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LUTHER AND ZWINGLI. ^{1078A}

A PARALLEL AND A CONTRAST.

1:

Dr. Kattenbusch thinks that a comparison of Luther and Zwingli will in every sincere Protestant induce the wish that nature might have made these two men into one.¹⁾ Each, he thinks, possesses that which is the principal lack of the other. They seemed destined to supplement each other, at least, to so shape their labors as to make them serve their joint interests. Reciprocal kindness and mutual helpfulness should have characterized their coexistence in an era that was big with promise for the good of the Church and of humanity in general. As a matter of fact, their meeting in the arena of historical events presents a most melancholy spectacle. It is the most fatal accident that could happen to the cause of the Reformation. With a discretion that is more wise than just Dr. Kattenbusch holds that it will not do to determine the amount of guilt that must be charged against either the one or the other of these two remarkable men, who brought on the saddest of the many internal conflicts in which Protestantism during the last four hundred years has had to engage. In this conflict, it is said, each of the original combatants appears limited by the peculiarities of his character. The

1) PRE 3 16, 156.

FOUR CONFESSIONS OF THE ANCIENT WALLENSIAN CHURCH.

IV. THE CONFESSION PRESENTED BY THE FRENCH WALDENSIANS, OR VAUDOIS, TO THE FRENCH KING 1542 BY CARDINAL SADOLET.

(Cf. G. Faber, *History and Theology of Ancient Waldenses and Albigenses*; 1838, London, pp. 433—445.)

“We all believe and confess that the Holy Scripture, as contained in the Old and New Testaments, was written by divine inspiration.

“From the teaching of the same Scripture we confess and believe that there is one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, distinct in three Persons, and subsisting in one spiritual and eternal essence; who by His mighty power and infinite goodness originally created and still preserves all things.

“We hold it for certain that the Son of God came into this world, and voluntarily submitted to be clothed in human flesh; on which thing alone the mystery of the Christian religion is constituted; for in that name our whole hope and faith rests, upon Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord, the admirable God, the Author of eternal life, the sole Savior and Justifier and Interpreter and Patron of mankind, and the sole Sacrificer also, whence there is no need of a successive sacrifice. We hold it for certain that He is truly God and truly man.

“We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ was

conceived of the Holy Ghost without the intervention of a man, as the angel announced before His conception, in order that He, whose procreation ought to be free from all sin, might be born holy and upright.

“We believe and confess that Jesus Christ, without any taint of original sin, was born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary, and that He assumed a body like unto our bodies in all things, sin only excepted, to which He could not be obnoxious.

“We believe and confess that Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried for our sins; and that He alone is the Paschal Lamb, offered as a victim, that He might snatch us from the jaws of the devil.

“We believe and confess that He descended into hell.

“We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ rose again on the third day from the dead for our justification.

“We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, forty days after His resurrection, ascended to heaven, and withdrew His bodily presence from these lower regions.

“We believe and confess that He sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.

“We believe that Jesus Christ will come to judge the quick and the dead at the last Day of Judgment.

“We believe and confess that the Holy Ghost is the third person, of the same essence with the Father and the Son, proceeding from the same Father and Son, and equal to each of them.

“We believe and confess that there is one holy Catholic Church, which is the congregation and assembly of all true believers, faithful, and elect of God, who have been from the beginning of the world, and shall be to the end; of which Church Jesus Christ is the Head.

“We believe and confess that there is a free remission of sins, proceeding from the mercy and goodness of our Lord Christ; who died once for our sins, the Just for the unjust; who took away our sins in His own body upon the cross; who

is our Advocate with God, the price of our reconciliation; whose blood cleanses our consciences from dead works that we should serve the living God; who alone made satisfaction for the faithful, so that their sins are not imputed to them as to the unbelieving and the reprobate.

“We believe that there is a resurrection of the flesh of the blessed of God to possess the kingdom of heaven forever, as also a resurrection of the cursed of God to perpetual fire and torment. — We believe also that the souls are immortal, but that the souls of the faithful, as soon as they migrate from the body, pass immediately to the glory of heaven; and that the souls of the unbelieving and the reprobate, as soon as they depart from the bodies, pass to the torments of hell until the Day of Judgment and the resurrection of the flesh, that so, both body and soul, they may be eternally tormented in the gehenna of inextinguishable fire.

“We believe that eternal life is offered to us by the grace of God through Christ, who is truly our Life, and who endured death that the faithful might become heirs of eternal life.

“We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, having abolished circumcision, instituted Baptism, through which we are received into the Church of the people of God. — This outward baptism means to us another inward baptism, namely, the grace of God, which cannot be seen with the eyes. — The apostles and other ministers of the Church baptize, using the Word of God in order to make it a Sacrament, and give only the visible sign; but the Lord Jesus Christ, the Chief Shepherd, alone gives the increase, and causes that we may receive the things signified. — They greatly err who deny Baptism to the children of Christianity.

“We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ afterward ordained the Sacrament of the Supper, which is the giving of thanks and the remembrance of the death and passion of Jesus Christ, rightly celebrated in the assembly of God’s people. There the bread and the wine are distributed and

taken as visible signs and representations of holy things: that is to say, of the body and blood of Jesus Christ offered upon the cross for the remission of our sins and for the reconciliation of mankind with God. Whosoever believeth that Jesus Christ delivered His body and shed His blood for the remission of sins, he eats the flesh and drinks the blood of Christ, the Lord, and becomes a partaker of both, considering the agreement of those things which are subjected to the eyes, and of the food by which the body is sustained, with those things which are not seen and are spiritual food. For as the body in this life is strengthened with bread, and as wine recreates the man, so, likewise, the body of Jesus Christ, delivered unto death, and His blood, shed for us, nourish and confirm and refresh the sad and afflicted soul. But let not any one imagine that the visible sign is so conjoined and conglutinated with the invisible thing signified as to be incapable of separation, inasmuch that the one cannot be received without the other; for Judas indeed received the sign, but the thing signified he did not receive, nor was he ever made a partaker of the body and blood of Christ. — The opinion of some, therefore, is not to be received who believe that the true and natural body of Christ, His flesh and His bones, exist and lie hid in that bread of that Supper, or that any transmutation of the one into the other is effected. For this opinion is repugnant to the Word of God and contrary to the articles of our faith in which it is clearly set forth that Christ ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, whence also He will come to judge the quick and the dead. But the Lord Jesus Christ is present in the Sacrament of the Supper by the power and virtue and presence of His Spirit in the hearts of His elect and faithful. — They also who affirm that in the Supper the body of Christ is eaten corporally do err; it is the Spirit who quickeneth. Therefore the truly faithful of Jesus Christ eat His flesh and drink His blood spiritually in their hearts.

“We believe and confess that the sincere worship of God

consists in obedience to His will and in the use of all our diligence to attain to it. The end of the commandment is to obey God in true charity from a pure and upright heart, and a good conscience and faith without dissimulation.

“We confess that the knowledge of our sin comes from an understanding of the Law, which points out to us our own imbecility, so that no mortal can perfectly fulfil it, for all men are sinners.

“We confess that good works, which God has prepared that we should walk in them, and which God has propounded in His Word, ought to be done and studiously accomplished, not, indeed, through hope of meriting anything at God’s hand, or through fear of eternal perdition, but for that duty and love which we ought to bear to our common Father.

“We believe and confess that, agreeably to the divine commandments, we must in all things preserve sobriety and continence; also, that fasting is enjoined to us in Scripture, which consists in the affliction and humiliation of the body, though not for the mere purpose of afflicting the flesh, but for the purpose of making us more lively and more fit for prayer.

“We confess that in the Old Testament certain foods are prohibited, but that, through Christ, the free use of them is granted to Christians.

“We confess that kings, princes, and magistrates are persons constituted of God in order to bear the sword for the defense of the good and for the punishment of the bad. Obedience, therefore, is due to them not only for wrath’s sake, but also for conscience’ sake.

“We confess that ministers and pastors of the Church ought to be an example to the flock and to the faithful in discourse, conversation, charity, faith, and chastity, being pre eminent in preaching the Word of God and in persevering in sincere doctrine. But covetous pastors, who for the sake of base gain, under pretext of God’s worship, introduce false doctrine; who profane the temple of God, making it a den of thieves;

who profess themselves able, for money, to redeem souls out of purgatory, as they speak; who sell bad works: these impostors, sacrilegers, and idolaters ought, by the authority of kings and magistrates, to be removed from their degree, and in their place others ought to be substituted."

REMARKS.

According to Claude Scyssel, Archbishop of Turin, about the year 1500 the Vallenses in their settlements in Piedmont and in those settlements geographically comprehended in the limits of the Archbishop's diocese profess:

"No authoritative rule of faith save the Bible; and we reject all glosses of popish doctors.

"The Church of Rome to be the Babylonian harlot, and assert their own Church to be the alone Catholic Church of Christ, and therefore paid no regard to the ecclesiastical censures of the popish prelates and clergy.

"The vital doctrine of justification through the alone merits of Christ; and assert that men required not the suffrages of saints.

"They reject the purgatory, and affirm that departed spirits passed immediately to a state either of happiness or of misery, the whole fable of purgatory having been invented by the priests for their own sordid emoluments.

"The contraction of matrimony (with the rare exception of utmost two cases) is openly free to all men; no celibacy.

"The power of absolution by the priests and the confession to them they entirely disallow.

"They reject, as idolatry, the worship of the Virgin and of the saints.

"They deny and deride the tenet of transubstantiation.

"All benedictions of cemeteries, holy water, ecclesiastic ornaments they affirm as utterly useless.

"They strenuously oppose the adoration of images."

The archbishop admits: "They commonly lead a purer

life than other Christians; they rarely take the name of God in vain; except by compulsion, they swear not; they fulfil their promises with all good faith, and, living for the most part in poverty, they protest that they alone preserve the apostolical life and doctrine. On this account they assert that the power of the Church resides with themselves, as being the innocent and true disciples of Christ, for whose faith and religion, to live in poverty and to suffer persecution from us, they esteem honorable and glorious." (Cf. Geo. Faber, *History and Theology of Vallenses*, pp. 426—434.)

An honest doctor of theology, who, on order of Bishop Cavillon, had perused said "Confession" before it was delivered to Cardinal Sadolet, to be read before the King of France, fairly confessed that he never was so much astonished as he was when he had duly weighed the articles of their faith, and had diligently compared them with Holy Writ.

The members of the deputation of the Vaudois Church to Oecolampadius of the Reformed Church confess as follows: "We are the teachers, such teachers as we are, of a certain unworthy and poor little people. Yet in all things we agree with you; and from the very time of the apostles our sentiments respecting the faith have been the same as your own. In this matter alone we differ, that through our own fault and through the slowness of our genius we do not understand the inspired writers so accurately as yourselves." (Cf. Geo. Faber, *History and Theology of Wallenses*, p. 448.)

Though, in fact, the Vallensian Church was from the beginning the true evangelical Christian Church and was strenuously protesting against the papal Catholic Church's false doctrines, it has never claimed the name and title of a Reformed Church, though in fact she may justly be called the mother of *the* Reformed Church.
