
THE LUTHERAN BELIEF.

The Lutherans teach and believe, that we are saved by faith alone, without any regard to works. They maintain this doctrine as firmly as though works were not at all necessary; yea, that *faith* is of such a nature that no work can be suffered or allowed beside it. And, therefore, had the highly important, zealous, and earnest epistle of James (because he reproves such a frivolous, vain doctrine and faith), to be esteemed and considered as straw. O presumption! Is the doctrine straw, then must also the chosen apostle, the faithful servant and witness of Christ, who wrote and taught it, have been a man of straw; this is as clear as the meridian sun. For the doctrine shows the character of the man.

Let every one take heed, how, and what he teaches; for with this same doctrine they have led the reckless and ignorant, great

and small, citizens and the common people, into such a fruitless, wild life, and have so much unbridled them, that we would scarcely find such an ungodly and abominable life among the Turks and Tartars, as we see among them. Their open deeds bear testimony; for the excessive eating and drinking; the superfluous pomp and splendor, the whoring, lying, cheating, cursing, swearing by the wounds, sacraments and sufferings of the Lord, the shedding of blood, fighting, &c., which exist among many of them, and, alas, have neither measure nor bounds. In many carnal things, both the teachers and disciples are the same, as may be seen. I well know, what I write, and what I have heard and seen, I testify, and I know that I testify the truth.

If any one can simply say with them, Ah! what dishonest knaves and villains these desperate priests and monks are! They wish them the venereal or some other disease; the ungodly pope with his shorn crew, say they, have deceived us long enough with purgatory, confession and fasting; we now eat as we have hunger; fish or flesh, as we desire; for every creature of God is good, says Paul, and is not to be rejected. But what follows they do not want to understand or know; namely, to (live as) the believing, who know the truth and enjoy it with thanksgiving. They further say, How shamefully they have deceived us poor people, they have robbed us of the blood of the Lord, and di-

rected us to their mummery and to their enchanting works. God be praised, we now know that all our works avail nothing, for the blood and death of Christ alone must blot out, and pay for our sins. They begin to sing a *psalm*: *Der Strick ist entzwei und wir sind frei*, &c., i. e. The cord is cut asunder and we are at liberty, while the smell of beer and wine issues from their drunken mouths and noses. Any one who can but read this *distich*, if he live ever so carnally, is a good evangelical man, and a fine brother. And should some one come, who would, in true and sincere love, admonish or reprove them, and direct them to Jesus Christ, to his doctrine, sacraments and unblamable example, and show that it does not become a christian to carouse and drink, and to revile and curse, &c., he must from that hour hear, that he is a legalist (*Werkheiliger*), one who would take heaven by storm, or a factionist, a fanatic or hypocrite, a defamer of the sacrament, or an anabaptist.

Behold! thus God, the righteous Lord, suffers these to err and go astray in their hearts, who rely upon the precious death and the most holy flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, together with his saving and reverent word, in their sensual lusts and wantonness, and make it an occasion of their unclean and sinful flesh. It appears to me this may also truly be called, a liberal and free sect.