

and the congregation, i.e. the lack of emphasis on contextuality and diversity.

Mark D. Tranvik from Augsburg College presented a paper on Luther and Wingren on baptism. In providing an overview of Luther's understanding of baptism, Tranvik argued that Wingren builds on the early church fathers and Luther. The overall goal of Tranvik was to promote a baptismal language and baptismal theology that focuses on the relationship *faith and daily life*. – Baptism for Luther is, so Tranvik, neither »just the sacrament of infancy« nor an initiation rite, rather, baptism spans the entire life of the believer. According to Wingren, man is through baptism restored in

Christ, recapitulated, brought back into proper relationship with creation, neighbor and God; in baptism, man truly becomes man. Yet, the »true and proper baptism for all humanity« is the death and resurrection of Christ, the reversing of the life-death pattern set by Adam; hence all the believer ever receives is a renewal and continuation of baptism. There were some questions raised concerning the bearing of the Luther-Wingren connection. It was argued that the understanding of baptism in Wingren seems to be drawn more from Irenaeus, hence the language of recapitulation and becoming man, and not that closely from Luther.

Sola Scriptura

Seminar Leader: Friederike Nüssel

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While the *sola scriptura* principle is widely regarded as an essential element of Luther's thought and Lutheran theology, it has gone through several transformations in the history of Lutheran thinking. The goal of the seminar was to identify and reflect some crucial

steps in this development and to discuss possible ways of re-thinking the way in which the principal role of the Bible could be defined today consistent with Lutheran thought.

The seminar participants included *Lubomir Batka* (Comenius-

University Bratislava, Slovakia), *H. Ashley Hall* (Creighton University, Nebraska, USA), *Anne Käfer* (Evangelical Church in Germany, Germany), *Friederike Nüssel* (Heidelberg University, Germany), *Steffen Kjeldgaard-Petersen* (Copenhagen, Denmark), and *Jens Schröter* (Humboldt-University Berlin, Germany).

First, the group studied some crucial passages from Luther's *De servo arbitrio*. Therein, Luther elaborates some central aspects of his hermeneutical approach to the Bible. Of particular concern was the *claritas scripturae* and the key idea that obscure and difficult passages in the Bible which cannot be clarified through philological exegesis need to be interpreted in the light of Jesus Christ as the center of the Bible. In his controversy with Erasmus, Luther argues that the Bible is a clear and sufficient source to develop an understanding of the human condition and the need for salvation in Christ. Both constitute the clear testimony of Scripture. The group asked whether this necessarily involves the *sola scriptura* principle and the complete exclusion of church tradition, especially the writings of the church fathers. An article by Timothy Wengert (T.J. WENGERT, A Note on *Sola Scriptura* in Martin Luther's

Writings, in: *Luther-Bulletin*, vol. 20, 2011, 21–31) was particularly helpful. Through a word study of Luther's works, Wengert demonstrates that Luther only rarely uses the phrase *sola scriptura*, and when he does so, it is often to deny that Scripture alone (Scripture *qua* Scripture) is sufficient. Instead, Luther's primary interest is to find Christ within Scripture as well as within the better tradition of the Church's theology and preaching. This generated a lot of conversation about whether and to what extent *sola scriptura* might nonetheless be implicit in Luther's understanding of authority.

Next, the group turned to the Lutheran theologians of the 17th century with particular examination of the locus *de scriptura sacra* in the works of Johann Gerhard and others. Here, we find a marked development. In these teachings, the *sola scriptura* principle was now both formulated in a strictly exclusive sense (i.e. relative to other authorities), and also informed by the particular doctrine of verbal inspiration. The reasons for this development were manifold. On the one hand, Lutherans faced challenges from the Council of Trent and its teaching on Scripture and tradition; and on the other, they

faced challenges from radical reformers and eclectic ways of using Scripture. Still another development was noted in the following century. In examining the works of Lutheran theologian Johann Franz Buddeus, who taught in Jena at the beginning of the 18th century, we noted that the argumentative weight of the idea of verbal inspiration was reduced. At the same time, Buddeus articulates the differentiation between exegetical and dogmatic readings of Scripture. According to Buddeus, the task of dogmatic theology is to identify those articles in the Bible necessary for salvation. For Buddeus, the *fundamentum in re* expressed in the Bible is God's reconciling activity through his new covenant in Christ. Buddeus thus systematically integrates Reformed federal theology into his Lutheran account of faith. Biblical theology is necessary only to clarify difficult passages in the Bible on a philological and syntactical level. For this reason, it has a methodological responsibility distinct from dogmatic theology.

For a prominent example of a post-Enlightenment revision of the article concerning Scripture, we then discussed Friedrich Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*. In his ac-

count of Scripture, Schleiermacher reflects a rationalist critique of the Bible. The same is found in the ground-breaking research of Johann Salomo Semler's *Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Kanons* (1771). Schleiermacher transfers the doctrine of Scripture from the prolegomena to the ecclesiological section of his dogmatics. As a result, he indicates that the inspired authority of the Bible is an expression of faith resulting from an encounter with the Bible primarily from within the Christian community. Moreover, Schleiermacher discusses the canonical character of the biblical writings. For him, the authority of the apostolic writings is based upon their account of the experience of Jesus, their account of his ultimate concern for God, and their witness as inspired through the Holy Spirit. For Schleiermacher, it is important that the early witness of the Apostles was pure. The sense for the truly apostolic witness is a gift of the Holy Spirit, which is deepened and promulgated in the course of the church's history. Hence, Schleiermacher, like Luther, stresses the role of the Spirit together with the salvific experience of Christ as the ground for the authority of the Bible. Yet, he does not defend *sola scriptura* in the exclusive

manner of Lutheran Orthodoxy. This is because, for Schleiermacher, the immediate source for Protestant theology is in the interpretation of the biblical witness in the confessional writings of the Reformation.

In the modern ecumenical movement of the 20th century, the issue of Scripture and tradition has become a major topic. Lutheran and Roman Catholic theologians have explored the fact that the canon itself was defined through a process of tradition. For a Lutheran perspective on this development, the group discussed an article by WILFRIED HÄRLE, *Tradition und Schrift als Thema des interkonfessionellen Dialogs heute aus evangelischer Sicht* (in: *Kircheneinheit und Weltverantwortung. Festschrift für Peter Neuner*, hg. v. C. BÖTTIGHEIMER/H. FILSER, 2006, 617–632). For Härle, the development of the canon involved the distinction between canonical and non-canonical tradition. While the identification of canonical writings was dependent on a process in which oral and written tradition played a decisive role, Härle affirms with Karl Barth that the authority of the biblical canon has emerged within the church through the work of the Spirit. Hence, Scripture is the normative source in comparison with all non-

canonical tradition, although tradition may help to deepen exegesis. Thus, the critical perspective on tradition, which we found in the Reformation and especially in the post-Reformation era, is changed.

Today, however, it is no longer sufficient to reflect upon the relationship between Scripture and tradition in an effort to describe the canonical character of the Bible. Rather, it is necessary to defend and explain both (i) the impact of God's revelation as witnessed in the Bible for a systematic understanding of the world as God's creation and (ii) the claim of the existence of God as the ultimate and all-determining reality. This was pointed out by Wolfhart Pannenberg in an early article on the crisis of the *sola scriptura* principle (*Die Krise des Schriftprinzips* (1962) [in: *Grundfragen systematischer Theologie*, hg. v. DERS., ²1971, 11–21]). Theology, therefore, has the task to demonstrate the rationality of Christian faith in dialogue with other disciplines. For Pannenberg, it is impossible to defend the normative role of Scripture in the academy today without first giving a systematic justification for why Scripture offers a plausible perspective on the world. This is how, as a modern Lutheran theologian, Pan-

nenberg transforms the principle of *sola scriptura*. In our discussion we agreed that this kind of theological approach would meet the concerns of confessional Lutheran theology of the 17th and 18th centuries in their distinction between and combination of natural and revealed theol-

ogy. Moreover, this insight is a recovery of Luther's insistence on finding and proclaiming Christ within the Scriptures, a commission that preserves the authority of Scripture relative to the person and benefits of Christ proclaimed and understood *pro nobis*.

Glaube und Vernunft bei Luther

Seminarleiter: Hans-Peter Großhans

Berichterstatter: Michael Plathow

Der aspektreiche und disparate Themenkomplex »Glaube und Vernunft bei Luther« erwies in unserer Seminararbeit seine Multiperspektivität, die sich bei dem existenziell denkenden Frömmigkeitstheologen M. Luther nicht ohne weiteres systematisieren lässt. Textorientiert wandten sich die aus Finnland, Dänemark und Deutschland kommenden Wissenschaftler dem Thema in verschiedenen Lutherschriften zu. Die situative Verortung und die unterschiedlichen Genera der Primärtexte reflektierend, verlieh gerade das theologische Unterscheiden, ohne zu trennen, von *Gesetz und Evangelium* als konstitutiver und kriteriologischer Zugang Klarheit für den Themenkomplex.

In der Spannweite von einerseits Luthers kritischen Äußerungen über die »Hure Vernunft« (WA 51; 126,7.32; WA 18; 164,25–27) und seiner konfessorischen Berufung auf den Schrift- und eben auch den Vernunftbeweis vor dem Reichstag zu Worms (WA 7; 838,4) wurden folgende Quellentexte interpretiert und diskutiert:

1. *Disputatio de homine* (1536) in: WA 39; 175–177 nach: G. EBELING, Lutherstudien Bd 2. *Disputatio de homine* I, 1977, 15–24 mit einer Einführung durch Michael Plathow: *nec eo ipsa ratio novit a priori, sed tantum a posteriori*.

Nicht aus sich – wie These 10 feststellt – vermag die Vernunft ihr Wesen zu bestimmen (a priori); erst