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КАКОВО БЫЛО БЫТЬ СТУДЕНТОМ ЛЮТЕРА

Несмотря на то, что в последние годы повышенное внимание было уделено тому, что Лютер не создавал свое богословие единолично, относительно мало внимания уделялось самой многочисленной группе, участвовавшей в Виттенбергской реформе: студентчеству. О реакции студентов на Лютера и о том, как они использовали полученные идеи, и будет говориться в данной статье. Именно студенты несли послание реформатора простому народу, проповедуя и читая его трактаты прихожанам, большинство из которых не умело ни читать, ни писать. Таким образом они распространяли идеи Лютера в немецкоязычных землях и за их пределами. Ученики Лютера происходили из самых разных слоев общества. Некоторые из них были сыновьями его последователей, пасторов, рано откликнувшихся на призыв Лютера к реформе. Студенты были не только учениками. Некоторые из них превратились в партнеров — разумеется, младших партнеров — реформаторов, действующих на благо распространения реформы. Трое студентов оставили свои воспоминания о Лютере: Кириак Спангенберг (1528–1604), Иоганн Матезиус (1504–1565) и Иоахим Мёрлин (1514–1571). Они дают нам не более, чем импрессионистические образы человека, которого они встречали на улицах, слышали на кафедре и в лекционных залах Виттенберга. Их воспоминания исключительно положительны. Это демонстрирует, как его пленительная личность и талант учителя способствовали распространению его идей. Воспоминания студентов позволяют понять, какое впечатление реформатор произвел своих современников и грядущие поколения.

Ключевые слова: Виттенберг, университет, Кириак Спангенберг, Иоганн Матезиус, Иоахим Мёрлин

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THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING LUTHER'S STUDENT

Despite the fact that in recent years increased attention has been given to the fact that Luther was not formulating his theology in isolation, relatively little attention has been given to the largest group of those who participated in reform in Wittenberg: the students. This essay focuses on the student reaction to Luther and the way in which one of them put his insights to use. It was these students who carried his message to the common people, preaching it and reading his treatises to the majority of their congregations who could not read or write. In this way they planted his thinking among the people throughout the German-speaking lands and beyond. Luther's students came from a variety of backgrounds. Some were sons of his followers who were pastors, early converts to Luther's call for reform. Students were not only learners. Some of them advanced into partners — junior partners, to be sure — of the reformers in the activities of spreading reform. Three students estimations are analysed by Cyriakus Spangenberg (1528–1604), Johann Mathesius (1504–1565) and Joachim Mörlin (1514–1571). They give us no more than impressionistic depictions of the man whom they encountered on the streets, in the pulpits, in the lecture halls of Wittenberg. Their pictures of him are dramatically positive. They illustrate how his captivating personality and talent as a teacher supported the spread of his ideas. They reveal the impression the Reformer made on the thinking of his contemporaries and generations to come.

Key words: Wittenberg, university, Cyriakus Spangenberg, Johann Mathesius, Joachim Mörlin

In recent years increased attention has been given to the fact that Martin Luther did not singlehandedly bring about his «theological Copernican revolution», his redefinition of what it means to be Christian, to the church. Luther was not formulating his theology in isolation. Instead, even as he was first developing and publishing his new insights into the biblical message, he was gathering around himself a team of fellow workers. Recently scholars have shown how his colleagues on Wittenberg's theological faculty, Philip Melanchthon, Johannes Bugenhagen, Justus Jonas, and Caspar Cruciger, worked with him. Each had specific skills and his own opportunities for spreading Wittenberg theology¹.

Relatively little attention has been given to the largest group of those who participated in reform in Wittenberg: the students. The number of students enrolled at the university fluctuated a good deal during Luther's career, depending on a number of external factors. At the founding of the university in 1502, some four hundred made their way to study in this town of a little more than two thousand, and providing for the students—along with the court of the electors of Saxony—became a major «industry» in what had been a regional commercial center. Within two decades printing had become the other major source of income for Wittenberg residents. From that initial matriculation of four hundred, numbers declined and rose. Shortly before declining enrollment in the two years before Luther's death, some seven hundred filled the town. Not all heard lectures by the theological faculty, and Philip Melanchthon lectured to even larger groups than did Luther at that time. But Luther's name, along with Melanchthon's, remained the major attractions of an university with superb competences in several disciplines².

¹ Leder H.-G. *Luthers Beziehungen zu seinen Wittenberger Freunden // Leben und Werk Martin Luthers von 1526 bis 1546 / Hrsg. von H. Junghans. Bd 1. Göttingen, 1983. P. 419–440; Wengert T. G. The Wittenberg Circle // Oxford Handbook to Martin Luther's theology / Ed. by R. Kolb, I. Dingel, L. Batka. Oxford, 2014. P. 491–501. On the Wittenberg theological faculty and its program, see: Die theologische Fakultät Wittenberg 1502 bis 1602, Beiträge zur 500. Wiederkehr der Gründungsjahres der Leucorea / Hrsg. von I. Dingel and G. Warbenberg. Leipzig, 2002.*

² Schwiebert E. G. 1) *Luther and his times. The Reformation from a New Perspective. Saint Louis, 1950. P. 603–607; 2) The Reformation. Minneapolis, 1996. P. 238–240. On the most prominent of these students, who came from various parts of Europe, see: Kolb R. *Luther's Wittenberg World. The Reformer's Family, Friends, Followers, and Foes. Minneapolis, 2018. P. 161–210.**

This essay focuses on the student reaction to Luther and the way in which one of them put his insights to use. It was these students who carried his message to the common people, preaching it and reading his treatises to the majority of their congregations who could not read or write. In this way they planted his thinking among the people throughout the German-speaking lands and beyond.

Luther's students came from a variety of backgrounds. Some were sons of his followers who were pastors, early converts to Luther's call for reform. Some came from leading merchant families. The parents of others were artisans, including entrepreneurs like Luther's own mother and father. Many of these students had already spent a few years learning and practicing a trade³. The later elevation of the pastoral ministry in the Lutheran churches to the level of upper middle class had not yet begun. Those who came to Wittenberg in Luther's days to study theology included former diocesan priests and members of religious orders, especially the Augustinians and Franciscans, as well as young men from families only recently converted to a Reformation way of thinking. They mingled freely in the shops and markets of Wittenberg with students from other faculties⁴. Some joined in student unrest, in individual clashes — even with swords — and in demonstrations against the old order in Luther's early years and against the municipal customs and laws throughout.

Students experienced Luther in various ways, but for most of them the most important were in the lecture hall or in the town church, where they heard him preach.⁵ Some lived with Luther's family in the Black Cloister; some of those recorded the evening conversations he conducted with them and others from the town who assembled there⁶. As professor, he had the sad task of informing parents when

³ Karant-Nunn S. *Luther's Pastors The Reformation in the Ernestine Countryside*. Philadelphia, 1979. P. 8–13.

⁴ Schwiebert E. G. *Luther and his times. The Reformation from a New Perspective*. Saint Louis, 1950. P. 603–612.

⁵ On Luther as professor, see: Kolb R. *Martin Luther and the Enduring Word of God. The Wittenberg School and its Scripture-Centered Proclamation*. Grand Rapids, 2016. P. 132–173; on him as preacher see: P. 174–208.

⁶ I. Klizsch treats the memorialization of Luther and the monumentalization of his teaching by his students in great detail (Klitzsch I. *Redaktion und Memoria. Die Lutherbilder der «Tischreden»*. Tübingen, 2020).

some students had died in Wittenberg⁷. Lewis W. Spitz, Jr., noted that «Luther always saw man whole, and his concern for students went well beyond the intellectual and theological to include their personal problems and social well-being». Spitz observes that his interest in his students extended long after they left Wittenberg, giving counsel and advice, celebrating family births and mourning deaths with them, intervening in their behalf when governmental authorities threatened them. He sought financial aid for them, accompanied their search for marriage partners, and fended off parental complaints that their sons had not returned to marry a hometown girl but found a wife in Wittenberg⁸.

Students were not only learners. Some of them advanced into partners — junior partners, to be sure — of the reformers in the activities of spreading reform. The medieval course to a teaching position at a university saw students advance slowly into the role of instructor by giving instruction to newer students in the basic lecture courses of the liberal arts curriculum. In addition, some students, as they matured in years and in skills in Wittenberg, became editors of the works of their preceptors. Luther regarded them as valuable members of the team promoting reform and welcomed their contributions. His students built bridges to a popular audience. Caspar Cruciger, who had joined him as a professor of theology from the ranks of his students, prepared some of his lectures and sermons for print. As an editor he made what Luther had said in the pulpit «clear and sprightly,» «pre-chewing [the sermons] as a mother chews the porridge before giving it to her baby,» according to Luther himself⁹. Cruciger improved sermons that Luther had preached when he prepared them for print,. Luther himself wrote that Cruciger had gone about the task with «profound understanding and great diligence» in editing his

⁷ D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Abt. 4. Briefwechsel / Hrsg. von J. K. F. Knaake. Bd 6. Weimar, 1827. S. 212–213, (Nr. 1876), 300–302 (Nr. 1930); Bd 8. Weimar, 1828. S. 484–486 (Nr. 3354); Bd 10. Weimar, 1828. S. 698–699 (Nr. 4049).

⁸ Spitz L. W., Jr. Luther's Social Concern for Students // The Social History of the Reformation / Ed. by L. P. Buck, J. W. Zophy. Columbus, 1972. P. 249, 294–270.

⁹ D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Weimar, 1828. Bd 21. S. 8–10. See: Kolb R. Martin Luther and the Enduring Word. P. 170–173.

sermons on John 14–17¹⁰. In the preface to the published Galatians lectures of 1535, Luther expressed his amazement that he had been so verbose as the book revealed. But he found that the «brothers» — Cruciger and Veit Dietrich, using the extensive notes taken by Georg Rörer — had given a faithful account of what he had said and what he had wanted to say¹¹. «I am forced to admit that perhaps I did say everything or at least most in the public lectures»¹². Luther had little concern for rights of authorship; he wanted the message to be proclaimed and published.

Without doubt, not all had the same positive experience of their professor as the three selected for this lecture. Some did not understand Luther's way of thinking very well or were repulsed by it. From most of Luther's students we have no reflections of their experience at the university. But from Cyriakus Spangenberg and Johannes Mathesius we get brief glimpses of what it meant to hear Luther. From Joachim Mörlin we hear how one of his adherents spoke of his message in preparing children for living the Christian life. Indeed, some twentieth-century scholars have complained that students like Spangenberg do not give us a fair picture of a «human» Luther but rather tell only of a glorified superhero. That, however, was their honest impression of the man. Luther left precisely this impression on many contemporaries, the impression of a person larger than life, the kind of outstanding individual that was to be remembered and read five hundred years later¹³.

Cyriakus Spangenberg (1528–1604) left his home, the parsonage of one of Luther's early converts, Johann Spangenberg, in Nordhausen in 1542 to begin his study in Wittenberg. The younger Spangenberg recalled an early encounter with Luther as a youth:

¹⁰ D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Abt. 2 Tischreden. Bd 3. Weimar, 1914. S. 42, §2869b. Cf. a similar comment in Luther's preface to the Summer Postil: Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Weimar, 1828. Bd 21. S. 8–10. Cf. also the judgment of Johannes Mathesius, quoted by Benjamin Mayes (Luther's Works. Vol. 77. Saint Louis, 2012. P. XV–XVI).

¹¹ On Rörer, see: Georg Rörer (1492–1557): Der Chronist der Wittenberger Reformation / Ed. S. Michel, Ch. Speer. Leipzig, 2012.

¹² Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Weimar, 1828. Bd 40/1. P. 2–6.

¹³ Herrmann W. Die Lutherpredigten des Cyriacus Spangenberg // Mansfelder Blätter. 1934/1935. Vol. 39. P. 7–95.

In the presence of Dr. Jonas and other theologians, this Man of God, knowing that I intended to enter the preaching ministry in time, wished me good fortune and prophesied that I would bear this cross which I must now bear because of what I teach <...> Indeed, God did not send Luther to us Germans in vain. He intends to have Luther, and the gifts which he gave us through that man, used in gratitude, without contempt. But my fears are great in view of the fact that God has let so many learned theologians sink and fall so that they have such a low estimate of the writings of this precious man, the true German Prophet, Dr. Luther, that they read him very little and follow them not at all¹⁴.

Years later, the younger Spangenberg reflected on his experience in Luther's lectures:

Everyone who heard him knows what kind of man Luther was when he preached or lectured at the university. Shortly before his death he lectured on <...> Genesis. What sheer genius, life, and power he had! The way he could express himself! <...> in my entire life I have experienced nothing more inspiring. When I heard his lectures, it was as if I were hearing an angel of the Lord <...> Luther had a great command of Scripture and sensed its proper meaning at every point. Dear God, there was a gigantic gift of being able to properly interpret Scripture in that man¹⁵.

Spangenberg preached a series of sermons on Luther for his congregation in Mansfeld that compared him with, among others, the prophet Elijah, the apostle Paul, the Evangelist John, a faithful householder, a spiritual knight, a theologian, the angel of the Lord, a martyr, a pilgrim of God, a Jacob, and a priest¹⁶. As exaggerated as this praise might seem to us, Spangenberg often reflected such impressions of Luther as an overpowering personality with great gifts, among them skill at teaching.

Johann Mathesius (1504–1565) grew up in a prominent family in the mining industry in the Saxon town of Rochlitz. His father, who died when Mathesius was seventeen years old, became poor

¹⁴ A letter of May 23, 1579, to Elector August of Saxony: *Der Briefwechsel des M. Cyriacus Spangenberg / Hrsg. von H. Rembe. Dresden, 1887–1888. P. 121–122.*

¹⁵ Theander Lutherus. *Von des werthen Gottes Manne Doctor Martin Luthers Geistlicher Haushaltung vnd Ritterschafft. Ursel, 1589. S. 70a–b.*

¹⁶ These sermons were gathered into the volume *Theander Luther; cf.: Kolb R. Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero. Grand Rapids, 1999. P. 49–55.*

with the collapse of the local economy before his death. Mathesius abandoned plans to work in mining and found his way to the university, finally to Wittenberg, in 1529–1530 and at least on one other occasion. At least once he lived with the Luther family. As pastor in Joachimsthal in Bohemia, Mathesius preached a series of sermons on Luther's life. In several sermons he recalled his own Wittenberg experiences. He arrived in the town on the Friday before Pentecost 1529. The next evening he heard Luther preach a sermon on Acts 2 in the town church, in which he treated the sacrament of baptism.

I can never forget that first sermon on baptism... In baptism we are sprinkled with Christ's blood and his Spirit, which is the chrism and truly divine anointment to the royal priesthood. In baptism God makes a covenant of a good conscience with us (1 Peter 3: 21), and we are buried into the death of Christ (Rom. 6: 3–4, Col. 2: 11–15) and incorporated into him and into the church of God, and we are given the garment of imputed righteousness and salvation (Gal. 3: 27) <...> I remember with great joy that first sermon as I by grace came to Wittenberg, and how I, praise God, spent the whole year taking part in church and school, hearing many similar edifying and comforting sermons¹⁷.

Mathesius remembered the impression made by Luther's lectures on the final chapters of Isaiah: «I often came out of these lectures filled with comfort and joy»¹⁸. In both lectures and sermons Luther was

a simple, congenial teacher when he spoke with his attentive people in the congregation and his hearers. More than once I heard him say at the table, «in the schools one uses the disputation and gives the opponent sharp rejoinders. In the pulpit the best preachers are those who speak at a child's level, of little things at the level of the people, the very simplest level, and do not bring up and attack questions far from their lives or refute opponents' arguments, rail against those who are present, government authorities or monks and priests <...> In the church

¹⁷ Johannes Mathesius. *Historien/ Von des Ehrwürdigen inn Gott seligen theuren Manns Gottes/ D. Martin Luthers/ Anfang/ Lere/ Leben/ Standhafft bekenntnuß seines Glaubens/ vnd Sterben/ Ordentlich der Jarzal nach/ sie sich solches alles habe zugetragen.* Nürnberg, 1576. P. 66a–b. On Mathesius, see: Johannes Mathesius (1504–1565): *Rezeption und Verbreitung der Wittenberger Reformation durch Predigt und Exegese* / Hrsg. von A. Kohnle, I. Dinkel. Leipzig, 2017; Loesche G. *Johannes Mathesius: Ein Lebens- und Sitten-Bild aus der Reformationszeit.* Nieuwkoop, 1971.

¹⁸ Johannes Mathesius. *Historien*, sermon seven. S. 67a.

one addresses those who are present; in the school one can address those who are not present»¹⁹.

Mathesius's recollections of his teacher resulted in his regarding Luther as the most gifted of pastors who brought consolation to God's people and his prophet of the Last Days. That did not prevent him from recalling Luther's tempestuousness as well. Mathesius remembered Luther speaking of Rebecca in his lectures on Genesis 27 in 1541. He had said,

Rebecca began by breaking the rules [in urging Jacob to deceive Isaac and receive the blessing of continuing the Messianic line]. But she finally put things back on the right track. I have often gotten off-track and said the Lord's Prayer or made some kind of comment that brought me back to my thoughts. I always got back on the right path with God, but I would advise you never to try that. Stay on the straight path and live according to the rules. Then no one will rein you in²⁰.

Mathesius had experienced Luther's vehemence against opponents of the gospel. He acknowledged it while praising and defending him at the same time. He spoke of Luther's

marvelous spirit, his exuberance, his wonderfully edifying vehemence and godly zeal, which burned against the abominable papacy and the poisonous false brethren and violent neighbors for the sake of the honor and the spread of the holy gospel. Whatever trespasses and frailties of flesh and blood may have blurred his lofty nature are covered by grace through the blood of Jesus Christ, with which he was often sprinkled in holy absolution²¹.

When Luther returned from Marburg in 1529, Mathesius recalled, «he resumed his lecturing, writing, and preaching». However, the student noted that

at the beginning of 1530 his zeal was afire against his own people in the Wittenberg congregation. He delivered to them a strong sermon of repentance, almost like the Lord Christ cried 'alas and woe' against the people of Capernaum and Bethsaida (Matt. 11: 20–24). For it seemed to him that there was only contempt and scorn for God's Word among them, as the prophet Jeremiah complains about his hearers

¹⁹ Johannes Mathesius. Historien, sermon eleven. S. 124b–125a.

²⁰ Johannes Mathesius. Historien, sermon seven. S. 74a.

²¹ Johannes Mathesius. Historien, sermon seven. S. 74b.

in chapter 20. So he decided never again to preach in the name of God. Dr. Luther let that be known publicly, and he held to it for quite a while, until his zeal cooled or his calling [as preacher] burned in his heart and he mounted the pulpit again²².

Joachim Mörlin (1514–1571) was born in Wittenberg, son of a professor of the arts at the university. At age seven he moved with his family to his father's new position as parish pastor. Originally destined for life as a potter, Mörlin came to the University of Wittenberg, where he became Luther's devoted student.

In writing a guide to reading Luther's published works, Mörlin told readers that Luther would lead them into the heart of the Scriptures, proceeding directly to what the Holy Spirit had established as the Scripture's nerve center in Christ. Mörlin continued by asserting Luther's words were so filled with meaning that a page or two might demand a half day to read and three or four weeks to digest. He had set forth all the articles of faith purely and thoroughly on the basis of God's Word. He had avoided ambiguous definitions and stated what is true forthrightly and simply, while sharply refuting what is false²³. Mörlin suggested that readers begin with the Small Catechism, for its three parts: law, gospel, and the table of responsibilities in the callings of daily life — summarize the entire Word of God²⁴.

Mörlin composed an expansion of Luther's Small Catechism. It aimed at supplying a longer textbook for instruction in the faith, just as Luther had urged pastors to find once they had given children the basic foundation he provided in the Small Catechism.²⁵ Mörlin had prepared such a «guide» to Luther's Catechism for his congregation in Göttingen in 1547 and later expanded it when he was pastor in Braunschweig, publishing this version in 1554 and several editions thereafter²⁶.

²² Johannes Mathesius. *Historien*, sermon seven. S. 73a–b.

²³ *Wie die Bu[e]cher vnd Schrifften/des tewren vnd Seligen Manns Gottes D. Martini Luthers nu[e]tzlich zu lesen Fu[e]r einfeltige frome Pfarhern vnd andere Christen Liebhaber vnd Leser/der Bu[e]cher D. Martini Lutheri... Eisleben, [1565]. S. Aij^r–Aij^r.*

²⁴ *Wie die Bu[e]cher vnd Schrifften. S. Aiiij^r–[Avj]^r.*

²⁵ *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche / Hrsg. von I. Dingel. Göttingen, 2014; The Book of Concord / Ed. by R. Kolb, T. J. Wengert. Minneapolis, 2000. P. 349, §17.*

²⁶ Reu J. M. *Quellen zur Geschichte des Katechismus-Unterrichts 3,2,2. Gütersloh, 1920. S. 858–894.*

In his dedication of his catechism to Duchess Elisabeth of Braunschweig-Calenberg, Mörlin compared Luther's composing his catechism to the work of a bee that flew about in God's paradise, the Scriptures, moving from rose to rose and among other flowers to place the fine honey of the Holy Spirit in his Small Catechism so that true Christians could give confession of their faith and the eternal treasure that it brings²⁷. Mörlin thought that the Holy Spirit must have guided Luther's hand and pen as he composed the Small Catechism, «for there is not a word, indeed, not even a syllable or letter in it, which does not point to such lofty thought that I must daily learn it anew, and I still remain a poor, simple, young pupil of the catechism»²⁸.

Before beginning his interpretation of the text of Luther's Small Catechism, Mörlin used several questions to introduce children to the Christian faith and the purpose of the catechism. These introductory questions not only prepare the user for learning from the Catechism. They also give us an impression of what, at its most basic level, Luther's theology meant to Mörlin.

The Reformed Heidelberg Catechism of 1563²⁹ followed Mörlin's example in beginning Christian instruction with a similar question that echoed Mörlin's initial question: «what is your comfort in the face of the world on earth?» Mörlin had the child answer, «although I know that I am in my very makeup and nature truly a child of wrath, as is the world, Ephesians 2, nonetheless I have indeed become another person and a Christian, for I have been baptized to Jesus Christ, my dear Savior in the infant years according to his command Mark 16. On him I set my entire hope and assurance in true trust and faith»³⁰.

This was a revision of Mörlin's original first question seven years earlier: «Tell me, dear child, what is it really that makes you delighted

²⁷ Reu J. M. Quellen. S. XX.

²⁸ Enchiridion. P. Aijj^v. On Mörlin's and other catechisms of this period, see: Kolb R. The Layman's Bible: The Use of Luther's Catechisms in the German Late Reformation // Luther's Catechisms — 450 Years, Essays Commemorating the Small and Large Catechisms of Dr. Martin Luther / Ed. by D. P. Scaer, R. D. Preus. Fort Wayne, IN, 16–26.

²⁹ Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation: Volume 2, 1552–1566 / Comp. by J. T. Dennison, Jr. Grand Rapids, 2010. P. 771. It phrased the question, «What is your only comfort in life and in death?»

³⁰ Reu J. M. Quellen. S. 860.

to be a Christian?» His answer then was similar, «It is that my dear God has made me a child and heir of eternal life and his benefits in my baptism for the sake of Christ, his Son. I can place all my trust on him, and I am intending to remain in this trust and nevermore to die but to go to the kingdom of my heavenly Father and there to live eternally».

Mörlin followed up this question with another: «What is this kingdom?» His answer follows Luther: «It is the proclamation of his Word, rich in grace, as Paul calls it in Colossians 4 (Coll. 4: 2, 6), through which together with all believing hearts, which Paul calls the body of Christ, Ephesians 4 (Eph. 4: 12-13), we are being built up until we come to the perfect maturity in Christ, that is, are transformed after death into eternal life, when the proclamation and faith cease, 1 Corinthians 13. In all this we must always be learning [more of Christ] and know that no one is our Master and Rabbi apart from Jesus Christ alone.» Mörlin then asked, «What is this Word of God?» In his 1547 version the children were to answer, «It is the teaching and proclamation of repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Whoever does not have and know this has and knows nothing of the kingdom of God and eternal life»³¹.

Mörlin continued to echo insights he had gained from Luther in his later edition of his catechism. «What makes you certain of this very comforting assurance?» «Reason tells me absolutely nothing, for fools know nothing of such spiritual matters, 1 Corinthians 1 and 2. God has fashioned this comfort for me in my heart, however, from heaven through his holy, divine Word, as Christ said, John 6, that is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent».

Mörlin continued, «What is this Word Of God?» with a different answer than he had given in 1547, nevertheless conveying another aspect of Luther's understanding of God's Word. Instead of focusing on the law-gospel distinction of repentance and forgiveness as he had in his first version, in 1554 Mörlin's answer spoke of the origin of the Word and its revelation in Scripture. «What is God's Word?» Mörlin asked. «It is not anything given by human beings, but it is God's counsel, thinking, and the expression or pleasure of his heart, as he revealed it from the beginning of the world through his prophets. Christ and the apostles revealed it up to this time and had

³¹ Reu J. M. Quellen. S. 860.

it composed in written form in the Bible for those who would follow, Psalm 102, so that it serves as a certain rule for all time for proper pure teaching against all false teaching and effort, Romans 1, Acts 24 and 26, Galatians 1». The remainder of Mörlin's supplement to the Small Catechism summarized its content and applied it to daily life. His explanation followed Luther's text closely and reinforced it without adding much at most points. Luther's students became pastors across the German-speaking lands and far beyond, and most of them used his Small Catechism for teaching the children of their congregations. Before Luther died, his Small Catechism had been printed in at least thirty editions. By 1600 it had appeared in more than one hundred twenty editions. Beyond these German printings, it was translated into Latin and issued thirty times in the course of the century for instruction in schools. In addition, fifteen editions of a Greek translation appeared, most with the Latin text as well, for instruction in the languages as well as in the faith. Six German/Latin and one German/Latin/Greek edition became available for use in the schools before 1600. A polyglot edition in German, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew appeared in 1572, with twelve editions by 1599. Two dozen Low German printings of the Small Catechism also were issued along with thirteen Low German/Latin editions³². Not all of the users of the Catechism had studied in Wittenberg, and not all who had heard Luther lecture captured their professor's thought in the way that Mörlin did. Nonetheless, Mörlin's treatment of Luther's instructions gives us insight into the influence of Luther on their way of thinking and proclaiming the biblical message.

These three students give us no more than impressionistic depictions of the man whom they encountered on the streets, in the pulpits, in the lecture halls of Wittenberg. Their pictures of him are dramatically positive. They illustrate how his captivating personality and talent as a teacher supported the spread of his ideas. They reveal

³² These statistics are taken from Kolb, *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero*, 158–159. They are derived from the catalog of the: *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts* / Hrsg. von Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in München and the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel. 1. Abt. Bd 12. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1988. S. 241–277, № 5020–5349. Some editions may have left no trace because the Small Catechism was a textbook that finally had been used so much that it fell apart.

the impression the Reformer made on the thinking of his contemporaries and generations to come.

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