

Lutheran Pietism: What the Pietists believed and Developments at Halle

Historical Theology
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I. TITUS 3:1-11

- A) This passage presents quite a few interesting supports and challenges for both the established Lutheran Church and the Pietists and some good concepts for us to meditate on ourselves.

II. PIOUS, PIETY, PIETISM

(According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 5th Ed.)

- A) Pious: showing or characterized by religious devotion
- B) Piety: The state or quality of being pious
- C) Pietism:
1. Stress on the emotional and personal aspects of religion.
 2. A reform movement in the German Lutheran Church during the 1600's and 1700's, which strove to renew the devotional ideal in the Protestant religion.

III. WHAT THE ORIGINAL PIETISTS BELIEVED

- A) Spener et al. believed that true Christianity had been lost in the Lutheran church in what they saw as dead orthodoxy, and they saw the lack of pious living and lack of emotion as evidence of this situation.
- B) They believed that a true conversion would be accompanied by a wave of emotions, thus justification was achieved by faith but must be evidenced by strong emotions.
- C) They began increasingly to reject Lutheran confessions. Today you might hear this sentiment expressed as, "Deeds not creeds."

1.They believed that the answer to the “cold orthodoxy” was to cultivate a pious life. They seem to have missed that in this process they were creating their own set of confessions and list of rules and actions which a person must keep to receive salvation.

D) Personal Bible study gained importance (before this time single copies of the Bible often cost as much as buying a house). This came with a new hermeneutic: emotions.

1.Early reformers believed the Bible could be read and understood plainly. They asked what did the author intend to communicate and how do my life and beliefs need to change to line up with it?

2.The Pietist hermeneutic was to ask what emotions were stirred up by the scripture passage.

IV. RELATED SCRIPTURES

A) Relating to gathering and fellowship

1.Matthew 23 especially vss. 4 & 25-27
(dead orthodoxy)

2.Acts 4 especially vss. 13 & 19-20
(radical conversion experience)

3.James 1:26 (self controlled)

4.Matthew 18:20 (small gatherings)

5.1 Peter 2:21-24 (affection for Christ’s wounds)

6.Ephesians 5:19 & Colossians 3:16
(psalms, hymns & spiritual songs)

a. Johann Freylinghausen

B) Relating to those others

1.Matthew 28:19-20 (go and make disciples)

2.Matthew 18:5, Mark 9:37, Luke 9:48
(receiving children in Jesus’ name)

3.James 2:15-17 (go in peace, be warm and filled)

4.James 1:27 (caring for widows and orphans)

V. AUGUST FRANCKE (1663 - 1721)

- A) Professor of Theology at Halle University
- B) Was responsible for multiple Pietist groups at Halle University.
- C) Was criticized by traditional Lutherans for “Biblical revivalism and social activism.”
- D) The criticisms reach a crescendo with the founding of a school for poor kids which would eventually develop into the Franckesche Stiftungen (Francke Foundations) which included the original school for poor kids as well as enrolling wealthier kids who could pay tuition, an orphanage, a pharmacy and a publishing house.

SOURCES

- American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 5th Edition
- Encyclopedia Britannica Online
- Gotquestions.org
- Wikipedia.com
- A large variety of videos from Youtube.com