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Paul Strawn

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In his recent comments to the 2012 fall conference of the Minnesota South District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LC-MS) in Mankato, Minnesota, Dale Meyer, president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and former speaker of the Lutheran Hour, raised the question as to the conundrum of penitential elements of Christian worship after a general confession of sins and absolution.* His point? Why, after having sins confessed and forgiven should there be any further elements of repentance in a worship service? He is not the first to raise this question—only the first, perhaps, to have uttered it in some form at an official gathering of LC-MS clergy. Those familiar with common worship in Lutheran churches up until the 1990's are aware of the "further elements" to which Meyer refers: the Kyrie, the Offertory and the Agnus Dei. Of course, depending on their content, the Introit, Psalm, Collect, Old Testament, Epistle and New Testament readings, the sermon, the prayer of the church and various hymns could also be included. In short, the form of worship Lutherans inherited from the Reformers of the 16th century, obviously features a continual confession of sins and absolution, or a continual repentance—a fact that is starting to gain a bit of attention in the academic world.¹

Contemporary remedies for this reality, whether comprehended as a reality to be remedied or not, have been threefold. Some Lutheran congregations have abandoned general confession and absolution altogether, and left the other elements of the service somewhat intact. Others have replaced general confession and absolution with what is commonly known as a "sinner's prayer" followed by a declaration of forgiveness. Still others have left the general confession and absolution intact, but then gutted the rest of the service of as much confession and absolution as possible, replacing liturgical elements and hymns with praise choruses and other contemporary Christian music of a more upbeat nature both in musical form and theological content. (In reality, if Meyer is right, then this last option is the only consistent way to proceed. For if you do not need additional "penitential" elements, you also do not need the gospel "repeated" after it has been declared at the beginning of the service. Worship therefore becomes utterly our praise and sacrifice. No "sacramental" elements are needed. A one-way communication from us to God thereby ensues.)

Awkward within all three "solutions" is the continued inclusion of the Lord's Prayer. Being taught by our Lord himself to his disciples (Mt. 6:8-13; Lk. 11:1-3), and being part of the earliest of liturgical practices,² its exclusion from worship services of whatever shape or form within today's Lutheran congregations has yet to be accomplished as it has already in other Protestant denominations. And yet it no longer seems to fit rightly there. Any "momentum of spirit" gained by stripping the worship service of any reference to the confession of sins comes to a screeching halt in the request that the "kingdom of God come" among a congregation, his "will be done", and the "forgiveness of sins" be granted to those who themselves forgive.

The reason this occurs perhaps was noted by Martin Luther (1483-1546) in his Antinomian disputations (1538-1540): The Lord's Prayer is in reality a prayer of repentance. By praying the Lord's

¹ Cf. Walther Sundberg, *Worship as Repentance: Lutheran Liturgical Traditions and Catholic Consensus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).

² Cf. J. Jeremias, *The Lord's Prayer* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964). For a brief summation cf. Simon J. Kistemaker, "The Lord's Prayer in the First Century," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21/4 (December 1978), 323-328.

Prayer, the Christian confesses that he remains in Satan's kingdom, is beset by his flesh and the world, and has not been able to rid himself of sin. Luther writes in the third set of theses:

17. The Lord's Prayer, taught by the Lord himself to his saints and believers, is part of repentance and is full of the teaching of the law.
18. For whoever prays it truly confesses with his own voice that he sins against the law and repents (cf. LC VI:9).
19. For who asks that the name of God be hallowed confesses that the name of God has not been sanctified perfectly yet.
20. And who asks that the kingdom of God come confesses that he partly still is stuck in the kingdom of Satan that is contrary to God's kingdom.
21. Who asks that the will of God be done confesses that he is largely disobedient to the will of God and that he repents of that.
22. Yet it is God's law that teaches that God's name is to be hallowed; praying, one bears witness that one has not fulfilled this law.
23. And who detests the kingdom of Satan left in him, thereby bears witness that he did not fulfill chiefly the law of the First Table.
24. And who prays that the will of God be done in him, bears witness that he is disobedient to the will of God.
25. Yet this prayer ought to be prayed by the entire Church until the end of the world and by each saint until death.
26. For the entire Church is holy and acknowledges that she has sin and that repentance needs to take place perpetually.³

More troubling perhaps in nature than an inherent—if misunderstood or even overlooked—repentance of sin in the praying of the Lord's Prayer, is the anthropological implications of the same: Not only does the Christian remain beset by sin, the Christian must also work constantly, through repentance and absolution, to drive out the sin that remains within him. Here Luther compares the Christian to the Children of Israel, who, upon entering the Promised Land, conquered the Jebusites, but did not drive them out entirely. And yet the children of Israel were obligated to do so. The second action, however, turned out to be no less difficult than the first:

5. The repentance of the believers in Christ goes beyond actual sins, is ongoing, and stretches to death throughout the entire life.
6. For theirs it is to detest and hate the disease or sin of nature to the end.
7. For Christ rightly says about all who are his (Mark 1:15): "Repent;" that is, he wants the entire lives of those who are his to be repentance (cf. AE 31:25, 83f.).
8. For the sin in our flesh lasts the entire time of life and strives against the spirit, its adversary (cf. Gal. 5:17).
9. This is why all works done after justification are nothing else than repentance or the good intention against sin.
10. For nothing else happens than that the sin that is shown by the law and forgiven in Christ is driven out.
11. Thus it was incumbent upon the sons of Israel, after they had obtained the land of Canaan, to drive out the Jebusites that lived within their boundaries.
12. And thus to drive out the remaining Jebusites from the area was not a smaller work than to invade the land in the beginning (cf. AE 32:203, 233, 249).
13. Thus it is not much less to persecute the remaining sin through perpetual repentance than

³ *Only the Decalogue is Eternal. Martin Luther's Complete Antinomian Theses and Disputations* (ODE), trans. by Holger Sonntag (Lutheran Press: Minneapolis, 2008), p. 126 f.

to begin to detest it in the beginning.⁴

Summarizing then, the praying of the Lord's Prayer by Christians is the tacit confession that the Christian life is still that beset by sin. What is more, it signals that the Christian must daily drive out that sin through perpetual repentance.

The question thus posed above about the effect of the inclusion of the Lord's Prayer in worship services in which the acknowledgment of sin is no longer desired is answered: It does not belong there. Why? Not only does it force the Christian praying it to do that which he does not want to do, to repent of sin, but also compels him to confess an inner-reality which he may or may not accept: The fact that there is something within him which remains, and must be driven out in some way, and that this can only be accomplished by God's aid.

But what is that "something"? And how is it to be understood? What does it really mean when Luther posits above "8. For the sin in our flesh lasts the entire time of life and strives against the spirit, its adversary"? A little later in the Fifth Antinomian Disputation he describes such a process this way: "For even if the old man is destroyed day in, day out, and the new man arises (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16), we nonetheless cannot perfectly and completely die to sin unless we also die naturally and are buried."⁵ At face value it would seem that Luther is assuming a type of two-nature anthropology similar to that of the Christology of Chalcedon, using the Pauline designations of old man and new man⁶ to designate two competing realities within the Christian. This is hardly an unknown aspect of Luther's theology. Significant however may be the usefulness of such an anthropological construct for understanding Luther's criticism's of the theology of Johann Agricola (1494-1566) in the Antinomian Disputations—which others must be left to do—but also for an understanding of Christian worship in which the Lord's Prayer, as a prayer of repentance, truly has a place.

Admittedly, this topic of the old man and new man within the Christian has been given little or no attention of late. Whether it is an aversion to opening up old theological wounds within the Missouri Synod,⁷ a reticence to address the topics of *theosis* and *divinization* popularized by Finnish school of Luther research,⁸ or preference for speaking of the state of man in baroque Lutheran fashion as being

⁴ ODE, p. 125 f.

⁵ Ibid., p. 154.

⁶ Cf. Rom. 6:6; 7:5, 18, 25; 8:1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13; 13:15; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:16, 17, 19, 24; 6:8; Eph. 4:22, 24; Col. 3:9, 10.

⁷ Cf. the S.T.M thesis of Walter A. Maier (1967), under the guidance of Martin Franzmann, later printed as *The Christian Under Grace, According to Romans 6:14* (Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, no date). There (p. 45 f.) Maier drew a stark distinction between the old man and the flesh: "After sacramental regeneration the child of God is, in essence, in the spirit, only "new man"; he no longer has or is "old man." The sinful part of the Christian's nature which still attaches to his "new man" after regeneration the Scriptures designate as "the flesh" (compare Galatians 5:16,17) or "the body" ...but never as "old man." Theologians at times use these terms rather loosely in their writings, and this tends to confuse Paul's teaching. A case in point is Martin Luther's answer to the question, "What does such baptizing with water signify?" He writes: "It signifies that the Old Adam [=Man] in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever." Unless one is familiar with Luther's usage of "old man," the impression certainly is not gained from this reply that the old man was once-for-all killed off in baptism and the new man alone remains as the believer's essential self. It would have been better if Luther had substituted something like "sinful flesh" for "Old Adam" in the opening part of this answer." This assertion by Maier as well as a basing of the Christian's sanctification on the realization of his union with Christ through baptism engendered much discussion into the 1980's.

⁸ Cf. Tuomo Mannermaa, *Christ Present In Faith: Luther's View Of Justification* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2005), translated from the German "In ipsa fide Christus adest: Der Schnittpunkt zwischen lutherischer und orthodoxer Theologie," originally published in Tuomo Mannermaa, *Der im Glauben gegenwärtige Christus: Rechtfertigung und Vergottung. Zum ökumenischen Dialog* (Hannover: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1989). See here Kurt Marquart's

made in the image of God, having lost that image, and living in faith;⁹ whether speaking of man who is beset by original sin committing actual sins of commission and omission is preferred,¹⁰ or it simply is granted that the modern concept of realized eschatology, of heaven “breaking in” has become the desired method of speaking of the Christian—for it replaces consideration of the individual Christian’s state in favor of the Church in general weekly celebrating a somewhat ethereal “feast of victory”—the concepts of old man and new man seem simply to have been forgotten. But they need not be. Nor does a consideration of them necessarily exclude other descriptions of man who is Christian. As the Church has fallen to speak of Christ himself according to his person, his two natures, his attributes, the communication of those attributes, his two states, his three offices, etc. , so it should not shy away from speaking of the Christian in similar multi-faceted fashion. And what is more, by once again reexamining the construct of old man/new man, perhaps new insights can be gained, old insights rediscovered and solutions offered, to the plethora of questions continuing to be raised about the nature of Christian worship.

The Two Natures of the Christian

The inner-reality of the Christian was treated repeatedly by Luther throughout his writings, lectures and sermons. From the outset of his career as university professor, he found himself in conflict with the Aristotelian anthropology in which he had been trained extensively, and which was the generally accepted understanding of man—both philosophically and theologically.¹¹ Telling already is what is found in the very first work he oversaw into print, but did not write himself, the *German Theology* (*Theologia Germanica* (Dec. 4, 1516 and 1518)). At that time, Luther claimed in the introduction that “Next to the Bible and Saint Augustine no other book has come to my attention from which I have learned—and desired to learn—more concerning God, Christ, man, and what all things are.”¹² In that work, the inner life of the Christian is front and center:

One speaks of the “the old man” and of “the new man.” You should know what that language means. The old man is Adam, disobedience, self, I, and the like. But the new man is Christ and obedience. When one speaks of dying and destroying and things like that, one means that the old man should come to nought. And when and where that happens in a true divine light, the new man is born again. One also says that man should die to himself, that is to say, man’s self [*selbhey*: literally “self-dom”] and his I [*ichhey*: literally “I-dom”] must die. Saint Paul speaks of the same thing: Put off the old man with its practices and put on the new man whom God has

critique of Mannermaa: “Luther and Theosis” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 64 (no. 3. July, 2000), pp. 182-205. Mannermaa’s further development of the divinization of man through his union with Christ would seem to be the natural development of the idea proposed by Lennart Pinomaa already in 1959, that “The new man lives in us only as the alien righteousness of Christ. This righteousness never changes into a part of my personality (ego). If in our quest for such change we turn our eyes upon ourselves, we become “self-righteous servants of the law.” The new in us is Christ himself. “*Faith Victorious: An Introduction to Luther’s Theology* , trans. by Walter J. Kukkonen (Lima, Ohio: Academic Renewal Press, 2001), p. 68.

⁹ So the excerpts from the writings of Johann Gerhard as presented in *The Doctrine of Man in Classical Lutheran Theology*, Ed. by Herman A. Preus and Edmund Smitts (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1962), p. 27 ff.

¹⁰ So the excerpts from the writings of Martin Chemnitz, *Ibid.*, p. 131 ff.

¹¹ Often overlooked is the fact that the very first public disputation held by Luther (Sept. 25, 1516) was on the topic of man. See *Quaestio de viribus et voluntate hominis sine gratia disputata* in *Martin Luther Studienausgabe*, Band 1, ed. by Hans-Ulrich Delius, with Helmar Junghans, Reinhold Pietz, Joachim Rogge and Günther Wartenberg (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1987), pp. 153-162.

¹² *The Theologia Germanica of Martin Luther*, Trans. by Bengt Hoffman, Intr. By Bengt Häggglund (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1980), p. 54.

created and formed. He who lives in his selfdom and according to the values of the old man is called—and is—Adam’s child. He may be leading the Adamic life on the fringe or be in the thick of it—he is nevertheless the devil’s child and brother. But he who lives in obedience, the life of the new man, is Christ’s brother and God’s child.¹³

In a second expanded edition of this work which Luther had printed in 1518, he would go so far as to give it the subtitle: “The right understanding as to what Adam and Christ mean and how Adam must die within us and Christ rise.”¹⁴ This would appear in 20 more editions before Luther’s death in 1546.¹⁵

In July of 1519, while lecturing on Galatians for the first time, Luther would work through the terminology of flesh, soul, and spirit. In treating Gal. 5:17 (“For the desires of the flesh are against the spirit, and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh”) Luther subtly rejects Jerome’s (347-420) distinction of the spiritual man who is something other than man who is body and soul (cf. 1 Thess. 5:23) in favor of man who is soul, “whole man,” comprised of flesh and spirit. In the process he describes the relationship of the flesh and spirit in man—the old man and the new man—to the whole man using a type of *genus idiomaticum* in which the attributes of either are ascribed to the entire Christian:

By spirit and flesh, moreover, I understand the whole man, especially the soul itself. Briefly, to give a very crude comparison, just as I may call flesh that is injured or ill both healthy and ill (for no flesh is altogether illness), because, to the extent that it begins to be healed and is healthy, it is called health, but where injury or illness is left, it is called illness; and just as illness or injury hinders the rest of the flesh, healthy though it is, from doing perfectly that which healthy flesh would do—so the same man, the same soul, the same spirit of a man, because he is associated with and tainted by the disposition of the flesh, is spirit insofar as he savors the things that are of God (Matt. 16:23), but is flesh insofar as he is influenced by the enticements of the flesh; and if he consents to these, he is altogether flesh, as is stated in Gen. 6:3. On the other hand, if he consents entirely to the Law, he is altogether spirit; and this will take place when the body becomes spiritual. Accordingly, one must not imagine that these are two distinct human beings.... Thus we in the church are indeed in the process of being healed, but we are not fully healthy. For the latter reason we are called “flesh”; for the former, “spirit.” It is the whole man who loves chastity, and the same whole man is titillated by the enticements of lust. There are two whole men, and there is only one whole man. Thus it comes about that a man fights against himself and is opposed to himself. He is willing, and he is unwilling. And this is the glory of the grace of God; it makes us enemies of ourselves.¹⁶

Such assertions of Luther about the inner conflict of the Christian, about the anthropology of the Christian, made in his early lectures in Galatians and elsewhere, did not go unnoticed. In fact, frequently overlooked in the bull issued by Rome the next year (1520) against Luther are its criticisms specifically of his anthropology. *On June 15, Pope Leo X censured 41 statements of Luther and granted him sixty days to recant them.*¹⁷ *While this bull was issued mostly based on Luther’s utterances in 1517 and 1519, that is, without considering the seminal writings of 1520, it does represent a snapshot of what the papal theology of the time¹⁸ deemed to be the most serious issues. And underneath the high-profile issue of*

¹³ Ibid., p. 77 f.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁶ AE 27:363 f.

¹⁷ In his bull, *Exsurge Domine*.

¹⁸ The bull is representative of that theology in that John Eck, Luther’s chief papal opponent, served as the chief author of the bull. Eck was also instrumental in crafting the papal response to the Augsburg Confession of 1530.

indulgences¹⁹ and related topics²⁰ there had emerged a fundamental disagreement between Luther and the papal theologians concerning that perennial question: What is (the Christian) man? The anthropological issues brought up in the papal bull are these: Does the Christian still have sin (2)?²¹ Does it prevent him from going to heaven (3)?²² How does that sin affect his good works (31-32)?²³ Can man by himself know the gravity of his sin (35)?²⁴ Given the struggle of flesh against spirit within the Christian, what are man's natural powers before conversion (36)?²⁵ While the bull merely listed the

¹⁹ Theologically, this issue, while of continued financial importance to Rome, was quickly fading in importance in comparison to the underlying and related issues.

²⁰ Such as sacramental confession, the power of the keys, purgatory, and the sacraments in general.

²¹ Even though the 1519 Leipzig Debate between Luther and John Eck centered mostly on the question of the primacy of the pope, the theses drawn up for debate covered a range of issues. In the second thesis, Luther asserted (AE 31:317): *"To deny that man sins even when doing good; that venial sin is pardonable, not according to its nature, but by the mercy of God; or that sin remains in the child after baptism; that is equivalent to crushing Paul and Christ under foot."* A few months after the debate, Luther defended this and other Leipzig theses in writing based on the Scriptures and the writings of church fathers, cf. esp. WA 2:410-421. In 1521, he concludes his defense of the second censured article by stating that "this article [is] almost the best and most important of them all" (AE 32:28). Considering that the German adverb "fast" (cf. WA 7:344-345) was at Luther's time typically equivalent to "very, exceedingly" in English (cf. Grimm, *Wörterbuch*, 3:1348), Luther ranked the importance of this article even higher than is apparent in the standard translation.

²² In his 1518 defense of the 95 Theses, Luther had stated (AE 31:153): *"They say all these things as if there were no sins except actual sins, and as if the tinder [of original sin] which is left is not an impurity, not a hindrance, not a means which would delay entrance to the kingdom of heaven. Unless this [original sin] is healed, it is impossible to enter heaven, even if there is no actual sin present, 'For nothing unclean shall enter it' [Rev. 21:27]."* In 1521, Luther interestingly noted, building on what he had written in response to the second article concerning true sinfulness of original sin (AE 32:29): *"Up till now, I held this article only as an opinion and theory, not as a settled and certain truth that ought to be taught. It was, therefore, not necessary to condemn it. But my opponents produce no better argument against it than the single word, 'disapproved.' Since I am not interested in what they like or do not like, and, in the meantime, have given the matter more thought, I am now ready to assert this article as a settled and true doctrine."*

²³ While the 31st article is based on the first part of the second Leipzig thesis quoted above, the following article is drawn again from Luther's 1518 explanation of the 95 Theses (AE 31:216): *"[E]ven a good work which has been done in the best manner is a venial sin."* As he explained in 1521, the foundation laid in defense of the articles two and three is also the basis for these articles (cf. AE 32:84). The argument he summarized briefly by a reference to the struggle of flesh (old Adam) against spirit (new man, cf. Rom. 7; Gal. 5) and the resultant inherently impure fruit of the person who is both flesh and spirit (Matth. 7). The sinfulness of a deed comes, therefore, from man's flesh; its venial or pardoned character is due to his spirit, that is, the new man's faith in Christ, resulting in God's merciful judgment (AE 32:86-87): *"A good work, even though well performed, is a venial sin according to God's merciful judgment, and a mortal sin according to his strict judgment."*

²⁴ Article 35 is again taken from Luther's 1518 defense of his 95 Theses, where he had stated (AE 31:121): *"No one is sure that he does not always sin mortally because of the most secret vice of pride."* Having had to reconsider the matter, Luther in 1521 wrote (AE 32:91): *"I must retract this article, too, and I say now that no one should doubt that all our good works are mortal sins, if they are judged according to God's judgment and severity and not accepted as good by grace alone. ... This is the true Christian doctrine, which teaches a man to fear and trust God, and then he can love and praise Him, for he now despairs of himself and relies for everything that is good upon the grace of God. The pope and his papists intend to destroy throughout the world this love, praise, and fear of God, and this faith."* Later Luther would state that the depth of man's corruption goes beyond human experience, which is why it must be learned from God's biblical law (cf. SA III, II, 4).

²⁵ In the 1518 Heidelberg Disputation, Luther had asserted (AE 31:40): *"Free will, after the fall, exists in name only, and as long as it does what it is able to do, it commits a mortal sin."* Again drawing on the struggle within the Christian, Luther asks (AE 32:93): *"Whose reason is not shocked to think that although spirit and flesh are the two greatest enemies, yet the flesh is supposed to desire and seek its enemy, the spirit?"*

sentences perceived as heretical without systematizing them or attempting a refutation, Luther, as becomes clear from his 1521 response to the bull,²⁶ obviously saw them as very much related. What is more, he saw them as critical for “his” theology as a whole. The answers to those questions, especially to the first one – Luther considered it to be the “very best and most important”²⁷ one, which should be considered “the most certain, the best known, the most evident truth” (AE 32:21) – determine the shape of the whole of Christian theology.²⁸

It is in article two of the papal bull that the relationship of a type of two nature anthropology within the writings of Luther is clearly rejected by Rome. That article, condemned by the bull, reads: “He who denies that after baptism sin remains in every child tramples upon Christ and St. Paul.”²⁹ This was the second of the thirteen theses that Luther had defended the previous year in Leipzig.³⁰ In his defense, appearing in March of 1521 as *A Defense and Explanation of all the Articles of D. Martin Luther Which Were Through the Roman Bull Unjustly Condemned* Luther quotes a number of biblical texts,³¹ and then turns to Romans 7:25: “I myself serve the law of God with my spirit, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.”³² He then notes:

Does not that make it abundantly clear that one and the same man finds in himself two things. Through the spirit, he wills the good and serves the law of God and is godly. He even takes pleasure and delights in this service. But with the rebellious flesh, he wills evil, and takes pleasure and delight in the service of evil. And since flesh and spirit are one man, he is held accountable for both aspects of his nature, work, love, and desire, even though they contradict each other. Because of the spirit, this man is godly; because of the flesh, he is a sinner, as St. Paul says in Rom. 6 [8:10]: “The spirit is alive in the sight of God because of its righteousness but the flesh is dead before him because of its sin.”³³

Then in the conclusion of his defense of the article is found almost the exact same argument, which he would use almost two decades later in the Antinomian Disputations:

To bring the matter to a conclusion, the Lord’s Prayer alone is enough to show that all of us are still sinners, for all the saints must also pray, “Hallowed be thy name, they will be done, they kingdom come,” etc. Here they actually confess that they do not now adequately hallow God’s name; nevertheless they could not even offer this prayer if the Spirit had not already begun to hallow this name. Thus they confess that they do not yet fulfill the will of God and yet they could not pray this petition had they not already begun to fulfill it. For those who have not made a beginning care nothing about the name and will of God, pray for nothing, and show no interest. Nor can it be said that in these petitions the saints pray only over their past sins and not their present and remaining sins. For there is a special petition in the Lord’s Prayer that deals with past sins which says, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” These other petitions, however, obviously refer to the other sins which are now present. For this reason, they ask that in the future God’s name be honored, the divine will be obeyed, and the kingdom of God be attained. These are the prayers of men who are still partly in the kingdom of the devil, partly disobedient, and partly guilty of dishonoring the name of God.³⁴

²⁶ See the previous footnotes.

²⁷ Cf. the brief discussion of the translation in footnote 8.

²⁸ “Saint and Sinner: Lutheran Anthropology and the “Uses” of the Law,” unpublished manuscript.

²⁹ AE 32:19.

³⁰ AE 31:317.

³¹ Rom. 7:7; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:18; Rom. 6:12; Gen. 3:15; Gal. 5:24; 1 Pet. 2:11; Rom. 7:22.

³² AE 32:21.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 24 f. Here Luther is repeating, to a greater extent, what he had already asserted about the seven petitions of the Lord’s Prayer in his *An Exposition of the Lord’s Prayer for Simple Laymen* in 1519: “They are seven

But to what anthropological conclusion do both quotations lead? What is Luther getting at by continuing to describe a twofold type of nature to the Christian? Luther's comments here come from the last of four such responses that he made to the papal bull. Already in November of 1520 he had published a Latin and a German response both entitled *Against the Bull of the Antichrist*.³⁵ He followed these in December with the Latin *Defense of Every Article of Martin Luther Recently Damned by the Bull of Leo X*.³⁶ It is in the midst of the preparations of these works that Luther also issued what could perhaps be considered a popularization of the issues he addressed in Leipzig and then was forced to defend after the appearance of the papal bull. It is in that popularization of the issues of the day that perhaps more clarity can be gained. In what is known today most commonly as *The Freedom of the Christian*, Luther presents his most-complete two-nature anthropology to that point. Significant is that there Luther compares the two natures of the Christian to that of the two natures of Christ, and then also to Christ's state of humiliation:

The faith of a Christian can be summarized with two statements: A Christian is the most liberated master of everyone, and subject to no one. A Christian is the most dutiful servant of everyone, and subject to everyone.

These statements seem contradictory, but they are not. They actually are in harmony. Both statements are from the Apostle Paul who wrote "For though I am free from all, I made myself a servant to all" (1 Corinthians 9:19) as well as "Owe no one anything, except to love each other" (Romans 13:8). To serve and obey whatever it loves is the very nature of love.

Christ was therefore free and enslaved. He was in the form of God and the form of a servant. Christ was Lord of all, but born of a woman, and born under the law.

A Christian finds himself in much the same situation. A Christian has two natures:³⁷ A spiritual nature and a bodily nature. When referring to the spiritual nature (which is also called the soul) a Christian is called the spiritual, the inner, or the new man. When referring to the bodily nature (which is also called the flesh) a Christian is called the body, the outer, or the old man. The Apostle Paul refers to this two-fold nature of the Christian when he says: "Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day" (2 Corinthians 4:16).

The reason why seemingly contradictory statements are often made in the Bible about Christians is due to the Christian's two-fold nature. The simple fact is that within each Christian two natures constantly oppose each other. "The flesh wars against the spirit and the spirit wars against the flesh" (Galatians 5:17).³⁸

What follows then is an explanation of the inner working of the two natures of the Christian, their relation to Christ, and how in particular faith and love are expressed in Christian life. Faith unites the soul to Christ,³⁹ the Christian is as Christ, king and priest.⁴⁰ Yet as far as his flesh, his body is concerned,

reminders of our wretchedness and poverty by means of which man, let to a knowledge of self, can see what a miserable and perilous life he leads here on earth. Such a life is nothing but blasphemy of God's name, disobedience to his will, rejection of his kingdom, a hungry land without bread, an existence full of sin, a precarious sojourn, and an abounding in every evil," AE 42:27.

³⁵ *Adversus execrabilem Antichristi bullam* and *Wider die Bulle des Endschrists*.

³⁶ *Assertio omnium articulorum M. Lutheri per bullam Leonis X. novissimam damnatorum*.

³⁷ Cf. "Homo e(ni)m duplici constat natura, spirituali (et) corporali,..." *De libertate Christiana*, in *Martin Luther Studienausgabe*, Vol. 2, ed. by Hans-Ulrich Delius with Helmar Junghans, Joachim Rogge und Günther Wartenberg, (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1982), p. 264; "...das eyn yglich Christen mensch ist zweyerley nature / geystlicher vn(d) leyplicher." *Ibid.* p. 265.

³⁸ *How to Live a Christian Life*, adapted by Paul Strawn, 2nd Ed. (Minneapolis: Lutheran Press, 2006), p. 10 f.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 39 ff.

something other must occur. The new man was to keep the old under control. The flesh must be put under submission to the spirit. That occurs when the flesh is caused to do works of service, i.e. of love:

Inwardly, according to the spirit, a man is justified by faith, having everything he requires spiritually. This very faith and abundance ought to increase every day until the future life. Nevertheless the Christian remains in this mortal life on earth. In this mortal life it is necessary that he rule his own body and have interaction with other people. This is where works begin. On this earth the Christian must not relax. Here he must exercise his body by fasting, keeping vigils, laboring, and other such regular disciplines. The Christian does this so that the body is subdued by the spirit, obeys it, and is conformed to the inner man and faith. If it is not subdued in such a way, it is the nature of the body to rebel against both the inner man and faith and hinder them in any way it can. The inner man, being conformed to God and recreated in His image through faith, rejoices and delights in Christ as the source of all the blessings and so really has only one thing it must do: Freely and joyously serve God in love. When the inner man does this, however, it comes into conflict with the contrary will residing in his own flesh. The will of the flesh strives only to serve the world and seek its own gratification. The spirit of faith cannot and will not bear the will of the flesh, and so constantly strives with cheerfulness and zeal to keep it in submission and restrain it.⁴¹

Just six months later, in the summer of 1521, further clarification of what Luther actually meant by the spirit and the flesh, or the soul and the body, would be achieved as he took up the distinction of “body, soul and spirit” found in his Commentary on the Magnificat:

Scripture divides man into three parts, as St. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:23: “May the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” There is yet another division of each of these three, and the whole of man, into two parts, which are called “spirit” and “flesh.” This is a division, not of the nature of man but of his qualities. The nature of man consists of the three parts—spirit, soul and body; and all of these may be good or evil, that is, they may be spirit or flesh. But we are not now dealing with this division. The first part, the spirit, is the highest, deepest, and noblest part of man. By it he is enabled to lay hold on things incomprehensible, invisible, and eternal. It is, in brief, the dwelling place of faith and the Word of God. Of it David speaks in Psalm 51:10: “Lord, create in my inward parts a right spirit,” that is, a straight and upright faith. But of the unbelieving he says in Psalm 78:37 “Their heart was not right with God, nor was their spirit faithful to Him.”

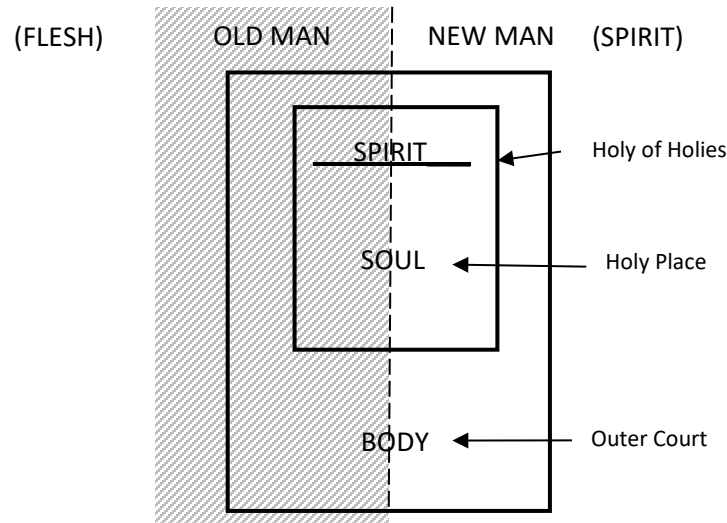
The second part, the soul, is this same spirit, so far as its nature is concerned, but viewed as performing a different function, namely giving life to the body and working through the body. In the Scriptures it is frequently put for the life; for the spirit may live without the body, but the body has no life apart from the spirit. Even in sleep the soul lives and works without ceasing. It is its nature to comprehend not incomprehensible things but such things as the reason can know and understand. Indeed, reason is the light in this dwelling; and unless the spirit, which is lighted with the brighter light of faith controls this light of reason, it cannot but be in error. For it is too feeble to deal with things divine. To these two parts of man the Scriptures ascribe many things, such as wisdom and knowledge—wisdom to the spirit, knowledge to the soul; likewise hatred, love, delight, horror, and the like.

The third part is the body with its members. Its work is to carry out and apply that which the soul knows and the spirit believes. Let us take an illustration of this from Scripture. In the tabernacle fashioned by Moses there were three separate compartments. The first was called the holy of holies; here was God’s dwelling place, and in it there was no light. The second was

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 50 f.

called the holy place; here stood a candlestick with seven arms and seven lamps. The third was called the outer court; this lay under the open sky and in the full light of the sun. In this tabernacle we have a figure of the Christian man. His spirit is the holy of holies, where God dwells in the darkness of faith, where no light is; for he believes that which he neither sees nor feels nor comprehends. His soul is the holy place, with its seven lamps, that is, all manner of reason, discrimination, knowledge and understanding of visible and bodily things. His body is the forecourt, open to all, so that men may see his works and manner of life.⁴²

So putting everything together so far we have a model of man that looks this way:



To this anthropological model Luther would add just a few short months later (October, 1521) a modification of the concept of the Christian conscience in his *The Judgment of Martin Luther on Monastic Vows*.⁴³ There, he would oppose Rome's insistence that the conscience is an infallible moral arbiter of human action, with the idea that the conscience is trained rightly or wrongly with whatever law that man adopts for himself.* The same discussion Luther would take up toward the end of his life in his treatment of Joseph's brothers in his lectures on Genesis.* In the fall of 1525, Luther would address the weakness of the human will and the limits of reason in *The Bondage of the Will*.*

In the *Small Catechism* of 1529 the daily reality of the Old Adam, as it is called there, and new man, is emphasized when the question is asked as to the continual meaning of baptism for the Christian: "It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever."⁴⁴ And in the section on Confession, we find once again a reference to the Lord's Prayer as a prayer of repentance: "Before God we should plead guilty of all sin, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer."⁴⁵ And of course in his explanation of the Lord's Prayer, there is the continual insistence that the Christian pray for that which he does not have nor can do.

Two years later, in 1531, it becomes obvious that a twofold anthropology truly has become a centerpiece to Luther's theology being used there as the foundation for understanding the difference

⁴² AE 21:303 f.

⁴³ AE 44:243 f.

⁴⁴ *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis: CPH, 1986), p. 25.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

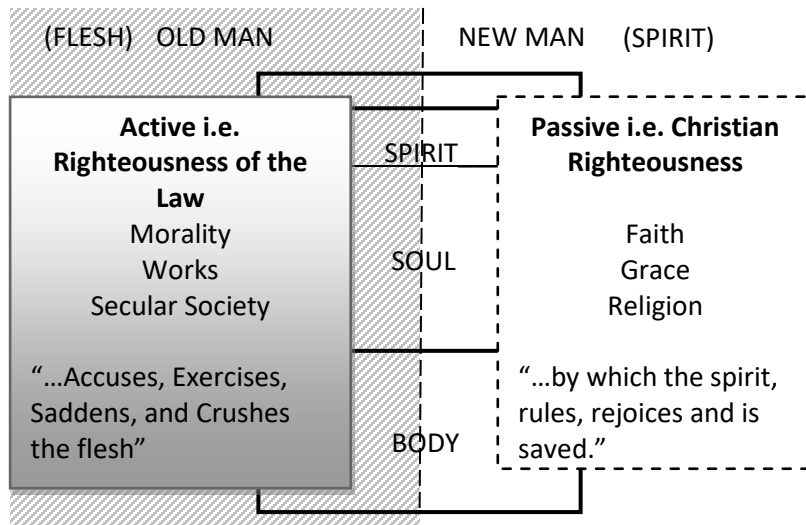
between two kinds of righteousness within the Christian⁴⁶. In the introduction to his second series of lectures on Galatians, begun in July of that year, Luther notes:

This is our theology, by which we teach a precise distinction between these two kinds of righteousness, the active and the passive, so that morality and faith, works and grace, secular society and religion may not be confused. Both are necessary, but both must be kept within their limits. Christian righteousness applies to the new man, and righteousness of the Law applies to the old man, who is born of flesh and blood. Upon this latter, as upon an ass, a burden must be put that will oppress him. He must not enjoy the freedom of the spirit or of grace unless he has first put on the new man by faith in Christ, but this does not happen fully in this life... Thus as long as we live here, both remain. The flesh is accused, exercised, saddened, and crushed by the active righteousness of the Law. But the spirit rules, rejoices, and is saved by passive righteousness, because it knows that it has a Lord sitting in heaven at the right hand of the Father, who has abolished the Law, sin, and death, and has trodden all evils underfoot, has led them captive and triumphed over them in Himself (Col. 2:15).⁴⁷

So here is the same diagram again with these editions additions:

⁴⁶ Summarizing their earlier work on the “two kinds of righteousness” as the key to Lutheran theology, R. Kolb and C. Arand, in their book *The Genius of Luther’s Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 26, describe the distinction between the righteousness before God (passive, by faith, in the heart) and the righteousness before men (active, by works, in the world) as the crucial anthropological “matrix” of Luther’s entire theology. What they overlook, however, is the important detail that Luther, in the introduction to his second Galatians commentary, distinguished “the righteousness of the Law or of the Decalog, which Moses teaches,” from civil righteousness according to political laws (cf. AE 26:4). This is not new when compared to his 1519 sermon on two kinds of righteousness. In other words, Luther’s distinction of “two kinds of righteousness” is not that between righteousness before God and before the world. Unlike the political laws, the law of Moses – the Ten Commandments – does command, e.g., faith. As the Spirit works that faith in man by the gospel, faith actively fulfills the First Commandment – not as a badge of pride before God, but as part of the incipient, inchoate renewal of human nature in all its relations: to God, to the neighbor, and to one’s own sinful nature (cf. AE 31:299). This is certainly also what the FC is driving at. Moreover, the Apology’s concept of the “new obedience” definitely included the First Table of the Ten Commandments (cf. only Ap. IV, 123-131, based on Jer. 31). Otherwise, it would just be repeating the error of the scholastic opponents within a different framework, as C. Arand, “Two Kinds of Righteousness as a Framework for Law and Gospel in the Apology,” *Lutheran Quarterly* XV (2001):417-439, seems to suggest by materially equating the external civil “righteousness of reason” with the new obedience of the Christian. In other words, the active righteousness that begins to be done by the Christian in the power of the Holy Spirit is not just “civil” or “neighborly” in nature, as defined by the Second Table of the Decalogue. It has also a decidedly theological dimension, as demanded by the First Table. Cf. Holger Sonntag, “Christ’s Holy People: Luther’s Ecclesiology of Holiness,” in *Theology Is Eminently Practical. Essays in Honor of John T. Pless*, ed. by Jacob Corzine and Bryan Wolfmueeller (??: Lutheran Legacy, ????), pp. ??-??.

⁴⁷ AE 26:7-9.



When so charted it becomes somewhat obvious, that by 1531, the two nature anthropology presented so forcibly in *The Freedom of the Christian* eleven years earlier, had not changed much at all, but if anything, has simply grown in complexity and fullness.

Later on in the same set of lectures on Galatians, as Luther treats Gal. 5:17 once again, he shifts the focus from simply establishing the fact that the Christian is of a twofold nature—as he did in his earlier treatment of the passage—to the comfort to the Christian that such knowledge of his two-fold nature brings, and the danger that a lack of such a knowledge presents:

Thus there is great comfort for the faithful in this teaching of Paul's, because they know that they have partly flesh and partly spirit, but in such a way that the spirit rules and the flesh is subordinate, that righteousness is supreme and sin is a servant. Otherwise someone who is not aware of this will be completely overwhelmed by a spirit of sadness and will despair. But for someone who knows this doctrine and uses it properly even evil will have to cooperate for good. For when his flesh impels him to sin, he is aroused and incited to seek forgiveness of sins through Christ and to embrace the righteousness of faith, which he would otherwise not have regarded as so important or yearned for with such intensity. And so it is very beneficial if we sometimes become aware of the evil of our nature and our flesh, because in this way we are aroused and stirred up to have faith and to call upon Christ. Through such an opportunity a Christian becomes a skillful artisan and a wonderful creator, who can make joy out of sadness, comfort out of terror, righteousness out of sin, and life out of death, when he restrains his flesh for this purpose, brings it into submission, and subjects it to the Spirit.⁴⁸

How exactly the flesh was to be restrained, brought into submission, and subjected to the spirit Luther would touch upon a few years later (Oct. 14, 1536), in his *Disputation Concerning Justification*. There Luther uses the term *original sin* for that of the old man:

Thus original sin is restless even in us, but since we are under the doctor, under Christ and live mindful of our illness, we shall be blessed. For that poison decreases more and more from day to day and we always wipe out, wash, and cleanse the poison, with the poison becoming less until it is totally extinguished by fire in the judgment. In the meantime we endure the cure of a

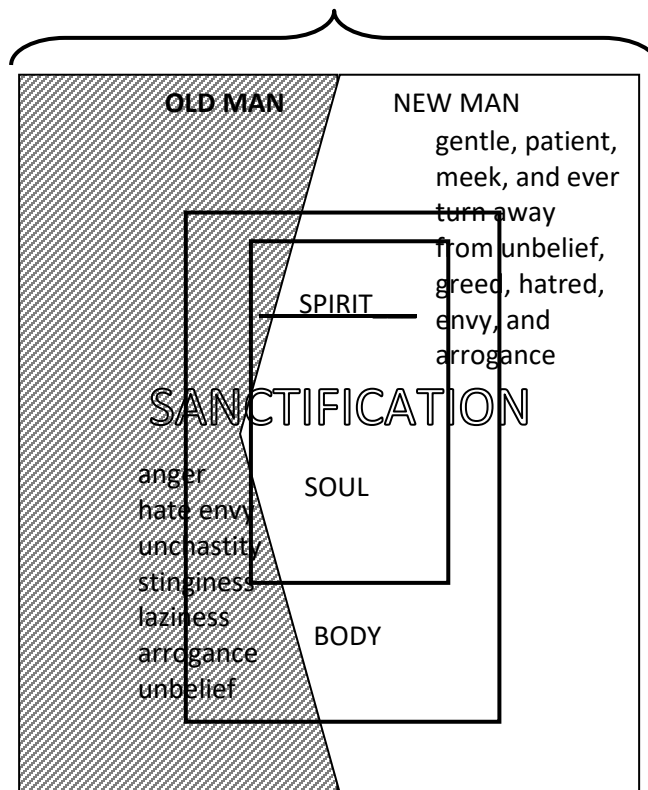
⁴⁸ AE 27:74.

living physician, that is, of Christ. We hear the Word, pray, read. As much as we can, we recover through the Word. For we ought to pray daily, hear and meditate on the Word daily, attend the sacraments, and purge the poison and rottenness. Accordingly, we ought to use these means, so that we are purged, cleansed of the poison of sin, until we are truly and entirely purged. This takes place in the pit of the tomb, until we reach eternal life, which happens at the last judgment.⁴⁹

So this simply reiterates, with a bit more detail, what Luther had already written in the *Large Catechism* concerning the gradual suppression of the Old Adam within the Christian:

But what is the old man? It is what is born in human beings from Adam: anger, hate, envy, unchastity, stinginess, laziness, arrogance—yes, unbelief. The old man is infected with all vices and has by nature nothing good in him. Now, when we have come into Christ’s kingdom, these things must daily decrease. The longer we live the more we become gentle, patient, meek, and ever turn away from unbelief, greed, hatred, envy, and arrogance.⁵⁰

Through Faith Credited with Christ’s Holiness



The Meaning of a Two-Nature Anthropology for Christian Worship: Enduring the Cure?

So what then does it mean for Christian worship that Christians are to live “mindful of our illness”, that is, of the existence of the old man (i.e. original sin) within us and that we daily “wipe out, wash, and

⁴⁹ AE 34:182f.

⁵⁰ *Luther’s Large Catechism with Study Questions*, (St. Louis: CPH, 2010), p. 139.

cleanse the poison?” Luther suggests that it is a matter of “Enduring the cure of a living physician, that is of Christ.” What is the cure? Daily prayer, hearing and meditating upon the Word of God, and reception of the sacraments. Why does Luther call such things “enduring the cure?” The answer might be found once again in the *Freedom of the Christian*:

Let’s be honest. We cannot live in this world without works and rituals. The hot and inexperienced period of youth needs restraining and protection by such things. Since everyone is obligated to keep his own body under control by attention to these things, the minister of Christ must be prudent and faithful in so directing and teaching the people of Christ in all these matters.⁵¹

So to a certain extent, the works and rituals of worship work to keep ourselves under control in order that we can indeed pray, hear and meditate upon the Word of God, and receive the sacraments. But the works and rituals of worship are not ends to themselves. They are there, to a certain extent, to keep us restrained like an orderly of sorts, so that the physician Christ can indeed work upon us, driving the illness of sin from us. Luther writes:

Hence in the Christian life rituals are to be looked upon as builders and workmen look upon those preparations for building or working which are not made with any view of being permanent or anything in themselves, but only because without them there could be no building and no work. When the structure is completed, they are laid aside. Here you see that we do not despise these preparations, but set the highest value on them. It is a belief in them we despise, because no one thinks that they constitute a real and permanent structure. If anyone were so manifestly out of his senses as to have no other object in life than that of setting up these preparations with all possible expense, diligence, and perseverance, while he never thought of the structure itself, but pleased himself and made his boast of these useless preparations and props, should we not all pity his madness and think, that at the cost thus thrown away, some great building might have been raised?

Thus, too, we do not despise works and rituals—nay, we set the highest value on them. But we despise the belief in works, which no one should consider to constitute true righteousness, as do those hypocrites who employ and throw away their whole life in the pursuit of works, and yet never attain to that for the sake of which the works are done. As the Apostle says, they are “ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 3:7). They appear to wish to build, they make preparations, and yet they never do build. In this way they continue in a show of godliness, but never attain to its power.

Even more bluntly, Luther asserted earlier in the same work that “the inexperienced and perverse youth need to be restrained and trained by the iron bars of ceremonies lest their unchecked ardor rush headlong into vice after vice.”⁵² But then he clarifies evangelically:

On the other hand, it would be death for them always to be held in bondage to ceremonies, thinking that these justify them. They are rather to be taught that they have been so imprisoned in ceremonies, that that they should be made righteous or gain great merit by them, but that they might thus be kept from doing evil and might more easily be instructed to the righteousness of faith. Such instruction they would not endure if the impulsiveness of their youth were not restrained.⁵³

And years later, in his Galatians commentary he would state:

There is also a ceremonial righteousness, which human traditions teach, as, for example, the traditions of the pope and other traditions. Parents and teachers may teach this righteousness

⁵¹ *How to Live a Christian Life*, p. 93.

⁵² AE 31:375.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

without danger, because they do not attribute to it any power to make satisfaction for sin, to placate God, and to earn grace; but they teach that these ceremonies are necessary only for moral discipline and for certain observances.⁵⁴

So perhaps the challenge posed by the idea with which we began—that after the public declaration of the forgiveness of sins, a Christian now need no longer to repent, or confess, for the rest of the time of worship—comes into some sort of relief. If true, it would seem to be suggesting that a different anthropology is a work than that described by Luther, and that to which the question of worship, of ritual, was applied. In the context of a two-nature type of anthropology, the confession of sins is a confession of a reality, which once again in itself confronts the old man and strengthens the new man. Before and after the confession of sins, the Christian is a Christian. The Christian is also a forgiven Christian. It is just that the old man rages and the new man is weakened, throwing the Christian into doubt. Public confession and absolution affirms that reality of the Christian life from the outset of worship, but does not change it. Thus all of the elements of worship which are penitential, and chiefly that of the Lord's Prayer, prayed directly before the Words of Institution and the reception of the body and blood of Christ in, with and under bread and wine, reflect such a two-nature anthropology. The concept however, that once sins are forgiven publicly, that a Christian is in a new reality in which sins no longer need be confessed, or that repentance need not be continual, seems to fly in the face of such a two-nature anthropology, and a rejection, whether intended or not, of the idea that the entire life of the Christian need be one of repentance (Cf. Thesis 1 of the *95 Theses*).

So what type of anthropology would such a worship suggest? Well, obviously one that has eliminated original sin from man's nature, either from the outset, as some Evangelicals, or by a sacramental action of the church, as Roman Catholics. Repentance and the forgiveness of sins in such a situation is therefore more like a coming clean, or a wiping of the slate of *actual sins*, than it is the confession of a continual reality which exists within the Christian known as *original sin*, or the *old man*. Thus there is a time aspect involved: Before confession and absolution one is liable for actual sin; after he is not. But for the Lutheran, actual sins committed are the symptoms of a greater reality: the continued existence within us of the old man until our death. The confession of sin therefore is the confession not just of wrong action, or inaction, but of our daily reality. Thus in the same section (the third set of theses) of the Antinomian Disputations, in which Luther treats the Lord's Prayer, he also treats confession and absolution, and the difference between a false and a true confession of sins and absolution:

1. The repentance of the Papists, Turks, Jews, and all infidels and hypocrites is similar in all aspects.
2. It consists in experiencing sorrow and doing satisfaction for one or more actual sins, in then being secure regarding other sins or original sin.
3. Yet their repentance is partial and temporal, only about some sins and in some part of life.
4. Those who in no way consider original sin to consist in the corruption and perdition of the entire nature are forced to think this way.
5. The repentance of the believers in Christ goes beyond actual sins, is ongoing, and stretches to death throughout the entire life.
6. For theirs it is to detest and hate the disease or sin of nature to the end.
7. For Christ rightly says about all who are his (Mark 1:15): "Repent;" that is, he wants the entire lives of those who are his to be repentance (cf. AE 31:25, 83f.).
8. For the sin in our flesh lasts the entire time of life and strives against the spirit, its adversary (cf. Gal. 5:17).
9. This is why all works done after justification are nothing else than repentance or the good intention against sin.

⁵⁴ AE 26:4.

10. For nothing else happens than that the sin that is shown by the law and forgiven in Christ is driven out.⁵⁵

Unfortunately, since the set of theses from which these comments come were not debated publicly,⁵⁶ further clarification must be found elsewhere, and it is, in the public debate over the second set of theses, on Jan. 12, 1538.⁵⁷ There Luther provides, first of all, a nice summary of the matter at hand, that the Christian must withstand within him a constant battle between his two natures of flesh and spirit. Secondly, he points out that the repentance that would seek to establish a clean slate for certain sins, and not be simply a confession of our condition, is insufficient:

Every believer, who by faith begins to conquer the terrors of the law, repents throughout his entire life. For the entire life of the faithful is an exercise and a certain hatred against the remainders of sin in the flesh, which grumbles against the Spirit and faith. The pious repeatedly feel terrors. Then faith battles against unbelief and despair, as well as against lust, anger, pride, revenge, etc. This battle remains in the pious as long as they live; in some it is more violent, in others, gentler. They therefore have sorrow over and hatred of sin combined with faith. And this is why they cry out with Paul (Rom. 7:24): "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" Staupitz used to say, death is desirable to the pious because there is never an end of sinning in this life—and this is most truly how it is. In pious minds the sadness over sin and fear of death is greater than the joys over the life and ineffable grace given through Christ. To be sure, they wrestle with this unbelief and conquer it by faith; but this spirit of sadness always returns. Therefore repentance remains in them until death.

These things I bring up because of the author of the monstrous propositions and because of the Papists, who acknowledged some actual sin and considered it an easy and momentary matter which can be abolished by contrition, confession, and satisfaction....

Furthermore, they totally removed original sin by saying that it is a certain weakness in nature which they called tinder. Therefore all Papists, Jews, and Turks have a repentance only concerning actual sins, which are murder, theft, adultery, etc.; whenever they feel sorry and render satisfactions for them by works and choice forms of worship they believe that God is placated and content. They do not know what repentance is, much less do they repent. On the contrary, by these words, "Unless your righteousness" etc. (Matt. 5:20), likewise, "Repent" (Mark 1:15) we are reminded that the repentance of the pious is perpetual—yet in such a way that faith and the knowledge of Christ conquer the terrors so that the fear is filial, not servile; so that the devil accordingly ambushes us as much as possible, walks about (1 Peter 5:8); and although he causes us to fall, we are nonetheless raised up by the promise concerning Christ, which announces the remission of sins. Then we receive the Holy Spirit by faith who brings forth new motions and fills the will so that it truly begins to love God and hate the sin that remains in the flesh.

Since this situation always returns and causes us trouble, we need repentance which lasts until death. About this repentance the Jews, Papists, and Mohammedans did not know anything, but only underwent repentance for some actual sins: a kind of repentance not of the entire life, but of a temporal nature. And when they have rendered it by means of works chosen by them for this purpose, then they believe they have made satisfaction for them before God.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ ODE, p. 125.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 14.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 13.

⁵⁸ Ibid. pp. 59-61.

Normally when reading such a quotation, our interest lies in the conception of satisfaction and its inappropriateness. Within the context of the Antinomian Disputations, however, our focus should be upon the inadequacy of a confession of sins which really is considered to be addressing actual sins alone, and not also man's condition as sinner by nature.

Conclusion

So ultimately the question that Dale Meier posed, and that Luther's comments concerning the Lord's Prayer in the Antinomian Disputation suggests, is that the issue over worship within the LC-MS and elsewhere may not be one of who is Christ, or what is worship, but simply that of what is man. Even more strongly perhaps, it might even be suggested that with the introduction of modifications of Christian worship, in order to minimize repentance, that the Lutheran church is in fact re-embracing an understanding of man, the rejection of which, was at the heart of the Lutheran reformation.