

Chapter Four (4).

1. *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.*

A. a door was opened in heaven: St. John the Apostle did not open the door, but the door was opened. Man only learns of God through God revealing Himself. Man cannot pry or look into the things of God apart from God's revealing them to him.

B. and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me: The trumpet indicates resoluteness, certainty.¹ There is no doubt about what will be revealed because it is God's revelation. God is Truth and, therefore, everything He says is sound and of impeccable integrity throughout.

the first voice: "John saw heaven's door open and heard a voice which spoke to him. Apparently he saw no one, but he recognized the voice as the first one which he had heard and which sounded 'like a trumpet' (Rev. 1:10 RSV). It was the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ, ... inviting John to come up and see 'things which must come to pass after these things.'"²

C. Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter: Again, these matters must be revealed to St. John because the personal knowledge of God cannot be known of men apart from God's revelation.

2. *And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.*

A. And immediately I was in the spirit: "In the Spirit" is another expression for Divine Revelation. For, as we've seen, the Son reveals Divine matters but so also does the Holy Spirit. The Rev. Dr. Louis Brighton writes, "John could not by his own strength obey the call of Christ to come up to the door of heaven and stand at its entrance and/or to enter. Immediately he was ... 'in the Spirit,' 4:2 This seems to have a different sense than [in the Spirit] in 1:10, which suggests that John was worshiping 'in the Spirit' – a holy experience in which all Christian participate by means of God's Word and Sacraments."³ Dr. Brighton makes a

¹"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" **I Corinthians 14:8.**

²The Rev. Luther Poellet, *Revelation*, p. 73.

³The Rev. Dr. Louis Brighton, *Revelation*, p. 113.

good distinction here. All Christians are in the Spirit because all Christians possess the Holy Spirit by the Gospel through faith. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”⁴ The Lutheran Church confesses: “But Christ was given for this purpose, namely, that for His sake there might be bestowed on us the remission of sins, and the Holy Ghost to bring forth in us new and eternal life [to manifest Christ in our hearts, as it is written John 16, 15: *He shall take of the things of Mine, and show them unto you.*”⁵ Rather, here St. John writes of the gift of revelation given to the Apostles. “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”⁶ Dr. Brighton continues: “... by the Spirit and in the Spirit, he was lifted up so that he could receive the visions of God which he was to share with the church (cf. Rev. 21:20).”⁷

B. a throne was set in heaven: “John describes his glimpses of heaven in the language of earth. His words must therefore not be taken in their usual sense⁸ under the limits of space and time. ‘The heaven of the angels and saints is not a concreated locality, but the condition of the blessed vision of God.’ ... (the Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. 1, p. 471). The ‘throne’ is not a physical piece of furniture, etc. Rather God here condescends to the forms and terms of this represent world in order to convey to us, as far as possible, some idea of the realities of heaven, which, in their full glory and splendor, are

⁴ **Acts 2:38.**

⁵ The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article III: Of Love and the Fulfilling of the Law. 11, *Triglotta*, p. 159.

⁶ **I Corinthians 2:13.**

⁷ *Revelation*, p. 114.

⁸ Luther writes: “Whoever is so bold as to give the words of Scripture a meaning that differs from the sense that their simple sound confers is obliged to prove his explanation from the text before him or from the articles of faith. ... Neither a conclusion or a figure of speech should be admitted in any place of the Bible, unless evident contextual circumstances or the absurdity of anything obviously militating against an articles of faith requires it. ... On the contrary, we must everywhere adhere to the simple, pure and natural meaning of the words. This accords with the rules of grammar and the usage of speech, which God has given men.” Raymond F. Surburg, *Luther’s Hermeneutical and Isagogical Views as Reflected in His Prefaces to the German Bible of 1534*, Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, pp. 13, 14.

inconceivable to us now.”⁹

A throne is a symbol of ruling authority and power. “There is no greater or higher symbol of power and authority and a rule, than a throne in heaven.”¹⁰

C. and one sat on the throne: The One sitting on the throne is the God the Father because He is distinguished later from the God the Holy Spirit and the Son. “... and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.” The Seven Spirits of God is an expression for the “*Spiritus Septiformis*” the Sevenfold Spirit, namely, the Sevenfold Gifts of the Spirit. “And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him [the Messiah], the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might; the Spirit of Knowledge and of the Fear of the LORD” **Isaiah 11:2**, amplification brackets added. “To the Spirit, who rests upon him, are given seven names that designate the Spirit’s various gifts and powers. On the basis of this passage the church speaks of the *Spiritus septiformis*. Accordingly, the prophecy of Zechariah, 4, 5.10, and Rev 1,4; 3, 1; 4, 5; 5, 6 speak of the seven eyes or the seven Spirits of God, that is, of the Spirit of God in the diversity of his gifts, powers, and activities.”¹¹ And Christ possessed the *Spiritus Septiformis* (His Spirit) as a man for us in order to sanctify us fallen and sinful men and to give us the holiness and righteousness that avails before God. “The Spirit of the Lord settles down upon the Son of David and so rests upon him. ... The expression calls to mind the similar statement of John the Baptist, that he saw the Spirit descending and resting upon Jesus. John 1, 32. Christ is Emmanuel, God in human flesh, the mighty God. But the Spirit of God permeates and has complete control also of his human nature, of his human life and activity from the very first. The humble, despised Branch is anointed beyond measure with the Spirit of God.”¹² Because Christ

⁹The Rev. Daniel Poellet, *Revelation*, pp. 73, 74.

¹⁰Poellet, *Revelation*, p. 74.

¹¹The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt, *Revelation*, p. 119.

¹²*Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119. "Stoeckhardt, Georg; b. February 17, 1842, at Chemnitz, Saxony; received his preparatory education in the Lateinschule at Tharandt and the Fuerstenschule at Meissen; studied theology at Erlangen and Leipzig 1862- 6 In 1878 he became pastor of Holy Cross Church, St. Louis, and, having since 1879 lectured on Old and New Testament Exegesis at Concordia Seminary, was elected professor in 1887. In 1903 Luther Seminary, Hamline, Minn., created him a Doctor of Divinity. D. January 9, 1913, Stoeckhardt was an exegete of the first rank. Coupled with his great learning, his familiarity with the original languages, etc., and his logical mind was his firm belief in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures and his childlike acceptance of all the teachings of Scripture, his great love of the revealed truth. He permitted nothing but the text to influence his thought. Concentrating all the powers of his

possessed the Spiritus Septiformis for us, then, we have fulfilled all the righteousness and commandments of God. “And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh use to fulfilled all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” **St. Matthew 3:15-17.** “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” **Galatians 4:4-5.** “But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.” **St. Matthew 1:21.**

And the Father in addition to being distinguished from the Holy Spirit is also distinguished from the Son. “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.” **Revelation 5:7.**

God the Father is also pictured seated on the Throne in **Daniel 7.** “I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn [**the Antichrist, the papacy**], before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots [**remnants of the Roman Empire**]: and, behold, in this horn *were* eyes like the eyes of man [**the horn is the papacy and the characteristics of man are the Public Ministry of the Gospel because the Gospel restores in man the *Imago Dei* {the Image of God}, the *Imago Dei* being the distinctive characteristic of man amongst the earthly creatures, St. John 17:3; but the papacy while wielding the Public Ministry of the Gospel does not believe it and seeks to obscure it**¹³.], and a mouth speaking great

believing heart and mind on the written Word, he obtained a wonderful grasp of the deep thoughts of the Spirit, and he had the rare gift of unfolding them in concise, clear, convincing language. ... The Missouri Synod owes much to him; his exegetical ability and love of the truth of Scripture made him one of the leaders with Walther, in the controversy on election and conversion and in the other battles the Church was, and is, engaged in, such as for verbal inspiration. In line with the article written on his accession to the chair of Exegesis: "How Can and Should Each Individual Lutheran Lend His Aid toward the Preservation of the Pure Doctrine by the Church?" he labored, by word and pen (his doctrinal articles in *Lehre und Wehre*, in *Lutheraner* and in the synodical reports), to conserve this most precious treasure of the Missouri Synod; and he admirably succeeded in impressing upon both his students and his readers his exegetical method, his loving reverence for the written Word." *Concordia Cyclopaedia*, pp. 729, 730, s.v. "**Stoeckhardt, Georg**".

¹³“Thus they obscure the glory of Christ, and deprive consciences of firm consolation,

things. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool [cf. **Revelation 1:14**¹⁴]: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as a* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. [**Here we see that God the Father marshals the forces of heaven when the Gospel is at stake and takes a keen interest in the day-to-day life and well-being of His Church gathered around and sustained by the Gospel**] ... I beheld, and the same horn [**the Antichrist, the papacy**] made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came [**the saints being powerless against their foes unless God intervenes**], and judgment was given to the saints of the most High [**the Judgment is Absolution, of which the restoration of the pure teaching thereof broke the power of the papacy: ‘But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips {the breath of Christ’s lips is Absolution: “And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them” St. John 20:22, 23.} “shall he slay the wicked.’ Isaiah 11:4. ‘And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” II Thessalonians 2:8]** and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. ... But the judgment shall sit, and they [**the Holy Trinity**] shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end. [**Dramatically, powerfully, and vividly we see here that the Antichrist and any all enemies of the Church are up against God the Father Himself when they threaten His Church.**]” **Daniel 7:8-10, 21-22, 26**, amplification and comments in brackets added.

3. *And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a*

and abolish true divine services, namely, the exercises of faith, struggling with [unbelief and] despair [concerning the promise of the Gospel].” **The Smalcald Articles, Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope.**44, *Triglotta*, p. 517.

¹⁴“To show His eternity, hair as white as wool is attributed to Him (Rev. 1:14). Compare Dan. 7:9, where it is said of the Father, ‘the Ancient of Days,’ that ‘the hair of His head was like pure wool.’ For this reason, Rupert comments very beautifully on Revelation 1: ‘The hairs of the head of both the former and the latter were equally white. Both are shown through the whiteness of their hair to be old men with no difference, because the Son is no younger than His Father, the old man, not by a year, not by a month, not by a day, not by an hour, not by a single moment of time.’” The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard, *Theological Commonplaces ... On the Person and Office of Christ.* tr. Richard J. Dinda, ed. and with annotations by Benjamin T. G. Mayes, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009, p. 50.

rainbow around about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

A. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: God the Father is an objective and absolute beauty in and of Himself to look upon. The Apostle St. John uses precious stones to approximate His Divine beauty. “Sardine”, “sardius”, is a precious stone reddish in color.¹⁵ Jasper is an opaque “quartz stained red, brown, green, yellow, etc. In ancient times included chalcedonies¹⁶ (Ex. 28:20; 39:13; Exe 28:13: Rv 4:3; 21:11, 18, 19).¹⁷ “Though the identification of these precious stones with modern equivalents is somewhat uncertain, ... the impression which they connote and reflect is unmistakable: even as light flashes through and from them with beauty and brilliance, so do the majesty and glory of God flash forth from the appearance of the One seated on the throne.”¹⁸

B. and there was a rainbow around about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald: The rainbow is a sign of peace from the days of Noah. “And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations”¹⁹ Green is a symbol of life. “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures”²⁰

4. *And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.*

A. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats [thrones²¹]: Just

¹⁵“**sardius** Deep-red or brownish-red carnelian (Ex. 28:17; 39:10).” *Concordia Bible Dictionary*, p. 120, s. v. “**sardius**”.

¹⁶“a precious stone found at *Chalkedon*, a Greek town in Asia Minor.] a cryptocrystalline, translucent variety quartz, having a luster nearly like wax. It is usually grayish or milky colored and comprises onyx, agate, sard, cat’s eye, jasper, carnelian, and chrysoprase; also written *calcedony*.” *Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary*, p. 300, s.v. “**chalcedony**”.

¹⁷*Concordia Bible Dictionary*, p. 71, s. v. “**jasper**”.

¹⁸The Rev. Dr. Louis Brighton, *Revelation*, p. 114.

¹⁹**Genesis 9:11-12.**

²⁰**Psalms 23:2.**

²¹The Greek has “thronous”, thrones.

as the Throne of the Father expresses authority and power, so do these thrones. These thrones are subordinate authority and power issuing from the Throne of the Father. This authority is the authority to preach the Gospel. “Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain they are retained.” **St. John 20:21-23**. The Office of the Gospel, therefore, is a Divine Office and in close proximity to the Father and the heart of heaven, reflecting its gravity and importance. Because such duties are Divinely commanded and, therefore, are a Divine Office, God calls men “gods” who carry out these duties commanded by God. “**I have said, Ye are gods [Psalm 86.2]**, He Himself has clothed them with their official dignity, they are never to forget that they are His representatives.”²² And while it might seem rather striking for Christians to be seated next to the Father, this intimate relationship and high honor comes through the Son and His Work on our behalf through the Gospel. “At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.” **St. John 16:26-27**. “But so great is the Father’s love which has been evoked by the love of the believers in Christ and by their firm belief that He came into the world to reveal the Father, to be His Ambassador, that the Father will deal directly with His children and will grant their prayers.”²³

B. and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting: Elder is the ruling office in the Church, the pastor. “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” **I Timothy 5:17**. “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed ...” **I Peter 5:1**. “[In our Confession and Apology we have in general recounted what we have had to say concerning ecclesiastical power. For] The Gospel assigns to those who *preside* (Latin: praesunt: ‘to be before’; The Vulgate likewise uses ‘praesesse’ throughout, except in I Timothy 3:4 where it uses “‘praepositum’, ‘to be placed before’. German: ‘vorstehen,’ ‘to administer, to manage, to direct’) over the churches the command to teach the Gospel, to remit sins, to administer the Sacraments, and besides jurisdiction, namely, the command to excommunicate those whose crimes are known, and again to absolve

²²The Rev. Dr. P. E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary on the Old Testament, The Poetical and the Prophetical Books*, Vol. II, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1924, p. 146, amplification in brackets added.

²³The Rev. Dr. P. E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary on the New Testament*, Vol. I, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921, p. 501.

those who repent. ... And by the confession of all, even of the adversaries, it is clear that this power by divine right is common to all who *preside* ('praesunt', 'vorstehen') over churches, whether they are called pastors, or elders, or bishops."²⁴ And because the Office of Pastor is a public office, the presence of the elders (pastors) in this passage from Revelation reflects the presence of all Christians with the Father and their royal standing and ruling office because each and every Christians is a priest²⁵ before God. On the Office of Pastor being a public office and, therefore, representing all Christians, the Lutheran Church confesses: "In addition to this, it is necessary to acknowledge that the keys belong not to the person of one particular man, but the Church, as many most clear and firm arguments testify. For Christ, speaking concerning the keys, Matt. 18, 19: *If two or three of you shall agree on earth*, etc. Therefore he grants the keys principally and immediately to the Church, just as also for this reason the Church has principally the right of calling. [For just as the promise of the Gospel belongs certainly and immediately to the entire Church, so the keys are nothing else than the office whereby this promise is communicated to every one who desires it, just as it is actually manifest that the Church has the power to ordain ministers of the Church. And Christ speaks in these words: *Whatsoever ye shall bind*, etc., and indicates to whom He has given the keys, namely, to the Church: *Where two or three are gathered together in My name*. Likewise Christ gives supreme and final jurisdiction to the Church, when He says: *Tell it unto the Church*.]"²⁶ Pastors, therefore, are public servants who serve the people with the Gospel and because they administer the Church's Treasure, i.e. the Gospel, they are also accountable to the people. Jesus teaches the proper understanding of public service, culminating in Himself, the Greatest Public Officer ever, serving the people through the Greatest Public Office ever, the Gospel: "But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." **St. Matthew 20:25-28**. The pastor is called a minister or servant because the Office of Priest is above that of the pastor and the pastor gets his authority from them. "But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal

²⁴The Smalcald Articles: Of the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops.60, 61, *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 521, emphasis and amplification added.

²⁵**I Peter 2:9**.

²⁶The Smalcald Articles: Of the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops.24, *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 411, underscore added.

priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” **I Peter 2:9**. The Apostle St. Paul writes: “Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? ... Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come a;; are yours.” **I Corinthians 3:5, 21-22**. The 24 elders, then, are the Church’s public officers representing there at the Throne of the Father, indicating that it is the Church, namely, all Christians, present at the Throne of the Father.²⁷ *Hence, we can see why the Church has such great power because through the Gospel it operates in the same heavenly sphere as God the Father Himself.*

The number 24: 24 is produced by the number 12 doubled. Twelve reminds us of the twelve tribes of Israel, from which nation the Messiah descended, and two (twice) reminds us of the superabundant blessings of the Gospel. “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.” **Isaiah 40:1-2**, underscore added. “On the other hand, the Gospel brings consolation and remission, not only in one way, but through the Word and Sacraments, and the like, as we shall hear afterward in order that [thus] there is *with the Lord plenteous redemption*, as Ps. 130, 7 says, against the dreadful captivity of sin.”²⁸

C. clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold:

White raiment reflects the purity of the Gospel and faith. “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” **Isaiah 1:18**. Crowns of gold reflects the royalty of the priesthood of all believers. “But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” **I Peter 2:9**, underscore added.

5. *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God:*

A. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices:

²⁷“We must regard them as representatives of the Church.” The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt, *Lectures on the Revelation of St. John*, tr. the Rev. H. W. Degner, Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1981, p. 19.

²⁸The Smalcald Articles, Part III. Article III. Of Repentance.8, *Triglotta*, p. 481, underscore added.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” **Proverbs 1:7**. Thunder, lightnings, and voices, remind us God has the power in the natural realm and amongst the multitudinous ranks of angels and men (hence voices) to enforce His Will. Wisdom begins with the understanding, the obvious understanding, that the Almighty has the will and ability to carry out what He teaches and says.

B. and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God: The Seven Spirits of God are the Holy Spirit and His gifts to men. “And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge of the fear of the LORD” **Isaiah 11:2**. “To the Spirit, who rests upon him, are given seven names that designate the Spirit’s various gifts and powers. On the basis of this passage the church speaks of a Spiritus septiformis [Sevenfold Spirit]. Accordingly, the prophecy of Zechariah, 4,6.10, and Rev 1,4; 3,1; 4,5; 5,6 speak of the seven eyes of the seven Spirits of God, that is, of the Spirit of God in the diversity of his gifts, powers, and activities. ... What we read here in V. 2 points to the work which the Messiah performs in the power of God’s Spirit during his visible, lowly appearing on earth. The kingly rule of the Exalted One is first discussed from V. 3 on. And so the New Testament then testifies that David’s Son Jesus Christ, who was conceived and born by the power of the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary was anointed beyond measure with the Spirit of God, that the Spirit of God was already with the boy Jesus, that then at the baptism, when he was to be revealed to Israel, the Spirit of God descended upon him in visible form, and that he, anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, went about doing good. Acts 10, 38. In all his life and activity on earth Christ displayed the Spirit’s gifts and powers. His entire life was submission to God, fear, love, and obedience. He preached with power and not as the scribes, he revealed to the immature the mysteries of God and showed them the right way of God. He counseled and helped his people in all their needs and delivered them from their direst afflictions, Through suffering and death he redeemed Israel from all its sins.”²⁹

The manifold gifts and works of the Spirit the prophet Isaiah takes earlier from the teachings of the Lord through Solomon. “Wisdom[s]³⁰ hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars” **Proverbs 9:1**. Solomon writes “Wisdoms” in the plural because he is referring the Sevenfold gifts of the Spirit.³¹

²⁹*Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, pp. 119, 120, amplification in brackets added.

³⁰The Hebrew has the plural *chachemoth*. **Proverbs 8** has *chachmah*, singular, because there it refers to Christ, God’s Wisdom.

³¹Luther: “The apostles and martyrs were like this when they were drunk with the Holy

And the pillars established by the Spirit are the Church through the Gospel. “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the LORD. In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.” **Ephesians 2:20-22.**

Wisdom³²: The Holy Spirit is active in Christ’s redemptive work because **A.** He is Christ’s Spirit because Christ is God³³ and **B.** because the Holy Spirit rests upon Him, the Savior. And the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Wisdom because He is Christ’s Spirit; and Christ is God’s Wisdom.³⁴ Wisdom is the wholesome and

Spirit. For a vine is very choice, and concerning it Wisdom says in Prov. 9:5: ‘Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Then you will drink and become drunk, but with spiritual drunkenness.’ ... Thus I understand this passage to mean that in Christ and in the time of Christ we must become drunk on the abundance of His house (cf. Ps. 36:8); that is, we are to receive the Holy Spirit from the Word and hearing.” *Luther's Works*, Vol. 8, p. 249.

It should also be noted that while the subject, *Chachemoth* [Wisdoms], is plural, the verb *banethah* is in the singular and reflects the singularity of the Person of the Holy Spirit.

³²The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: “‘Ruah habhemah’ is the Spirit of wisdom, the ‘sophia’ which inquires into the essence of things, also the depths of the Godhead.” *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

³³“according to His divinity, He is of one essence with the Holy Ghost” *The Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, VIII. Of the Person of Christ.* 72, 73, 74, *Triglotta*, p. 1041.

³⁴The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard writes: “With this passage of Proverbs 8 I also compare the other passages of Scripture in which creation is attributed to the Wisdom of God. Prov. 3:19-20: ‘The Lord founded the earth in Wisdom; in understanding He established the heavens. Through His Wisdom the abysses were divided and the clouds drop down the dew.’ Ps. 104:24: ‘You have made all things in Wisdom.’ Jer. 10:12: ‘It is God who established the world in His Wisdom and in His prudence stretched out the heavens .’ *On the Nature of God and On the Most Holy Mystery of the Trinity*, tr. Richard J. Dinda, ed. and annotated by Benjamin T. J. Mayes, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007, p. 379. Dr. Gerhard continues: “It is clear that this Wisdom is the hypostatic Second Person of the Deity, the Son of God. This is clear not only from the New Testament (Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:35; 11:49; I Cor. 1:24; Col. 2:3) but also from Proverbs 8, where He is set forth to us as a person distinct from the Father before the creation of the world, that is, as begotten by Him from eternity, as well as from Ps. 2:7 and Prov. 30:4, where this Wisdom is called “the Son of God.” *ibid.* p. 379. “Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) has rightly been classified the ‘third preeminent theologian after Luther and Chemnitz.’ ... However, while Gerhard is best remembered for his great dogmatics, the *Loci Theologici*, Gerhard produced a number of devotional volumes and preach [sic] many sermons to the ‘common man.’

useful application of knowledge.³⁵ Certainly, it was wholesome and useful of knowledge when God created us in the beginning. And it is certainly the wholesome and application of knowledge when the Holy Spirit presses His infinite knowledge into the redemption of mankind from sin. The Spirit of Wisdom rebuilds a right relationship between God in man through Christ our Savior and, thereby, re-creates man unto life eternal with God. The Holy Spirit, therefore, is the Spirit of Wisdom because He presses His knowledge into the useful and wholesome work of saving men from sin and granting them eternal life.

Understanding³⁶: The Holy Spirit has discernment and knowledge of creation because He is God. With this keen understanding, the Holy Spirit is active in Christ Our Savior to restore His creation, man, to the Image of God and a right relationship with God and, thereby, give man eternal life.

And the Holy Spirit is fully capable of carrying out the difficult and complex work of restoring the relationship between God and fallen man because He is the Almighty God and Creator of man, who is able to search out and discern the deep things of God and man³⁷ and understand everything about man and his broken relationship with God and how to sort the matter out for his salvation and restore an right and eternal relationship.

Counsel³⁸: The Holy Spirit that rests upon Christ and is active in Him in the redemption of the world is the Spirit of Counsel. This Spirit is the same Holy

The sermons in this volume were apparently preached when Gerhard was 31 years old and already superintendent at Heldburg and a Doctor of Divinity.” **Foreword** from *Seven Christmas Sermons*.

³⁵“the faculty of making the best use of knowledge, experience, understanding, etc.; good judgment; sagacity.” *Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary*, p. 2099, s.v. “wisdom”.

³⁶The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: “And the ‘ruah Biynah’ is the Spirit of understanding or insight, which understands the distinction of things.” *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

³⁷“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” **I Corinthians 2:11**.

³⁸The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: “The Spirit’s second double name, ‘the Spirit of counsel and might’, points back to the double name given the Messiah; ‘Counsellor,’ ‘mighty God’. 9,6. He who is called ‘Counsellor’ and the ‘mighty God’, he who is anointed with the Spirit of counsel and might knows what to do when his people are in dire need and gives counsel and brings his people the long-awaited redemption.” *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

Spirit who counseled with the Father and the Son in the beginning to create man in the Image of God.³⁹ And so, it is not surprising to see the Holy Spirit in conjunction with the Father and the Son active in counsel to restore in man after the fall the Image of God through Christ Our Savior and, thereby, give man eternal life. The Rev. Dr. John Gerhard writes: The reason why this Child [Jesus], this Son, is also called **Counselor** is that He, in counsel with [the other Persons of] Holy Trinity, helped reach the conclusion of how fallen mankind could be helped again. The unending righteousness of God was offended by the Fall of Adam. Now then, there was only an unending payment required, which neither angel nor man could provide. Therefore there was no counsel either in heaven or upon earth. Thus, the Son of God, the eternal Wisdom, came up with the counsel that He would volunteer Himself as Mediator and Redeemer, that He especially in the fullness of time wanted to take into Himself human nature and within it make payment for us men.⁴⁰

³⁹Luther: “*Let Us make man according to Our image and likeness.* Here again Moses employs a new expression. He does not say: ‘Let the sea be set in motion,’ ‘Let the earth bring forth herbs,’ or ‘Let it bring forth.’ He says: ‘Let us make.’ Therefore he includes an obvious deliberation and plan; he did nothing similar in the case of the earlier creatures. There, without any deliberation and counsel, He said: ‘Let the sea be put in motion,’ ‘Let the earth produce,’ etc. But here, when He wants to create man, God summons Himself to a council and announces some sort of deliberation. Therefore, in the first place, there is indicated here an outstanding difference between man and all the other creatures. ... But here Moses points out an outstanding difference between these living beings and man when he says that man as created by the special plan and providence of God. This indicates that man is a creature far superior to the rest of the living beings that live a physical life, especially since as yet his nature not become depraved. Epicurus holds the opinion that man as created solely to eat and drink. But this is equivalent to making no difference between man and the rest of the beasts, which also have their desires and follow them. Here the text definitely sets man apart when it says that in a special deliberation God gave consideration to the creation of man, and not only that but also to making him in the image of God. This image is something far different from the concern of the belly, namely, food and drink, things for which the beasts also have understanding and appreciation.” *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 55, 56.

⁴⁰*Seven Christmas Sermons*, pp. 75, 76. “Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) has rightly been classified the ‘third preeminent theologian after Luther and Chemnitz.’ ... However, while Gerhard is best remembered for his great dogmatics, the *Loci Theologici*, Gerhard produced a number of devotional volumes and preach many sermons to the ‘common man.’ The sermons in this volume were apparently preached when Gerhard was 31 years old and already superintendent at Heldburg and a Doctor of Divinity.” **Foreword** from *Seven Christmas Sermons*.

Might⁴¹: The Holy Spirit obviously possesses might and power because He is the Almighty God. In Christ, the Holy Spirit presses His Almighty power into the infinite and eternal task of establishing human righteousness pleasing to God so that once again God will dwell with man, and that forever. The fact that the Holy Spirit is Almighty is comforting because we, know that the Holy Spirit is not only willing but also *able* to effect our sanctification pleasing to God and, thereby, our salvation.

Knowledge⁴²: The Holy Spirit possesses knowledge because He is the all-knowing God, fully capable of sorting out man's situation, dire need, and reestablishing human righteousness pleasing to God on earth that delivers man from his doom into life eternal.

Fear of the Lord⁴³: The Holy Spirit establishes in Christ proper fear of the Lord, i.e. respecting the Lord to keep and fulfill His promises to bless righteousness and punish sin. In the Garden of Eden Adam failed to fear the Lord; he instead took the Lord for a joke and disobeyed His Word, figuring God would not carry out His promise that Adam would die. The Holy Spirit, however, working through and in the Redeemer properly fashions human righteousness that does what man was originally supposed to do: Fear the Lord, i.e. take seriously God and His Word.

⁴¹The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: "The Spirit's second double name, 'the Spirit of counsel and might', points back to the double name given the Messiah; 'Counsellor,' 'mighty God'. 9,6. He who is called 'Counsellor' and the 'mighty God', he who is anointed with the Spirit of counsel and might knows what to do when his people are in dire need and gives counsel and brings his people the long-awaited redemption." *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

⁴²The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: "The last-named pair refers to the direct relationship of the Son of David to God and his conduct toward God. ... [The knowledge of the LORD] ... is 'knowledge grounded in love-fellowship', and [fear of the LORD] is 'fear of the Lord given in adoration'." *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

⁴³The Rev. Dr. George Stoeckhardt writes: "The last-named pair refers to the direct relationship of the Son of David to God and his conduct toward God. ... [The knowledge of the LORD] ... is 'knowledge grounded in love-fellowship', and [fear of the LORD] is 'fear of the Lord given in adoration'." *Isaiah: The First Twelve Chapters*, p. 119.

6. *And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beast full of eyes before and behind.*

A. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: In glory is a crystalline sea. It is a smooth sea because there is no turbulence of God's wrath in glory because Christ has already led us beside still waters through the Gospel (**Psalm 23:2**).⁴⁴ It is crystalline because is pure and sound through and through, of utmost integrity and firm foundation man's eternal existence. This glimpse of glory reveals again to us the Power, Purity, Soundness, and utter Integrity of the Gospel, of God's Word and Sacraments, to provide us with a sound, firm, and sure eternal home. While the world despises their humility, they are, indeed, the Power of God unto salvation (**Romans 1:16**) and provides us with an eternal and firm foundation with God. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."⁴⁵

B. And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes. Actually, St. John writes, "living creatures" and not beasts.⁴⁶ These living creatures indicates God's kingdom of power. "C. As my *King*, Christ with His almighty power *rules over all creatures, governs and protects His*

⁴⁴"The sea that is before God's heavenly throne has been tamed, conquered, and stilled. *Its crystal-like stillness reminded John that what had separated him from the glory of God's presence, the turmoil of his sin and God's judgment, is not stilled and quiet.*" The Rev. Dr. Louis Brighton, *Revelation*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999, p. 122, italics original.

⁴⁵**I Corinthians 3:11.**

⁴⁶"Rev. 4:6 KJV; better translated 'four living ones.' 'Beasts' – a different Greek word from that in Rev. 11:7; 13:1 – is an unfortunate word in this passage for our modern English-speaking world. John Wyclif used it in this passage in 1380, in the first English Bible. It was perpetuated in the KJV. Most modern English translations use the expression 'living creatures.'" The Rev. Luther Poellet, *Revelation*, p. 76, footnote 15.

The Greek word St. John uses is "zoia", which derives from the verb "zoon" to live. We get our word "zoo" from this Greek word. Hence, a better translation would not be beast but rather, simply, "living creatures".

As Poellet has noted, beast is used elsewhere in **Revelation**, but that refers to evil powers. The Greek word used is "thayrion", which means "(wild) animal, beast". *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Walter Bauer, tr. William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, Second Edition revised and augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979, p. 361, s. v. **thayrion, ou, to**.

Church, and finally leads it to glory. ³³¹ All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Matt. 28:18. (The Kingdom of Power. – All creatures.)⁴⁷ The plenitude of eyes indicates God's omniscience, namely, even though it is His kingdom of power, it is not bereft of God's presence and knowledge and not merely material matter. God's omnipotence and omniscience and pressed into the Service of building His Church (**Psalm 2**⁴⁸) because the living creatures are quintessentially coordinate at the Throne of God with the 24 elders and sing God's praises.

7. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

A. And the first beast was like a lion: Again, these living creatures represent God's Kingdom of Power wherein He rules all things. A lion indicates strength wisely applied in every respect at all times.

B. and the second beast like a calf: A calf indicates tenderness and suppleness. God's Almighty Power is not brutish and overpowering, but always and ever is applied where it should be in the precise, wholesome, and edifying measure it should be at all times.

C. and the third beast had a face as a man: The face of a man indicates intelligence and reminds us that, contrary to the modern materialistic philosophers (e.g. Charles Darwin [biology, materialistic determinism applied to life itself]), Karl Marx [materialistic determinism applied to economics], August Comte, the father of sociology [materialistic determinism applied to man's behavior vis-a-vis his fellow men], Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis [materialistic

⁴⁷*The Small Catechism*, p. 108, question 132 C. "While Scripture does not explicitly affirm those interpretations of the faces, there is biblical evidence that the *number* of the winged creatures is symbolic. Four suggest the totality of God's animate creation, 'the four corners of the earth' (Rev. 7:1; 20:8). ... *The winged creatures are, properly, representatives of God's total creation in worship before his heavenly throne* (see 5:13-14). The fact that they are full of eyes suggest that God in his 'ceaseless vigilance' ... oversees his creation as it is represented by the four winged creatures." Brighton, *Revelation*, p. 127.

⁴⁸"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth." **Psalm 2:7-10**.

determinism applied to the core of man's being)]⁴⁹, these forces of creation [they would say "nature"] are not inanimate material only but material directed and governed by the Intelligent Being who is God. Modern materialist philosophers posit no organizing intelligence behind creation ("nature"). Other philosophers have tried to bring into relief this obvious fallacy by explaining "nature" and its obvious organization with the expression "intelligent design". These "intelligent design" philosophers counter by saying intelligence manifestly lies behind the material or inanimate world because it is organized, well and precisely organized, and well regulated. The proverb "Every house that is built is built by some man."⁵⁰ applies here and reminds us where something has been built there must be a builder. Likewise, the ancient proverb that only a fool says there is no God⁵¹ also applies because it is folly to say an organization, which creation ("nature") is, has no organizer. Who but a fool, i.e. an irrational man, would posit something so irrational and illogical, i.e. something that does not logically follow from the fact that there is an organization, as there be an organization and no organizer? Evolution is the quintessential non-sequitur, i.e., something which does not "follow" from that which goes before it. St. John reminds us with the figure of the face of a man on one of the living creatures that behind the material world lies the Intelligence Who is God to create, organize, and direct as He wishes, this fact especially evident in the *Imago Dei* and man governing God's earthly creation as the crown of His earthly creation.⁵² Francis Pieper writes: "The so-called 'laws of nature' are not something which differs from God's will and operation, but are God's will and operation itself in its relation to the existence and operation of the creatures."⁵³

⁴⁹The materialistic philosophers believed man to be merely a bundle of atoms (the material or matter) and nothing more. Man's behavior, therefore, because he is nothing but a bundle of "billiard balls", as it were, could be predicted with the precision of Newtonian physics.

⁵⁰**Hebrews 3:4.**

⁵¹**Psalm 14:1.**

⁵²"This is one of the Bible's strongest and most direct passages that give the lie to all man-made theories of the origin of the universe. The universe did not simply 'happen.' It is a product of God's creative will, which is so powerful that when it found expression God simply said: 'Let there be ...' – 'and there was ...!' (Gen. 1:3). Rev. 4:11 carries us back to the word 'create' in Gen. 1:1. All created things received their existence by the will of God. 'Create' in Gen. 1:1, then, means to call into existence out of nothing." The Rev. Dr. Luther Poellet, *Revelation*, p. 80.

⁵³The Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 489.

D. and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle: A flying eagle indicates swift acuity. God is omnipresent and, therefore, effecting His will everywhere all the time. The acuity or sharpness of the eagle indicates He carries out this work out with absolute precision all the time every where.

8. *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

A. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him: Again, these living creatures represent God's Kingdom of Power. The wings indicate swiftness and remind us that God is present everywhere, His *omnipresence*.⁵⁴

B. and they were full of eyes within: The eyes remind us that God is *omniscience*, namely, that He sees and knows all things.⁵⁵ Hence, the prophet Daniel calls the Holy Trinity "the Watchers". "This matter *is* by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." **Daniel 4:17.**

C. and they rest not day and night: God never rests in His Kingdom of Power. He constantly, moment by moment, day and night, sustains and supports every last scintilla of life, down to the smallest, atom, electron, and quark, by His Word. "Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power" **Hebrews 1:3.** "Thy righteousness *is* like the great mountains; thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast." **Psalms 36:6.** "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" **Acts 17:38.**⁵⁶

⁵⁴"E. *Omnipresent* (present everywhere); ³⁷ Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I *fill heaven and earth*? saith the Lord. *Jer. 23:24.*" *The Small Catechism*, p. 48.

⁵⁵"D. *Omniscient* (all-knowing); ³⁵ O Lord, Thou hast searched me and *known me*, Thou *knowest my down sitting* and mine *uprising*. Thou understandest my *thought afar off*. Thou compassest my path and my lying down and *art acquainted with all my ways*. For there is not a word in my tongue but, lo, O Lord, *Thou knowest it altogether*. *Ps. 139:1-4.*" *The Small Catechism*, p. 47.

⁵⁶"**GOD STILL PRESERVES ME AND ALL CREATURES. 116. What does God still do for you and all creatures?** He still *preserves* me and all creatures. ²⁶⁸ O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast. *Ps. 36:6.* ²⁶⁹ [He upholds] all things by the word of His power. *Heb.*

D. saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come: The splendid quality of God's creation like a well-oiled machine, to put it crudely, exhibits God's great power, craftsmanship, skill, and wisdom and by the exhibition of His abilities sings His praises. "The *heavens declare* the glory of God, and *the firmament showeth* His handiwork." **Psalm 19:1.**

9. *And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,*

Again, these living creatures obviously honor God because they are His Kingdom of Power and they respond to every Glorious Wish and Will of God, which Wish and Will are wonderful, delightful, and glorious, i.e. worthy of renown, in every respect, especially because, as we've seen, God also plies His Kingdom of Power into the Service of the Gospel and the Church in every respect.

10. *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship; him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*

Here creation and man again are in perfect harmony through the Gospel. For the elders represent the Church, the Office of the Gospel. The Gospel brings man back into harmony with God. And now that man is back in harmony with God, creation is also in harmony with man. Formerly disharmony was brought into creation because of the fall of man. The Apostle St. Paul writes: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body." **Romans 8:20-23.** But now that the Gospel has reconciled God to man and brought harmony between God and man, all of creation sings God's praises because God, man, and all of creation are now in perfect harmony.

11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure thy are and were created.*

A. Thou art worthy, O Lord to receive glory and honour and power: God is **worthy**, i.e. it is owed or coming to Him, to receive glory, honor, and power because He has *earned* it by the spectacular achievements He has accomplished,

1:13." *The Small Catechism*, p. 97.

namely, His wonderful earthly creation, the crown of which is man⁵⁷, created in the Image of God, i.e. created, unlike any other earthly creature, to know *Who* God is, namely, the Holy Trinity, and to have a close personal relationship with the Holy Trinity. This rarefied air is status without peer. Who could ever begin to consider such a relationship? But man enjoys this because he was created in the Image of God and through God's Pure and Undeserving Grace Redeemed in the Image of Grace through the Gospel of Christ and Him Crucified for the sins of men.

B. glory: Glory means renown. What is God renowned for? After man's fall into sin, God is renowned His Mercy in Christ and Him Crucified for the sins of all men. God's Mercy in Christ brings His creation, disrupted with disharmony the devil and man, into harmony through His Great Mercy in Christ and Him Crucified for the sins of all men.

⁵⁷“Man exercised dominion over the creatures. That was in immediate consequence of possessing the divine image, for we read: ‘Let Us make man Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion,’ (Gen. 1:26-28) It was a real dominion; willingly all creatures rendered man service. ... ¹⁰Luther: ‘Adam and Eve are made rulers of the earth, the sea, and the air. This dominion is committed to them not only by the counsel of God, but also by an express mandate So, then, the naked man, without arms and walls, yea, without any garments, ruled in his bare body over all birds, beasts, and fishes Who can understand this part of the divine nature (if we may use this expression) that Adam and Eve understood and knew all about the senses, nature, and powers of all the animals? For they could have exercised no rule if they had not know these things If we would therefore speak of a great and excellent philosopher, let us speak of our first parents when they were yet free from sin They also had a sure knowledge of the stars and of all astronomy. What we accomplish in our life is accomplished through industry and art, not by that dominion, which Adam had. For we see that birds and fishes are caught by cunning tricks; the beast are tamed by our skill. For those animals which are most domesticated, like geese and hens, are by their nature wild animals. Hence, even our leprous body, by the grace of God, has some show of a dominion over the other creatures. But it is very paltry and far inferior to that dominion in which there was no need of art and cunning, where the animals simply obeyed the divine voice and Adam and Eve were commanded to rule over them. So we now retain the mere name and word of dominion or the bare title; the matter itself has been completely lost. And yet it is good to know and think of these things, so that we may long for that day in which all the things which we have lost in Paradise shall be restored to us. For we look for that life which Adam also had been expecting. And well indeed may we wonder and render thanks unto God that we, so deformed by sin, so dull, so stupefied, so dead, as it were, should be enabled through the merits of Christ to look for that same glory of a spiritual life which Adam would have looked forward to if he had remained in the earthly life which possessed the image of God.’” The Rev. Dr. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 522.

C. honour: Honor means accolades rightly and just earned. God has earned these accolades because He paid a Great Price through the Cross of Christ to harmonize Himself with fallen man and to bring all of creation into harmony. For example, the Virgin St. Mary speaks of her soul magnifying the Lord. But how can St. Mary’s soul magnify, i.e. make great or greater, the Lord when God is Almighty and Everywhere Present? St. Mary’s soul magnifies the Lord not according to His Almighty Power expressed in His Kingdom of Power, i.e. creation, but rather through adding to the praises of His Kingdom created by His winning hearts through the Gospel. The Virgin St. Mary sings in her *Magnificat*⁵⁸: “My soul doth magnify the Lord” The Lutheran Church confesses: For they first say this, namely, that *the name of the Lord will be great*. This is accomplished by the preaching of the Gospel. For through this the name of Christ is made known, and the mercy of the Father, promised in Christ is recognized. The preaching of the Gospel produces faith in those who receive the Gospel. They call upon God, they give thanks to God, they bear afflictions for their confession, they produce good works for the glory of Christ. Thus the name of the Lord becomes great among the Gentiles.⁵⁹ Luther writes: “For God is not magnified by us so far as His nature is concerned – He is unchangeable – but He is magnified in our knowledge and experience when we greatly esteem Him and highly regard Him, especially as to His grace and goodness.”⁶⁰

D. power: Power? How is God worthy of all power? Doesn’t God have all power already because He is the Almighty? Indeed, God does, but God lacked, so to speak, the power of the ranks of man because of man’s defection from Him because of sin. But through the Gospel of Christ and Him Crucified for the sins of men to redeem men from their sins, He has *earned* the vast powers of the ranks of men from the beginning of time, down through the ages, and across the globe. The Apostle St. Peter states: “To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” **Acts 10:43**. The Lutheran Church confesses: But Peter also here cites in our issue the consensus of the Church: *To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name, whosoever believeth in Him, shall receive remission of sins*, etc. The consensus of the prophets is assuredly to be judged as the consensus of the Church universal. [I verily think that if all the holy prophets are unanimously agreed in a declaration (since God regards even a single prophet as an inestimable

⁵⁸The title *Magnificat* comes from opening of this canticle in Latin: “*Magnificat* (magnifies) *anima* (soul) *mea* (my) *Dominum* (Lord)”, i.e. “My soul magnifies the Lord.”

⁵⁹*The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV. (XII).*32,

⁶⁰*Luther’s Works*, Vol. 21, p. 307.

treasure), it would also to be a decree, a declaration, and a unanimous strong conclusion of the universal, catholic, Christian, holy Church, and would be justly regarded as such.] We concede neither to the Pope nor to the Church the power to make decrees against the consensus of the prophets.⁶¹ Through the Gospel God has added to His Kingdom the vast numbers of the saints across the globe down through the ages endowed with the Power of the Almighty through the Gospel (**Romans 1:16**).

E. for thou hast created all things: He who Sits on the Throne, i.e. God the Father – and along with Him the Son and the Holy Ghost – alone deserves this honor and praise because He alone is the Creator. “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.”⁶² “**105. Why do you here call the First Person of the Trinity ‘the Father’?** I call Him the Father because He is the *Father of my Lord Jesus Christ* and also *my Father*”²⁴² I ascend unto *My Father* and *your Father* and to *My God* and *your God*. *John 20:17*.²⁴³ Have we not *all one Father*? Hath not on God *created us*? *Mal. 2:10* [God the Father is the Father of all men because He created all. But He is not the Father of all because not all accept His Son, Jesus Christ and Him Crucified for their sins and the sins of the entire world, but reject Him and, thereby, reject God the Father from being their Father and their God.]”⁶³

“The church fathers were correct when, in the ancient creeds of faith, they⁶⁴ put as the First Article that which confesses God the Father and his work of creation. This was followed immediately by the Second Article, concerning Christ’s redemptive work. For creation came first and then, after its fall, the

⁶¹*The Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, Article XII.[V].66, 67, *Triglotta*, p. 271, **Acts 10:43**.

⁶²**The Nicene Creed**, *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 22.

⁶³*The Small Catechism*, pp. 92, 93.

⁶⁴Perhaps a little more precisely, the Church Fathers reproducing the teachings of the Apostles and, therefore, Christ Himself. “The foundation of the Apostles’ Creed was, in a way, laid by Christ Himself when He commissioned His disciples, saying, Matt. 28, 19, 20: ‘Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.’ ... there is no sufficient reason why the apostles themselves should not have been instrumental in its formulation, nor why, with the exception of a number of minor later additions, its original form should not have been essentially what it is to-day.” The Rev. Dr. F. Bente, **Historical Introductions to the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church**, in *Concordia Triglotta*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921, p. 10.

redemption wrought by Christ. The first could not remain without the second. So also John *first* sees and hears and reports the praise of God the Creator and *then*, as he continues to relate this inaugural vision of God's heavenly glory (in chapter 5), he describes the enthronement of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ."⁶⁵

F. *and for thy pleasure thy are and were created:* "The last part of Rev. 4:11 is easily misunderstood in the KJV: 'For Thy pleasure they are and were created.' The meaning is not that creation was intended to give God pleasure, or make Him happy, but rather that all things came into existence *by the will* of God."⁶⁶ The Greek, as Dr. Poellet has noted, actually reads, "for Thou hast created all things and through Thy will they were and were created."⁶⁷

⁶⁵The Rev. Dr. Louis Brighton, *Revelation*, p. 129.

⁶⁶The Rev. Dr. Luther Poellet, *Revelation*, p. 80.

⁶⁷**Revelation 4:11**, translation is mine.