

#838 The Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg – Martin Luther and Just War, part 1, The Augsburg Confession

Question: What’s wrong with the doctrine of Martin Luther, the founder of the Protestant Reformation?

Answer: Article 16 of the Augsburg Confession. (Article 16 is addressed in the next Unsealing.)

The Augsburg Confession

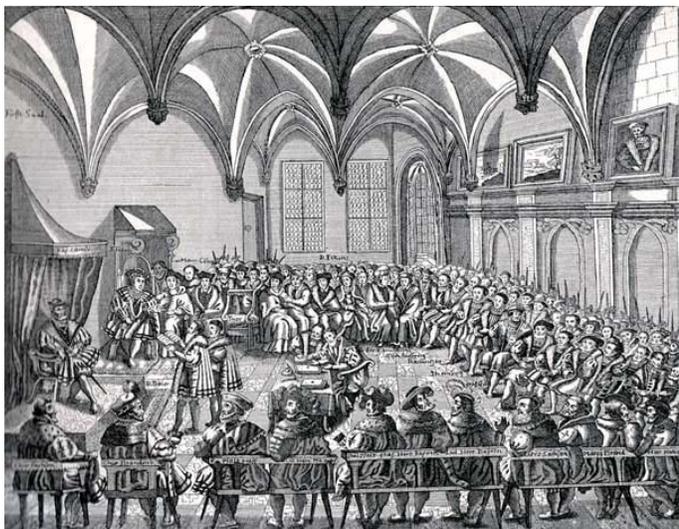
Here is a good summary on the Augsburg Confession, mostly from another source:

The Augsburg Confession of 1530 is the founding manifesto of Protestantism and the basic statement of faith of the Lutheran Church. Martin Luther on October 31, 1517, had nailed the 95 Theses, or arguments, against the practice of indulgences on the door of the Catholic Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Luther was subsequently excommunicated by the Church, and his excommunication led to a split in Germany over the merits of his excommunication. In 1521 Luther was called by Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, to appear before the Imperial Diet at Worms to defend his position. Here he uttered the famous lines, “Hier stehe ich. Ich kann nicht anders.” [“Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise.”] The protest against certain practices of the Catholic Church expanded and took on political overtones.



Martin Luther stands before Emperor Charles V and declares “Here I stand”

In 1530, hoping to unify the princes and cities of his German territories in the face of a threat from Turkish armies in eastern Austria, Emperor Charles V called a meeting, or diet, in Augsburg [in modern day Germany]. He hoped that these leaders of the Lutheran revolt would issue a statement clarifying their beliefs, and that this might lead to a resolution of the controversy. At Augsburg, Philip Melancthon, a close friend of Martin Luther and a Professor of New Testament at Wittenberg University, drafted the Augsburg Confession. It was presented in both German and Latin (with minor differences between the two versions) to the Emperor on June 25,



Diet of Augsburg by Christian Beyer

1530. Charles V rejected it and gave Protestant princes until the following April to reconsider, forsake their heresies, and return to the Roman Catholic Church. Instead, the Protestant princes, in support of Luther, formed the armed League of Schmalkalden and retained their views.

The gulf between Lutheran and Catholic was too wide to be bridged. Princes on both sides would form military alliances.

Key Understanding: *The Augsburg Confession immediately legitimized “just war” to the Protestant Church. Because of the lack of the true understanding of the gospel, the Augsburg Confession of 1530 – the founding manifesto of Protestantism and the basic statement of faith of the Lutheran Church – immediately resulted in a “just war” position of both Catholic princes and Protestant princes – each side in essence claiming to be building the true House of God.*

1 Chronicles 28:3 (KJV) But God said unto me [King David], THOU SHALT NOT BUILD AN HOUSE FOR MY NAME, BECAUSE THOU HAST BEEN A MAN OF WAR, AND HAST SHED BLOOD.

Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon



[<< Previous](#)

[Main Page and List of Unsealing Summaries](#)

[Next >>](#)