

The Doctrine of Sanctification in the Lutheran Tradition

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As a result of Martin Luther's insistence on the "three solas," *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, Christianity underwent a radical change.¹ He led challenges to the theology of the church ranging from indulgences and the power of the pope, to clerical celibacy and justification. This also had a necessary and tremendous effect on the understanding of sanctification. When justification is given purely by the grace of God, with no effort, contribution, or participation on the part of the sinner, plenty of questions about the life of faith are sure to arise. As a result, it is not surprising that there has been plenty of confusion as well as criticism directed at Luther and his theological heirs. From the sixteenth century until today, there have been those who insisted that Luther's theology leads to libertinism, moral apathy, and quietism, even while others rejoiced in the new understanding of the freedom of a Christian. Luther's view of sanctification remains a tricky and controversial matter.

To make matters worse, it is convincingly argued that Lutherans tend to "shout justification, but whisper sanctification."² To a certain extent, this concern is warranted. However, understanding why this has been the case, along with the theology of sanctification that Luther taught, provide us with the insights we need to understand the remarkable and even systematic theology of Luther and Lutheranism.

In order to gain a more complete picture of the theology and place of sanctification in the Lutheran tradition, we will begin with Luther himself. From there we will consider the history of Lutheranism, from the 16th century until today, as its adherents struggled to address the challenging theological and practical questions of how the Christian life should be taught and encouraged.

Sanctification in Luther's Theology

Luther was not a systematic theologian, yet there were certain central unifying concerns that tied his theology together. Chief among these was the pastoral concern for those seeking secure refuge in the arms of a loving God. Luther's own struggles to find such solace, after years of working to merit God's grace, had an immeasurable effect on himself and his theology. Once discovered, in the midst of his famous "Tower Experience," his life was dedicated to sharing what he regarded as the unadulterated "good news" which the Church had lost sight of and corrupted.

Luther's radical emphasis on grace, where sinners are redeemed purely on the basis of what God does, shook the Christian world at its foundation. Corrupt human beings do nothing to merit God's grace, prepare themselves to receive it, or even consent to it. Justification takes place as if we are as passive as "a piece of material; I do not do anything."³ From that moment

¹ While the three principles of scripture alone, faith alone, and grace alone are present throughout Luther's writings, presenting them as a triad was a twentieth century invention.

² Carter Lindberg, "Do Lutherans Shout Justification but Whisper Sanctification," *Lutheran Quarterly* XIII, (1999), 1-20.

on, works – good and bad – have nothing to do with salvation.⁴ For Luther, this understanding of the gospel meant that no believer could ever despair. There is no fear of having done too little. While honest assessment of oneself still finds a corrupt human nature, that is something which God has now overcome, not something that you or I must struggle to correct. The effect is true liberation from fear, anxiety, and bondage to any demands that require one to reach a certain moral ideal.

Sanctification, then, has nothing to do directly with the salvation of the sinner. That is, sanctification does not contribute anything to one's redemption. There is no requirement for the individual to express her faith in love toward her neighbor in order to complete or ensure her redemption. Good works do not maintain faith, as if the believer must keep working at holiness in order to stay in the good graces of God. Contrary to Andreas Osiander (1498-1552), the justified sinner, who has received Christ and the Holy Spirit, does not then earn salvation because of the presence and work of God in the believer. Sanctification happens. It is not the cause of anything related to salvation.

For Luther, sanctification is not a choice or action of the redeemed sinner, but a natural and necessary result of one's justification. "Where there is a genuine faith, there good works will certainly follow, too."⁵ As heat must proceed from fire, so sanctification happens in the life of the believer. The justified sinner will necessarily put to death the Old Adam and begin to be transformed. Moreover, this is not driven by the law, but by love and gratitude toward God. Luther wrote in his *Treatise on Good Works*, "We may see this in an everyday example. When a husband and wife really love one another, have pleasure in each other, and thoroughly believe in their love, who teaches them how they are to behave one to another, what they are to do or not to do, say or not to say, what they are to think." They will automatically do what makes the other happy.

This authentic transformation toward holiness, moreover, is only possible for those who have been justified. It is qualitatively different than the civil righteousness we see around us, carried out by the nice and pleasant children of this world. Luther knew that fallen human beings can be agreeable, kind, and helpful toward each other. However, behaving well is not what is truly God-pleasing. Only those who have been forgiven of their sins, released from any threat of punishment, and can therefore respond with gratitude, experience a genuine sanctification.

One of the keys to understanding the Christian life for Luther is in his teaching of *simul iustus et peccator*. A Christian believer is at the same time saint and sinner. While this principle is familiar to many students of Luther, it is often misunderstood. Luther was not claiming that Christians are part sinner and part saint, as if they were slowly shedding their corruption and becoming holier day by day. Rather, as Alister McGrath explains, the Christian is "*extrinsically righteous and intrinsically sinful*."⁶ The believer is not in the middle of a process, where the sinful part decreases while saintliness increases. It is here where Luther breaks from Augustine; there is no Platonic dualism in the person of virtuous spirit and corrupt flesh, where the former becomes stronger over time.

³ *D. Martin Luthers Werke*, Kritische Gesamtausgabe (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883 - 1993), 39¹, 447.

⁴ The only act that can affect their salvation is the rejection of faith itself, which is indeed possible. Luther did not accept the idea of the perseverance of the saints.

⁵ *Luther's Works (LW)*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut Lehmann, 55 vols. (Philadelphia and St. Louis: Fortress and Concordia, 1995-1986), 21:150.

⁶ Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 209.

To the contrary, a Christian is entirely a sinner and entirely a saint simultaneously, not a mixture of the two. Wilfred Joest explains this quite clearly:

The *simul* is not the equilibrium of two mutually limiting partial aspects but the battleground of two mutually exclusive totalities. It is not the case that a no-longer-entirely sinner and a not-yet-completely righteous one can be pasted together in a psychologically conceivable mixture; it is rather that real and complete righteousness stands over against real and total sin.... The Christian is not half free and half bound, but slave and free at once, not half saint, but sinner and saint at once, not half alive, but dead and alive at once, not a mixture but a gaping opposition of antithesis.⁷

This paradox carries significant implications for the Lutheran doctrine of sanctification. The believer should not, and indeed cannot, look to himself for evidence of righteousness. He remains a complete and total sinner his whole life long. All of his actions remain essentially corrupted by sin. “Every good work of the saints while pilgrims in this world is sin.”⁸ However, this is a cause of joy, freedom, and (ironically) genuine holiness. When there is no reason to examine oneself for evidence of righteousness, there can be no fear or anxiety of not measuring up. The believer escapes the trap of being curved in on himself, focused on his own acts and their perceived merit. When God is trusted completely, and there is nothing the believer can add, here we find true liberation. Such liberation leads to gratitude. This gratitude expresses itself in love toward all humanity – not with any concern for merit, but guided simply by love.

Of course, at the same time that Luther believed that Christians remain completely sinful for their whole lives, sanctification is a real thing. The redeemed do become holier as they grow in their faith. Internal righteousness is a “fruit and consequence”⁹ of faith in God’s declaration of external righteousness. Here we find yet another of Luther’s paradoxes. One is always and entirely a sinner, yet one fights against and wins victories over sin. The old Adam is slowly put to death and the new Adam is manifested in this lifetime. In attempting to make sense of this paradox, Luther would simply tell the believer that she should only look to Christ. In the midst of sin and the Law’s accusations, look to Christ. Throughout the struggle to overcome temptation, look to Christ. During anxieties about one’s value as a human being, look to Christ. As evening darkens, and questions of eternal security are raised, look to Christ. Never look to oneself.

There is certainly a danger with this theology. It can easily lead to a kind of quietism, where the believer sits and waits for God’s spirit to slowly do the work. Since sanctification is essentially the work of God, and my efforts merit nothing, I will simply allow God to slowly transform me, or so this reasoning goes. However, while Luther taught that the individual is completely passive in his justification, he most certainly cooperates in his sanctification. Whereas our love of others “is weak in our flesh... we must struggle daily against the flesh with the help of the Spirit.”¹⁰ That effort does not merit anything, but it is indeed an essential part of the life of faith. In *The Freedom of a Christian*, Luther explains the task for the redeemed:

⁷ Wilfred Joest, *Gesetz und Freiheit* 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 58f. As quoted in Gerhard O. Forde, *A More Radical Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), 120f.

⁸ LW 32:159.

⁹ LW 31:300.

¹⁰ LW 54:234.

Here the works begin; here a man cannot enjoy leisure; here he must indeed take care to discipline his body by fastings, watchings, labors, and other reasonable discipline and to subject it to the Spirit so that it will obey and conform to the inner man and faith and not revolt against faith and hinder the inner man, as it is the nature of the body to do if it is not held in check. The inner man, who by faith is created in the image of God, is both joyful and happy because of Christ in whom so many benefits are conferred upon him; and therefore it is his one occupation to serve God joyfully and without thought of gain, in love that is not constrained.¹¹

It should be noted here that the work of the believer is not focused on external acts of doing good works for others, but on the internal labor of growing in faith. The believer, again, is oriented toward God. Here is where the work takes places. Acts of charity toward the neighbor will then follow. Luther instructs Christians to “think of nothing more than doing to your neighbor as Christ has done to you, and let all your works with your entire life be directed to your neighbor.”¹² Simon Peura summarizes this well, “When Christians love God with the whole heart, they also love what God wills and expects from them.”¹³ However, it is doubtful Luther believed Christians ever love God with their “*whole heart*.”

One other very important aspect of Luther’s understanding of justification and sanctification can come as a surprise: The two are not truly two. God does not first engage in a justifying act and then proceed to a sanctifying act. There is only a single divine act. In order to understand and communicate about theology more clearly, we speak separately of justification, grace, mercy, forgiveness, faith, salvation, the gift of the Spirit, the presence of Christ, redemption, and sanctification. However, these are not separate and distinct acts of God. This is all God’s one work in the redeemed. We divide it into parts to make sense of what is actually an essential whole.

The believer, then, does not follow different paths in order to receive forgiveness, strengthen faith, draw close to God, find peace, and be sanctified. The Christian does not work to achieve these things at all, but only returns to the Word of God. Turning to the Word means a *repetition* of hearing God’s accusing law, repenting of one’s sins, hearing the promise of forgiveness, believing that one is thereby adopted into the family of God, experiencing joy, peace, and gratitude, knowing the love of God, and being transformed in one’s actions. Insofar as this is all the single saving act of God, the believer repeats all of these for her whole life long.

McGrath explains, “For Luther, man may thus only progress in the spiritual life by continually returning to Christ *semper a novo incipere* [always beginning anew]. Thus Luther interprets *semper iustificandus* as ‘ever to be justified anew.’”¹⁴ The law always accuses, repentance continues throughout one’s life, the announcement of forgiveness is heard ever anew, and so sanctification produced by love and gratitude is likewise always beginning.

Given that life is not a progression of static stages, but a constant tossing to and fro in the waves of a sinful world, the lifetime of new beginnings makes sense. Luther himself experienced a great deal of doubt, struggle, chaos, and *Anfechtung* throughout his life. He knew

¹¹ LW 31:358f.

¹² D. Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883 – 1993), 10¹, 2, 168.

¹³ Simon Peura, “What God Gives, Man Receives: Luther on Salvation,” in *Union With Christ*, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 94.

¹⁴ McGrath, 200. McGrath points out that this is in contrast to Augustine, who understands this principle as “ever to be made more and more righteous.”

better than most that the narrow path is not a smooth escalator ride. Paul Tillich discussed Luther's perception and experience with the Christian life. "It was seen instead as an up-and-down of ecstasy and anxiety, of being grasped by *agape* and being thrown back into estrangement and ambiguity. This oscillation between up and down was experienced radically by Luther himself, in the change between movements of courage and joy and moments of demonic attacks, as he interpreted his states of doubt and profound despair."¹⁵

In Luther's theology, we can pick out sanctification and discuss it in isolation from other areas of doctrine. This can be helpful. However, to see a qualitative distinction between justification and sanctification, in time or intention, is to misunderstand Luther.

Sanctification in Lutheranism

The theological relationship between Martin Luther and five centuries of Lutherans has remained quite strong, especially when discussing central doctrines like justification. As discussed above, sanctification cannot be separated from justification, and so one finds relatively little conscious departure from Luther's doctrine of sanctification among Lutherans. That is not to say, however, that there has been universal agreement on the subject within Lutheranism. Emphases have shifted and philosophical influences have had effects, and so we do find variety and debate within the Lutheran tradition regarding how sanctification should be understood.

Lutheran Orthodoxy

Lutheranism's first and primary systematic theologian, Philipp Melancthon (1497-1560), sought to remain faithful to the theology of his mentor. In large part he did, systematizing the theology of Lutheranism in a way that Luther knew he could not, and earning tremendous praise from Luther himself in the process. Nevertheless, not every Lutheran has agreed with Melancthon's theology, or seen his work as an unqualified success.

Melancthon introduced a "third use of the law" which has been contested ever since.¹⁶ His concern was that believers should be more concerned with their sanctification, reading the scriptures in order to discover how God wants them to act. Throughout his career, Melancthon was concerned about those who were abusing the freedom of the gospel, taking advantage of the free gift of salvation, and becoming apathetic or libertine with regard to their sanctification. His emphasis on human cooperation with grace was intended as an antidote to this, but led many of his Lutheran contemporaries to accuse him of violating Luther's understanding of salvation through faith alone.

Nevertheless, despite the protests of many through the sixteenth century, the third use of the law was established in the Lutheran Confessions. The Formula of Concord states:

¹⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 230.

¹⁶ Luther's first use of the law was as a curb on human impulses in order to make it possible to have a civil society. His second use was the primary use of the law; this "theological use" functions as a mirror so that the individual sees himself for what he truly is, a sinner in need of God's grace. Melancthon's third use of the law was moral instruction for the redeemed, so they would know how God desires for them to live. It is still contested whether or not Luther believed this third use to be appropriate. Cf. Jeffrey K. Mann, *Shall We Sin?* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), 17-21, 53-56.

For the explanation and final settlement of this dissent we unanimously believe, teach, and confess that although the truly believing and truly converted to God and justified Christians are liberated and made free from the curse of the Law, yet they should daily exercise themselves in the Law of the Lord, as it is written, Ps. 1:2;119:1: Blessed is the man whose delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in His Law doth he meditate day and night. For the Law is a mirror in which the will of God, and what pleases Him, are exactly portrayed, and which should [therefore] be constantly held up to the believers and be diligently urged upon them without ceasing.¹⁷

The other significant influence that Melancthon had on the Lutheran understanding of sanctification came through his emphasis on forensic justification. Luther used various images and language to discuss how one is made right with God, just as one finds considerable variety on this subject in the history of the Church. Melancthon, on the other hand, narrowed the discussion of justification to forensic justification; one is legally declared righteous by God. This is then reflected through the Lutheran Confessions and becomes the singular standard for discussing this doctrine.

There is considerable disagreement about whether this was a departure from Luther or merely codifying his theology. Nevertheless, as we will see, the effect on sanctification could be significant. When the emphasis on justification is God's declaration of the righteousness of the sinner, as opposed to the indwelling of Christ and/or the Spirit in the redeemed, the dangers of moral apathy, quietism, or libertinism may be elevated.

Pietism

While there were important precursors to the Pietist movement, like Johann Arndt (1555-1621), it was Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) who is generally regarded as the father of this movement. Pietism on the European continent, along with Puritanism in England, emphasized the importance of personal piety, religious experience, and the study of the Scriptures for personal edification. The Pietists wanted to make *bekennende Christen* into *tätige Christen* (confessing Christians into active Christians). The Christian faith should not be simply a matter for the head, but for the heart. In this, they echoed Luther's insistence that the gospel must be the gospel *pro me* (for me) if it is to be a saving Word. As part and parcel of this emphasis on experience, there was a renewed focus on the life of faith, not least sanctification.

Spener and other early Lutheran Pietists did not see themselves as anything less than loyal and orthodox followers of Luther. In fact, Spener's most influential work, *Pia Desideria*, constantly harkens back to Luther as the touchstone for his theology and concerns about libertinism in the Church. In many ways, Spener and others, like August Hermann Francke (1663-1727), wanted to be good Lutherans who simply addressed the life of faith sufficiently. Much of this was done through preaching the third use of the law. This, as we have seen, was already a contentious point within Lutheran theology. However, with the Pietists' exceedingly strong emphasis on moral virtue in one's life, problems were bound to arise.

¹⁷ Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, VI, 4. On the subject of the third use of the law in Lutheranism, cf. Edward A. Engelbrecht, *Friends of the Law*, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2011).

The Orthodox party was concerned that such an emphasis on human activity would lead to arrogance on the part of the Pietists, and they had good reason to believe so. At times, members of Spener's *collegia pietatis* (conventicle or Bible-study groups) became a bit too confident in their greater holiness. People like Johann Jakob Schütz (1640-1690), a German lawyer, hymn-writer, and member of Spener's original *Collegium*, did not even want to receive communion alongside the "unworthy" parishioners who were not part of the pious elite. As the Orthodox believed and Luther had warned, looking to one's own actions, rather than Christ, is the root of heresy and blasphemy.

At the same time, the Pietists believed that the Orthodox Lutherans had created their own works-righteousness on the basis of correct doctrine. The latter had placed so much emphasis on orthodox theology, that salvation was becoming based on one's intellectual grasp of correct doctrine. Here again, the concern arose that believers were looking to their own achievements rather than to the author of the salvation.

Pietism continued to develop, and in some cases moved in more radical directions. Eventually, for some the life of faith became of paramount importance, and the place of doctrine receded far into the background. It reached so far that one's actual beliefs were irrelevant compared to the experience of being sanctified.

The battle between Pietist and Orthodox Lutherans did not end with a clear winner, as the common enemy of the Enlightenment came to be seen as a greater threat to the Faith than one another. What this conflict did allow, however, was for Lutherans to challenge the theological implications of over-emphasizing orthodoxy or orthopraxy. There was extremism, but as iron sharpens iron, the result in many cases was a more mature understanding of sanctification and the Christian life.

The Enlightenment and its Effects

The period of the Enlightenment had a phenomenal effect on Protestant Christianity throughout Europe and North America. Traditional foundations for belief were vigorously challenged and attacked, and many metaphysical assumptions within Christianity were confronted and discarded. While it is difficult to overstate the effect on Western Protestantism, central doctrines of justification and sanctification were not uprooted. The understanding of the individual sinner's relation to the divine experienced a shift, albeit one which was still rooted in the 16th century.

The Enlightenment challenged many Christian assumptions about the nature of reality. Is the human "soul" really a thing outside of the physical body? Can we know anything about the nature of God and how He might interact with the physical world? Is the Spirit of God an entity that we can even describe, let alone how He physically/metaphysically/mystically interacts with an individual human being? These challenges, along with newfound epistemological humility, led many Christians to avoid claims about the spiritual connection between God and the believer. If our perception cannot ever reach what Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) called the "thing in itself," but only a limited understanding of reality, then we need to be more circumspect in our theology. We must acknowledge that our minds cannot grasp the eternal and boundless nature of God. However, we can make meaningful statements about the relationship between things. Ontological claims about the divine or the human soul are dubious. Relationality, on the other hand, can still be spoken of in a meaningful way.

As a result, the doctrine of sanctification continued to be spoken of in Lutheran circles primarily in relation to forensic justification. A relationship between the Creator and the sinful human being is declared by God and received through faith. Sanctification is, then, a necessary and natural response to the love of God. The response of gratitude to this new relationship is expressed – as God desires and commands – in love of one’s neighbor. There is no need to discuss or describe the presence of Christ or indwelling of the Spirit in some physical way. Recognizing the relationship suffices.

We find this approach to justification and sanctification extending into the early 20th century and the Luther Renaissance. However, Lutheran theology in the late 20th century experienced a significant challenge to this perspective from a rising Finnish interpretation of Luther’s theology, led by Tuomo Mannermaa (1937-2015). In a nutshell, it challenged the narrow understanding of forensic justification, and its implications for sanctification, that had begun with Melancthon and extended through Kant up to the twentieth century. The believer does not simply stand in a new relation with God, but is transformed by the very presence of Christ. This “union with Christ” leads to the *theosis*, or deification, of the believer.

Rather than a narrowly conceived forensic relationship between God and the redeemed sinner, there is a resurrected understanding of God’s true presence and deification of the Christian. Mannermaa points to Luther himself, who wrote, “That is how, as I have said often enough, faith makes us lords; through faith we even become gods and partake of the divine nature and name.”¹⁸ For Mannermaa and the Finns, this is a rediscovery of a broader understanding of justification and sanctification that is actually present in Luther. It was Melancthon, Lutheran Orthodoxy, and the influence of Kant that had constricted the fuller language and theology of Luther.

Around the same time, Charismatic Lutherans, paralleling Pentecostals and Charismatics in other denominations, were emphasizing the gifts of the Spirit. The Christian life of sanctification should be lived, and identified, in gifts of prophecy, healing, and speaking in tongues. The cold intellectual certainty of salvation, which they perceived in the institutional church, did not encourage the sanctifying life for believers that God had intended.

While there does not appear to be any direct connection between the theology of the Finns’ “union with Christ” and the Charismatics’ theology of “gifts of the Spirit,” it is reasonable to assume that both represented pushback to a Church that was narrowly concerned with theology, tradition, and the life of the mind.¹⁹ As we saw with the Pietists centuries before, when the Christian life becomes too cerebral, focused on the “head” rather than the “heart,” a reactionary movement is likely to develop.

Political Theologies

Beginning in the latter half of the twentieth century, political theologies developed in various Christian denominations. Picking up Pietism’s emphasis on orthopraxy over orthodoxy, the Social Gospel Movement in the United States, and Latin American Liberation Theology, more liberal Lutheran traditions embraced a strong political message and agenda as an expression of their faith.

¹⁸ As in Tuomo Mannermaa, *Union with Christ*, 13.

¹⁹ In the case of the Finns, a significant motivator was also their spirit of Ecumenism. This, too, can be seen as a reaction against orthodoxy in favor of an enlivening faith that draws together all believers.

As the principles of Latin American Liberation Theology began to disseminate around the world,²⁰ various liberation theologies appeared: Feminist, Womanist, *Mujerista*, Black, Palestinian, *Minjung* (Korea), Theology of Struggle (The Philippines). Whereas most Lutheran congregations and communities are white, they were not directly involved in most of these liberative movements, although they wanted to be supportive of them. Political theologies that advocated for women and homosexuals, along with broader left-wing political agendas relating to nuclear disarmament and environmental causes, were chiefly where many Lutherans felt called to express their love and faith in the world.

This is not the first time that a significant subset of Lutherans decided to “shout” sanctification, in conscious departure from perceived Lutheran moral apathy. However, unlike Pietism, these political theologies teach that the Christian life is about creating systemic political change to help “the least of these,” rather than a focus on cultivating personal piety. Liberating the oppressed became the mandate, rather than overcoming sin one’s own life. Whether or not this expresses a truly Lutheran theology, it is notable in its appeal for Christ to transform culture.²¹

Conclusion

As Lutheranism has changed over the past five hundred years, feeling and responding to the effects of Pietism, the Enlightenment, and Postmodernism, the understanding of the sanctified life has shifted considerably. Rather than a single trajectory, there have been various movements emphasizing different elements in Luther’s essential theology of sanctification. Within these, there is arguably a pendulum swinging back and forth between an emphasis on justification or sanctification.

Despite these significant differences, Lutheran theology permits more movement within its doctrinal parameters than one might expect. Luther’s theology of justification, which has remained an essential touchstone for Lutherans, demands a specific theology of sanctification: Our works avail nothing; they are merely our response of gratitude to the grace of God. How believers should emphasize and live out this response has varied considerably.

Questions and challenges remain about how the faithful should understand and express their justification and sanctification. Nevertheless, the changing face of Lutherans’ understanding of sanctification has largely existed within the theological parameters of justification by grace alone through faith alone. Despite the significant differences in their understanding of piety, metaphysics, and politics, this has allowed them to remain a singular – if fractured – denomination.

²⁰ Or, perhaps we should say, “reflect back,” since this theological movement was created through the influence of western European ideas.

²¹ Cf. H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 1951.