



## A Word from Pastor Schielke

### On Creeds: Part 5

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> article: *Who for us men and our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried.*

These words summarize the whole earthly life of Jesus before His resurrection. This is often referred to as Christ's state of humiliation. Jesus "humiliated" Himself (humbled or lowered Himself) in that He came down from heaven and became a man. Moreover, He veiled or hid His glory and divinity most of the time, only exercising it at certain times, for example in the performing of miracles or on the mount of transfiguration. Though He veiled His glory and power to some extent, He did not permit Himself to be killed or arrested until the appropriate time, until His hour had come. You'll note that in this humiliated state many did not believe Him to be the Messiah. However, those who believed His words

did see Him as the promised Messiah, though they didn't really understand what He had come to do, die for sin, until Pentecost.

The climax of this section is the phrase "and was made man." This short phrase speaks volumes against a vast swath of heretical ideas all of which have their roots in Gnostic thought. Remember Gnosticism looks with disdain on earthly, physical things. Flesh and body are considered evil, and only the spirit is or can be good and pure. For "Gnostic Christians" taking

on a human body is beneath God. He would never lower Himself in such a way. But the creed proclaims loud and clear that God in Christ became man. He took on the same sort of flesh and blood that you and I have. He came down from heaven, left His glorious throne to become one of us, to live for a time in this sin-filled corrupt world, and to ascend to the throne of the cross. Why? As the creed says, for us, and for our salvation.

You may notice during the creed, that I (or other pastors) will bow during part of this section. Some may even kneel at the words "and was made man." This is out of reverence, honor, and thanks for the miracle of Christ's incarnation. In this gesture we give thanks to the Son of God that He would lower Himself to be born into our world, to take on our sin, and atone for it as the one perfect and final sacrifice for sin. Thanks be to God.



"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."  
**1 Corinthians 15:57**

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**The Formula of Concord** - The Formula of Concord (FC) was the last of the confessional documents written by the Lutherans in the 16th century. Finished in 1577, the FC consists of twelve articles presented in two parts. The first part, the Epitome, is a brief presentation of each point of doctrine and the controversy surrounding it while the Solid Declaration presents a more detailed discussion. Over a dozen authors contributed portions of draft versions of the FC, but the most influential authors of the final document were Jakob Andrea and Martin Chemnitz. The need for the FC arose after the death of Martin Luther in 1546. Over time, the Lutherans became divided over several points of doctrine. Several political peace treaties also forced the Lutherans to entertain and accept certain points of Reformed theology which had been developing in Switzerland. Thus, the FC was pivotal in clarifying the Lutheran position over and against both the Roman Catholic position and more significantly, over the Reformed position. It is the FC that most clearly distinguishes Lutheran teaching on several important points and against the various Protestant bodies we see around us even today. Over the next months, you will find the articles of the Epitome of the Formula of Concord in our newsletter. It's good for all of us to have at least some familiarity with this important doctrinal statement.

**II - Free Will - The Principal Question in This Controversy.**

### **Negative Theses - Part 2**

Contrary False Doctrine.

158. Also, when the following expressions are employed without explanation, namely, that the will of man before, in, and after conversion resists the Holy Ghost, and that the Holy Ghost is given to those who resist Him intentionally and persistently; for, as Augustine says, in conversion God makes willing persons out of the unwilling and dwells in the willing.

16As to the expressions of ancient and modern teachers of the Church, when it is said: Deus trahit, sed volentem trahit, i. e., God draws, but He draws the willing; likewise, Hominis voluntas in conversione non est otiosa, sed agit aliquid, i. e., In conversion the will of man is not idle, but also effects something, we maintain that, inasmuch as these expressions have been introduced for confirming [the false opinion concerning] the powers of the natural free will in man's conversion, against the doctrine of God's grace, they do not conform to the form of sound doctrine, and therefore, when we speak of conversion to God, justly ought to be avoided.

17But, on the other hand, it is correctly said that in conversion God, through the drawing of the Holy Ghost, makes out of stubborn and unwilling men willing ones, and that after such conversion in the daily exercise of repentance the regenerate will of man is not idle, but also cooperates in all the works of the Holy Ghost, which He performs through us.

189. Also what Dr. Luther has written, namely, that man's will in his conversion is pure passive, that is, that it does nothing whatever, is to be understood respectu divinae gratiae in accendendis novis motibus, that is, when God's Spirit, through the Word heard or the use of the holy Sacraments, lays hold upon man's will, and works [in man] the new birth and conversion. For when [after] the Holy Ghost has wrought and accomplished this, and man's will has been changed and renewed by His divine power and working alone, then the new will of man is an instrument and organ of God the Holy Ghost, so that he not only accepts grace, but also cooperates with the Holy Ghost in the works which follow.

19Therefore, before the conversion of man there are only two efficient causes, namely, the Holy Ghost and the Word of God, as the instrument of the Holy Ghost, by which He works conversion. This Word man is [indeed] to hear; however, it is not by his own powers, but only through the grace and working of the Holy Ghost that he can yield faith to it and accept it.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Newark's Tree Lighting Ceremony 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.
3 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	4	5	6 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Advent Dinner 6 p.m. Advent Service 7 p.m.	7	8	9
10 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Council Meeting	11	12	13 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Advent Dinner 6 p.m. Advent Service 7 p.m.	14	15	16
17 Divine Service 10 a.m. Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	18	19	20 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Advent Dinner 6 p.m. Advent Service 7 p.m.	21	22	23
24 Divine Service 10 a.m. Christmas Eve Service 7 p.m.	25 Divine Service 10 a.m.	26	27	28	29	30
31 Divine Service 10 a.m. New Year's Eve Service 7 p.m. New Year's Eve Party						

**Future Church Cleaning:**

Dec. 9 Ben & Ester Schielke

Dec. 23 Haney/Knox

Jan. 6 Hill

Jan. 20 Kroeger/McClain

**December Birthdays:**

1 Don Foltz

2 Melinda Mitchell

11 Brian Schwiesow

13 Kymerly Reinsmith

25 Bo Hill



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**We are in our last month of 2023. In 2024, I would like to challenge every member of this congregation to read or continue reading through the Bible in one year. The Bible readings for December and part of January are listed below.**

Dec. 1: 1 Corinthians 9-11	Dec. 14: 2 Thessalonians	Dec. 27: Revelation 4-8
Dec. 2: 1 Corinthians 12-14	Dec. 15: 1 Timothy	Dec. 28: Revelation 9-12
Dec. 3: 1 Corinthians 15-16	Dec. 16: 2 Timothy	Dec. 29: Revelation 13-16
Dec. 4: 2 Corinthians 1-4	Dec. 17: Titus, Philemon	Dec. 30: Revelation 17-19
Dec. 5: 2 Corinthians 5-9	Dec. 18: Hebrews 1-6	Dec. 31: Revelation 20-22
Dec. 6: 2 Corinthians 10-13	Dec. 19: Hebrews 7-10	January 1: Genesis 1-3
Dec. 7: Galatians 1-3	Dec. 20: Hebrews 11-13	January 2: Genesis 4-7
Dec. 8: Galatians 4-6	Dec. 21: James	January 3: Genesis 8-11
Dec. 9: Ephesians 1-3	Dec. 22: 1 Peter	January 4: Genesis 12 -15
Dec. 10: Ephesians 4-6	Dec. 23: 2 Peter	January 5: Genesis 16-18
Dec. 11: Philippians	Dec. 24: 1 John	January 6: Genesis 19-21
Dec. 12: Colossians	Dec. 25: 2-3 John, Jude	January 7: Genesis 22-24
Dec. 13: 1 Thessalonians	Dec. 26: Revelation 1-3	January 8: Genesis 25-26



Advent



Christmas

## VIC Happenings

**Advent Dinners** - We will be serving dinners on Wednesday nights at 6 p.m.

**Advent Services** - We will be having Advent services on December 6, 13, and 20. These services will begin at 7 p.m.

**Christmas Eve Service 12/24** - We will have our annual candlelight Christmas Eve service on December 24, at 7 p.m.

**Christmas Day Service 12/25** - We will have our Christmas Day service at 10:00 a.m. This service is a celebration of Christ's coming to redeem his lost creatures.

**New Year's Eve Service 12/31** - We will be having a New Year's Eve service on December 31, at 7 p.m., followed by games and snacks.

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