

# With the Same Heart

An overview of the Book of Concord

Session 2 - The Augsburg Confession



# Warm up question

If you were going to lay out “categories” for your personal theology, what would those categories be?



# The Diet of Augsburg

The Augsburg Confession was presented to the “Imperial Diet of Augsburg,” essentially the legislative body of the Holy Roman Empire at the time. It was made up of three “colleges” or differentiated sections of **electors** ( those who held the power to appoint ), **princes** ( those who had royal or ecclesiastical positions of note ), and **cities** ( representatives from large cities within the empire ).

This Diet had been called in 1530 to address three issues: 1.) The defense of the empire against the Ottoman threat 2.) Generalized issues of currency, policy, and 3.) Disagreements about Christianity.

The Lutherans were invited to present their document, but initially were not given time to read it audibly. The princes finally were given the opportunity to read it out-loud but were sequestered in a small chapel rather than a large meeting room. Nonetheless, the reading of the Augsburg Confession occurred on June 25, 1530.

- *Question:*
- *The fact that the Diet of Augsburg was called shows the importance of the Church during this time. What is something that might attract the attention of the ruling authorities today?*



# Parts of the Augsburg Confession

There are 28 Articles to the Augsburg Confession. They are first separated into two units: 1.) Statements of Faith (Articles 1-21), 2.) Corrected Abuses (Articles 22-28).

One interesting way to split up the 21 is found in an engraving by Wencelas Hollar, an artist from the 1600's. It divides the 21 articles into 7 sets of three.

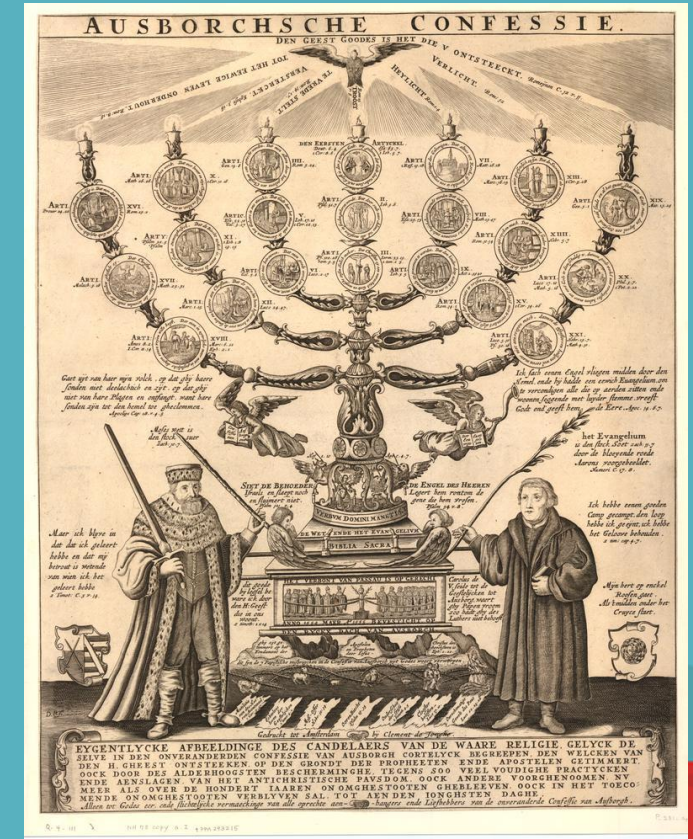
Middle (1-3) - Who is God?

Left Side - God's Work in Human Lives

- Justification and Obedience (4-6)
- Dealing with Man's Sin (10-12)
- Man's Dealings with Other Men (16-18)

Right Side - The Church's Roles

- The Church (7-9)
- Order in the Church (13-15)
- Implications of Free Will(19-21)



The remaining corrected abuses are less thematically oriented. We will see them a little later.



# About God

The first 3 articles about the relationship between God and man, the basics of theology:

1. God - Who God is and rejections of heresies
2. Original Sin - Who human beings are before a holy God
3. The Son of God - Clarity about teachings about Jesus and more rejection of heresies



# Justification and Obedience

The next set of Articles are about justification by faith and the obedience of the Christian. This is really the first time that the Lutherans start to show their disagreement with the current Roman Catholic teaching:

4. Justification by Faith - Probably the most important article in all of the Confession, clearly outlines the idea of “Justification by Faith” meaning that a person is saved because of their faith - not because of anything they do.

5. The Office of Preaching - Largely written to separate the Lutherans from Anabaptists who “teach that we obtain the Holy Spirit without the external word of the Gospel through our own preparations, thoughts, and works.”

6. The “New Obedience” - Dealing with the issue of “good works,” now outside of what would have been considered its usual framework of being the working of the Holy Spirit for the sake of salvation by works.



# The Church

The Next Section is about the Church. Often times Articles 7 and 8 are lumped together

7. The Church (Institution) - This article largely affirms the necessity of the Church and shows that the Lutherans are not meaning that the Church somehow is jettisoned.

8. The Church (members) - However, this article differs with the Roman Catholics on the make up of the Church, essentially saying that the Church is built more upon belief than it is upon membership in a human institution.

9. Baptism and entrance into the Church - Essentially showing that Lutherans still believe that Baptism grants entrance to the Church and that children are to be baptized.



# Dealing with Sin

The next Articles are about dealing with continuing sin in the Christian:

10. The Lord's Supper - While Lutheran differences with Roman Catholic theology exist, this article mostly plays to the similarities between the two - specifically the belief in the "true presence".

11. Confession - Retains "private absolution" as a practice in the Lutheran church but makes an allowance that those confessing need not enumerate all of their sins.

12. Repentance - Clarifies the Lutheran position that "repentance" is understood as "to have contrition and sorrow, or terror about sin, and yet at the same time believe in the gospel and absolution that sin is forgiven and grace it obtained through Christ."





# Order in the Church

The next Articles are about dealing with continuing sin in the Christian:

13. The Use of the Sacraments - Makes clear that the sacraments are to be thought of as more than “marks of profession” among Christians, but also rejecting the idea of sacraments working without the receiving faith of the believer

14. Ecclesial Order - A very short but meaningful definition of who should “teach publically or administer the sacraments,” that these should be the “properly called”.

15. Ecclesial Traditions - Separating the difference between certain human traditions in the church which are good but not mandatory, and those things commanded by Scripture.



# Man's Dealing with Fellow Man

The next Articles are about dealing with continuing sin in the Christian:

16. Of Civil Affairs - Essentially differentiate the Lutherans from the Anabaptists who refuse to participate in civil affairs or hold civil offices.

17. Judgment of Humans - Affirms that Christ will come to judge the deeds of men on the last day and rejecting two problematic ideas: a.) that there is no judgement of evil people on the last day (annihilationism), and that before Christ returns there will be a righteous nation state that will "annihilate the ungodly".

18. Free Will - Begins to unpack the Lutheran perspective on free will, saying that "a human being has some measure of free will, so as to live an externally honorable life and to choose among the things reason comprehends," but not to choose salvation for one's self.



# Implications of Free Will

The next Articles are about dealing with continuing sin in the Christian:

19. The Cause of Sin - Implicates the “perverted will” of human beings for the cause of sin, and that this perverted will cooperates with “the will of the devil and of all the ungodly.”

20. Good Works - An extraordinarily long article that corrects a rumor that Lutherans were “falsely accused of prohibiting good works,” while also clarifying that Lutherans reject the idea that good works arise from anyone other than the Holy Spirit, including from self.

21. Worship of the Saints - Clarifies the Lutheran position that saints should be emulated for their faith but that only Christ is to be seen as an intermediary.



# Corrected Abuses

The last six articles concern the correction of certain perceived abuses of the Roman Catholic church:

22. Of Both Kinds in the Sacrament - Both host and cup should be offered to all people (common practice during this time was only the priests drank the wine).

23. Of the Marriage of Priests - Priests should be allowed to marry.

24. Of the Mass - Various corrections including questioning masses said for the dead or for those not present.

25. Of Confession - Corrects the practices of the required enumeration of all sins as well as the traditional requirements of penance before forgiveness is obtained

26. Of the Distinction of Meats - Goes further into the issues of traditions meriting the forgiveness of sins.

27. Of Monastic Vows - Equates monastic vows with prison sentences and encourages monasteries and the like to be “voluntary associations”.

28. Of Ecclesiastical Power - Calls for a separation of church power and civic power in the offices of bishops of the church.



# Next Time - The Defense of the Augsburg Confession

Didn't get enough Augsburg this time? Don't worry, the Roman Catholics respond to the Lutherans and the Lutherans come back at them with the "Apology" or the Defense. That's what we're studying next time.

