the Concordia Lutheran

"The Scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35.

"Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path" Ps. 119:105.

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Thy Word

is a Lamp...,

and a Light...!

-- Ps. 119:105

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

To set forth in simple and plain language the pure doctrine of God's Word as taught by the true Lutheran Church in full accordance with the **Book of Concord of 1580** and the **Brief Statement of 1932.**

To show, **on the basis of Scripture,** what true Christians are to believe and how, out of love for their Savior Jesus Christ, they are to lead godly lives.

To furnish aids for Bible study and articles for Scriptural devotion and meditation.

To demonstrate, by our Scriptural stand, that our **Concordia Lutheran Conference** is not a sect or a false church, but that the congregations which form it confess, teach, and practice the Word of God in its full truth and purity and use the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. All who do this are the true visible Church on earth.

To seek out all who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice, and to urge the mutual public acknowledgement of such God-given unity. Thus we shall be able thereafter to practice a God-pleasing fellowship with them.

To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

To set forth pertinent historical information which has a bearing upon the Church and to expose modern philosophical thought and the so-called scientific theories which contradict the Word of God.

To expose particularly the false teaching and practice of the various so-called "Lutheran" church bodies by comparing their teachings and practices with what is plainly recorded in the Word of God, in the Lutheran Confessions, and in the old orthodox Lutheran writings.

To expose false teaching and practice wherever it makes its appearance and to keep abreast of the current happenings in the church and among the nations as signs of the times.

To be truthful and factual in our reporting and freely to correct any misinformation of which we are not aware and which has been called to our attention. Also to clarify any information or statement of doctrine or practice which may be unclear to our readers or which may create a wrong impression.

The President's Column

Because justification or the forgiveness of sins is the greatest blessing for anyone and everyone in this world, **what the Bible teaches about the forgiveness of sins** by God's grace alone for Christ's sake or the **Doctrine of Justification** cannot help but be the chief teaching of the Bible or the **Chief Doctrine of the Christian Religion**. It is **not**, however, recognized as such by the great majority of so-called Christian denominations, pastors, or theologians.

Some will say that **the Doctrine of God** in His supreme power and majesty **is the chief teaching of the Bible**. Such denominations, or individual pastors and theologians, follow Calvin, with his teaching of a limited atonement and denial of God's universal will of grace, and make the Lord God responsible for everything from the salvation of some to the damnation of many. It should be obvious that it is possible for a person to believe everything that the Bible tells us about God's supreme power and majesty and still **not** find the way of salvation.

Some denominations, or individual pastors and theologians, **emphasize charismatic gifts** (such as speaking in tongues, performing miracles of healing, feeling the Holy Ghost's indwelling, etc.) **to the exclusion or minimizing of other plain teachings of the Bible.** They claim that you have not really received the Holy Ghost and that you are not really saved unless you are able to demonstrate the presence of the Holy Ghost in your heart by such charismatic performances. This, of course, is nowhere stated in the Bible. It is obvious that people who practice such charismatic demonstrations revel in focusing the spotlight upon themselves so that they become important in the eyes of others--and as they increase, Christ decreases! The **physical** needs of people are stressed over and above their spiritual needs--the greatest of which spiritual need for all mankind **is** the forgiveness of sins.

Some denominations, or individual pastors and theologians, make their man-developed idea of the **apostolic succession** of their pastors, bishops, archbishops, etc., **outshine every doctrine of Scripture** so that the people are led to believe that they could not go to heaven without the service of such Holy orders. The **emphasis** is therefore placed on the indelible character of the pastoral office, outward ceremonies, and liturgical formality with its constant changing of vestments, genuflecting before the altar, the use of holy water and incense, the lighting of candles before statues, and the like. Here too the Doctrine of Justification is relegated to the background.

Some denominations, or individual pastors and theologians, put **so much emphasis on love**, even the love of God in Christ, that they **spurn** original sin as the total depravity of all mankind since the fall of Adam and **diminish** the wickedness of sin and its well-deserved punishment in hell. Why, then, should the **forgiveness of sins** be the chief doctrine of Scripture? Do they not realize that, in the Bible, God's love in Christ Jesus is inseparably joined with the forgiveness of sins and that, therefore, God's love in Christ Jesus cannot be fully appreciated unless a person realizes the enormity of his sins?

In your conversation with people of other denominations, you may perhaps be enabled better to point them in the proper direction if you were to find out how they would answer **"What is the Chief Doctrine of the Bible?"** and **"Why?"** Even many who call themselves Lutherans would hesitate to reply, "The Doctrine of Justification or The Forgiveness of Sins," simply because there is such extreme laxity in the proper distinction between Law and Gospel in external Christendom today and also among most of those who call themselves Lutherans. **Without understanding** that there is **not** one good thing in us by nature, and that we daily sin much against our just and holy God in our thoughts, desires, words, and actions--because of which we deserve the everlasting pains and torments of hell--**there can be no inclination** to regard the Doctrine of Justification or the Forgiveness of Sins, by God's grace alone for Christ's sake, as the Chief Doctrine of the Bible. The **more** we recognize ourselves as we really are in the Light of God's Holy Law, namely, that each one of us is, by nature, lost and condemned, ruined in body and soul, **the more precious** will our Savior be to us and

the deeper and more appreciative will be our understanding of our Savior's bitter suffering and death on the accursed tree of the cross!

"Sweet the moment, rich in blessing,
Which before the Cross we spend,
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinners' dying Friend."

--TLH 154:1

Your servant in Christ,

Rev. Paul R. Bloedel

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From Our Editor

In this issue of "The Concordia Lutheran," we are presenting two essays written by lay persons in our congregations. One essay is written by an outstanding, college-bound high school senior, and the other by one who has an earned PhD in mathematics. In accord with our policy, both essays have been submitted through the pastors of the respective laymen.

There are two purposes for occasionally including materials written by laymen. First our readers are provided the opportunity to see concrete evidence of growth in grace and knowledge in our congregations. Secondly, we see that by God's grace Christians who do not hold the pastoral office or a teaching position can be nevertheless in their own right theologians who are God-given blessings to any congregation.

By God's grace, we trust that you will be instructed and edified by these two essays.

E.R.S.

NOTE: The following article was submitted for a high school chemistry class by a student who is a member of my congregation. After reading it to several other pastors in our Conference and, at their urging, I present it as an example of how our young people can write a paper stating the facts which are required of them from their "humanistic" and "evolutionistic" teachers but still hold fast to and give confession of their beliefs as a Christian. It is not submitted as an ideal example, but only as an example of how this can be done.

M.W.D.

Creationism vs. Evolutionism

People for centuries have wondered where we came from, how life started, and who or what started it. Despite the fact that man knows by nature that there is a God from the existence of the world and the testimony of his conscience, nevertheless, according to his perverse and sinful reason, he has tried to account for the existence of the universe by leaving out God. He has failed miserably. Despite all his efforts to the contrary, there remains only one viable explanation for the existence of the world--its creation by God. Nevertheless, there remain two main schools of thought regarding the origins of the universe today, Creationism and Evolutionism. While many on both sides of this question claim that they are "scientific" in their approach, the truth is that both creationism and evolution can be accepted only as articles of faith, and if any "scientific theory" is supported by fact, it is not evolution, but creationism. In this paper I hope to show this to you, the reader.

I.
CREATIONISM

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Gen. 1:1, KJV. These words, the first words of the Bible, are the accepted truth for the three major religions in the world, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. It is a tenet which asserts that a Supreme Being, a higher power which has always existed (or at least existed before the creation of the universe), created all things out of nothing. This particular concept is even older than the Bible itself, however. It is one that is shared in one form or another by many other cultures including the American Indians, the Chinese, the Egyptians, and even many primitive pagan religions. While the Judeo-Christian Bible is the Source of the words most commonly used today to explain the belief that God created all things, including life itself, the essential facts of creationism are found in records which pre-date the Bible. (Note: The Bible was written over a sixteen hundred year period, from about 1500 B.C. to 100 A.D.) It is recorded in one form or another in almost every early civilization's records, including the Egyptians and the Chinese. All these records share the same basic idea, that a living Being, some great all-powerful Spirit created all matter, yes, created the universe and everything in it--indeed, created life itself where once there was no life.

Orthodox theologians of all major religious groups interpret the Biblical account literally. They hold that creation happened exactly the way the Bible relates it, namely, that the universe and all that is in it was created in six 24 hour days (the hexameron). The assertion of the six 24 hour periods called days is based upon the repeated wording found in the Bible, ***"And the evening and the morning were the first...the second...the third day,"*** etc. (Gen. 1:5,8,13.19,23.31.). According to the common thread that runs through all creationism records, the Bible, the writings of the Medes and Persians, the written records of the Egyptians and Chinese, even American Indian lore, the order of creation was more or less on the following basis:

DAY 1: Elemental light;

DAY 2: The firmament, that is, the heavens themselves which, according to the Scriptures, divided the waters from below from the waters above;

DAY 3: Dry land and the seas, rivers and oceans, grasses, trees and all other plant life;

DAY 4: The sun, the moon, stars and planets in the universe;

DAY 5: Birds and the fish and animals in the seas, oceans, rivers, lakes, etc.

DAY 6: All land animals; and finally, God created man, the crown of His creating work.

Obviously, creationism is a religious tenet, a belief held to with only the record of religious writings to back up those beliefs. It is not scientific in that there is no empirical data to support the assertions. Just as obviously, there is no way in which empirical data can be gathered so that the "theory" of creationism can be proved, for the creative process cannot be replicated nor affirmed simply because it is a unique, one-time event. For this reason, many "modern" theologians today, in the name of "scientific honesty," have abandoned creationism because they claim it is not good science.

This does not mean, however, that creationism can be discarded as a valid theory of how the universe and life itself began. It is founded upon documents thousands of years old, and the old adage, that the source of legends is often found in truth, cannot be ignored. Though it must be held to by faith, it has just as sound or even a more sound basis for belief than does the faith of the evolutionist, as we shall see.

II.
EVOLUTIONISM

The other school of thought to explain life and the creation of the universe is called "evolutionism." Evolutionism basically must be divided into two parts: First, the explanation of how the universe was formed and, secondly, how life itself began. The most prevalent scientific thought today regarding the formation of the universe is the "Big Bang" theory, which asserts that matter gathered in space over countless eons of time and became so dense that it finally exploded. Out of that explosion galaxies, stars, solar systems, planets and all other matter in the universe was formed. The most prevalent theory of the "evolution of life" was formally set forth by Charles Darwin in the 19th Century. "The main tenets of evolutionism are belief in spontaneous

generation of life from the inorganic world and the evolution of so-called higher forms of life from so-called lower forms."[1] Darwinism "asserts that members of a given species in a given locality struggle for existence due to over-production and that only the fittest members of the species are able to survive. These most fit members pass on their favorable characteristics to their offspring, and new species arise by the passing on of the more favorable attributes to countless succeeding generations over innumerable ages."[2] Both of these theories of the evolution of the universe and life are no more than "religious beliefs," just as surely as the so-called assertions of the creationists. Indeed, there are so many scientific holes in these theories of evolution that it, too, can only be called an "article of faith." Any assertion to the contrary is bad science at the least and pure propaganda at its worst.

The first, and possibly the largest hole in the two theories of evolution mentioned, is one of the most basic of scientific laws, the Second Law of Thermodynamics. This law states that within an isolated system, order and complexity can only decrease with time, never increase. If this is true, then the "Big Bang" could not have produced the universe as we know it, since the explosion would have resulted in the mass of gasses and other matter into a less organized, not more organized state. If the evolutionists are right, the organized universe that we are able to observe is proof positive that the Second Law of Thermodynamics is not a "law" at all. Likewise, when this Law is applied to the creation of life, the possibility of a single living cell being created out of a mass of basic sugars and amino acids is nil.

Another gap in the evolutionary reasoning are the laws of probability. The human body is made up of trillions of cells, each with a specialized function. In fact, there are about 30 trillion cells of 200 different varieties, each variety with its own function and structure. Twelve billion of these cells make up the brain, these having 120 trillion different connections. All these were supposed to start with a single

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1 "The Atheism of Recent Times in the Light of God's Word," John Steinke, Ph.D.

2 ibid

cell, which in itself was a mistake? and through millions of other mistakes, created the other 30 trillion cells? H. J. Morowitz calculated the possibility of matter arranging itself into a single living bacterium, one of the simplest of living organisms, to be one chance in ten to the 340,000,000th power. Put in simpler terms, this constitutes one chance out of ten followed by 340,000,000 zeros.[3] Carl Sagan of Cornell University has calculated that the chances of life forming accidentally on earth are approximately 1 in 10 to the 2,000,000,000th power (that is 1 followed by 300 pages of zeros. It would require about 6,000 books of 300 pages each just to list all those zeros!).[4] A well-known British scientist, Sir Frederick Hoyle, came to the conclusion that "the probability of life forming by random, naturalistic processes was similar to the probability of a tornado sweeping through a junkyard and assembling the parts of a Boeing 747 airplane from the junk therein."[5] Another scientist, Sir Julian Huxley who had led the fight for evolution in the 1960's, at a symposium in 1981 said that a mutation producing the human species was such an improbability that it is a "number immensely greater than that of all the electrons and protons in the visible universe. That is a degree of our own inherent improbability--an improbability of the same order of magnitude as that of "a monkey with a typewriter producing the works of Shakespeare."[6]

Indeed, the individual cells of the human body, or of any living organism, are so complex that Hoyle, a microbiologist, says that the possibilities of it (evolution) being true are "so utterly minuscule" as to be absurd. Hoyle and most other microbiologists now realize that biomolecules are so enormously complex that "quite explicit instructions" were necessary for their assembly and that other means than "natural selection" were required for life's creation. In making his case, Hoyle arrays the findings of microbiology, mathematics, computer

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3 "Energy Flow in Biology, Harold J. Morowitz, p. 99

4 "The Origin of Life," "Christian News," January 21, 1985, p. 19

5 "From Paley to Darwin," "Christian News," June 25, 1984, p. 18

6 ibid.

technology and the fossil record against the Darwin theory, declaring it has been undercut by new knowledge. Thus, the chances of random chemical shufflings in some primordial soup producing the complex basic enzymes of life are only one to "10 to the 40,000th power."[7] In accepting a Nobel prize for his work in microbiology, Hoyle remarked that only "Carl Sagan and high school science teachers" still could hold to the theory of evolution.

III.
CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

The more work that science does in order to try to prove the "theory" of evolution, the more they undo the very theory they promote, and the more certain becomes the theory of creationism. The space program serves as a perfect example.

In 1987 at Green Belt, Maryland, NASA scientists were checking the position of the sun, moon and planets out in space as to where they would be in 100 years and 1000 years from now. It is important for the space experts to know this so that a satellite isn't sent up that will "bump" into something later on in one of its orbits. The orbits have to be laid out in terms of the life of the satellite, and where the planets will be, so that the whole program does not become bogged down. Thus, computer measurements were run back and forth over the centuries and, then, the computer came to a halt. The computer stopped and put up a red signal, so to speak, which meant that there was something wrong, either with the information fed into the computer or with the results as compared to the standards. They called the service department to check the computer out and they said that the computer was running perfectly. The head programmer asked what the problem was. "Well, we have found there is a day missing in space in elapsed time." The scientists scratched their heads and tore their hair. There was no answer. But one religious fellow on the team said that he remembered from his days in Sunday School that the Bible said that the sun ***"stood still."*** Of course, nobody believed him, but having nothing else to go on, they got out their trusty Bibles and read Joshua 10:8-14.

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7 ibid.

There they found the Lord saying to Joshua, ***"Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee."*** Joshua was concerned because he was surrounded by the enemy, and, if darkness fell, they would overpower him and his army. So Joshua asked the Lord to make the sun stand still! ***"The sun stood still and the moon stayed and hasted not to go down ABOUT a whole day."*** The scientists and computer experts had to admit that here was a possible answer to the missing day. They checked the computers going back into the time the book of Joshua was written and found it was close, but not close enough. The elapsed time that was missing back in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes--not a whole day. They read the Bible again and there it said ***"about a day."*** These little words in the Bible proved to be important, but the scientists were still in trouble because, if you cannot account for 40 minutes, you'll be in trouble 1000 years from now. Forty minutes had to be found, because it can be multiplied many times over in orbit. Well, once again this religious fellow also remembered that somewhere in the Bible it said that the sun actually moved backwards. Again, the scientists got out the Book and read these words in II Kings 20:9-11: ***"And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that He hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz."*** You see, Hezekiah, the king of Israel, was dying. But Hezekiah had asked the Lord to spare him for a time, and the sun moving backwards in its orbit was the sign he required that the Lord had answered his prayer. For theologians and everyday Christians, this is something just accepted, another fact, a miraculous fact to be sure, that the Bible teaches. For the scientists, however, it was not just **a** miracle, but a miracle of miracles. Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes! Twenty-three hours and 20 minutes in Joshua's time, plus 40 minutes during the reign of Hezekiah makes the missing 24 hours. And lo and behold, modern science accepted the answer that the Bible gave them regarding the missing 24 hours and they logged it in their book as being the

missing day in the universe.[8]

Thus, while there are gigantic scientific holes in the theory of evolution, the Source of creationism proves itself to be the answer to problems which the most modern scientists and equipment cannot answer. This being true, creationism is the only logical choice for the explanation of the origin of the universe and life itself. It completely overthrows evolution and its mechanistic view of creation.

I present this paper as a treatise on the question of the origin of the world in which we live. I do so as a student "scientist" and as a Christian. While the bias as a Christian certainly is present, for I accept the Bible as the divinely inspired Word of God, inerrant in every word and detail, the scientific facts now available to us make the entire theory of evolution untenable, unbelievable, and much more **UN**scientific than creationism ever was or ever will be!

Submitted by Aaron J. Dierking
through his Pastor.

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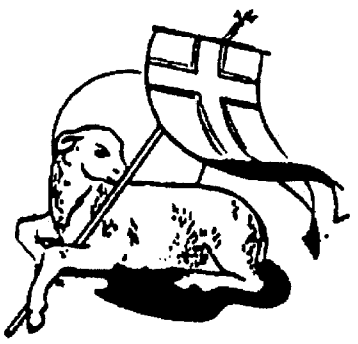
8 "ACRES U.S.A.," as quoted in Wilmar, MN daily paper

NOTE: The following article is an essay presented by our pre-seminary student in fulfillment of a class assignment.

E.R.S.

The Communication of Attributes in the Person of Christ



The doctrine of the Person of Christ has been controverted throughout the whole of the New Testament Era. The Arian and Nestorian controversies stand out as prime examples of the attacks on the Person and Nature of Christ. The resolutions of these controversies, e.g. the formulation of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, exemplify the manner in which the Church down through the ages has had to maintain the true doctrine of Scripture against heresy. In Christ the divine and the human nature are united in one Person, and consequently the Person of Christ shares both divine and human attributes. The manner in which the Person of Christ possesses these attributes comes under the study of the communication of attributes. Although the doctrine of the communication of attributes is nothing else than the exposition of clear passages of Scripture concerning of the God-Man Jesus Christ, this exposition has become somewhat lengthy and detailed. Yet it has become extensive and elaborate only because false positions have become so numerous and detailed that great detail is necessary to present and defend the Scriptural truth in the matter. The communication of attributes has been treated under three natural headings, namely, the genus idiomaticum, genus maiestaticum (the majestic genus), and the genus apotelesmaticum. The definitions of these terms are somewhat lengthy but their meanings will become clear in their respective treatments. We add, however, this remark, that the divisions or genuses are not artificial or superfluous, but are necessary because the human

and divine attributes of Christ are not all ascribed to Him in the same manner. The "Formula of Concord" explains it this way: "The propositions, or praedicationes, that is, how to speak of the person of Christ and of its natures and properties, are not all of one kind and mode, and when they are employed without proper discrimination, the doctrine becomes confused, and the simple reader is easily led astray." (Trigl. 1037, F.C., Sol. Decl., VIII, 35) We will therefore consider the doctrine of the communication of attributes, observing the natural headings of the genus idiomaticum, the genus maiestaticum, and the genus apotelesmaticum.

The idiomatic genus has been defined as "this, that such things as are peculiar to the divine or the human nature are truly and really ascribed to the entire Person of Christ, designated by either nature or both." (See, for instance, A Summary of Christian Doctrine, p. 90.) Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary according to His human nature, but at the same time He is, because of the Personal Union, the eternal Son of God. As a true man, Jesus ate, slept, wept, hungered, felt tired, grew and learned. Yet He was and is eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent because of the Personal Union of the divine and human natures in the one Person. All of the above attributes are properly to be ascribed to the Person of Christ. When the disciples said to Jesus, ***"Thou knowest all things"*** (John 16:30; 21:17), and when Peter declared, ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"*** (Matt. 16:16), the disciples thereby attributed full divine knowledge and full deity to the Person of Christ. Jesus Christ may properly be called God, and may properly be called man. Indeed, doubting Thomas called Jesus, ***"My LORD and my GOD"*** (John 20:28), and in I Timothy 2:5 we read that ***"there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."*** The terms, Son of God and Son of Man, stress respectively the divine and human natures in Christ. Yet in some instances, Scripture predicates of one nature of Christ an action which is done primarily according to the other nature. For example, consider Acts 3:14,15: ***"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just,...and killed the Prince of Life."*** Thus death is predicated of the Prince of Life, which is obviously a divine title. Again, the blood of Christ is a property of the human nature. Yet Scripture declares that ***"the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin"*** (I John 1:7), and again, ***"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the***

which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," Acts 20:28. Thus the blood of Christ is actually the blood of the Son of God. Hence the Person of Christ possesses both the divine nature and the human nature, and properties which are attributed to either the intrinsic divine or the intrinsic human nature are properly ascribed to the undivided Person of Christ.

The genus maiestaticum, or majestic genus, refers to the communication of the attributes of the divine nature to the human nature of Christ. We read in Colossians 2:9, ***"For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily"*** and in John 1:14, ***"(And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*** The attributes of the divine nature, which the Son of God possessed from eternity, were not diminished or changed when ***"the Word was made flesh,"*** John 1:14. Rather, the divine attributes, eternity, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, divine glory, etc., were communicated to the human nature. Thus Jesus Christ, the God-man, is eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, etc., even according to His human nature. We will briefly give examples illustrating the communication of each of the three primary attributes (omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence) to the human nature. That omniscience is communicated to the human nature of Christ is shown by considering John 3:31-32 and John 1:18. ***"He that cometh from heaven is above all....And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth,"*** John 8:31,32. ***"No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him,"*** John 1;18. Taken together, these passages show that the man Christ Jesus spoke of those things which He, as the Son of God, had seen and heard in the communion of the Holy Trinity. Christ spoke directly from His own divine knowledge, and not indirectly as in the case of the prophets and apostles who wrote or spoke by inspiration. That omnipresence is communicated to the human nature of Christ is revealed in Ephesians 4:9-10: ***"(Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.)"*** Christ ascended according to His human nature, and we learn form this passage that Christ ascended bodily that He might ***"fill all things,"*** meaning, "to fill the whole universe." The

human nature of Christ cannot be separated from His divine filling of all things without altering the plain meaning of the text. Finally, we show that Scripture teaches the communication of omnipotence to the human nature of Christ. Christ performed miracles, not only according to His divine nature, but also according to His human nature. If the human nature did not participate in the performance of the miracles, then Christ according to His human nature would be no different than the prophets or apostles who worked miracles solely by the power of God and not by their own power. Thus also omnipotence is clearly communicated to the human nature of Christ. Because of His State of Humiliation, Christ did not always or fully manifest the divine power and glory which He possessed, but this kenosis or non-exercise of attributes (cf. Phil. 2:5-8) was all part of God's plan of salvation and in no wise detracts from the fact of His possession of divine attributes according to His human nature. We close this section with a reference to the transfiguration of Christ. The transfiguration clearly shows that the full majesty and glory of God were communicated to the human nature of Christ, for the divine glory of Christ was visibly and bodily displayed before the disciples. Speaking of this event, the apostle Peter says, ***"He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,"*** I Peter 1:17. It is evident from this that the man Christ Jesus, gloriously transfigured before the disciples, is the very Son of God as attested by God the Father. We sum up by reiterating that the attributes of the divine nature of the Son of God are really and truly communicated to the human nature in the Person of Christ.

The third genus, the apotelesmatic genus, refers to the joint participation of the divine and human natures in the official actions of Christ. To facilitate understanding, we mention the following analogy to the body and soul of man. Even though ***"the body without the spirit is dead"*** (James 2:26), still the body participates in the actions of the soul. The concomitant action of body and soul together is so close and so thorough that we cannot imagine an action of the body in which the soul does not participate. Likewise, although the human nature of Christ is not the divine nature, the human nature participates in the actions of the God-man which are done primarily according to the divine nature, e.g., healing of diseases, being everywhere at once, and possessing all divine power and authority. Conversely, the divine nature participates in the

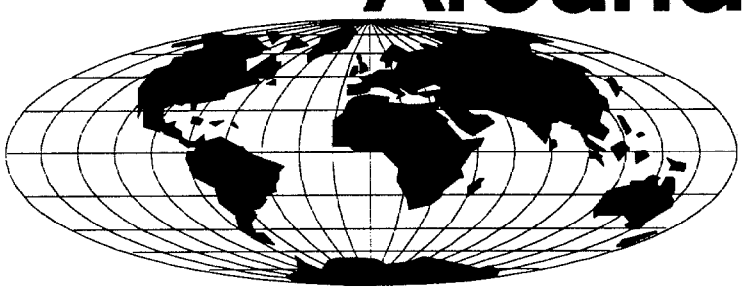
actions of the God-man which are done primarily according to the human nature. A very practical application of this doctrine is to the work of Christ as our Savior from sin. ***"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,"*** Gal. 4:4,5. The perfect obedience of Christ, and His suffering and death, would have only been able to accomplish His own salvation if it were only Christ's human nature which had been perfect, suffered and died. But the divine nature of Christ participated in the whole work of redemption, giving the redemptive work infinite value. Thus, although it can be rightly said that God cannot suffer or die, yet in the Person of Christ the Son of God indeed suffered and died--the divine nature actually participated in the suffering and death of Christ. Scripture declares that ***"the blood of Jesus Christ <u>His</u> <u>Son</u> cleanseth us from all sin,"*** I John 1:7. Thus it was the holy, precious blood of the Son of God which gave infinite value to the sacrifice of Christ. The participation of the human nature in the divine attributes has been treated previously under the <u>genus</u> <u>maiestaticum</u>. We therefore affirm that the human and divine natures jointly participate in each and every official action of the God-man Jesus Christ.

The doctrine of Christ and of the Person of Christ are central to the Christian Faith. In particular, that Christ is true God and true man is of paramount importance, for man's salvation depends on the fact that Christ is indeed God and man. Because this doctrine of the Person of Christ is so important to salvation, it has been viciously attacked by the father of lies, the devil, and consequently it has had to be staunchly maintained by defenders of the faith throughout the ages. As is so often the case, the devil has appealed to the blind reason of the Old Adam in order to introduce false doctrines of the Person of Christ on seemingly Scriptural grounds. Thus the Reformed bodies, who end up separating the natures in Christ, do so, they claim, to prevent Christians from believing the "impossible," even "blasphemous" fact that the Son of God participated in human attributes. (See Pieper, Vol. II, p. 132.) We have seen from the foregoing that it would be spiritually disastrous to deny the communication of attributes in Christ. We simply cannot abandon what is plainly taught in Scripture, and we cannot let reason overrule any statement of Scripture. Let us praise God for the true doctrine of the communication of attributes in the Person of Christ, for in it we find that

the God-incarnate, man-divine fulfilled God's Law for us, suffered and died for all our sins, and rose again according to the Scriptures, with both natures participating conjointly for our salvation.

Submitted by John Steinke
through his Pastor

Around the World



with editorial comment

by M. L. Natterer

Dr. Robert Schuller, the founding pastor of the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California, is known worldwide through his television ministry, "Hour of Power" and is also the author of 30 books. But Schuller's faith--in himself and in the goodness of mankind--was not always so confident. As a young preacher in 1955, Schuller came to Garden Grove, where he struggled to hold together a small congregation. He wrote to the most well-known preacher of the day, Norman Vincent Peale, inviting him to speak at his "church," which was nothing more than the roof above the snack bar at the Orange Drive-In Movie Theater. Schuller describes what happened next in his book "Goliath: The Life of Robert Schuller." "If Jesus Himself were standing here today talking to you, do you know what He would tell you?" Norman Vincent Peale's words echoed through the drive in. "Do you think He would tell you what a bunch of miserable sinners you are?" "No, He wouldn't," Peale said. "He wouldn't call you a bunch of sinners." "Jesus never called you sinners. He never called one of you out there a sinner." Peale pried his foot loose from the tar-papered roof of the snack bar. He held up a Bible. "Look it up anywhere in the Bible. You won't find it, because

Jesus never called one person a sinner." Schuller looked up from the Bible. It's not here, he thought. Dr. Peale was right. Jesus treated people positively. You have to build people up in order to help them.

Even a Sunday School youngster knows better than this preacher! This was the purpose for which the Savior came into the world: *"For He shall save His people from their sins,"* Matt. 1:21. Jesus declared, *"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,"* Mark 2:17. Note the first recorded sermon which the Savior preached! *"Repent ye, and believe the Gospel,"* Mark 1:15. Repent of what? Of our sins! And what is sin? *"Sin is the transgression of the Law,"* I John 3:4. And who has sinned? *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,"* Rom. 3:23. The Savior commanded His disciples *"that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations,"* Luke 24:47. And whoever repents of his sins and casts himself upon the mercy of the heavenly Father as revealed in Christ who atoned for all our sins with His holy precious blood has as his very own possession the forgiveness of sins and the hope of an eternal life with the Savior. For *"the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin,"* I John 1:7. And *"he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,"* John 3:36. Not to repent of one's sins and believe in the Savior spells eternal destruction! Jesus told the Jews, *"If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins,"* John 8:24. There is only one way in which to "build up people" and that is by proclaiming to the repentant sinner, *"Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee,"* Matt. 9:2. To know that our sins have been forgiven and that heaven is our Home; to know that He which hath begun a good work in us will perform it unto the Day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6); to know that now *"all things work together for good to them that love God,"* (Rom. 8:28), gives us joy and peace in believing.

A church that practices animal sacrifices told the Supreme Court that government may not ban such religious sacrifices when it lets people kill animals for other reasons such as hunting. However, an attorney for a Florida city that banned animal sacrifices countered that the Constitution does not protect a church's right to kill animals in

worship services. In Hialeah, Fla., "you can kill animals for almost any reason...but not for religious reasons," said Douglas Laycock, attorney for the Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye. Animal sacrifice is the central ritual of Santeria, the ancient African religion the church practices, he said. The court's ruling in the case, expected by July, could provide new guidelines for religious freedom that also could affect mainstream denominations. Hialeah, a suburb of Miami, enacted ordinances in 1987 to ban animal sacrifices after the Lukumi church leased an abandoned car lot and announced plans to open a Santeria church. Attorney Richard Garrett, representing the city, argued that the ban was needed to protect the public health and guard against cruelty to animals. People who sacrifice animals in their homes often save the animals' blood in cauldrons and dump carcasses in public places, he said. Up to 60,000 people in south Florida practice Santeria, which was carried to Cuba by slaves in past centuries and then to the United States. An integral part is the sacrifice of animals--chickens, ducks, goats and sheep--for birth, marriage and death rites and the initiation of new priests.

The sacrifice of animals was commanded by the Lord in the Old Testament. The Book of Leviticus, for example, deals extensively with the various offerings and sacrifices which the Lord required of the Israelites. And what was the purpose of those sacrifices? They were to point forward to the coming Messiah, the Lamb of God (John 1:29), whose life would be the supreme sacrifice upon the cross to atone for the sins of all men and thus satisfy once and for all the righteous wrath of God because of man's disobedience. In chapters 9 and 10 of Hebrews the writer by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost emphasizes this most comforting truth, *"by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this Man, after He had offered ONE sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God...Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin,"* Heb. 10:10-12, 18. Therefore for anyone to offer animal sacrifices as though such sacrifices would be able to expiate sin is to blaspheme the all-sufficient sacrifice of the Lord Jesus who cried out, *"It is finished"* before His death upon the cross (John 19:30). We realize, of course, that in our country there

is freedom of religion; consequently, the government allows the free exercise of any religion, even though the practice of a religion includes such things as sacrificing of animals, as long as it does not infringe upon the rights of others.

The small-town serenity of Camp Verde, Ariz., has been shaken by fears that the pastor of a cult-like church will kill his flock on Christmas day to prematurely trigger "the rapture." It isn't helping matters that the Rev. Jim Jones bears the same name as that of the Peoples' Temple minister who in 1978 led 912 followers in a mass suicide in Jonestown, Guyana. On Sunday night, about 20 former church members picketed Jones' church, The Spoken Word Tabernacle, demanding police protection. Jones, whose former church members call a fiery, charismatic preacher, reportedly became increasingly militant after a Yavapai County grand jury indicted him last Fall on two counts of allegedly molesting teenage girls who were members of the church. He remains free on $100,000 bail and is awaiting trial. In the meantime, Jones, 62, continues to preach at the church he originally started in Phoenix. Jones persuaded his 250-member congregation to quit their jobs, sell their homes and move to Camp Verde in 1989 after reportedly hearing a voice calling him to the area. According to former members, Jones is using the pulpit to call for the death of those who challenge him, charming followers into devotion to him, while at the same time smashing a television set and getting into fistfights during sermons.

It is amazing how gullible some people are when it comes to ministers of religion! How often they seem to swallow hook, line and sinker, whatever is proclaimed by a so-called minister, particularly if he happens to be endowed with a dominant personality and an appealing charisma. If only Christians would always learn to judge on the basis of God's Word and follow that Word! What a wonderful example those Bereans were who searched the Scriptures daily to determine if what they heard from the Apostle Paul were in accord with God's Word (Acts 17:11). The Apostle John warns us, *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world,"* I John 4:1. God binds us to His Word! He

commands that pastors are to preach His Word in all of its truth and purity. How disgraceful when a pastor sets forth his own notions and whims in binding his people to his dreams, and visions, while hiding behind the cloak of a religious calling and then to declare that God is speaking through him and therefore they must obey him. *"Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith,"* Jer. 23:31. But in order to tell *"if the trumpet give an uncertain sound"* (I Cor. 14:8) so that we can prepare to do battle against the false doctrine, we must know God's Word well! That means not merely sitting in the Bible Classes and Divine Services, but also listening attentively to what is being taught and asking the Holy Spirit to help us retain what we learn! For only by being firmly rooted and grounded in the Word shall we be able with that Sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) to stand against the wiles of the devil as he seeks to lead astray through his followers--the false prophets!

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