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Re-examining Lutheran Theology

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Foreword

Re-examining Lutheran Theology

Mary “Joy” Philip

One must admit that theology, of all writing, certainly causes greatest pleasure. Precisely not the pleasure of the text, but the pleasure – unless it have to do with a joy – of transgressing it: from words to the Word, from the Word to the words, incessantly and in theology alone, since there alone the Word finds in the words nothing less than a body. The body of the text does not belong to the text, but to the One who is embodied in it. Thus theological writing always transgresses itself, just as theological speech feeds on the silence, in which, at last, it speaks correctly. In other words, to try one’s hand at theology requires no other justification than the extreme pleasure of writing. The only limit to this pleasure, in fact, is in the condition of its exercise; for the play from the words to the Word implies that the theological writing is played in distance, which unites as well as separates the *person* writing and the Word at hand – the Christ. Theology always writes starting from an other than itself. It diverts the author from *themselves*; it causes *them* to write outside of *themselves*, even against *themselves*, since *they* must not write not of what *they are*, on what *they* know, in view of what *they* wants, but in, for, and by that which *they* receive and in no case master.¹

Welcome to 2019, Volume 40 issue 1 of *Consensus*! This issue showcases student contributions, which exemplify what Jean Luc Marion says about writing, whether it be Theology, New Testament, Hebrew Scriptures, Neuroscience, Counselling or Human Development. With the exception of the book reviews, this issue features twelve articles by students in the various programmes of Martin Luther University College. Two “study and observation” pieces add color to the content. Also featured are three sermons and two book reviews.

The papers are written by students at both the masters and doctoral levels, with longer essays by the doctoral students. These papers encompass a variety of assignments and so the length and content vary depending on the assignment. The course for which they were written is noted in the first footnote. Further information regarding the assignment can be obtained from the corresponding syllabus online.

Writing papers and essays are part and parcel of formal theological education. However, it is much more than an intellectual exercise. Yes, they are the result of purposeful reflection, in theology, the Bible, or neurology. More importantly, these papers are borne of a commitment to learning that has ramifications outside of the theological academia.

Enjoy reading!

¹ Jean Luc Marion, *God without Being* (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1995), 1. Note that *he* and *him* pronouns have been replaced by *they* pronouns.