

TH  
m 746

A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE  
WRITINGS OF LUTHER

By

KENNETH L. MONETTE

A.B., Whitworth College

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for  
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SACRED THEOLOGY  
in  
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York, N.Y.  
April 1948

BIBLICAL SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY LIBRARY  
HATFIELD, PA.

18527



TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Gift of the author.*

*May 25, 1948*

*26212*

CHAPTER	Page
Introduction . . . . .	1
A. The Problem Stated . . . . .	1
B. Justification of the Problem . . . . .	1
C. Sources of Data . . . . .	2
D. Method of Procedure . . . . .	3
I. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE TRINITY . . . . .	6
Introduction . . . . .	6
A. The Fact of the Trinity . . . . .	7
B. The Holy Spirit and Our Understanding of the Trinity . . . . .	11
C. The Holy Spirit and the Indwelling Trinity . . . . .	12
Summary . . . . .	13
II. THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT INTO THE HEART AND LIFE . . . . .	17
Introduction . . . . .	17
A. The Divine Part in the Coming of the Holy Spirit into the Heart and Life . . . . .	19
1. Prerequisites for the Coming of the Holy Spirit . . . . .	19
2. Manifestations of the Holy Spirit . . . . .	20
3. Conviction by the Spirit . . . . .	22
a. Conviction of Sin . . . . .	23
b. Conviction of Righteousness . . . . .	25
c. Conviction of Judgment . . . . .	26
B. The Human Part in the Coming of the Holy Spirit into the Heart and Life.. . . .	26
1. The Preacher . . . . .	27
2. The Believer . . . . .	28
a. Faith . . . . .	28
b. Baptism . . . . .	34
Summary . . . . .	35
III. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE HEART AND LIFE . . . . .	40
Introduction . . . . .	40
A. The Holy Spirit as Regenerator . . . . .	41
1. Its Basis . . . . .	41
2. Its Nature and Manner . . . . .	43
a. It Is Incomprehensible . . . . .	43
b. It Is Attained through Effort . . . . .	43

CHAPTER	Page
c. It Is Spiritual . . . . .	44
d. It Is Wrought by Water and Spirit . . . . .	45
3. Its Results . . . . .	45
B. The Holy Spirit As Witness . . . . .	49
1. The Holy Spirit As Witness to the Believer . . . . .	49
2. The Holy Spirit As Witness through the Believer . . . . .	50
C. The Holy Spirit As Guide to Truth . . . . .	51
1. Jesus' Teaching Concerning the Holy Spirit As Guide to Truth . . . . .	51
2. The Holy Spirit As Guide to Truth Today . . . . .	54
D. The Holy Spirit As Revealer and Interpreter of the Scriptures . . . . .	54
1. The Holy Spirit As Revealer of the Scriptures . . . . .	54
2. The Holy Spirit As Interpreter of the Scriptures . . . . .	56
E. The Holy Spirit As the Inspirer of Good Works . . . . .	57
1. The Holy Spirit Inspires Righteous Attitudes and Deeds . . . . .	57
2. The Holy Spirit Inspires Obedience to the Spiritual Law . . . . .	60
F. The Holy Spirit As Comforter . . . . .	62
G. The Holy Spirit As Intercessor . . . . .	63
H. The Holy Spirit As Sanctifier . . . . .	66
Summary . . . . .	71
SUMMARY . . . . .	76
A. Restatement of the Problem . . . . .	76
B. Summary . . . . .	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	82



**INTRODUCTION**

A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE  
WRITINGS OF LUTHER

INTRODUCTION

A. THE PROBLEM STATED

This thesis, A Study of the Holy Spirit in the Writings of Luther, is undertaken to solve the following problem: What did Luther, one of the greatest reformers, believe concerning the Holy Spirit?

B. JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

There is a great variety of beliefs concerning the Holy Spirit among the many Christian religious denominations in the world today. Some do not accept the fact of the Holy Spirit as a separate personal entity in the triune Godhead. Others put so much emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit that other great doctrines are neglected. Some believe one thing about the Holy Spirit and His work, while others have beliefs that are entirely different.

The question arises: What did the reformers teach about the Holy Spirit? since it was from the efforts of the reformers that Protestantism with its many variations grew. Although it is impossible to make a complete

study of all the reformers in this thesis, a study will be made of the leading reformer to discover what he taught concerning the Holy Spirit. Such a project will throw light on the concept of the Holy Spirit in the reformation, and will thereby enable us to re-evaluate present day teachings in Protestantism.

Dr. Luther did not write a systematic theology, so a reader cannot pick up one or two of his works and learn what he taught on this subject. Furthermore, there are no publications today in which his teachings on the Holy Spirit have been gathered together. There are books on Luther's theology, and they have short sections on the Holy Spirit, but he taught far more about the Spirit than could be incorporated into a general volume on a man's theology prepared for popular reading. Therefore a study which brings together Luther's teachings on the Holy Spirit would be very helpful.

### C. SOURCES OF DATA

Dr. Luther was a voluminous writer, and many of his sermons have been published. Some of his writings and sermons have been translated into several languages, and a great many of them are now available in English. This thesis will be based primarily upon a direct study of these English translations. However, a few secondary



sources will also be used.

#### D. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

This thesis will contain three chapters: I. The Holy Spirit and the Trinity; II. The Coming of the Holy Spirit into the Heart and Life; III. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Heart and Life.

Chapter I will be concerned with the fact of the Trinity and the relationships of the Holy Spirit to the other two members of the Trinity. Since the three persons of the Trinity are so closely related, and the work of one effects the work of the other two, this will be treated first to establish a basis for the following chapters. Just to know the place of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity would do one no permanent good, for Luther taught that the individual must have a vital relationship with the Holy Spirit. Therefore Chapter II will be concerned with the ways and means by which a relationship is established and the Holy Spirit enters the heart and life of the believer. Before that relationship has been established, the Holy Spirit begins His work; and after it has been established, He carries His work on from within the believer, so Chapter III will be concerned with the various phases of the Spirit's work in the heart and life of the believer.



CHAPTER I

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE TRINITY

## CHAPTER I

### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE TRINITY

#### INTRODUCTION

Luther's doctrine of the Trinity is basic in his teachings on the Holy Spirit because of the following facts: 1) Luther taught that the Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of the Trinity. 2) He taught that the Holy Spirit has a direct relation to an understanding of Christ and His teachings, and God and His Word. 3) He believed that the Holy Spirit is active in the believer's relationships with both God and Christ, and one's Christian living that results from taking God and Christ into one's heart. Therefore, since an understanding of the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the other members of the Trinity is necessary for an understanding of the divine functions of the Holy Spirit as a member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit and the Trinity will be considered at the outset of this thesis.

This will be treated under the following heads:

A. The Fact of the Trinity, as taught by Luther in his sermons from Trinity to Advent, and in other sermons on the gospels, and in His commentary on Genesis. In this will be considered the personality relationships of the Trinity. B. The Holy Spirit and Our Understanding of the

Trinity, which will be a consideration of the necessity of the third person of the Trinity in order that one may have an understanding of all three persons of the Trinity.

C. The Holy Spirit and the Indwelling Trinity, in which will be considered the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the other two persons of the Trinity as all three dwell in the believer. Parts B and C will be taken from the same sermons as Part A.

These three parts start in the distant and move into the heart of man. Or to state them differently, they might be called The Trinity as It exists without Relation to Man, The Holy Spirit and Man's Mental Concept of the Trinity, and The Holy Spirit and Man's Heart Concept of the Trinity.

#### A. THE FACT OF THE TRINITY

The word "Trinity" is not found in the New Testament; it is a man-made word which signifies that there are three persons in God. The triune Godhead is a heavenly mystery, and like every other article of faith it cannot be based on reason and comparison, but must be understood and established by the use of Scripture; for only God has perfect knowledge and knows how to speak concerning Himself.

The first person of the Trinity is He whom we

call the Father; "and of him exists the second person called the Son, born from eternity; and proceeding from both of these is the third, namely, the Holy Spirit." <sup>1</sup> These three persons are not distinct from each other, as individual brothers and sisters are, but "they have being in one and the same eternal, undivided and indivisible essence." <sup>2</sup> The Holy Spirit derived His eternal divine essence from the Father and the Son, and the Son derived His from the Father; but the Father is derived from no other. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is often referred to as the Spirit of the Father, or the Spirit of the Son.

In his commentary on Genesis Luther stated that Moses, in recording the account of the creation, did not give a distinct division of the Godhead into Father, Son, and Spirit. However in the creation story Moses foreshadowed the Trinity from the beginning of the world when he indicated that in the divine beings who produced the creation there is a plurality of persons but a unity of the divine essence. The rest he left for the gospels. <sup>3</sup>

In his teachings substantiating the fact that the Holy Spirit is a member of the Trinity, Luther used words of David, of Paul, and of Jesus. David in Psalm

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Kern; A Compend of Luther's Theology, Page 38.
2. Ibid. Page 38.
3. Lenker, Luther on the Creation, A Critical and Devotional Commentary on Genesis, Vol. I, Pages 50-60.

33:6 attributes the same act of creation to both God and the Holy Spirit. "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the spirit of his mouth." This makes God and the Holy Spirit the same person. In Psalm 139:7-8 David wrote, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold thou art there." This cannot be said of any creature, for only God the Creator is everywhere. Since it can be said of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit and God are one.

In Galatians 4:6 Luther believed the fact of the third person of the Trinity -- the Holy Spirit -- is set forth. Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God's Son. For the Spirit not only dwells in Christ as He does in man, but He also is Christ's Spirit, deriving His divine substance from Him just as He does from the Father. "Otherwise the language of Paul -- 'the Spirit of his Son' -- would be false." <sup>1</sup>

Jesus Himself preached that the Holy Spirit is everlasting and Almighty God. He taught that His followers were to "trust or believe in no one but God;" but Jesus told His disciples to baptize in the name of the

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Advent and Christmas Seasons, Vol. I, Page 259.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This places the Holy Spirit on an equality with the Father and the Son as a divine person. Christ commanded His followers to trust absolutely in God; here He told them to trust and believe in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, therefore, must be God.<sup>1</sup> In the Gospel according to John, Christ frequently speaks to His disciples of the power and existence of the Holy Spirit. In Christ's own words the Holy Spirit is held out as a distinct person. "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth." (John 14: 16-17). Here the Son prayed to the Father to send the Holy Spirit. He cannot be the Father or the Son, because the Father gives Him, and Christ prayed that He be given.<sup>2</sup>

The fact that Luther believed that the Scriptures teach the existence of a triune Godhead is shown in one of his sermons.

"Therefore, we cling to the Scriptures, those passages which testify of the Trinity of God, and we say: I know very well that in God there are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; but how they can be one I do not know, neither should I know it."<sup>3</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Luther's Church Postil, Gospels, Page 410.
2. Lenker, Op. Cit., Page 66.
3. Lenker, Op. Cit., Pages 410-411.



C. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND  
OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE TRINITY

It was Luther's position that no one can preach rightly about God and Christ and the works of the Holy Spirit, and about comfort and grace and forgiveness of sins, unless he himself is first taught by the Spirit. For no human can understand God, except as the Holy Spirit, who knows the things of God, reveals it to him. The Holy Spirit is to God and Christ as the human spirit is to humans. No one can understand even the person of Christ without the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, if one does try to teach about God and Christ without himself being taught by the Holy Spirit, his teaching is all in vain; for instead of teaching what God and Christ are like, he gives a false idea of Them, and the learner would be better off if he had not been taught.<sup>1</sup>

The Holy Spirit was given in order to teach men the meaning and significance of what Christ and the Scriptures say, and to bring them to remembrance -- to reveal Christ and His blessing through the gospel -- and His instruction is superior to all books. Apart from the Spirit, therefore, the gospel is meaningless and the Scriptures cannot be understood.<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

1. J.A. Holman Co., Works of Martin Luther, Vol. 5, Page 264.
2. Ibid. Page 276.

D. THE HOLY SPIRIT  
AND THE INDWELLING TRINITY

The Spirit of grace and of supplication that Zechariah, in 12:10, said would be poured out in the Kingdom of Christ, is the Holy Spirit, who with the Father and the Son "lives in believers, speaks and works through them, and gives them comfort and power to remain steadfast against sin, death and the devil's power." <sup>1</sup>

Luther quoted Jesus' words, "If a man love me, he will keep my word and my Father will love him; and we will come unto him and make our abode with him," (John 14:23), and commented that this promise is not to all, but only to those who love Christ and keep His commandments. This promise brings to the individual heart a new Pentecost and a manifestation of power. God and man will be friends, for the Holy Spirit himself prepares the heart of man and consecrates it as a holy temple and dwelling place of God. "What a glorious, noble, living, and precious guest and house-companion does man receive -- God the Father and the Son and certainly with them also the Holy Spirit!"<sup>2</sup> Thus there is a heavenly council for the hearts which are aflame with love to Christ through the Holy Spirit. This is promised to men as they

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Kerr, A Compend of Luther's Theology, Page 322.
2. Ibid. Page 315.

dwell here on earth. Many Christians think God is the farthest from them and the devil is the nearest, but they can comfort themselves in the thought that they are the true house of God -- the true Church through the indwelling of the Spirit.

#### SUMMARY

Dr. Luther recognized that the word "Trinity" is not found in the New Testament; it is a man-made word. But he believed that the concept of a Godhead consisting of three divine persons is presented in both the Old and New Testaments. He taught that these three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are of the same eternal essence. The Father originated from none, the Son originated from the Father, and the Holy Spirit originated from the Father and the Son.

The chief passages Luther used to identify the Father and the Son with the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, were from the Psalms, Galatians, and John. In the Psalms David attributed omnipresence to the Holy Spirit and attributed the act of creation to both God and the Holy Spirit. Therefore Luther maintained that since only God is Creator and omnipresent, God and the Spirit must be one. From the Gospel according to John, Luther used Jesus' teaching that His followers

should trust and believe in no one but God, and His teaching that His followers are to trust and believe in the Holy Spirit, as a basis for substantiating the fact that God and the Spirit are one. From the Son's prayer to the Father that He send the Holy Spirit to the hearts and lives of believers, Luther concluded that these are not three ways of speaking of one person, but they are three persons of one eternal essence.

On the basis of both the Old and New Testaments Luther taught that the Trinity dwells in believers through the Spirit. Zechariah spoke of the Spirit of grace and of supplication that would be poured out in the Kingdom of Christ. Luther took this to mean that the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son would dwell in believers. Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my word and my Father will love him; and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." Luther taught that this also included the Holy Spirit in the believer, and that this promise is for men as they dwell here on earth. The first manifestation of it was at Pentecost.



CHAPTER II

THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
INTO THE HEART AND LIFE

CHAPTER II  
THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
INTO THE HEART AND LIFE

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter I the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the other members of the Trinity was seen to be important in Luther's teachings on the Spirit. Likewise his teachings on the relationship of the Spirit to the believer and how that relationship is established are important. To Luther the coming of the Holy Spirit into the life of the believer is the basis for the work of the Holy Spirit in and among Christians. In this connection Luther wrote:

"There is a people upon earth which is called God's people, where he desires to be master in his house, prince in his castle, God in his Church; a people so precious and highly esteemed before God that he did not deem his very heaven above so great as to keep him from coming to his Church in this vale of sorrow and remaining with it until the end of the world. He would not have man to gaze up in vain and seek his Church in Paradise. He would have them find it here until the other life begins." <sup>1</sup>

That relationship between God and His people, with them as His house and His Church, is so important that God sent His Spirit to be with His Church here on earth. This chapter will consider Luther's view of what is involved in the coming of the Holy Spirit into the

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Kerr, A Compend of Luther's Theology, Pages 319-320.

heart and life of man.

This study will be divided into two sections:

(1) the divine part in the coming of the Holy Spirit into the heart and life, and the manifestations that accompany the coming of the Spirit; (2) the preacher's part in helping others to receive the Spirit, and the believer's part in receiving the Spirit. The treatment of the preacher's and believer's part in the coming of the Holy Spirit contains both positive and negative elements, because Luther thought that some things which are commonly done in an effort to receive the Spirit are done in vain.

This chapter will not follow a strict psychological development. In the divine part will be considered the activities of the Holy Spirit in convicting the unbeliever. Since human agency is used in the convicting, the human part is presupposed in the treatment of conviction; but the human part will not be considered until later in the chapter. The divine and human parts are too closely related to be separated completely, but in the first part of the chapter the main emphasis will be on the divine part, and in the second part the main emphasis will be on the human.



A. THE DIVINE PART  
IN THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
INTO THE HEART AND LIFE

Dr. Luther's teachings on the divine part in the coming of the Holy Spirit into the heart and life of the believer were taken from Jesus' discourse with His disciples on the night He was betrayed.

1. Prerequisites for the Coming of the Holy Spirit.

Luther taught that the Holy Spirit is given only to those who serve God and keep His commandments. But no one can keep His commandments, or the Law, as Luther generally referred to them, nor even have the desire within himself to keep them. Against this evil God found a remedy and determined to use it. He sent Christ, His Son, into this world to shed His blood and to die in order to "make satisfaction for sin" and to take it away. After Christ had made atonement for sin, then the way was free for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said (John 14:16), "I will pray the Father and He will give you another Comforter." And again, He said (John 16:7), "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." And in John 15:26 Jesus said He would send the Holy Spirit from the Father. By the word "Comforter," Luther under-

stood Christ to mean the Holy Spirit. Jesus went to heaven in order that the Holy Spirit might be sent and His Kingdom be further developed. God does not send the Holy Spirit until His Son goes to the Father and tells Him that the proper preparations have been made here on earth. Then God and the Son together send the Spirit from the Father to the believer.

This brings up the question, What are the manifestations that accompany the coming of the Holy Spirit into the heart and life?

## 2. Manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

Luther said that the Holy Spirit has been sent with two types of manifestations.<sup>1</sup> First, in the primitive Church the sending of the Spirit was accompanied by visible signs. He came upon Christ at the Jordan in the likeness of a dove (Matthew 3:16), and He came upon the apostles and other believers in the form of fire and wind (Acts 2:3). It was expedient that these first comings of the Holy Spirit be in physical manifestations because the early Church was still loosely organized and full of unbelievers. But after the Church was gathered together and confirmed by these miracles, it was no longer necessary

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Kerr, A Compend of Luther's Theology, Pages 68-69.

that the visible manifestations of the Holy Spirit should continue.

Second, the Holy Spirit is sent by the Word into the hearts of believers, as Paul wrote in Galatians 4:6, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." Luther described God's sending the Spirit of His Son into the believer's heart thus:

"This sending is without any visible appearance; to wit, when, by the hearing of the external word, we receive an inward fervency and light, whereby we are changed and become new creatures; whereby also we receive a new judgment, a new feeling, and a new moving. This change is no work of reason, or of the power of man, but it is the gift and operation of the Holy Ghost, which cometh with the word preached, which purifieth our hearts by faith, and bringeth forth in us spiritual motives." 1

Since there is no visible manifestation when the Spirit enters the heart, one might not appear before the world to be renewed and in possession of the Holy Spirit; yet one's judgment, speech, and confession declare sufficiently that the Holy Spirit and His gifts are within one. Such a person is not troubled when the world judges him to be a pernicious heretic, a seditious person, a destroyer of religion, a troubler of the common peace, and possessed of devils that speak in him and govern his actions; for he knows assuredly that he has the gift of God, that he believes in Jesus Christ, and that he preaches

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Luther, A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, Page 446.

and confesses Him before the world.

### 3. Conviction by the Spirit.

The medium through which the Holy Spirit acts as convictor is the gospel. The gospel, according to Luther, is not something that man has discovered; it is a message that has been sent to man by the Holy Spirit -- sent down from heaven into the world. This was true not just during Christ's time here on earth, but it has been true from the time of the prophets down to the present day, and the gospel will be sent by the Spirit until the end of time. Therefore the Spirit provides His own medium of conviction.

The gospel is not just sent at intervals, it is sent daily through various channels. Some of those channels are the same as the means by which the Holy Spirit comes into the heart and life, considered later in this chapter -- faith and baptism. The Spirit who comes to the believer through these activities, also increases the believer's knowledge of the gospel through the same activities. Of the means by which the Spirit sends the gospel, Luther put special significance on the medium of communication. The first method used with unbelievers is communication, because they must hear the gospel before the Spirit can put faith in their hearts. Therefore those

who do not have faith, the Spirit justly convicts through the gospel and shows them that they are sinful and condemned. Those who do have faith the Spirit convicts of things in their hearts and lives that are not in harmony with God's will and character.<sup>1</sup>

Most of Luther's comments on the Holy Spirit as convictor through the gospel are based on Jesus' words recorded in John 16:7-11.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

a. Conviction of Sin.

Concerning the activities of the Holy Spirit as convictor of sin, Luther commented that unbelief is the only sin mentioned in the above verses, so if one commits this sin, it is only the Spirit who convicts him of it. Unbelief is mentioned, because it is a basic sin; doubt, disobedience, blasphemy, and other sins spring from it. Also unbelief is mentioned because it keeps the Spirit from doing His work. He wants to get into the heart and life, but He cannot until he who hears the gospel of

\* \* \* \* \*

1. A.J. Holman Co., Works of Martin Luther, Vol. 4, Page 113; and Steinhäuser, Luther Primer, Pages 107-108.

Christ accepts Christ as his Savior. Therefore the Holy Spirit resists unbelief and strives with divine power to convict the unbeliever until the last day. Through His conviction the Spirit must drive Satan's kingdom under God's wrath and condemnation. Through the gospel He tells people that all they have done and are doing is nothing but sin, and tries to convince them that all their attempts to get rid of their sins are in vain.

Further, the Holy Spirit does not convict of outward sins such as adultery, murder, stealing, and theft; because the powers of the world already convict of them. But He convicts of the subtle secret acts that the world does not know as sins.

The Holy Spirit convicts all people. Through the gospel He tells them that they must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as their Savior, and then their sins will disappear. Some are brought to repentance and faith, but those who refuse are condemned and go deeper in sin.<sup>1</sup> Therefore Luther considered the first work of the Holy Spirit as Convictor to be worldwide conviction of sin through the gospel in an attempt to get unbelievers to accept Christ as their Savior.

1. Lenker, Luther's Church Postil, Gospels, Pages 116, 126.

Christ accepts Christ as his Savior. Therefore the Holy Spirit resists unbelief and strives with divine power to convict the unbeliever until the last day. Through His conviction the Spirit must drive Satan's kingdom under God's wrath and condemnation. Through the gospel He tells people that all they have done and are doing is nothing but sin, and tries to convince them that all their attempts to get rid of their sins are in vain.

Further, the Holy Spirit does not convict of outward sins such as adultery, murder, stealing, and theft; because the powers of the world already convict of them. But He convicts of the subtle secret acts that the world does not know as sins.

The Holy Spirit convicts all people. Through the gospel He tells them that they must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as their Savior, and then their sins will disappear. Some are brought to repentance and faith, but those who refuse are condemned and go deeper in sin.<sup>1</sup> Therefore Luther considered the first work of the Holy Spirit as Convictor to be worldwide conviction of sin through the gospel in an attempt to get unbelievers to accept Christ as their Savior.

1. Lenker, Luther's Church Postil, Gospels, Pages 116, 126.

b. Conviction of Righteousness.

The second work of the Holy Spirit as Convictor is to convict of righteousness, because Christ returned to the Father. Luther taught that Christ did not rise from the dead and ascend to heaven for His own sake but for man's sake. Wherever the Holy Spirit sends the gospel and it is accepted, there Christ reigns from the right hand of the Father, and is Himself here below reigning in the hearts of men. He gives power over the believer's enemies and guards him from sin. Christ can do that because He rose from the dead and returned to the Father. Luther maintained that the righteousness of which the Holy Spirit convicts is the righteous lives believers can live as a result of Christ's having returned to the Father. An unbeliever does not know the joyous life he can live through accepting Christ, so the Spirit convicts him of it through the gospel.

Further, the righteousness of which the Holy Spirit convicts is the faith and grace of God by which God makes one pious and righteous. God in His righteousness gives one faith. It is through the use of that faith that the believer is able to let Christ into his heart when the Holy Spirit presents him with the gospel. Also God through His righteousness and grace bestows Christ's righteousness upon the believer. Therefore one's righteousness is that of another. One has done nothing



to merit it, but God freely gives it to one so he may please God and be His child.<sup>1</sup>

c. Conviction of Judgment.

The third sphere in which the Holy Spirit convicts is that of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. Everything that the world considers good is base and evil, because it does not proceed from the Word and the Spirit but proceeds from the old Adam, whom Luther called a "blind fool" and a "sinner." Since the prince of the world and all that he does and can do are condemned, the world is blind when it follows him. It considers that the "wisdom and purity" of the prince of the world is good, and fails to see that his "wisdom and purity" are condemned already.

B. THE HUMAN PART  
IN THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
INTO THE HEART AND LIFE

Luther taught that the coming of the Holy Spirit into the heart and life of the believer is divinely initiated, but he also taught that it takes more than divine initiation and intervention -- there is a task for man.

\* \* \* \* \*

1. For further treatment of the righteousness of which the Holy Spirit convicts, see Ibid. Pages 117-118, 128-129, and 145-146.

Man's task involves presenting the gospel, or preaching, and receiving the gospel, or believing.

### 1. The Preacher.

Luther asked if the heathen were expected to believe in God. He assumed that they were expected to believe in God and said that they must first hear the Word of God preached and by the preached Word receive the Holy Spirit. Why did Christ command His followers to preach? He knew that of his own will man could do nothing but sin, no matter how good his actions looked. Jesus commanded His followers to preach so that man would know that through responding to Christ all his sin could be taken away and he could receive the Holy Spirit. Luther did not say it was the preaching itself that brought the Spirit, but he repeatedly gave the preaching of the Word a prominent place among the things that do bring the Spirit. Without the preaching of the Word no one would know that there was such a person as the Spirit; so how could one even hope to receive Him, to say nothing of one's knowing how to receive Him.

Luther thought the constant aim of the Book of Acts was to teach that the Holy Spirit does not come from the Law, but from the hearing of the gospel. That belief was based on such passages as the following. Luke wrote concerning Peter's ministry in Acts 10:44, "While Peter

yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word," and, again, in Acts 11:15, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." Also concerning Paul's ministry Luke wrote in Acts 19:5-6,

"When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

Luther used these passages to show that the Holy Spirit came through response to the preaching of Peter and Paul, because He came only upon those who heard. From these he concluded that the Holy Spirit is received by the preaching of faith.

## 2. The Believer.

### a. Faith.

Luther frequently used the term "preaching of faith." In a sermon on Galatians 3:2, which reads, "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?" Luther said that there is a definite distinction between the Law and the preaching of faith. The Holy Spirit can be received by faith, but He cannot be received by the works of the Law. By the works of the Law, Luther took Paul to mean all the Law -- both the ceremonial and the moral Law. The Galatians could not say that they had received the Spirit by the works of the Law, because as long as they

were under the Law they had not received Him; but when by faith they heard the gospel preached, they "by and by" received the Holy Spirit before they had done any works or showed any fruit of the gospel.<sup>1</sup>

Luther went further to show that the Holy Spirit was given even to the Gentiles who kept none of the Law. The Holy Spirit was brought to Cornelius' household by Peter's preaching. They did no works, but only accepted the Word by faith. All Peter did was preach, and the Holy Spirit came. Luther used Peter's testimony as recorded in Acts 11:8,9,10,17 to further substantiate his belief that the Holy Spirit was given by faith.

"But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?"

Furthermore, the fact that there is a definite distinction between the Law and the preaching of faith is shown in the Old Testament. Naaman, the Syrian, did not accept the Law and offer sacrifices; he did not even belong to the "kingdom of Moses, which then flourished," but his flesh was cleansed, the God of Israel was revealed to him, and he received the Holy Spirit. Also, while the Law of Moses was still in force, the great city of Nineveh,

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Luther, A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, Page 295.

and Job, and many others were justified without keeping the Law or being circumcised, or offering sacrifices. If Gentiles were justified without the Law, and received the Holy Spirit before Christ was revealed, when the Law was yet in force, why should the Law be required now as necessary to righteousness since Christ's coming? <sup>1</sup> Luther considered the people in these incidents as being justified and receiving the Holy Spirit in the same way as the prophets did. Both groups were justified by a faith which looked forward to Christ, and through that faith they received the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Luther taught that the Holy Spirit has always been freely given upon receiving the preaching of faith, regardless of one's sins and demerits. One does not have to work to earn it. However, faith must not be oversimplified, because it is hard to lay hold of and hard to retain. After it is received, the believer must mortify the flesh, because in the flesh he feels a resistance against the Spirit.

Moreover, a person cannot receive the Holy Spirit through striving to keep the Law, because where the Holy Spirit does not dwell, there is an unclean spirit. Such a person has an unclean heart and despises God and seeks only his own gain and glory. All that he does in trying to keep the Law is done from his unclean

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Page 303.

heart, and therefore does not fulfill the Law but is only hypocrisy and sin. He only mocks the Law with an outward show and so confirms his wickedness. Therefore it is impossible to receive the Spirit no matter how hard one strives to keep the Law. Furthermore, one cannot receive the Spirit through the Law, because Christ is not in the Law, and Christ must prepare the heart for the coming of the Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

Luther taught that just as the Holy Spirit could not be received through the keeping of the Law, so those who strive to keep the Law cannot help others to receive the Spirit. One of the Scriptures he used for this belief was Galatians 6:13, "For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the Law;<sup>2</sup> but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." They are "vain-glorious" men who do not honestly seek to help others, but are seeking their own profit and have no interests but to satisfy their own fleshly desires. They do not humbly approach the cross and seek to have its benefits applied to their lives, but they flee from the cross and determine to walk in their own ways. Therefore they do not teach truth and certainty, but they teach only counter-

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 618-621.

2. In Ibid., Luther maintains that by the Law, Paul means both the ceremonial and the moral Law. His comments on Paul's references to the Law seem to bear out the fact that Luther believed that Paul used the term "Law" in the same way all through Galatians. For examples see Pages 295 and 621-622.

feits, because their whole life is full of hypocrisy. Thus one can not receive the Holy Spirit by their preaching, because they themselves do not have the Spirit.

However, Luther did attribute some significance to the Law in one's receiving the Holy Spirit. In a sermon on the following text (Galatians 3:24) "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith," he said that the Law works as a schoolmaster in the saints to mortify the flesh, reason, and their own strength, and cause them to be renewed in the inward man through Christ who daily redeems men from the "hard and sharp servitude" of the schoolmaster. After the Law has done its work, one is then ready to receive the "first-fruits of the Spirit." The Law as a schoolmaster vexes the individual in order that the way may be prepared for Christ to give the Spirit.

Luther was working among many people who believed they could not ask God for anything unless they were conscious of their purity. Therefore they maintained that God would not hear a sinner if he prayed for forgiveness and for the Spirit. Luther wrote that this was the work of false preachers who did not teach men to start with faith and trust in God, but taught them to start with their own works. He used this illustration:

"Look you, wretched man! if you have broken a leg, or the peril of death overtakes you, you call upon God, this Saint and that, and do not wait until your leg is healed, or the danger is past: you are not so foolish

as to think that God hears no one whose leg is broken, or who is in bodily danger. Nay, you believe that God shall hear most of all when you are in the greatest need and fear." 1

Then he asked why they were so foolish when there was an immeasurably greater need and an eternal hurt. If God could hear when they had a broken leg or were in danger of death, He could hear them when they ask for faith. That which was in their lives that made them feel their impurity could not be changed until they had faith, regardless of how many good works they did. It is sheer blindness for men to run to God with bodily sickness and need and to run from God with the soul's sickness and not return until they are well; as if there were one God who could heal the body and another who could heal the soul, or as if a person could help himself in spiritual needs but not in physical needs. Instead, he must run to God and pray with more confidence than when he has a bodily need. God is not hostile to sinners but only to unbelievers who try to purify themselves by their own works. When God gives His Spirit to men, He gives Him because they have faith in God, and gives Him as soon as they have faith. The Scriptures do not teach that the Holy Spirit was given to anyone when he did good works, but when he received the gospel of Christ and the mercy of God through the preach-

\* \* \* \* \*

1. A.J. Holman Co., Works of Martin Luther, Vol. I, Pages 232-233.



ing of faith.

In commenting on the fact that one does not need to work to receive the Holy Spirit, and on the sufficiency of the work God does in us through our faith, Luther said:

"It would be absurd for God to pour out upon us the Holy Spirit in such measure and yet to expect from us, and in us, something whereby we might be justified and saved; as if the superabundant divine works were insufficient." <sup>1</sup>

b. Baptism.

Along with the preaching of the Word and of faith Luther placed baptism as a means of receiving the Holy Spirit. He believed that both Jesus and Paul teach that the Holy Spirit is given in baptism. In Luther's day there were some who said that the Holy Spirit was not given in baptism but in confirmation. He admitted that in Acts 8 it is recorded that the apostles laid their hands on those who had been baptized, so they would receive the Holy Spirit; but he maintained that to say that this is a sanction for confirmation and teaches that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of hands is only to misconstrue the meaning; for the Holy Spirit was given at the time of baptism, and the laying on of hands was

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Advent and Christmas Seasons, Vol. I, Page 158.

only an external evidence, the same as the speaking in tongues. Luther held that the biggest proof that the Holy Spirit was given in baptism and not in the laying on of hands was the fact that the practice of laying on hands was soon abandoned.<sup>1</sup>

Luther taught that the reason the Holy Spirit is given in baptism is that through baptism one expresses the desire to die, with all his sins, and be made new, and be a partaker of eternal life at the last day. God accepts this expression of the desire for regeneration and grants spiritual baptism when one carries out the rite of physical baptism, and pours into such a one His grace and the Holy Spirit. Thus baptism brings victory over death and the devil; it brings forgiveness of sin and the grace of God and Christ, and along with these the Holy Spirit and His gifts.

#### SUMMARY

Luther taught that there is both a divine and a human part in the coming of the Holy Spirit into the heart and life. On the divine part he taught that the Holy Spirit cannot come into a disobedient heart, so God found a remedy for man's inability to obey His commandments,

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Page 159.

and used it. He sent His Son into the world as a sacrifice for sin to take away sin. When Christ takes the sin from the heart, then it is free and open to the coming of the Holy Spirit. Also, before the Spirit can enter the heart and life, He convicts the unbeliever to get him to have faith in God.

There are two ways in which the presence of the Spirit in believers has been manifested. First, He was sent with visible manifestations, as He came upon Christ in the likeness of a dove at His baptism, and as He came on the apostles and other believers in the form of fire. Second, He comes quietly into the heart of the believer without any visible manifestation but with an inner fervency and light.

Concerning the human part in the coming of the Holy Spirit, Luther taught that there is a task for both the preacher and the hearer. The preacher must take the gospel to the unbeliever and teach him that through faith in God he can have his sins forgiven and receive the Holy Spirit.

There are two tasks for the believer. First, he must accept the Word of God through the preacher and believe that there is a Holy Spirit and that God will send the Spirit into his heart and life. Second, he must be baptized.

The reason the Holy Spirit is given in baptism

is that in it one expresses his desire for purity and for harmony with God. God accepts this expression of one's desire and grants spiritual baptism when one carries out the rite of physical baptism.



CHAPTER III

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

IN THE HEART AND LIFE

CHAPTER III  
THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
IN THE HEART AND LIFE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter II was a consideration of Luther's teachings on that which is involved in the coming of the Holy Spirit into the heart and life. Luther did not teach that the Holy Spirit enters the heart of the believer and remains there as in a passive state. Rather, Luther taught that the Spirit becomes an active force in the life. Chapter III will be a consideration of the Spirit's activities after He enters the heart and life of the believer. The Spirit's activities will be treated under the following sections: (1) the Holy Spirit as regenerator, because the first thing the Spirit does when He enters the heart and life of the believer is to regenerate him; this will include the basis, its nature and manner, and its result; (2) The Holy Spirit as witness to the believer, and through the believer; (3) the Holy Spirit as guide to truth, including Jesus' teachings to the disciples concerning the Holy Spirit as their guide to truth and the Holy Spirit as guide to truth today; (4) the Holy Spirit as revealer and interpreter of the Scriptures; (5) the Holy Spirit as the inspirer of good works; (6) the Holy Spirit

as comforter; (7) the Holy Spirit as intercessor; and (8) the Holy Spirit as sanctifier.

#### A. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS REGENERATOR

Just as Luther considered the activities of the Holy Spirit as necessary in convicting the unbeliever, so he considered the activities of the Spirit necessary in regenerating the person whom conviction has changed into a believer.

Being born of the Spirit is something that does not take place by one's own choice or action, because human choice and action are of the flesh and cannot cause one to see the Kingdom of God. But the new birth takes place by the Word of the gospel, which induces the unbeliever to repent, because it reveals God's wrath. The Word also reveals God's grace through Christ, the Mediator -- grace for the consolation and peace of the believer's conscience and grace for righteousness in the sight of God.<sup>1</sup>

##### 1. Its Basis.

It is recorded in John 3:13a that Jesus told

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Luther's Church Postil, Gospels, Page 438.



Nicodemus, "No one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven." From this Luther concluded that Jesus' incarnation is the basis for regeneration. He believed that the Holy Spirit worked with the other members of the Trinity to effect regeneration. He believed that Jesus made that statement to Nicodemus in order to get Nicodemus to understand Jesus' purpose. Neither Adam, Noah, Abraham, nor the prophets had any merit of their own. It was necessary that one descend from heaven who had eternal righteousness and life in himself and who was able to appease God's anger and abolish sin and death. Christ was saying that it was because He himself had come as Mediator that Nicodemus could have the new birth. Without Christ it would be vain for man to even desire to be delivered from the old birth and be renewed by the Spirit and become pure.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the Spirit is not alone in the work of the new birth. Since God had to be satisfied, Jesus came to earth to be a satisfactory offering to God; and the Holy Spirit tells one that God has been satisfied through Christ, tells one of the joyous life that can be lived in harmony with God, and gives one the necessary faith from God to receive the new birth.

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 446-447.

## 2. Its Nature and Manner.

### a. It Is Incomprehensible.

Luther said that it is very clear that Nicodemus did not understand the new birth of which Jesus spoke, so Jesus said, "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:5). This is a birth that cannot be explained in natural terms. It does not abolish the natural birth of flesh, but in addition it gives a new birth -- born of water and the Spirit. Jesus said further, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." (John 3:6). Luther said that this spiritual birth cannot be grasped by reason. Speculation only makes a fool of one, because by applying reasoning to water and Spirit one gets water bubbles. Jesus told Nicodemus that as a teacher of Israel he should understand those things and be teaching them to others. But he must renounce his reasoning and accept Christ's word and believe it.

### b. It Is Attained through Effort.

Luther said that it is easy to tell a person how to be born of the Spirit -- just have faith in the gospel and in the work of the Holy Spirit. However,

when it is a matter of experiencing the new birth, as it was here with Nicodemus, then it is hard to understand. There is much effort required in actually experiencing it. It is easy to tell one that he must blind his reason, disregard his feelings, close his eyes, and only cling to the Word, and finally die and yet live. But to persevere in this until it actually becomes a matter of experience, and to continue in the new birth when one is really tested, requires pains and labor. It is a very bitter experience.<sup>1</sup> But Luther also said concerning the new birth, "It is so easy and so soon accomplished that no work could be easier."<sup>2</sup> He taught that the struggle is in giving up the old and the ease is in receiving the new.

c. It Is Spiritual.

Concerning the terminology which Jesus used in His conversation with Nicodemus, Luther believed that Jesus used the simile of the wind to point out that the spiritual man is neither here nor there and is not limited to time nor space. But his influence for good reaches beyond himself in space and beyond time into eternity. He does not do things that are merely physical, for he knows they will come to naught and will avail nothing.

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 113-114.
2. Ibid., Page 442.

The new life does not consist of dependence on works, but it is given and is continued in the grace of God which God gives one through Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the new birth is more than physical; it is spiritual.<sup>1</sup>

d. It Is Wrought by Water and Spirit.

Luther compared the water and the Spirit in the new birth to parents in physical birth. There is no use to look for the Holy Spirit apart from the water, because the Holy Spirit in the spiritual birth is the male part and the water is the female part, or mother. Neither can cause the new birth alone, Therefore, both water and the Spirit are essential to the new birth.

3. Its Results.

Luther said that there are no particular outward manifestations which show up as a result of the new birth, because nothing is required to perform the work except the Word and water, which we hear and perceive, and the power of the Holy Spirit putting faith in God and fear of God in the heart, causing one to have true confidence and comfort in God's grace, and helping one to offer

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Page 416.

true prayer. Then one is justly recognized as conceived and born of God, as it is written in John 1:12, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." God accepts the believer for the sake of His Son, and makes him His child, pleasing to Himself, and heir of eternal life; and the Holy Spirit is sent into the heart. Therefore, the result is inner and eternal. The heart is renewed and the believer overcomes God's wrath, sin, the flesh, and the world. He turns to God sincerely and has a desire and love for everything good. Then he no longer flees from God's wrath, though he acknowledges that he has sinned and merits God's wrath; but he takes comfort in the grace of Christ, which has been promised in the Word of God to those who repent and believe. Thus one obtains a childlike heart toward God and cheerfully comes before Him as his Father and calls upon Him by faith in Christ, the Mediator. That is the birth of the Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

In Galatians 6:15 Paul wrote, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Concerning Paul's term "a new creature," Luther said that the new creature is a result of a new creation whereby the image of God is renewed. It is not the colour and counterfeit of good

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 438-439.

works; for, although good works make a new outward appearance, and the world is delighted in them, they do not make a new creature, because the heart may remain just as wicked and full of infidelity and contempt of God as it was before. A new creature is the work of the Holy Spirit, who cleanses the heart by faith and puts in it the fear of God, love, chastity, and other Christian virtues, and gives one the power to bridle the flesh, and to reject the righteousness of the world. Therefore it is the renewing of the mind in the Holy Spirit that makes the new creature. After that the whole body is progressively brought into subjection, until the Spirit rules the whole man.<sup>1</sup>

Luther referred to Abraham as an example of one who had the new birth. It is recorded in Genesis 15:5 that God promised Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the heavens, and that they would inherit the world. But God commanded Abraham to slay his only son. Abraham could have said, "Surely God cannot command this; it must be of the devil." But no, Abraham forsook reason and honored God's commandment. He knew that God could raise up his son or give him another son, or even carry out His purpose in some other way. So Abraham gave all to God. In that decision Abraham left

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Kostlin, The Theology of Luther, Vol. 2, Page 628.

his old life and surrendered himself to God. As a result of regeneration he was willing to obey God even though it meant sacrificing his son. Through believing in God he became a new man. Then on the mountain when his son Isaac was tied and Abraham had raised his knife, an angel came to him and said,

"Abraham, Abraham, lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." (Genesis 22:11-12).

It was beyond Abraham's imagination that God would restore his son in that way. But the important fact is that Abraham, in obedience to God, had already slain Isaac in his heart. Therefore, Abraham had successfully carried on the heart struggle of obedience and submission and had taken on the new life from God.<sup>1</sup>

The result of the new birth is clearly seen in times of poverty and temptation and in the hour of death. In poverty and temptation, he who is not born of the Spirit is disorganized and fights wildly to defend himself. He turns all directions and vainly employs his reason to make his living. But he who is born of the Spirit thinks, "I am in God's hands, who has supplied my needs before and has given victory over Satan; He will also care for me now." In the hour of death he who does not have the

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Op. Cit., Pages 414-415.

new birth is frantic and fearful, but he who does have the new birth is calm and trusts his soul to God. Therefore the new birth, or the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, prepares one to live a joyous life before God in this world, and causes one to have a stable confidence in God that will carry one peacefully through death into the next world.<sup>1</sup>

#### B. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS WITNESS

##### 1. The Holy Spirit as Witness to the Believer.

Luther taught that Christ gave a test whereby the believer may know that the Holy Spirit is dwelling in him. It is recorded in John 15:26 that Jesus said of the Spirit, "He shall testify of me." If anyone glorifies himself or any person other than Christ, he does not have the Spirit and is not speaking the words of the Spirit. Further, Christ also said of the Spirit (John 16:13), "He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak." Thus when Christ or God speak to one, they speak through the Spirit. Therefore the believer may know when he has the Spirit, because the believer who has the Spirit glorifies Christ, and Christ and God speak to the believer through the Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Page 415.
2. Ibid., Page 165.



## 2. The Holy Spirit as Witness through the Believer.

The Holy Spirit is called a witness, because He witnesses concerning Christ and the Word. Luther taught that this witnessing is carried on through an outer testimony to the unlearned and the unbelievers through the Church represented by its ministerial officers as they preach the Word and administer the sacraments. Through the Church the Spirit bears witness of Christ. Jesus said, as recorded in John 15:26, that when the Spirit should come, He would testify of Jesus. From that Luther concluded that Christ established this method of witnessing -- that the Spirit should always remain in the Church as a witness to Christ. He concluded further that it was for the purpose of outward witnessing that Christ called the Spirit and gave Him to the apostles and their successors -- "ministers, preachers, and teachers." The Spirit's public witness through these "ministers, preachers, and teachers" will not be nullified nor prevented no matter how hard Satan and his followers may fight against them.

If the witness of the Spirit were not in the Church, the Church would be useless; and each person would be free to interpret the Scriptures to suit himself. But for the sake of the un instructed masses and the young people the Spirit must bear public witness so that they

may learn to know the grace of God which has been manifest and which is given through Christ. Therefore the Spirit gives an external witness through the Church so that unbelievers, no matter how unfortunate they are, may learn of God's grace in giving salvation through Christ.<sup>1</sup>

### C. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS GUIDE TO TRUTH.

#### 1. Jesus' Teaching Concerning the Holy Spirit as Guide to Truth.

It is recorded in John 16:13 that Jesus called the Holy Spirit the "Spirit of truth." Concerning Jesus' term "Spirit of truth," Luther said that where the Spirit is, there is a "rock foundation" of truth, and there is neither falsehood nor hypocrisy; because the Holy Spirit is not hypocritical but is truth. Where the Spirit is not, there is nothing but falsehood and hypocrisy; because where the Spirit of truth is not present, there can be no truth. Therefore the Holy Spirit is essential to the existence of truth.<sup>2</sup>

Jesus said, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 244-245, and 256.  
Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Epiphany, Easter and Pentecost, Vol. 2, Pages 240-241.
2. Lenker, Op. Cit., Page 249.

Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." (John 16:12-13a). In his interpretation of this verse, Luther used Jesus' words recorded in John 14:26,

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Jesus was telling the disciples that they could not understand what Jesus was saying, no matter how hard they tried and no matter how much Jesus tried to explain it to them; because they were still using carnal reasoning. Further, Jesus was telling His disciples that there were many more things of which He wanted to speak, but they had not yet oriented themselves to thinking of a spiritual kingdom with the ruler ruling in spirit instead of through his physical body, so they could not understand the things that Jesus wanted to say.

Jesus was not just presenting a problem without a solution. He also told His disciples that when the Holy Spirit came, He would guide them into all truth. In other words, "The Spirit will bring to your remembrance the things that I have just told you; and as you think about them under His guidance, you will be able to understand them." Further, the Holy Spirit was to complete the work which Jesus began. As the disciples were able to receive the truths which Jesus wanted to tell them but couldn't, the Spirit would reveal those truths to them.

Christ's word was carried out, and through the guidance of the Spirit the apostles were able to tell the world what Christ wanted to say but couldn't, because His hearers were not ready to receive it. Therefore, the Holy Spirit as guide to truth was given two tasks. First, He was to bring to the disciples' remembrance the things Jesus had told them, and He was to guide them in their understanding of those things. Second, He was to tell the disciples the things that Jesus wanted to tell them but could not, because the disciples were not ready to hear them.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the Holy Spirit's carrying out His functions as guide to truth after Christ had left this earth, Luther said that it was only after the disciples were left alone and were in danger and need and fear, and realized the need of praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that the Spirit could come and remind the disciples of the things Jesus had taught them and help them to use Jesus' teachings. Therefore, it was best for the Holy Spirit to act as guide to truth after Christ had left, because while Christ was here the disciples were no more ready to receive instruction from the Spirit than they were to receive instruction from Christ.<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 121-122, and 156-157.
2. Ibid., Page 329.

## 2. The Holy Spirit as Guide to Truth Today.

Luther taught that the Holy Spirit is still functioning today, doing the same work as He did in the days of the apostles. The Word proceeded from Christ, and the Spirit reminded the hearers of the Word and also gave them new truth. The apostles wrote those truths down, and today the Spirit speaks to one as one reads the recorded Word. He also goes with the Word as it is being told to others. The Spirit does not work without the Word, but He comes with the Word and through the Word as a guide to the truth of God, which the Word is.

### D. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS REVEALER AND INTERPRETER OF THE SCRIPTURES

#### 1. The Holy Spirit as Revealer of the Scriptures.

Thomas, in The Holy Spirit of God, wrote, "Luther by his emphasis on Justification had much to say about the Holy Spirit as the Author of Divine Revelation mediated through faith." <sup>1</sup> The truth of this statement is easily seen in Luther's own writings. He often refers to a passage with such expressions as the Holy Spirit witnessing, or the Holy Spirit speaking through the author of the

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Thomas, The Holy Spirit of God, Page 101.

passage. Or he often speaks of the Spirit witnessing through the passage. To Luther the expressions "God speaks" and "the Scriptures speak" were the same thing, because the Scriptures involve God's speaking through a medium inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Luther taught that the prophets and apostles spoke and wrote as the instruments of the Holy Spirit. Every word they gave is precious, because it came directly from God. The Holy Spirit put God's Word into the prophets' minds. Therefore, Luther gave the Holy Spirit an important place in the revelation and inspiration of the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning error in Scriptures, Luther taught that the original revelations were free from error, because they were given by the Holy Spirit. But the men who wrote the Scriptures under the guidance of the Spirit were not free from error. Also, Luther taught that there are errors in translation. However, all through the Scriptures the Spirit had one purpose -- to glorify Christ -- and that purpose is met in spite of the human errors that creep in through writing and translating. The Holy Spirit gave the revelations which have been written in the Scriptures; and the central purpose of those revelations is

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Luther, A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, Page 191.  
Rue, Luther and the Scriptures, Pages 17-18, and 56.

preserved, even though some errors do creep into the text through the writers and translators.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Holy Spirit as Interpreter of the Scriptures.

Luther taught that the Holy Spirit not only revealed what is in the Scriptures, but He also interprets the Scriptures. If one cannot understand the Scriptures, it is no fault of the Scriptures themselves; because without the help of the Holy Spirit in interpreting the Scriptures, one is like a deaf man listening to a speech. He hears a word now and then and goes away saying that the speaker did not use intelligible language. Further, a person does not need to depend on what other people have said about the Scriptures. He can and should go directly to the Scriptures themselves, and open his heart to the Spirit, who will interpret the Scriptures to him as he is able to receive their truths.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning applying reasoning to the Scriptures, Luther taught that the Scriptures must be understood "in the Spirit and in truth." One should not seek reasons in order to prove the truths of the Scriptures, because what

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 47, 92, and 109.

Kostlin, The Theology of Luther, Vol. 2, Page 256.

2. Lenker, The Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude Preached and Explained by Martin Luther, Pages 237-239, and 329. A.J. Holman Co., Works of Martin Luther, Page 333.

is in the Scriptures is true by virtue of the fact that the Holy Spirit gave it. One is not to try to reason out what can not be understood in the Scriptures as truth, because the Holy Spirit gave them.<sup>1, 2</sup>

#### E. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THE INSPIRER OF GOOD WORKS

##### 1. The Holy Spirit Inspires Righteous Attitudes and Deeds.

It is recorded in John 5:28-29 that Jesus said,

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Also Paul wrote in Romans 2:5-9a,

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish."

Luther asked how these verses teaching salvation by works can be harmonized with salvation through the washing of

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Luther's Commentary on the First Twenty-Two Psalms, Page 211.
- Rue, Luther and the Scriptures, Pages 16, 60, and 78.
2. For a fuller statement of Luther's views of revelation, recording, interpretation, preservation, cannonization, and translation of the Scriptures, see Rue, Luther and the Scriptures.



regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. He answered the question by saying that they do not need to be harmonized, because they are not out of harmony. Salvation through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit is an inner work done by the grace of God through faith, but the above verses are concerned with the outward signs resulting from the inner change. One becomes good through the washing of regeneration, and one does good works because one is good. That is what Jesus meant when He spoke of a good tree bringing forth good fruit and a corrupt tree bringing forth corrupt fruit.<sup>1</sup>

Luther taught that it is the Holy Spirit who gives the believer power to resist his sinful nature and manifest a life that springs from the regeneration and renewing of the Spirit. By His power the Holy Spirit transforms adulterous, wrathful, impatient, covetous persons who were enemies with their neighbors, into chaste, gentle, patient, generous persons who love their neighbors. That transformation is brought about through faith. Therefore it is through the transforming power of the Spirit, wrought in the believer by faith, that a believer can live a life that is pleasing to God.<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Advent and Christmas Season, Vol. 1, Page 159.
2. Lenker, Op. Cit., Page 310.  
Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Trinity Sunday to Advent, Vol. 3, Page 149.

In Galatians 5:22-23 Paul wrote, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ..." Concerning the fruits of the Spirit, or Christian graces, Luther said that Paul put love first, to impress upon the Christian that it is the first and most important of all the fruits of the Spirit. Before all things, Christians should love one another. After the Spirit has put love in the believer's heart, it is easier for the believer to live a life characterized by "joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance;" because the love that is in the heart finds expression through those characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

Luther so closely associated the Holy Spirit and the life of the believer that he regarded everything as sin except that which is done by faith in following the guidance of the Spirit. He thought of the Spirit as omniscient, because He knows the meanings and values a person puts on everything in his heart. Knowing those meanings and values, the Spirit tries to prevent the believer from being effected by thoughts that are not becoming to one who is following God. Also, through faith the Spirit guides the believer's thoughts into the chan-

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Luther's Church Postil, Gospels, Pages 593-595.

nels into which they should go, so that the believer will know what good works he ought to do. The believer is not left to his own wisdom to decide what he should and should not do, but through faith he can follow the Spirit, who will draw the believer's thoughts from evil and direct them to that which is good.<sup>1</sup>

When a person becomes justified through faith, faith has already started to bring the flesh into subjection, and Christ begins to rule in the heart. However, the flesh is still powerful and at times besets the believer. But through the believer's faith the Spirit daily slays the flesh lest it cause the believer to cast out faith. Therefore, faith in the activities of the Holy Spirit is necessary if the believer is to live a good life and continue to be a believer.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The Holy Spirit Inspires Obedience to the Spiritual Law.

Luther taught that God has given two sets of Laws -- the written Law and the spiritual Law. Since man's nature is to follow his desires, he wants to disobey the written Law; but he tries to make himself obey it, because he thinks God will punish him if he disobeys God's command-

\* \* \* \* \*

1. A.J. Holman Co., Works of Martin Luther, Vol. 1, Pages 113, 181, and 190. Also Vol. 6, Pages 450 and 453. Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Trinity Sunday to Advent, Vol. 3, Page 169.
2. Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Ehiphany, Easter and Pentecost, Page 235. Lenker, The Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude Preached and Explained by Martin Luther, Page 241.

ments. Since man obeys God's written Laws reluctantly, and only to avoid the penalty, man is hostile to God. But the spiritual Law is not written with pen and ink nor spoken with the mouth, for the Holy Spirit puts the spiritual Law in the heart of the believer. The believer does not reluctantly obey the spiritual Law to avoid punishment, but he obeys it willingly, because the Law is in his heart, and out of his heart come willful actions.

Luther also distinguished between civil laws and spiritual Laws. He said that human laws are obeyed in works, even though the works do not come from the heart. But spiritual Laws make their demand on the heart and cannot be obeyed except from the heart. Any attempt to obey spiritual Laws except from the heart is sin and hypocrisy.

But it is impossible for a person to keep the spiritual Law from his heart in his own strength. Therefore, the spiritual Law only drives a person to sin, because it demands something that he cannot do. But the Holy Spirit can give a person a heart that desires to keep the Law; because when the Holy Spirit enters the heart, He makes it a new heart in a new man. A person who has such a heart does not obey God out of compulsion and fear, but he obeys God from a willing heart. The Holy Spirit writes the spiritual Law on the heart in a way that makes it a living Law which gives the believer courage and causes him to obey the spiritual Law out of love. The

believer can obey God's spiritual Laws, because the Holy Spirit gives him a new heart out of which he loves to obey the spiritual Law.<sup>1</sup>

#### F. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS COMFORTER

Jesus knew that two of the basic necessities of a Christian life are faith and confession of faith. Also, He knew that Christians in the world would be as orphans when He left, and that they would be subject to discouragements because of the bitter attacks of Satan and his followers. Luther taught that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit as Comforter because of the necessity of faith and confession of faith in the Christian life, and because of the discouragements that would come to the Christian. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, true to His mission, comforts believers and gives them courage when they are in circumstances in which confession of faith is difficult.

The Holy Spirit does not comfort everyone; because, if He comforted the hardhearted, they would only become more careless. But through faith He comforts the Christians who are in sorrow and fear. But Luther taught that even Christians sometimes do not feel the comfort of the Spirit, because sometimes the devil causes them to be

\* \* \* \* \*

1. A.J. Holman Co., Works of Martin Luther, Vol. 6, Pages 448-449.  
Lenker, Luther's Church Postil, Gospels, Pages 277-278.

so timid that they do not have enough faith to appropriate the Spirit's comfort to themselves. In fact, sometimes, through the wickedness of the world, Satan hinders Christians to such an extent that it is impossible for them to appropriate "an atom" of God's comfort through the Holy Spirit. However, this is not due to any limitation on the part of the Spirit; for when the believer exercises faith, he finds the Holy Spirit able to comfort him under any circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

#### G. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS INTERCESSOR

Concerning the prayers of Christians, Luther taught that no person is capable of praying to God in such a way as to receive response from God. Therefore, the Holy Spirit was given to pray to God from within the believer. The Spirit's praying to God in behalf of a believer is an expression of the believer's confidence in God as his Father.

Paul wrote in Galatians 5:6, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Luther said that Paul could have written that God sent the Spirit of His Son into the believer's heart calling or whispering Abba,

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 248, 256-257, 281-282, and 303-306.

Father; but he said "Crying, Abba, Father," because crying is more forceful. He cries because the believer is tempted and is so weak. Likewise, in Romans 8:26 Paul wrote,

"The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

Luther said that whoever is assured of this work of the Spirit should never be overcome by any infirmity, no matter how great it is, because no infirmity in the believer is so great that the cry of the Holy Spirit to God to help the believer cannot be heard.<sup>1</sup>

Because one feels God's displeasure more than His good-will and favor, the Holy Spirit is sent into one's heart to sigh and to make request for one, to cry "Abba, Father," and to pray for one according to the will of God, with tears and unspeakable groanings. Also, when a person is in terror and conflict of conscience, and takes hold of Christ, and believes that Christ is his Savior, the devil turns all his energies against him to take away Christ and all the consolation which the believer has. Then the Holy Spirit makes intercession for the believer and gives him the assurance that he is a child of God. Thus the believer is raised above the terrors and looks unto Christ, his Savior; he overcomes the infirmities of

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Luther, A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, Page 451.

the flesh, and receives comfort again. The more Satan afflicts one, the more earnestly one lays hold on Christ, and the more the Spirit intercedes for one. Thus the Spirit's cry and one's own cry far surmount the cry of the Law and of the devil against one.

In Luke 18:6-8 it is recorded that Jesus said,

"Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, he will avenge them speedily."

From this verse, Luther concluded that the Spirit prays to God on behalf of the believer day and night.<sup>1</sup>

Luther taught that one for whom the Spirit cries is not free from temptation and affliction. When Moses had led the Israelites out of Egypt, and they came to the Red Sea, Moses was under severe affliction. No doubt he felt the cry of the devil against him saying, "All this people shall this day perish, for they can escape no way; and of this great calamity thou only shalt be found to be the author, because thou hast led them out of Egypt." Besides this the people cried out against him, as recorded in Exodus 14:11-12,

"Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Pages 452-453.



Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness."

The Holy Spirit was truly present here with Moses and made intercession for him with unspeakable groanings, so that Moses cried out to the Lord, "O Lord, at thy command have I led forth this people: help us, therefore." The fact that the Spirit was working for Moses did not prevent the affliction, but the Spirit's working was beneficial, because through His work a way of escape was furnished.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the Holy Spirit does intercede to God for the believer, and His intercession is with greater anguish and deeper groanings and cryings than any human can utter. The harder the conflict, the believer is in and the stronger the temptation with which he is confronted, the more earnestly the Spirit intercedes to God in behalf of the believer.

#### H. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS SANCTIFIER

Paul wrote in Romans 8:13, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Luther believed that the struggle to mortify the flesh never decreases nor ends so long as a person lives. The Christian does not dare to become negligent in this struggle

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Ibid., Page 454.

against the flesh, but

"He must arouse himself through the Spirit so as not to give place to the flesh. He must constantly put to death the flesh lest he himself be put to death by it." <sup>1</sup>

The Christian receives the Holy Spirit in order that the Spirit may help the Christian to be willing and able to mortify the flesh.

Concerning the struggle against the flesh that goes on in the Spirit-filled believer, Luther wrote the following statement:

"Take the most spiritual and the wisest individuals on earth, and while it is true that a fraction of them are outwardly and physically chaste, their hearts, it will be found, are filled with haughtiness, presumptions and self-will, while they delight in their own wisdom and peculiar conduct. No saint is wholly free from the deep depravity of the inner nature. Hence he must constantly offer himself up, mortifying his old deceitful self. Paul calls it sacrificing the body, because the individual, on becoming a Christian, lives more than half spiritually, and the evil propensities remaining to be mortified Paul attributes to the body as to the inferior, less important, part of man; the part not as yet wholly under the Spirit's influence." <sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the believer is not made perfect nor are his struggles with the flesh ended when he is regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

To Luther, "holiness" and "sanctification" are terms applied to that which is set apart from all profane

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Trinity Sunday to Advent, Vol. 3, Page 171.
2. Lenker, Luther's Epistle Sermons, Epiphany, Easter and Pentecost, Vol. 2, Page 15.

use and is dedicated to God. Christians are holy through the blood of Christ, the Word of grace, and faith which the Holy Spirit has given for the forgiveness of sins. That is what Jesus prayed for in His prayer recorded in John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Further, Christians are holy in that through the Spirit they daily crucify the lusts of the flesh, govern their lives by the divine Word, and serve God in the various walks of Christian life which are sanctified by His Word. In this sense, holiness is progressive. It denotes a continuous putting away of sin. It makes no difference how much the Spirit is appropriated by the believer; he is not yet righteous and pure, but is still a sinner, and is only engaged in the process of following after righteousness. But the Spirit in the believer is constantly busy lifting him up and guiding and strengthening him. Before God he is righteous because of his faith, and his sins and imperfections are forgiven him, and true righteousness is imputed to him. Therefore, even though the believer is not made perfect, there is a sense in which he is holy, or sanctified. Through the Spirit he is daily conquering the flesh and living more in harmony with God's will as it is given in God's Word.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Kerr, A Compend of Luther's Theology, Page 71.  
 Kostlin, The Theology of Luther, Vol. 2, Pages 141-142.  
 Lenker, Luther's Church Postil Gospels, Pages 280-281  
 and 438-440.

Luther taught that there are seven major ways by which the Holy Spirit daily sanctifies the believer and helps him to slay the flesh.<sup>1</sup> First, the Spirit sanctifies the believer through God's Word, which is the "very holiness of God." The Spirit administers the Word and uses it to anoint and sanctify the Christian. Second, God's people are made holy by the sacrament of baptism, which

"... is a holy bath of regeneration through the Holy Ghost, in which we bathe and are washed by the Holy Ghost from sin and death, as in the innocent, holy blood of the Lamb of God."<sup>2</sup>

Third, the believer is made holy through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Fourth, God's people are kept holy by the use of the "keys." Luther taught that the "keys" were given to the body of Christians, and not to a universal leader. As Christians use their authority to rebuke sin in a person, the Holy Spirit is trying to make that person holy. If he refuses to be holy, he is cast out of the Church by the authority of the "keys," and he is as a heathen. Through the Christian's use of the "keys," the Holy Spirit keeps the believer holy by preventing his being drawn away through fellowship with unbelievers. Fifth, one means by which the Holy Spirit administers the Word, baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the "keys" is through

\* \* \* \* \*

1. A.J. Holman Co., Works of Martin Luther, Vol. 5, Pages 270-289.

2. Ibid., Page 272.

officers within the group of believers. It is not the officers who make one holy, but Christ and the Holy Spirit working through the officers. Sixth, the Holy Spirit uses prayers that are not just repeated but are prayed from the heart to make Christians holy. Seventh, the Holy Spirit makes believers holy through persecutions and trials. The believer needs persecutions and trials because of the old corrupt Adam. Concerning persecutions and trials, Luther wrote:

They are "... for the good of the Christian life that it may continually grow and become more holy; for if we are led to faith through the preaching of the Gospel, then shall we be justified and grow in holiness; but while we remain in the flesh we can never be fully purified. Therefore God throws us into the midst of the fire, that is, into suffering, shame and calamity, so that we may become more and more purified until we die." 1

When a person is made holy by the Spirit, the old Adam is slain and made to learn "patience, humility, gentleness," and he is taught to "praise and thank God and to be joyful in suffering." Thus the believer finds new life in Christ and learns "to believe God, trust Him, hope in Him, love Him ..." 2

Therefore, even though the believer is still a sinner, and Luther taught that all believers are still

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Lenker, The Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude Preached and Explained by Martin Luther, Page 51.
2. A. J. Holman Co., Works of Martin Luther, Vol. 5, Page 287.

sinners, the Holy Spirit helps him become more pure and holy by working through the regular mediums which God has established. The Spirit's work as perfecter is not completed until after the death of the believer.

#### SUMMARY

The Holy Spirit's activities are not finished when He enters the heart and life of the believer. Luther taught that the Spirit works in the heart and life until the believer dies. The Spirit's first work is to regenerate the believer, or to cause him to be born of God. The new birth is something that man cannot understand, but it is possible because Christ came to earth from heaven. The new birth is accomplished through faith.

After regeneration has been accomplished, the Spirit witnesses to the believer that regeneration has taken place because the believer glorifies Christ instead of glorifying self. The Spirit also witnesses through the believer to sinners. The Spirit's witness through the believer is made possible through the Church and its functions and sacraments.

Luther taught that in fulfillment of Christ's promise, the Holy Spirit came as a guide to truth. He reminded the apostles of the things of which Jesus had spoken and helped the apostles to understand them. The

Spirit also gave the apostles new truth which Jesus could not give. The apostles wrote these truths down, and people today have them in the Scriptures. The Spirit guides people to the truth today by speaking to them through Scriptures.

The expressions "God speaks" and "the Scriptures speak" meant the same to Luther, because he considered the Scriptures as the Word of God. Through the Holy Spirit, God put His Word into the minds of the prophets and apostles, who in turn recorded it for posterity.

Luther taught that just as a good tree brings forth good fruit, so he who has the Holy Spirit in his heart does good works. The believer is not left to his own wisdom to decide what is good and what is not good, but through faith the Spirit guides the believer's thoughts away from what is evil and directs them toward that which is good. The Spirit also writes a Law on the believer's heart, which is a criterion of what is good and what is evil.

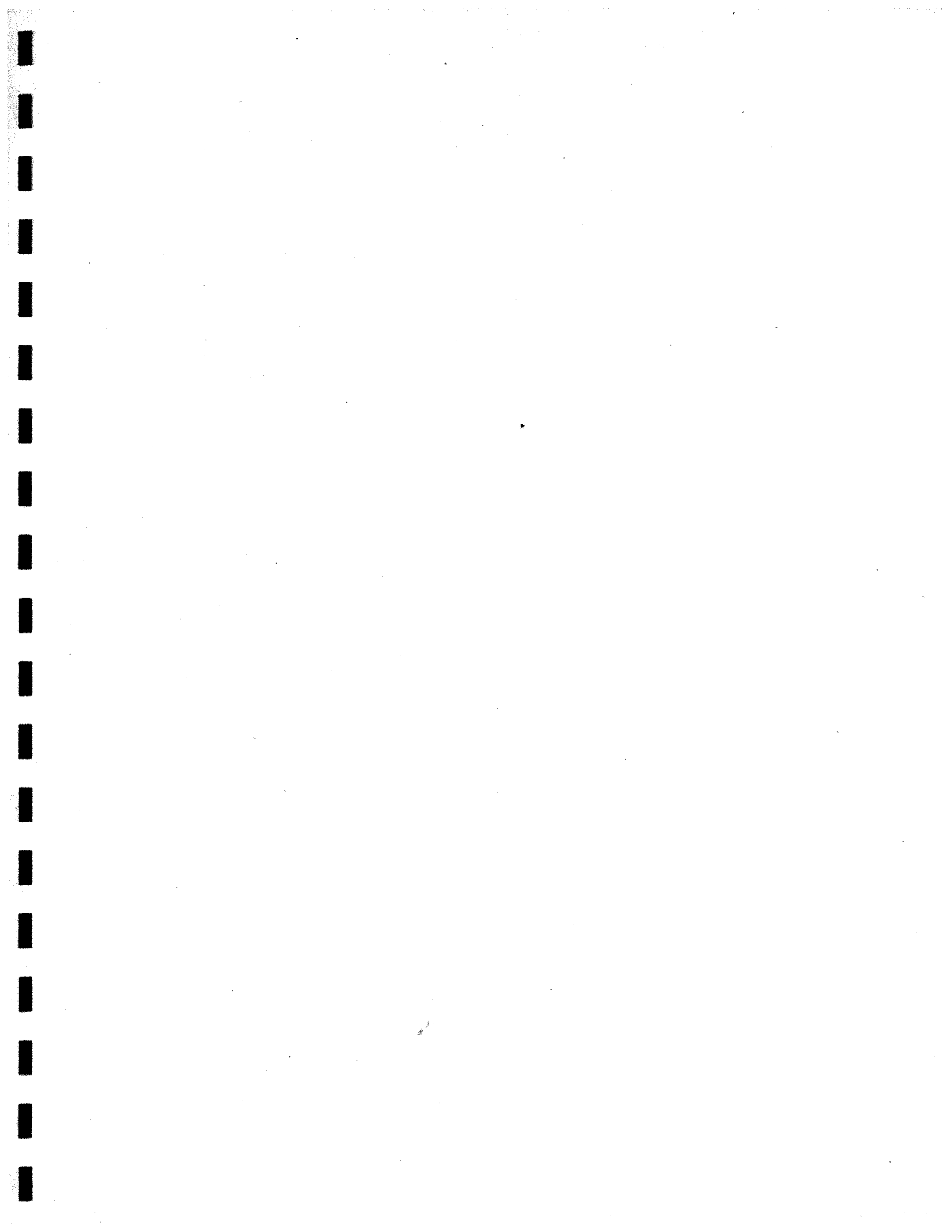
Jesus knew that the Christian would live in many situations in which it would be difficult for him to keep his faith in God, so He sent the Holy Spirit to comfort the Christian. The comfort that the Spirit gives is God's comfort, sent to the Christian because of his faith.

Luther taught that a person does not know how to pray as he should, so the Holy Spirit intercedes to God

for him. The Spirit's intercession for the believer is with daily groanings which no human can utter.

The believer is not made perfect through regeneration, for he still feels sin and makes many errors. Luther taught that the Holy Spirit helps the believer constantly to slay the flesh with its sinful tendencies, and become more pure and holy. The work of perfecting the believer is continued all through the believer's life and is completed after the believer's death.





SUMMARY

## SUMMARY

### A. RESTATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study has been to discover what Luther, one of the greatest reformers, believed concerning the Holy Spirit.

### B. SUMMARY

From this study some definite conclusions can be drawn on Luther's belief concerning the Holy Spirit. He believed that the Holy Spirit is a person who derived His divine essence from both God the Father and Christ the Son, and that He is of eternal existence. The Spirit dwells in the believer, and it is through the Spirit that the Father and the Son dwell in the believer.

From the Scriptures Luther learned what he believed to be the procedure through which the Holy Spirit normally enters the heart and life of the believer. Man could not please God, so God sent His Son into the world to shed His blood to "make satisfaction for sin" and take it away. Once atonement for sin had been made, then the way was open for the Spirit to enter the heart.

Before the Church was firmly established, the Spirit's entering the heart was accompanied by visible signs, as a dove or tongues of fire and wind; but since

the Church has become established, the Spirit's entering the heart is not accompanied by visible manifestations, but by an inner fervency. However, before the Spirit enters the heart, He convicts the unbeliever of sin, righteousness, and judgment in order to cause the unbeliever to respond.

The atonement would do no good if man did not make use of it; so there is something for man to do. A preacher must preach the gospel to those who do not know about atonement and about the Holy Spirit. Then the believer must use the faith the Holy Spirit has given him. He must have faith in the atonement and in the power of the Spirit to apply the atonement to a sinful heart. Through baptism the believer makes known his desire to serve God and enter into a new life with God as his Father. When the believer is baptized physically, God baptizes him spiritually through the Holy Spirit and the Spirit enters the believer's heart.

Luther believed that after the Holy Spirit has entered the heart and life of the believer, He carries on certain activities from within the believer. First, the Spirit regenerates the believer and he is born into the family of God. As a result, the believer's entire life is motivated by the energy of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit witnesses to the believer that regeneration has taken place, and witnesses through the

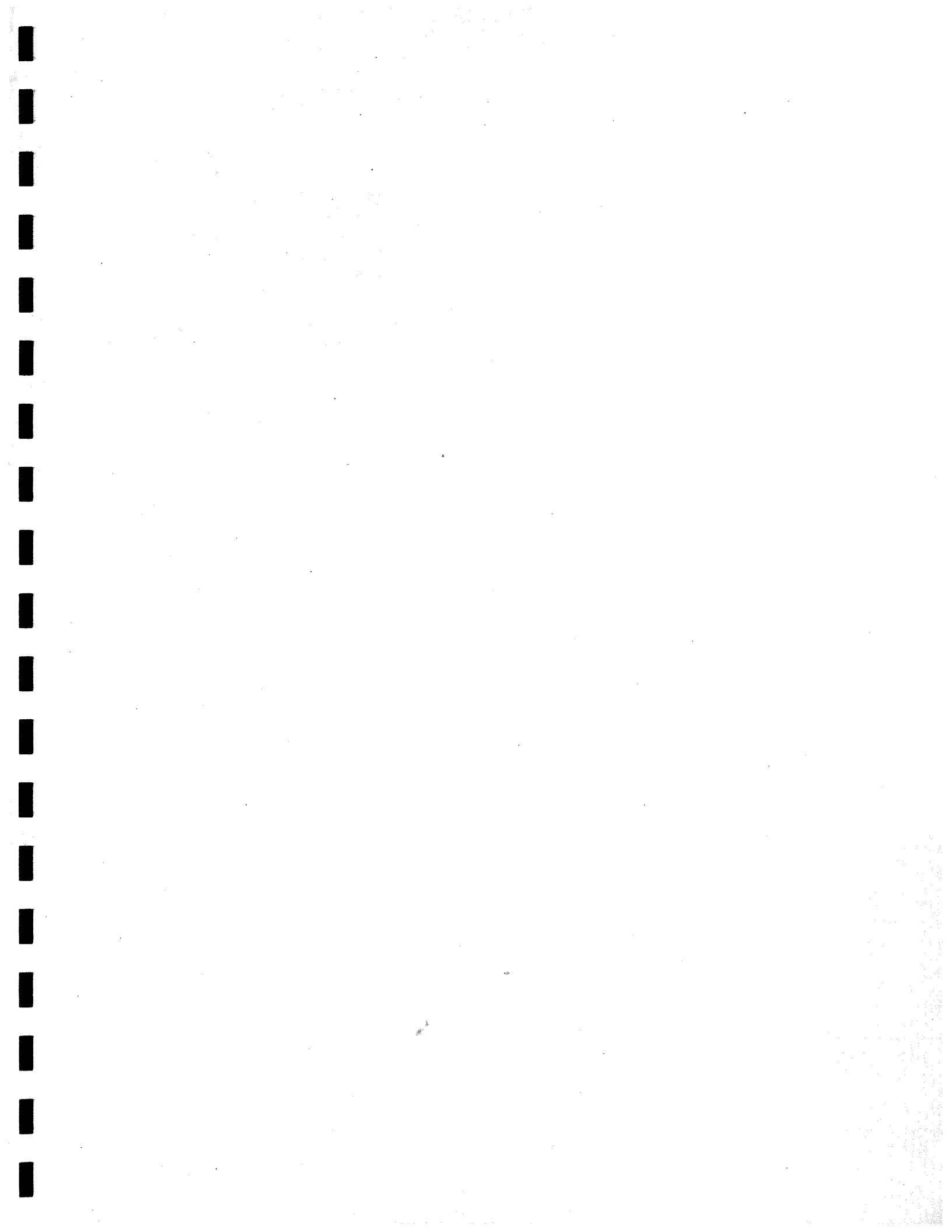
believer to unbelievers in order that unbelievers may become believers. The Spirit's witness through believers is carried on chiefly through the Church by means of its functions of preaching, teaching, ministering, and keeping the sacraments.

Luther believed that the Holy Spirit guided the apostles in their understanding of what Christ taught them, and also revealed new truth to them. The apostles wrote these truths in the Scriptures, and today the Spirit guides individuals in the truth by interpreting the Scriptures to them. Luther believed that the Spirit also revealed truth to the prophets who wrote the Old Testament. In both the Old and New Testaments the truths are God's truths given to the writers through the Holy Spirit.

Luther firmly believed that works for salvation would profit nothing before God, but he also believed that works done from a heart of love characterize the life of the person in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. The Spirit writes a spiritual Law on the heart of the believer and puts within the believer a desire to serve God and man from a motivation of love.

Christ knew that the believer would be serving God under trials. So Luther held that the Holy Spirit was sent to comfort believers in their trials so that Satan would not be able to cause the believer to cast away his faith.

Luther believed that the Holy Spirit helps the believer to overcome the sin in his life by slaying the flesh. Through the efforts of the Spirit and the perseverance of the believer, the believer gradually becomes more nearly perfect. But the Spirit's work is not completed in this life, and perfection is not attained until after the believer's death.



BIBLIOGRAPHY



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. PRIMARY SOURCES

- Holman, A.J. Co.: Works of Martin Luther, A.J. Holman Co., Philadelphia.  
Vol. I, 1915.  
Vol. II, 1916.  
Vol. III, 1930.  
Vol. IV, 1931.  
Vol. V, 1931.  
Vol. VI, 1932.
- Lenker, John Nicholas: Luther on the Creation, A Critical and Devotional Commentary on Genesis, Vol. I, Lutherans in All Lands Co., Minneapolis, 1904
- Lenker, John Nicholas: Luther on Sin and the Flood, Commentary on Genesis, Vol. II, The Luther Press, Minneapolis, 1910.
- Lenker, John Nicholas: Luther's Commentary on the First Twenty-Two Psalms, Lutherans in All Lands Co., Sunbury, Penn., 1903.
- Lenker, John Nicholas: Luther's Church Postil, Gospels, Lutherans in All Lands Co., Minneapolis, 1907.
- Lenker, John Nicholas: Luther's Epistle Sermons, Advent and Christmas Season, Vol. I, The Luther Press, Minneapolis, 1908.
- Lenker, John Nicholas: Luther's Epistle Sermons, Epiphany, Easter and Pentecost, Vol. II, The Luther Press, Minneapolis, 1909.
- Lenker, John Nicholas: Luther's Epistle Sermons, Trinity Sunday to Advent, Vol. III, The Luther Press, Minneapolis, 1909.
- Lenker, John Nicholas: The Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude Preached and Explained by Martin Luther, Lutherans in All Lands Co., Minneapolis, 1904.
- Luther, Martin: A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, Published by Salmon S. Miles; T. K. and P.G. Collins, Philadelphia, (undated).

- Luther, Martin: Martin Luther's Key to the Epistle of Paul to the Romans; Translated by Schauffler, William G., American Tract Society, New York, (undated).
- Luther, Martin: The Small Catechism; Translated by Welzel, H., Woodstock, Virginia, 1872.
- Smith, Preserved: The Life and Letters of Martin Luther, Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, 1911.

#### B. SECONDARY SOURCES

- Bruce, Gustav Marius: Luther As an Educator, Augsburg Publishing Co., Minneapolis, 1928.
- Fisher, George Park: History of Christian Doctrine, Charles Scribner Sons, New York, 1906.
- Heisey, Paul Harold: Three Essays on Luther, Wittenberg College Book Store, Springfield, Ohio, 1932.
- Kerr, Hugh Thomson: A Compend of Luther's Theology, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1934.
- Kostlin, Julius: The Theology of Luther; translated by Hay, Charles E., Lutheran Publications Society, Philadelphia.  
Vol. I, 1897.  
Vol. II, 1897.
- Neuslon, John Louis: Luther: The Leader, The Abingdon Press, New York, 1906.
- Peter, Martin Luther: "A Miracle Among Men," Aurora, West Virginia, (publisher not given).
- Reu, M.: Luther and the Scriptures, Wortburg Press, Columbus, Ohio, 1944.
- Steinhaeuser, Albert F.W.: Luther Primer, Survey Publishing Co., Columbia, S.C., 1917.
- Thomas, W.H.: The Holy Spirit of God, Longmans, Green, and Co., New York, 1913.