

Lenten Preaching among Distressed Lives: Five Assists for Lenten Preachers from Intersections between Martin Luther's Homiletical Theology and a Political Theologian's Vigil through a Tumultuous US Socio-political Season

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Introduction

In a seminary course I teach, I try to equip seminarians with empathic listening skills; then I get home and turn on the Presidential debates only to hear one candidate interrupt another 57 times—a far cry from empathic listening. Many of our students are actively attempting to dismantle systemic oppressions; we open our news apps too many days to headlines of another fatal shooting of an African American man. Systemic oppressions remain nauseatingly prevalent. The socio-political climate in the United States is in distress and causes distress.

This article takes as its context the distressed lives of the people in the assembly and the communities in which preachers find their callings. With intentionality during Lent, preachers proclaim God's living word into this same distressing context. For Lenten preachers who truly understand the challenge of speaking life into contexts of death, this article offers five tangible assists to the vocational blessing and hazard that is Lenten preaching. We arrive at these assists by bringing into conversation Martin Luther's homiletical theology and a political theologian's vigil through the tumultuous US socio-political season.

Martin Luther's Homiletical Theology

This article identifies five elements that constitute what could be called Martin Luther's homiletical theology. In order to talk about Luther's homiletical theology, one disclaimer is needed, for it is widely recognized that Luther took a non-systematic approach to theology; therefore, the five elements named as part of his homiletical theology should not be considered exhaustive, but instead should be taken as crucial and consistent aspects of his homiletic. The five elements of Luther's homiletical theology explored in this article are 1. the cross as central, 2. the cross as paradox, 3. the word as sacramental, 4. preaching as God speaking, and 5. the Holy Spirit as agent who creates reception.

The Cross as Central

Luther consistently points to the cross as central to Christian convictions. He articulates this through his hymns, treatises, disputations, and the development of what he, in the 1518 *Heidelberg Disputation*, termed *theologia crucis* or theology of the cross. Luther derived the concept of *theologia crucis* especially from two biblical passages: 1 Corinthians 1:21–25 and John 14:8–9.

First Corinthians 1:21–25: For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but *we proclaim Christ crucified*, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,

but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and *God's weakness is stronger than human strength*. John 14: 8–9: Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? *Whoever has seen me has seen the Father*. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

First Corinthians proclaims Christ crucified as the power, wisdom, and strength of God—a power, wisdom, and strength that stands in contrast and opposition to oppressive domination. Christ crucified as the power, wisdom, and strength of God epitomizes God's incarnate presence that suffers with humanity. John 14 adds an emphasis that God is known through Christ Jesus.

Informed by these texts, Luther claimed a theology of the cross, which identifies God by how God accompanies humanity, i.e., in Christ and the cross. The theology of the cross influenced protestant theology; for example, theologian Jürgen Moltmann built on *theologia crucis* when he wrote, "[T]he tempted, rejected, suffering and dying Christ came to be the centre of the religion of the oppressed and the piety of the lost."¹ Ian McFarland summarized Moltmann's use of *theologia cruce*s, saying that "only a God capable of incorporating suffering and death into the divine life is credible in the wake of the unprecedented scale of human suffering."² The cross was central to Luther's theology; yet, *theologia crucis* was not only a general theological commitment; for Luther it was also a specifically homiletical commitment. He wrote, "It is the office of a true apostle to preach of the passion and resurrection...and to lay the foundation for faith in [Christ]."³ Luther understood the heart of preaching as proclamation of the cross of Jesus Christ.

The Cross as Paradox

The cross that is so central to Luther's understanding of preaching is, itself, complex because the cross is, in Luther's understanding, paradoxical. The cross as paradox is a second element in Luther's homiletical theology. Hope from despair, new beginnings in the end, life from death—these familiar paradoxes in the lived experience of humans and all of creation emerge from the paradox of the cross in which Jesus' suffering and death yield hope and new life.

Homiletically, Luther primarily expresses paradox through the concept of Law and Gospel. Law and Gospel announce that what has humans/creation bound, God has overturned, and that God liberates creation/humanity from what is deserved. Taken together in their paradoxical unity, Law/Gospel exposes the need for relationship with God, identifies rifts in the relationship, and promises God's gracious reconciliation of the relationship.⁴ To drive home the point of what Law/Gospel is, I'd like to identify several things it is not:

Law is *not* bad, and the gospel, good.

Law is *not* the first 39 books of the Bible, and gospel the New Testament.

Law is *not* Jewish, and gospel Christian.

Law is *not* hard, and the gospel easy/soft.

The above list shows appalling misunderstandings of Law/Gospel. More accurately, Law and Gospel articulates the theological work of the Word and identifies the way a biblical text is received. That is, the Word has the capacity to do multiple things with a hearer simultaneously—the Word can expose, guide, promise, and liberate

all at once. Hearers have the capacity to receive these multiple actions of the Word and to be formed by them. Since the whole Bible is Word of God, every biblical text can bear the fullness of LawGospel. Luther wrote, “There is no book in the Bible which does not contain both [law and gospel]. Everywhere God has placed law and promise side by side. . . . Pay careful attention to this distinction no matter which book you may be reading, whether in the Old or in the New Testament.”⁵ Although found everywhere in the Word of God, LawGospel is perhaps most clearly evidenced in the cross where Christ exposes sin and death-dealing practices of the world, guides the thief beside him to repentance, promises salvation, and liberates those who are dying to live anew.⁶

The Word as Sacramental

The Word is sacramental; this third element of Luther’s homiletical theology derives from Luther’s belief “that Jesus Christ is present in preaching as he is present in the sacrament of the Altar,”⁷ because both preaching and sacraments are enlivened by the Word. The phrase *the Word effects the reality it declares*,⁸ expresses this theology; it means that the full efficacy of God’s forgiving, salvific promise is there in the promise made through the Word; in that promise, God makes Godself present. The Word actually does what the Word speaks.⁹ When the Word effects the reality it declares through preaching, Christ is present to the assembly through the proclamation of hope, grace, new life, etc. The same is true in the sacraments: when the Word effects the reality it declares through, for example, the Eucharist, Christ is present to the assembly in the breaking of the bread.

The Word of God enlivens preaching as the Word enlivens the Eucharist because God’s Word, as Christ, has the power to effect grace. The triune God, through the Word, in the power of the Holy Spirit, is the grace-giving agency of the sacramental word. “God must take action to reveal Godself to humanity. That action is God’s Word. God’s Word as revelation, however, is not vocalization or a spirit’s voice or a disembodied will; it is Jesus Christ.”¹⁰ Preaching is sacramental because God, through the Word, effects the reality God declares.

Preaching as God Speaking

Luther was adamant that preaching is *Deus loquens* (God speaking), which is a fourth element of his homiletical theology. *Deus loquens* means that God Godself is present in preaching, actively speaking to people through the preached word. God’s Word is *Deus loquens* already before the Word is proclaimed. The biblical text has the capacity to speak to a hearer or reader in transformative ways regardless of a preacher’s participation. However, in Luther’s homiletical conviction, *Deus loquens* extends also to the preaching event, which means that the preacher has the potential of participating in occurrences of God’s speaking. Preachers who proclaim the living Word, through which others hear God speaking, have been gifted participation in God’s transformative speech acts. Luther was filled with awe, and a deep sense of responsibility, at the prospect of participating in the way an assembly hears God speaking.

The conviction that God is present and actively speaking through proclamation supported the Reformation phrase: *viva vox evangelii* (the living voice of the gospel). The gospel’s voice lives because the living God is agent of the power and efficacy of

the living word. The preacher participates in the living voice of the gospel and is called to be a living voice, announcing the redemptive power of the cross and resurrection. God draws preachers into fellowship with the divine and sends preachers forth from God's generative creating to be a living voice and to serve God and others. *Viva vox evangelii* is the voice of God calling Elijah in the silence that follows the storm. *Viva vox evangelii* is the voice of the angels calling the unsuspecting shepherds to see God with them. *Viva vox evangelii* is the voice you embody—from the organ bench, from the pulpit, from the bedside—as you participate in proclaiming God's new life.

Holy Spirit as Agent Who Creates Reception

A fifth and final element of Luther's homiletic that will be explored here arises from his pneumatology: Luther maintained that the Holy Spirit is the agent who creates hearers' reception of the Word. The Spirit is not merely helpful but is essential to the internal reception of the Word because the Holy Spirit makes the external word, heard by the ear, into an internal word, experienced internally. This section is organized around three questions: In what ways is the Holy Spirit agent of the reception of the Word? How does the Spirit create reception? What happens when the Spirit creates reception?

The Holy Spirit is agent of human reception of the Word because the Holy Spirit is the means and the power by which the Word is revealed to humans. The Holy Spirit is the means by which Christ is known. In 1 Corinthians 12:3, Paul writes, "I disclose to you that no one, when he speaks in the Spirit, says, 'Jesus is a curse,' and no one is able to say, 'Jesus is Lord,' if not in the Holy Spirit." It is the Holy Spirit who is the means by which the Word, Jesus Christ, is revealed. The second reason the Holy Spirit is the agent of human reception of the Word is power: the Holy Spirit has the *δύναμις* (inherent power) to perform the work of revealing the Word. This power is unique to the Spirit, who empowers any given revelation of the Word.

How does the Spirit create reception? The Spirit is continually at work within the believer¹¹ to create reception of the word by disclosing Christ and internalizing the connection. The Holy Spirit discloses Christ. Disclosing Christ means making Christ known or perceptible and thereby augmenting access to Christ. The Spirit discloses Christ in many ways. In John 16:14 Jesus claims, "[The Spirit] will receive from me [Jesus] what is mine and will tell it to you." John suggests that the Spirit discloses to people what Christ gives.

The Spirit generates reception of the Word by making the connection internal. First, an acknowledgement that people can experience the Word as just a good word with good ideas of how to live well; when this occurs, they have encountered the word without the Spirit. Theologian Regin Prenter writes, "The Word may exist without the Spirit. When the Word is without the Spirit it is just a letter. It is a letter in the sense that it only gives a description of the life we are to live, but does not give us the life it describes."¹² However, the Spirit can take the external biblical word and enable humans to internalize it. When people encounter the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit, they experience the living Word that presents Christ and effects the reality it declares. It is the Holy Spirit who has the power to speak more deeply to the human spirit both in terms of meaning and impact. "The Holy Spirit must translate what is heard externally into the kind of 'language' requisite to its internal reception—*Testimonium spiritus sancti internum*."¹³ When the Spirit creates reception of the Word,

the Spirit has communicated the living vitality of the Word. So strong was Luther's conviction, he asserted that "we can have no assurance that the promise of the Gospel is the Word of the living God to us, unless the Holy Spirit says in our heart, 'that is God's Word.'" ¹⁴ It would be hard to overstate Luther's view of the importance of the Spirit's work in hearer's reception of the Word, as Luther himself wrote, "[O]f Christ we should know nothing were He not revealed to us through the Holy Spirit." ¹⁵

What happens when the Spirit translates the Word internally? First, the Spirit makes promises real to hearers, and second, the Spirit enables hearers to become witnesses.

The Spirit makes the promise of Christ real to us. From Romans 5:5 we hear, "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us." This has a very real impact on lives because the "enlightening work of the Holy Spirit is responsible for the fact that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not a distant metaphysical phenomenon but a redeeming reality in us and for us." ¹⁶ The Holy Spirit causes Christ's redeeming presence to be perceptible as real.

A second thing happens when the Holy Spirit enables people to receive the Word: hearers become witnesses. Jesus' statement in Acts 1:8 claims that the power that Christians are given to witness to Christ comes from the Holy Spirit. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." The disciples' ability to communicate Christ is an effect of the Spirit at work making Christ known. Not only does the Spirit bear witness, but the Spirit creates witness bearers through reception of the word! The Spirit not only has the power to originally reveal Christ but also has the power to enable witnesses to secondarily reveal Christ.

Five Assists for the Lenten Preacher

Below are five assists to the Lenten preacher who recognizes socio-political upheaval in the US; these are intended to offer preachers a thoughtful, biblically-grounded, contextual approach to one text each week. Each one will relate to one of the five Sundays of Lent preceding Passion/Palm Sunday, which often bears its own unique proclamatory practices. One of the Revised Common Lectionary texts appointed for that Sunday grounds each assist. Next comes a paragraph from the perspective of political theology (theology that addresses systemic injustices) that analyzes a specific concern from the tumultuous socio-political climate in the US. Finally, a preaching assist brings the text and socio-political concern into conversation with one element of Luther's homiletical theology. The confluence of text, concern, and theology seems particularly compelling because Luther's homiletic and Lent share a focus on the cross and an orientation toward God and the world in light of the cross of Jesus Christ. Additionally, the perspective of political theology, which examines systemic injustices theologically, is perhaps especially fitting during Lent when the church is, liturgically, more sensitive to human pathos. Luther himself could be considered a political theologian because "one can find no systematic work or essay by Luther unconnected with a political crisis or problem of the time." ¹⁷ The following four categories, Week in Lent, RCL Text, Socio-Political Concern, and Element of Luther's Homiletical Theology summarize the three topics brought together for each Lenten Sunday:

1 st Sunday	Mt 4: 1–11	Disillusionment	Cross as Central
2 nd Sunday	Rom 4: 1–5; 13–17	Hopelessness	Cross as Paradox
3 rd Sunday	Ex 17: 1–7	Distrust	Word as Sacramental
4 th Sunday	Jn 9: 1–41	Reduction	Preaching as God Speaking
5 th Sunday	Rom 8: 6–11	Cut Dead	Holy Spirit as Agent

First Sunday in Lent, March 5, 2017

On the first Sunday in Lent, the gospel reading—Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness—comes from Matthew 4: 1–11. Jesus’ temptation came when he was famished and isolated. The devil tempted him to prove he was the Son of God by providing bread for himself, to test God’s commitment to him by throwing himself off a pinnacle, and to gain dominion over the world by worshiping the devil. In response to each temptation, Jesus calls on his treasury of scripture to offer a direct response that was true to Jesus’ identity.

Temptations to provide preferentially for one’s own needs, to test God, and to accumulate power remain common. In February 2016 President Obama decried the worsening climate in US politics. He said that the system incentivizes divisive language and tearing one another down. Acquiescence to these temptations advances people’s careers. Obama blamed “a poisonous political climate that pushes people away from participating in public life..., discourages them and makes them cynical.”¹⁸ There is widespread disillusionment with many aspects of socio-political life in the United States that causes people to wonder if or how to engage in public life.

Matthew 4 and Luther’s commitment to the centrality of the cross offer a response to those wondering if or how to engage publicly. In Matthew 4, Jesus overcame temptations by responding directly and non-violently to the tempter. Remaining communally oriented and grounded in his identity, Jesus privileged his relationship with God and responsibility to others over the opportunistic lure of the temptations. Luther’s adamant focus on the centrality of the cross offers a compass for discernment. When an opportunity presents itself, how does one discern its true worth? Jesus relied on his relationship with God and responsibility to others to navigate deceptions. For Luther, theology of the cross also is about relationship with God and responsibility to others. God chose incarnate presence that suffers with humanity. Theology of the cross can be a compass for discernment. How can your discernment be guided by knowing that God chooses to be particularly present to the poor and vulnerable?

Second Sunday in Lent; March 12, 2017

The Second Sunday in Lent includes an epistle reading from Romans 4. It is the story of Abraham’s faith being reckoned to him as righteousness, quite apart from any works he achieved. Ultimately, the righteousness reckoned to Abraham is possible because of what God has done and is doing. Verse 17 praises God, “who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.” The very next phrase, which is in verse 18 and not included in this pericope, says that Abraham was “hoping against hope” that God’s promise of new life/new existence would come to pass. Christian hope of righteousness is grounded in the paradoxical cross through which God called into existence what had not existed—namely new life in the presence of death.

The US is experiencing a socio-political climate filled with news that leaves

some feeling hopeless. The day after Sylville K. Smith was fatally shot by police in Milwaukee, people gathered for a prayer vigil to mourn and to protest injustice. Residents in Milwaukee wondered where hope may be found when this shooting fit a pattern of violence that was decades in the making. The New York Times reported, “Milwaukee, a city of nearly 600,000, joins other embattled parts of the country like Baltimore and Ferguson, Mo., where police killings did not so much draw outrage for the deaths alone, but for the systemic problems that have so many black people feeling hopeless.”¹⁹ Yet, even in this climate that perpetuates hopelessness, many still find themselves, like Abraham, hoping against hope. Reggie Moore, who works for violence prevention, finds hope in direct community discourse. He is challenging Milwaukee residents to have real conversations around questions such as “What are the systemic issues that need to be addressed around poverty, racism, segregation and inequity to reduce the likelihood of this happening again?”²⁰ Moore links direct questions addressed in community to the ability to discover what a just community looks like.

In situations that can seem hopeless, paradoxical hope that communally erupts is the hope of which Romans speaks. It is God calling into existence what had not previously existed—hope in the midst of hopelessness. The paradoxical cross is the source and paramount instance of God calling into existence that which was not. Christian hope in the paradoxical overturning of injustices is grounded in the cross through which God took up death and turned out life. People listening to sermons know all about paradoxes. They find themselves living in all sorts of paradoxes that are part of the human condition. People’s daily situations are full of cross-shaped paradoxes.

Third Sunday in Lent; March 19, 2017

The Hebrew Bible text for the 3rd Sunday in Lent is the story of water from the rock in Exodus 17. The Israelites’ quarreling and testing of Moses and God erupted because of their physical need for water. Faced with potentially lethal thirst, the Israelites demanded, “Give us water to drink” and accused, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?” Hearing their dismay and Moses’ plea, God gave the unprecedented, and water gushed from the rock.

Broad distrust characterizes US citizens’ view of the federal government. A Pew Research Center study found that only 19% of citizens trust the government most of the time. This number is down 58 percentage points from a 77% trust in the government in 1958.²¹

The same Pew Research study found that trust in the federal government is not merely mediocre, but that “[a]mong both Democrats and Republicans, large majorities say they can seldom, if ever, trust the federal government (89% of Republicans, 72% of Democrats).”²² It is not only trust of the federal government that plagues citizens’ political confidence. Trust in the average citizen’s “political wisdom” has also eroded; since 2007, trust has decreased 20-27%, depending on party affiliation. Distrust currently characterizes US citizens’ views of both the federal government and the average citizen’s political savvy.

Distrust in the political savvy of fellow citizens and the federal government and dismay at overwhelming and unmet basic human needs (e.g., thirst in Exodus 17) increase skepticism. Skepticism, theologically, decreases one’s ability to imagine

that God is about to work in unprecedented ways. Yet, God doing the unprecedented is precisely the pattern of God's action that Luther indicates when writing that the Word is sacramental. When God breaks into this world, bringing new life that was formerly unprecedented, then God has acted sacramentally, and the Word has effected the reality it declares.

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 26, 2017

The gospel text, John 9:1-41, recounts the story of the man born blind. In this text, the man suffers others' reductions of his personhood. First, the disciples assume that sin is the cause of his blindness. Some of his neighbors are unwilling to believe he could have changed. The Pharisees would not believe that his own testimony about his own experience was credible, so they called in his parents. His parents refuse to stand up for him; since they are "afraid," they deflect the Pharisee's question saying, "He is of age; ask him." When the man challenges the Pharisees to notice the "astonishing thing" Jesus has done, they minimize him by saying that he was "born entirely in sin," and they send him away. Throughout the story, he is identified by his disability instead of other characteristics.

Political discourse that reduces others tragically has a foothold in the US. Enough of the voting population supported Donald Trump that he became the official Republican Presidential candidate. This candidate is more experienced at reducing others—"When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best.... They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists."²³—than at discussing political policy. He vilifies immigrants, name-calls women and people living with disabilities, and declares opponents "losers," "lowlives," and "liars." At the time when this article was written, it is as yet unclear whether US voters will elect this candidate who habitually and publicly reduces others, which frighteningly shows that his violent, reductive rhetoric works with a significant swath of US voters.

Contrary to the reductive discourse so disturbingly effective in the election cycle, the man born blind lifts up God's action in the world as he has experienced it through Jesus Christ. He does not point primarily to himself as the one who made his life great again. As he retells his story time and time again, he consistently says that he is not sure what exactly happened to him, but he knows whom to praise for his new life. He has heard God speaking and has become a witness to God's movement in the world.

When people compete for attention and accolades, they often do it at the expense of—that is, in ways that reduce—others. This stands in direct opposition to the discourse of the man born blind, who does not compete for attention but focuses the story of health on the God who gives new life. God speaking, one element of Luther's homiletic, does not reduce others; rather, God speaking brings new life to others where abundance did not formerly exist.

Fifth Sunday in Lent; April 2, 2017

The epistle reading on the 5th Sunday in Lent is Romans 8:6-11. Verse 11 reads, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you." Paul announces the Spirit's active presence in people's daily lives as a radical, yet quotidian, concept. The Spirit's presence is nothing short of the daily

enlivening of bodies and circumstances that enables people to make it through life's struggles.

Many systemic concerns in this world—poverty, racism, and ageism, to name a few—cut people dead, which means that they are recognized but their presence is not acknowledged. They are ignored. Political theology concerns itself with any form of systemic injustice. The way that systems cut people dead is a grave concern for political theology, as it silences and makes invisible many individuals and populations. A political theologian has to ask these questions: Who is missing from public discourse? Who has this society made silent or invisible? How can those who have been silenced be heard?

Luther believed it is the Holy Spirit as agent who creates internal reception of God's word. Paul believed it is the Spirit who enlivens daily human existence and enables people to survive desperate times. The Spirit surrounds people who experience being cut dead by systemic oppressions, both seeing their embodied realities and hearing their stories. The Spirit can also bring about the transformation of people's stories changing from silenced to heard, of people's bodies transforming from ignored and cut dead to visible and valued. The Spirit is bringing this new life. How do preachers form society's vision and participate in radical story telling?

Notes

1 Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 62.

2 Ian McFarland, "Theologia Crucis" in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 501.

3 Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, [American ed.] (Saint Louis: Concordia PubHouse, 1955), 35, 396.

4 The concept of Law and Gospel is articulated well as one concept. Attempts to break it down into component parts (i.e., of Law as distinguished from Gospel) often fall short of the complexity of Luther's thought and fall prey (as did Luther himself) to reinscribing anti-Semitism. That is, when Law is identified as wrath or brokenness and Gospel is identified as grace or liberation, then one treads treacherously close to an anti-Semitic articulation since the Pentateuch is so frequently called "the Law," etc.

5 "Luthers Werke (Weimarer Ausgabe) - Luthers Werke (Weimarer Ausgabe)," 10: I, 2, 159, accessed October 5, 2016, <http://www.proquest.com/products-services/luther.html>.

6 This cross narrative is found in Luke 23:32ff.

7 H. S. Wilson, *The Speaking God: Luther's Theology of Preaching* (United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India, 1982), 119. Wilson is, in this sentence, expressing Luther's theology of the Word.

8 Winston Persaud in *Global Dictionary of Theology: A Resource for the Worldwide Church* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Nottingham, England: IVP Academic; Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), 511.

9 Genesis 1, John 1, Matthew 9:1-8, to name a few.

10 Thomas J Davis (Thomas Jeffery), *This Is My Body: The Presence of Christ in Reformation Thought / Thomas J. Davis* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2008), 58.

11 SW (vol 1 p.154) *Select Works of Martin Luther*, trans. H. Cole, 4 vols (London, 1826) and WB 104 (Luther's Primary Works. Ed. Wace and Buchheim. London 1896, in Philip S. Watson, *Let God be God!: An Interpretation of the theology of Martin Luther* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2000), 168-169.

12 Prenter, *Spiritus Creator*, 122.

13 Douglas John Hall, *Thinking the Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 386.

14 Luther's *Sammtliche Werke* Erlangen 1826-57 vol. 1 p.451, quoted in Philip S. Watson, *Let God be God!: An Interpretation of the theology of Martin Luther* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2000), 167.

15 Martin Luther, *Werke* (Weimar, 1883ff) vol XI, p52. Kritische Gesamtausgabe (48.27) quoted in Philip S. Watson, *Let God be God!: An Interpretation of the theology of Martin Luther* (Eugene: Wipf

and Stock Publishers, 2000), 185.

16 Prenter, *Spiritus Creator*, 112.

17 J.M. Porter, ed., *Luther - Selected Political Writings* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1974), 1.

18 New York Daily News, "President Obama Decries Cruelty in Politics," February 11, 2016. <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/president-obama-decries-cruelty-politics-article-1.2527709>. Accessed 10.3.2016.

19 John Eligon, "Racial Violence in Milwaukee was Decades in the Making, Residents Say," in The New York Times, August 14, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/15/us/racial-violence-in-milwaukee-was-decades-in-the-making-residents-say.html?_r=0. Accessed 10.8.2016.

20 Ibid.

21 Pew Research Center, "Beyond Distrust: How Americans View Their Government," November 23, 2015. <http://www.people-press.org/2015/11/23/beyond-distrust-how-americans-view-their-government/>. Accessed 10.10.2016.

22 Ibid.

23 Donald Trump, Presidential Announcement Speech, June 16, 2015.