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War and Peace:
The Liturgical Controversy and Its Resolution
1857-1890

BOOK REVIEW
Anne Thayer…
Imputation and Impartation: Union with Christ in American Reformed Theology.
By William B. Evans.

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The Mercersburg Society has been formed to uphold the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ, Evangelical, Reformed, Catholic, Apostolic, organic, developmental and connectional. It affirms the ecumenical Creeds as witnesses to its faith and the Eucharist as the liturgical act from which all other acts of worship and service emanate.

The Society pursues contemporary theology in the Church and the world within the context of Mercersburg Theology. In effecting its purpose the Society provides opportunities for fellowship and study for persons interested in Mercersburg Theology, sponsors and annual convocation, engages in the publication of articles and books, stimulates research and correspondence among scholars on topics of theology, liturgy, the Sacraments and ecumenism.
The **New Mercersburg Review** is designed to publish the proceedings of the annual convocation as well as other articles on the subjects pertinent to the aims and interests of the Society.

From the Editor

F. Christopher Anderson

This issue is a keeper.

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Rahn Clemons' essay gives us an overview of thirty-three years of German Reformed Church warfare on liturgy. The President of our Society gives us a perspective that we do not see too often. Pastor Clemens not only shows us the issues involved in the controversy but she also shows us how these particular Christians ended the conflict. This is an area we often overlook.

She presented the essay at the 2006 Convocation we enjoyed at St. Luke's UCC, Trappe, PA and Trinity Reformed, Collegeville, PA. She summarizes what happened with the German Reformed Peace Commission of 1857-1890. This is solid Mercersburg history that speaks to every age because every age has church fights. We owe her a debt of thanks for her research.

Dr. Anne Thayer of Lancaster Theological Seminary provides us with an important Book Review. She points out that *Imputation and Impartation* by William B. Evans is a very difficult book to read but that the issues it brings up are very important.

The content of Evans' book should be brought down to a more practical level. Though the book is written in a manner that makes it seem merely scholastic the book does touch on real life issues. For example in my twenties I was strongly influenced by New England Theology and

its disdain for imputation. I have experienced trying to live out my Christian life under the New England view and later under the Mercersburg view. The difference points out one experiential reason why I love Mercersburg Theology so much.

For those in the Mercersburg Society it is heartening that William B. Evans, who is not a member of our Society, divides the history of American Reformed Theology into New England Theology, Mercersburg Theology and Princeton Theology. We may no longer be the Rodney Dangerfields of Reformed Theology! We would love to have William B. Evans speak at one of our Convocations!

Lastly I want to apologize for an error in the Spring 2009 issue, # 40. I mistakenly attributed the Book Review on Linden J. DeBie's book to "Alan P. F. Sell & Milton Keynes." Dr. Sell was the sole author of the review. Milton Keynes is the large town where he lives in the southeast of England. The only positive thing about this mistake is that it allows us again to connect Dr. Sell's esteemed name to our humble publication. We thank Dr. Sell for both his membership in our Society and his support of our work.

WAR AND PEACE:

The Liturgical Controversy and Its Resolution

1857-1890

Deborah Rahn Clemens

Wars so often begin amidst a flurry of excitement, hope and even glee. As the call to arms is sounded throughout the land, soldiers and citizens alike rush to their stations for the sake of the cause. The troops report for duty, sustained by a dream of vindication, and victory. "Anchors away," "bring out the fife and drums," "wave the flag cheerfully." Mothers hug their babies. Fathers salute their prodigy. Sweethearts vow to faithfully wait their return as the enlisted march proudly into battle. Wars often begin with a sense of glory. They do not end that way. If there is any glory to be witnessed at all when humans fight, it can only be found in the eventual making of the peace.

The war which was fought in the Reformed Church in the United Sates in the later part of the 19th century was a real war. Bloodless, though it was, it cost this church its innocence and caused extensive collateral damage. One might argue that the repercussions of this conflict are still being realized in its descendant congregations today. Those who study the times must be cautioned not to romanticize the battle or vilify the enemy. We must rather learn the

hard lessons learned by those individuals called in to help clean up the carnage and establish new terms for tolerance and restoration of the surviving community. Fortunately for us, the story of the war in the Reformed Church is also a story of peace. Remembering this can enable us to foster hope of resolving our present ecclesiastical conflicts, whatever they may be, with a Christ-like spirit of love and humility.

The conflict began shortly after the publishing of the 1857 Provisional Liturgy. It is not at all difficult for us to imagine why the publication of a worship resource should generate hostility. We have seen how, in our own times, battles can arise over "forms" in worship such as the recent Inclusive Language debate which has effected many denominations in some way, and the more localized congregational tussles over style of music. Remembering these helps us to see just how powerful rites, sacraments, and music can be in the Christian community.

Few in the Reformed Church of the 19th century objected to the idea of having an American generated unifying Book of Worship. The Old Palatinate Liturgy which (along with the Heidelberg Catechism) had formed the German Reformed people's identity and hermeneutic was too German and too old to be easily transferable to the new country. Generations of congregations had already, for the most part, fallen away from using it. Most churches did not even

own a single copy. Before the establishment of our first seminary in 1825, candidates for ministry simply apprenticed with the more seasoned members of the clergy. They learned to adapt to their mentor's style which, more and more over time, came to reflect the free style of worship which dominated America generally.[1] As in all churches, whatever the habits of the last 20 years, people insist, "We always did it that way."

Dr. Lewis Mayer attempted to provide the Reformed Church with its own American liturgy in 1841[2]. It was quickly recognized for being inadequate for the needs of the churches and far too dry and didactic. It simply didn't appeal to almost anybody, except perhaps Mr. Mayer himself, and so it went unused. Just six years after the Mayer liturgy was published, the East Pennsylvania Classis asked its Synod to authorize another book of worship. The committee, chaired by John H. A. Bomberger, and including John Williamson Nevin, and Philip Schaff went about its work under the mandate to produce forms for contemporary worship that would be recognized by their forefathers and have the clear sanction of the practice and peculiar genius of the original Protestant Churches of the sixteenth

[1] "Free worship", was assumed to be what the Reformed Church ALWAYS practiced since its very BEGINNINGS. Some were so afraid of losing their liberty that even the reciting of the Lord's Prayer and Apostles' Creed was debated. The congregation typically had no voice other than the singing of hymns. Bomberger, 99

[2] Rev. Dr. Lewis Mayer was the first elected professor of the seminary in Carlisle. His tenure was never very happy. He taught in Carlisle, York and Mercersburg, resigning in 1839.

century. [3] They held five meetings (each lasting one to two weeks for a total of 104 sessions) until declaring their liturgy complete.

The Early Scrimmage

The Provisional Liturgy, once opened and inspected, was viewed by some to be a radical departure from the whole reformed church heritage. The majority on the liturgical committee, however, believed it to be well in keeping with the Spirit of the Palatinate as well as a necessary corrective. It shed the 16th century phobia about associating with the medieval church and went on to integrate reformed insights with Christian catholicity extending and including all generations even back to the earliest centuries.

Opposition to the Provisional Liturgy began soon after it started circulating. Vigorous debates published in the "The Reformed Church Messenger" made the issues very public. Charges that the Liturgy introduced an alien spirit to Reformed worship kept growing. Was the product closer in character to the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer than to the Palatinate scheme? Did it create a break with the Constitution's sacramental standards, especially

[3] J.W Nevin, called to Professorship at Mercersburg Seminary 1840, J. Berg, trained in the Moravian Seminary, served German Reformed Churches 1835-52. Transferred to Dutch Reformed denomination 1852 (mostly over the Mercersburg controversy), J.H.A. Bomberger, was at the time Pastor of the German Reformed Church in Easton, moving to the Race Street Church in Philadelphia 1852, P. Schaff was called to Mercersburg Seminary as professor in 1844 after being charged with heresy for his "Roman" tendencies by Joseph Berg.

when it came to Adult Baptism? The Constitution required candidates to pledge their allegiance to the Holy Scriptures as the perfect and only rule of life, to the doctrines contained in the Heidelberg Catechism and to the rules of order and discipline of the German Reformed Church. Whereas, the Liturgy merely asked the candidate to renounce the devil, profess the Creed, be willing to be baptized, and pledge to follow Christ and his commandments all their days. Did the addition of litany prayers, the allowance for Nicene and Anthanasian Creeds, congregational responses, and absolution (indicating priestly authority), and the singing of the Gloria and Te Deum etc. infect the Reformed Church with things (oh my gosh) catholic?

Although the Provisional liturgy included both Pulpit and Altar liturgies[4] on the Lord's Day and allowed for free prayer along with the written forms, it became relatively clear that those pastors who were using it preferred the "High" forms. "Low" church pastors seemed to ignore the publication completely. As the years ensued, the Mercersburg professors promoted their liturgy with sound teaching of the objective reality of Christianity which continues through the church's life organically. Therefore the ancient heritage, along with its forms, is not antithetical to who we were as church. They are our lived reality. Seminarians and some local

[4] By "Pulpit" liturgy we mean a handbook intended to be used by the Pastor as worship leader exclusively. And "Altar Liturgy" focuses on the table fellowship

Pastors (especially those in the East) learned to grow liturgically into an appreciation for the church year, for the sacramental grace, and for the legitimate voice of the people in worship.

After three years of its trial run, committee members Bomberger and Fisher called for the Liturgy's revision. For practical reasons they believed a new revision, making more allowances for free style worship, would be more marketable and more effective. The bulk of the committee, however, had come to cherish the so-called "High forms" and believed they were increasingly popular as the clergy were growing up into the Mercersburg system. Suddenly the defunct Palatinate and Mayer liturgies were being touted as ideals for worship. Bomberger's defection from the committee created "attitudes" among the Mercersburg contingent. Nevin and Schaff now begin to speak against free prayer and "Directories" of worship as bastard conceptions of liturgy. By 1862 the lines of battle were clearly drawn.[5] [6] [7]

of all the saints, for use by the congregation as a whole. Preaching is complementary but not primary.

[5] See the " Reformed Church Messenger" May 14, 1862, 71

[6] A word must be said here about the Palatinate Liturgy... The order gives several indications that lay persons are expected to participate in the service vocally. They are to sing Psalms and hymns, say out loud their Amen's, and answer the pastor's questions of faith in the Preparatory service. Other phrases indicating congregational participation include the following sentences:

> Let us pray as our true Lord and Savior Jesus Christ taught us saying:
> Fall on your knees and pray as the Lord has taught us saying:
> Confirm us also, by this Holy Supper in the universal and undoubted Christian faith, of which we make confession with mouth and heart saying:
> In which faith we make our confession with mouth and heart saying:

Despite the terrors of the American Civil War, the year 1863 was a banner year for the German Reformed community. Officially now for the first time it changed its name to the Reformed Church in the United States. It celebrated the three hundredth anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism and Palatinate Liturgy with a mutual revival of love and respect for this rich heritage. Celebrations included international speakers, renewed publishing, the founding of Bethany Children's Home, and the convening of the very first General Synod Meeting.

By General Synod I (Nevin serving as President) it was obvious that the Provisional Liturgy was not to become the official liturgy for all the member churches. The synods most polarized about this, the Eastern synod (pro) and the Ohio and Western synods (against), were both asked to return in three years with new liturgical offerings. It looked like this would be a great compromise tactic.

Let us heartily confess the same to our faithful Father:
Therefore, say with me:
Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, let us bow down before God and from the depth of our hearts call upon Him and say:

For the German text and citations see Deborah R. Clemens, "Foundations of German Reformed Worship in the Sixteenth Century Palatinate" UMI Dissertation, Bell and Howell Co. Ann Arbor Michigan 1995, 207

[7] Ibid 208 Latin canticles such as the Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, and Agnus Dei, etc. along with the Creed, Prayer, and Commandments, were translated into German for corporate singing. And, the complete forms, along with lectionary according to the church year, were published into hymnals for individual member's purchase and usage. This indicates that the Palatinate Liturgy was no Pulpit Liturgy. Sacramentally it was NOT Zwinglian.

The hope being that after 1866 some sort of compendium of High/Low worship resources might be produced to give the denomination a resolution to its liturgical squabblings. Nice try. Fat chance.

War Breaks Out

J.H.A. Bomberger got the opportunity to review the Revised Liturgy at the Eastern Synod meeting. It was no compromise liturgy that took into account the objections raised. It was anything but that. The Liturgical committee had, quite frankly, come a long way in its appreciation for the riches of Christian worship since it first started its task more than a decade before. They absolutely refused to dumb down the Provisional Liturgy which was, in their minds, a complete and organic whole in itself. It was not just a scrapbook of material for cutting and pasting. So they produced "The Order of Worship" which was more orthodox, more catholic, allowing for no free prayer and no pulpit liturgy.

Bomberger was angry. He published his attack on the revised liturgy just six weeks after the Eastern Synod meeting and just before the General Synod assembly met. Along with his many other objections he questioned what it conveyed doctrinally. He challenged, "Its teaching of the relation of Christ's glorified body to the believer." And "That the sacraments work regenerating grace

through the Holy Spirit, whereas the catechism says it is by the Word."[8]

At the General Synod II, in 1866, the Mercersburg Liturgical Committee came with the Order of Worship for the Reformed Church in the United States completed and ready to be published.[9] The Western contingency reported that they were not finished with their work and therefore had no document for the offering. They couldn't say the dog or the computer ate their homework. In their defense, however the Civil War might have been a bit of a distraction from their duties. Whatever the reason, the Synod had an unexpected conundrum on their hands. Now what to do? The remainder of the Synod sessions (seven in all) were consumed with the liturgical debate. By a slight majority, the delegates voted to authorize the "Order" for optional use and permitted the West to continue working. This did not sit well with the minority. Under the leadership of Prof. Jeremiah H. Good, soon to be appointed professor at Heidelberg College and seminary, they complained :

> The undersigned believe, unless further discussion and investigation shall be able to remove or modify these objections, that this Synod should not endorse

[8] Good, History, p.427-8
[9] Order of Worship for the Reformed Church in the United States, Philadelphia, PA, S. R. Fisher, 1866

this work as the authorized Order of Worship in the German Reformed Church for the following reasons:

1. It involved an exceedingly great change in our Order of Worship, amounting, in fact, to a fundamental revolution;
2. It is not in accordance with the original character and genius of the German Reformed Church, as this is manifested in the Palatinate and other Reformed Liturgies of the sixteenth century;
3. It is not in accordance with the historical tradition;
4. It is not in accordance with our present circumstances and needs;
5. It is believed that there is very little prospect of its successful introduction among the great body of our congregations;
6. It will be the cause of loss, strife, division, and schism;
7. Its tendency will be to merge gradually a large portion of our body in that (the Episcopal) denomination;
8. It will more and more separate us from sister denominations of the Reformed faith with

whom we are most closely allied, and in this respect to whom we yearn for a closer union;

9. The system which it attempts to introduce is one, however beautiful in itself, and adapted in some cases to intelligent and educated congregations, wholly unsuited to the great body of our plain people;
10. Finally, we think that its influence on ministers and people, on the work of our mission, upon the increase of ministers, on the growth of the Church, on charity among ourselves, and the work of grace in the hearts of our people, will be of very doubtful benefit. [10]

Jeremiah Good et. al. were astute enough to realize the power in the Liturgy being presented. They could see that use of these forms in corporate worship would have far reaching and vital consequences. They recognized the theological issues at stake for the whole church and that a large part of their present worship life together was being threatened by it. In a nut shell it carried with it the whole Mercersburg theological system. Therefore the minority report recommended that a whole new and special liturgical committee be appointed by General Synod to go back to the drawing board and

[10] (Signed) J. H. Good, D. Winters, Edw. Swander, V.C. Tidball. These objections are slightly adapted and greatly shortened from the original minutes taken from the minutes of the Second Triennial Session, Kuhns and Kelker, 16-19

start all over again. But, of course, after working on forms now for twenty full years and after devoting forty five more sessions on this already second creation, and after all it being nearly perfect, the likes of Nevin and Schaff were not about to be very much opened to doing that. The Order stood approved for trial use regardless of the objections.

Now what really were the issues about which they were fighting? It might be helpful to try to list them. Mercersburg was accused of being grounded solely in the modern progressive Hegelian philosophical system whereas the opposition claimed to be confessional and grounded in the Heidelberg Catechism. Mercersburg was thought to give equal authority to the Bible (as it reveals the Living Christ) and to tradition whereas the other regarded the Creed to be subordinate and the Bible inerrant. Mercersburg taught that by the Incarnation, God united himself with creation and thus with all humanity organically and permanently. The others thought the Incarnation to be an exclusive and supernatural event. In the first, the Incarnation was always in God's plan. In the second, Jesus came only because of human sin. Mercersburg sees the atonement as organic union with the Godhead, not a pay back for a broken legal contract. The church therefore is a continuation of that living and life giving presence, and not only a gathering of those faithful who volunteer to be a part of it. The sacraments are in themselves potent and objective in the

Mercersburg teaching. According to the lower view they are subjective and confirming.[11]

Before the next synod meeting a separate convention was held in Myerstown, PA. for an "anti-ritual" protest. At that gathering the Mercersburg Seminary and its professors were accused of heresy and a system set in place to formulate separate ecclesiological activities. The Eastern Synod in return sanctioned the Myerstown Convention for being an illegal church gathering constituted without proper authority. The synod called the Myerstown delegates schismatic, ordered that all abstain from attending any such future meetings, and that only grievances sent through the proper presbyterial channels would be accepted before the plenary body.[12]

In a counter attack, the "Low Church" group set up "The Reformed Church Monthly" to be its weapon with words. In its first edition Bomberger (editor) gave a scathing attack on the "Ritualists." He in turn was condemned on the floor by the next Eastern Synod. This public spanking was considered the "Last Straw" for the Low Church movement. Freeland Seminary in Collegeville, PA was purchased for the purpose of instituting Ursinus College to be an alternative education institution. The legitimacy of the founding of Ursinus College was very much a matter of dispute. The

[11] Adapted from Good, 587-594

Mercersburg side objected to the fact that Ursinus was including theology in its curriculum. According to them no one should be permitted to teach theology without first being elected by the synod as a whole and then placed in that office. Bomberger, on the other hand, reminded the church that local clergy privately taught theology to new pastors since its American beginnings. The right had never been revoked from them. Nevertheless the Eastern Synod ordered Bomberger to cease and desist from such disorderly teaching. That decision was appealed to the General synod which eventually sustained it in Bomberger's absence.[13] In James I. Good's opinion by founding Ursinus College, Bomberger saved the church for the Reformed faith. He said:

> The founding of Ursinus caused a reaction in the church against the Romanizing tendency. It kept the Reformed Church Protestant. It became the center around which the true Protestant element in the Reformed Church rallied. Its very existence was a continued protest against such a tendency to Catholicism and it led to a reaction in the Reformed Church against the extreme Mercersburg views.[14]

Separate mission projects for the two sides were initiated and battles ensued as to whether one party's monies could support the

[12] Klein, 251-2
[13] Bomberger 215-17
[14] Omwake, Bomberger, 217

enemies' missionaries. And, you can bet, all clergy were pigeonholed as being either "for" or "against" before entering the call process. Thus on the eve of General Synod III (1869), a full blown para-church system existed. Many in the Eastern Synod questioned whether or not there was any hope for or purpose to the whole denominational organization.

The best General Synod could do that year (after exhausting debate) was give the newly finished Western Liturgy equal status and suggest that decisions as to liturgical form should be made by the local Classes. Too many "memorials" or independent opinions had come in, making ultimatums unless their particular point of view should win.[15]

Reporting from the General Board of Home Missions:

> We need not inform this venerable body that the unsettled state of the Church, the exciting and irritating controversies agitating her, have seriously interfered with this part of our church work (missions). Although striving to be just and impartial to all interests and parties concerned, we

[15] Minutes from the Third Triennial; Session, Quoting; "But the worst feature of this memorial movement is that it flies directly in the face of the history of the Reformed Church from the beginning of its existence down to the present day, by asking that Synod shall take away rights from others which the petitioners claim for themselves, and thus limit and curtail the broad and generous freedom which our branch of the Catholic Church has always allowed in matters of this kind." Kuhns and Kelker. 29

> regret to report that we have not received the confidence of the entire Church. From the start some of the Synods, in a measure, refused to cooperate with the General Board, claiming the privilege to disburse their own funds and manage their own missions, regardless of its authority.[16]

So as you can see, the state of the Reformed Church in the United States was in one big mess. No one seemed to carry much hope for survival as a denomination. The war had caused too many casualties and too much hard feelings. None of our current conflicts can be considered worst than this. The very core of what it means to be a church, what is understood to be worship, what are the sacraments, the ministry, the mission, the government were all effected.

Thus in E. V. Gerhart's report on the state of the church he said:

> In conclusion, the committee feels constrained to make explicit reference to the difference of sentiment touching worship, and some point's of doctrine that prevails in the Reformed Church. That there are two tendencies was distinctly recognized by

[16] From the minutes of the Fourth Triennial Session 37, Kuhns and Kelker 32

the General Synod of Philadelphia. This division of sentiment has ripened into antagonism. The adherents of one tendency being arrayed in their practical church work directly against the adherents of the opposite tendency. Whilst the present state of things exists, there can be no unity, peace and concord. Instead of concentrating our energies in the way of harmonious action against the common foe, much of our time and strength is expended in maintaining the conflict within our own organization, and in seeking to achieve victory over the other. What is to be done? The status is abnormal. We do not report it in order to solve the problem but simply as a matter of fact.[17]

Calling a Truce

Nothing much changed until the General Synod VI which met in Lancaster Pa. in 1878 (now already 30 years since the liturgical argument began). On the evening of May 20, Dr. Clement Z. Weiser D.D.[18] pastor of New Goshenhoppen Church in East

[17] From the minutes of the Fourth Triennial Session 31-2, Kuhns and Kelker 31-2

[18] Clement Zwingli Weiser was born in Selinsgrove Pa. fourth generation descendant of the pioneer Conrad Weiser. He was son of the Rev. Daniel Weiser who served New Goshenhoppen and Great Swanp churches in Montgomery County Pa. He was educated at Marshall College (Now Franklin and Marshall)

Greenville stood up to speak. Weiser was educated at Marshall College and Mercersburg Seminary under Nevin and Schaff, and was known among his clergy college as "a ritualist." He more or less preached to them that the "Reformed Church in the United States may not ignore the differences within its bounds," but must confess and lament over them. If we don't, we face, "impending ecclesiastical suicide as we bite and devour our inheritance." Then after referencing various scriptural passages about church union he suggested. Be it:

> ... hereby ordered by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, now in session in the city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, that a Commission be created by the several District Synods, consisting of a representation from the six several District Synods, after the ratio of church membership within their respective bounds, each representation to be partly ministerial and partly lay, which Commission, proportionally representing the true tendencies in the Church, shall consider and solemnly deliberate over all matters in controversy within the Church, with a view of devising a plan of

and at the Mercersburg Seminary. A prolific writer, he was published in the Messenger, Guardian, Hausfreund, and The Mercersburg Review. He had the reputation of being able to speak even to little folks without tiring them" and of having the ability also of "reinforcing a good lesson without becoming prosy." (Remarks from a local newspaper found in his personal scrapbook).

> amicable adjustment, to be reported to the next General Synod, on some such basis of mutual agreement as shall commend itself as best to the mind of said Commission, guaranteeing unity in essentials, liberty in doubtful, and charity in all things pertaining to the Church.[19]

John H. A. Bomberger rose to speak in response to Weiser's proposal. He said that nothing would please him more than to imagine a resolution to the controversies becoming a reality. However, he said, that he would like to think about the recommendations before voting. The synod turned into a beehive of activity. The elders in attendance were especially determined to see the document endorsed by the whole body. The discussion went on until 10:00 PM when a motion to adjourn was made. The motion was unanimously defeated. Nobody wanted to quit and go home without a bona fide Peace Commission. A second notion to adjourn was also voted down. Then, at the request of the assembly, Dr. Weiser re- read his proposal and spoke about it briefly. The resolution was adopted. According to the report in the local paper: "The adoption of this paper is regarded AS THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE IN THE CHURCH FOR YEARS, AND THE MOST INTENSE FEELING

[19] From the minutes of the Sixth Triennial Session, Kuhns and Kelker 40

WAS MANIFESTED ON THE SUBJECT BY ALL THE DELEGATES.[20]

Once adopted, prayer was lead in both German by Kuelling and English by Bomberger, the doxology was sung and the following resolutions were also made:

> Whereas, under the guidance of the great head of the Church, this General Synod, with cordial unanimity, has inaugurated measures designed to restore harmony and peace within its bounds: therefore,
>
> Resolved, that the ministers and members represented in this Synod be admonished to use their official and personal influence for the cultivation of mutual confidence and peace.
>
> Resolved, that the editors of our Church periodicals be requested, as far as possible, to infuse a spirit of conciliation and concord into their publications.
>
> Resolved, that the professors of our classical, collegiate, and theological institutions are requested to cultivate such a spirit of charitableness and peace in the minds of their students as is contemplated in the aforesaid conciliatory measures adopted by this synod.

[20] Newspaper clipping found in Dr. Clement Weiser's personal scrapbook.

> Resolved, that this General Synod most earnestly requests the members of all the ecclesiastical bodies under its supervision, in the deliberations and decisions of their regular and special meetings, to have a due and charitable regard for each other's conscientious convictions, and, as far as possible, to conduct their business so as to cultivate and advance the cause of peace and good will among the congregations and people of our reformed Zion.[21]

In addition to this, the Synod resolved to conduct intentional prayer meetings at every level of church life and especially during the time the Commission convenes so that divine intervention may be sought on behalf of this great experiment. And so the newly appointed "Peace Commissioners" had their work cut out for them. They accepted their roles trusting that the new reconciling movement was indeed the work of the Holy Spirit.

The difference of spirit was recognized almost immediately. Somehow, by October of that year, 1878, at the Eastern Synod meeting, Rev. Dr. John H. A. Bomberger was elected president by acclamation. He rose to speak on the synod floor expressing his surprise at the unified endorsement of his leadership. Before finishing he said whatever part he had provoking or indulging in "of

[21] Kuhns and Kelker 42

harshness or asperity in feeling thought or word "in the past, he now regretted and he recalled it. Dr. Clement C. Weiser then rose and read the following resolution.

> Forasmuch as Divine charity, effected only by the Holy Ghost, can alone produce those heart changes which are first and most necessary to the proper understanding of all mysteries and knowledge, to the harmonizing of our wills with God's, and to that unity which he will approve in a lasting peace: be it therefore
>
> Resolved, by the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, in general convention assembled at Easton, PA A.D. 1878, that the action taken by the Synod of the said church, convened, at Hagerstown, MD., October A.D. 1868, in reference to the Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, be hereby recalled.

The delegates unanimously endorsed the Peace Movement. A report from the Philadelphia Classes read to the plenary body contains these remarks:

> We speak less now a day of 'our party' and 'your party.' During the intervals between the sessions, we do not now, as we used to, hold adjourned

meetings, the one party under the green trees on the one side of the church, and the other party under the green trees on the other side of the church. We can sit together on the same bench, on the same green yard, under the same blue sky, eat at the same table and walk and dwell together in general harmony as brethren and fellow-ambassadors of the same common Lord should. Perhaps for this more than for anything else in particular just now, we should be thankful to the great giver of all good. Let the good work go on, and let no man raise hand or voice, to stay this happy tide of charitable feeling. Let there be mutual toleration and concession, and if, in our differences occasionally arising with us as with all similar deliberative bodies, we cannot always agree, then let us at least, seek to agree to differ.[22]

They also passed out Ursinus College catalogues and expressed "with pleasure" that Ursinus College was successfully prosecuting its educational work, and commended it to the favorable consideration of the Church." After both resolutions were unanimously adopted, the Rev. Dr. Nevin stood before the body and reflected on what had just happened and gave his congratulations to

[22] Minutes of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, October 1878, 18

the church for the progress it had made and for the entire Peace process.[23]

The Peace Commission

At 7:00 PM, on the evening of November 26, 1879 in Salem Reformed Church in Harrisburg, the Rev. Dr. David Van Horne, President of the 1878 General Synod called the peace commission to order with the singing of "I Love Thy Kingdom Lord". After reading Psalm 133 and I Corinthians 13, elections were held for officers. Clement Weiser was unanimously chosen as president. Both an English and a German secretary were also elected. After the elections were held, Rev Dr. Van Horne withdrew from the meeting to allow the Commissioners to be about their task. Peace Commissioners included the following "ritualists:"

Pastors

Elders

Clement Weiser,	(Eastern Synod)
Daniel W. Gross	(Eastern)
T. G. Apple	(Eastern Synod)
William H. Seibert	(Eastern)
Lewis H. Kefauver	(Ohio Synod)
Christian M. Boush	(Pittsburgh)

[23] Klein,267

John M. Titzel	(Pittsburgh Synod)
Thomas J. Craig	(Pittsburgh)
Joseph H. Apple	(Pittsburgh Synod)
Henry Wirt	(Potomac)
Samuel N. Callender	(Potomac Synod)
Lewis H. Steiner	(Potomac)

And the following "anti- ritualists:"

Pastors

Elders

Franklin W. Kremer	(Eastern Synod)
Rudolph F. Kelker	(Eastern)
Jeremiah H. Good	(Ohio Synod)
Andrew H. Baughman	(Ohio)
Herman J. Ruetenik	(Northwest Synod)
Benjamin Kuhns	(Ohio)
Peter Greding	(Northwest Synod)
Frederick W. Scheele	(Northwest)
G. William Welker	(Potomac Synod)
Henry Tons	(Northwest)
John Kuelling	(German Synod)
William D. Gross	(German)

Thus the representatives were evenly divided between the two factions. The gentlemen met morning, noon, and night for eight full days until finally adjourning on December 3, 1879. The order of worship for the closing service was as follows:

Invocation Weiser

Hymn "Not all the Blood of Beasts" Watts

John 17

Nicene Creed

Hymn "Forever Here My Rest" Wesley

Communion (Weiser and Callender presiding)

Prayer Jeremiah Good

Remarks by each of the Commissioners

Hymn " Nun Danket alle Gott"

Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Benediction (Weiser)

Of the service it was said: "Thus closed one of the most, perhaps the most blessed communion ever participated in by the members of the Commission. During the addresses many wept and there was not a dry eye in the assembly. It was indeed, a sweet foretaste of that holier and higher communion in which we all hope to participate at the marriage supper of the Lamb."[24]

[24] Kuhns and Kelker 48

A Pastoral Letter was sent to all churches along with a unanimous report giving guidance for future standards within the Reformed communion.

From the Pastoral Letter:

> "The sessions of this body were in the highest degree harmonious. The bands of peace held the members captive. The results of its labors were obtained, accordingly, under the manifest guidance of the Spirit of God, as we make bold to declare. Our common prayer, ascending from the Church to God, was heard - that we may be one.
>
> These conclusions, which we now proclaim, may indeed not prove perfectly satisfactory to all the reverend pastors and faithful members of our Communion. Some, doubtless, expected more, whilst others would rather have seen less. The Commission, nevertheless, congratulates itself and blesses God for the happy fact that it has been enabled, under the Great Shepherd, to successfully carry out the spirit of the instructions of the General Synod, which directs a basis of peace, in which "unity in essential, liberty in doubtful, and charity in all things" may be maintained.[25]

[25] "The Peace Commission" The Mercersburg Review, 1880 151-2

In matters of Doctrine it affirmed:

The Holy Scriptures as interpreted by the Heidelberg Catechism are our common guides for doctrine. Theological fervor and historical criticism had always been and continued to be allowed and encouraged. Therefore, points of agreement are:

Jesus Christ is the foundation and source of our salvation;

Christian life is begotten by Word and Spirit;

The visible and invisible churches are not identical but neither can they be separated;

Grace is imparted to all who believe when receiving the sacraments;

Those who do not believe receive bare elements;

Christian life is more than conscious experience;

We are justified only by Grace through faith;

The ordained are servants of Christ, not lords;

We uphold both the priesthood of all believers and the office of the ordained;

We uphold Reformation correctives of Rome and Rationalism;

All philosophy and theology be held in submission to the Word.

In Matters of Worship:

It requested that the next General Synod authorize the production of a unifying Directory of Worship for general use in the

denomination. Until that time the various liturgies currently in use should be allowed with the consent of the majority of members of any congregation. And, those hymnals already in use also are sanctioned until the publication of an appropriate hymnal as well.

Government:

That a new Constitution and By-Laws eventually be created to honor the organic relationship between regional judicatories and the General Synod;

To tighten the connection between General Synod and its Theological institutions;

That personality conflicts be kept out of future controversies concerning doctrine, culture, and constitution;

The church should hereafter focus it efforts on evangelism and mission;

This was signed, Dec. 3, 1879 ...the aforementioned Commissioners.[26]

Thus, immediately a new spirit was also evident in the circles of the church. As if a cloud had finally lifted, clergy and elders alike from both sides of the tortured strife came to believe again that the internal difficulties would somehow someday finally be settled. Now that the first steps were taken in right direction, they became

[26] Ibid 152-155

confident that peace and reconciliation would actually happen.[27] Soon, pensive souls were able to recognize that the community could actually learn something from the experience. It taught them to be leery of their own unchecked prejudice. They admitted that caricatures of the opponents are always dangerous. Heated public debates are not the best venue for generating understanding. Rarely does the enemy hold the extreme views we think are held by them.

Upon reflecting back, cooler heads could admit that attitudes had been changing, even softening long before the 1878 General Synod resolution. When the committee sat down to examine and discuss their differences they noted it wasn't so much that the essential doctrines of the Christian faith (so beloved by both) were at risk. The arguments were actually about how the church should interpret them. The Commission held no illusion that one week of extended work would solve all their problems. They also did not try to impose any strict standard of orthodoxy on the whole denomination. What they were able to do was affirm together some cardinal truths which reassured all that the Holy Spirit can work in "High" churches and in "Low" churches too. What are the cardinal truths? That Christ is the central objective truth of all Christian faith. That, by the power of the Holy Spirit the Word of God is supreme and life giving. That the church can be equated neither with the Romans external nor the Pietists spiritual view but rather with both

[27] Apple, "The Peace Commission" 156

or with something in between. That we are neither transsubstantialists, consubstantialists, nor memorialists sacra mentally. That we share equal regard for the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, and priesthood of believers and the office of ordained ministry.[28]

No doubt had anyone scratched the surface too much, it would not be hard to cause more bleeding. But no one was much interested in scratching. The taste for the enemy's blood had now past. They knew they still harbored theological differences. But they also knew these differences would not be changed through legislation. Theological discussion would still go on. They knew they could not and should never be afraid of fostering it. But it was not a time to simply bury heads in the sand and believe the church ought to focus only on human service and mission. In fact, looking back, it became very apparent that without this great civil war over liturgy Mercersburg theology would not have gotten nearly so rich and so advanced. I hope the debate over Inclusive language helped us to sharpen our theology of the Trinity, and the debate over contemporary music is helping us improve our understanding of the purpose of Christian worship, and the debate over human sexuality will eventually bring us to better insights on God's soteriology.

[28] Ibid 158

The Peace Commission of course could not produce a compromise liturgy for the whole Reformed Church in the United States in one week. Along with the unanimous adoption of the Peace Commission report and after the singing of the Doxology, General Synod VII (Rev Dr. Jeremiah H. Good presiding) directed the very same committee to reconvene as a Peace Liturgical committee and to produce a "Liturgy or Directory of Worship suitable to the demands of the case and the wants of the church". Once again Clement Weiser et al. got busy.

The Directory of Worship for the Reformed Church in the United States was approved by General Synod VIII, authorized to be printed and distributed and forwarded to each of the Classes for adoption. It was determined that two-thirds of the Classes would be asked to endorse it before it would be considered the official directory of worship for the denomination. At that General Synod the report on the state of the church noted a striking increase in the denominations domestic and foreign mission along with the following statement:

> It has been said that we have made our journey through the Wilderness of Strife, and have now reached the Promised Land of Peace. But this land is not yet the land of Beulah. We have reached a point from which we can look back upon the past, and

> contemplate it in light of a heroic age; we can look forward with pleasant anticipations of great things to be realized in the future; but the present, our day demands that, clothed in the armor of light, we should stand prepared to do valiant battle, not against one another, but against the common enemy."[29]

The War had come to an end. It was in March of that year that Clement Weiser's only remaining child, his daughter, his only child that lived to adulthood, died giving birth along with the infant, and was laid to rest. Along with many letters of condolences sent are tender messages of Christian compassion by John Bomberger as well as Rev. and Mrs. John Nevin. The shared tragedies of earthly life help to give us changed perspectives.

The Directory of Worship, curiously enough reads like the Mercersburg Liturgy of 1866 with few exceptions. There are few signs of the Western Liturgy in it. I doubt that John Williamson Nevin was happy with it. He would have objected to the "cut and paste" tampering with the organic whole and finished product of years of research and development. But, when we compare it today to what we believe were "Low church" sentiments, we are amazed at how much of Mercersburg was acceptable and accepted. I believe the vigorous writing and teaching that went on during this

[29] From minutes of the General Synod VII 43, Kuhns and Kelker,63

controversy brought both sides to a new place whether either would admit it or not.

The Directory offers only one Lord's Day service option. (We would expect a free church and a liturgical choice) but there is only one. The Litany (a subject of high controversy and even offense) is prominently positioned following the Lord's Day service. Written prayers are provided for all sorts of occasions (although free prayer is allowed in the rubrics). The lectionary according to the church year is included as are full orders for the church's rites and sacraments.

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XIV. Laying of a Corner-Stone

XV. Consecration of a Church

XVI. Consecration of a Burial-Ground

XVII. An Order of Daily Scripture Readings

XVIII. Prayers for the Family [30]

When we compare the Directory with the 1866 Communion Liturgy we can note these significant changes. The opening liturgy follows the regular Lord's Day service in the compromise text. This begins with the Trinitarian formula and the opening collect from the Book of Common Prayer (of all places). It skirts the Mercersburg Communion confession which emphasizes our unworthiness to partake of the body and blood and also, curiously drops the Mercersburg Absolution which is the only section of the Palatinate Liturgy of 1563 which has come down through tradition more or less in tact. There is no kneeling. The Altar is a Communion Table. The Apostles' Creed, not the Nicene, is recited. The Vesicles and Intercessions have disappeared and the Epistle is read before the Gospel lesson. The term "Mysteries" is replaced with the word "Communion" at the uncovering, but not in the prayer of Thanksgiving after the Consecration. The Sursum Corda has bit the dust and the Passing of the Peace is skipped.

[30] Directory of Worship, Table of Contents

But the Eucharistic Prayer is Mercersburg almost verbatim! The only changes occur in the Epiclesis and Oblation. The original Epiclesis reads "Almighty God, our heavenly Father, **send down we beseech thee, the powerful benediction of thy Holy Spirit upon** these elements of bread and wine. The Directory: "Almighty God, our heavenly Father, **sanctify, we beseech Thee, by Thy word and Spirit,** these elements of bread and wine." In the Oblation one phrase is substituted. Instead of saying "And be pleased now O most merciful Father, **graciously to receive at our hands this memorial of the blessed sacrifice of thy Son; in union with which we here offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, the reasonable sacrifice of our own persons;** consecrating ourselves, on the altar of the Gospel…" The Directory reads: "And be pleased now, O most merciful Father, **to accept our sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise, which we here offer unto Thee, in union with this memorial of the blessed sacrifice of Thy Son;** consecrating ourselves, on the altar of the Gospel…" Along with the standard prayer of Thanksgiving, and Te Deum, Psalm 103 reappears (as I think it should) and a free prayer is permitted as an acceptable conclusion to the service. Other than this, The Reformed Church could now harmonize its varied voices in singing God's praises.

At General Synod IX the votes to approve or disapprove The Directory were tallied from the Classes. Of the 52 Classes, a 2/3

majority or 35 yeas were needed. Of the votes submitted 39 approved and only 8 rejected it. Incredibly the Ohio Synod and the Synod in the United States overwhelmingly endorsed it. There was only one abstention. Seven of the nay sayers came from either the German or the Western classes. The one and only no vote from the Synod of the Potomac came from (can you guess)? It came from the Mercersburg Classes. Finally the Reformed church in the United States had an official Book of Worship. It was the only Book (other than the Mayer Liturgy) officially endorsed by the denomination.

So you ask, what happened to it? Why are we not familiar with it? After the dust settled and the warriors returned to their homes and churches, the Mercersburg Synods republished the 1866 Liturgy in their hymnals and the Free Church Synods simply didn't. It made the publisher of The Directory very unhappy for sales were no where near what they had expected.[31] Nevertheless, the strife was o'er the battle done, and the church was about to move forward to 20th century issues of ecumenism and mission.

At the 1890 General Synod X. Rev Dr. John H. A. Bomberger was overwhelmingly elected President of a church united. The Report of the Committee on the State of the church said:

[31] Kuhns and Kelker iv

During a period of twelve years the angel of peace has hovered over our beloved Zion with healing in her wings. She has been inspiring the hearts and minds of our ministry and people more and more with her gracious spirit. Again, since the former meeting of your reverend body, as well assuring the present session, have we been assured of the wisdom of this movement in the growing tendencies toward the consolation and unification of our powers and energies for the glory of God and his Kingdom. Surely, during these years may not the leading of a divine Providence be discerned in this movement?

The report went on to note its learning: That there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit. That we trust in Jesus' prayer that they may all be one and will someday be made perfect. We expect that "greater light is breaking in these last days" (I suppose that means God is still speaking). And we look for the consummation of a federal union with our sister Reformed Church (in America) which now seems just over the horizon. For all this may God alone have the glory.[32]

[32] General Synod X minutes 50-52, Kuhns and Kelker 75

If there is any glory to be witnessed at all when churches fight it can only be seen after the Lord brings it to an end. By August 19, 1890 Bomberger was dead. The era was past.

Now it is time for us who are heirs of this great tradition to glean our learning from it. May we remember that all human conflicts are time bound and limited. May we ever be conscious of how Liturgy does carry incredible power and grace if well developed and well planned. May we look to learn how the church can be edified, not destroyed, through theological debate and discussion. May we repent of our own acts of aggression and polarization and prejudice against our fellow Christians. May we recall that our Reformed Church from its founding was united and irenic. And finally, may we always walk humbly in the footsteps of the Prince of peace and the master of Reconciliation.

PEACE COMMISSION
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BOOK REVIEW

William B. Evans. *Imputation and Impartation: Union with Christ in American Reformed Theology*.
Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock for Pater Noster Press, 2008.

Reviewed by Anne T. Thayer, Lancaster Theological Seminary.

It is something of a theological game of chicken and egg: what comes first (in both logic and time), justification or sanctification? Are they even separable? Are they the results of something else?

For those with a theological background, *Imputation and Impartation* is a carefully researched and well-written book on just this topic – applied soteriology, or how we receive the benefits of Christ. Evans' research is stimulated by a desire to understand and address what he sees as a key theological problem for both evangelical and mainline churches, "a lack of soteriological integration" (261). As he sees it, liberal or mainline theology tends to stress social action, focusing on the sanctification elements in salvation, while evangelical thought highlights evangelism, centering on justification before God. His book traces how this split came about and seeks to articulate a way forward. Thus, the book is a detailed geneological survey of the soteriological understandings of the Reformed tradition since Calvin, with special focus on American traditions. Evans faithfully gives signposts to his readers, helping them keep track of where they are in the developments he is describing

Evans presents his historical theological survey in exemplary fashion, clearly explaining the pressures that led to particular theological decisions in particular historical contexts. Not viewing theology as static, the various trajectories within the Reformed tradition are seen as signs of theological vitality. "Even when a doctrinal move later turn out to be unfortunate, it was generally no without reason or logic in its immediate context, and an understanding of the rationale for it may shed considerable light on the dynamics of doctrinal development within the Reformed tradition" (3). Thus the book moves forward by identifying tensions

and ambiguities in teaching in one generation that the next sought to remedy. It ends with Evans' own statement of what ought to characterize a new Reformed soteriology.

According to Evans, Calvin taught that union with Christ in his incarnate humanity brings about both justification and sanctification in the Christian by faith. Christ delivers both in the same way, and so they are inseparable even if "conceptually distinct" (36). However, Calvin did not provide an "explanation of the mechanism whereby the forensic may be mediated by a personal and ontological union" (39). This set the stage for two subsequent developments. One approach was to articulate various versions of the *ordo salutis*. As various aspects of salvation were named and given temporal order, union with Christ became one event in a series, not the framework united them all. Another approach was to divide union with Christ into two parts, a legal or federal union (usually associated with forensic justification) and a spiritual or vital union (usually associated with sanctification).

In nineteenth-century America, Hodge (and Princeton) taught a "federal union," Nevin articulated an "organic union" and New England Calvinists posited a "moral union," all claiming the authority of Calvin. But Evans diagnoses instabilities in each of these as well. Discussion of a federal union generally stressed forensic justification, preserving the nature of salvation as a free gift, but abstracting it from the ongoing life of faith and obedience. Focus on union with Christ as a moral or ethical bond often ended up reducing religion to moral, subjective or personalistic postures. The Mercersburg tradition's reclaiming of Calvin's overarching union with Christ left a problem of intelligibility, with their realism "being tied to the ontology of a particular period," and thus being implausible or difficult for other generations to understand.

Evans' treatment of Mercersburg is likely to be of particular interest to readers of this review. After a concise presentation of Nevin's biography, Evans devotes close attention to German influences on Mercersburg Theology. From idealist ontology and epistemology (Schelling, Hegel, Schleiermacher) comes an overcoming of divine-human dualism in the divine-human unity of Christ. Organic views of history (Schelling, Hegel) spurred a re-evaluation of the question of continuity between Roman Catholic

and Protestant traditions, as well as the recognition that forward development in the church could not be achieved by a "repristination," but needed to involve a critical evaluation of past and present. The Christocentric approach to theology of Schleiermacher and others gave new impetus to understanding of Christ as the second Adam and union with Christ as key to reception of the benefits of salvation. Helping to bring these influences into closer alignment with the Reformed tradition's understandings of God, humanity, Christ, sin, and revelation were the Mediating Theologians (Dorner, Rothe, Ullmann, Müller).

Evans then turns to Nevin's theology in which he finds, not surprisingly, a "vigorous methodological tendency toward unity and integration rather than disjunction, toward the *a priori* and ideal over against the *a posteriori* and empirical, and toward the general over the particular" (157). Inspired by Calvin, Nevin rejects the "moral union" and "federal union" understandings of union with Christ. Although true as far as they go, they are not adequately inward, deep or real. Nevin asserts the believer's union with Christ's incarnate humanity through faith and the Holy Spirit. He presents Christ as the second Adam, placing great importance on his generic humanity and the Church as the continuation of the incarnation.

Evans carefully describes what he sees as the strengths and difficulties of Nevin's articulation of union with Christ as the foundation for all aspects of salvation. Sanctification in Christ becomes necessary to full salvation. Forensic justification is often subordinated to realistic justification and subjective awareness of forgiveness in Christ. Again not surprisingly, he finds that "Nevin thinks in terms of an ongoing economy of faith, moving to the rhythm of the sacraments and the means of grace, rather than an *ordo salutis* in the technical sense" (175). Nevin's treatment of the eucharist is well-known. Here Evans notes that Nevin's stress on the mediate union with the Word provided in the sacraments "leads to a marked deemphasis of the written and preached Word as a means of grace" (177). In the eucharist, spatial and temporal constraints are overcome, so that the union of the believer with Christ's humanity becomes a dynamic matter of activity and power.

Evans concludes by finding that Nevin's theology was ultimately unsatisfying, but played a critical role in moving forward Reformed theological development. "Despite its depth at certain points, Nevin's creative recasting of the sacramental Calvin in the language of nineteenth-century German organicism and idealism was not an umitigated success from the standpoint of Reformational thought. While sharing Calvin's intuition that the forensic dimension of salvation is tied to union with the humanity of Christ, Nevin also failed (as did Calvin) to establish sufficiently the connection between Christ's person and the forensic benefits accruing from Christ's work. Instead, Nevin recasts soteriological imputation as mediate, that is, as grounded in the believer's participation in a new and renovated moral state. Here a critical Reformation insight – the synthetic justification of the sinner—is subverted. Nevertheless, Nevin's trenchant criticisms of federal orthodoxy helped to provoke further soteriolgical reflection and development on the part of federal thinkers" (183).

Evans has Calvinist and Mercersburg values at heart. Evans' final chapter serves as a summary of the book and articulates his hope of encouraging further development in Reformed soteriology, using the building blocks of its history. He calls for a "spiritual and eschatological realism" that uses union with Christ as its starting point, draws on Christ as the second Adam, and focuses on Christ's resurrected humanity as "spiritually accessible and life-giving." Here he is drawn to the work of R.B. Gaffin and T.F. Torrance. He abandons the *ordo salutis* because historically this theological schema had the effect of severing meaningful connection between justification and the life of faith. Rather Evans believes that a truly "evangelical, catholic, and Reformed" theology based on union with Christ will move away from an extrinsic and legal soteriology, undergird an understanding of the life of faith as an ongoing pilgrimage, stress the role of the church in soteriology, renew worship traditions, and provide a solid basis for Christian activity in the world.

While quite valuable, substantial and ultimately hopeful, this is not an "easy read." Its theological discussions assume a familiarity with such distinctions as mediate and immediate imputation, extrinsic and synthetic justification, harmatological and

soteriological solidarity, etc. At the same time, there is significant room in the church today to cultivate a deeper understanding of union with Christ as foundational to our spiritual life together. *Imputation and Impartation* will provide the thoughtful Reformed pastor/theologian with an analysis of theological trajectories which shape the present and resources from within the tradition to cultivate for the future.

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