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Article abstract

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## “The Mouth of Christ Alone”: Luther’s *Eine treue Vermahnung* (1522) on the Weak in Faith

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*Cet article examine un petit mais très important ouvrage que Luther a écrit avant de quitter pour toujours le château de Wartbourg, au début de mars 1522. A Sincere Admonition to All Christians présente des idées et un langage caractéristiques que l'on retrouve dans les sermons Invocavit. L'analyse de ce texte montre comment Luther a sélectionné, interprété et amplifié les textes bibliques dans le développement de son herméneutique, afin d'éloigner le mouvement de Wittenberg des influences puissantes de la politique, pour la ramener vers ce qu'il considérait comme l'irrésistible nature et fonction de la parole de Dieu. Lorsque les chrétiens identifient correctement leur interlocuteur, la « voix du Seigneur » — un agent de jugement dépassant toute insurrection humaine — favorise également le soutien persuasif du faible dans la foi.*

It is a commonplace that popular medieval understandings of Christ were dominated by an image of him as Cosmic Judge. Early sixteenth-century Wittenberg held artistic displays at the entrance to the cemetery, on the north tower entrance to the parish church, and on the old Wittenberg church seal depicting Christ as judge. Oswald Bayer notes that “every time he entered the city church in Wittenberg” Luther probably interpreted a “fear of the judge of the world, so angry the veins stand out, menacing and swollen, on his forehead... A lily emerging from the right side of his mouth and a sword from the left symbolize Christ judging both the spiritual and the worldly realms, thus judging everywhere: Nobody and nothing escapes his judgment.”<sup>1</sup> We might reasonably ask, then, how Luther might have understood (and subsequently used) his concept of the mouth of the Lord as judgment to be feared and as power to persuade. Could Luther, upon his brief secret visit<sup>2</sup> to Wittenberg in early December 1521, have been motivated not only by troubling tendencies toward violence but also by visible reminders that nothing surpasses the power

of the Word? Readers who grasped a rich respect for the Word might be convinced not to run ahead of the Lord in their haste to reform the church.

My agenda here is to examine an important document Luther wrote from the Wartburg (late December 1521, published January 1522).<sup>3</sup> Luther's "A Sincere Admonition by Martin Luther to All Christians to Guard Themselves Against Insurrection and Rebellion" (*Eine treue Vermahnung zu allen Christen, sich zu hüten vor Aufruhr und Empörung*) is a work critical for understanding Luther's subsequent actions upon returning from Wartburg in March 1522 to resume leadership of the Wittenberg Movement.<sup>4</sup> In "Sincere Admonition," not only do we learn what Luther wrote there about avoiding violence, but also—and more importantly for him—what readers needed to know about how to treat others, particularly the weak in faith. This latter theme is not simply Luther's main emphasis in this work; it continued to shape his direct appeals to the Wittenbergers when he preached to them from the *Kanzel* in the *Stadtkirche*.<sup>5</sup> In this little book Luther argues two important themes that subsequently proved effective in his Eight Invocavit Sermons<sup>6</sup> (March 9–16, 1522), sermons that slowed a runaway Reformation in Wittenberg, sermons in which his fellow theology professor Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt (1486–1541) was discredited,<sup>7</sup> by what he characterized as a sellout of their movement.<sup>8</sup> Important arguments Luther makes in "Sincere Admonition" address how the Word of God, operating through divine speech, judges and redeems, and to what extent Christians can be part of that agency.

In what follows, then, I examine Luther's document through textual analysis, employing grammatical, rhetorical, and historical evidence, organizing my analysis in a manner consonant with Luther's own textual arrangement. While I shall not insist here that Luther consciously and deliberately used the rules of *ars rhetoricae*, nevertheless I concentrate especially on how he organized and expressed his arguments and appeals.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, how Luther wrote can be seen with greater clarity as expressed through grammatical and stylistic categories. First, I summarize Luther's purpose in writing. Next, I explicate briefly each of the document's two parts (themes), wherein the first part is the longer and clearly bears upon the subject of the title (insurrection); the second part is much shorter but bears upon the matter of what to do about "the weak," the dominant issue for the Wittenberg Movement in the next few months. I argue that the second, shorter part is the *more* important for Luther. Finally, I offer some conclusions.

## 1. Summary of Luther’s Purpose in Writing

The problem of potential widespread violence against the clergy, which could develop into a larger insurrection, was one important issue for Luther. Between early October and mid-December 1521 numerous instances in Wittenberg of violence against priests and the disturbing of masses—not to mention the cessation of private masses, abandonment of vows, and flight of monks from the cloisters—was producing enough trouble to prompt Saxon Elector Frederick the Wise to order an investigation; sufficient news of these events brought Luther to Wittenberg on a secret visit.<sup>10</sup> The rush to implement changes in worship influenced students and others to take matters into their own hands. Not everyone in Wittenberg and surrounding towns, however, was in sympathy with these actions. Moreover, well known are some remarks in a letter Luther wrote to Spalatin, probably on December 5, 1521, when he was ready to travel back to Wartburg: “To be sure, I was disturbed [*vexatus*] on the way by various rumors about the violent conduct of some of our people, and have determined to issue a public exhortation on that subject as soon as I get back to my wilderness.”<sup>11</sup>

However, a second, and broader, problem was the damage being done to the reputation of the evangelical cause; the two problems are thus layers of “violence.” Luther believed that God would handle the first problem; for the second he had deeper anxiety. He loathed physical violence against authority, but he also tried to help his readers see that taking up arms plays into the devil’s hands, disobeys Scripture, and never will succeed. If he can convince readers that the violence already occurring is evidence of God’s wrath against the papal regime, then the first problem will abate. However, the greater danger to the evangelical movement is the more insidious method of the devil’s complicity with human pride, enticing evangelicals to overreact. Damage could be done to the cause by offending the very audience they need to reach—weaker brethren who still remain devoted to traditional ceremonies yet are receptive to the gospel. Thus the second purpose of this little book—to avoid causing offence—is not apparent from the book’s title. Moreover, not only is the title silent about the second problem, but its two terms *auffruhr* and *emporung* could mistakenly be taken as implying two dimensions to the first problem. However, Luther uses these two terms (*auffruhr*, *emporung*) synonymously, or at least, as complements.<sup>12</sup> Yet Luther’s final sentence of the book makes both aims abundantly clear: “Let

this suffice for the present as a renewed<sup>13</sup> admonition to guard against insurrection and giving offence, so that we ourselves may not be the agents for the desecration of God's holy word."<sup>14</sup> Finally, we must not overlook the reflexive (*sich zu hüten*) in the title, for Luther certainly expected "all Christians" to heed his admonition and apply it to themselves.

Accordingly, Luther uses the last one-third of his book to argue for a reasoned gentleness in working with weaker brethren. Therefore, this section is a natural extension of his previous point—that the authentic solution to insurrection is that the "mouth of the Lord" will handle things. For "all who glory in the name Christian" play a crucial role in the outcome and its apocalyptic overtones: their words and actions will further condemn the guilty papists (the hard-hearted), as well as help rescue those who are merely weak in faith. Naturally, Luther would then need to add further discussion about how that will happen through believers: what to avoid and what to pursue, this time based on two types of people—the stubborn and the weak.

## 2. Explication of *Eine Treue Vermahnung*

### 2.1 "First Part — Insurrection": a brief synopsis, with analysis

Luther is pleased about the fear and anxiety, because they reveal the beginning of God's wrath against the papacy. However, he argues that the *problem* of insurrection is not as bad as some thought; full-scale insurrection will not ensue, for it will be controlled by God's own Word. Luther then explains the *solution* to insurrection, offering instructions for dealing with the hand of men: only temporal authorities have the right to keep peace and punish wrong. Luther's instructions come in two parts: what *not* to do, and then what *to* do. First, do nothing; it is not necessary. Threats are just that, but secular authority must do its part to moderate wrong. Insurrection is ineffective, for it always results in the innocent harmed or a worsening of conditions. God forbids insurrection, so do not do it; if God forbids it, then it also will not work. Finally, the Devil has fomented the notion of insurrection; do not succumb to this, because he wants to undermine our teachings. Following these instructions, Luther provides a transition, in the form of prolepsis (raising, then refuting, potential objections), asking: "So, *what do we do* if the above measures do not work?" In this second part, Luther instructs readers: first, be humble and confess that we also are to

blame; second, pray for God to put down the papists; third, speak and write against the papal regime, and you will be participating in the Word issuing from the Mouth of the Lord. Finally, in summary, Luther argues that there is no need for an armed insurrection, for Christ has already begun a “spiritual insurrection”; for the “pope and his adherents” Scripture promises something worse than “bodily death and insurrection.”<sup>15</sup> Daniel 8:25 dictates that “no human hand,” which Luther interprets as “no sword and<sup>16</sup> physical force [*schwert und leyplicher gewalt*],” will break [him]. Obviously, Luther sees the pope as the incarnation of the “king of bold countenance” (Daniel 8:23). Having offered a synopsis, I will now present a more detailed analysis, demonstrating how Luther advances his argument.

Having established what God will *not* use—a pattern Luther follows frequently in this book, wherein the “not” or “do not” precedes the “will” or “do”—he turns to Paul (one-fourth of Luther’s texts in this book are Pauline). In quoting 2 Thess. 2:8, Luther applies Paul’s declaration about “the lawless one” to the pope: “Our Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him with the brightness of his coming.” Interpreting this text by calling to mind artistic depictions known to all in Wittenberg, Luther explains that Isaiah inspired the artists and that the Psalmist is corroboration that the artists got it wrong! The mouth of the Lord here is only for judging the wicked; there will be no mercy for the pope. Luther’s argument needs to be heard in full, as he retains the chiasmus (= reverse parallelism)<sup>17</sup> in Isaiah 11:4, wherein God judges the poor and meek with righteousness and equity (= mercy), but the wicked of the earth are smitten with rod and breath (= condemnation). Luther also preserves the syntax of Psalm 10:15, wherein God judges with condemnation only the wicked. Luther here took the engraving<sup>18</sup> to be improperly trying to depict *both* aspects of judgment—mercy (*misericordia*) with a lily blossom, and justice (*iustitia*) with a sword in the same illustration of *Der Weltenrichter*, Christ the Judge, seated on a rainbow—as below:

Artists portray Christ seated on a rainbow, with a twig and a sword [*ruthe und schwert*]<sup>19</sup> proceeding out of his mouth, a conception based on Isaiah 11 [:4], where he says, “He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.” But the artists depict a twig in blossom; that is not right. It should be a staff or rod [*stab odder stangen*],<sup>20</sup> and

both rod and sword [*stange und schwerdt*] should be on the same side,<sup>21</sup> extending only over the damned. Psalm 10 [:15] says, “Break thou the arm of the ungodly; seek out his wickedness, and his godlessness will remain.”<sup>22</sup>

Regardless of how confusing, or misguided, we take Luther’s exegesis here, there is little question that his focus is on judgment of the wicked, particularly the “pope and his anti-Christian regime” whose destruction, he says, we learn “from these texts.”<sup>23</sup> I consider Luther to be arguing that Paul (2 Thess. 2:8) echoes the Psalmist (Psalm 10:15). Later, Luther will return to this key theme of the mouth of the Lord, through which Christians can participate in wooing people with the gospel, and the dual notion of the one-and-the-same “mouth of the Lord” that brings both judgment and salvation (Isaiah 11:4).

Having now shown *that* the papal regime has been judged by God, Luther then proceeds to explain *how* such judgment will be effected: it will occur by means of the “word of Christ, which is the breath, the rod and the sword, of his mouth.” This word will expose the pope’s “villainy, deceit, rascality, tyranny, beguilements.” Luther instructs his readers in what they *can* do: speak and write against the papal regime, and “you will be participating in the Word issuing from the Mouth of the Lord.” He advises his reader to let his mouth become the mouth of the Spirit of Christ, which Luther says is what Paul means in 2 Thesalonians 2:8, which he had uttered earlier:

This we do when we boldly continue the work that has been begun, and by speaking and writing spread among the people knowledge of the rascality and deceit of the pope and the papists until he is exposed, recognized, and brought into disrepute throughout the world. For he must first be slain with words; the mouth of Christ must do it. In that way he will be torn from the hearts of men, and his lies recognized and despised. When he is gone from men’s hearts and so has lost their confidence, he is already destroyed.<sup>24</sup>

Luther’s emphasis on the mouth of Christ becoming our mouth continues heavily in this section. In 25 lines he uses *mund* nine times; he will use it six more times before the end of the First Part of the book. Luther argues that Christ’s slaying of the Antichrist, meaning the pope and his regime, by the breath

of his mouth—visualized by rod and sword—will be actualized in part when believers allow their mouths to be Christ’s mouth; his spirit and word becomes their word, living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12). From Luther’s last two sentences in the quotation above, his confidence in the Word as a productive power to supplant evil in men’s hearts is not only a word of judgment but also a word of hope—that what the devil has built up (sin and fear) will not only be torn down but also replaced with faith, hope, and love. As Luther completes his discussion of what will be accomplished by the action of Christ’s mouth, Luther contrasts the work of Christ’s mouth with that of human violence (*abbrechenn*) and insurrection (*auffruhr*).

Next, Luther’s readers are shown evidence that speaking and writing will work. Luther’s arguments are first practical and then biblical; the biblical legitimizes and actuates the practical. In the full quotation below, notice how Luther strategically hammers a quadruplet of enemies, using no conjunctions (= asyndeton), after which he employs a triplet of apparent powers, now using conjunctions to stretch out, even exhaust, the list (= polysyndeton). Moreover, he repeats significant terms (*mouth, word*), ultimately juxtaposing them tightly through chiasmus (*word/mouth: mouth/word*), while at the same time executing an antithesis: “not mine but Christ’s”:

See what I have done. Have I not, with the mouth alone, without a single stroke of the sword, done more harm to the pope, bishops, priests and monks than all the emperors and kings and princes with all their power ever did before? And why? Because Daniel 8 [:25] says, “By no human hand shall this king be broken”; and St. Paul says, “He will be destroyed by the mouth of Christ” [2 Thessalonians 2:8]. Now every man—whether it be I or another—who speaks the word of Christ may boldly assert that his mouth is the mouth of Christ. I for my part am certain that my word is not mine, but the word of Christ; my mouth therefore must also be [the mouth] of him whose word it speaks.<sup>25</sup>

There is no need, Luther summarizes, for an armed insurrection, for Christ has already begun a “spiritual insurrection.” The papacy will not be able to withstand what Christ is doing, for they cannot see Christ. Luther uses repetition of initial phrases (= anaphora) to unveil divine action—systematically and



progressively—for his readers: “It is not our work that is now transpiring in the world. It is not by mere man that such an affair could possibly begin and transpire. It has not come thus far by my consideration and counsel. It will also be completed without my advice.”<sup>26</sup> What should be done is “spread and help others spread” the holy gospel; they are to “teach, speak, write and preach” that human laws are nothing; simply tell them that the Christian life is “faith and love.” He finishes with more of the same, when the mouth of Christ—and our mouths—flourish:

But if we fail to teach and spread this truth among the people so their hearts will no longer cling to these things, we will still have the pope with us, though we were to start a thousand insurrections against him. See what has been accomplished in this one single year, during which we have been preaching and writing this truth... What will be the result if the mouth of Christ continues to thresh by his Spirit for two more years? This is what the devil would like to prevent by stirring up an armed insurrection. But let us be wise, thank God for his holy word, and be bold with our mouths in the service of this blessed insurrection.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, within the last 50 lines, Luther has juxtaposed two types of insurrection: (1) using strong tone, especially for clergy, he depicts the improper, unauthorized, harmful insurrection of violence, contrasting it, through a gentler tone, with (2) the proper, authorized, beneficial insurrection of the Spirit, the latter being effected by the mouth of Christ alone and aided by our (i.e., his readers’) mouths, when they speak only the truth and bring no reproach upon the gospel. Without saying it explicitly, Luther has proposed a course of behaviour that enacts what it means to “*be Christ to our neighbour*,” which he had argued one year earlier in “The Freedom of A Christian.”<sup>28</sup>

## **2.2. “Second Part — On Not Giving Offence”: a brief synopsis, with analysis**

Luther now considers the solution further, arguing that an overly harsh approach to promoting the gospel and overturning unscriptural laws harms the weak

and undermines the very gospel we proclaim. Two specific and interrelated instructions must be followed. First, Luther tells those who want to be known as “Lutherans” and who are judging others to be insufficiently “Evangelical” that this is prideful, anti-scriptural, and ineffective; Christ is their only master, and mimicking papist partisanship is unchristian. Luther argues that to claim a sectarian identity is to divorce oneself from Christ. He advances this argument by aligning himself (*I, my, mine*) closely with Paul and Pauline doctrine. Yet as he takes his stance—in contrast to what he says has been occurring (in Wittenberg, presumably)—his secondary identity is still *aligned with* his fellow believers, not set apart from them. Notice how, in addition to the Scriptures, Luther also employs the rhetorical question (= demanding that readers ponder an answer), doublet (= furnishing two unacceptable alternatives), endearment (*dear friends*), and the first person plural pronoun (*us, we, our*). Together, these stylistic choices signal an elevated urgency to this section on offence:

In the first place, I ask that men make no reference to my name; let them call themselves Christians, not Lutherans. What is Luther? After all, the teaching is not mine.<sup>29</sup> Neither was I crucified for anyone.<sup>30</sup> St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 3, would not allow the Christians to call themselves Pauline or Petrine, but rather [*sondern*] Christian. How then should I—poor stinking maggot-fodder that I am—come to have men call the children of Christ by my wretched name? Not so, dear friends; let us abolish all party names and be known as Christians, after him whose teaching we hold. The papists deservedly have a party name, because they are not content with the teaching and name of Christ, but want to be papist as well. Let them be papist then, since the pope is their master. I neither am nor want to be anyone’s master. I hold, together with the universal church, the one universal teaching of Christ, who is our only master (Matthew 23).<sup>31</sup>

Second, Luther tells readers to consider their audience, which is made up of two kinds of people: the stubborn and the weak. The former, the hard-hearted (*vorstockten*), are those who have already rejected the gospel.<sup>32</sup> He tells them: (1) to these, remain silent; you won’t change them anyway, they are a lost cause; (2) take the initiative and attack with sharp commands, when they lie or poison

others. This must be done, not for their sakes but for the sake of those they poison. When these same hardhearted begin corrupting others, and readers subsequently witness this, Luther's hearers must "take the offensive and fight against them [*denn kopff stoffenn unnd wider sie streyitten*]." Luther invokes the exemplary actions of Paul (Acts 13) and Christ (Matthew 23:33), as well as the command of Paul (Titus 1:10–13). His second person singular pronouns retain the same degree of strong instruction, addressing each believer, throughout the earlier part of the paragraph<sup>33</sup> (three second person singular pronouns):

But when you see that these same liars pour their lies and poison into other people, then you should boldly take the offensive and fight against them, just as Paul in Acts 13 [:10–11] attacked Elymas with hard, sharp<sup>34</sup> words, and as Christ called the Pharisees a 'brood of vipers' [Matt 23:33]. You should do this, not for their sake, for they will not listen, but for the sake of those whom they are poisoning. Just so does St. Paul command Titus to rebuke sharply such empty talkers and deceivers of souls [Titus 1:10–13].<sup>35</sup>

The weak in faith (*schwachen*), having not yet heard the gospel, are Luther's second audience type. This one is not proud but has a simple soul (*eynfeldig hertz*), is one's neighbour (*nehisten*), one's brother. He needs the gentle teaching that Paul and Peter advocate.<sup>36</sup> How Luther recommends handling this group, upon which he concentrates for the next 43 lines (thirteen percent of the book), eventually becomes the epicentre of the controversy surrounding the *Invocavit* Sermons. For it was Luther's project for temperate treatment of the weak that Andreas Bodenstein of Karlstadt considered commensurate with a sellout of the strong<sup>37</sup> and to which he objected strenuously. This group of "the weak," Luther maintains, consists of those who: (a) have not yet heard; (b) would be willing to learn if someone taught them; or (c) are so weak that they cannot readily grasp the gospel.<sup>38</sup> Luther's advice incorporates antithesis and three doublets that successively tell readers what not to do, how to do what they should, and what that entails: "These you should not bully or beat up, but instruct in a kindly and gentle manner, giving them a reason and a cause. If they are unable to grasp it at once, have patience with them for some time."<sup>39</sup>

Luther finds this category of the weak in faith, and how to treat them, to be outlined in the New Testament. His careful quotation of Paul in Romans

14:1a (he actually cites Romans 15) foregrounds the weak in faith by virtue of its first position in his sentence.<sup>40</sup> By blending Paul’s category of the weak with Peter’s instructions for treating them, Luther makes a strong rationale for behaving with “gentleness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15), a phrase he then uses repeatedly in this section about the weak. As it happens, he uses “gentleness and fear” (or something close to it)<sup>41</sup> twice as often as he does the expression “reason and cause.”<sup>42</sup> In other words, in this context the manner of teaching is at least as important as the substance of what is taught (probably more important), for the manner of approaching these folk is crucial in determining what substance they learn. Notice also, in Luther’s use of the scriptural warrants, that he emphasizes the receptivity of the weak, presenting it through additional doublets:

St. Paul says of them in Romans 15, “Welcome him who is weak in faith;” and St. Peter<sup>43</sup> says in 1 Peter 3 [:15], “Always be prepared to give an answer to any one who desires a defense and explanation [*grund unnd ursach*] of the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and fear [*sanffmutickeyt und forcht*].” Here you see that we are to give instruction in our faith gently and in the fear of God [*mit senffte unnd gottis furcht*] to any man who desires or needs [*begert odder darff*] it.<sup>44</sup>

An example (a rope around a brother’s neck) illuminates both harmful and helpful ways to intervene. Here Luther offers what will become a comparison (*gleychnisz*) that serves as paradigmatic for teaching readers how to handle the weak. Notice the abundance of second person singular pronouns; Luther here employs a stronger tone, a more confrontational style—again, we see signs of increased urgency in this topic.

Take an analogous case: If an enemy had tied a rope around your brother’s neck, endangering his life, and you like a fool were to fly into a rage at rope and enemy and frantically pull the rope toward you or slash at it with a knife, you would most likely either strangle or stab your brother, doing him more harm than either rope or enemy. If you really want to help, this is what you must do: the enemy you may punish or beat<sup>45</sup> as hard as he deserves, but the

rope you must handle gently and with caution until you get it off  
his neck, lest you strangle your brother.<sup>46</sup>

So cogent was the example that nearly three years later (November 1524) Karlstadt offered a corresponding counter-example, wherein the weak brother is a child playing with a sharp knife; thus, the obvious solution demands acting quickly to prevent the child from harming himself.<sup>47</sup> Here, however, Luther's illustration covers both means of attempting to aid someone in danger: first, the improper tactic; next, the proper course. The example embodies wisdom and power: into the scene, at the very outset, Luther shrewdly inserts a third party, an enemy (*feynd*) who is not *deynn bruder*. However, one cannot disable that enemy (repeated twice more) without risking harm to one's brother.<sup>48</sup> For the reader wanting to aid his brother (and who wouldn't want that?), there are two "targets"—rope and enemy—the *agency* that binds the brother's neck, and the responsible *agent*. The logical-ethical dilemma, therefore, is: how to free my brother without harming him further. Moreover, Luther's example includes a second dilemma: how to defeat the enemy without further jeopardizing my brother's safety. Yet it is the brother's rescue that Luther upholds as paramount. In this example he concentrates more second person singular pronouns than any other place in the book, strongly holding the reader accountable to choose a course of action. Moreover, Luther puts his positive example for helping the brother into the figure of *inclusio*—"you must [*mustu*]... you may [*magstu*] ... you must [*mustu*]." A recent interpreter concludes that an *inclusio* "has the effect of framing the enclosed material, giving it unity and closure: the reader recognizes the return to the original pattern after movement away in the interim."<sup>49</sup> Finally, one cannot miss Luther's two additional rhetorical tactics: first, the strong epithet "fool [*narr*]" that he uses to add literal insult to the injury of the hypothetical brother—which is, for Luther, not at all hypothetical.<sup>50</sup> In the earlier use of "fool," when he began this "Second Part: On Offence," Luther was even more insulting: "You fool."<sup>51</sup>

Luther then summarizes the handling of two kinds of people, with scriptural evidence of commands and results.<sup>52</sup> Continuing to use the second person singular, Luther reiterates how to handle each type of fellow, taking up first "the liars, the hardened tyrants [*die lugner, die vorstockte tyrannen*]"<sup>53</sup>—whose "teachings and works [*lere und werck*]" one may (*magstu*) oppose boldly. Next he contrasts that to the "caution and gentleness [*furcht unnd senffte*]" with

which one must (*mustu*) undo (*auffloszen*) the teachings of the simple (*eynfeltigen*). In addition to repeated stressing of the *form* of teaching (from 1 Peter 3:15), Luther also repeats the doublet that represents *content* of teaching—a “defense and explanation [*grund unnd ursach*]”—as well as the expectation: gradually (*mit der tzeytt*) setting them free. To bolster his summary, Luther adds biblical support. He continues with Pauline principles, this time using not Paul’s teaching but rather his conduct: in Jerusalem, Paul defied all the Jews, because of the false brethren (*falsos fratres*) they brought in,<sup>54</sup> refusing to circumcise the Gentile Titus (Galatians 2:3ff.); yet in order to minister to Gentiles in Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, he circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3). Oddly, Luther cites neither of these Scriptures, nor does he comment upon the fact that Timothy was circumcised because of the Jews (*propter Iudaeos*) that were there, who knew Timothy was Greek. Perhaps Luther is silent because he chose to omit any explaining of the differing circumstances in the two cases (not to mention the possible confusion over two opposing ways to deal with the same kinds of people). As it happens, Luther immediately turns instead to further metaphoric characterization of the hardened (*vorstockt*), similar to the dogs and swine (Matthew 7) that he had used earlier in this discussion. Adding two new metaphors, he places the four creatures into a tidy antithesis, distinguishing not only between two kinds of people, but also between “must” and “may,” a crucial distinction he will develop further in the *Invocavit Sermons*: “You must treat dogs and swine [*hund unnd sew*] differently from men; wolves and lions [*wolff unnd lewen*] differently from the weak sheep. With wolves you cannot be too severe; with weak sheep you cannot be too gentle.”<sup>55</sup>

In completing the summary, Luther then abandons the second person singular and returns to the first person plural. He invokes another teaching of Peter, this one being instruction for dealing with the heathen; thus, Peter has now supplied Luther with teaching about both of his two kinds of people (*tzweyerley*). The quote is verbatim from the reading he will use in the *Septemberbibel*, with one exception: Luther has moved the verb from first position and placed it in the centre of the syntax. Notice, as I quote Luther’s exhortation in full, not only the inclusive pronouns—in sharp distinction from the opposition—but also his recovery of the theme of reputation, so crucial to Evangelical teaching (*dyszer lere; die gantzen lere*). Further, one cannot miss his transparent conclusion that papists are not weak brethren but “heathen,” uttered three times:

Living as we do among the papists today, we must act as though we were living among the heathen. Indeed, they are heathen seven times over; we should therefore, as St. Peter teaches [1 Peter 2:12], maintain good conduct among the heathen, that they may not speak any evil of us truthfully, as they would like to do. They are delighted when they hear that you make a boast of this teaching and give offence to timid souls. This affords them a pretext for denouncing the whole teaching as offensive and harmful [*ergerlich und schedlich*], for they have no other way of demolishing it and have to admit [*abbrechen unnd bekennen*] it is true.<sup>56</sup>

Luther's closing remarks invoke God's empowering for all (*Gott geb uns allen*) to "practise what we preach," so that word and deed, living and teaching, be brought into harmony. In quoting from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:21), he appropriately<sup>57</sup> applies Jesus's warning that the many (*viel*) who will say, "Lord, Lord," *on that [judgment] day* can also be found among us now (*Unser ist*). Luther's application is forceful, extending Jesus's saying, drawing the inference that not only is the "doing and following [*thun unnd folgen*]" lacking, but additionally present is their (now hypocritical) praise of the teaching (*loben die lere*). Without stressing the context of Jesus's teaching in Matthew 7 (hypocrites and false prophets), Luther certainly talks as though he finds Jesus's words about knowing a tree by its fruits (Matthew 7:16–20) to be particularly enlightening for his topic here. Thus, this invocation for all to do better makes a final stab at overzealous Evangelicals who undermine their own teaching with lack of complementary lifestyle.

As I stated near the beginning of the paper, Luther's finishing statement (*Das seyn ditzmal gnug ...*), coming here at the end of "Part Two, On Avoiding Offence," clearly covers both parts: a sincere [*trewen*, from Luther's title]<sup>58</sup> admonition to avoid insurrection (*auffruhr*) and to prevent offence-giving (*ergernusz*).

## Conclusion

That Luther wanted the weak in faith<sup>59</sup> salvaged, more than he wanted the stubborn punished, is evident even from how he applies the example of the

child and the rope. He says that for the weak one must “undo” (*auffloszen*) the teachings of men (*menschen lere*), which is precisely what the *enemy’s ropes* (both agent and agency) are! It is these teachings that have bound men and from which they must be set free (*losz machen*). In addition, Luther indicates through his style—more elevated and urgent in the second part—that his greater concern here is not with the likelihood of insurrection but with the arrogance that can harm weaker brethren. Scripture that Luther quotes provides: (1) precedents from Paul for (a) confronting the stubborn (Galatians 2:3) and (b) assisting the weak (Acts 16:3); and (2) commands from Peter on how to behave and teach: always be ready to explain your faith, doing it with gentleness (1 Peter 3:15), and maintain good conduct among the heathen (1 Peter 2:12). Luther’s advice, then, for discerning which kind of audience one faces is simple, though not easy: assume you live among the heathen (*unter den heydenn*) and act in love. Although he appeals to the anthropological (pragmatic efficacy), the fundamental grounding of his argument rests with the theological (a desire to please the Lord). The appeal of this entire argument, then, resides in appeals to love and honour: love of neighbour, not wanting to offend him; love and honour for Christ, by practising what we preach. In arguing that the mouth of the Lord alone will judge the unrighteous with a spiritual insurrection, and that one can (and must) *be* the mouth of Christ<sup>60</sup> for assisting, rather than offending, one’s neighbour, Luther portrays the establishment of God’s kingdom through witness rather than by power and influence.<sup>61</sup> Failure to *witness* faithfully would be catastrophic because, for Luther, the desecrating (*unheyligt*) of God’s holy word was at stake—as well as, of course, the reputation of “*theologia nostra*,”<sup>62</sup> and—in Electoral Saxony—even the future of the *causa Lutheri*.

## Notes

1. Oswald Bayer, “Justification as the Basis and Boundary of Theology,” *Lutheran Quarterly* 15.3 (2006), pp. 273–92 [281]. Bayer’s description of the engraving is quoted verbatim by Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, in *The Genius of Luther’s Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2008), p. 33. Throughout my paper I refer to Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehman, ed., *Luther’s Works: American Edition*, 55 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1955–1986), 45:57–74, a series henceforth



- abbreviated as LW. Unless otherwise specified, English translations of Luther are from LW. For additional comments on the artistic renderings in Wittenberg of Christ as judge, see LW 45:59, note 6.
2. Luther's stay at Wartburg was from May 4, 1521 to March 1, 1522. However, prior to his return, disguised as Knight George, Luther made one secret trip to Wittenberg, travelling from December 1–11, staying only three days in Wittenberg at the home of Nikolaus Amsdorf.
  3. *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Abteilung Werke, 67 vols. (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1883–), 8:673, a series henceforth abbreviated as WA.
  4. LW 45:57–74; WA 8:676–687. The WA editors worked from ten editions, while Josef Benzing and Helmut Claus, *Lutherbibliographie: Verzeichnis der gedruckten Schriften Martin Luthers bis zu dessen Tod* (Baden-Baden: Heitz, 1965), nr. 1046–1055, also catalogue ten editions in 1522–1523, a series hereafter abbreviated as Benzing.
  5. The *weak in faith* is a strong theme in the First Invocavit Sermon, on March 9, 1522 (LW 51:71–72).
  6. LW 51:70–100; WA 10[III]:1–64.
  7. On April 27, 1522 a book censorship order, aimed primarily at Karlstadt, was implemented by Wittenberg University; see Jens-Martin Kruse, *Universitätstheologie und Kirchenreform: Die Anfänge der Reformation in Wittenberg 1516–1522* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2002), p. 383. On p. 385 Kruse shows how Luther's own letters written immediately after the *Invocavit Predigten* make Karlstadt and Gabriel Zwilling (of the Wittenberg Augustinian Monastery) responsible for many of the developments in Wittenberg leading up to March 1522.
  8. Karlstadt expressed his concerns in a letter of March 27, 1522 to Hektor Pömer at Nuremberg; see Ulrich Bubenheimer, "Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt und seine fränkische Heimat: Mit einem Brief Bodensteins an Hektor Pömer vom 27. März 1522," in *Querdenker der Reformation: Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt und seine frühe Wirkung*, eds. Ulrich Bubenheimer and Stefan Oehmig (Würzburg: R & K Verlag, 2001), pp. 15–48.
  9. Contemporary scholars who argue for Luther's conscious employment of rhetoric include Austra Reinis, *Reforming the Art of Dying: The ars moriendi in the German Reformation (1519–1528)*, St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 9–11. Reinis follows Birgit Stolt, "Docere, delectare und movere bei Luther," *Wortkampf: Frühneuhochdeutsche Beispiele zur*

*rhetorischen Praxis* (Frankfurt am Main: Athanaeum, 1974), originally published in *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 44 (1970), pp. 433–74; cf. her *Martin Luthers Rhetorik des Herzens* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2000); Timothy P. Dost, *Renaissance Humanism in Support of the Gospel in Luther's Early Correspondence: Taking all things captive* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2001); Helmar Junghans, “Rhetorische Bermerkungen Luthers in seinen ‘Dicta super Psalterium,’” *Theologische Versuche* 8 (1977), pp. 97–128. Somewhat more cautious in claims about Luther’s conscious use of rhetorical rules, especially regarding *dispositio*, is Neil R. Leroux, *Luther's Rhetoric: Style and Strategies in the Invocavit Sermons* (St. Louis: Concordia Academic Press, 2002). Leroux, like Junghans, attends more to matters of Luther’s style. Important recent contributions about Luther’s familiarity with and use of rhetoric have come from Timothy J. Wengert, “The Rhetorical Key to the Lutheran Confessions for Faith and Life in Today’s Church,” *Seminary Ridge Review* 4.2 (2002), pp. 45–61. Lately, a challenge to this preoccupation with rhetoric has come from Kenneth Hagen, in “Luther Preaching to the Hometown Folks,” *Preaching through the Ages. The Pieper Lectures Volume 8*, ed. John A. Maxfield (St. Louis: Concordia Historical Institute; Northville, SD: Luther Academy, 2004), pp. 64–87 (“The Current Issue of Rhetoric,” pp. 72–76).

10. The events are well documented with primary sources in Nikolaus Müller, *Die Wittenberger Bewegung 1521 und 1522: Die Vorgänge in und um Wittenberg während Luthers Wartburgaufenthalt* (Leipzig: Heinsius, 1911), and in many secondary sources: e.g., LW 45:53–56; Leroux, *Luther's Rhetoric*, pp. 48–53; Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation, 1521–1532*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), pp. 22–45; Ernst G. Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times: The Reformation from A New Perspective* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), pp. 535–42; Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luther in Mid-Career 1521–1530*, ed. Karin Bornkamm, trans. E. T. Bachmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), pp. 24–42; Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1950), pp. 203–14; Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 91–110; Ulrich Bubenheimer, “Luther’s Stellung zum Aufruhr in Wittenberg 1520–1522 und die frühreformatorischen Wurzeln des landesherrlichen Kirchenregiments,” *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 101 [Kanonistische Abteilung, 71] (1985), pp. 147–214 [161–82].
11. LW 48:351–52. Preserved Smith and Charles M. Jacobs, ed. and trans., *Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters, vol. 2, 1521–1530* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1918), p. 115, Letter 541, a series henceforth abbre-

- viated as S-J; S-J 2:79 translates “vexatus” as “worried” and “de nostrorum quorundam” as “of some of our followers”; *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Briefwechsel*, 15 vols. (Weimar: Böhlau, 1930–1978), 2:410.19–22 (nr. 443): “quamquam per viam vexatus rumore vario de nostrorum quorundam importunitate praestituerim publicam exhortationem edere, quam primum reuersus fuero ad Eremum meam”; a series henceforth abbreviated as WABr.
12. The two terms are not even close to being evenly employed in the book: *auffruhr* appears 27 times, *emporung* only twice. Other titles of Luther bearing a synonymous or complementary doublet are: “Brief Instruction on What to Look For and Expect in the Gospels [1521]” (LW 35:113–24; *Eyn kleyn unnterricht, was man ynn den Evangelijns suchen und gewartten soll*, WA 10[I, 1]:8–18); “Persons Related by Consanguinity and Affinity Who are Forbidden to Marry” [1522] (LW 45:3–9; *Wilche person verpoten sind tzu ehlichen ynn der heyligenn schrift beyde der freundschaftt und Mogschaftt*, WA 10[II]:265–66); “That a Christian Assembly or Congregation has the Right and Power to Judge All Teaching and to Call, Appoint, and Dismiss Teachers, Established and Proven by Scripture [1523]” (LW 39:301–14; *Das eyn Christliche versamlung odder gemeyne recht und macht habe, alle lere tzu urteylen und lerer zu beruffen, eyn und abzusetzen, Grund und ursach aus der schrift*, WA 11:408–16); “Infiltrating and Clandestine Preachers” [1532] (LW 40:379–94; *Ein Brief D. M. Luthers von den Schleichern und und Winkelpredigern*, WA 30[III]:518–27); “Sermon on Soberness and Moderation Against Drunkenness” [1539] (LW 51:289–99; *Eine Predigt D. M. Luthers von Nüchternheit und Mäßigkeit wider Völlerei und Trunkenheit*, WA 47:757–772). For a discussion of synonymous and complementary pairs of terms see Neil R. Leroux, “Luther’s Use of Doublets,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 30 (Summer 2000), pp. 35–54, reprinted in Tom Schoenberg, ed., *Literature Criticism From 1400 to 1800, Vol. 150* (Detroit: Gale Cengage, 2008), pp. 248–59.
  13. WA 8:687.25, where the editors offer conjecture that Luther wrote *trewen*, not *newen*.
  14. “Das seyn ditzmal gnug zur newen vormanung fur auffruhr und ergernusz tzu behutten, auff das nitt durch unsz selbs das heylige gottis wortt vor unheyligt werde. Amen” (WA 8:687.24–26).
  15. Both LW 45:59 and PE 3:208 reverse this doublet; Augustus Steimle, ed., *Works of Martin Luther*, 6 vols. (Philadelphia: Holman, 1915–1943), henceforth abbreviated as PE.
  16. Both LW 45:59 and PE 3:208 understandably translate the *und* here as *noch*.

17. The chiasmus in Isaiah 11:4 is synonymous or complementary; that is, the second pair ( $b_1a_1$ ) of the figure ( $abb_1a_1$ ) does not reverse but, instead, reinforces the first pair (ab); another example is Psalm 51:5, “I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” A classic example of antithetical chiasmus is Mark 2:27, “The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath.” For a critical discussion of the function of chiasmus see Neil R. Leroux, “Repetition, Progression, and Persuasion in Scripture,” *Neotestamentica* 29 (1995), pp. 1–25.
18. See above, note 1.
19. LW 45:59 reverses this doublet; PE 3:208 gets it right.
20. Both LW 45:59 and PE 3:208 reverse this doublet.
21. This is the chief illustration for Revelation 1, in both the *Septemberbibel* (1522) and the *Deutchbibel* (1534) that Luther had Cranach design. The angle is semi-profile from Christ’s right side, with eyes blazing and sword extending from the mouth. The designs Luther comments on in “Sincere Admonition” are frontal images, where the extending sword (rod/lily) passes through the mouth on either side. In the 1493 woodcut of Hartmann Schedel, sword (Christ’s left) and lily (Christ’s right) appear to extend from the ears! See Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand*, p. 31. The *Weltenrichter* image from Wittenberg is found at <http://www.stadtkirchenge-meinde-wittenberg.de/richter.htm>. See Kenneth A. Strand, ed., *Luther’s “September Bible” in Facsimile* (Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1972); *Die Luther-Bibel von 1534. Vollständiger Nachdruck, Biblia, das ist die ganze Heilige Schrift*. Gebundene Ausgabe (Cologne: Taschen, 2002).
22. WA 8:677.25—678.3.
23. WA 8:678.4.
24. “Das thun wir, szo wir getrost furt faren, wie angefangen ist, des Bapst und der Papisten buberey und triegerey unter die leut treyben, mit reddden unnd mit schreyben, bisz das er ynn aller weltt blosz auffdeckt erkenntet und tzu schanden werde. Denn mit worten musz man yhn tzuvor todten, der mund Christi musz es thun, dam it wirt er ausz der menschen hertzen geryffen und seyne lugen erkenntet und vorachtet. Wenn er aber ausz denn hertzen ist, das sey n dinck nit mer gilt, szo ist er schon vorstoret” (WA 8:682.33—683.4).
25. “Sich meyn thun an. Hab ich nit dem Bapst, Bisschoffen, Pfaffen unnd munchen alleyn schwerd schlag, mehr abbrochen, denn yhm biszher alle Keyszer unnd Konige unnd Fursten mit alley hr gewalt haben abbrochen? Warumb das? Darumb das Daniel. Vij. Sagt, dyszer Konig soll on hand vorstoret werden, unnd S. Paulus, Er soll mit dem mund Christi vorstoret werden. Nu mag ich unnd eyn iglicher,

- der Christus wort redet, frey sich rhumen, das seyn mund Christus mund sey. Jch bynn yhe gewisz, das meyn wort nitt meyn, sondernn Christus wort sey, szo mus meyn mund auch des seyn, des wort er redet" (WA 8:683.8–17).
26. "Es ist nit unser werck, das itzt geht ynn der welt. Es ist nit muglich, das ein mensch solt alleyn solch eyn weszen ansahen und furen. Es ist auch on mein bedencken un nd radschlagen szo ferne komenn. Es soll auch on meynem radt woll hynausz gehen" (WA 8:683.20–24).
  27. "Weren wyr aber das nit unnd bringen solch warheyt nit unter die leut, das yhn solch ding ausz dem hertzen genommen werde, so wirt der Bapst woll fur uns bleybenn, wen wir ditz eynige iar, das wir habenn solch warheyt getrieben und geschryben, wie ist den Papistsen die decke szo Kurtz und schmal wordenn! Was will werden, wo solcher mund Christi noch tzwey iar mit seynem geyst dresschen wirt? Solch spiel wolt der teuffell mitt leyplicher auffruhr gerne hyndern. Aber last unsz weysze seyn, gott dancken fur seyn heylig wort, unnd dyszer seligen auffruhr denn mund frisch dar geben" (WA 8:684.6–16).
  28. "Martin Luther's Treatise on Christian Liberty" (LW 31:343–77); *Mar. Lutheri Tractatus De Libertate Christiana* (WA 7:49–73).
  29. LW 45:70 and PE 3:218 both cite John 7:16, "So Jesus answered them, 'My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me,'" after this statement.
  30. LW 45:70 cites 1 Corinthians 1:13b, "Was Paul crucified for you?"
  31. "Tzum ersten bitt ich, man wolt meynes namen geschweygen und sich nit lutherisch, sondern Christen heyssen. Was ist Luther? Ist doch die lere nitt meyn. Szo byn ich auch fur niemant gecreutzigt. S. Paulus i. Corint. iij. Wolt nit leyden, das die Christen sich solten heyssen Paulish oder Petersch, sondernn Christen. Wie keme denn ich armer stinckender madensack datzu, das man die kinder Christi solt mit meynem beyloszen namen nennen? Nitt alsoz, lieben freund, last uns tilgenn die parteysche namen unnd Christen heyssen, des lere wir haben. Die Papisten habenn billich eynen parteyschen namen, die weyl sie nit benuget an Christus lere unnd namen, wollenn auch Bepstisch seyn, szo last sie Bepstisch seynn, der yhr meyster ist. Jch byn unnd wyll keynisz meyster seyn. Jch habe mit der gemeyne die eynige gemeyne lere Christi, der alleyn unszer meyster ist. Matth. xxij." (WA 8:685.4–16).
  32. Luther does not say explicitly that these have rejected the gospel. He says they will not listen (*nit horenn wollen*). However, he says explicitly of the second group, the weak (*schwachen*), that they "have not heard enough and might be willing to learn (*tzuvor nit mehr gehort habenn, unnd woll lernen mochten*)" (WA 8:685.34f.). The

inference I draw is that the *vorstockten* have heard and were not willing to learn; however, this may not be a necessary inference.

33. The second person pronouns of Matthew 7:6 are both plural (Jesus speaking to the disciples).
34. Both LW 45:71 and PE 3:219 insert a conjunction into Luther’s asyndetic doublet.
35. “Wenn du aber sihest, das die selbigen lugner yhr lugen unnd gift auch ynn andere leutt schencken, da soltu sie getrost fur denn kopff stoffenn unnd wider sie streyten, gleych wie Paulus stiesz den Elimam act. Xij. Mit harten scharffen wortten, unnd Christus die Phariseos nennet ‘otter getzichte’. Das soltu nit umb yhrenn willen thun, denn sie horen nitt, szondern umb der willen, die sie vorgiffen. Also gepeut S. Paulus Tito, Er soll solch unnutze plauderer unnd seel vorfurer herttcklich straffenn” (WA 8:685.27–33).
36. Tracing the roots of Luther’s understanding of the weak in faith—not only who fits that description in the 1520s but also what Scripture teaches about them—cannot be done justice here. In the First Invocavit Sermon Luther cites Paul in 1 Corinthians 3, about milk and meat, and that text was recalled by Albert Burer in his letter to Beatus Rhenanus (March 27, 1522): “For they [Karlstadt and Zwilling] had no regard for weak consciences, whom Luther, no less than Paul, would feed on milk until they grew strong [1 Corinthians 3:2]”; S-J 2:115, Letter 541; *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 6 (1909), pp. 467–69. Yet Luther was thinking about the weak in faith even during his Psalms lectures; cf. Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: His Road to Reformation 1483–1521*, p. 293, on the *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519–1521); Barbara Pitkin, “‘The Heritage of the Lord’: Children in the Theology of John Calvin,” in *The Child in Christian Thought*, ed. Marcia J. Bunge (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), pp. 160–93; here at 166 (on Psalm 8:2): “In his first lectures on the Psalms [1513–1515], Luther states explicitly that ‘babes’ and ‘sucklings’ are not taken literally but refer to those who are weaker in faith, just as were the children praising Jesus in Matthew 21:15 (*First Lectures on the Psalms: I: Psalms 1–75*, ed. Hilton C. Oswald [LW 10:86]). In his second exegetical work on the Psalms Luther ... argues that there is a more general application to all simple believers. He is most concerned to see here an example of his theology of the cross, according to which God is proclaimed by what the world counts as lowly. He thus interprets the phrase ‘out of the mouth of babes’ with respect to what it suggests about how preachers ought to preach (*Operationes in Psalmos*, part 2, ed. G. Hammer and M. Biersack, vol. 2 of *Archiv Weimarer Ausgabe der Werke Martin Luthers* [Cologne: Böhlau, 1981], 455–469).”

37. On March 27, 1522, eleven days after the last of the Invocavit Sermons, Karlstadt wrote (in Latin) the following to Hektor Pömer in Nuremberg: “Martin is beginning to recant [*recantare/widerrufen*] here by his actions his own [,] not without the most severe pain to the neighbours who want themselves to be called evangelicals. The good father puts forward the respect of love and, while he enriches it, leaves no place of security among the strong [*fortes/Starken*] toward those enlivened by faith, no embrace even of love”; Ulrich Bubenheimer, “Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt und seine fränkische Heimat,” 47, translation by John J. Bateman. Pömer (1495–1541), a young patrician student with a doctorate of laws, came to Wittenberg in 1520 and studied with Luther and Karlstadt for one or two semesters, and then was called by the council at Nürnberg and assumed his duties in 1521 as Provost of the parish church of St. Lorenz at Nuremberg. See Harold J. Grimm, “The Role of Nuremberg in the Reformation,” in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History: Essays Presented to George Hunston Williams on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. F. Forrester Church and Timothy George (Leiden: Brill, 1979), pp. 187–88; Gottfried Seebass, “The Reformation in Nürnberg,” in *The Social History of the Reformation*, ed. Lawrence P. Buck and Jonathan W. Zophy (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972), pp. 17–39.
38. Thomas Müntzer (1488/89–1525) also complained about Luther’s careful treatment of the weak. In a letter of March 29, 1522 to Philip Melancthon (1497–1560), Müntzer lamented: “Our most beloved Martin acts ignorantly because he does not want to offend the little ones [*parvulos*]; but those little ones [*parvuli*] today are just like the boys [*pueri*] who lived to be a hundred years old and were damned [Isaiah 65:20].” The editor of the English translation, Peter Matheson, says here that Müntzer has in mind Luther’s Invocavit sermon of March 9, 1522. See *The Collected Writings of Thomas Müntzer*, trans. and ed. Peter Matheson (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988; paperback ed., 1994), p. 47 (letter number 31); *Thomas Müntzer, Schriften und Briefe: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Günther Franz. Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte 33 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1968), p. 381, lines 20–21.
39. “Dysse soll man nitt ubirpoltern noch uber rumpelln, sondern sie freuntlich unnd senfft unter weysen, grund und ursach antzeygen, wo sie e saber nitt gleych fassen mugen, eyynn tzeyt lang gedult mit yhn haben” (WA 8:685.36–686.3).
40. While “weak in faith” is clearly from Romans 14:1, the entire context of chapters 14–15 deals with this subject; moreover, 15:1 also speaks explicitly of the weak.

41. “kindly and gently [*freuntlich unnd senfft*]” (WA 8:686.1); with “fear and gentleness [*furcht unnd senffmutickeytt*]” (686.21, 32); with “caution and gentleness [*furcht unnd senffte*]” (687.8); with “gentleness and fear [*sanffmutickeyt und forcht*]” (686.6, 11); “gently [*mit senffte*]” (687.18).
42. *grund und ursach* (686.1, 5); *unterricht* (686.7). 1 Peter 3:15 does not use a doublet for this latter term.
43. LW 45:72 omits “St.”; PE 3:220 translates Luther correctly.
44. “Do von sagt S. Paulus Ro. Xv. ‘den schwachenn ym glawben solt yhr an nehmen.’ Jtem S. Peter i. Pe. Iij. ‘yhr solt alletzeyt bereyt seyn tzur antwort eynem iglichen, der vonn euch begerd grund unnd ursach ewer hoffnung, mit sanffmutickeyt und forcht.’ Da sihestu, das mit senffte unnd gottis furcht wir sollen unterricht gebenn unszers glaubens, szo es ymandt begert odder darff” (WA 8:686.4–8).
45. PE 3:221 retains Luther’s doublet, whereas LW 45:73 obscures it.
46. “Merck eyynn gleychnisz. Wenn deyynn bruder were mit eynem strick umb den halsz ferlich gepunden von seynem feynd, und du narr wurdist tzornig auff den strick und feynd, liessest tzu und rissest denn strick mit grossem Ernst tzu dyr odder stechist mit einem messer darnach, da solttistu wol deynem bruder erwurgen odder erstechen und mehr schaden thun, denn der strick und feynd. Wenn du aber yhm helffen wilt, mustu also thun: den feynd magstu hart genug straffen odder schlagen, aber mit dem strick mustu senffte unnd mit furchtenn umbgehen, bisz du yhn vonn seynem halsz bringist, das du deinen bruder nitt erwurgist” (WA 8:686.32—687.4).
47. “Whether One Should Proceed Slowly,” in Ronald J. Sider, ed., *Karlstadt’s Battle with Luther: Documents in a Liberal-Radical Debate* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), pp. 49–71, here at p. 65. Another translation is found in E. J. Furcha, trans. and ed., “Whether We Should Go Slowly and Avoid Offending the Weak in Matters Pertaining to God’s Will,” *The Essential Karlstadt* (Waterloo, Ont.: Herald Press, 1995), pp. 247–68. See *Ob man gemach faren, und des ergernissen der schwachen verschonen soll, in sachen so gottis willen angehn*, catalogued in E. Freys and H. Barge, “Verzeichnis der gedruckten Schriften des Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt,” *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 21 (1904), pp. 153–79; 209–43; 305–31 [311, nr. 138].
48. *bruder*, also repeated twice more, and always modified by the second person singular pronoun.
49. A. Preminger et al., ed., *New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 361, cited in Chris Wyckoff, “Have We Come



Full Circle Yet? Closure, Psycholinguistics, and Problems of Recognition with the *Inclusio*,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 30 (2006), pp. 475–505, here at p. 477. While Wyckoff’s study deals with Hebrew Poetry, *inclusio* is used elsewhere, as we see here. Further, note what he says on p. 483: “Finally, psycholinguistic studies have also demonstrated that sequence is important when it comes to memory. More specifically, words that occur first in a phrase, clause, or sentence are accorded a ‘privileged status’ in memory [Gernsbacher and Hargreaves, pp. 83–84]. Initial words are more easily recalled and therefore more memorable”; cf. M. A. Gernsbacher and D. Hargreaves, “The Privilege of Primacy: Experimental Data and Cognitive Explanations,” in *Pragmatics of Word-Order Flexibility*, ed. D. L. Payne (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1992), pp. 83–116. I disagree, however, with Wyckoff’s conclusion that *inclusio* must be recognized by readers in order to be effective.

50. Recall his charge that there were “wholesale defections from and denunciations of the holy gospel [*dem heyligen Evangelio eynen grossen abfall und nach reddden*]” (WA 8:684.31).
51. “du narr” (WA 8:685.4).
52. WA 8:687.5–21.
53. PE 3:221; LW 45:73 inserts a conjunction into Luther’s asyndetic, anaphoric doublet (note the repeated article *die*).
54. Luther does not mention or explain about the false brethren at all.
55. “Sihe, alsoz mustu die hund unnd sew anders denn die menschen, die wolff unnd lewen anders denn die schwachen schaff handeln, den wolffen kanstu nit zu hart seyn, den schwachen schaffen kanstu nit zu weych seyn” (WA 8:687.11–14).
56. “Wyr müssen unsz doch itzt nit anders halten, denn alsz lebten wyr unter den heyden, weyl wyr unter den Papisten leben. Ja sie sind woll siebenfeltige heyden, darumb sollen wyr, wie S. Petrus leret, eyn gutten wandel furen unter den heyden, das sie uns nichts ubels mugen nach sagen mit warheytt, wie sie gern wollten. Sie horensz gar gern, so du dich dyszer lere rhumist und den schwachenn hertzen ergerlich bist, auff das die gantzen lere mugen ergerlich und schedlich beschreyen, weyl sie yhr sonst nichts mugen abbrechen unnd bekennen müssen, das sie war sey” (WA 8:687.14–21).
57. Jesus’s words, “Lord, Lord,” are found in both verses 21 and 22 of Matthew 7. The first instance refers to the present, the second to the future.
58. The *apparatus criticus* of WA 8:687.25 says all prints read “newen” and raises the question of why this word does not match Luther’s title. W. A. Lambert in PE 3:222

follows the reading, but adds a note defending the reading by taking Luther as referencing his sermon of July 15, 1520, no longer extant but mentioned in letters of Luther. Walter I. Brandt (LW 45:74) reads “renewed admonition” but cites the comments in *Luthers Werke in Auswahl, vol. 2: Schriften von 1520–1524*, ed. Otto Clemen and Albert Leitzmann (Bonn: Marcus and Weber, 1912), p. 310, note 23, that a printer’s error possibly resulted from a misreading of Luther’s hand. Bubenheimer, “Luther’s Stellung,” p. 150, says the first edition of “Sincere Admonition” (Benzing, nr. 1046) contained 29 printer’s errors, as compiled in the critical edition of Hans-Ulrich Delius, *Martin Luther Studienausgabe*, vol. 3 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1982), pp. 15–26, a series henceforth abbreviated as LStA. LStA found no errors in the second edition (Benzing, nr. 1047). Luther’s July 13, 1520 sermon is mentioned in his letters of July 14 and July 17 to Spalatin (S-J 1:339–41; WABr 2:142–44). The student riots in Wittenberg in 1520 were not about Reformation grievances but rather were, starting in February, “zwischen Studenten und Bürgern”; Bubenheimer, “Luther’s Stellung,” p. 151. See also Brecht, *Martin Luther: His Road to Reformation*, pp. 295–97.

59. Martin Brecht has also shown convincingly that Luther’s understandings about the weak in faith (see note 36 above) began in his studies of the Psalms, particularly Psalm 15 (14 Vulgate). See his “Luther und die Wittenberger Reformation während der Wartburgzeit,” in *Martin Luther: Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, eds. Günter Vogler, Siegfried Hoyer, and Adolf Laube (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1986), pp. 73–90 [83]. Timothy J. Wengert has also just offered new observations about how Luther’s position on the weak predates March 1522. In his “Higher Education and Vocation: The University of Wittenberg (1517–1533) between Renaissance and Reform,” in *The Lutheran Doctrine of Vocation. The Pieper Lectures, Volume 11*, ed. John A. Maxfield (St. Louis: Concordia Historical Institute; Northville, SD: The Luther Academy, 2008), pp. 1–21, Wengert argues that Luther’s “developing evangelical understanding of vocation in the two realms of God’s activity led him to a renewed pastoral appreciation for the weak” (p. 10). Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining*, attempts even to identify certain of the weak that Luther had in mind: “The Wittenberg jurist, Jerome Schurf, was one of the weak, but Luther was thinking also of the inhabitants of Ducal Saxony who took offence at the events in Wittenberg” (p. 59). In naming Schurf, Brecht cites the jurist’s letter of March 13, 1522, to Spalatin (WABr 2:472.11–20). In designating those of ducal Saxony, Brecht is following one manuscript tradition of the *Invocavit Sermons* which has Luther identify Duke George (WA 10 [111]:LIX.43–48). Duke George of Saxony

was president of the Imperial Council of Regency (*Reichsregiment*), which convened in Nuremberg on January 20, 1522, and issued a mandate forbidding all worship innovations and demanding a return to the *status quo ante*.

60. “Get busy now; spread the holy gospel, and help others spread it; teach, speak, write, and preach [*lere, rede, schreyb und predige*] that man-made laws are nothing; . . . rather, tell them that a Christian life consists in [*stehen ym*] faith and love” (LW 45:68, my altered translation from WA 8:683.34–684.2). In the second of the *Invocavit Sermons* (on March 10, 1522) Luther gave nearly identical instructions, expressing them, as his own resolve, in first person singular: “In short, I will preach it, teach it, write it [*Summa summarum predigen wil ichs, sagen wil ichs, schreyben wil ichs*], but I will constrain no man by force, for faith must come freely without compulsion.” He then immediately follows with his own example: “I simply taught, preached, and wrote [*getrieben, geprediget und geschrieben*] God’s Word; otherwise I did nothing” (LW 51:77; WA 10 [III]:18.10–15; cf. LStA 2:537.2–5). The editor of the best critical edition of the *Invocavit Sermons* (in vol. 2 of LStA), Helmar Jung-hans, has also produced a modern German text (*Neuhochdeutsche Übertragung*) of the *Invocavit Sermons*, with Horst Beintker (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1981).
61. Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 163.
62. Luther to John Lang, May 18, 1517 (LW 48:42; WABr 1:99).