

THIRTY-NINTH EVENING LECTURE.

(November 6, 1885.)

There is not a profession or calling, my friends, that has been made the subject of as profound contempt and intensive hatred as that of theologians, or teachers of religion. The world regards these men as the chief, if not the, cause that delays the coming of the Golden Age. A hundred years ago Diderot, notorious French encyclopedist, wrote: "Better times will not come for the world until the last king shall have been hanged with the guts of the last priest." On account of this and similar statements the French Government ordered that the writings of Diderot be burned and the author put in prison; however, his appalling statement became not only the slogan of the French revolutionaries in 1789, but it has been the slogan also of all revolutionaries until the present time. We may expect, too, that it will be translated into action some day, for all signs point in that direction. You may live to see it realized.

If only theologians and teachers of religion would not make themselves so contemptible and hated by their own fault! Alas! This sad fact is recorded not only in the annals of the history of the Church, but it is also confirmed by our own experience. There are too many teachers of religion who misuse their sacred office, their minds, their greed of money and glory, and their love of domineering. They do not only hush and even deny the truth continually, partly from a miserable fear of men, partly from an abominable favor of men, but instead of preaching the pure Gospel, they proclaim the very opposite and spread lies and errors. Why, there is no vice too shameful, no crime too awful, but teachers of religion have desecrated their office with it and have given the world offense, grievous beyond utterance.

Is this fact to deter you, my friends, from continuing your devoption to the study of theology? God forbid! Consider, in the first place, that the omniscient God has foreseen these sad events and has nevertheless in his infinite wisdom adopted this order of administering the sacred office, not through holy angels, who did not fall from their holy estate, but through fallen men, who are subject to sin. May God keep us from taking offense at this arrangement! Let us rather adore God for having made admirable provision that His church shall not be overcome by hell, in spite of the fact that it is served by such poor and, at times, such abominable ministers.

Consider, in the second place, that notwithstanding the contempt of the world the great God has highly honored the office of teachers of religion and has exalted it above every other office. To begin with the Son of God, in the days of his flesh and while personally administering this office, from the very beginning cheered the first teachers with these words: "He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me;

and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent Me.” Luke 10, 16 What a glorious credentials has He furnished his ministers by these words for their itineraries throughout the world! Furthermore, the Word of God has revealed to us the fact that not only marriage unions, but also unions between ministers and their congregations are concluded in heaven. What is told us concerning Jeremiah and Paul applies to all true ministers: they are appointed not only in the present time, not only at their birth, but they have been appointed by God from eternity, to be His helpers for saving those who are entrusted to them. Lastly, no one has been given more glorious promises than teachers of the Gospel and ministers of the Word of God. By the prophet Daniel, God says: “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.” Dan 12, 3 When the time comes that the worldly shall gnash their teeth, they shall witness all the elect and angels saying to God: “This man has been a faithful minister and teacher. He has proclaimed the saving Word of God to a world of castaways. On yonder earth he was despised, persecuted, and maligned, but he shines now as a star with imperishable luster.”

Verily, my dear friends, this fact should cheer us and keep us from becoming unfaithful to our God, who has called us into this office. Of course, what the prophet has said applies only to true and faithful ministers. Bearing this in mind, let us take up the final thesis in this series, which treats of the distinction between the Law and the Gospel and of the confounding of these two doctrines. In studying this thesis, we shall ponder the chief and primary requisite of a true teacher of the Christian religion.

Thesis XXV.

In the twenty-first place, the Word of God is not rightly divided when the person teaching it does not allow the Gospel to have a general predominance in his teaching.

It is an exceedingly important subject that we are taking up in this our concluding study. For we are told in this thesis that Law and Gospel are confounded and perverted for the hearers of the Word, not only when the Law predominates in the preaching, but also when Law and Gospel, as a rule, are equally balanced and the gospel is not predominant in the preaching. In view of the precious character of this subject I am seized with fear lest I spoil it by my manner of presentation. The longer I have meditated this subject, the more inadequate does the expression that I can give it; so precious is this matter.

Let us return to the Holy Scriptures and become convinced that, in a general way, the Gospel must predominate in the preaching of a Christian minister. The first proof of this claim is furnished by the first preacher after Christ had been born into this world. He was an angel; he preached to the shepherds, who were terrified by his celestial splendor: “Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” Luke 2, 10. In his address there is not the least trace of the Law, of injunctions,

of demands that God makes upon men, but he preaches the very opposite: concerning the good will and mercy of God to all men. He is joined by the heavenly host, who sing exultingly: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2, 14. Again, we hear nothing but a sweet, pleasant message of joy. Our Father in heaven has had His honor restored to Him. He had created a race of men of whom He knew that they would fall, but he did everything possible to save men. The Infant born in the stable at Bethlehem has established peace between God and mankind. The only thing that God requires is that men be pleased with His arrangement for their salvation and take comfort and rejoice in this Infant.

This heavenly preacher gave us an illustration of how we are to preach. True, we have to preach the law, only, however, as a preparation for the Gospel. The ultimate aim in our preaching of the law must be to preach the Gospel. Whoever does not adopt this aim is not a true minister of the Gospel.

Mark 16, 15–16 we read: *Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* When these words were spoken, the time had arrived for Christ to proclaim in clear and distinct terms the basic facts of His religion. For He was about to ascend to heaven and must now give His apostles instruction how to continue His work. What does he say to them? He tells them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. The mere term *Gospel* serves notice on them that their message must be a message of joy. Lest they think that His word is so infinitely great that nobody will grasp its meaning, He adds these words immediately: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," to let them know that this is what He understands by the word *Gospel*. He proceeds: "He that believeth not shall be damned." This, too, is a sweet word; for He does not say: "He that has sinned much for a long time shall be damned," but states no other reason for man's damnation than his unbelief. Humanly speaking, one might say that these last words are the very sweetest and most comforting. Ponder the meaning of this statement: "He that believeth not shall be damned." No matter what a person's character is and how grievously he has sinned, nothing in his past record shall damn him. But, naturally, when a person refuses to believe the words, the message, of Jesus, he has to go to perdition. The Lord never makes mention of hell except for the purpose of bringing men to heaven. So in this passage; the alarming reference to damnation is merely to prompt men to accept His gracious message and not to put it from them. These last words of the Lord should not be emphasized thus: "He that believeth *not* shall be damned," but thus: "He that *believeth* not shall be damned," He means to say: "Your damnation has already been removed from you; your sin has been taken away; hell has already been overcome for you. I have rendered sufficient atonement for everything. It is now for you to *believe* this, and you will be saved forevermore."

2 Tim 4, 5 Paul writes: *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work*

of an evangelist (ἔργον εὐαγγελιστοῦ), make full proof of thy ministry. Granted that the term “evangelist” may refer to a special office, that does not weaken our argument. Those who were not apostles, but evangelists were such because there were to preach nothing but the Gospel, that is, only the doctrine by which they were to save men.

True, if you meet with people who are merged in self-righteousness, in sins and vices, and in carnal security, you must first crush their stony hearts: but that is merely preparatory work. The waters of grace cannot penetrate a stony heart. But the Law is merely an auxiliary doctrine; it is not the real doctrine of Christ. “The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” John 1, 17. By Christ came only grace, the Gospel, not a new Law, as the miserable papists claim in their blindness. He preached the law merely to prepare men for the sweet comfort which he had to offer them.

2 Cor 3, 5–6 Paul writes: *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.* The apostle speaks of this apostolic activity. Preachers of this Christian era must bear in mind that they are preachers, not of the Old Covenant, but of the New. That is the reason why the apostle refers to the letter, that is, the Law, which kills, and to the spirit, this is, the Gospel, which gives life. A New Testament preacher as such has to preach nothing less than the Gospel. He is really discharging an alien function when he preaches the law. It is due to the horrible blindness that papists assert that in the Scriptures two doctrines must be distinguished, the old Law and the *evangelical law*. The latter term is self-contradiction. How can there be glad tidings in a law? Add to this that the Antichrist goes so far as to contend that the evangelical law is the more grievous of the two: for the Mosaic Law had been satisfied with external obedience, while the evangelical law lays its injunctions on men's innermost heart.

1 Cor 2, 2 Paul writes: *For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.* It is remarkable that during his sojourn at Corinth, Paul was day and night wrestling with the problem how to bring Christ into people's heart and how to lay a solid foundation for their faith in Christ and their joy in Him. Jesus Christ was the marrow and substance of all his preaching, the golden thread that ran through all his sermons. He wrote this fact down for our benefit. When saying farewell to our congregations, we can do so with a good conscience only if we can repeat the statement of Paul that has just been cited. Woe to the preacher that preaches other things! Woe to him if, in order to make men godly, he has preached the law because he imagined that the pure, unadulterated grace of God would not save men. If he has done that, he has been an unfaithful servant.

I Cor 15, 3 Paul writes: *For I delivered unto you FIRST OF ALL that which I also received, how that Christ died for your sins according to the Scriptures.* The apostle says:

“first of all,” ἐν πρώτοις, *imprimis*. He regarded all other matters as subordinate to this primary subject for preaching, namely, the Gospel concerning Christ.

Now, do not merely listen to this statement of the apostle, but think of the time when you will be the pastor of a congregation and make a vow to God that you will adopt the apostle's method, that you will not stand in your pulpits sad-faced, as if you were bidding men to come to a funeral, but like men that go wooing a bride or announcing a wedding. If you do not mingle Law with the Gospel you will always mount your pulpit with joy. People will notice that you are filled with joy because you are bringing the blessed message of joy to your congregation. They will furthermore notice that wonderful things are happening among them. Alas! Many ministers do not meet with those wonderful experiences; their hearers remain sleepy; their misers stay stingy. What is the reason? Not sufficient Gospel has been preached to them. The people who go to church in America really want to hear the Word of God. We are living in a free country, where it is nobody's concern whether one goes to church or not. In accordance with God's will it should be the preacher's aim to proclaim the Gospel to his hearers till their hearts are melted, till they give up their resistance and confess that the Lord has been too strong for them, and hence forth they wish to abide with Jesus. It is not sufficient for you to be conscious of your orthodoxy and your ability to present the pure doctrine correctly. These are, indeed, important matters; however, no one will be benefited by them if you confound Law and Gospel. The very finest form of confounding both occurs when the Gospel is preached *along with* the Law, but is not the predominating element in the sermon. The preacher may think that he has proclaimed the evangelical truth quite often. His hearers, however, remember on that on some occasions he preached quite comfortingly and told them to believe in Jesus Christ. Without telling them how to attain to faith in Christ, your hearers will be spiritually starved to death if you do not allow the Gospel to predominate in your preaching. They will be spiritually underfed because the bread of life is not the Law, but the Gospel.

2 Cor 1, 24 we read: *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy; for by faith ye stand.* This is a fine text for your initial sermon. Remember this word of the apostle well: when you become ministers, you become helpers of the Christians' joy. Do not become ministers who vex and torture the people, filling them with uncertainty and causing them to go home from church heavy-hearted. Write your sermons so that you can say: “If anyone hears this sermon and is not converted, it is his own fault if he goes home from church unconverted and hardened.” Do not worry when you hear fanatics say that you are not truly converted, otherwise you would come down on your people with the Law much more forcefully and that you are preaching your people into hell, etc. Let fanatics say about you what they please. You may rest assured that your method is the correct one because you are to be helpers of joy to Christians; you are not to put them on the rack of the Law. The longer you preach to your people after

this method, the more they will praise God for having given them such a pastor. *You may believe me when I say that in the entire course of history of the Church there will be found few communions that have such achievements to show as our Synod spite of its weaknesses and defects. That is not due to our prudence, our hard work our self-denial. The true reason is that we have really preached the genuine Gospel to the people.*

As soon as there arises in the hearts of hearers a desire for God's grace and mercy and the cheerful assurance that they, too, will be saved, they are believers. Many remain in their sins because they think that they will never get to be so that they can go to heaven, since they can never become as godly as their godly pastor is. Do not hesitate to preach the Gospel of the grace of God in Christ Jesus frankly and cheerfully, and such gloomy thoughts will soon vanish from the hearts of your hearers.

Let me offer you two quotations from the Symbolical Books which show that our Church, too, has in its confessional writings declared that the doctrine of the grace of God in Christ Jesus is a matter of primary importance. In the *Augsburg Confession*, Art. IV, we read (Mueller, p. 39; *Trigl Conc.*, p. 45): "Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in his sight. Rom 3 & 4."

In the *Smalcald Articles*, Part II, Art I, we read (Mueller, p. 300; *Trigl. Conc.*, p. 461): "Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth, and whatever will not abide, should sink into ruin. For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, says Peter. Acts 4, 12 And with His stripes we are healed. Is 53, 5. And upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the Pope, the devil, and the world. Therefore we must be sure concerning this doctrine and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the Pope and the devil and all things gain the victory and suit over us."

Let me offer you a quotation from *Luther* which you ought to commit to memory and of which you should make diligent use. It is found in his *Preface to the Epistle to the Galatians* (St. L. Ed. IX, 9) and reads: "In my heart there reigns, and shall ever reign, this one article, namely, faith in my dear Lord Christ, which is the sole beginning, middle, and end of all spiritual and godly thoughts which I may have at any time, day or night."

Luther might as well have said "in my sermons and writings", instead of "in my heart," for his sermons and writings conform to the above rule. No one can preach the Gospel more sweetly and gloriously than our beloved Luther did. He does not only offer great comfort in his sermons, but he preaches so as to lay hold of any doubting hearer and drag him out of his doubts, compelling him to believe that he is a child of God and would die saved if were to die that night. Would to God that this testimony could be of-

ferred concerning you when you have entered the ministry! Pray to God on your knees for His help in order that you may repeat Luther's confession. Would to God that this confession could be repeated by all ministers, and I must add, alas! also by all ministers in the Missouri Synod! For they are not all alike; in some there is a legalistic trend, which does great injury to the owner and to their hearers' souls. They do not administer their office with genuine cheerfulness and do not make their people cheerful Christians. But that is what you will have to do to achieve wonderful results. If you preach the Gospel abundantly, you need not fear that your people will leave your church when some spiritual mountebank comes along and starts an unseemly exhibition in his pulpit. Your people will say: "Our minister has given us what we could not get anywhere else. He is a true Lutheran minister and pours out a great treasure for us every Sunday.

Commenting on John 17, 10, *Luther* writes (St. L. Ed. VIII, 798): "Let every one, then, see for himself how Christ is glorified in him. For there are many who boast of the Gospel and know how to talk a great deal about it; but having Christ glorified in oneself is not such a common event that it takes place in everybody. For, as we were told, glorifying Christ, or believing in Him, is nothing else than being assured that whosoever has him has the Father and all grace, divine blessings, and life eternal. That is something which the saints of this world, the Pope and the sectarian spirits cannot achieve. For, although some talk about Christ and manage to utter these words that He is the Son of God, that He has redeemed us, etc., yet they never learn by their own experience how He is received, used, sought, found, and held fast and how the Father is apprehended in and through Him. Meanwhile they are soaring up into the clouds and busy themselves with their own imaginations. You can observe this in some of the sectarian spirits, who have learned from us to speak of Christ and of faith, *how rarely they treat this doctrine, yea, how cold and inept they are* whenever they have to treat *this chief point of doctrine*, and how they rush over such texts as these and merely skim their surface, regarding this matter as a paltry thing that everybody is able to do quite well."

On examining your sermon for both its Law and its Gospel contents, you may find that you have given the Gospel very little space. Now remember, if you come out of your pulpit without having preached enough Gospel to save some poor sinner who may have come to church for the first and the last time, his blood will be required of you.

Luther continues: "To sum up, they are filled altogether with other thoughts, and even when they hit upon something worth while, as will happen occasionally, they have no real understanding of it and promptly skip on to their dreams. *A true minister, however, urges this article most of all, yea, without ceasing*, since on it is based everything that pertains to the knowledge of God and our salvation, as you see in this evangelist John and throughout the epistles of Paul."

It is of paramount importance that your heart be full of this subject and that you speak of it from personal experience, so that, when you reach this point in your sermons,

you are forced to confess to your hearers that you cannot fully express all that you have experienced, that it baffles all efforts to describe it in words, and that you can merely stammer forth a few inadequate words about it. A preacher of this sort will soon notice that streams of the Holy Spirit are being poured out upon his congregation and that even the most hardened sinners are for once brought around to Christ by the comforting preaching which they have heard. We must not imagine that saving knowledge is produced in the hearers invariably by powerful preaching of the Law. Many hearers of such preaching become convinced that they would perish if they had to die immediately. When they hear a real Gospel sermon, full of the richest consolation, it may readily happen that they are brought around to Christ.

In *Luther's House Postil* (St. L. Ed. XIII, p. 2014) we find this comment on Ps 68, 18: "What a King is this who has ascended on high, sat down beyond the clouds, at the right hand of Majesty in heaven, and has led captivity captive! While on earth, He was not engaged in child's play and worthless things, but captured an everlasting enemy and a great prison: He made captives of sin and the devil, who had made captives of the entire world. Hence sin and the devil, though they are my adversaries and want to torment me, yet cannot harm me in the least if I hold fast Christ." How foolish are ministers who, after preaching a long time without having any success, decide to preach nothing but the law for a while in order to rouse their people from their spiritual sleep! By that method they will accomplish nothing. "This does not mean that the people are to remain lazy and not do good works, as the papists say when they revile our preaching and sarcastically call us 'sweet preachers'". Luther is willing to bear the reproach of being called a "sweet", that is, a comforting, preacher. He will regard that as a very trifling charge when people say that his preaching prevents men from doing good works, because he is sure by his preaching he is changing men's hearts, so that they will do good works. "However, they would talk in a different strain if they had ever been in this prison. When they shall be placed at the left hand of the Judge and anguish and terror lay hold on them, they shall experience what this prison means. Accordingly, this is not a subject that may be preached to men's flesh and blood, as if they were given liberty to do according to their lust. But the story of Christ's ascension and His rule is to the end that sin may be made captive and eternal death may not shackle us and keep us in bondage. Now, if sin is to be made captive, I (who believe in Christ, must so live that I am not overcome by hatred and envy of my fellowmen or by other sins, but must fight against sin and say: "Listen, sin! You want to incite me to become angry, to envy, to commit adultery, to steal, to be unfaithful, etc. I will not do it." Likewise, if sin wants to assail me from the other side and fill me with terror, I must say: "No, sin. You are my servant, and I am your lord. Have you never heard the pretty song about my Lord Jesus Christ which David sang, saying: 'Thou hast ascended on high,' etc." Hitherto you have been a hangman and a devil to me; you have held me captive; but now that I believe in

Christ you shall be my hangman no longer. I shall not permit you to accuse me, for you are a captive of my Lord and King, who has put you in the stocks and cast you beneath my feet.” Understand this matter right: By His ascension and by the preaching of faith, Christ does not purpose to rear lazy and sluggish Christians, who say: “We shall now live according to our pleasure, not doing good works, remain sinners, and following sin like captive slaves.” *Those who talk thus have never had a right understanding of the preaching of faith.* Christ and His mercy are not preached to the end that men should remain in their sins. On the contrary, this is what the Christian doctrine proclaims: “The captivity is to leave you go free, not that you may do whatever you desire, but that you sin no more.”

Luther means to tell us to preach the real Gospel with its comfort without hesitation and not to fear that we shall preach people into hell with the Gospel. True, some may derive a carnal comfort from our Gospel-preaching, but we must not think that they will have an easy death with their false comfort. In the presence of death their comfort will vanish like snow before the sun in March. We are not responsible for false comfort which a hearer draws from our preaching. He lives in security and imagines that, since he is not so awfully wicked and has many good traits to show and his getting drunk occasionally and his cursing are merely bad habits that cling to him, he will undoubtedly go to heaven. Such a person never has received the Gospel that was preached to him in his heart. We must not allow occurrences of this kind to disturb us. We must cheerfully preach the Gospel, since Christ has commanded us: “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Often times all hope seems to vanish from those who have lived in a false comfort and imagined that they were resting their confidence on what their faithful minister has preached. The minister may have an awful time with such people when preparing them for their departure from this world; they seem to despair of salvation. *God grant that some day people may say about you that you are preaching well, but too sweetly!* Do not hold forth with the Law too long; let the Gospel follow promptly. When the law has made the iron to flow, apply the Gospel immediately to shape it into a proper form; if the iron is allowed to cool, nothing can be done with it.

Lastly, *Luther* writes in his House Postil (St. L. Ed. XIII, 800 ff.) “This, then, is the other rule laid down by the Lord: we are to disregard specious displays and look for fruits. He says: ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ He illustrates his meaning by a parable. No one is so foolish as to go into a field full of thorns and thistles and look for grapes and figs. Such fruits we seek on a different plant, which is not so full of barbs and prickles. The same thing happens in our gardens. Seeing a tree full of apples or pears, everybody exclaims: ‘Ah, what a fine tree that is!’ Again, where there is no fruit on a tree or he fruit is worm-eaten, cracked, and misshapen, everybody says the tree is worthless, fit to be cut down and cast into the fire, so that a better tree may be planted in its place. These tests, the Lord says, you must apply to the false prophets, and you will

not make a mistake, no matter how good their appearance may be. If a wolf had put on twenty sheepskins, still you must know him to be a wolf and not be deceived by him.

“Now, what is the fruit of a true prophet or preacher by which we can know that he is not a wolf, but a good sheep? It is not his way of living, his title, and office, nor his peculiar gifts of grace. For our Lord testifies, and our own experience corroborates His testimony, that people are often duped and deluded by these external marks. The genuine fruit — as the Lord states at the end of His parable — is the doing of the will of the Father in heaven.

“Note that the Lord in this place is not speaking of Christians in general, but of prophets. True all Christians are to do the will of the Father and are to be saved through doing it.” We are frequently misunderstood. People imagine they can know a true prophet by the fruit of his godly life and by his great success in the ministry. But Christ says: “Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.” Matt 7, 21. “Now, ‘doing the will of the Father’ refers not only to that which is expressed in the Ten Commandments and to the obedience which God demands in His Law. For, since we cannot do this will of God perfectly in the present life, it would be impossible for us to glory in having done the will of the Father, and hence we could not go to heaven. But the will of the Father has been expressed in John 6, 40, where Christ says: ‘This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the Last Day!’ That is the only way in which we all, both preachers and hearers, are to walk if we are to be saved.

“Now, the Lord in this passage speaks, in particular, of preachers or prophets, whose real and proper fruit is nothing else than this, that they diligently proclaim this will of God to the people and teach them that God is gracious and merciful and has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but wants him to live, moreover, that God has manifested His mercy by having His only begotten Son become man. Whoever, now, receives Him and believes in Him, that is, whoever takes comfort in the fact that for the sake of His son, God will be merciful to him, will forgive his sins, and grant him eternal salvation, etc., — *whoever is engaged in this preaching of the pure Gospel and thus direct men to Christ, the only Mediator between God and men, he, as a preacher, is doing the will of God.* That is the genuine fruit by which no one is deceived or duped. For if it were possible that the devil were to preach this truth, the preaching would not be false or made up of lies and a person believing it would have what it promises. — *After this fruit, which is the principal and most reliable one and cannot deceive, there follow in the course of time other fruits, namely, a life in beautiful harmony with this doctrine and in no way contrary to it. But these fruits are to be regarded as genuine fruits only where the first fruit, namely, the doctrine of Christ, already exists.*”