

#851 The Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg – Establishing the Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg upon the Augsburg Confession

The first Lutheran theological seminary in the United States of America was begun in 1826 at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The site was chosen because it was centrally located in relation to the regional Lutheran synods that at that time were a part of the General Synod.

At the time that the General Synod elected Dr. S.S. Schmucker as the professor upon the establishment of the Gettysburg Seminary, the synod “placed the seminary on the unmistakable basis of subscription to the Augsburg Confession by declaring: ‘In this seminary shall be taught, in the German and English languages, the fundamental doctrines of the Sacred Scriptures as contained in the Augsburg Confession.’” As well, the Augsburg Confession was put into the ordination vow which Professor Schmucker wrote into the constitution for district synods of the General Synod in 1829.

Between the 1820’s and 1870’s, Dr. Schmucker led the General Synod, writing many of its documents and determining its policies. For nearly forty of those years he continued as head of the Gettysburg Seminary. During this time about 500 men were prepared for the ministry.

[Source: Most of the above information came from *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America*, by Abdel Ross Wentz, Revised Edition, © 1964.]

Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg



Martin Luther’s “just war” brought the New World’s greatest battle to the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

Key Understanding: *Establishing the Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg upon the Augsburg Confession.* The Augsburg Confession, including its spirit of “just war” in Article 16, was a foundation of the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, the first on the North American continent and in the New World. That is why the Lord brought the greatest battle in the history of the New World to the seminary.

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.

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