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## The RSV and the Small Catechism

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**I**N the theological literature of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod it has been the practice to quote Scripture passages in English in the form in which they appear in the King James Version of 1611. The revision of 1881—1885 and the revision of 1901 in no way affected this custom. Neither achieved any great measure of popularity. The situation appears to be somewhat different in the case of the Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version, which appeared upon the market in 1952 under copyright of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. A large number of copies of this Bible in modern English have already been sold and are apparently being widely read. Several church bodies have officially approved the use of this new version in their services and in Sunday schools.

The version has also made an impact on The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, which, however, has thus far officially maintained a neutral position towards the Revised Standard Version, reserving final judgment for the time when a careful and detailed examination would clearly reveal its advantages and shortcomings. Some of the latter have already been noted in the literature of our church, but the hope has also been expressed that a later edition might correct these.

In spite of the vast sale which the Revised Standard Version has enjoyed, it is still too early to predict with any degree of certainty to what extent this modern translation may ultimately displace the King James Version in the Protestant churches of North America. It took the King James Version more than half a century to gain general acceptance, and the RSV may have

a similar experience. But the possibility must be reckoned with that the RSV may become the English Bible of the future, at least in the United States.

If the RSV should become the popular Scripture text of the future, one of the religious textbooks which would be affected is our synodical Catechism. In the course of time this brief textbook of Christian doctrine has undergone several revisions. The one in Synod-wide use at present was copyrighted by Concordia Publishing House in 1943. The problem which may face our church is, To what extent does the RSV, in respect to both language and doctrine, lend itself for use in the Catechism? It is the purpose of this article to answer this question and to appraise the RSV's adequacy—or inadequacy—for imparting the truths of Christianity in simple and clear fashion.

The first part of our synodical Catechism, Luther's enchiridion, includes Section I, the Six Chief Parts; Section II, a number of prayers; Section III, the Table of Duties; and finally Section IV, Christian Questions with Their Answers. In all of these there either appear Scripture quotations, or where these are lacking, the wording reflects Scripture language. It is therefore natural to anticipate that, should the RSV achieve the position of the popular Bible also in our church body, the language of the Catechism, in order not to be out of harmony with the dominant Scripture version, would have to be adapted to the RSV.

#### THE ENCHIRIDION

##### *The Ten Commandments*

In the instance of the First Chief Part, the Ten Commandments, the adaptation of the Catechism to the RSV would mean very little change apart from a modernizing of the language, such as replacing "thou shalt" by "you shall"; "thy" and "thine" by "you" and "your"; "them that" by "those who"; and a few other minor, immaterial changes. In the instance of the Third Commandment the present synodical Catechism already offers a variant in which the "thou shalt" of Luther's Catechism is replaced by the imperative "Remember" found in the KJV. Luther, regardless of what the original Hebrew may have, uniformly introduced each Commandment by "thou shalt," even in the Third and the Fourth Com-

ment. Furthermore, in the Tenth Commandment he summed up the specific animals mentioned in the Hebrew original in the word "cattle." There appears no reason why, even if the RSV should come into popular use, the language of the First Chief Part of the Catechism, apart from modernizing its language, should be altered. Perhaps the only small adjustment might be the replacement of "and" by "but" in the phrase "and showing mercy" in the section labeled "The Close of the Commandments."

### *The Creed*

The section headed by "The Creed," while moving in Scriptural terms, does not quote any passage verbatim. The different sections of the Three Articles are made up of phrases and clauses such as are gleaned from here and there in the Old and the New Testament. At the close of the Second Article occurs the expression "the quick and the dead." It reflects the King James wording in Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; and 1 Peter 4:5. In these passages the RSV uniformly has "the living and the dead." There is no reason why our Catechism should not use the same modern terminology.

In Articles Two and Three our synodical Catechism uses the term "Holy Ghost," while the RSV prefers "Holy Spirit" to designate the Third Person of the Trinity. Cf., e. g., Matt. 1:20 et al. The practice of the KJV is to use "Holy Ghost" when no modifying phrase, such as, e. g., "of God," follows. Only two passages in the New Testament seem to be exceptions, Luke 11:13 and 1 Thess. 4:8. Elsewhere the KJV, too, regularly employs the noun "Spirit" to designate the Holy Ghost. It is thus a matter of indifference whether Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is given the preference.

### *The Lord's Prayer*

In the case of the Lord's Prayer the RSV, in deference to the almost universally accepted form found in the KJV, has introduced no change in the wording of the petitions (Matt. 6:9-13). Well known, of course, is the fact that the wording of the Fifth Petition in our synodical Catechism does not reproduce the KJV text, but follows Tyndale's version. Of course, at the end the closing doxology of the prayer is omitted in the RSV in accordance with the conclusion reached by text-critical research that these words are a later addition. A rather interesting observation is that Luther

in his explanation of the conclusion confines his remarks exclusively to the word "Amen," taking no note of the doxology. The fact that the RSV omits the concluding words of the usual form of the Lord's Prayer does not necessarily mean that they should be excluded from the Catechism. The doxology expresses thoughts which are Scriptural. Luther was aware that the closing "Amen" was not found in the Biblical version of the Lord's Prayer, and yet he gave it a place in his Catechism as a fitting close of the Lord's Prayer.

### *Holy Baptism*

In the case of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism the RSV suggests changes in the wording of our Catechism, some of which have merit and some of which must definitely be rejected. Among the former may be reckoned the replacement of "teach" by "make disciples of" in the words of the institution (Matt. 28:19, 20). The RSV, for one thing, reproduces the Greek μαθητεύσατε more literally than does the KJV, and, furthermore, it brings out more clearly the purpose of the teaching commission with which Jesus charged His disciples.

In the same Chief Part, when dealing with the Blessings of Baptism, our Catechism quotes Mark 16:16. Scholars are in disagreement as to whether vv. 9-20 of the chapter represent the original close or not. Arguments have been advanced against their genuineness, but these are inconclusive. The Nestle text of the Greek New Testament prints the verses as part of the Gospel although enclosing them in double brackets to mark them as "Western interpolations" which are not represented in the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts. This text edition leaves it to the reader's own judgment whether to regard the disputed verses as genuine or not. The RSV does not reflect this moderate position but gives expression to the conviction of the revisers by separating vv. 9-20 from the body of the Gospel and printing them in italics at the foot of the page with the notation, "Other texts and versions add as 16:9-20 the following passage." However, in view of the fact that the existence of these verses as part of the Gospel can be traced back to the first half of the second century, it would seem to have been the wiser course for the RSV to follow the procedure

of the Nestle text. In passing it may be remarked that the loss of Mark 16:16 as a proof text would be no serious matter, since other passages, e. g., Gal. 3:26, 27 and Acts 2:38, point out the blessings of Baptism.

In the quotation from Mark our Catechism has the KJV wording "he that believeth not shall be damned," while the RSV prefers the translation "he who does not believe will be condemned." In favor of the RSV version it may be pointed out that the Greek verb used in this passage, according to Thayer, means "to give judgment against, to judge worthy of punishment, to condemn." In the KJV it is translated by "condemn" in Rom. 8:34; Matt. 20:18; and 1 Cor. 11:32. Also in favor of the RSV rendering "condemned" is the fact that the word brings out more clearly in modern English the idea that a judicial procedure is involved, a meaning which was in Middle English associated also with the simple verb "damn."

In treating of the Power of Baptism the Catechism quotes Titus 3:5. In general the wording of this passage in the RSV is satisfactory, but the translation "renewal in the Holy Spirit" seems an unnecessary departure from the original Greek in which the genitive "of the Holy Spirit" appears. There may be those who would be inclined to detect some doctrinal bias in the RSV's translation, but in all fairness it should be taken into account that the Catechism in answering the question, "How can water do such great things?" defines Baptism as "a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost," and not "of the Holy Ghost."

In the passage from Titus the RSV has replaced the KJV's "according to the hope" by "in the hope." The Greek preposition in the phrase is one which may denote "according to," but it appears in such a wide variety of contexts and shades of meaning that the RSV's translation "in the hope" cannot be faulted.

The Catechism adds to the quotation of Titus 3:5 the sentence from the beginning of v. 8, "This is a faithful saying." The RSV in more modern English and, besides, in greater harmony with the Greek, has, "The saying is sure." This perhaps lacks the full sound of the KJV's wording, but is clear without explanation.

After stating the significance of Baptism, the Catechism cites Rom. 6:4 as the source. The RSV translation of the passage is an improvement in general, and particularly the use of the past tense "we were buried" reflects the Greek aorist more accurately.

*The Office of the Keys and Confession*

The only Scripture quoted in this Chief Part is John 20:22, 23. There is no material difference between the KJV and the RSV translations though the latter in simplicity of language has the edge on the former.

*The Sacrament of the Altar*

The words of the institution of the Lord's Supper represent a composite from Matt. 26:26 f.; Mark 14:22 ff.; Luke 22:19 f.; and 1 Cor. 11:23 ff. The RSV has relegated the closing words of Luke 22:19 and v. 20 to a footnote on the ground that they are not part of the original Gospel but an insertion. This treatment by the RSV seems very premature in view of the fact that the debate about the genuineness of these words is still raging hot and heavy. Until a relatively recent date the conviction seemed dominant among scholars that the words are not genuine. Lately, however, the opinion of experts is swinging in the opposite direction. In general it may be said that in view of Luke 22:17 with its reference to the cup in connection with the Passover meal it is relatively easy to understand how a scribe might have mistakenly omitted the closing words of v. 19 and v. 20, while it is not so easy to prove spurious the reference by Luke to the distribution of the wine at the institution of the Lord's Supper in view of the parallel passages in Matthew, Mark, and St. Paul. It is too early to predict what the RSV committee may have in mind for another edition of the RSV scheduled for 1962, but it is reasonable to expect that, if scholarly opinion favors the inclusion of the closing words of vv. 19 and 20 into the body of the Gospel, the RSV will follow suit. This certainly would be in harmony with the principle followed by the revisers to make use of that text of the New Testament which seems to have the support of textual criticism.

If the RSV's translation of the four sources for the form of institution of the Lord's Supper is accepted, practically the same formula as is used in our Catechism will result.

*Tables of Duties*

*To Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers.* — The RSV translations of 1 Tim. 3:2, 3, 4, 6 and of Titus 1:9 are, in general, satisfactory and meaningful to the modern reader. There is, however, the one unfortunate exception 1 Tim. 3:2, where the RSV replaces the KJV's literal rendering "the husband of one wife" by the interpretation "married only once." It is true that some commentators favor this view, but the principle laid down by the Apostle in Rom. 7:2 clearly indicates that there is nothing objectionable in a second marriage after a spouse's death.

*What the Hearers Owe to their Pastors.* — All passages appearing in this section of the Catechism are well rendered in the RSV. In many instances its phrasing has a much more familiar ring for the modern ear than has the language of the KJV.

*Of Civil Government.* — The RSV translation of Rom. 13:1-4, the only Scripture quoted under this heading, is good and readily intelligible in this age.

*Of Subjects.* — All passages quoted are well translated in the RSV. The use of modern English clears up for the reader some of the difficulties in the KJV.

*To Husbands.* — Both passages are well rendered in the RSV.

*To Wives.* — The RSV omits the unnecessary "own" in Eph. 5:22. The Greek required it, since without it it was possible to understand the apostle to say that the women in general should submit themselves to the men. Luther, too, omitted the word in his translation *die Weiber seien untertan ihren Maennern*. Both passages quoted under the heading "To Wives" are well done in the RSV.

*To Parents.* — In Eph. 6:4, the only passage appearing at this point, the RSV replaces the KJV translation "nurture and admonition of the Lord" by "discipline and instruction of the Lord." There is no objection to "discipline," but it may seem that "instruction" is a somewhat free rendering of a word that actually means "admonition." But when considering that the purpose of the admonishing is to keep the children with Christ and that this admonishing is done through the Word of Christ, the RSV's "instruction" does not seem out of line with the intended meaning. Both KJV and RSV



retain the translation "of the Lord," but Luther paraphrases the genitive in his *Zucht und Vermahnung zum Herrn*, thus emphasizing the goal to which the discipline and instruction should lead.

*To Children.*—The translation of Eph. 6:1-3 is practically identical in KJV and RSV.

*To Servants, Hired Men, and Employees.*—Eph. 6:5-8 is essentially the same in both KJV and RSV, but the latter's "slaves" at the beginning of the quotation is more accurate than the KJV's "servants." It is, however, a little inconsistent that the RSV later on does not also speak of "slaves of Christ."

*To Employers.*—The translation of Eph. 6:9 in the RSV expresses the same thoughts as the KJV translation, but in somewhat more modern wording.

*To the Young in General.*—The RSV's rendering of 1 Peter 5:5, 6 is satisfactory.

*To Widows.*—The RSV's version of 1 Tim. 5:5, 6 is good and quite smooth. Possibly one may find the expression "self-indulgent" a trifle weak. The Greek term is stronger, signifying "leading a voluptuous or dissolute life."

*To All in Common.*—If the RSV version of Rom. 13:9 is followed in the Catechism, the initial words will read, "The Commandments are summed up in this sentence. . . ." This is more intelligible to the modern reader than the KJV. The remainder of the verse is practically identical in both versions.—The words in the Catechism, "and persevere in prayer for all men" with a reference to 1 Tim. 2:1, are not a quotation from the KJV but rather a summary of the passage. The RSV's wording of the passage is good and suitable for insertion in the Catechism.

#### THE PROOF PASSAGES

*The Bible.*—The RSV renders 2 Peter 1:21, (1) and (3): "Men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God," omitting "holy" for text-critical reasons. The adjective adds nothing essential and its omission does not impair the Apostle's argument. The passage in the RSV is, if anything, even more effective than in the form in which the KJV has it.—The RSV has no important changes in 2 Tim. 3:15-17 (2), (6), and (8). The language is clearer for the modern reader than that of the KJV.—The RSV trans-

lation of 1 Cor. 2:13a (4) is superior to the KJV, both in point of English and in closeness to the Greek original.—In John 17:17 (5); 10:35 (7); Ps. 119:105 (9); John 5:39 (10); Luke 11:28 (11); 2:19 (12); John 14:23 (13), it is immaterial which version is followed.

*Law and Gospel.*—All passages (14)—(19) in this section serve equally well in RSV form. In 1 John 4:9 (17) the substitution of “only” for “only begotten” has been criticized, but it should not be overlooked that without any misgivings we use “His only Son” in the Apostolic Creed.

#### *The Ten Commandments*

*General.*—The RSV rendering of Rom. 2:14, 15 (20) and (25) is very good. Incidentally, the RSV corrects the erroneous “meanwhile” of the KJV in v. 15.—Rom. 13:10 (21) is identical in RSV and KJV.

#### *The First Table*

*The First Commandment.*—All passages (22)—(72) in the RSV serve well as proof passages for the respective point of doctrine in connection with which they appear.—Rom. 1:19, 20 (24) in the RSV is a very smooth translation and an improvement over the translation offered by the KJV.—The translation, “Thou art God,” in RSV and KJV, Ps. 90:2 (29), is superior to that of the Catechism, “Thou art, God.” The Hebrew accentuation supports the rendering of the RSV and KJV.—In Ps. 139:4 (35) the RSV’s “even before a word is on my tongue,” reproduces well the original Hebrew “for nonexistence of a word [is] on my tongue.”—In Deut. 32:4 (40) the RSV’s “a God of faithfulness” is clearer to the English reader than the KJV’s “a God of truth.”—In Ex. 34:6 (44) the RSV has the better division, “The Lord, a God merciful and gracious,” over against the KJV’s, “The Lord God, merciful and gracious.” Cf. the Masoretic accents.—In John 15:26 (52) the RSV’s rendering of παράκλητος by “Counselor” rather than by “Comforter” may be faulted by some, but the translation of the term into English represents a difficult problem. In general the word means one who is summoned or called to one’s side for the purpose of pleading a cause before a judge. The translation “Counselor” is therefore not out of line with the meaning

of the word. — The translation of Prov. 3:5 (60) is clearer in the RSV for the English-speaking reader. — Mark 10:24 (62) appears in the RSV without the words "for those who trust in riches." The omission is based on manuscript evidence. It would be better to replace this proof passage in the Catechism by 1 Tim. 6:17; Prov. 11:28; or others. — The translation "to take refuge," RSV, is closer to the original Hebrew than "to trust," KJV.

*The Second Commandment.* — The proof passages (73)—(96) serve very well in RSV form. — Ex. 20:24 (76) in RSV is an improvement over KJV. — The same holds good of 2 Cor. 1:23 (80) in respect to language and closer adherence to the Greek. — The freer translation of Heb. 6:16 (83) in RSV is an aid to a more ready understanding of the passage. — Matt. 5:33-37 (84) in the RSV is far clearer to the modern English reader than in the KJV. — Both Lev. 19:31 (87) and Deut. 12:32 (90) in the RSV are improvements over KJV. — In the passage Matt. 15:8 (91) RSV omits "draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth and," following the Nestle text. This omission, however, does not impair the usefulness of the text as a proof passage.

*The Third Commandment.* — All of the passages (97)—(115) serve their purpose equally well in the wording of the RSV. — In Rom. 14:6 (99) the RSV omits "and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it" on textual grounds. The presence or absence of these words is immaterial. The English of the RSV is far more understandable than that of the KJV. — Acts 2:42 (102) in the RSV is an improvement. The text appears in the Catechism also as (109), (476), (676), (690), and (700). — The verb "reject" in Luke 10:16 (104), RSV, reproduces the Greek better than the verb "despiseth" in KJV. — The translation in Eccl. 5:1 (107) in the RSV is better and more easily understood than in the KJV.

#### *The Second Table*

*General.* — It is immaterial whether passages (116), (117), and (118) are used in RSV or in KJV wording.

*The Fourth Commandment.* — All the passages (119)—(127) in the wording of the RSV are suitable as proof texts. — Rom. 13:2 (120) is more readily understood in the RSV text than in the

KJV form.—In Acts 5:29 (127) “we must,” RSV, conveys the exact meaning of the Greek more concisely than the KJV’s “we ought.”

*The Fifth Commandment.*—The RSV wordings of (128) to (140) lose nothing of their effectiveness as prooftexts.—Rom. 13:4 (129) is much clearer in the RSV text than in that of the KJV.—Rom. 12:19 (131) in the RSV is an improvement over the KJV.—The RSV’s translation of Matt. 5:22 (132) omits “without cause” for text-critical reasons. Luther’s German version likewise omits the phrase.—The RSV’s translation “slander” in Matt. 15:19 (134) is better than the KJV’s “blasphemies.” Blasphemy in modern English denotes an offense against God, but in the passage the offense is obviously against fellow men. In Eph. 4:31 the KJV translates βλασφημία by “evil speaking,” which is better than “blasphemy,” but does not express the idea as well as “slander.”—The RSV renders Matt. 5:25 (138) freely in the light of the parallel passage Luke 12:58. This procedure brings out the meaning much more clearly than does the KJV.—“In Christ,” Eph. 4:32 (140) in the RSV is the exact reproduction of the Greek ἐν Χριστῷ.

*The Sixth Commandment.*—The passages (142)—(159), with one exception, in their RSV wording are well suited as prooftexts. In a number of instances the language of the RSV is more meaningful to the modern reader than that of the KJV, e. g., Matt. 5:28 (146), “looks at a woman lustfully”; Eph. 5:3, 4 (147); 1 Peter 2:11 (149); and Eph. 4:29 (151). The exception referred to is Prov. 23:31-33 (154) which has no place as a prooftext in the study of the Sixth Commandment, since תַּרְוִיחַ in the context does not denote “strange women,” but rather, as the RSV has it, “strange things,” e. g., hallucinations. The Hebrew word may indeed be used of lewd women, as in Prov. 22:14. But the context in Prov. 23:31-33 deals with the befuddled state of a person who has overindulged in wine. It would be better to eliminate the passage from the Catechism at this place.

*The Seventh Commandment.*—The RSV texts of (160) to (163) are good prooftexts, but Ps. 37:21 (164), though the RSV’s is better than the KJV’s, does not belong here. As the RSV indicates, the verse in its context speaks of the deterioration

of the wicked person's economic state. He borrows, but he finds himself unable to pay back what he owes and so is ruined. But the righteous man, according to v. 21b, is blessed with earthly goods, so that he is in a position to show compassion to others and give them the support they need. — Also good in their RSV form are the passages (165)—(171), particularly (171).

*The Eighth Commandment.*— All proof passages, (173) to (184), included under this Commandment, in the RSV serve well. Prov. 31:8,9 (182) reproduces the sense of the Hebrew far better than the KJV.

*The Ninth Commandment.*— In Is. 5:8 (185) the pronoun "they" is incorrect. The RSV has corrected this to "and you are made to dwell" etc. The RSV's translation of the entire verse is better than that of the KJV. — All passages (185)—(189) are satisfactory.

*The Tenth Commandment.*— The proof passages (190) to (194) in their RSV form are quite satisfactory. James 1:14,15 (191) may be more readily intelligible in the RSV than in the KJV.

*The Close of the Commandments.*— The RSV's wording of proof passages (195)—(200) is good.

*The Fulfillment of the Law.*— Proof passages (201)—(208) from the RSV serve well. Very neat is the RSV's translation of Phil. 3:12 (206).

*The Purpose of the Law.*— All passages (209)—(214) in RSV serve their purpose.

*Sin.*— The RSV passages for (215)—(233) serve their purpose well. — The RSV's translation of Rom. 10:4 (232) is somewhat free, but so is Luther's "Wer an den glaubt, der ist gerecht."

### *The First Article*                      *The Apostles' Creed*

*I Believe.*— All texts (234)—(244) in RSV wording are suitable as proof passages. Heb. 11:1 (236) in the RSV is an improvement over the KJV in point of clear English for the present-day reader. — The same may be said of Ps. 37:5 (238). — In Eph. 3:14 (244) the RSV omits the words "of our Lord Jesus Christ," for text-critical reasons. This, however, does not impair the value of the passage as a proof-text.

*God Made Me and All Creatures.*—The translations of (245) to (247) in RSV are good. In fact, its wording of Heb. 11:3 (246) is an improvement in clearness over the KJV.

*The Angels.*—All passages (248)—(260) in this section serve well in RSV form.—In Heb. 1:14 (248) and (254) RSV replaces “for them” by “for the sake of,” which is closer to the Greek. Luther’s German has the same, *um derer willen*.—In Matt. 25:31 (249a) the RSV omits “holy” since it is poorly attested in the Greek manuscripts.—In Ps. 103:20 (252) and (253) the KJV has the free rendering “that excel in strength”; the RSV with its “you mighty ones” adheres more closely to the Hebrew, which has literally “mighty ones of power.”—In 2 Peter 2:4 (256) the KJV has “into chains,” while the RSV has “to pits,” adopting the better-attested reading  $\sigma\theta\omicron\iota\varsigma$  in the Greek. The KJV translates the reading  $\sigma\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\alpha\iota\varsigma$ . For the Catechism it is immaterial which text is used.—Eph. 6:12 (257) in the RSV reproduces the Greek more closely than the KJV and, in some respects, makes the passage better suited as a proof-text.

*Man.*—The passages (261)—(264) are acceptable in the RSV.—In Gen. 5:3 (265) the RSV offers the translation “became the father of” instead of “begot”—an unnecessary change.—Ps. 17:15 (266), no matter what version’s text is followed, looks like a very poor proof-text in view of exegetical difficulties. It should either be entirely omitted or a better passage substituted.—In its rendering of Ps. 139:14 (267) the RSV adopts a number of arbitrary emendations, partly based on the ancient versions, and renders the passage entirely useless here as a proof-text. The KJV follows the Hebrew text rather well and thus has the better translation.

*God Still Preserves Me and All Creatures.*—All passages (268) to (280) in RSV wording lend themselves well as proof-texts.

### *The Second Article*

*The Names Jesus and Christ.*—The RSV’s translation of (281) to (284) is satisfactory.—John 3:34 (285) is a poor proof passage since the statement, both in RSV and KJV, is general. The words “unto Him,” as the italics in the KJV show, are supplied and not found in the original Greek. Luther’s German Bible omits

these words. The limitation of the statement to Christ is a matter of interpretation. It would be better to omit this passage from the Catechism. — John 17:3 (286) is satisfactory in the RSV. — In the case of John 3:36 (287) the KJV's rendering "he that believeth not" is preferable to the RSV's "does not obey." According to Thayer, the verb which is involved has the meaning "to refuse or withhold belief." The RSV's translation is thus a little weak but linguistically not an impossible one. Hence, the text as it stands in the RSV may be used as a proof-text. — The RSV's translation of 2 Tim. 1:12 (288) is satisfactory to make the point for which the passage is quoted. The latter part of the passage differs from the KJV; the former following Luther's interpretation, while the latter understands the  $\mu\omicron\nu$  of the Greek as a subjective genitive.

*The Two Natures in Christ.* — In view of the criticism leveled against the RSV that it shows a tendency to detract from the glory of our Lord, it is noteworthy that all passages (289)—(322), with the single exception of Rom. 9:5 (292), in the form appearing in the new version serve as proof-texts just as effectively as those now in the Catechism from the KJV. This does not mean, however, that in each instance the translation of an individual passage is satisfactory in its entirety. Such cases will be noted below. — Rom. 9:5 (292) presents a problem in punctuation to the exegete. The Greek text originally had no marks to guide the reader. Commentaries such as Stöckhardt and Hodge, to mention but two, make what seems a conclusive argument for the general correctness of KJV's translation of the verse. That the translators of the RSV were aware of the textual situation is indicated by their alternative rendering at the foot of the page, "Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever." One can only wish that they had put the words of the footnote into the body of their text and relegated the doxology "God, who is over all, be blessed forever" to the margin as the less acceptable translation. As it stands, the text of Rom. 9:5 in the RSV has lost its force in a discussion of the divine names which the Scriptures apply to Christ. But its elimination is compensated by the substitution of two passages in the RSV, Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1, texts which unequivocally declare that Christ is God and Savior. Oddly enough,

the KJV in these two instances falls short of the RSV in bringing out the true meaning of the text. — In John 1:14 (307) the RSV has “only” instead of “only-begotten.” Reference to this rendering of *μονογενής* was made in dealing with the wording of the Second Article in the enchiridion. The RSV in the same passage is more accurate in its translation “from the Father” than the KJV with its “of the Father.” The Greek has the preposition *παρά* in the phrase and not the plain genitive suggested by the KJV. Luther reproduces the phrase by, *vom Vater*. — In Acts 3:15 (313) the RSV speaks of “the Author of life,” while the KJV has “Prince of Life.” Both translations may be justified, since the noun *ἀρχηγός* may denote either “prince” or “author.” In the latter meaning it definitely occurs in Heb. 2:10. — The words of Ps. 49:7, 8 (317) in the RSV at first glance seem quite suitable as a proof-text, but unfortunately the translation is arbitrary. Literally the Hebrew means: “A man [anybody] surely cannot purchase back a brother; nor can he pay his ransom [i. e., the ransom for him] to God; and costly is the purchase price of their soul [i. e., their person].” In view of the contents of the entire psalm the choice of Ps. 49:7, 8 as a proof-text at this point in the Catechism is unfortunate. The words alone sound convincing enough, but actually they do not support the argument.

*The Office of Christ.* — All passages (323)—(333) are satisfactory.

*The Savior in the State of Humiliation.* — Proof passages (334) to (372) in RSV wording serve adequately in the connection in which they appear. — Phil. 2:5-8 (334) is difficult to translate. The English in the KJV is not completely satisfactory. The RSV’s rendering of v. 6 appears preferable to that of KJV. In v. 7 the KJV’s “He made Himself of no reputation” lacks clarity and besides is more in the nature of an interpretative paraphrase than a translation. In general it may be granted that the English of Phil. 2:5-8 in the RSV represents an improvement over the KJV. — In Luke 1:35 (335) the RSV replaces the KJV’s unappealing “holy thing” by “the child,” no doubt an improvement. In the latter part of the verse RSV drops “of you,” which, however, does not affect the sense of the verse. — Is. 7:14 (337) in the RSV has the much-criticized “the young woman” instead of the Septua-



gint's "virgin." With the added reference to Matt. 1:18 the proper understanding of "the young woman" in Is. 7:14 appears fully safeguarded. To insist that the use of "the young woman" in the prophet's message in any way prejudices the virgin birth of Christ seems like conjuring up a difficulty which does not exist. — The rendering of Is. 53:3 (342) in the RSV is more readily intelligible than the corresponding KJV text. — In John 19:3 (344) the RSV adds, on manuscript evidence, "they came up to him." The addition is immaterial. — Heb. 2:15 (356) ends with the statement "were all their lifetime subject to bondage," which the RSV reproduces more simply by "were subject to lifelong bondage." — In the Messianic prophecy, Gen. 3:15 (359), the RSV replaces the "it" by "he." It thereby commits itself to the interpretation that the woman's "seed" is a single definite person. — 2 Cor. 5:21 (365) is a good translation in the RSV. — Similarly Is. 53:5 (366) is preferable to the KJV, which offers "the chastisement of our peace." The RSV's rendering "the chastisement that made us whole" is more readily understood. — The RSV omits Matt. 18:11 (368) from the body of the Gospel, and puts its translation in a footnote. Reference to text-critical editions shows that experts generally regard the verse as an interpolation. No difficulty is created by granting the correctness of the opinion of experts on the Greek text, for practically the same words occur in Luke 19:10. In view of the doubtful genuineness of Matt. 18:11, it would be well to substitute the passage from Luke in the Catechism. — In 1 John 2:2 (370) the RSV uses "expiation" in place of the KJV's "propitiation." There is no objection to this. — The word "master" in the RSV of 2 Peter 2:1 (372) reproduces the Greek δεσπότην more accurately than "Lord," KJV.

*The Savior in the State of Exaltation.* — The RSV's translation of prooftexts (373) — (409) serves satisfactorily. — In 1 Cor. 15:4 (376) the RSV reproduces the passive of the Greek text by "he was raised," whereas the KJV substitutes the active voice. — Eph. 4:10-12 (388) seems very plain in the English of the RSV. — In Rev. 5:9 (404) the RSV for textual reasons omits the pronoun "us," but from the context supplies "men." — In the instance of Gal. 2:20 (406) it is interesting to note that the KJV and the

RSV both translate the same Greek text but separate the words differently. Each of the two translations is possible, but that of the RSV seems preferable.

### *Third Article*

*The Holy Ghost.*—Most proof passages in this section, (410) to (457), are satisfactory in the RSV version. Exceptions are noted below.—Titus 3:5, (417) and (438), was dealt with under Baptism in the enchiridion.—The clause “that is set on the flesh” in the RSV’s translation of Rom. 8:7 (422) seems inferior to the KJV’s “carnal.” The Apostle is referring to the state of the mind and not to the object towards which its interest is directed. The Greek literally means “the mind of the flesh,” which Luther translates well by *fleischlich gesinnt sein*.—In the context, the RSV’s “I became your father,” 1 Cor. 4:15 (435), is better than the KJV’s “I have begotten you.”—In Ps. 51:10 (441) the RSV translates the latter part of the verse by “put a new and right spirit within me.” Since the psalm deals with the repentant sinner who seeks a restoration to his former relationship to God, the change has no advantage over the KJV’s “renew a right spirit within me.”—Similarly, in Phil. 1:6 (450) the phrase in the RSV “at the day of Jesus Christ,” is inferior to the KJV’s “until the Day of Jesus Christ.” The Apostle in the context is referring to the continuing process of bringing the good work in a Christian to completion up to his death.

*The Holy Christian Church.*—Again the majority of the passages (458)—(483) in the RSV serve adequately as prooftexts.—Luke 17:21 (461) raises the old problem of the meaning of ἐντός in this passage. Is it “within” or “among”? The RSV prefers the latter, the KJV the former.—In Matt. 16:18 (463) the RSV interprets the Greek, “gates of Hades,” to mean “powers of death.” It is obvious that, strictly speaking, this is not a translation but a paraphrase.—The RSV in Eph. 5:27 (467) offers the passive translation “that the church might be presented before him,” where the Greek has the active, as the KJV has it, “that He might present it to Himself.” The RSV thus makes the church the subject of the statement, while according to the Greek it is Christ, to whom the church owes its existence, who presents it to Himself.

The RSV's translation spoils the statement. — In 1 Peter 2:5 (468) the RSV translates the first verb as an imperative "be built," following Luther's lead. The KJV prefers the indicative. The fact is that the verb form allows for either. — The translation "difficulties" which the RSV has in Rom. 16:17 (482) for *σκάνδαλα* seems weak. Better would be something like "occasions of stumbling" or "occasions of offense."

*The Forgiveness of Sins.* — With the exception of 2 Tim. 1:12 (498) all proof passages (484)—(505) in RSV form are adequate in the context in which they appear. A discussion of 2 Tim. 1:12 is found in connection with (288). — The RSV shifts the position of "power" in Rom. 8:38 (499), but this is of no consequence for the meaning. — In Acts 16:34 (503) the participial phrase, "believing . . .," KJV, becomes a final clause in the RSV, "that he had believed. . . ." Luther's translation is similar, *dasz er an Gott gläubig geworden war.* — The RSV's translation of Rev. 1:5, 6 (505) is based on a Greek text with the verb "free" (*λύσαντι*) and the noun "kingdom" (*βασιλείαν*) instead of "wash" (*λούσαντι*) and "kings" (*βασιλεῖς*), respectively, KJV.

*The Resurrection of the Body.* — With the exception of Job 19:25-27 (507) the proof passages (506)—(515) in RSV serve well. — In Job 19:25-27 the first and the last verses are relatively easy to translate, as the similarity of the verses in the KJV and in the RSV may be presumed to indicate. V. 26 is a *crux interpretum*. The KJV translates the first section of the verse, "and though after my skin worms destroy this body." Although there is no "though," "worms," or "body" in the original Hebrew, as the italics in the printed text indicate, the translation seems to reflect the general sense of the verse half. The RSV's translation does not diverge too greatly from that of the KJV. An attempt at a more literal rendering might be: "and afterwards, in respect to my skin, they [i. e., the destructive forces] will have destroyed this [accompanied by a gesture pointing to his wretched body, which Job did not even consider worthy of a name]." The continuation in the second half of the verse would be: "but from [out of] my flesh I shall gaze on God." That a restoration of the body after death is in Job's mind is clear, but unfortunately the

RSV spoils the thought by its "without my flesh." — The translation "lowly body," which the RSV has in Phil. 3:21 (508), is better for our time than KJV's "vile body." "Vile" is today associated with contempt, an idea foreign to the Greek "body of lowliness." — "Imperishable" in 1 Cor. 15:52 (509), RSV, is a more adequate rendering for the modern reader than "incorruptible," this adjective having today the meaning of "impossible to bribe." — The RSV's "narrow gate," in Matt. 7:13 (515), sounds more familiar than "strait gate," KJV.

*Life Everlasting.* — All prooftexts under this caption, (516) to (528), in the RSV are well suited. Eph. 1:3-6 (526) is an improvement over KJV so far as clarity is concerned.

#### *The Lord's Prayer*

*General.* — The proof passages (529)—(557), with the exception of (544), adequately serve also in the RSV form. — Matt. 6:7 (530) with its modern English is an improvement. — In Is. 63:16 (535) the RSV, following the Masoretic accentuation, translates "our Redeemer from of old," while the KJV links "from of old" with the noun "name" and makes a separate sentence of the combination: "Thy name is from everlasting." The passage is satisfactory as a prooftext in either version. — In Phil. 4:6 (538) the RSV's translation "have no anxiety" is superior in our time to the KJV's "be careful for nothing." — The RSV, in John 16:23 (544) shifts the phrase "in my name" to make the passage read: "He [the Father] will give it to you in my name," in accordance with the text which Nestle has. This change renders the passage unserviceable as a prooftext at this point. An adequate substitute in the RSV would be John 14:13, 14; or 15:16. — The RSV connects James 1:6, 7 (549) with v. 8 as does also the Nestle text. This does not impair the use of the passage as a prooftext. Furthermore, the English of the RSV is clearer than that of the KJV. — The translation of Matt. 5:44 (551) in the RSV is based on a shorter version of the Greek text (cf. Nestle) without loss of value as a prooftext. — In 1 Tim. 2:8 (553) the RSV reproduces the article found in the Greek, "the men," as Luther also has it, *die Männer*. The KJV's "men" makes the Apostle's statement apply in general, while he no doubt had specific men in mind.

In the same passage the RSV's translation "quarreling" for *διαλογισμοῦ* may be questioned. Basically the word denotes "a thinking over" and apparently in the passage is used in the sense of "doubting" as the KJV renders it. In Luke 24:38 the RSV renders the plural of this same noun by "questioned." — Matt. 6:6 (554) in the RSV is a translation of a shorter form of the Greek which appears in the Nestle edition. As a proof-text the passage does not lose its force.

*The Introduction.* — At the close of 1 John 3:1 (558) the RSV, on the basis of manuscript evidence, has the addition "and so we are." This has no effect on the general meaning of the passage. — Rom. 8:15 (559) in its first part is well rendered in the RSV. However, the RSV with *ἐν ᾧ* begins a new sentence which then continues into vv. 16 and 17. The *ἐν ᾧ* is thus taken in the sense of an adverbial of time equivalent to the English "when." However, *ἐν ᾧ* in Mark 2:19, Luke 5:34, and John 5:7 clearly means "while" and is so translated in the RSV in these passages. Similarly in Rom. 8:15 "while" would be better than "when." Decisive, however, against the RSV's sentence division in Rom. 8:15 is Gal. 4:6, a parallel statement by Paul, where the RSV correctly has: "Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" The RSV's version of Rom. 8:15 ff., which follows Moffatt, can hardly be branded as contrary to the Scriptures, but it looks like an inferior rendering in comparison with that offered by the KJV. Since the passage in RSV form no longer serves at this point in the Catechism, Gal. 4:6 of this modern version would be a fully adequate substitute. — The RSV in Gal. 3:26 (561) understands the words "in Christ Jesus" adverbially with "are," while the KJV more naturally regards them as an adjectival modifier of "faith." Ultimately, however, the text in either version serves as a satisfactory proof-text.

*The First Petition.* — All passages under this heading, (562) to (566), serve adequately in the RSV form.

*The Second Petition.* — The same may be said of proof-texts (567) — (572). — The translation of 2 Thess. 3:1 (570) in the RSV is quite good.

*The Third Petition.*—Proof passages (573)—(583) in the RSV version serve well. However, if the RSV text of 1 Peter 1:5 (581) is used, the entire verse must be quoted in order to be clear. The Catechism quotes only part of the verse.

*The Fourth Petition.*—Proof passages (584)—(592) in the RSV are suitable. — In 2 Thess. 3:11 (587) the KJV has “walk disorderly,” which the RSV replaces by “living in idleness,” a translation which fits very well into the context. In a similar way, in v. 7 it reproduces the verb ἠτακτήσαμεν by “we were idle.” — For Heb. 13:16 (588) see (171). — Matt. 6:33, 34 (591) in the RSV is an improvement over the KJV. — The same may be said of Ps. 127:2 (592). Cf. Luther’s translation.

*The Fifth Petition.*—All passages (593)—(598) in RSV form are satisfactory.

*The Sixth Petition.*—The same holds good of proof passages (599)—(607). — Matt. 18:7 (602) is a difficult passage to translate. The KJV uses the noun “offenses” for σκάνδαλα. The RSV in a footnote states that the meaning of the word literally is “stumbling blocks” and translates by “temptations to sin” in an effort to convey the meaning of the Greek word somewhat more clearly to the modern reader. The KJV’s translation “offenses” lacks clarity.

*The Seventh Petition.*—All passages (608)—(615) are satisfactory in the RSV text.

### *The Sacrament of Baptism*

*The Nature of Baptism.*—The Catechism quotes Mark 7:4 (616) from the KJV with brackets, “except they wash [baptize],” to show that βαπτίζειν has the general meaning “to wash.” The RSV, however, adopts the reading ἁγνίσκονται, “they purify themselves” (cf. Nestle), so that this part of the passage no longer serves its purpose. However, later in the same verse occurs the noun βαπτισμούς, which both KJV and RSV translate by “washings.” The entire context speaks of washing, cf. in v. 3 νίψονται, “they wash.” In view of the RSV’s translation of the latter part of v. 4, the passage still serves adequately as a proof-text at the point where it appears in the Catechism. — All passages (617) to (636) are satisfactory as proof passages in their RSV form. —

1 Cor. 4:1 (620) is clearer to the modern reader than in the KJV. — In Acts 2:41 (621) the RSV omits "gladly" as does the Nestle text. This does not affect the meaning of the passage. — Eph. 6:4 (622) was dealt with in the discussion of the Table of Duties, section *Parents*. — In Mark 10:13-15 (625) the RSV reproduces the Greek very nicely with "were bringing" (imperfect), and "rebuked" (aorist). "Indignant" in the RSV well reflects Jesus' reaction. Luther has *unwillig*. For the somewhat ambiguous "as a child" the RSV substitutes "like a child." — Matt. 18:6 (627) presents a difficulty for the translator. The KJV translates the Greek which literally means "causes to stumble" by "shall offend," which is subject to misunderstanding by the modern reader. The RSV offers the translation "causes to sin," which conveys the intended meaning much more clearly.

*The Power of Baptism.* — The one passage (637) under this caption is satisfactory in the RSV.

*The Significance of Baptizing with Water.* — The statement made in connection with the previous section applies also to (638)—(641).

#### *The Office of the Keys and Confession*

*General.* — The passages (642)—(655) are adequate as proof passages in the RSV. — Matt. 3:8 (655) in the RSV is preferable to KJV on account of its plain, modern English.

*The Office of the Ministry.* — The four passages (656)—(659) are adequate prooftexts in the RSV.

*Church Discipline and Excommunication.* — Matt. 18:15-17, quoted under Question 278, serves adequately in RSV form. — Similarly passages (660)—(662).

*Confession and Absolution.* — Passages (663)—(672) offer no difficulty as prooftexts from the RSV.

#### *The Sacrament of the Altar*

*General.* — All passages (673)—(677) are adequate in the RSV text.

*What the Lord's Supper Is.* — Passages (678)—(691) generally serve adequately in RSV form. In the instance of 1 Cor. 11:27 (681) the RSV's translation "guilty of profaning" is an inter-

pretation of the Greek ἔνοχος, which simply means "guilty," as the KJV renders the word. — In Mark 14:24 (682) the RSV, like the Nestle text, omits the adjective "new" before "covenant." This does not materially affect the meaning of the passage. — In Gal. 3:15 (683) the RSV's clear and understandable modern English is worthwhile noting.

*The Benefits of the Lord's Supper.* — Luke 22:19, 20 (692) was discussed previously in connection with the words of the institution in the Small Catechism. — Proof passage (693) is adequate in the RSV translation.

*Salutary Use of the Lord's Supper.* — 1 Cor. 11:28, 29, quoted in the answer to Question 319, serves adequately in the RSV text form. — The same holds good of passages (694)—(703). — The translation of Rom. 16:17 in the RSV was discussed under proof passage (482).

#### *Conclusion*

The author in all humility confesses that this study of the RSV and our synodical Catechism is by no means exhaustive and that much more could and ought to be said. Nevertheless it is his hope that the article may contribute something towards stimulating a serious study — by our clergy and teachers of religion in general — of the role which the RSV may play in teaching the truths of Christianity. It seems to the writer that, even when the shortcomings of the RSV are emphasized, Dr. Pieper's dictum in his *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, 419, holds good: "We face the fact that among the generally known translations of the Bible there is not a single one in which Christian doctrine in all its parts does not find expression and in which the opposing errors are not rejected."

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