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AN EXAMINATION OF OSIANDER'S "IMAGO DEI"
IN ITS RELATION TO JUSTIFICATION

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Systematic Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity

by
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May, 1949

Approved by:

W. G. Meyer
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Outline

Introductory Remarks: The purpose of this paper is to solve the problem - Does Osiander teach justification as a process which makes man righteous, or does he teach justification as a forensic act?

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 - b. Christ is not the "first man", but the "second man".
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- C. His identification of justification with sanctification.
 1. Osiander identified justification with sanctification, in that he considered justification as a gradual and progressive process.
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 - a. To justify means to declare righteous.
 - b. Justification depends upon a faith, which receives the merits of Christ's active and passive obedience.

- c. The Scriptural usage of faith is trust in Christ.
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 - c. The divine nature alone without the human could not be our righteousness.
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- E. His conception of the means of grace and the mystical union.
- 1. Osiander held that the means of grace served to unite us with Christ's humanity (mystical union), so that we might be capable of the righteousness of the divine nature of Christ, which makes us just by its indwelling.
 - 2. Against his teaching Scripture testifies that:
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 - c. The mystical union is not only with Christ, but with the Triune God.
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I. Introduction

The doctrine of justification by faith has always been for me the most interesting teaching of the entire Scripture. Already as a boy when I attended my father's confirmation class, the beauty and the importance of this great truth encouraged me to search even deeper into the study of the Bible. Several years later I entered Concordia College, Ft. Wayne to prepare for the ministry. Here again the love of this sacred doctrine continued, bringing with it many questions. Many of these questions, I am sorry to say, were left unanswered, because of the lack of sufficient time to concentrate upon them.

As I continued my theological studies at the Seminary, I decided to devote some of my time to a more thorough study of this central article of faith, in order to find the explanations to these unanswered questions. The apparent solution to them came, as I was attending a class lecture on Romans in Biblical Theology. While discussing Romans 3,28, the instructor mentioned the name of one of the most complete treatises on justification by faith, Dr. Preuss's Die Rechtfertigung des Suenders Vor Gott. This book immediately interested me, and without delay I purchased a copy for my library.

From this time on my spare moments were devoted to an intensive study of this book, checking all the footnotes, especially the proof texts. After I had completed the examination of this book, I went to the library and looked

up other works written upon this subject. As I read these different treatises, one question constantly appeared: What is the righteousness of God, which is imputed to us when we are justified by faith?

Since this problem always was the motive for a more exhaustive study of this doctrine, I decided to make it the subject of this research paper. A few days later I consulted with Dr. Mayer, who suggested a thorough examination of this teaching, based upon Article III of the Formula of Concord, which deals with the essence of the Righteousness of God. This article was written against Osiander, who contended that the righteousness of faith, which the apostle calls the righteousness of God, is God's essential righteousness, which is Christ Himself as the true, natural, and essential Son of God, who dwells in the elect by faith and impels them to do right and thus is their righteousness.¹ The problem which this thesis will try to solve is: Does Osiander really teach justification as a process which makes man righteous, or does he teach a forensic justification? His teaching of the righteousness of God in justification will be brought to light as we examine the central idea of his entire system, his peculiar view of the image of God.

1. "Formula of Concord" in Triglot Concordia, Art.III, p.917,6.

II. Osiander - His early history and doctrine.

The doctrine of justification has been called the chief doctrine with which the Christian doctrine and church rises or falls (*articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*).² It is the very heart and core of the Lutheran Reformation. The great Reformer once said: "This article concerning justification (as the Apology says) is the chief doctrine in the entire Christian doctrine, without which no poor conscience can have any firm consolation, or can truly know the riches of the grace of Christ,"³ and again "For if this article of justification is lost, then is the whole Christian doctrine at the same time also lost."⁴ In his Smalcald Articles he writes: "Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and whatever will not abide should sink to ruin... And upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the Pope, the devil, and the

2. Piper, Christliche Dogmatik, Vol. 2, p.617. "Zahlreich sind die Aussprueche, in denen die lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften, Luther und die lutherischen Lehrer den Artikel von der Rechtfertigung ein Summarium der ganzen Christlichen Lehre nennen oder fuer den Hauptartikel erklaren, mit dem die christliche Lehre und Kirche stehe und falle (*articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*).

3. F. Bente, "Historical Introduction" of the Triglot Concordia, p.917,6.

4. "Ausfuhrliche Erklarerung der Epistel an die Galater" in Walch, Luther's Saemelicke Schriften Vol. 9, p.24,19: "Denn wenn dieser Artikel von der Rechtfertigung verloran ist dann is auch zugleich die ganze christliche Lehre verloren."

world. Therefore we must be sure concerning this doctrine and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the Pope and devil and all things gain the victory and suit over us."⁵ Other great Lutheran theologians also stress the importance of this teaching. They with Luther call this article concerning justification by faith "a summary of the entire Christian doctrine".⁶

Since this doctrine is of such vital importance to the Christian faith, Luther often feared that this vital teaching would again be corrupted, as it was in the days before the Reformation. Martin Chemnitz remarked as he read Luther's writings, "I frequently shudder, because Luther -- I do not know by what kind of presentiment -- in his commentaries on the letter to the Galatians and on the first book of Moses, so often repeats the statement: "This doctrine (of justification) will be obscured again after my death".⁷

Andrew Osiander was the first to fulfill this prophecy of Luther. He was at one mind with Luther in the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith, but he interpreted in a mystical manner and construed his mystical view in a speculative way.⁸

In 1549 he began publicly to propound a doctrine in which he abandoned the forensic conception of justification by imputation of the merits of Christ, and

5. "Smalcald Articles" in the Triglot Concordia, pp. 461f, 5.

6. Piper, op. cit. p. 617.

7. Walther, Kern und Stern, 26 quoted in the Triglot

8. Concordia, p. 152. Entstehung der Lutherischen und der Reformierten Kirchenlehre, p. 491.

returned to the Roman view of justification by infusion, i.e., by infusion of the eternal righteousness of the divine nature of Christ.⁹ According to his own statement he is said to have held these views of justification ever since 1528 and presented them in a sermon delivered at the convention in Smalcaid in 1537. He, however, did not make any special effort to publicize his views during the life of Luther, but immediately after Luther's death, Osiander should have said, "Now that the lion is dead, I shall easily dispose of the foxes and the hares."¹⁰

Osiander is an important theologian in the history of the Lutheran Church. As a young priest appointed at the St. Lorenz Church (in the free city of Nuernberg), he entered immediately with great energy and determination in favor of the Reformation; from then on he stood constantly at Luther's side. In Nuernberg he was highly esteemed, taking part in the Marburg Colloquy in 1529, where he personally made his first acquaintances with the Wittenberg theologians, in the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, at Smalcaid in 1537, and in the Compromise Diet at Hagenau and Worms in 1540. Because of this great activity in behalf of the church he was known as the "Defender of the Lutheran Faith in Nuernberg."¹¹

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9. F. Bente, "Historical Introduction" in *op.cit.*, p. 152.
 10. Quoted in Planck, Geschichte der Protestantischen Religion, Vol. 4, p. 257: "Er sollte selbst nach Lutheers Tode einmahl oeffentlich gesagt haben, jetzt, da der loewe todt sei, wollte er mit den Haasen und Fuechsen leicht fertig werden".
Schluesselburg's Cat. haeret. LVI, p. 243.
 11. Tschackert, op.cit., p. 489 and 490.

When the Augsburg Interim was introduced in Nuernberg, Osiander resigned his position at the St. Lorenz church, and with great sorrow he left Nuernberg for Koenigsberg. On January 27, 1549 he arrived in Koenigsberg, where he was joyously received by Count Albrecht of Prussia, whom he had gained for the Reformation in 1523. Since this time Count Albrecht honored him as his "spiritual father". Moved now by gratitude toward Osiander, Count Albrecht appointed him as pastor of the Old City Church, and soon after, first professor of theology at the University of Koenigsberg, with double salary, although Osiander had never received an academic degree.¹² Immediately after Osiander began his duties at the University, he began to expound his mystical views on justification by faith. This was the beginning of the Osiandrian Controversy.

Much has been written concerning his views of justification. Some theologians, such as John Brenz and Matthew Vogel, consider his teaching a logomachy, that is that Osiander's teaching differed from the doctrine of the Lutheran Church in terms and phrases rather than in substance.¹³ Osiander seemed to hold the same meaning of justification as Luther, but he either did not fully understand Luther's concepts, or disregarded them altogether. This is brought out by his use of the term justification. The term, justificati~~on~~, according to its

12. Tschackert, op.cit., p.490; Triglot Concordia, p.153.

13. Bente, "Historical Introduction" in op.cit. p.154.

usage in Scripture (and by Luther) is nothing else "than to be declared righteous by God" and for this reason Osiander distinguished the act of man's justification carefully from his regeneration and sanctification. He carefully distinguished again the judicial sentence, through which he declared him for the sake of Christ free of all punishment and guilt from these results, through which his regeneration or change for the better has begun or continued.¹⁴ Osiander, on the other hand, wanted to have this action or change by justification understood as the act by which the unrighteous man is truly made righteous by God. He also wanted to be understood by it, what the old Lutheran doctrines included by the terms, regeneration and sanctification, and seemed to do away with the difference, which they had embraced between this change and justification, so he didn't want to know anything of the last.¹⁵ This failure to make a proper distinction between terms, or his ignorance of the terms, which Luther and his associates held, made this more than a matter of logomachy; it was

14. Planck, op.cit. p. 259: "Osiander hingegen wollte unter Rechtfertigung diejenige Handlung oder Veranderung verstanden haben, wodurch der vorher ungerechte Mensch wuerlick von Gott gerecht macht werde, wollte also eben das darunter verstanden haben, was die Aecht-lutherische Lehrform unter dem Nahmen der Erneuerung und Heiligung begriff, und schien eben damit den Unterschied aufzuheben, den sie zwischen diesen Veraenderungen und zwischen der Rechtfertigung in ihrem Sinn annahm, oder von der letzten gar nichts wissen zu wollen."

15. Planck, op. cit. p. 259.

a matter which involved the substance of this doctrine of justification by faith.

Other theologians consider Osiander's views concerning justification as a mere personal matter against his colleagues. Osiander was a man as proud, overbearing, and passionate, as he was gifted, keen, sagacious, learned, eloquent, and energetic.¹⁶ He loved to place himself above others and used every opportunity to show himself a better theologian than his colleagues. < This greed for more glory is brought out in his attitude toward these men. When he had received his degree from Count Albrecht, he immediately, with great conceit and ambition, stepped forward, as if he had to teach the Prussians in the far East the right knowledge, even though the Wittenberg theologians had worked there before.¹⁷ His attitude toward the coming controversy was the same. According to Planck one can assert without hesitation, that he had already brought the intention to Königsberg to incite a controversy; at least it was certainly not against his wishes, that the new colleagues, which he found there, discovered an opportunity in his first disputation for disagreement. (His inaugural disputation De Lege et Evangelio,

16. Bente, Historical Introduction in op.cit. p. 153

17. Tschackert, op. cit. p.490: "Da nun Osiander sofort selbstbewusst und herrschsuechtig auftrat, als ob er denn Hinterlaendlern in fernem Osten erst die richtige Erkenntnis beibringen muesste, waehrend dort bis dahin eine ganze Reihe Wittenberger Doktoren der Theologie gewirkt hatte und zum Teil noch wirkte, ein Briessman, der verstorbene Rapagelan, Hegemon, Isinder, und bald noch Joachim Moerlin.

April 5, 1549.)¹⁸ In this disputation Osiander's vanity prompted him to hint at his peculiar views, which he knew were not in agreement with the doctrines taught at Wittenberg and the Lutheran church at large.¹⁹ Throughout the controversy which followed, he wished to be known as the "Defender of the Lutheran Doctrine of Koenigsberg", a more learned theologian than his former colleagues at Wittenberg.

Personal jealousy between Osiander and his colleagues also had much to do with the controversy. When Osiander had received the honor of becoming head professor of theology at the University of Koenigsberg with double salary, though he had never received an academic degree, this unusual preferment caused much dissatisfaction among his colleagues, especially Bressman, Hegemon, Isinder, and Moerlin. They had been professors at the University before Osiander, yet Osiander, a new professor, had been placed over them, even though he did not have the qualifications for the position.²⁰ This jealousy, heightened by his overbearing and domineering ways, and his ostentation, as if he had to teach the right knowledge to the Prussians, added largely to the violence and the animosity of the controversy. It is said that the professors of

Koenigsberg even carried firearms into the academic

18. Planck, Op. cit. p.258: "Man darf daher ohne Bedenken behaupten, dass er schon den Vorsatz einen Streit zu veranlassen nach Koenigsberg brachte; wenigstens war es gewiss nicht gegen seine Wuensche, dass die neue Kollegen, die er hier fand, schon in seiner ersten Disputation einen Anlass dazu fanden!"

19. Bente, "Historical Introduction" in op.cit. p. 154.

20. Plankk, op.cit. p.251ff.

sessions.^{21.}

This great animosity of his opponents and his overbearing character increased the amount of opposition against him. Matthias Lauterwald of Elbingen was the first to challenge Osiander. This Elbingen teacher was an unusual man who was not able to live if there was nothing to argue about; therefore he also knew how to find arguments in all subjects.²² When Osiander hinted slightly in his inaugural address concerning his peculiar views, Lauterwald immediately took issue with him. In his thesis against Osiander, he declared: "Osiander has denied that faith is a part of repentance".²³ Lauterwald's attacks were often unfair, and many times he unjustly accused Osiander of false doctrine.

Among Osiander's most outstanding opponents were his three colleagues, Staphylus, Hegemon, and Isinder. All three, especially the first, because of their overzealousness, used every hostile means to oppose Osiander. At times (this is shown to the dishonor of their characters) they wrote letters to all the surrounding lands, that Osiander had brought the most dangerous false teaching to Prussia, and now from Prussia, this doctrine would be disseminated into the whole Lutheran church; therefore everyone must at all times stand on his guard. These men

21. Bente, "Historical Introduction" in *op.cit.*, p.153

22. Planck, *op.cit.* p.259f. "Dieser Elbingische Magister war ein hoechstseltsames Geschoepf, dass nicht leben konnte, wenn es nicht etwas zu streiten hatte; und daher auch in allem Stof zum streiten zu finden wusste."

23. Planck, *op.cit.* p.262.

also used every other means to spread the report among the people, as well as among the ministers of Koenigsberg, that Osiander wished to take away from them the whole teaching of justification.²⁴ These men also treated him unjustly. They knew his views of justification, yet they did not seek an opportunity to discuss them with him; instead, they sought to discredit him.

The most formidable opponents of Osiander, however, were Flacius and Moerlin. Flacius treated Osiander with much consideration, because he had hoped that Osiander would still alter what he had incorrectly written. When Osiander did not fulfill this hope, he came forward just as inconsiderately against him as he did in his other controversies.²⁵ Moerlin also fought this view of justification with the same great zeal, for he clearly understood that solid comfort in life and death is possible only as long as our faith rests solely on the "aliena iustitia", on the objective righteousness of Christ, which is without us, and is offered in the Gospel and received

24. Planck, op.cit.p. 262f. "Allein diese Vorstellung haben sie selbst unmoeglich gemacht. Zu eben der Zeit--diss ist zum Unglueck fuer ihren Charackter ebenfalls erwiesen--schrieben sie in der ganzen Weltumher, dass Osiander die gefaehrlichste Kezerey nach Preussen gebracht habe, und nun von Preussen aus in der ganzen lutherischen Kirche verbreiten wolle, daher man doch ja ueberall auf seiner Huth stehen moechte!"

25. Preger, Matthias Flacius Illyricus und seine Zeit, Vol.1, p.219: "Er will Osiander noch schonen, weil er hofft, Osiander werde noch aendern, was er unrecht geschrieben hat. Als Osiander diese Hoffnung nicht erfuehlt, tritt er ebenso ruecksichtslos gegen ihn hervor, wie er es in seinen sonstigen Kaempfen thut."

by faith. Fully realizing also that Christian assurance is incompatible with such a doctrine as Osiander taught.. Moerlin publicly attacked Osiander from the pulpit and in every way emphasized the fact that his teaching could never be tolerated in the Lutheran Church.²⁶

The opposition increased on all sides. The Lutherans, the theologians of Wittenberg, as well as those of Jena, Brandenburg, Pomerania, and Hamburg held up the Lutheran doctrine against him. With all these opponents attacking him, the controversy was rapidly reaching its climax.

The corruptions involved in Osiander's teaching of justification center around the teaching that we are justified not by ~~the~~ Christ for us, but by Christ's dwelling in us. Justification according to him is not a forensic act, or imputation of the righteousness of Christ outside of man, but is the process of making righteous by the infusion of the essential divine nature of Christ dwelling in us. This justification is received by faith, but faith according to him does not justify inasmuch as it apprehends the merits of Christ, but inasmuch as it unites us with the divine nature, the essential righteousness of God, in which our sins are diluted, as it were, and lost, as an impure drop disappears when poured into an ocean of liquid purity. According to Osiander then justification is never complete or instant, but is always a gradual and progressive process.²⁷

26. Bente, "Historical Introduction" in op.cit., p.154

27. Bente, "Historical Introduction" in op.cit. p.155

III. Osiander's conception of the "imago Dei" as the basis of his doctrine of justification.

Osiander's conception of the righteousness of God in justification is based upon the central idea of his entire system, his peculiar view concerning the image of God. According to Osiander the "imago Dei" is the divine Logos into whom His entire essence flows in a manner and a process eternal.²⁸ It is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself not only according to His divinity, but also according to His physical body and the entire substance of His human nature.²⁹ This image of God is the Incarnate Word, as it was predicated in the mind of God, foreshadowed in the theophanies of the Old Testament, and realized in Christ.³⁰ With this divine essence, which flowed in the Logos, came the essential righteousness of God.

This divine essential indwelling righteousness was destined to be realized in man. This was God's plan from the very beginning. In order that God's purpose might be carried out, man was created after the image of the Incarnate Logos.³¹ Because of this man would be capable of God (the essential indwelling of God) and be able to share

28. Bente, "Historical Introduction" in op.cit. p.158.

29. Preger, op.cit.p.229: "Das Bild Gottes (Πῶς), nach welchem der Mensch geschaffen ist, ist unser Herr Jesus Christus selbst, nicht nur nach seiner Gottheit, sondern auch nach seiner koerperlichen Gestalt und der ganzen Substanz seiner menschlichen Natur."

30. Tschackert, op.cit.p.492: "Das Bilde Gottes, nach welchem und auf welches hin der Mensch geschaffen ist, ist das Fleisch gewordene Wort, wie es im Verstande Gottes praedestiniert, in den Theophanien des Alte Testaments abgeschattet und in Jesus Christus realisiert ist."

31. Bent, "Historical Introduction", op.cit. p.158

His divine nature. Osiander states it in this manner:
 "God formed the body of man that it should be like unto
 the future body of Christ. Thereupon He breathed into
 it the breath of life, i.e. a rational soul together
 with the human spirit, adorned with the proper powers
 in such a manner, that it, too, should be like unto the
 future soul of Christ."³²

As now the entire divine essence (the eternal righteous-
 ness, wisdom, etc.) dwelt in the Son of God, so also this ☆
 same essence should dwell in all men, who are created
 after the image of God. This divine essence, then, in-
 dwells in man through the Son of God. He is the Mediator ✓
 of this essence to mankind, and His human nature is at
 the same time the canal through which the divine essence
 flows into us. 33

32. "An Filius Dei fuerit Incarnandus, etc." quoted in Frank
op.cit.p.104: "Ideo fecit hominem imagine sua, id est
 qui habeat eandem imaginem, quam Deus habet. Formavit
 corpus hominis, ut esset futuro corpori Christi simile
 prorsus. Deinde inspiravit ei spiraculum vitae, id
 est, animam rationalem una cum spirit humano, debitis
 potentiis exornatam, ita ut eas quoque per omnia similis
 esset animae Christi futurae." (Bente's translation used
 above.)

33. Preger, op.cit.p.229ff. "Wie nun in dem Sohne Gottes das
 ganze goettliche Wesen wohnte, die ewige wesentliche
 Gerechtigkeit, Weisheit, u.s.w., so soll dasselbe auch
 in allen Menschen wohnen, die nach dem Bilde Sohnes Gottes
 geschaffen sind. Und dieses goettliche Wesen wohnt in
 den Menschen durch den Sohn Gottes, er ist der Vermittler
 desselben an die Menschheit und seine menschliche Natur
 ist gleichsam der Canal durch dar das goettliche Wesen in
 uns uebergeht. Eine solche Einwohnung des goettlichen
 Wesens vermittelte der Sohn Gottes durch seine vorbildliche
 Leiblichkeit schon in Adam vor dem Falle."

Before the fall such an indwelling of the divine essence was already in Adam, being imparted to him through His human nature. This indwelling of the Logos and His essential righteousness made him righteous. Through the fall, however, this "iustitia originalis" was lost. This necessitated the incarnation, the means through which this lost image could be restored and the eternal plan of God realized (Divine eternal righteousness indwelling in man).³⁴

Closely linked with Osiander's conception of the image of God is the purpose of the incarnation. God's plan from eternity was that the essential righteousness of Christ should be in and working in man.³⁵ For the realization of this purpose Christ has been determined to become man or to unite Himself with the human nature (and in all probability if Adam had not fallen, and sin had not come into the world)³⁶ so that the Ideal of His human nature, received into the union with his divinity, might

34. Seeberg, Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte Vol. 4,2,p.497.

35. Bente "Historical Introduction" in op.cit. p.1588

36. Bente "Historical Introduction" in op.cit. p. 153: Here Dr. Bente refers to the work of Osiander "Whether the Son of God would have had to be Incarnated, if Sin had Not Entered Into the World." In this work is brought out the fact that Christ would have had to become incarnate, even if sin did not enter the world.

be predestined for a reality in the mind of God.³⁷ Since man was created in the image of God, he could be united with God. There was, however, a great dissimilarity between the finite man and the infinite divine Logos. In order that this great dissimilarity might be overcome and God's plan of Christ's righteousness working effectively in man might be realized, Christ had to become incarnate. Without this incarnation this dissimilarity would have remained forever.³⁸

After the fall the incarnation takes on an additional aspect. By the fall man lost the "imago Dei", the essential righteousness of Christ. This necessitated the satisfaction and the redemption, in order to pave the way for the renewal of the lost image of God, or the indwelling essential righteousness in man. To accomplish this the Logos had to become flesh.³⁹

This renewal and restoration of the image of God in man has as its basis the incarnation or the vicarious satisfaction and the atoning work of Christ (the active and passive obedience). This office of Christ divides itself into two parts: the "redemptio" through the

37. Planck, *op.cit.*, p.274

38. Bente, "Historical Introduction", *op.cit.*p.158

39. Tschackert, *op.cit.*p.491: "Durch den Suendenfall ist die Heilsgeschichte noetig: das "Wort" wuerde Fleisch; aber das Bild Gottes haette verwirklicht werden, der Logos haette Fleisch werden muessen, auch wenn die Suende nicht in die Welt gekommen waere."

"impletio legis et passio" or "satisfactio", for the purpose of the "propitiatio" and the forgiveness of sin and the "iustificatio" which rests upon it. This "redemptio", in turn, contains two parts: that the sinner should bear the entire punishment of his sin, or the wrath of God, and that he should completely fulfill the law. Christ, through His innocent suffering, endured the wrath of God and merited for mankind the forgiveness of sin. Since we, after the renewal, were not able to fulfill the law, He completely fulfilled the law for us and for our good, so that the law could no longer accuse us. Therefore, it will not be accounted against us, nor will we be condemned, if we cannot completely keep the law in this life, for this active and passive obedience of Christ brings about our objective redemption. These together constitute the payment, through which man merits the grace, the satisfaction and the reconciliation of Christ.³⁹

This reconciliation or forgiveness of sin, however, is not in any sense our justification or righteousness, but it forms the objective basis for the realization of this righteousness in the individual. The essence of this redemption is thought to be as follows: Our sins are forgiven before this righteousness is offered to us. We are justified first through the indwelling Christ (the indwelling

39. Seeberg, op.cit., p.498

of the righteousness of Christ, which makes us righteous.)⁴⁰

Osiander summarizes the purpose of the active and passive obedience of Christ as follows: "It is evident" he says, "that all that Christ as the true Mediator has negotiated with His Heavenly Father for our sakes through the fulfilling of the law and through His suffering and death, that has happened 1500 or more years ago, before we were born. Therefore, this can not properly be called our justification, but only our redemption and satisfaction for us and for our sins. If one will be justified, he must believe, and in order to believe, he must be born and live. On account of this Christ has not justified us, who now live and die, but by it we are redeemed from the anger of God and death and hell. It is, however, true and unquestionable, that He has procured and gained for us through the fulfillment of the law and through His suffering and death from His Heavenly Father this great and superabundant grace. It is also true and unquestionable that He has not only forgiven us all our sins and taken away the intolerable burden of the law from us, but will also justify us through faith in Christ. This is accomplished by the infusing of this righteousness ^{☆ quote} or the making righteous through the working of His Holy Ghost and through the death of Christ, in which we are united in Baptism. Because of this indwelling righteousness,

40. Seeberg, op.cit., p.499.

the sins, which have been already forgiven us, but which still live and cleave in our flesh, are killed, cleansed and entirely dispensed with, if we but follow Him.⁴¹

"There is yet another part to the work of our beloved and faithful Lord and Mediator Jesus Christ. Christ, because of His work of redemption, now turns Himself to us and deals with us poor sinners as the guilty party, so that we may recognize this great grace and receive it with thankfulness by faith. Thus He makes us righteous and living through faith by the death of sin. In addition the sin which has already been forgiven, but still lives and cleaves to our flesh, will be entirely mortified and dispensed with."⁴²

The question now arises: Which is the right and true righteousness of God, of which Osiander speaks? Osiander answers it for us. "I understand it", he says, "in this manner . :

(1) It flowed from His pure grace and mercy, that God sacrificed His only Son for us.

(2) The Son became man and was made under the Law, and He has redeemed us from the Law and from the curse of the Law.

(3) He took upon Himself the sins of the whole world, for which He suffered, died, shed His blood, descended into hell, rose again, and thus overcame sin, death and hell, and merited for us forgiveness of sin., reconciliation with God, the grace and gift of justification, and eternal life.

(4) This is to be preached into all the world.

(5) Whosoever believes this and is baptized, is justified and blessed by virtue of such faith.

(6) Faith apprehends Christ, so that He dwells in our hearts by faith; that ye being, rooted and grounded in love.

41. Planck, op.cit., p.268

42. Planck, op. cit. p.268

(7) Christ living in us through faith is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Holiness, and Redemption.

I Corinthians 1,30: But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

Jeremiah 23,6: In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby He shall be called, "The Lord Our Righteousness".

Jeremiah 33,16: In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this the name wherewith she shall be called, "The Lord our Righteousness".

(8) Christ, true God and man, dwelling in us through faith, is our Righteousness according to His divine nature, as Dr. Luther says: "I rely on the righteousness which is God Himself; this he cannot reject. Such is, says Luther, the simple, correct understanding, do not suffer yourself to be led away from it." ⁴³

This leads us to the investigation of the manner in which Christ is our Righteousness according to His divine nature. Osiander states it in the following way: "If the question is asked according to which nature Christ, His whole undivided person, is our Righteousness, then, just as when one asks according to what nature He is the ☆ Creator of heaven and earth, the clear, correct, and plain answer is that He is our Righteousness according to His divine, and not according to His human nature, although we are unable to find, obtain, or apprehend such divine V righteousness apart from His humanity." ⁴⁴

43. Osiander, "Wider den lichtfluechtigen Nachtraben", 1552, quoted in Bente, "Historical Introduction" in op.cit. p.155ff. The appeal to Luther in Art.8 by Osiander is misleading. According to Luther Christ was our Righteousness because His obedience is God's obedience, the work of both the human and divine natures of Christ, while according to Osiander everything that Christ did for us merely serves to bring about the indwelling of the divine nature of Christ, whose essential holiness is our righteousness before God.

44. Frank, op.cit. p.12

This divine nature of Christ imparts its essential righteousness to His human nature. The human nature, so to speak, is only the canal, through which the divine essence with its righteousness, wisdom, and holiness flows into us.⁴⁵ Again Osiander says: "When we say: Christ is our Righteousness, we must understand His deity, which enters us through His humanity. When Christ says: I am the Bread of Life, we must understand His deity which comes into us through His humanity and is our life. When He says: My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed, we must take it to mean His deity, which is in the flesh and blood and is meat and drink for us. Thus, too, when John says, I John 1,7: The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, we must understand the deity of Christ which is in the blood: for John does not speak of the blood of Christ as it was shed on the cross, but as it, united with the flesh of Christ, is our heavenly meat and drink by faith."⁴⁶

Thus the purpose of the incarnation is the canal whereby Christ imparts His divine righteousness, which is His divine nature, to His human nature so that finite man might be capable of the infinite righteousness of Christ.

⁴⁵. Frank, op.cit. p.22: "So faellt denn schliesslich trotz der behaupteten Nothwendigkeit der Menschwerdung Christi doch in Anbetracht der heilbringenden Gabe das Gewicht lediglich auf die goettliche Natur und die menschliche ist nur der Kanal, durch welchen das goettliche Wesen mit seiner Gerechtigkeit, Heiligkeit, u.s.w. in uns einfliehet.

⁴⁶. Frank, op.cit. p.24ff.

The human nature serves only as a canal, in order that this righteousness might be living and dwelling in us, making us righteous. After the fall the incarnation prepared the way for the renewal of the lost image of God. Through His active and passive obedience Christ has made satisfaction for sin, making it possible for this righteousness to again dwell in man. This indwelling of the divinity of Christ, with whom the Triune God dwells in us at the same time, is our Righteousness before God, more accurately His divine nature is our Righteousness.⁴⁷

The means by which we are united with Christ's humanity, so that we may receive the indwelling righteousness of God, are the Word, faith, and the Sacraments. This whole concept has as its basis, his view concerning the Word of God. According to Osiander the Gospel or the Word of God has two aspects, the "inner word" and the "external word". God had already resolved in eternity, that He would redeem us from the curse of the law through the obedience of His Son. This eternal decree of God is the "Inner word", God Himself and even the God, who has become Man and is Jesus Christ, our Lord, now true God and true Man; for all, that is in God from eternity, is God Himself.⁴⁸ Christ, then, the divine Logos (according

47. Seeberg, op.cit. p.499

48. Preger, op.cit. p.252/

to John 1) is this "inner word", which makes us righteous.⁴⁹

This "inner word" approaches us in the "external word" (the words spoken by Jesus, the prophets, and the apostles).⁵⁰ Through this "external word" the "inner word" which is God Himself and has become flesh, being born of the Virgin Mary, is brought into the believing heart. This "inner word" awakens us from the death of sin, so that we can live again in God and from God. With this "inner word" also comes the Gospel, which announces to us that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Redeemer, our Righteousness itself, which makes us righteous through Himself.⁵¹ Thus the "external word" is nothing more than an empty shell, which disappears as soon as it is brought to the hearer. The meaning and the truth, however, which is included in

49. Bente, "Historical Introduction", op.cit. p.158

50. Preger, op.cit. p.252: "Dieses innerliche Wort Gottes sei nun in das aeußerliche Wort gefasst, werde durch Christum, seine Propheten und Apostel verkuendiget."

51. Frank, op.cit. p.99.: A.a.O. C3a: "Solcher ewiger Rath, Vorsatz, und Beschluss Gottes (naemlich der Rathschluss der Erloesung und der Predigt des Evangeliums) is in Gott auch ein innerliches Wort und ist Gott selbst und eben der Gott, der da ist Mensch geworden und ist Jesus Christus unser Herr, itzo wahrer Gott und Mensch; denn Alles was in Gott von Ewigkeit ist, das muss Gott selbst sein, darum spricht Joh. am 1. Kap.: Gott war das Wort und das Wort ist Fleisch worden. Nun hat Gott dieses sein innerliches Wort, das in ihm Gott selbst ist und aus Maria der Jungfrauen auch wahrer Mensch geboren ist, in das aeußerliche Wort gefasset, und es uns durch Christum und seine Propheten und Apostel lassen verkuendigen." Vgl. H 2b un 03a: (continued on next page)

this "external word" is rightly called the "inner word".⁵²

Faith is the means that unites us with this "inner word" the essential righteousness of God, which is brought to us through the "external word". According to Osiander faith makes a man righteous, in that it infuses the divine righteousness into man and through this indwelling righteousness restores again the image of God (God's essential righteousness). This righteousness which dwells in all who believe, justifies us in that our sins, as it were, are diluted in this infinite essential righteousness of God and lost, as an impure drop in the ocean of liquid purity.⁵³ This faith justifies not inasmuch as it apprehends

"Gleichwie das Evangelium das innerliche lebendige Wort Gottes, welches Gott selbst und aus der reinen Jungfrau Maria geboren Fleisch geworden, Jesus Christus unser Heiland ist, durch unsern Glauben also in unser Herz bringt, dass wir durch dasselbe vom Tode der Sünden erweckt in Gott und aus Gott wiederum leben, ja Gott selbst unser Leben ist, also ist eben dasselbige Wort Gottes, dass Gott selbst Jesus Christus unser Herr und Heiland ist, auch unsere Gerechtigkeit selbst und macht uns gerecht durch sich selbst."

52. Planck, op. cit., p.277: "Das äussere Wort ist nichts anders als der leere Schall, der wieder verschwindet, sobald er in die Ohren gebracht ist, der Sinn hingegen, der in diesem äusseren Wort eingeschlossen, die Wahrheit, die darin gehüllt ist, kann mit Recht das innere Wort heissen, das eben so durch den Glauben, wie das äussere Wort mit dem Gehör aufgefasst werden muss, und aufgefasst wird."

53. Frank, op. cit., p.99: "Dagegen wie wir durch den Glauben in ihm sein und er in uns, so werden wir in ihm auch Gottes Gerechtigkeit, wie er Sünd geworden ist, das ist, er ueberschuettet und erfuellet uns mit seiner goettlichen Gerechtigkeit, wie wir ihn mit unsren Sünden ueberschuettet haben, dass Gott selbst und alle Engel, dieweil Christus unser und in uns ist, eitel Gerechtigkeit in uns sehen, von wegen der allerhoechsten, ewigen und unendlichen Gerechtigkeit Christi, die seine Gottheit selbst ist und in uns wohnt. Und ob schon noch Sünd in unserm Fleische wohnt und anklebt, so ists

the merits of Christ, but because it unites us with the
 d
 divine nature of Christ, the righteousness of God.⁵⁴

Osiander's justification, therefore, is a sort of medicinal
 process in man, by which a "clean man is made out of an
 unclean" (a righteous man out of an unrighteous.)⁵⁵

Another means by which we can be united with Christ's
 humanity is by the Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's
 Supper. Baptism serves to take us from the union with
 Adam and his death and to unite and engraft us in the
 human nature of Christ, so that we through His human
 nature might become partakers of His divine nature.⁵⁶
 Osiander uses this analogy to explain this truth: As
 the branches could not partake of the nature of the vine
 if they could not partake of the wood of the vine, even
 so we could not share the divine nature of Christ, if we
 had not, incorporated in Him by faith and Baptism become
 flesh, blood and bone. Accordingly, as Christ's humanity
 became righteous through the union with God, the essential

doch eben als ein unreines Troeplein gegen einem garzen
 reinen Meer, und Gott wills um der Gerechtigkeit Christi
 willen, die in uns ist, nicht sehen."

54. Bente, "Historical Introduction", op.cit. p.155

55. Seeberg, op.cit. p.499: This is based on his meaning
 of the word to justify, which he explains as follows:
 "Iustificare ist demgemass ex impio iustum facere, hoc est
 ortuum ad vitam vocare". (de iustif. thes.3)

56. Frank, op.cit., p.20: "Der Glaube sowohl wie die Taufe dienen
 dazu, uns der Verbindung mit Adam und seinem Tode zu entnehmen
 und in die Menschheit Christi "einzupelzen" und einzuleiben,
 dass wir durch dieselbe theilhaftig werden seiner goettlichen
 Natur."

righteousness, which moved Him to obedience toward God, thus we also become righteous through our union with Christ and in Him with God.⁵⁷

The Lord's Supper also serves to unite us with His humanity, so that we might be capable of His divinity. According to Osiander, the Lord's Supper is a guarantee, that we remain in Christ. Whenever it is distributed to us, we should not only remember that Christ has died for us and shed His blood for the forgiveness of sin, but we should be assured that when we believe, He will be in us and will draw us in Himself, so that we become His flesh and blood. Just as we take nourishment out of natural food and transform it into our flesh and blood, so when we partake of Christ's body and blood, we also become His flesh and blood. Since the humanity of Christ, with which we become one in a manner described, is personally united with the deity, it imparts to us also the divine essence, and as a result, we, too, are the abode of the essential righteousness of God. Now one can see and understand how the entire human nature of Christ serves as a canal, so that His divine righteousness might be in and working in us for our justification.⁵⁸

Osiander's teaching of the "imago Dei" in his doctrine of justification may be summarized as follows:

Man was created in the image of God. This image of God is the divine Logos, into whom His entire essence flows

57. Frank, op.cit., p 20 ff., quoted in Bente, "Historical Introduction" in op.cit., p.159.

58. Frank, op.cit., p.21ff.; Bente, "Historical Introduction", op.cit., p.159.

in a manner and process eternal. This same divine image was destined to be realized in man through the incarnation of the Son of God. Before the Fall, Adam was justified as the result of the indwelling of this divine image. After the Fall, however, man lost this original righteousness; thus making the redemption and atonement necessary in order to pave the way for the renewal of the lost image of God, or the indwelling of God's essential righteousness in man. This was accomplished in the incarnation.

The real source of this righteousness, however, is not the human, but the divine nature of Christ. In the process of justification or making man righteous, the human nature of Christ merely serves as a canal through which this essential righteousness of the divine nature flows into our heart.

Christ, the "inner Word" approaches man in the "external Word" and through it enters into the believing heart. Through the Word, Sacraments, and faith we are united with His humanity, which makes it possible for the divine nature of Christ to dwell in us. This indwelling is the restoration of the image of God and makes us righteous. Therefore justification according to Osiander is based upon a quality which is infused in man and received by faith. Because of this he is united with the divine nature of Christ, which makes him righteous. Thus the image of God is restored in man.

II. A Critique of Osiander's teaching of the "imago Dei" in its relation to the doctrine of justification.

An examination of Osiander's doctrine of justification as a process reveals to us a very interesting truth. All of the writings, which were written against his teaching, attacked him from the viewpoint of the righteousness of God, but failed to say anything concerning the basis of his entire system -- his concept of the image of God. Article III of the Formula of Concord, which was written in opposition to his views, clearly illustrates this point. It states that the main issue involved in his teaching consists in his view of the righteousness of God, but it does not mention the foundation for his concept of the righteousness of God, the "imago Dei".¹ In order to bring the importance of his "imago Dei" in his teaching of justification, let us examine his chief doctrine from this point of view.

The first doctrine, with which we wish to concern ourselves, is his concept of justification as the restoration of the essential indwelling righteousness of God, the "imago Dei", which makes a man righteous. Osiander arrived at this conclusion in the following manner: Man was created in the image of the divine nature of Christ, which had already been conceived in the divine mind in eternity. This divine nature of Christ is the essential righteousness of the Triune God, which dwelt in Adam

1. "The Formula of Concord" in Triglot Concordia, p.917.

before the Fall, making him righteous. After the Fall this divine indwelling righteousness was lost. Therefore, Osiander considered the restoration of the "imago Dei" in man as justification.²

This basic thought concerning the image of God clearly contradicts the teaching of Scripture. Scripture plainly teaches that man is not created after the image of the divine nature of Christ, but after the image of the entire essence of the Triune God. In Genesis 1:26 this fact is set forth in definite terms. Here the Father, who is speaking with the Son and the Holy Spirit, says: Let us make man in our own image (בְּצַלְמֵנוּ) after our likeness (כְּדֹמְיֹתֵינוּ).³ The Father does not say, as Osiander wishes Him to say, to the Incarnate Son: "Let us make man according to your image, but according to our image". This image of God, according to which man is created, is the image of the Triune God, that is according to the divine essence and what is united with the Triune God. It consists in the wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, even the "justitia originalis", strictly the similitude of God, according to which, absolutely speaking, the entire man is called the image of God.⁴

Osiander also taught that this "imago Dei" in which

2. Plankk, op.cit. p.271.

3. Genesis 1:26

4. Hoenecke, Ev.Luth. Dogmatik, Vol. II, p.320.

Genesis 1:26: בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדֹמְיֹתֵינוּ וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֱדָם בְּיֹמֵי הַיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֱדָם בְּיֹמֵי הַיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֱדָם בְּיֹמֵי הַיּוֹם הַהוּא

Note: the Plural suffixes נוּ יֵנוּ

man was created, had already been preconceived in the mind of God before the creation of Adam. Again we turn to Scripture. In I Corinthians 15,45 Christ according to His human nature is not the first man (ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος) but the latter Adam (ὁ ἔσχατος Ἀδὰμ [ἄνθρωπος]).⁵ Thus Christ is spoken of as the second and not the first man. Therefore, if the idea or form of the human nature of Christ, which had been preconceived in the divine mind would have created Adam according to His own similitude, Christ would have spoken of Adam second rather than first. It, however, is silent in that we are not created similar to Christ, in this sense, but Christ is made similar to us (except without sin). This truth is confirmed in Hebrews 2,14, where it states that Christ has put on our flesh and blood, not the opposite that men have put on the flesh and blood of Christ.⁶

Scripture sheds even more light upon the essence of the "Imago Dei". Nowhere does Scripture say that man is created "Kata τὸν υἱὸν" (after the Son), but "Kata τὸν Θεόν" (after God). On the contrary the Son of God is said to have been "ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας" (in the similitude of sinful flesh) Romans 8:3 and to have

5. I Cor. 15:45: ἔγένετο ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος Ἀδὰμ εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν
ὁ ἔσχατος Ἀδὰμ εἰς πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν

6. Hebrews 2,14: ἐπεὶ οὖν τὰ παλαιὰ κεκοινωνήκειν αἵματος καὶ σαρκὸς.

received "μορφὴν δούλου" the form of a servant,
Phil. 2,7.⁷

In addition to say that man was created after the divine image of Christ contradicts the order of the divine decrees. The decrees concerning the forming of man according to the "imago Dei" preceded the decree of sending the Son of God into the flesh for the renewal of the lost image. Therefore, the Son of God, who was made incarnate later, was not able to be the model of the divine image of man, who was formed before.

Even when the mission of Christ is considered, it points out a different purpose of the "imago Dei" than Osiander. Scripture gives the reason for the incarnation not as the realization of the "imago Dei", but for the blessedness of man as I Tim. 1,15 testifies: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Osiander says that Jesus came only to make it possible that the "Imago Dei" might be realized in man, which would make it possible for man to be made righteous.

In contrast to Osiander's view of the image of God, Scripture also reveals to us, that the "imago Dei" not only consists in the possession of knowledge and will or

7. Romans 8:3: τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου, ἐν ᾧ ἡσθέουε διὰ τῆς σαρκός, ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί.
Phil. 2: 6,7: ὅς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐκ ἤρπαχεν ἡγήσασθαι τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ, ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἕκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν, ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος.

in that man is one person, but before all things in the perfect state of will and understanding, namely, in that man with his own understanding knew God and with his own will desired only what God willed. This assumes the knowledge of God and the holiness upon the side of men.⁸ This contents of the image of God is taught in the New Testament in Col. 3,10 and Eph. 4,24. In Col. 3,10 the new man is described as: ὁ ἀνακαλυπόμενος εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν and in Eph. 4,24 as: ὁ κατὰ θεὸν κτισθεὶς ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας

According to these passages the "imago Dei" is the righteousness and holiness of the Triune God, not only of Christ. Therefore, when Scripture teaches that Adam was created after the image of God, it states that Adam was made like God in His holiness and righteousness, not as Osiander teaches with the essential righteousness dwelling in him. For this reason Adam was holy and righteous. Through the Fall Adam lost this holiness and righteousness, as well as the perfect state of knowing God and only doing what God desired.⁹

Justification, then, is the restoral of this lost holiness which man had before the Fall, not the restoral of the essential righteousness of Christ (imago Dei). In

8. Pieper, op.cit. Vol. I, p.618.

9. These views concerning the image of God are found in Quenstedt's Opinio Originianorum et Osiandri. In Pieper op.cit. Vol. I, p.618.

other words, justification after the Fall consists in God declaring us righteous through the righteousness which Christ has earned for us, and not by the restoration of the "imago Dei" (the infused Christ dwelling in us and making us righteous).

✓ The second error in Osiander's doctrine of justification is in his conception of the forgiveness of sins. According to his teaching the active and passive obedience of Christ did not merit for us the forgiveness of sin or the ransom for sin, on account of which man receives grace and reconciliation with God. This reconciliation and redemption, however, is not our righteousness, for they only form the basis for the realization of the true righteousness in the individual, which is the righteousness of the indwelling Christ. Thus we are not declared righteous in the sight of God by the righteousness of Christ for us, which He earned by His active and passive obedience, but through the infused righteousness of the divine nature of Christ, which makes us righteous by His indwelling.¹⁰

Against this doctrine of justification, we maintain that the forgiveness of sin, which Christ merited for us through His active and passive obedience, is the righteousness of God which is imputed to us by faith. On account of this righteousness of Christ, God declares us just. This is complete justification or the forgiveness of sins.¹¹

10. Seeberg, *op.cit.* p.498.

11. Article III of the "Formula of Concord" in Triglott Concordia, p.915,6-16 in which the active and passive obedience of Christ is discussed.

As we examine Osiander's thesis we find that his first error consists in his false conception of the active and passive obedience of Christ, which is the forgiveness of sins or the righteousness of God. The vicarious work~~ing~~ of Christ includes, besides his suffering and death (His passive obedience), His fulfillment of the divine law in the place of man. In other words, in order to satisfy divine justice Christ not only bore the penalty of man's disobedience to the law, but also rendered in His holy life that obedience, which man is obligated to render, but does not render (active obedience of Christ, "obedientia Christi activa"). Osiander considered this obedience of Christ only as a ransom for sin, or the basis for his justification. Therefore, he denied that the active and passive obedience of Christ gained for us the forgiveness of sin, which is the righteousness of God.¹²

The Formula of Concord, however, teaches clearly and distinctly that Christ's active and passive obedience is the forgiveness of sins and the righteousness of God. In Article III we find this fact stated in the following manner: "Since Christ is not man alone, but God and Man in one undivided person, He was as little subject to the law (that is obligated to keep the Law "legi subiectus") because He is the Lord of the Law. For this reason, then,

12. Article III of the "Formula of Concord" in Triglott Concordia, p.919, 15-16.

His obedience, not only in suffering and dying, but also in this, that He is our head was voluntarily made under the Law and fulfilled it by His obedience, is imputed to us for righteousness, so that on account of this complete obedience, which he rendered His heavenly Father for us by His doing and suffering, in living and dying, God forgives our sins, regarding us as godly and righteousness and eternally saved us. ¹³

Scripture also teaches this truth that the active obedience of Christ is the forgiveness of sin. In Galatians 4,4-5 Paul says that Christ was put under the Law, which was given to men, so that He might fulfill it to redeem mankind.¹⁴ Stoeckhardt in his comments on this passage states: The Law to which Israel was subject is the sum of all that God would have man do or omit. And this is the Law under which Christ was also put. And Christ assumed the obligation, that is, He fulfilled all the commandments of God. And it was precisely this obedience which made for our redemption. ¹⁵ Matt. 5,17 is another proof text for the active obedience of Christ.

13. Engelder, "The Active Obedience of Christ" in Concordia Theological Monthly, 1930, Vol. 1, p.810.

14. Galatians 4:4-5: ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, ἔξαπέστειλε ὁ Θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμου ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἔξαγοράσῃ, ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν.

15. "Lehre and Wehre", 1896, p.137 in Engelder "The Active Obedience of Christ in op.cit. p.811.

According to this passage Christ came not to "καταλύσαι τὸν νόμον" but to "πληρῶσαι τὸν νόμον" for us.

This fulfilling of the Law is our righteousness which Christ imputes to us.¹⁶

This fulfilling of the law forms not only the basis ★ for our righteousness, but is our righteousness itself. In Romans 5,18-19 this truth is brought out in the words: "Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men for justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."¹⁷ Here St. Paul points out that Christ's obedience is our righteousness. Over against the "παραπτώματος", the transgression of Adam, is placed the "δικαίωμα", the righteous behavior of Christ, that by which Christ, unlike Adam, approved Himself righteous, the obedience of Christ (ὕπακόν). This righteousness of Christ shall come upon all men and make many righteous (the righteousness of Christ's active obedience).

16. Matt. 5,17: γὰρ νομίοντες ὅτι ἦλθον καταλύσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφῆτας οὐκ ἦλθον καταλύσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι.

17. Romans 5,18-19: Ὅρα οὖν ὡς δι' ἑνὸς παραπτώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς κατάκριμα, οὕτως καὶ δι' ἑνὸς δικαίωματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς. ὡς περὶ γὰρ διὰ τῆς παρακῆς τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἁμαρτωλοὶ καταστάθησαν οἱ πολλοί, οὕτως καὶ διὰ τῆς ὑπακούσεως τοῦ ἑνὸς δικαίου κατασταθήσονται οἱ πολλοί.

Further proof that Christ's active obedience is our righteousness is brought out in Romans 10,4: Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth, i.e. Christ's fulfilling of the law is the righteousness, which God accounts to us.¹⁸ Stoeckhardt comments on this passage are: "By virtue of Christ's fulfilling the Law and thereby bringing it to an end, there exists righteousness, a perfect righteousness, for everyone that believes. Man needs but to take over by faith, the fulfillment of the Law, the obedience of Christ, this righteousness, which is a finished product." Quenstedt, as quoted above: "Since man was not only to be freed from the wrath of God, the just Judge but also needed, in order that he might stand before God a righteousness, which could not be acquired except by the fulfillment of the Law, therefore Christ took both upon Himself and not only suffered for us, but also satisfied the Law in every way in order that this fulfillment and obedience might be imputed to us for righteousness."¹⁹ Therefore, we can conclude with Paul that Christ through His active obedience is made unto us, Righteousness. I Cor. 1,30. Thus by His active obedience Christ procures for us a righteousness in which the guilt of sin disappears as night flees before the rising sun or man's shame and

18. Romans 10,4: τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστός εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι.

19. Engelder, "The Active Obedience of Christ" in op.cit. p. 894.

nakedness are covered with a spotless robe.²⁰ This righteousness is the forgiveness of sin.

Furthermore, Christ's passive obedience is also our righteousness. Osiander's error in regard to the passive obedience did not consist in his denial of a ransom from the penalty of sin, merited by Christ's suffering and death, but in the fact that he denied that this ransom was part of the righteousness of Christ in our justification. Again the Formula of Concord testifies that Christ's passive obedience is our righteousness before God. It states: "therefore the righteousness, which is imputed to faith or to the believer out of pure grace is the obedience, suffering, and resurrection of Christ, since He has made satisfaction for us to the Law, and has paid for our sins".²¹

Scripture also confirms this truth that Christ's passive obedience is our righteousness. In II Cor. 5,21. St. Paul says: God hath made Him to be sin of us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ).

Christ was made a "ἀνομιὰν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀνομιὰν" means that He had to suffer and make atonement for our sins on the cross, so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (ἐν αὐτῷ). Christ then by His

20. H.E. Jacobs, A Summary of the Christian Faith in op.cit. p. 815. in Engelder's "The Active Obedience of Christ"

21. Article III of the "Formula of Concord" in op.cit. p. 919.9.

passive obedience becomes the righteousness, which is imputed to us.²² I Cor. 1,30 also testifies to this truth. In this passage Paul emphasizes that Christ is made unto us Righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) and Redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις). Thus the passive obedience, Christ's redemption, is connected with His righteousness.²³ Romans 3, 24-25 sheds further light upon this fact in the words: Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through faith in His blood; to declare His (Christ's) righteousness for the remission of sins. Thus Paul again connects Christ's redemption and the atonement by the shedding of His blood with Christ's righteousness, which is the remission of sins.²⁴ Therefore the complete passive obedience of Christ is also our Righteousness. Jer. 23,6.²⁵

The complete obedience of Christ (obedientia activa and passive) is the righteousness of God, which is accounted to us for righteousness. The forgiveness of

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22. II Cor. 5,21: τὸν γὰρ γνόντα ἀγαπτιαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀγαπτιαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.
23. I Cor. 1,30: καὶ αὐτοῦ δὲ ὑμεῖς ἔστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἔχει τὴν σοφίαν ἡμῶν ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνην τε καὶ ἀγιασμὸς καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις.
24. Romans 3, 24-25: δικαιοῦμενοι δωρεάν τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολύτρωσις τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. ὃν παρέθετο ὁ Θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι, εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν πίστιν τῶν προσηγορευτῶν ἀγαπημάτων.
25. Jer. 23,6: And this is the name whereby He shall be called the Lord our Righteousness.

sin is not only the ransom for sin, as Osiander taught, X
 but is the righteousness of God. Thus complete justification is the act by which God grants to us the forgiveness of sin or the merit of Christ's active and passive obedience by faith and on account of this, declares us righteous. Therefore, justification is the forgiveness of sin or the receiving of the righteousness of God.

Osiander's third error regarding justification was *
 that he identified it with sanctification. To justify, he says, means "to make a just man out of an unjust one, that is to recall a dead man back to life -- ex impio iustum facere, hoc est mortuum ad vitam revocare."²⁶
 Thus, according to his doctrine, justification is a continual process, in which the fulfillment of the law effected by Christ and the remission of sins prepare for the divine nature of Christ, which is the essential righteousness of God. This divine nature of Christ enters and abides in us by faith (which he interprets as an infused quality), enabling us to act righteously.²⁷

Justification according to Scripture does not consist in sanctification, that is, justification is not essentially a change by which man is made just, but a change whereby

26. Seeberg, op.cit., p.499

27. Schmid, The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1889, p.441.

he is declared just on account of the perfect righteousness of Christ, which he appropriates by faith. The change which follows justification is the fruit of faith and properly belongs in the field of sanctification.²⁸

Throughout both the Old and New Testaments justification denotes the act by which the sinner, who is responsible for guilt and liable to punishment (reus culpae et poenae), but who believes in Christ, is pronounced just by the Judge.²⁹ To justify, then, means to "declare righteous" or "to absolve or to declare free from sin".³⁰ The two words, which are used and defined in this manner in Scripture, are " $\rho' \tau \upsilon \sigma \tau \acute{\iota}$ " and " $\delta \iota \kappa \alpha \iota \omicron \nu$ ".³¹ Nowhere in the entire Bible do these two terms, even when not used in reference to the justification of a sinner before God signify justification by the infusion of new qualities (such as the essential righteousness of the divine nature of Christ), but whenever they are used of God justifying the wicked before His tribunal, they have a forensic meaning.³²

Paul also everywhere describes justification as a

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28. Mueller, Christian Dogmatics, St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1934, p.375.
 29. Br. Baier (574) in Schmid, op.cit. p.432.
 30. "Formula of Concord" in op.cit. 921,17.
 31. Stoeckhardt, Commentar ueber den Brief Pauli an die Roemer, St. Louis, 1907, p. 133ff. Here Stoeckhardt gives a beautiful discussion of the meaning of $\rho' \tau \upsilon \sigma \tau \acute{\iota}$ and $\delta \iota \kappa \alpha \iota \omicron \nu$ in both the Old and the New Testament.
 32. Quen. III,515 in Schmid, op.cit. p.433

forensic and judicial act. In Romans 5,21 he uses the word "δικαιοῦν" in this manner.³³ To justify (δικαιοῦν) here signifies "to acquit" a guilty one and declare him righteous, but on account of the righteousness of another, namely Christ, which righteousness of another, namely of Christ is communicated to us by faith.³⁴ Again in Romans 3, 24, Paul states that we are "δικαιούμενοι δωρεάν τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. (declared just freely by His grace through the redemption, that is in Christ Jesus). Throughout his Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians this forensic meaning of δικαιοῦν becomes a "terminus technicus".³⁵ This justification does not depend upon a faith (a quality) which unites us with the divine nature, the infinite essential righteousness of God, but upon the faith, which apprehends the merits of Christ. In other words, we are not justified by Osiander's conception of faith, a quality which is within us, but by the faith, which trusts solely on the merits of Christ.³⁶ Accordingly, justification is to be regarded throughout as a free gift of grace on

33. Romans 5:21: ἵνα ὡσπερ ἐβασίλευσεν ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ Θανάτῳ, οὕτως καὶ ἡ χάρις βασιλεύσῃ διὰ δικαιοσύνης εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν.

34. "Apology of the Augsburg Confession", Art. III, 185 in op.cit. p.205.

35. Stoeckhardt, op.cit. p.135

36. Bente, Historical Introduction" in op.cit. p.155

the part of God, which is offered to us gratuitously and without requiring any condition to it on our part, and which can be received and accepted only by faith, as it is expressed in the declaration that we are justified, gratuitously, by faith alone, and for Christ's sake.³⁷

An examination of the Scriptural usage of faith will reveal to us that faith is never regarded as a quality in man, but as a trust in the merits of Christ, which receives the forgiveness of sin. In Romans 4,5 faith is designated as the trust in Christ, which appropriates the righteousness of God to himself.³⁸ Again in Romans 3,28 faith is pointed out as the means by which a sinner is justified, not as a quality. In this passage all works or qualities upon which justification might depend are eliminated and only faith is left to justify.³⁹ Thus faith can be defined as the receiving means (medium ληπτικόν) by which the believer appropriates to himself the merits of Christ offered to him in the means of grace (media σωτικά).⁴⁰

The Formula of Concord and the Augsburg Confession also confirm that faith justifies not because it is a quality in us, but because it lays hold of and accepts the merits

37. Schmid, op.cit. p.431f.

38. Romans 4:5: τῷ δὲ γὰρ ἔργα λόγην πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦν τὸν ἁσεβῶν, λογιζέται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

39. Romans 3:28: λογιζόμεθα γὰρ δικαιούσθαι πίστει ἀνθρώπων χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου.

40. Mueller, op.cit. p.374.

of Christ on the promise of the Gospel. In Article III of the Formula of Concord we find expressions such as these: "Faith alone is the sole means and instrument by which and through which we can receive the forgiveness of sins, which are offered to us in the Gospel!"⁴¹ "Faith justifies not for this cause and reason that it is so good a work and so fair a virtue, but because it lays hold of and accepts the merit of Christ on the promise of the Gospel".⁴² Article IV of the Augsburg Confession also contains similar expressions: "Also they teach that man cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith is imputed for righteousness in His sight. Romans 3 and 4."⁴³

Furthermore justification is not a process, which makes man righteous, but is instantaneous and complete the moment Christ's righteousness is received by faith. Scripture never teaches justification as a process, but always as an instantaneous act. David assures us of this fact in Ps. 32,1-2 in the words: Blessed is He whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered: blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity and

41. "Formula of Concord" Article III,30 in op.cit. p.925.
 42. "Formula of Concord" Article III,13 in op.cit. p.919.
 43. "Augsburg Confession", Article IV,1f. in op.cit. p.45.

in whose spirit there is no guile." According to this passage a person is blessed as soon as he receives the forgiveness of sin. Jesus Himself also assures us of this very fact in His words to the man sick of the palsy: "Son, be of good cheer: thy sins be forgiven thee." ⁴⁴ This man was justified immediately by Christ's declaration. Paul also confirms this truth in Romans 5,1: "Being justified by faith we have (ἔχωμεν pres. subj.) peace with God." ⁴⁵ Paul also teaches that as soon as we accept the forgiveness of ~~sinly~~ faith we are justified. Therefore, justification is not a process which makes us righteous, but is an instantaneous, forensic act. A

The word "δικαιοῦν" also expresses this fact. Dr. Mueller expresses it as follows: "That the verb "δικαιοῦν" means "to declare righteous" and not to "make righteous" is incontestably proved not only by its consistent usage in Scripture, but also by the exclusive particles (particulae exclusivae), which in Scripture are commonly joined in this term, Rom. 3,23-28; 4,5-8. These show that justification is not a healing or sanctifying process (actus medicinalis) by virtue of which the sinner is enabled to merit salvation by good works, but rather a forensic act, by which God for Christ's sake declares him to be righteous. Romans 4,2. ⁴⁶

44. Matt. 9,2.

45. Romans 5,1: Δικαιωθεῖτες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως εἰρήνην ἔχωμεν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

46. Mueller, op.cit. p.377

47. Br. (Baier) (574) in Schmid, op.cit. p.432.

Baier also confirms that justification is instantaneous when he states: "For with and through faith man is at once justified; so that the act by which faith conferred upon man, and the act by which man is justified, are simultaneous." ⁴⁷ On this same truth Pieper states: "In demselben Augenblick, in welchem ein Mensch an Christum oder an das Evangelium, das heisst, an die von Christo erworbene und im Evangelium dargebotene Vergebung der Sunden, gläubig wird, wird er durch diesen Glauben vor Gott gerechtfertigt." ⁴⁸ Thus justification is not as Osiander would have us believe, a process by which man is made righteous, but is an instantaneous and complete act, by which man is declared righteous.

In addition justification is not the same as sanctification, as Osiander teaches, but justification precedes sanctification. In other words justification is the source of sanctification. ⁴⁹ This truth is confirmed on the pages of Holy Writ. In Romans 6,22: But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God (namely, through justification) ye have τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν εἰς ἁγιασμόν v.18,19: Ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας (through faith in the Gospel, v.17, or through justification) ἔδουλώθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ... παρεθήκατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δούλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν ⁵⁰. Thus Scripture testifies

47. Br. (Baier 574) in Schmid, *op.cit.* p.432.

48. Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, Vol. II, p. 606.

49. Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, Vol. III, p.3.

50. Mueller, *op.cit.* p.384! "The justification of a sinner is immediately followed by his sanctification or renovation. Rom. 5,15. That is to say, the justified sinner turns from sin and serves God in good works, Rom. 12, 1-2; I. Thess. 4, 3-7; I Pet. 1,15; Rom. 13,13-14.

that the justification of a sinner precedes his sanctification, that is to say, the justified sinner turns from sin and then serves God in good works. Thus justification is always the antecedent; sanctification the consequence.

The Formula of Concord also confirms this truth, that justification precedes sanctification. It writes (Thor. Decl. III, 40-41): "In the same manner the order also between faith and good works must abide and be maintained and likewise between justification and renewal, or sanctification. For good works do not precede faith, neither does sanctification precede justification. But first faith is kindled in us in conversion by the Holy Ghost through the hearing of the Gospel. This lays hold of God's grace in Christ, by which the person is justified. Then when the person is justified, he is also renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, from which renewal and sanctification the fruits of good works then follow." 51

Therefore justification cannot be identified with sanctification, for justification precedes and is the cause of sanctification. On account of these facts Osiander's doctrine must be rejected.

51. Mueller, op.cit. p.385

The fourth error in Osiander's doctrine of justification is that he believed that the righteousness, by which we were made righteous before God, was not the essential righteousness of the entire Logos according to both natures, but only according to the divine nature, the human nature being only the canal through which this essential righteousness could be infused in man. Thus Osiander held that the work of redemption was only the work of the human nature of Christ, and our justification was the work of the divine nature. By separating the two natures of Christ in this manner, he denied the *genus apotelesmaticum*.⁵²

Against his teaching of justification we maintain that Christ's work of redemption and the actions pertaining to the office of Christ do not belong to one or the other nature singly and alone; but they are common to both, inasmuch as each contributes to them that which is its own, and thus each acts with the communication of the other. Therefore the righteousness of Christ and His redemption, which is accounted to us in justification is the righteousness of both natures of Christ.⁵³

The whole plan of Christ's incarnation bears out the fact that both the divine and human natures were united

52. Piper, *op.cit.* Vol. II, p.272, where he defines the *genus apotelesmaticum* as follows: "Alle Amtswerke, die Christus als Prophet, Hoherpriester, und Koenig zur Seligmachung der Menschen gewirkt hat und noch wirkt, wirkt er nach beiden Naturen, indem jede Natur das ihr Eigentuemliche nicht getrennt von der anderen, sondern in steter Gemeinschaft mit der and ern in einem ungeteilten gottmenschlichen Akt (*actio Θεανθρωπική*) wirkt."

53. Br. (478) in Schmid, *op.cit.* p.343

in the work of redemption. Schmid explains it in this manner: "The whole design of the incarnation of Christ is none other than that the Logos, united with the human nature, may accomplish the work of redemption. From the communion of the two natures, resulting from the personal union, it follows that all the influences proceeding from Christ cannot be attributed to one of the two natures. The influences may, indeed, proceed from one of the two natures, and each of the two natures exerts the influence peculiar to itself, but in such a way that, while such an influence is being exerted on the part of one of the natures, the other is not idle, but at the same time active; that, therefore, while the human nature suffers, the divine which indeed cannot also suffer, yet in so far participates in the suffering of the human nature that it wills this suffering, permits it, stands by the human nature and strengthens and supports it for enduring the imposed burden; further, that the human nature is to be regarded as active, not alone by means of the attributes essentially its own, but that to these are added, by virtue of the second genus of the *communicatio idiomatum*, the divine attributes imparted to it, with which it operates. For the divine nature could not of itself, alone, have offered a ransom for the redemption of the world; to do this it had to be united with the human nature, which, consisting of soul and body, could be offered up for the salvation of men; and again,

the human nature could not have accomplished much (miracles, etc.) had not its attributes been increased by the addition of the divine.⁵⁴

The Formula of Concord also testifies to this same fact that Christ, according to both natures, is our righteousness. In Article III of the Formula of Concord we read: "In opposition to both these parties it has been unanimously taught by the other teachers of the Augsburg Confession that Christ is our righteousness not according to His divine nature alone, nor according to His human nature alone, but according to both natures; for He has redeemed, justified and saved us from our sins as God and Man through His complete obedience; that therefore the righteousness of faith is the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, and our adoption as God's children only on account of the obedience of Christ, which through faith alone, out of pure grace, is imputed for righteousness to all true believers, and on account of it they are absolved from all their unrighteousness."⁵⁵ And again in the summary of this article this same teaching is presented and further explained: "For ever though Christ had been conceived and born without sin by the Holy Ghost and had fulfilled all righteousness in His human nature alone, and yet had not been true and eternal God, this obedience and suffering of His human nature could

54. Schmid, op.cit. p.322

55. "Formula of Concord", Art. III, 4 in op.cit. p.917

not be imputed to us for righteousness. As also, if the Son of God had not become man, the divine nature alone could not be our righteousness. Therefore, we believe, teach and confess, that the entire obedience of the entire person of Christ, which He has rendered the Father for us, even to His most ignominious death upon the cross is imputed to us for righteousness. For the human nature alone, without the divine, could neither by obedience and suffering render satisfaction to the eternal almighty God for the sins of all the world; however, the divinity alone, without the humanity, could not mediate between God and us." 56

The testimonies of Scripture clearly show that the union of the two natures in Christ occurred in order that the work of redemption, atonement, and salvation might be accomplished in, with, and through both natures of Christ. For if redemption, atonement, etc. could have been accomplished by the divine alone, or by the human nature alone, the Logos would have in vain descended from heaven for us men and for our salvation, and become incarnate man.⁵⁷

An examination of Osiander's doctrine that the divine nature of Christ is our righteousness in the light of Scripture will reveal to us even more concerning his error. Nowhere in Scripture does God assert that only the divine nature of Christ is our righteousness, but, on the contrary,

56. "Formula of Concord", Art. III, 56 in op.cit. p. 935
 57. Gerhard (III, 556) in Schmid op.cit. p. 343.

it constantly affirms that the entire work of redemption is the office of both natures of the Logos. John confirms this truth, when he says: "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested -- namely, ἐν σαρκί --- that He might destroy the works of the devil." According to this passage all the divine works through which the Son of God would become the Savior of men, are the offices of both natures. All these divine works, however, are accomplished only through the incarnation, in which God uses the human nature or the flesh as a means for all phases of the work of redemption.⁵⁸

Moreover, this human nature, in spite of its human essence, also receives the mutual divine attributes with the divine nature, or in other words, the entire work of Christ is also the work of the divine office. Scripture confirms this again and again. As the Seed of the woman, through His human nature as the organ, the Son of God crushed the head of the serpent under foot.⁵⁹ As the Seed of Abraham, in the human nature and through the same, He brought the blessing among the heathen.⁶⁰ As the One who was born of a woman, in the human nature and through the same, the Son of God was placed under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.⁶¹ As a prophet

58. I John 3,8: εἰς τοῦτο ἐφανερώθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα λύσῃ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου.

59. Gen. 3,15.

60. Gen. 22,18

61. Gal. 4,4-5

upon earth, in the flesh and through the same, He taught not only ἐκ τῆς γῆς but as ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κάλπον τοῦ πατρὸς with divine understanding.⁶² As the exalted King after His suffering and death, according to His human nature and through the same, He rules not in absentia, but over all things present in the world and the church.⁶³ In view of these Bible passages, which have ratified the entire work of the office of the Son of God through the incarnation, we can conclude that the work of Christ depends upon both the divine and human natures of Christ united in the God-man Christ.⁶⁴

In addition, Scripture does not describe the incarnate Son of God as a being outside of the flesh (esse extra carnem), but as becoming flesh (ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο). It was only through the incarnation that the Son of God, in the flesh and through the flesh, destroyed the works of the devil and is our Prophet, Priest, and King. Therefore we can conclude against Osiander's separation of the natures of Christ in the work of redemption, that "Christ accomplished all the functions of His mediatorial office (ἀποτελέσματα) according to both natures, in which each nature works those things, which pertain to it in continual communion with the other in one undivided act."⁶⁵

On the contrary the human nature of Christ alone could not be our righteousness, even though it could have suffered,

62. John 1, 18; 3, 31ff.

63. Gen. 22, 18:

64. Pieper, op.cit. Vol. II, p. 274 ff.

65. Pieper, op.cit. Vol. II, p. 277

died, and shed its blood, for the suffering and bloody death of Christ would have been without saving result, if the divine nature had not added a price of infinite value to those sufferings and death, which the Savior endured for us.⁶⁶ Our Bible furnishes us with many proof-texts that Christ's mediatorial office, or our Righteousness, is not the work of the human nature alone, but is the united work of both natures. I John 1,7 expresses this truth in the words: The blood of Jesus Christ, His (God's) Son, cleanseth us from all sin. Here the human nature of Christ is described as the αἷμα Ἰησοῦ (blood of Christ) and the divine nature with υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (His Son). Thus the two natures, united together καθαρῶς (cleanseth) us from all sin. Therefore the work of redemption or Christ's righteousness is not only the work of one nature, but of both natures.⁶⁷

Christ, in His mediatorial office, is also spoken of as our Savior, Redeemer, Prophet, King, etc. not only according to one nature, but according to both natures. In Scripture He is described as the One: who carries the sins of the world (John 1,29); who gave Himself for our sins (Gal. 1,4); who hath given Himself for us an offering as a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor (Eph.5,2); who died for our sins (I Cor. 15,3); who has suffered for us in the flesh (I Peter 4,1); who heals us through

66. Gerhard (III,556) in Schmid. op.cit. p.343.

67. I John 1,7: καὶ τὸ αἷμα Ἰησοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ καθαρῶς ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάντων ἁμαρτιῶν.

His wounds (Is. 53,5: I Peter 2,24); who gave His life as an offering for sin (Is. 53,10); who has redeemed us from the curse of the law (Gal.3,13); who has crushed the head of the serpent under foot (Gen. 3,15); who has destroyed the work of the devil (I John 3,8); who took part of death that through death He might destroy him that hath power of death (Hebrews 2,14); who is come to seek and to save that which is lost (Luke 19,10); who has by Himself purged our sin (Hebrews 1,3); etc. In all these texts whether the subject is clearly named according to both natures (that is, Christ died for our sins) or only by one of the two natures (that is, The only begotten Son had declared it to us, or the Seed of the woman shall crush the head of the serpent), yet the entire person always accomplished the work of redemption according to both natures, in which each nature works those things which pertain to it in continual communion with the other. And upon this unparalleled working together of God and man in one Person, that is, in the essence of the God-man Christ, is the unique character of the work of Christ in His Prophetic, High priestly, and Kingly office.⁶⁸

Thus since the complete work of Christ according to both natures in our righteousness, we can conclude against Osiander that Christ is our righteousness not only

68. Pieper, op.cit. Vol. II, p.277

according to His divine nature, but according to both natures.

The last error in Osiander's doctrine of justification, which we wish to examine, concerns his conception of the means of grace and the mystical union of Christ with the believers. Osiander held that the means of grace only serve to unite us with Christ's humanity, so that we might be capable of the righteousness of the divine nature of Christ, which makes us righteous. In other words, Christ, the "inner Word", approaches man in the "external Word" (the Gospel) and through it enters the believing soul, for through the Word, Sacraments, and faith we are united with His humanity. Accordingly, as Christ's humanity became righteous through the union with God, the essential righteousness, which moved Him to obedience toward God, thus we also become righteous through our union with Christ and in Him with God.⁶⁹

In opposition to Osiander's doctrine of the means of grace and the mystical union of Christ with the believers, we hold, as Scriptures teach, that the means of grace offer and convey the forgiveness of sin to all.⁷⁰ When this righteousness of Christ is received by faith, God, through this same Word, declares the believer righteous. This is his justification. By faith also we are, as the result of justification, united in a mystical union with God, so that the Triune God dwells in our hearts,

69. Seeberg, op.cit. p.497.

70. Mueller, op.cit. p.344.

strengthening our faith and enabling us to do works, which are pleasing to God. This is sanctification.

Scripture clearly teaches that all of the means of grace, that is the Word and the Sacraments, have the same purpose and effect, that is to say on the one hand, they offer the forgiveness of sin (the righteousness of Christ): on the other hand they engender and strengthen faith.⁷¹

Dr. Pieper in his Dogmatics defines the means of grace as the "Mittel, durch welche Gott sein durch Christum voellig versoehntes Herg den Menschen offern bart oder den Menschen um Christi Werkes willen eine Liebes erklarung macht, die von den Menschen geglaubt werden soll. Die wirkende Kraft der Gnadenmittel besteht darin, dass Gott durch diese Mittel, weil sie die Vergebung der Suenden zusagen oder Gottes gnaediges Herz offenbaren oder eine goettliche Liebeserklarung sind, auch den Glauben an die dargebotene Suendenvergebung hervorbringt und, wo er bereits vorhanden ist, staerkt."⁷²

According to Scripture the pre-eminent means of grace is the Gospel or the Word of Reconciliation, for it is the Word of God, which not only offers and conveys the forgiveness to the sinner, but actually absolves him from all sins.⁷³ Luther states this very correctly: "The Gospel is a general absolution; for it is a promise, which according to God's will and command, all in general

71. Pieper, op.cit. Vol.III,126.

72. Pieper, op.cit. Vol. III, p.121.

73. Romans 1,16; 2 Cor. 5,9.

and everyone should accept.⁷⁴

Moreover, the Gospel is a true means of grace in every form in which it is presented to the sinner, no matter whether it is publicly preached (Mark 16,15.16; Luke 24,47), or whether it is read (John 20,21; I John 1, 3.4); whether it is directly pronounced as an absolution, either in public or private (John 20,23; II Cor. 2,10): "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also") or expressed in the heart (Luke 2,21; Romans 10,8), etc. In short, no matter how the Gospel is brought before the mind of men it is always a true means of grace, offering to them and conferring upon them, the grace of God through faith in Christ Jesus.⁷⁵ Because of this St. Paul calls the Gospel a "ministration of righteousness".⁷⁶

Baptism is also another means of grace, by which God offers and conveys to men the merits of Christ, secured for the world by His vicarious satisfaction. In other words, baptism is a means of justification (Rechtfertigungsmedium or medium iustificationis sive remissionis peccatorum).⁷⁷ Scripture clearly teaches this truth. St. Paul states that Baptism is for the remission of sins (εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν). Acts 2,38: for the washing away of sins (ἀπολῦσαι ἁμαρτίας), Acts 22,16: for the cleansing of the church of Christ by the washing of water by the Word (καθάρσις τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι), Eph. 5,26.

74. Luther, Martin: St. Louis Edition XXIb, 1849 in Mueller
op.cit. p.443.

75. Mueller, op.cit. p.443

76. II Cor. 3,9.

77. Pieper, op.cit. Vol. III, p.309.

Therefore Luther rightly says that baptism "works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promises of God declare." 78

In addition God also offers and conveys the forgiveness of sin in the Lord's Supper. In this means of grace Christ offers to the communicant the body and the blood shed for the remission of sins, so that also in this sacrament we have God's gracious offer of pardon for the sake of Him who died and shed His blood as a ransom for sinners.⁷⁹ Christ Himself gives us this assurance in the words of institution, when He says: "Take eat, this is my body ... drink ye all of it, for this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you for the remission of sins (εἰς ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν)".⁸⁰ Therefore the Smalcald Articles classify the Lord's Supper as a means of grace "by which the forgiveness of sins is preached." 81

Thus Scriptures clearly testify that all the means of grace convey, offer, and grant the forgiveness of sin to all believers. They are not, as Osiander teaches, means through which man is united with Christ's humanity, so that he might be able to receive the divine essential righteousness of Christ, which makes him righteous. The

78. Luther, M., The Small Catechism, p.16.

79. Luke 22, 19.20; Matt. 26, 26-28.

80. Matt. 26, 26-28.

81. The "Smalcald Articles" Part III, Art. IV in the op.cit. p. 491.

Gospel and the Sacraments are means, by which God mediates to us by faith the forgiveness of sin for Christ's sake.

Closely linked with Osiander's false conception of the means of grace was his perverted view concerning the mystical union of Christ with the believers, according to which we become justified through our union with Him and God. Thus our union with the indwelling Christ works our justification. This teaching, however, is in conflict with God's Word. Scripture teaches that justification effects the mystical union (unio mystical), by which the Holy Trinity, in particular, dwells in the believer.⁸² It is a peculiar indwelling, which is distinct from God's general presence with all creatures (unio generalis), since God dwells essentially in the believer. It is the result of justification, not the cause of it.⁸³

On the other hand the mystical union of Christ with the believer works our sanctification, not our justification. When the believer receives the Triune God, especially the Holy Spirit by faith, the Holy Spirit dwells in his heart, as if He were dwelling in His holy temple.⁸⁴ Through this indwelling, our faith which has appropriated Christ's justification is strengthened, and he is moved

82. Gal.3,2; Eph.3,7; John 14,23; I Cor.3,16; 6,9.

83. Mueller, J.T., op.cit. p.320.

84. Gal. 3,2; I cor. 3,16.

by Him to continuous child-like prayers. These child-like prayers are the works of sanctification, the result of justification. 85 86

Furthermore, the "mystical union" is not only the union of Christ with the believers, but of the entire Triune God -- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The writers of the New Testament bring this truth forth very clearly. St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians speaks of the union of Christ with the believers. 87 In his Gospel St. John tells of the Father and Christ making their abode in the believers. 88 So also the Holy Ghost dwells in us according to Paul, because we are the temple of God. 89 Since these three persons are one in essence, we can on the basis of the Bible conclude that not only Christ, but the entire Trinity dwells in the believer because of the mystical union.

In addition this indwelling of the Trinity is not a union in which we become flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of His bone, as Osiander taught, but it is a real and most intimate conjunction of the substance of the Holy Trinity with the substance of the believers, effected by God Himself through the Gospel, the Sacraments, and faith. 90 Yet this union is not a personal or a substantial one. It would be wrong to suppose that the Triune God and the believer were united, so that their two substances would

85. Gal. 4,6; Romans 8,16.

86. Mueller, J.T. op.cit. p.382.

87. Eph. 3,7.

88. John 14,23.

89. I Cor. 3,16.

90. Quenstedt (III,622) quoted in Schmid, op.cit. p.487.

become one or that the one would be absorbed by the other, or that they would be united together as in the person of Christ.⁹¹ Rather, this union is a spiritual conjunction of the Triune God with justified man, in which Christ and the believers are mystically united, but yet remain two persons, as St. Paul testified in Gal. 2,20.⁹²

According to Schmid, the Formula of Concord seems to point to the mystical union. He bases his view on Sol. Dec. III, 65, where it designates as false the assertion that "not God Himself, but only the gifts of God, dwell in the believers." Using this as his basis, he then defines the extremes or limits of the mystical union as follows: "'The essence of the subjects to be united are, one the one part, the divine substance of the whole Trinity, 2 Pet. 1,4, and the substance of the human nature of Christ, John 15, 1,2,4; I Cor. 6,15-17; Eph. 5,30; Gal. 2,19-20; on the other part, the substance of believers, as to body and soul, I Cor. 6,15-19; Eph.5,30.' The form of this union consists in a true, real, intrinsic, and most conjunction of the substance of the believer with the substance of the Holy Trinity and the flesh of Christ.'" ⁹³

91. Schmid, op.cit., p. 485f.

92. Gal. 2,20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

93. Schmid, op.cit., p.488.

Thus we can affirm against Osiander's doctrine of the mystical union of Christ with the believers, that Scripture teaches that justification is the cause, not the result of this special union of Christ with the believers; that not only Christ, but the whole Trinity dwells in us because of faith, and that this union is not one of substance or person, but is a special union with God. Therefore we must reject Osiander's doctrine.

A Comparison of Osiander's "Christ in us" with the Scriptural Doctrine of "Christ for us"

A comparison of Osiander's doctrine of "Christ in us" with the Scriptural doctrine of a "Christ for us" reveals the following:

First: that justification is not an act by which God makes a man inherently just and righteous, but an act by which God declares us righteous.

Second: that justification is not an actual infusion of a righteousness dwelling in man ("Imago Dei"), but is an imputation of a righteousness existing outside of man.

Third: that justification is not regeneration, renewal, sanctification, and a physical cleansing from sin, but is a mere acquittal from sin and guilt.

Fourth: that justification is not a sort of medicinal process within man, but is a forensic or judicial act outside of man or a declaration concerning man's standing with God and his relationship to man.

Fifth: that the righteousness of faith is not a quality, condition, or change effected in believers by the essential righteousness of the divine nature (the "Imago Dei") dwelling in them through faith in Christ, but is the foreign righteousness, consisting in the obedience of Christ.

Sixth: that faith does not justify by reason of the thing which it introduces in man, but on account

of the thing outside of man in which he trusts and relies.

Seventh: Accordingly, justification is not a gradual and progressive act, but is always instantaneous and complete. ⁹⁴

94. Bente, "Historical Introduction" in op.cit., p.155.

In summary, our examination of Osiander's doctrine of the "imago Dei" in its relation to justification has revealed the far-reaching effect of this error upon the central teaching of Scripture, justification by faith alone. It has manifested to us the great truth of the statement that "an error in one of the fundamental teachings of Scripture always permeates and effects the doctrine of justification by faith, finally if carried out consistently eliminating the salvation by faith alone." Osiander's teaching did this very thing. His false conception of the "imago Dei" ultimately led to the substitution of the justification by a faith in a "Christ for us" for a justification by faith in a "Christ in us". In other words, Osiander made justification dependent on a Christ who dwells in us and makes us righteous, and not on a Christ who imputes the righteousness of His suffering and death to us and on of this declares us just.

This truth will become even more apparent as we briefly summarize the conclusions of our examination of Osiander's doctrine of justification with the Scriptural doctrine. A comparison of Osiander's teaching with that of Scripture reveals the following:

First: that justification is not the restoral of the essential righteousness of Christ ("imago Dei"), which makes man righteous, but is an act of God by which God declares us righteous through the righteousness which Christ has earned for us.

Second: that justification does not consist in two parts: the forgiveness of sins and the making righteous by the indwelling Christ, but is the forgiveness of sins or the righteousness of God (the merit of Christ's active and passive obedience, on account of which God declares us just).

Third: that justification is not identical with sanctification (as a process of becoming righteous), but is a complete instantaneous act, that is, a mere acquittal from sin the moment the righteousness of God is received by faith.

Fourth: that justification can not be identified with sanctification, for justification precedes and is the cause of sanctification, not the result of it.

Fifth: that justification is not the imputation of the essential righteousness of the divine nature of Christ, which makes us righteous by its indwelling, but is the righteousness of the complete work of Christ according to both natures.

Sixth: that the means of grace are not ways through which man is united with Christ's humanity, so that he might be capable of receiving the essential righteousness of Christ, which makes him righteous, but are the means through which God conveys, offers, and grants the forgiveness of sins to all believers.

Seventh: that justification is not the result of the mystical union of Christ with the believers, but is the cause of this special union.

Thus we can conclude that Osiander teaches justification as a process, and not as a forensic act of God.

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