

# God and Creation

NOVEMBER 27, 2000: CLASS

## TEXTS

- Pieper inadequate for the study of the doctrine of God and of creation
  - “Bad dogmatics”: too scholastic and proof-textual
  - we WILL be required to know Pieper, but Chemnitz first, then Preus, then Pieper
- Chemnitz is a much better dogmatics
  - Strength of Chemnitz is its Christology – God is not defined apart from Christ
  - Loci Theologica is a very strong exposition of the doctrine of God
  - Contains much that relates to the Patristics
- Preus’ volume gives a summary of the classical post-reformation Lutheran dogmaticians
- 6 weeks on God, 4 weeks on Creation
- MEMORIZE: Hymn, explanation of the 1<sup>st</sup> article of the creed

## TESTS

- Readings will not be tested in detail: you will know what will be on the test in class
- Know the general arguments of orthodoxy about God

## LUTHER’S CONFESSION

- How does Luther proceed (order) in his thoughts on God?
- Bear in mind that Luther writes this at the same time as his Supper paper against Zwingli

## DIOGENES ALLEN

- *Creatio Ex Nihilo* is a definitional statement about God, forced by Gnostic and Arian crises
  - The, if not a, primary word about who God is
  - A basis for Christian thinking

## JOHN OF DAMASCUS

- Summarizer of the Eastern Tradition
- Book 1, Ch. 1-4 covers the issue of the natural knowledge of God

## UNDERSTANDING GOD

- God is not an *object*: God cannot be reflected on like a vase on a shelf and reflected on
  - If God is an object, God is not someone we can think *about*
  - God is active, and cannot be a topic; he is someone we *worship*
- Knowledge of God should underlie implicitly all that we do, preach and teach
  - Ex: How does the Doctrine of Justification necessitate the doctrine of the Trinity?
  - Ex: How does our sacramentology relate to our *theology*?
- Augsburg Confession
  - *Die Bekenntnisschriften Der Evangelische Lutheriche Kirchen*
  - Compare the first 5-6 articles with the Nuremberg and Schwabach Articles
  - Read 1528 Confession of Lutheran, Explanation to 3<sup>rd</sup> Article of the Creed in L.C.
  - Q: Where does one stand in order to talk about God

NOVEMBER 29, 2000: CLASS

### Nuremberg Articles

- 1) God
- 2) Son of God
- 3) Sacraments

### Schwabach and Marburg Articles

- 1) God
- 2) Son of God
- 3) Original Sin

### Augustana

- 1) God
  - 2) Original Sin
  - 3) Son of God
  - 4) Justification
  - 5) Office of the Ministry
- WHY is SIN added as the second article?
    - Sinners know God as the justifying God in Christ
    - The knowledge of God is bound up in the justifying of the sinner
    - This justification accomplished by Christ is preached and administered in the sacraments
    - We do not know Christ in his natures, but in his benefits: salvation & life (Melanchthon)

### LUTHER'S CONFESSION OF 1528

- A *methodological* statement: how do we talk about God *rightly*?
- 1) Sublime article of the majesty of God
  - Not in terms of his transcendence, but in his Trinitarian character
  - Opus proprium dei creatio ex nihilo est: the proper work of God is creation from nothing
    - *MAKER of heaven and earth* bespeaks his Trinitarian character: God is CREATOR
    - The justification of the sinner is also a *creatio ex nihilo*
    - Creation is accomplished through Christ, therefore Arius is excluded
    - This the ongoing, perpetual way in which God continues to relate to the world
    - If we can “choose”, there is raw material and God no longer creates “ex nihilo”
- 2) The Second Person of the Godhead – the “middle” or “mediating” Person
  - Became man: the life of the man Jesus is the definition of God
  - Jesus is fully man in every way, body and soul, but without sin, as I am myself (for me)
  - Correction: “and that this man IS true God”, not became: not an instrument
    - The flesh of Christ is *anhypostatic*; it does not exist independently, but is GOD's
    - Jesus' personhood is that of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity; Nestorius is excluded
    - What one can say about the Son can also be said about the man Jesus
  - 2a) All men are sinners because of their descent from Adam (traducianism?)
    - Free will is *rejected* because it denies the need for Christ
    - Pelagians, cloisters, monasteries, etc. are all condemned
- 3) These are the three Person of the one God
  - God has given himself to us *wholly* and *completely* with *all that he is and has*
  - God is known in things and in persons with whom he has vested himself
    - In our life and in our decay we experience God present as *judge*
    - When we are born we are already in relation to a Mom, Dad, government, etc.
  - The Father: Confession that God is creator is eschatological: we confess it in spite of all the contrary evidence, in spite of our wasting away: we believe he will raise us

- The Father gives himself to us in all he is and has; it is in his nature to be Father
  - God is Father because he is the Father of the Son *outside* of creation
  - Rom. 8:15: “The spirit of adoption of sons, by which we cry, ‘Abba, Father!’”
  - We are the children of Abraham not according to the flesh but *spirit* (adoption)
  - There is no *motherhood* involved in any of this activity
    - “He who from all eternity had a Father but no mother, for our sake became a man with a mother, but no Father”
  - Abraham was the first-adopted, whose first name meant “The Father be exalted”
    - The fatherhood of God is seen in the fatherhood of Abraham
- The Holy Spirit provides inward and outward gifts:
  - Inward gifts of faith and other spiritual gifts
  - Outward gifts of Word and the Sacraments

### NATURAL KNOWLEDGE

- God as God is a Trinitarian reality: Father, Son and Spirit
- Sin makes it impossible to see God as Trinity without revelation
- The purpose of reconciliation is to know God as Father by being in the Son
- Deism and pantheism are both excluded:
  - God is not localized in the creature (he is wholly other)
  - God is not absent from the world (he preserves it)

### SCRIPTURE

- The Bible was never meant to be the object of private devotions
- The Bible was meant to be preached in the synagogue or the church
- It is the canonical form of the message which is to be preached
- In the beginning was “la parole”, the speech
  - The word was the Son and the spoken word
  - The Lutherans wanted to maintain the power of the creative *spoken* word
  - Deus facit, homo fit: God creates, man relates
  - God creates by grace, because there is no reason for him to do so
  - God creates in order to have something on which to bestow his goodness
  - The removal of God’s grace is his wrath or judgement and leads to death

### DECEMBER 4, 2000: CLASS

- Creatio ex nihilo establishes
  - 1) God’s freedom: creation is not required
  - 2) God’s grace: creation is good not because we deserve it
  - 3) God’s direct knowability:
    - God is unknowable in his *essence*, his *ousia*, which is ONE
      - We do not know God in his reality
      - We cannot know “humanity” in general
    - God is known in his *persons* or *hypostases*, which are THREE
      - We access God in his Fatherhood, Sonship, and Spirit
      - We only know “humanity” as we know individual “humans”
- All that connects the creation to God is his will
- Only a PERSON can will, an essence CANNOT will
- God does not need a creation to love, because there is love between the Father and the Son
  - Relation of Father to Son is more basic/foundational than relationship with the world

- Creation is CONTINGENT: contingency can't bring into connection with the necessary
- Therefore if CHRIST is a creation, he didn't bring us into contact with the NECESSARY
- Humanity cannot be divorced from maleness and femaleness
- In the same way, God's essence cannot be divorced from the Persons

#### WAS THERE A NECESSITY FOR A SAVIOR?

- Redemption does not add to God
- Redemption is, however, true to God's nature
- APPLE TREE ANALOGY
  - An apple tree grows apples by its nature, not by its will
  - ARIUS: if Jesus is the only Son, out of the essence of the Father, then the Son is not generated out of God's free will but by NECESSITY, and the Son then cannot be the expression of God's grace
  - ATHANASIUS: The will of the Father is not a decision. One's truest freedom is to be true to who you are: not true to an intrinsic standard, but true to an *inside* authority: not choice as freedom (Pelagius), but trueness to oneself as freedom ("God is free when God is God": Athanasius). God ENJOYS being God. The Son is "willed" freely, not because God could choose to beget the Son or not, but because willing the Son was God being God.
- THEREFORE being Christian frees us to be ourselves, not to be free to make any choice we want. Being rid of original sin means being in communion with God, which means being true to one what it means to be human, which means one is FREE.

POINT: There is a need in Christian thought to understand the common and the particular rightly.

#### LUTHERAN CONFESSION

- To know God is to trust, fear and love God
- God desires to be known and worshipped
  - Accept his blessings and receive him in his mercy and not by our merits
  - God the Father wants to be known through his Son by the power of the Spirit
  - In our worship we are part of the eternal song of the Spirit through the Son to the Father
- The heathen have (to some extent) knowledge of God
  - Creation shows the glory of God, which we perceive dimly ("dim spark") – "*funklein*"
    - *The smallest spark, from which the fire cannot again be restarted*
    - We cannot know God as he is (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)

#### DECEMBER 6, 2000: CLASS

##### EARLY LUTHERAN DOGMATICIANS

- Early writers had little to say about the natural knowledge of God
- It is at best a "spark" that cannot be fanned
- The "book of the world" is ambiguous
  - All things in the realm of nature can be both beneficial or destructive
  - Nature does not give a sense of God as *constantly* good and merciful
  - Chemnitz: natural knowledge will always be a *defective knowledge of the Law*
    - It will never lead to faith
    - It is nothing, for the whole of philosophy know nothing of the Son and forgiveness
  - Adolk Koberle illustrates this well
  - "No God, No Creed" the book claims that "philosophical atheism" is 100 years old
  - The Church created modern atheism by allowing reason to prove the existence of God

- Acts 17 is never used in the Confessions as proof for the natural knowledge of God
  - **NATURAL KNOWLEDGE** of God
  - Knowing God in the things that make up YOUR life: not abstract, but concrete?
  - “What does it mean to be a human being in this world?”
  - We know NOTHING about the beginnings of the world, only our present situation
  - “To believe that God is the creator is no different than believing that God is the one who raises the dead”
1. “INNATE” knowledge of God
    - a. Gerhard: origin in the common notions that are obscured vestiges of the lost image
    - b. Calov: no notion in man by nature before the exercise of reason
      - i. Innate knowledge is not specific
      - ii. There is a capacity or disposition for thought about God, but that’s all
    - c. Hollotz: man does not have a definite idea of God before using reason
      - i. BUT there is some disposition or habit or posture of capacity after the Fall
      - ii. With this capacity we can then know God to a certain extent
    - d. *Capacity or the disposition to know God*
  2. “ACQUIRED” knowledge of God
    - a. Upon what does reason work on? Books, thoughts, ideas
    - b. The knowledge of God that is NOT what one is born with
    - c. SEDES: Romans 1, 2 and Acts 17
    - d. Sin: *incurvatus in se*: the image of God cannot be lost, but merely distorted
- Natural knowledge is not worthless, but promotes the natural life of man
  - If it had not been for sin, we would have known the Father through creation
  - At our resurrection, we then once again know the Father as “new” creator, fully
  - It is possible that FOR A TIME, God’s blessing may be “forstalled” (Totalitarianism)
    - The natural knowledge cannot increase or decrease, but can be less fruitful
    - To say it becomes cloudier and cloudier is that we become less and less human
  - God at work in the law, is God working apart from mercy and grace
  - “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” – God, by God forsaken – Luther
  - The God we meet in the law, naturally, is indeed God, but God as judge

### **DECEMBER 8, 2000: CLASS**

- Sin is like rot: it does not have its own existence, but “feeds” off another
- So a human by nature has a disposition to know God, but this is warped by sin

### **REFLECTIONS ON PREUS**

- Lutheran dogmaticians offer little new on the subject of natural knowledge
- They differ a little in the weight they place on it (as in, none!)
- The knowledge about God through Christ is FORMALLY different than natural knowledge
  - This is done to counter Cartesian thinking, “inner-light” thinking, Roman theologians
  - John Locke a classic example: “the mind of man when born is a *blank slate*”
  - Natural knowledge can either incite pursuit or rejection of God
  - The Law or natural knowledge does not entice us to receive the Gospel
  - CAN be apologetic to a certain extent, but there is no organic connection
- It is not a question of what *can* be known, but what *you* know about God
- Cultivate the natural knowledge of God, subordinated to revealed knowledge
  - In order to praise God more worthily, to praise him for his handiwork
  - Even the unbelieving natural man can ascribe beauty to the universe
  - “Faith seeking understanding” is of a different order: Anselm, Augustine, etc.

- Should be *doxological*: in order to praise God
- Conscience is part of the implanted knowledge of God

### JOHN OF DAMASCUS

- John starts with John 1
- Only the Son truly knows the Father in his intrinsic reality
  - No one can approach God directly in his true reality
  - The knowledge of God is implanted in all persons
  - Nothing created can ever know God correctly, except through intermediaries:
    - The world
    - The law and the prophets
    - Jesus
- God has been disclosed in his Son “as that was possible for us.”
- Gregory of Nazianzus: we will always, for all eternity, be approaching closer and closer to God
- The knowledge of God is not mere cognition, knowing “things *about* God”

### DECEMBER 11, 2000: CLASS

#### CHEMNITZ’ LOCI

- p.57, left hand column: definition of God is
  - based on that which has been revealed
  - based on what is worshipped about God
  - demonstrates that classical definitions are far removed from the Church’s understanding
- p.61: attributes of God
  - mentioned *last*: all early Lutheran dogmaticians did this
  - discussion of God’s Trinitarian nature is discussed Christologically
  - God is one who is God in his justification of the sinner
- NATURAL KNOWLEDGE tells us that there IS a God, who is:
  - The uncreated Creator (Aristotelian idea of the unmoved mover)
  - Preservation and government of creation (Stoic “logos” argument)
  - Above all existing things, and may in fact be above existence itself
  - Unknowable and incomprehensible: he can be known only through his chosen revelation
  - SPECULATION and mysticism are therefore excluded

#### ISSUES, EVIDENCE AND TERMINOLOGY

- 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century dogmaticians use the scholastic mode of presentation
- The attributes of God now come FIRST, as in Pieper, unlike the first generations
- Not a good idea, since evangelical doctrine should be based on Christ and revealed doctrine
- p.114 (Preus):
  - Distinctly Trinitarian; focused attention on Christ the Savior
  - Christ was the chief locus of knowledge about God
  - Christology is treated by some early dogmaticians in their Locus on God
- The life of the Trinity is known and bestowed in Jesus’ *humanity*
  - “The Son is the visible of the Father, while the Father is the invisible of the Son” – *Irenaeus*
  - The necessity of belief in the Trinity is not esoteric but economic (justification)
  - Geoffrey Wainright, SPCK, London: “The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Bible”
- p.122 (Preus):
  - *ousia* or *essentia*: that which makes a thing what it is; fundamentally undefinable

- God's *Godness*, man's *humanity*: essence is not *will*, however
  - ουσια: the foundation of a thing, that which it is
  - φυσικς: the nature of a thing is that which it is and does out of its Ουσια, *to the outside*
  - υποστασις: the concrete representation of the thing to the world
  - προσωπον: the appearance of a thing to the world
- God's essence is incapable of *division*: there is only one *Godness* to go around
  - Father, Son and Holy Spirit are: 1 + 1 + 1 = 1
  - The one who sees the Son sees the entirety of the Father, in the entirety of the Holy Spirit
- Difference between speaking of God *in concreto* (persons) or *in abstracto* (essence)
  - The Son is unbegotten according to nature, but begotten according to personal characteristic
  - The Father is unbegotten both according to his nature and his personal characteristics
- It is not improper to say that the Son is subordinate to the Father *in the Godhead*
- These are mysteries to be worshipped, that cannot be understood
- p.51 (Chemnitz), Melanchthon's Loci
  - "When we think about God...we should turn our attention to the doctrine of Baptism"
  - The catholic faith is a liturgy, it is worship: see the Athanasian Creed!

### DECEMBER 13, 2000: CLASS

- ουσια: that which is common to the three persons
- υποστασις: that which is different among the three persons
  - a concrete, particular, and individual thing
  - also υπαρξις, προσωπον
  - something which subsists in and of itself, not dependent on another
  - BUT the Holy Trinity is not a committee:
    - one will,
    - one consciousness,
    - one intelligence,
    - one personality
- God's ουσια does not exist independently from the υποστασις
- God wills in a fatherly, filiating, and pneumatological way
  - Personhood is
  - incommunicable: Fatherhood cannot be transferred to the Son
  - subsists in itself: not like a property or a characteristic
  - of an intelligent nature: not as individual personalities
  - personal characteristics: the opera ad intra (works toward the inside)
    - *Father*: Unbegotten / Fatherhood
    - *Son*: Begotten / Sonship
    - *Spirit*: Proceeding / Sanctifying
    - *NOTE*: all opera ad extra apply to ALL persons: goodness, wiseness, etc.
    - These are *relational* terms
    - Essence is communicated from Father to Son and Spirit
  - These are NOT works of the Father; they are relations constitutive of the divine reality
  - There is an intimate, intrinsic intercommunication: perichoresis
  - pericoresiv: circumincessio or interpenetration; each person indwells the other
  - God cannot be a person before creation if he is a monolithic god
  - To be person is to be opposite someone
- One outlines what one must say about God in order to not fall into blaspheme

## JANUARY 8, 2001

- “A divine person subsists in himself, and not in another”
  - The Son is not a *feature* or *accident* of the Father
  - The persons do not come from a *will to create* (Arianism)
  - Is himself the center of consciousness, but not a *personality*
  - Each person is a *person*, with a will, but yet there are not three will-s
    - The Father expresses the will paternally
    - The Son filially
    - The Spirit pneumatologically
  - Persons are distinguished by *idiomata*
    - *Opera ad intra* of the Trinity (“beings” on the inside, *not* “happenings” or “works”)
    - Perichoresis is an essential feature of godhead
      - The Father is unbegotten, begets the Son, and breathes the Spirit
      - The Son is begotten of the Father, and breathes the Spirit
      - The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son
    - The spiration of the Son should, though, be distinguished from the spiration of the Father
    - Otherwise, there is a confusion of hypostatic characteristics
  - The will is one, but in three persons:
    - The Father expresses the will paternally
    - The Son filially
    - The Spirit pneumatologically
  - The incarnation allows God to remain distinct, and yet allows us participation in his nature
    - The flesh of Christ relates to the deity in a way that one is the vehicle of the other
    - The flesh communicates eternal life and forgiveness of sins because the divinity does so
      - *Genus Idiomatica*: the person has the attributes of the natures
      - *Genus Maestaticum*: the *attributes* of deity are communicated to the human *nature*
        - Human nature is now omnipotent, omnipresent in Christ
        - Mortality is *not* communicated to the divine nature
        - Human nature does not *become* divine, but inherits the divine properties
  - “Trinity implies both tri- and unity”
    - There are not four persons, only three, in one
    - It is not a threefold *composition*: God’s essence is simple and undivided
    - The three persons are *of* the same essence
    - The persons are not *attributes* of the same essence (Modalism)
  - “The dianoina or the scope of Scripture”
    - ex: “No one knows the time, but the Father”
    - Scripture is the narrative of the incarnate Word, not the eternal Word
    - Christ speaks these words as a man, with the limits of human knowledge

## JANUARY 10, 2001: CLASS

- Lutheran dogmatics did not have much to say about the Father
  - “an absence of speculative interest”
- The Son was the one through whom
  - the Father was revealed,
  - and in whose name the H.S. worked
- The Father
  - The Father has a Son of his own essence by an actual (though eternal) *generation*
  - This generation is not an act, an event, or a happening external to the Father

- ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς τοῦ ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρὸς
- A “hypostatic Fatherhood”: a state of being, mode, or manner of being God
- God the Father NEVER refers to the entire godhead (even though Dr. Preus thinks it does)
- God’s Fatherhood is not, strictly speaking, related to his being creator (Arian)
  - Begetting cannot be creating, or else there is a time when the Son was not (Arian)
  - THEREFORE it cannot be an act of will; it is constitutive of the Father *identity*!
- Only the Father and the Son are TRUE Father and TRUE Son
  - Father is not behavior, or accident, or happenstance, but EXHAUSTIVE BEING
  - Sonship is constitutive as well!
- Not succession, but relation
- Not act, but state of existence
- Not divisibility, but of one essence

### JANUARY 12, 2001: CLASS

- Arians: if the Son is homoousias with the Father, then the Son must also be “unbegotten”
- Nicea: but if the Son is not homoousia, then he is not fully God
- It is NOT correct to call the Father “Mother”
  - The Father is a distinct and separable “other”, while motherhood has connotations of reception
  - The mother is naturally bound in a way that the father is not
  - This is **not** a natural relationship that exists by necessity
    - But if the Father is Son not by *will*, then is not necessary?
    - No, because he is Father and not Mother
    - An impregnated Mother *must* have the child; who is fed by her own blood
  - This is **not** based on a comparison of fatherly vs. motherly characteristics of God
    - It is not that God is “like a mother to us”
    - Nor is it like saying that God is “like a father to us”

### JANUARY 15, 2001: CLASS

- God IS love: his love is who he is: there can be nothing else, and God can still love
- God has wrath: his wrath is directed towards something outside
- For God to become man was not alien to God’s own nature
- God the man suffered *impassively*:
  - It is not alien to who God is
  - This is how God *is* in the context of sin, death, and the devil
  - The cross is how God *is* God: “The Word of God remained what he always was but took the flesh from the virgin Mary and made it his own so that he suffered in the flesh”
- To know God is not to *know* God, but to receive him
  - “faith is reception” not “faith is *this* and *this* and *this*”
- Both baptism and the Lord’s Supper were necessary for salvation (John 3 and John 6)
- EAST: tradition continues of communing infants
  - “Let a man examine oneself” refers to those who *can* examine themselves
- WEST: change starts in the 9<sup>th</sup> century as seen in the conciliatory documents
  - Lord’s supper’s necessity is questioned
  - John 6, therefore, ceases to be seen as Eucharistic
  - Infants and others, therefore, cease to be allowed to commune
  - By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Thomas Aquinas witnesses to the end product of this development

- WHY:
  - Bound up with the medieval penitential system?
  - Roman law dealt with amelioration and aggravation
  - Pastoral practice was bound up in progressive sanctification
  - The Lord's Supper could only be taken when a certain stage of sanctification occurred

### JANUARY 19, 2001: CLASS

- Read Athanasius by Monday
- The Son
  - Reformation Era Arians: Socinians
    - The question of Christ's deity (who is) concerns salvation (what he does)
    - If Christ is not true God, then our salvation is in jeopardy
    - In Lutheran thought, the doctrine of God is tied up in Christology
- Preexistence
  - Scripture is foundational to Christ's preexistence
    - Any "sending" passages argue for this: the one sent precedes the sending
      - "The Father has sent me into the world"
    - Christ is said to exist at the creation (John)
    - High priestly prayer says Christ had glory with the Father before the world began
    - His work: ability to forgive sins
    - His worship: he is honored with the Father
    - His perichoresis: the Father is in him and he is in the Father
  - If eternity is an attribute of God only, then the Son must inhabit the eternity of the Father
  - It also means he is outside the nature of God; extrinsic to God's will
- The Eternal Generation
  - A generation that is "supernatural" with no natural parallels
  - 7 attributes:
    - unceasing
    - intimate, ad intra to God, with perichoresis: the Son is internal to the Father
    - the Son is freely generated out of love within the Father but not necessarily
  - If God is not generative, he lacks something, and then is not love

### JANUARY 22, 2001: CLASS

- ATHANASIOS
  - "one in essence with the Father"
  - All others are creatures, the Word ALONE is "from the Father"
  - The Son is begotten of the Father uniquely: he "comes from God" in a way unlike us
  - He is both "said to be" and "is" from the essence of the Father
  - No "creature" is of the essence of the Father
    - The Son is he "through WHOM all things were made" that "come from God"
      - If the Son was *created*, he could be different and at a distance from the Father
      - But the Son is *generated*, and therefore he is separable from the Father and *at one*
    - Homousios denotes the *inseparability* and *perichoresis* at the same time
  - Homousios, though not biblical, is still appropriate
    - Even though both the gnostics and the modalists used it
    - The *sense* of the Scripture is subsumed under the *sense* of the word as used by Nicea

- God is not compound
  - God cannot be contained
  - Father is not something *about* God, but rather something that God *is*
  - “one in essence” does not imply partitions and divisions in the Godhead
- Distinguish the Son from creation and also distinguish from the Father
- IN CONFRONTING THE WORD MADE FLESH, ARE WE CONFRONTING GOD?
- SOTERIOLOGY
  - Arians: The Son follows the will of the Father as we now do
  - Antiochenes: Son of Man and Son of God are related by will
    - Gregg and Groh: Arianism and the Salvation of Man (15 years ago)
  - Nicenes: We participate in God by virtue of Christ’s being God and Man

### JANUARY 24, 2001: CLASS

- Impassability is an attribute where God is true to himself in his actions
- Ravoni, Italy
  - Arian Baptistry: 6<sup>th</sup> century mosaics of geometric shapes (no knowledge of God)
  - Orthodox Baptistry: 6<sup>th</sup> century mosaics of the baptism of Jesus (revelation)
- Arianism:
  - Creation is a secondary act through the first creation, the Word
  - The Word is itself a creature
  - One cannot know God through a creature, the flesh of Christ
  - God does not act intermediately; there is no “bridge”
  - Christ saves the world by a creaturely “adjustment” or “restoration”
  - Christ himself was open to mortality and corruption, so no perfection was possible “in him”
  - Christ restores things to the state they were before: death is still possible
  - Fixing up
  - Death is the separation of The Creature from creatures
  - Separation from God is part of the natural order
- Orthodox:
  - Creation is the creative act of God
  - The Word is himself God
  - God is known through the flesh of Christ
  - God the Son is now both flesh and divine, so a “bridge” is established
  - Christ reconciles the world to the reality of God, giving it a new “stability”
  - Mankind is perfected and restored with greater grace than before
  - Christ brings immortality and incorruption: death is no longer possible
  - Radical restoration and recreation
  - Death is an ontological separation, a chasm between God himself and man
  - Separation from God is NOT part of the natural order
- The flesh of Christ had to be of the corrupted order or no redemption was possible
- “Christ became as we are, sinner, that we might become as he is, saint” – Luther

### JANUARY 26, 2001: CLASS

- The Holy Spirit
  - Person: otherwise, there cannot be a sin against Him
  - Presence: poured out by Jesus and given his mission
- To sanctify is to set aside for a purpose

- A person sets aside: there's intention, will and purpose
- It is always important to ask after the *purpose* of the Spirit's coming
- Ways of speaking
  - From the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit
  - From the Father who begets a Son and who rests in the Holy Spirit
  - Justified (by the Father) by grace (Christ's) through faith (the work of the Spirit)
- Knowledge and worship of God is Trinitarian
  - The Father is known in his Son whom we worship by the Spirit
  - We pray in the Spirit through the Son to the Father (MOVEMENT of FAITH)
  - The Father is known through the Son by means of the Spirit (MEANS of GRACE)
  - It is impossible to address "God", per se:
    - there are three Persons
    - we do not pray to an essence
  - God is not a name: although the NT does indeed address the Father as God
  - Tradition continues that we address the Father in prayer, not the other persons
- FILIOQUE
  - e patre filioque (from the Father AND FROM THE SON)
    - Western rendering of the Nicene Creed
  - Ek th- ousia- tou Patro-
    - But the Pneumatomachians and Macedonians denied the full deity of the Spirit
  - Reccared, Visigoth King, was a strong Arian
    - In 589 he becomes convinced of Nicene orthodoxy
    - He convened a Synod in Toledo (the third)
    - "Filioque" clause is inserted to emphasize the deity of the *Son*
    - After all, whatever the Father does, the Son must do also
    - Cordova is the last remaining hold out of Visigoth history
      - A great number of philosophers and bishops came from Cordova
      - Maimonides (Jewish), Mosques, etc.
  - This was a natural development out of Western Trinitarian thinking
- AUGUSTINE:
  - God is love
  - The Father is the lover, the Son the beloved, and the Spirit the love between them
  - The love is returned from beloved to lover, and so is *also* a source
- CHARLEMAGNE:
  - At the time of Charlemagne an edict was ordered to add the filioque to the creed
  - The current Pope disagreed vehemently on the grounds that one doesn't change creeds
  - He understood the difficulties this would introduce with the East
- Photius (c. 850 AD) argued against this change vigorously
- Benedict VIII (1014 AD) adds the filioque into the creed
- CAPPADOCIAN THINKING:
  - The problem for the Cappadocian thinkers was isolating characteristics
  - The Father is unbegotten
  - The Son is begotten
  - The Spirit is proceeding
  - One CANNOT say that the Father or the Son proceeds, or that the Spirit is begotten
    - To say that the Father and the Son spirate is to confuse the two persons
    - A personal property must be characteristic of either one person only or of the essence
    - Which introduces MODALISM into the Trinitarian thinking

- The MONARCHY is compromised
  - The unity of source of the Father is threatened
  - There can now be *two* sources: Father and Son
  - This in turn leads to DUALISM
- Summary:
  - MODALISM: confusion of persons
  - DUALISM: two sources instead of one source
  - SUBORDINATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Spirit not a full participant in divinity

### JANUARY 31, 2001: CLASS

#### TEST:

- Memorize the explanation of the 1<sup>st</sup> article of the creed

#### FILIOQUE (con't)

- John 15:16 is the significant proof-text for the East and the West
  - The West tends to emphasize the economic sending
  - The East tends to emphasize the imminent proceeding
- “Spirit of God, Spirit of the Church” by the World Council of Churches
- Andrew of Crete speaks of the Father begetting the Son who rests on the Spirit

#### LUTHERAN-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE

- An Orthodox ambassador knew Melanchthon,
  - Philip translated the Augustana into Greek to be sent back to Constantinople
  - But the ambassador never made it back to Constantinople
  - Melanchthon is “very accommodating” to the Greeks in this translation
    - He slightly modifies A.C. IV, suggests “change” in A.C. X
- Tübingen was interested in contacting Constantinople
  - Three interchanges of letters were made by theologians on either side
  - The procession of the Spirit dominates the second exchange
- “**Procession and Sending**”
  - Jeremiah II
    - “The procession is one thing and the sending is another”
    - “The procession is the natural existence, and directly alone from the Father”
    - “The sending is a sending forth on a mission in time in which the Son also sends the Spirit”
    - “The Spirit also sends the Son – Luke 4:16”
    - ek and dia are different: “out of” and “through”
    - If the Spirit proceeds from the Son, then the Son sends the Spirit on the Son
  - The Lutherans
    - “There is one and the same sending...that of the Son and that of the Father”
    - “The Holy Spirit is called the finger of God, the most operative means of God”
- The language of “from the Father *through* the Son” is not foreign to the East
- The question is one of source: who is the Spirit *from*?
- **Avery Dulles**
  - Procession from or through the Son?
  - This is an argument from Thomas Aquinas
  - The Three Divine Persons are Subsistent Relations

- This is a matter of revelation, not natural theology
- They are distinguished by the relation of origin
  - Paternity, filiation, active spiration, passive spiration
  - Father to Son, Son to Father, Father to Spirit, Son to Spirit
- All three persons are equal in all ways but these relations
- The Father and Son are equal in every way
  - “The same thing is said of the Son as of the Father, except that the Son is Father”
  - The Father can only generate the Son
  - The Spirit must then proceed from both as from a single co-principal
  - The Father contemplates all things in the Word
  - The love from which the Spirit proceeds must come also from the Son who is the knowing of the Father – an Augustinian argument
- There must be harmony between the persons and their work
  - The Son is sent by the Father
  - The Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son
  - There is a link between sending and procession – a Western argument
- The internal reality must underlie the economic reality
  - The Son can be sent because he proceeds from the Father
  - The Spirit can be sent by both because he proceeds from both
  - The Missions ad extra ARE the Processions ad intra
- If we know God through his activities, then the opera ad intra must mirror the opera ad extra

I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He (**that he has given**) gives me and still provides (**sustains**) my body and soul, (**all**) my limbs and (all) my senses, my reason and all the faculties of my mind, together with food and clothing, house and home, family and property. He (**that he provides me daily**) (richly) and abundantly (**with all the necessities of life**) (provides for all my daily needs), protects me from all danger, and preserves me from (**all**) evil. All this he does out of (**his pure**) fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, through no merit or worthiness of my own (**without any merit or worthiness on my part**). For (**all**) this I (**am bound**) (ought) to thank and praise, serve and obey him. This is most certainly true!

## FEBRUARY 2, 2001: CLASS

### ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

- God’s essence can only be known from his works
- If God’s essence is simple and one, how can God have a number of differing attributes?
  - All the attributes of God must therefore be of God’s essence
  - God IS mercy, God IS truth, God IS infinite
  - It is not that God possesses mercy in some sense, but it is what God is in his essence
  - If this were not the case, there could be change and mutability in God
- No contribution or accidents exist in God
  - Only in thought do we “distinguish” attributes
  - Neither are attributes confused or “blended” with one another
  - Wisdom and goodness do not differ in reality, and cannot be distinguished
  - They are seen only in their *effects*
- There is only 1 attribute, by way of identity
- There could be an infinite number, by way of their effects
  - Dogmatists therefore differ in the number, kind, and classification of attributes
  - Gerhard has a **two fold classification**:

- **Absolute**, negative or immanent attributes
  - Those things that bespeak the divine essence in himself
  - Immutable – there is no need for an “outside” toward which to be immutable
- **Relative**, positive or external attributes
  - Those things that indicate God as he is in relation to the outside (world)
  - Mercy – one cannot have mercy without being merciful toward something
  - All three Persons of the Trinity possess these attributes
- **Attributes:**
  - UNITY
  - SPIRIT
  - SIMPLICITY: the divine essence is without parts, and uncompounded, incapable of division
  - MAJESTY
  - INFINITY: all things that relate to God’s deity are perfected – there is no “lack” of mercy
  - ETERNITY: God is transcendent over *time*;
    - he cannot be measured by time;
    - not “an unending duration”
  - GOODNESS
  - WILL: p.97 in Preus
    - God is not a “clump” of deity; God is never at rest
    - The will of God of the essence is distinguished from the will expressed in the world
    - The “*hidden*” and “*revealed*” will of God
      - Jesus’ death is for us
      - The deaths in India are for unknown reasons
    - The “*absolute*” and “*conditional*” will
    - The “*antecedent*” and “*consequent*” will
      - Grace is the antecedent will of God: occurs before we have faith
      - Damnation occurs because man sins, consequent to his actions
      - Consequent will is subordinate to the antecedent will
      - Law is subordinate to grace
    - The difference in God’s will
      - That which God wills to will
      - That which God does not will to will but must will
  - IMMUTABILITY: God does not change; this is an absolute attribute
    - Often associate with God’s truthfulness, a relative attribute
  - IMMENSITY: Absolute attribute of the transcendence over space
    - NOT the same as omnipresence, in the same way that infinity is NOT everlastingness
    - Uninterrupted and unending “thereness”
    - The direct and simple limitless of being present
    - God cannot NOT be present, because of his immensity
    - “Nothing so high, that God is not higher; nothing so low that God is not lower” – Luther
    - God is “shear highest will”, not “a spiritual substance that fills everything”
  - OMNIPRESENCE: Relative attribute with respect to the world; his presence everywhere
    - God creational presence and preservation is an “operative presence”
    - 1) Creation and Providence
    - 2) Gracious Presence
    - 3) Eschatological Presence
    - 4) Presence of the Son Incarnationally and Sacramentally
    - These modes are distinguished by effect and purpose but not ontologically

- Hell: cannot be the place where God is not, because this limits God
  - There can be no place where he is not
  - God is present there according to wrath, not as grace

## FEBRUARY 7, 2001: CLASS

### CREATION

- Pay attention to the 1<sup>st</sup> use of the law in “Creation and Law”
- **Focus:**
  - NOT theories of creation
  - NOT apology for anti-evolution notions
  - IS how a *creative* God fits into Christian theology
  - IS how creatures relate to God
  - IS how it is a *paradigm for other doctrines*
- **Approach:**
  - Luther’s explanation to the 1<sup>st</sup> article
  - The creedal, doxological, and hymnic aspect of God’s creation and providence
  - How is God MY God, my creator?
- **Edmund Schlink:** “Theology of the Lutheran Confessions”
  - It is as difficult to confess that God is our creator as God is our redeemer
    - In the midst of sin and death, we confess that God is both good and gracious
    - How can God preserve my eyes if I am going blind?
  - We are making *eschatological* claims, which look forward to final consummation
    - To confess that God is creator is not to make a philosophical or scientific claim
    - The *life* of the confessing person is placed in the center: **I** am a creature of God
    - Luther’s 1528 confession: “God the Father gives us all that he is and has”
- Death can be understood as God’s ceasing to give, ceasing to be *creator* for **you**
  - In the multiple and very arrangement of our existence we are confronted by God
  - However we do not see God as a *good* creator, but see only his wrath
- **Genesis 1 and 2:**
  - These are not merely happenings
  - They recount the prototype for understanding God’s relationship to humanity
  - 1) God of grace
    - In the beginning...God speaks
    - Creation is done freely through the sovereign exercise of God’s will through the Word
    - The word for creation is arb: this word is only used in relation to God
    - In this context, it seems that this implies a creation from nothing
  - 2) God of Freedom
    - In this context, it seems that this implies a creation from nothing
    - The FREEDOM of God over and against the WORLD
    - God relates in freedom and will to all things *not* God
    - Nothing external to God forced him to create or necessitated creation
    - Therefore God relates to the world as the one who WILLS it to life
  - 3) Creation
    - creation is not merely “dependent” on God
    - creation is not the “first cause” of which the world is then the subsequent effect(s) (Aristotle)
      - then God would simply be the first link in a long chain
      - The system then includes God within itself
    - In Genesis, all things are obedient and subservient to the divine command
      - As opposed to other myths, where they are generative principles of their own

- 4) Mythology
  - All that is creaturely is divested of divine power
  - No magic, no other powers: only God has power
- Gerhard May, "Creation Ex Nihilo": 2<sup>nd</sup> century development of the doctrine
- 2 Maccabees 7:28

## FEBRUARY 12, 2001: CLASS

### CREATION BY THE WORD

- The things which God speaks are realities
- The words of God and the actions of God are indistinguishable
- God does not stand hidden behind his actions
  - Creation does not stand between us and God
  - God is present in them, and in and through them he speaks to us
- In the things God makes he speaks to us in his Word
- God speaks in and through the things that he makes
  - What he speaks is the house of the Word
  - Creatio per verbum is a hypostatic understanding
  - **Hebrews 11:3**: "the creative rhma"
  - Preaching is also a creative word, that does not go forth void
  - In the word we also encounter God himself, not merely something about God
- Ex: "Honor your Father and Mother"
  - There was no need to wait for Mt. Sinai to know this
  - People already had Mother and Father, but being sinners did not know the truth
  - The law and creation both preach the demand and wrath of God
- When God says "that you might live a long life" means:
  - To have all that is needed for an abundant life
  - Good government, food, shelter, everything!
  - Through good civil authority does God provide us with what we need
- "I believe that God has created me *and all things*"
  - Implies our interconnectedness with all things
- The earth is the place of concrete existence, and the arena of God's work
  - God saw his creation and approved of it
  - Not just an aesthetic reality
  - It is good because it is just the way God intended it to be, to do what God intended it to do
    - It is good because the things perform according to their nature and purpose
      - The sun rises and shines
      - The birds chirp and fly
      - The fish swim
    - It is a fit an apt instrument for God to bestow his goodness upon us
      - They are not intrinsically good
      - They are good because they serves God's good purpose
    - "You see that God has created all things by his goodness, and has arranged them for goodness and usefulness; for life, for clarity, for eating...in order that in all things both his power and his goodness might be manifest." – *Luther*
      - God's power is seen in that he creates in order to bestow his goodness
- The earth was made for man and man's use

- It fosters and preserves human life
- It is good in view of man's own place and purpose in creation

### **MAN and the IMAGE OF GOD**

- Man is not created in service to God, but is served by God
- The good things of creation are given for his benefit
  - God is already in service to man
    - The future incarnation is presaged
  - Man is not viewed in isolation
    - Man is a relational being
    - We are not "political animals", but created in the image of the creator
    - The place we are given is the arena of God's creation and of his own proper vocation
    - "Work the garden" – in this vocation man is in the image and likeness of God
- How the image of God?
  - I) By virtue of reason, intellect, memory, creative ability, or speech
    - But the Bible doesn't associate these with the imago
    - Luther also rejects these, because then Satan would be more in the image of God
    - Satan has an even more tenacious intellect than man
  - II) By virtue of our spirit and soul, our original righteousness
    - These are included in the imago, for sure
    - This more likely refers to man as he was intended to be
  - III) By virtue of being *man*
    - Not our DNA or physical, intellectual attributes
    - We are man in our relations
      - A good creature of God
      - Through whom God's goodness is mediated to world and neighbor
      - We are in the image of God as the locus of God's goodness
    - Not merely spiritual capacity, but also physicality
    - Etimologically, the Hebrew word "selem" suggests "an image" or "icon"
- Our dominion and our image go together
  - Man is a living image of God's rule
  - We are God's statue in the middle of creation
  - We are the demonstration of God's goodness by virtue of our stewardship
- THEREFORE: In the coming of the man of Jesus God's kingdom comes
  - Jesus the man, as the true man, reestablishes the rule of God among creation
  - Jesus is the locus of goodness in creation
  - Man as created in the garden was not as man would be (Irenaeus)
  - Jesus would fulfill the destiny of man; the incarnation was plan A; his death was not
- Man is himself preeminently
  - the one who receives his life from God
  - Stands in God's place toward other creatures
- To be human is to trust God completely
  - "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit"
  - Man enjoys his freedom in his being true to himself, not in freedom of choice

### **FEBRUARY 16, 2001: CLASS**

- **Wednesday**: 12:30 pm Class

**CREATIO PRIMA:** the original or “first” creation

- **Creatio Ex Nihilo:** creation from nothing
  - Creation is a free act
  - It is not a necessary act
  - It is an act of love: “it was good”
- Addresses four significant errors:
  - Aristotelian: preexistent matter, God is a part of the system, a *first cause*
  - Accidental: creation has no purpose
  - Gnosticism: demiurges, intermediate causes/being between a perfect God and a profane world
  - Dualism: Marcionistic good Savior-God versus evil Creator-God
- Confirms three positive points about God:
  - Omnipotence:
  - Wisdom:
  - Goodness: deists would need to disagree
    - This is not a historically limited activity
    - It is an ongoing preservation
- Creation is imbued with the goodness of God, and therefore reflects his glory
  - Now, due to sin, only glimmers are left of the glory and goodness of the Lord
  - The book of nature by itself will only possibly teach omnipotence and wisdom
- **Creatio Per Verba:** creation by the Word
- Identical with the Second Person of the Trinity
  - Without whom the Father neither speaks nor works
  - 1) God speaks
  - 2) God speaks through Christ
- God’s speaking is action: it always happens
  - God works through means
  - The means are active and accomplish God’s will
- Creation as it originally was is consistent with the being of God
- **Creatio et Evangel:**
- All of this doctrine is to show that God is active and involved with his goodness
- Man’s importance to God
  - “God made all things for man, and he made man for himself” – Quenstedt
  - Without sin, there would have been nothing been friendship with God
- Doxological
  - Only Christians can get a proper sense of the doxological use of creation
  - What of Psalm 19?
- Justifying faith accepts all things that will strengthen it
  - Faith in creation supports, but does not create, justifying faith
  - “He who was able to create all things is able also to justify a poor sinner and save him forever”

**FEBRUARY 19, 2001: CLASS**

**CREATIO CONTINUA**

- God continues to care for and provide for all things
- The continued movement of the heavens, rains, etc. are the providence of God

- Guides and moderates all things so that they serve his purpose
  - To punish
  - To save
- Two Modes of Presence
  - Universal: present to all things
  - Gracious: through Word and Sacrament
  - Immanence: all things and events are immediately present and understood by God
- All rules are by the will of God; they can of course be suspended by him
- 1<sup>st</sup> CAUSE: God
- What ever God can do through secondary causes, he can do through 1<sup>st</sup> causes
- God not only empowers secondary causes, but directly ensures its accomplishment
- All that happens is accomplished entirely by God (active) and entirely by creature (passive)
  - Not God alone
  - Not creature alone
  - Not God in part and the creature in part
- God is always the efficient cause of any thing that happens
- God's good is our good: providence in a Gospel sense

## FEBRUARY 21, 2001: CLASS

### Creation and Law

- Sin: incurvatus in se
  - Man seeks by his own efforts to bring others under his subjection
  - Man's dominion is no longer one of service, but one of *domination*
  - The priestly character of human existence is now destroyed
  - Death is now something to be feared
  - We no longer trust the only One who can grant life, but the *thing* which cannot
- Hell is a place of eternal loneliness
- Lutheran Dogmaticians spent little time on the creatio prima
  - They were very interested in the creation continua
- Luther cared about the creatio ex nihilo
  - The world is completely dependent on God's gracious will and command
  - Our justification is dependent on God's being able to create ex nihilo
- The interest is not how the world works or came into being
- The concern is pure Christian thinking as opposed to the pagan mind
  - We can never prove the faith statement that "God spoke and it was"
  - Certain worldviews are helpful and others are not
  - But no single worldview can be *dogma*

### After the Fall

- God continues to relate to the world after the fall
- Creation continues by will
  - God's personal, active presence in the world is related to his *omnipresence*
  - Modes of presence become very important due to interest in his continued relationship
  - Creation can't be a past event but a present and personal event: "God has created me..."
  - God has ceased to establish, but never stops governing

- To create ex nihilo is for God to create by will and command
  - The speaking of this command is still operative in the government of the world
  - The continuing creation is the divine working
  - God asserts his will to give life in the face of man's rebellion and death
- Luther: (LW 26:314)
  - "God is the God of the humble, the miserable, and the desperate"
  - It is the nature of God to exalt the humble, to feed the hungry, to comfort the miserable
  - To justify the sinner, to raise the dead, and to save the damned
  - For God is the almighty creator who makes everything out of nothing
- Faith apprehends God in creaturely existence
  - Deism is excluded, which would abstract God from the world
  - Faith in God as creator will be a sacramental belief
  - The doctrine of creation is a radically anti-charismatic notion!
- For God to raise a child from the dead is for him to be no more present than for you to breathe
- There is no special category of "miracle"
  
- Both deism and magic must always be excluded
- **Concursus divinus** doctrine: that man's contingency never excludes God's providence
  - Man acts in such a way that even though it is his decision, God's will is done
  - God constrains people to do good by forcing upon them civil righteousness through the law
  - Political powers, rulers, marriage and school direct human activity toward good
  - Evil is restricted and punished, society is preserved and promoted
  - So man, even apart from faith, is constrained to do good
- Lawless rulers and rebellious people are both improperly exercising power
  - Not everyone in authority as legitimate authority
  - Those in power are to govern *justly*
- Work itself is not the result of sin
  - God's work was good, and so man's original work was good
  - Under sin, our work now becomes toil, because the earth works *against* us
  - So all work, even done apart from faith, is man continuing to carry out his vocation
  - We are therefore exhorted to continue in our vocation
  - To not do so is to abandon God and our neighbour
- 

Father most holy, merciful and tender  
 Jesus our savior, with the Father reigning  
 Spirit of comfort, advocate defender  
 Light never waning

Trinity blessed, unity unshaken  
 Goodness unbounded, very God of heaven  
 Light of the angels, joy of those forsaken  
 Hope of all living

Maker of all things, all thy creatures praise thee  
 All for thy worship were and are created  
 Now as we also worship thee devoutly  
 Hear though our voices

Lord God almighty, unto thee be glory  
One in three persons, over all exalted  
Glory we offer, praise thee and adore thee  
Now and forever

F,J,S,Light  
Father most holy, merciful and tender  
Jesus our Savior, with the Father reigning  
Spirit of comfort, advocate, defender  
Light never waning

TGLH  
Trinity blessed, unity unshaken  
[Goodness unbounded], very God of heaven  
Light of the angels, joy of those forsaken  
Hope of all living

MANH  
Maker of all things, all thy creatures praise thee  
All for thy worship were and are created  
Now as we also worship thee devoutly  
Hear thou our voices

LOGN  
Lord God almighty, unto thee be glory  
One in three persons, over all exalted  
Glory we offer, praise thee and adore thee  
Now and forever