



BULLETIN

The North American Paul Tillich Society

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In this issue:

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- Information about the Annual Banquet of NAPTS and Reservations
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- “Vita Passiva’: A Life of Faith in Light of the Reformation on the Occasion of the 500th Commemoration of the Reformation, Deut. 6:4-5; John 1:9-13; Mark 9:24” by Young-Ho Chun
- “Martin Luther’s Concept of the Church,” Notes by Wilhelm and Marion Pauck

FOR THOSE ATTENDING THE ANNUAL MEETING IN BOSTON: A NEW WAY OF PAYING DUES
AND THE BANQUET FEE.

THE NAPTS GOES HIGH-TECH!

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2017 ANNUAL PROGRAM, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

P17-107

North American Paul Tillich Society

Theme: *Creative Justice and Resistance*

Friday - 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Sheraton Boston-Olmsted (Fifth Level)

J. Kendrick Wells, Louisville, Kentucky

Should the Freedom of Expression of Religious Beliefs be Subordinate to Civil Rights

Matthew Lon Weaver, Marshall School

Philosophy and Biblicism

Peter Slater, Trinity University, Toronto

Tillich at Harvard

P17-242

NAPTS Books under Discussion

Theme: *Book Review*

Prophetic Interruptions by Bryan Wagoner

Bryan Wagoner, Davis and Elkins College, Presiding

Friday - 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Sheraton Boston-Clarendon (Third Level)

Responding:

Christopher C. Brittain, Trinity College, Toronto

Russell Re Manning, Bath Spa University

Christian Danz, Universität Wien

P17-248

NAPTS Books under Discussion

Theme: *The Influence of Paul Tillich on Robert Neville's Philosophical Theology*

Friday - 3:30 PM-5:00 PM

Sheraton Boston-Beacon B (Third Level)

Robert Neville will discuss his three volume *Philosophical Theology* as an outgrowth of the Tillichian project. Two respondents will reply to the presentation.

Presenter:

Robert C. Neville, Boston University

Responding:

Sharon Peebles Burch, Interfaith Counseling Center, San Anselmo, California

Wesley J. Wildman, Boston University

6:30 – 9:30 NAPTS Annual Banquet—Information after the Program

P18-122

North American Paul Tillich Society

Theme: *Tillich and Reformation Heritage*

Saturday - 9:00 AM-11:30 AM

Marriott Copley Place-Brandeis (Third Level)

Christian Danz, Universität Wien

Critique and Forming: Paul Tillich's Interpretation of Protestantism

Tyler Atkinson, Bethany College

Power Plays in the Political Thought of Tillich and Luther

Jan-Olav Henriksen, MF Norwegian School of Theology

Tillich and the Reformation

Ilona Nord, University of Würzburg

Rereading Paul Tillich's Sermons Regarding the Debate on Inclusion and Diversity in Germany

A19-122

Open and Relational Theologies Unit and Tillich: Issues in Theology and Culture Unit

Theme: *Does God Need the World? Whitehead and Tillich in Conversation*

Devan Stahl, Michigan State University, Presiding

Sunday - 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Sheraton Boston-Republic B (Second Level)

Does God Need the World? Whitehead and Tillich in Conversation (Joint Session)

In this time of looming climate catastrophe a major impediment to action has been the theological conviction of many that God will not let us destroy our world. Embedded in this idea is that we are indispensable to God. What if that is not the case? This joint session between the Tillich: Issues in Theology and Culture and the Open and Relational Theologies Units will explore the fundamental question: "Does God need the world?"

Janna Gonwa, Yale University

'A Tender Care That Nothing Be Lost': Whitehead, Tillich, and the Eternal Life of the Ecosystem

Marc Pugliese, Saint Leo University

Tillich on the Dynamics of the "Divine Life": Evasive or Earnest?

Kirk MacGregor, McPherson College

The Tillichian Dispensability of the World to God

Demian Wheeler, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities

God Is the World: Bernard Loomer as a Bridge between Whitehead and Tillich

Responding:

Robert C. Neville, Boston University

A19-325

Books under Discussion

Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Unit

Theme: Book Panel: *Tillich and the Abyss: Foundations, Feminism, and Theology of Praxis (Palgrave, 2016)* by Sigridur Gudmarsdottir

Michele Watkins, Iliff School of Theology, Presiding

Sunday - 5:00 PM-6:30 PM

Marriott Copley Place-Grand A (Fourth Level)

This session will be a prearranged book review panel on *Tillich and the Abyss: Foundations, Feminism and Theology of Praxis* by Sigrid Gudmarsdottir. The panel will include responses by Catherine Keller, John Thatamanil, and Kwok Pui-Lan.

Panelists:

Kwok Pui Lan, Emory University

John Thatamanil, Union Theological Seminary

Responding:

Sigridur Gudmarsdottir, University of Tromsø

Business Meeting:

Devan Stahl, Michigan State University

Stephen G. Ray, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

THE ANNUAL NAPTS BANQUET

A message from President Adam Pryor:

The NAPTS Banquet for 2017 will be held on Friday November 17th from 7:00-9:30 pm at the Back Bay Social Club. The restaurant is located at 867 Boylston Street. It is a one minute walk NE out of the Bolyston

Street exit of the Hynes Convention Center.

Attendance at the banquet will be \$60 with a cash bar available. Graduate students are asked to pay what they can—at least \$25. Retired faculty are also asked to pay according to their means, but all are welcome! ***Please contact Fred Parrella in advance if you plan***

to attend and make payment to the NAPTS. As always, all are welcome, but advanced notice will help us best prepare the venue for the evening.

The meal will be a three-course seated dinner. The first course will include either a Boston Clam Chowder or House Mixed Green Salad; the second course will include a ½ Herb Marinated Roast Chicken with mashed potatoes and baby root vegetables, Mussels in white wine, garlic and shallot with grilled baguette, or Vegetarian Pasta consisting of peas, asparagus, grilled scallion, tomato crème fraîche, and dill; and the third course will include assorted desserts.

I am excited to let you know that our banquet speaker for 2017 will be Mary Ann Stenger, Professor Emerita, The University of Louisville. A long-time member of the society and dedicated Tillich scholar, her banquet talk is entitled “Pushing the Boundaries: With Tillich and Beyond.”

A Reminder: Credit Cards will now be accepted at the banquet and will be the preferred way of payment. No cash.

SYMPOSIUM ON TILlich IN KOREA

The First International Symposium on the Thought of Paul Tillich was held from October 18 to 20 near Seoul, South Korea. The Symposium included lengthy question and answer sessions with the attendees. Five papers were published beforehand in both Korean and English with the book available to both presenters and the audience so they could understand one another. The symposium was arranged by Prof. Young-Ho Chun of St. Paul’s Theological Seminary in Kansas City, a long-time member of the North American Paul Tillich Society. The five invited participants were Prof. Mary Ann Stenger, University of Louisville, Prof. Christian Danz, University of Vienna, Prof. Hans Schwarz, the University of Regensburg, Prof. Peter Haigis, the University of Heidelberg, and Prof. Frederick Parrella, Santa Clara University. All of the expenses for the Symposium came from a generous grant of the Methodist Church in South Korea.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Please send new publications on Tillich or by members of the Tillich Societies to the editor. Thank you.

Nix, Echol Jr. and Keturah C. Nix, *Milestone Documents in African American History*, Second Edition, Volumes 1-4 (New York: Greyhouse Publishers/The Schlager Group, 2017).

For information, see:

<https://www.salempress.com/press-titles.html?book=91>

“VITA PASSIVA”: A LIFE OF FAITH IN LIGHT OF THE REFORMATION

ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST
INTERNATIONAL PAUL TILlich SYMPOSIUM
IN KOREA.
THE 500TH COMMEMORATION OF THE
REFORMATION

Deut. 6:4-5; John 1:9-13; Mark 9:24

Christian life was understood in the Middle Ages under the influence of Aristotle in two distinctive terms in the pair of *theoria* and *praxis*. Later these were paired as *contemplatio* and *actio*, and further as *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa* respectively. Their relation is mutually disjunctive. Martin Luther (1483-1546), in his various commentaries and writings, suggested the “third” way to a faithful Christian life that would synthesize these two ways, namely *vita passiva*. He, however, did not subordinate *actio* to *contemplatio*, nor *contemplatio* to *actio*. He connected *actio* and *contemplatio* but did not enmesh the two to the extent that their distinction was erased. His synthesis of the two preserves the character of the faith in terms of being permeated fully by the divine presence in living. This signifies that a Christian life breathes in faith and Christian faith is embedded in life. For this reason, Luther used three Scriptural texts to indicate that faith is rooted in that which is outside a believer. Faith is grounded in a gifting God. It is a gift. Hence its primary mode is “passive.” This is a common conviction shared by both the Judaism and Christianity as is attested by the scriptural texts for today.

Our just life is “passive.” Accordingly, we are justified to be just. This is what the justice of God is and does (Rom 1:17). God works in and for us and we are to surrender ourselves to this work so as for Him to work for our salvation.¹ Thus viewed,

faith/belief is our confidence in the transformative work of God and those who welcome this God and “believe in his name, he [God] authorized us to become God’s children, born not from blood nor from human desire or passion, but born from God.”² Faith kills the old Adam so as to make us free sufficiently to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.”³ Faith is thus a work of God in us and for us. It is a thorough work and not a half-baked work. We are not ourselves able to do anything for it, except that we may receive it as given through the faith and consequently *suffer* (burden like wings of a bird that enables it to fly) from it.

The justice of the Christ Jesus is antithetical to the justice that one may obtain from doing meritorious things. In short, it is *institia passiva*. We can only receive it from without. We cannot make it nor attain nor obtain by any merit we earn. Since faith is given from the other, i.e., God, it is neither an unnatural addition nor even an unfit imposition. Hence, we “suffer” consequences of faith. Faith as received and accepted may be experienced as a burden, at times even a heavy burden that calls for endurance. God is the Lord who works for our sake in us and among us in the midst of us all.

This world does not comprehend this! Thus, the faith is hidden from, and to, us. Why? Because we are arrested and imprisoned within our desire to be concerned only about us. We are always interested in our own actions, which will presumably free us to concern ourselves with our own things. We desire to advance our own causes; we want to place ourselves at the top of the world—the most powerful position, the richest of the rich, the most popular star of the stars—with our own efforts. We desire to invent and create our own world in which we live and find ourselves as the subject of our history. At just about every bookstore, we readily see a bookshelf full of self-help manuals. Many are interested in hearing and reading stories about someone who made him/her self by their own bootstraps. Anyone who made the “American dream” is an instant popular guest speaker on the T.V. talk shows. We are living in an age of self-help/ self-fulfillment. Many flock to the pulpit that proclaims this type of gospel.

Luther’s lesson about the Christian faith, which is revolutionary in my view, can be termed as *vita*

passiva. This may be influenced by Luther’s close work in the German mysticism of his early period as a monk such as Johann Tauler. Some scholars take this view critically in that in mysticism a contemplative life may appear to be passive but in actuality is active—an active approach takes over the receptive and passive approach to grace. The just faith, *institia passiva*, a receptive character of the faith indicates that faith is neither knowledge nor action; it is neither metaphysics nor morality; neither active deed nor meditative act. It is simply *vita passiva*. This is why Luther preferred *fiducia* to *assensus*.

Sin is an act by which we elevate ourselves inordinately. Sin, by our own efforts, puts us at the center of our world; we obsess ourselves with this effort to the extent that we cannot see beyond ourselves upward as well as sideways. All our efforts and perspectives are so much oriented toward, and concentrated on, ourselves that our being is “turned in on itself” (*curvatio in se ipsum*). It is impossible for us to make this curved self-straighten-up in our relationship with God and also with our neighbors. Someone other than us must do the work. This help must come from outside us. This is what God accomplished in Christ. This is to us a “passive” work, but to God in Christ, it is an active work. We must accept this form of divine acceptance of us.⁴

The thought that one may buy one’s salvation with money is a work of a Devil. Many have succumbed to this type of Devil’s seduction in our days, just as it was in the Middle Ages. Many tell me whenever I come to Korea that the Christian churches must be reformed, if not transformed, because they are no longer a beckon of righteousness, justice, and equality before God as well as before the people. Many church leaders have been elected under suspicious procedures and the elected leaders were often accused of having been implicated in corruption and misuse of the authority of their office. Some cases have been proven to bribe the voters. Many pastors were more often influenced by those who made more offerings and tithes. The denominational bodies tend to protect the accused and take a dismissive attitude towards the victims. More enlightened members in the congregations often regard churches as being without

public accountability, integrity, and genuine responsiveness. Something resembling the medieval practice of simony has frequently been committed in churches across the denominational boundaries in Korea for too long, but no sign of changing seem to appear. There is an outcry against this state of affairs. Calls for reform erupted in recent years.

Many know that the indulgence sale by Johann Tetzel (1465-1519) prompted Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk, to pen the 95 theses and allegedly post them on the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church on October 31, 1517 for a public disputation. The indulgence sale was directly and indirectly connected to financing the Roman Church's hierarchy—regional and International—the purchase of lands for the children and their powerful office (Albrecht von Mainz) as well as the construction of the basilica of the Vatican of Pope Leo X. "Indulgence" is closely connected with the one of the seven sacraments, penance. It is very important practice stemming from the practice of Jesus (Mark 4: 17). Indulgence was meant to be a means by which a confessing sinner would obtain an objective assurance of forgiveness by a priest of one's *guilt* from an actual sin but not a due punishment. Hence, he/she was still subject to the punishment. But Tetzel's indulgence promised a plenary forgiveness from guilt and punishment. What was more is that his indulgence would do the same thing for the loved ones of the indulgence buyer!

Christians in the 16th century had an image, drawn from the Book of Revelation, of the Christ who is to come with a white Lilly symbolizing mercy and forgiveness in one hand and with the other a knife of signifying the wrath and final judgment. Their concern was how to avoid the knife and obtain the white Lilly. The Medieval Church had an answer: whatever you do is up to you; so long as you do not reject, God will benefit you in accordance with what you have merited by good works. Do your best as much as you can! What if you fall short of the best you intended? To this, there was an answer. It was penance. What if your penance is not thorough and not sufficient? Here comes the necessity of the *Purgatorio*.⁵ On Christmas Day in 1300, then Pope Bonifacius VIII proclaimed that everyone suffering in Purgatory be forgiven and be permitted to enter the Kingdom of

Heaven. Indulgence is to complement one's inadequate penance for those beloved ones in Purgatory. The misuse and abuse of this, otherwise legitimate, sacramental liturgical practice led Luther to challenge the authority of the church. The sale of indulgences is rooted in a church dogma, not sufficiently grounded in Scripture. Hence Luther's *sola Scriptura, sola Gratia, sola fide*, etc.

Many historians and cultural critics generally paint the Middle Age as the Age of Darkness and extreme ecclesiastical and clergy moral corruption. One has to understand the context of this before characterizing it with a broad brush. There were, in my view, two factors that may have contributed to this situation. First, up to the 13th century, church produced group of excellent clergy and theologians. Church architectures like the Gothic style testify to this. Scholastic theological works, such as the writings of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), prove that in the 13th century the Christian Church and her theological creativity reached the high point of its achievement and also left the indelible mark on the subsequent generations and the legacy behind. The 13th century earned the accolade of the "High Middle Ages." But in the 14th century, there were at least 10 waves of plagues that decimated the population. Europe then was a society completely permeated by Christian religion. Plagues demystified the Church; the plagues were called divine curses: the dead bodies were highly contagious and the close proximity to them infected the many attending priests and killed them. Seeing the dying priests demystified the status of the priests. The enlarged church at that time was in need of replenishing these priestly positions. Normally it took several years to produce qualified priests but the church could not afford spending long period of time in educating them and needed to shorten the preparatory stage. Consequently, many were ordained first and then subjected to the requisite programs to form them as the capable and competent priests. This expedient process played an unfortunate role in producing many incompetent priests with no proper character and/or theological formation. Secondly, in those days, the common means of religious liturgy and communication was Latin. The only available Bible was the Vulgate in Latin. It usually took many years to become competent in this language to comprehend the passages

of the Bible and celebrate Mass. But the newly ordained priests were not able to read and converse, even during ordinary liturgy, in Latin.⁶ Being ignorant of Latin was being substantially ignorant in theology and their church history. Many priests recited their liturgical texts without really understanding them. Consequently, their ecclesial practice reflected their low degree of competency. The Church suffered in the absence of ecclesial accountability, integrity, and competence. In the 15th and 16th centuries in Germany, there even emerged a new literary genre called “grievance literature” that expressed in satire form ridicule of the abhorrent level of ignorance of the priests. The appearance of sub-standard priests brought about the church’s structural corruption. This situation was ironically a result of faithful services rendered by many able and compassionate priests who dutifully attended the dead victims of the plague and was infected to death.

What Martin Luther did was to turn this structural corruption upside down and inside out by putting the flame to the torch of public discontent. I would call this a “revolutionary” achievement. It is God who saves, not “I” or “We” by any good means. This is what Luther recovered and reclaimed through his doctrine of Justification. The term *reformatio* carries a connotation of returning to the lost core of the original, but *evolutio* is moving forward to something new without losing the core of the original. In the year 1520, Luther published three important writings, “The Freedom of a Christian,” “The Babylonian Captivity of the Church,” and “the Appeal to the Nobility of German nation.” If you desire to understand the theological and practical keys to the Protestant Reformation in commemorating the 500th year of the Reformation, you must read at least these three programmatic writings! In Korea, for quite long time, there has been a discernible lack in appreciating the Reformation and Luther’s contribution. What is more, many lack the knowledge of who Martin Luther was as a theologian, a leader of the Protestant movement and his accomplishments. This is probably due to the large Christian population linked to the nominal influence of John Calvin and the Presbyterian Church denomination. To know Luther better, I would suggest you read the

recently published “Rediscovery of Martin Luther,” written by a very able Lutheran pastor in Seoul. In addition, you must read for your theological edification Luther’s “Large Catechism” and his “Table Talk.” If you understand Luther and his theology better, you may appreciate better what John Wesley thought and did—the founder of your denomination as Methodists.

What is the core of Luther’s theology? In 1518 at the Heidelberg Disputation, Luther advanced his theological core: it is a *theologia crucis*. This is contrasted to *theologia gloriae*. Others may present a relationship between Law and Gospel (Gal. 3: 23-29, in 1532),⁷ reflective of our state of existence and God’s salvific Grace/Gospel. Another group will assert the doctrine of justification by grace through faith. Yet another would insist that the right understanding of the *confessio*, and the assurance of faith in salvation. The question is: how one becomes assured of one’s own salvation. To attend to this, Luther stressed the importance of a relation between *promissio* and *fiducia/fide* in understanding Christian faith. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus teaches his disciples, “to obey everything that I’ve commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age.” This is a “promise.” Believing in such *promissio* brings about assurance about the future. This is a “performative language.”⁸ According to Austin, there are two distinctive aspects of the performative language: one is an “establishing something” while the other is a “constituting something.” The former has to do with “affirming something that already exists and allows that something which already exists to be ‘described.’” The latter has to do with “actually constituting” a reality. It does not merely affirm that something as it exists already, but rather presents *it* for the first time that was not there previously. A statement, “I promise X,” places the promise maker under an obligation; a relationship is here *being* thereby *created that did not exist previously*. This relationship will be destroyed if the promise is not kept and broken instead. This aspect reveals a level of juridical act of performative language. One may understand the passage of John 3:16 likewise. Moreover, the liturgical words of “Take and eat” this bread and wine may also be understood in this light. Likewise, the passage of Luke 2: 11 “To you is born this day a Savior!” *Promissiones* of this type

concretely brings about the presence of the Christ and manifestly the assurance of one's future relationship with the Christ through faith.

If you listen and believe in the Promise of the Christ Jesus, then you shall be liberated from all anxieties. What is more, you will be grounded in the assurance of your new life and set on the journey to the new heaven and new earth. Imagine that someone gave you a wonderful painting as a gift. One of your friends says to you that it looks like a painting by Picasso. You were excited by that assessment and brought it to the expert art dealer and showed it to her. She examined it carefully and exclaimed that it surely looks like a painting by Picasso. But she also was puzzled by the absence of the signature of Picasso! She finally judged that it is not authentic due to the absence of his distinctive signature. If it had his signature, its value would run up to millions in U.S. dollars. Since it lacked it, it may be of value up to mere \$30.00. The authentic Picasso's paint may be given spaces for displaying on the walls of the many famous museums and art galleries. The sky would be the limit to its value. But the inauthentic Picasso painting may be displayed in a private wall but not very prominently. The former is on demand for the public viewing while the latter may be ignored. With the signature of Picasso, the painting is a "name-branded" and "value-carrier." It carried a seal of authenticity. It also carries a *promissio* that is a guarantor of an enduring future. Many desire to stand nearby, if not possess it. Being in relationship with it enables the seer to experience something in their lives that was not there before.

You all are baptized Christians, aren't you? As the Picasso's painting is, so should you be the "branded" Christians. Through and in Baptism, one is branded by Christ, so to speak. You were given either a new name or consecrated by the Holy Spirit as you "died and rose" to the new life in Baptism. John Calvin (1509-1565) characterized Baptism as a seal through the Holy Spirit. This is a *promissio* that brings new reality in our life that was not there previously. Faith is given and it is of the divine promise. If you take that seriously to the heart, you step into a new reality of a relationship with God that creates a new reality that was not there before. Belief in the promise of God sets you free into a new being. You become a newly

branded entity that calls for public performance. You are no longer circumscribed by fears and anxieties of natural life and death. You are set free from them. We all become free of the self-centered concerns that curve us inward, oblivious to the public life—lives of others in need. We tend to our own needs only. We will be free from this and free for the people of God. We no longer strive to become the master of our lives and the subject of our history, but rather to be open to the gift intended for us and to receive to form *vita passiva*. Grab that life! You are empowered to get it fully!

Try to avoid turning grace into the law. Try not to make faith an act. All acts are directed to substantiate one's own self. Try not to turn the Gospel teachings into the moral precepts. We tend to look at the world outside through the window of our own interests, as Nietzsche once asserted. Try not to let the Christ fall to the level of an example (*exemplum*). The Christ *is donum* (gift) and thereby truly becomes an example. The Christ who comes to us, in us and for us, as gift creates faith, a confident relationship with God in Christ. Christ as an example "shows and tells" the life of love for us who otherwise distort it. Such an example nourishes our faith as we practice. It makes us Christian believers. In faith itself, there is nothing but the life and salvific work of God in Christ. Of course, acts are there in our life, but they are not our products and the Christ's. His name is in them and we no longer remain as sinners but as children of God, Christian brothers and sisters to one another. Among us and within us there is a signature of God in Christ; we are awakened to the enthused life with vitality and vivacious spirit. How valuable this is! We are allowed to be enthusiastic!

As mentioned earlier, Korean churches are being accused and even ridiculed in many aspects by many these days. They are in crisis of identity. In order to regain their vitality as well as to grow as a church, which is stagnant in recent years, many church leaders have resorted to the 'methods' of commercial world to attract new members, especially the younger generation, instead to attend to the essentials of the evangelical mission. They adopted many secular strategies that were proven to be effective and successful. The young people are in search for the ultimate meaning that would quench their thirst of their minds and hearts.⁹ If

there is no Christ's signature, it may appear to be successful in attracting them to their programs but they would surely fail to retain their interests because they would not be satisfied. I hear and know that the Eastern Orthodox Church in the U. S. is growing. This Church has never experienced a "Reformation" in her history. Despite the existing perception of patriarchal character of their ecclesial structure and hierarchy, it is deeply rooted in the Gospel message and its beauty. Their future is rooted in the inherited tradition. They are not, however, imprisoned in the past, as it often appears to be, but rather propelled to the future by the inner dynamics of the Gospel and tradition. They see the world through the "window" of the icons that enable them to see the world permeating in the Holy.

I hear from many who are concerned with the renewal of the churches in Korea that the key to this renewal is a "small church." This clarion call is being issued because so many churches and their leaders advocate for, and strive to become, a mega church. And yet so many mega-church related reports were in public display in terms of leadership failure in morality and integrity. The size is not what ultimately matters. An effective ministry to people in need matters. My experience shows that a small church or even a large group of small churches cannot effectively render the service to those who are in need—the poor, the hungry, the oppressed—more than what one mega-church can do for the mission project on a local and global level. In my view, what is needed lies not in reducing the size of the churches to small size in membership. It may work but it may also be a superficial approach. In a small church, one may feel cozy in relation with others. But their capacity is limited to respond to the overwhelming tasks.

The church I attend in the Kansas City area is called the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection. It started with four members. The pastor preached to his own family. After some twenty years, it now cares the members of over 20,000. Their mission project traverses from this Continent to other continents without neglecting the needs of the local school districts, for example. What this church does exceeds more than what one Annual Conference of a United Methodist Church does. I am of the opinion that the quantity

leads to the quality of the community, not the other way around as many advocates. One cannot simply begin with the quality of a community. It may never grow, because they are too content with themselves. The problematic issue is that a large quantity without the quality of faithful members would remain an empty shell and will eventually wither. Many monastic communities suffer the lack of quantity, even though there may other factors involved.

The crisis of the Korean churches is diagnosed by the lack of social engagement with society. Members are too emotionally codependent on one another that they dislike any presence of a stranger. They are notorious with hospitality, but it is with one another. Hospitality is directed to their guests, not some other's guests.

The churches often sided with the powerful and the rich, neglecting their care for the poor, the hungry, and the oppressed. They acted as no different from any other societal organization. Their spirituality has been of the "ascending spirituality," not enough the "descending spirituality." Their demonstrative behavior of love has not been different from that of any society. They seemed to have adopted the values of secular society, not enough the transformative value exemplified by and in Jesus the Christ. They have been prejudicial as the secular society was. In fact, this indicates that they followed examples of the rich and powerful in society, rather than the example of Jesus the Christ! As Jesus sacrificed himself as Jesus in order to become the Christ on the Cross, so the Korean churches that claim to follow Jesus as the Christ must deconstruct themselves as Jesus did to be resurrected anew as the Church of the Christ Jesus, as the Body of the Christ.

I hope that this first International Paul Tillich Symposium held in Korea, with the generous supports of two Congregations, Seo-Jung Methodist Church and the Dream Methodist Church in Kwang-Kyo, will be repeated every two or three years. I am convinced that the repetition would contribute toward, and secure, the theological basis for the renewal and transformation of the Church in Korea. I am deeply grateful to the pastors, Rev. Han and Rev. Kim of these two churches. It is noteworthy that this symposium is being held at

one of these local congregations, not on the academic campus, as in the case of all previous conferences. This is significant in that the scholarly dialogue is brought thereby closer to the congregations and bridges the gap between academia and the *ecclesia* more closely. The distance between these two entities in the past impoverished theology itself and the faithful and devotional life of the congregation. I believe that the critical adaptation of Tillich's method of correlation to the culture of the congregations will help the pastor's approach in creative manner to ministry.

When you closely look at all the reformers, you will see that virtually all of them are scholars. Dr. Martin Luther was a Professor of the Bible at Wittenberg University. He translated the Latin Bible into the German language. He knew the ancient languages: Latin, Greek and Hebrew. He dealt with the original texts by himself. He was steeply engaged in his studies with the humanistic materials.

¹ Martin Luther, *Weimarer Ausgabe* 6: 244, 3-6.

² John 1:13. (Common English Bible)

³ Deut. 6: 5 (The Oxford Annotated Bible)

⁴ Paul Tillich, "You Are Accepted," in his sermon *The Shaking of the Foundations*.

⁵ This is also known as 'in igne purgatorium' (in refining or purgating fire), which was accepted at the Council of Lyons in 1274. It became an official dogma at the Council of Trent in 1550 in the heat of the Counter-Reformation.

MARTIN LUTHER'S CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH

NOTES BY MARION PAUCK AND
WILHELM PAUCK

"Nothing historical, no action, event, or influence of the past, can ultimately survive by itself. In order to live, it must be remembered. It must be received by someone, it must be acted upon."

Wilhelm Pauck in *The Heritage of the Reformation*

Martin Luther's conception of the church was the impetus that brought new types of churches into being through the Reformation. The times were ripe for change: The Renaissance and Humanism were among them. The Reformation shattered the

He studied and taught the Philosophy of Aristotle (BCE 384-322) enough to hold a critical distance from it. Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531) also translated the Bible in German. John Calvin. John Wesley (1703-1791) was a scholar and a Professor at the Lincoln College, Oxford University. No reformation and no revolution were achieved without contributions of scholars. Karl Marx was a competent scholar. Korean churches are in need of recruiting and supporting many able young men and women in their studies and nurture them not only in spirituality but also scholarships. That is a sure way to renew and transform their churches. Remember that the office of a Methodist pastor is not called an "office" but a "study." The Holy Spirit works both in a study as well as a prayer closet. Prayer and study go hand in hand to transform one's life and other's. Amen.

⁶ In the 16th century, in a large city such as Nuremberg, which was known to be, an enlightened city had a 95% illiteracy in Latin.

⁷ See Rom. 7: 12; Gal. 3: 10, 12; James 2: 10; Gal 5: 3; Rom. 2: 25.

⁸ Cf. John L. Austin, "Performative and Constitutive Statement," in *Language and Analysis. Texts of Contemporary English Philosophy*.

⁹ See the paper by Prof. Dr. Frederick Parrella for this symposium.

fundamental authority on which all medieval life rested.

The Reformation was born in a monastery remote from the world in an insignificant university (akin to Christ being born in a manger) lacking the prestige and splendor of old medieval institutions of learning.

The source of all this was Martin Luther's re-discovery of the Gospel! His high sense of mission never caused him to think of a break with the medieval church.

Luther's fresh understanding of the Christian Gospel in terms of the Pauline doctrine of "justification by faith" freed him from the torment of guilt that assailed him in the monastery. Luther's personal search for the merciful God that had caused

him to become a monk in the first place, was accompanied by *Anfechtungen*, or waves of guilt, a condition that even his psychologically astute mentor, friend, and fellow monk, Staupitz, failed to erase. But when Luther came upon the words *sola fides*, “by faith alone,” in Romans, these words of St. Paul, freed him from the anguish of guilt he had superimposed upon himself. In short, his search for “the merciful God” was rewarded in that instant in which he, Luther, understood that faith and faith alone, not deeds, leads to salvation. His search for “the merciful God,” the search that had given him so much anguish, was thus finally fulfilled.

Because the implications of his new interpretation of the Gospel were revolutionary, he inaugurated a new period of Church history. From scholastic theology, he broke through to the Bible. In 1512, Luther began his public work as a professor of Biblical theology. Imbued with the ever-increasing joyful certainty that he had rediscovered the Gospel, i.e., that he had found the true source of Christianity, and therefore regarded himself as a true son of the Church, he lectured first on the Psalms, and then on the Epistle to the Romans, Hebrews, and Galatians. He thus developed the basic ideas that he later defended in his conflict with the Papacy and Roman Catholicism. From the time, he nailed the 95 Theses onto the Church door, his ideas showed a remarkable consistency. No idea was more important in Luther’s whole work than that of the Church. It is important to remember that Luther’s idea of the Church was in profound contrast with that prevailing one in Roman Catholicism.

We find that the idea of the church in the Reformation, as the source of all later Protestant thought, was already clearly developed in Luther’s commentary on the Psalms. The ecclesiological principles that he formulated at the beginning of his career served him as the guiding vision of a new and true church in the world. He saw then that the church “is a people,” “God’s people,” “of believers,” the “*communio sanctorum*.” He disliked the term “church” and preferred to translate the Greek word “*ekklesia*” and the Latin word “*ecclesia*” into the German word “*Gemeinde*” (community), “*Versammlung*” (assembly), or “*Christenheit*” (the unity of all Christian people).

Indeed, the sense of high mission that had always been with him had never been accompanied by a desire to follow traditions uncritically.

II.

Luther rediscovered the early Christian idea of the church in the New Testament but he did not desire the Church to return to that time. He was merely persuaded that the church should be reformed to the earlier pattern. Luther learned much from St Augustine. It would not be wrong to say that the fundamental Roman Catholic conception of the church as the *Corpus Christi Mysticum* (the mystical, i.e., spiritual body of Christ), remained the theme of his ecclesiology. He could not think of the church apart from Christ, nor of Christ apart from the Church. Luther interpreted “the body of Christ” as the body, i.e., the unity of the community of the Christian believers. The church of Christ “is a universal fellowship of Christian believers who share with one another all their faith and love.”

III.

The most radical, incisive feature of Luther’s interpretation of the Christian religion was that he stressed its personal character. Faith was for him nothing else than personal believing the trusting conviction that what the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaims as God’s way is true. Faith in the Gospel as Luther interpreted it, is a personal event that happens in the secrecy of one’s own soul. As each of us dies for oneself, each of us believes for himself.

The Roman Catholic teaching that each believer may wrap his own faith up in the church and that each believer does not necessarily need to be persuaded of the truth was radically rejected by Luther. Therefore, the Roman Catholics incline to criticize Luther as a “religious individualist.” As a matter of fact, Luther taught that one becomes a Christian only in the secret moment of his own personal encounter with God in Christ. The Christian life is never one of isolation and seclusion but rather a fellowship of giving love. To be a Christian *and* in the church, the community of believers is one and the same. As Cyprian said: “Outside of the church there is no salvation.”

IV.

Luther's interpretation of the Church as a *communio sanctorum* was a deed of tremendous consequence. It became the dynamic resource of Protestant church life within Protestantism again and again. Luther himself found it difficult because he had to establish it in opposition to Roman Catholicism in connection with the new evangelical church. The following difficulties are worth mentioning: (1) Conflict with Rome involved the removal or re-evaluation of traditions, converting practices and teachings, which had governed over centuries. (2) Innumerable complications of a personal and impersonal nature beset by uncertainties that normally accompany new enterprises in history.

The key to understanding Luther's doctrine of the church is his teaching that the church as the "communion of believers" is constituted in and by the Word of God. The "Word of God is Christ as he lives in witness of the Bible and as he comes to life again and again in preaching and proclamation based on the Bible." The Word is the "sole vehicle of the Grace of God." The Word of God cannot be without God's people and God's people cannot be without the Word. Christ was not another Moses but the mirror of God's personal goodness. The Bible is the written Gospel of Christ.

Thus, Luther regarded Roman Catholicism, as it was, not truly Christian! The sacral apparatus, the papacy, hierarchy, non-Scriptural sacraments, were human historical additions to the Gospel. Because the Roman Catholics held them to be the essence of Christianity, Luther felt that they were an arbitrary defamation of the Christian Church. He

fought the Papacy as "the Devil," as "the anti-Christ." Luther did not always realize the far-reaching historical views of his enemies.

V.

Luther's presupposition was that the "Word" is the constitutive principle of the "communion of believers." We must distinguish between (1) Internal and external character; (2) The church in a general sense and "the universal community of believers"; (3) The local church congregation as one of the hierarchies in and through which the church as the universal community of believers is realized.

(Note: Detailed discussion and Luther's ecclesiology can be found on pp. 36-37 of *The Heritage of the Reformation* by Wilhelm Pauck.)

VI. Twofold Character of the Church

On the one hand, the character of the church is "internal and spiritual; on the other hand, it is external and corporeal." It is a unity of faith, hope, love, toward God. As a corporeal body, it is a participation in the sacraments, i.e., a sign of faith, hope, and love towards God. Luther felt strongly that although it is possible to excommunicate someone bodily from the church, it is not possible to deprive him or her from membership in the "spiritual communion of believers." The Church—the community of believers—cannot exist without external forms and arrangements. Yet these are not of its essence. "The church is one thing here, another there, yet it is always the same."

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