

The problem of the Middle Ages in the Martin Luther's Theology

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The article is devoted to the interpretation of the Middle Ages from the angle of the Martin Luther's theology. The main problem is dual status of the Middle Ages. It's the time of Christian hegemony, but also the period of negative pre-Reformation tendencies. The Lutherans found a middle position between negative humanistic and positive Catholic estimations. In Luther's texts the Middle ages are seen within two general concepts — of Millennialism and the Babilonian captivity of the Church. According to Luther, millennialism is not in future, it describes the ancient period of the Church's history. Here Luther bases on ecclesiology of St. Augustine. Millennialism was the time of undivided Church. The Babylonian captivity of the Church began from the Great Schism in 1054. Luther here concentrates not on the question of procession of the Holy Spirit «from the Son» (Filioque), but on the role of priest and understanding of the sacraments. He criticized the idea, that during the liturgy eucharistic bread transformed into the Body of the Lord. This magical interpretation was invented by Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century. According to Lutheranism, a priest is a pastor, who predicts the Word of God, but not a wizard, who transforms the substance of bread. Another aspect of the Babylonian captivity of the Church is absence of national language in the liturgy. Western Church had a Latin liturgy in the Middle Ages, because Latin was a national language at the time of St. Jerome and St. Augustine, but it was a dead language by the 10th century.



Key words: [the Middle Ages](#), [Millennialism](#), [Babylonian captivity of the Church](#), [Reformation](#), [Lutheranism](#)

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