

**LUTHERAN IDENTITY OF BATAK CHURCHES:
A STUDY OF THE CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE *HKBP*
AND THE BASIC ARTICLES OF FAITH OF THE *GKPI***

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Submitted by
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To

My wife, Tiarma Pintauli Tambun, my children Pinondang Maura Simorangkir, Tarida Epiphania Simorangkir, Joseph Martua Shemuel Simorangkir who support me with their love, especially during my studies in Hong Kong. Being separated for so long is extremely difficult. God must have helped us. He makes us stronger and closer to each other.

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ABSTRACT

The Batak Church is the result of the Rhenish Mission's evangelization. Heavily influenced by pietism, the mission, which stood as a confessionally neutral mission body, served Batak land for 80 years. But later in 1952, when the HKBP had become an autonomous church, it joined the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Many question the Lutheran identity of the HKBP and other Lutheran churches in Indonesia, saying "tidak murni Lutheran" (it is not truly Lutheran) or "theologically not Lutheran at all". Such views closely relate to the history of Batak churches themselves.

When the Batak Church in 1951 applied for membership in the LWF, rather than adopting the Augsburg Confession, it chose to draw up its own confession. It was then on the basis of the Batak Church's confession that the LWF received them.

This study argues that the Lutheran identity of the Batak churches depends not just on the period before the emergence of its confession but also from its new Lutheran confession. Through an examination of the confessions of Batak churches, this study demonstrates how Batak churches that originated as non-confessional churches but later became Lutheran understand their Lutheran identity. Based on the examination of their confessions, Batak churches have clearly expressed their Lutheran identity. However, these confessions do not clearly show an effort to link Lutheran theological convictions to or use Lutheran theology to deal with the contextual challenges facing Batak churches. Although Batak churches have embraced Lutheranism, they are not yet seriously working on a theology to fit their Lutheran identity.

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Soli Deo Gloria! May God in Jesus Christ be with us now and forever more.

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Table of Contents

Title Page	i
Dedication	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	vii
Abbreviations	x
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1 Lutheran identity of Batak churches	1
1.1.1 Lutheran churches in Indonesia	7
1.1.2 The use of Luther's Small Catechism	8
1.1.3 The Lord's Supper in the "Agenda" (Book of Liturgy) of Batak churches	11
1.1.4 Church Discipline	13
1.2 Thesis statement	14
1.3 The Purpose and Scope of this Study	15
1.4 Methodology	15
1.5 Difficulties	16
Chapter 2. The Batak Church as the Result of the Rhenish Mission (1861-1940)	18
2.1 The Rhenish Mission Society	18
2.1.1 The Influence of Lutheran Pietism	18
2.1.2 The Theology of the Teachers of the Barmen Seminary	24
2.1.3 The Theology of the Rhenish Mission's Missionaries in Batakland	30
2.1.3.1 Christianization of a Whole Clan	32
2.1.3.2 The Missionaries' Attitude Towards <i>Adat</i>	39
2.1.3.3 A Unity between School and Church	46
2.2 The Use of Luther's Small Catechism	50
2.3 The Rhenish Mission's Missionaries Views on Salvation in General and Faith and Good Works in Particular	54
Chapter 3. The Batak Church Joined the Lutheran World Federation (1952)	62
3.1 Situation of the Batak Church Post Rhenish Mission Leadership	62
3.1.1 Critical Attitude towards the Rhenish Mission Leadership	66
3.1.2 Efforts in Overcoming Its Shortcomings as the Consequence of the World War II	68
3.2 Decision to Join the Lutheran World Federation	69
3.2.1 Contacts with the LWF	69
3.2.2 The Decision to Apply for LWF Membership and to Draft its own Confession	72

3.2.3	The Batak Church Became a Member of the LWF	79
3.3	Lutheran Identity	80
3.3.1	Key Points that Mark Lutheranism	81
3.3.2	Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification	87
3.3.3	Lutheran Identity of Asian Lutheran Churches	93
Chapter 4.	Lutheran Characteristic of the Confession of 1951	98
4.1	Its Contents in General	98
4.2	Lutheran Characteristic of the Confession of 1951	103
4.2.1	On Justification	103
4.2.2	On Faith and Good Works	111
4.2.2.1	Close Relationship of AC Articles IV, VII, and XX	111
4.2.2.2	Faith Affects Good Works and the Necessity of Good Works	112
4.2.2.3	Which Works Must be Done	116
4.2.2.4	The Comparison to the Confession of 1951	122
4.2.3	On Law and Gospel	124
4.2.4	On the Church	134
4.2.5	On Sacraments	138
4.2.5.1	The Formulation of the Lutheran Confessions	140
4.2.5.2	The Formulation of the 1951 Confession. A Comparison with the Lutheran Confessions and Luther	147
4.2.5.2.1	Position of the formulation of the 1951 Confession on the Lord's Supper	147
4.2.5.2.2	The 1951 Confession's formulation on the Lord's Supper can be traced back to the position of the Rhenish Mission and Nommensen's translation of Luther's Small Catechism	148
4.2.6	On Several other Topics	156
4.2.6.1	On the Servant of God in the Church	157
4.2.6.2	On Church Rites	159
4.2.6.3	On Government	161
4.2.6.4	On Foods	163
Chapter 5.	Lutheran Characteristic of the 1996 Confession of the HKBP and of the Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI	165
5.1	The Emergence of the 1996 Confession of the HKBP	165
5.2	The Lutheran Characteristic of the 1996 Confession of the HKBP	169
5.2.1	On Justification	170
5.2.2	On Faith and Good Works	174
5.2.3	On Law and Gospel	175
5.2.3.1	The Formulations that Retain the 1951 Confession's Emphasis of the Distinction of Law and Gospel	178
5.2.3.2	The 1996 Confession Omits the 1951 Confession's Emphasis on the Distinction of Law and Gospel	181
5.2.3.3	The Newly Added Formulations in the 1996 Confession on the Distinction of Law and Gospel	183
5.2.4	On the Church	184
5.2.5	On Sacraments	186
5.2.5.1	Similarities to the 1951 Confession	186
5.2.5.2	No new efforts to better bond with the formulation of the	186

	Lutheran Confessions	
5.2.5.3	Indonesian translation of the 1996 Confession and Luther	188
5.2.6	On Several Other Topics	190
5.2.6.1	On the Servant of God in the Church	190
5.2.6.2	On Church Rites	191
5.2.6.3	On Government	193
5.2.6.4	On Foods	193
5.3	The Emergence of the Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI	194
5.4	Special Emphasis of Priesthood of All Believers in the GKPI	199
5.5	The Lutheran Characteristic of the Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI	200
5.5.1	On Justification	201
5.5.2	On Law and Gospel	202
5.5.3	On the Church	203
5.5.4	On Sacraments	204
5.5.5	On Several Other Topics	205
5.5.6	On the Servant of God in the Church	205
5.5.6.1	On Government	205
Chapter 6.	Conclusion and Reflection	207
6.1	Conclusion	208
6.1.1	On Justification by Faith and the Relation of Faith and Good Works	209
6.1.2	On Law and Gospel	211
6.1.3	On the Real Presence	213
6.2	Reflection	215
	Bibliography	225

ABBREVIATIONS

3 Hs	<i>Hamoraon, hagabeon, hasangapon</i> . "3Hs" ("H" is the first letter in those three words) is the worldview of Batak people which express their ideals: <i>hamoraon</i> (wealth), <i>hagabeon</i> (fecundity), and <i>hasangapon</i> (honor, glory)
AC	Augsburg Confession
AGTC	<i>Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue</i> . A Study on the Doctrine of Justification by the German Ecumenical Study Commission (DÖSTA)
Ap.	Apology of the Augsburg Confession
BEM	<i>Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry</i>
FC	Formula of Concord
GKPI	Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia (Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia)
GKPS	Gereja Kristen Protestant Simalungun (Simalungun Christian Protestant Church)
HKBP	Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (Batak Christian Protestant Church)
HKI	Huria Kristen Indonesia (The Indonesian Christian Church)
JDDJ	<i>Join Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification</i>
LC	Large Catechism
LCA	The Lutheran Church of Australia
LW	<i>Luther's Work</i> . American Edition. 55 vols. Ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann. Philadelphia: Fortress Press and St. Louis: Concordia, 1955-1986
LWF	The Lutheran World Federation
PGI	Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (Communion of Churches in Indonesia/CCI)
SA	Smalcald Articles
SC	Small Catechism
WCC	The World Council of Churches

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Lutheran identity¹ of Batak churches

The Batak Church² is the result of the Rhenish Mission's evangelization. Heavily influenced by pietism, the mission, which stood as a confessionally neutral mission body, served Batak land for 80 years. Nevertheless, later in 1952, when the HKBP had become an autonomous church, it joined the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

At that time, many people, both in Indonesia and abroad, questioned the move. Theologians and leaders of churches in Indonesia were working intensely to build and raise ecumenical awareness. They worried that the admission of the HKBP

¹ Etymologically the word "identity" comes from late Latin *identitas* equivalent to the Latin word *ident* (*idem*: the same). *Random House Unabridged Dictionary* gives several meaning for it, such as: 1. the state or fact of remaining the same one or ones, as under varying aspects or conditions; 2. the condition of being oneself or itself, and not another; 3. condition or character as to who a person or what a thing is. In modern psychology this word is employed specifically. The term also relates to a philosophical origin. Meanwhile, the more general sense of "identity" also has been adopted by the language of church and theology. In these studies, the term "identity" is meant as "self-understanding". Therefore, the phrase "Lutheran identity" points to the specific self-understanding of Lutherans. See *Random House Unabridged Dictionary* (New York: Random House, 1987), 950; *Lutheran Identity*. Final Report of the Study Project: "The Identity of the Lutheran Churches in the Context of the Challenges of our Time" (Strasbourg, Institute for Ecumenical Research, 1977), 13, 14, 54; Don S. Browning, "Identity," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 2, ed. by Erwin Fahlbusch, et. al. (Grand Rapids/Cambridge/Leiden/Boston/Köln: Wm. B. Eerdmans/Brill, 2001), 653.

² The term of "the Batak Church" here refers to the one Batak Church, later named the HKBP, at a time when the Batak Church was still one, and when the churches that split from the Batak Church had not yet come into existence. There are two kind of split. Firstly, there are churches that came into existence as a result of conscious and peaceful separation, involving language and cultural differences. This group includes the GKPS (Simalungun Protestant Christian Church, in 1963), the GKPA (Christian Protestant Angkola Church, in 1974). Secondly, there are churches that came into existence as a result of internal conflicts in the HKBP that led to separation. This group includes the GKPB (Batak Christian Community Church, in 1927), the HKI (The Indonesian Christian Church, in 1927), the GKPI (Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia; in 1964), and the GKLI (Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church, 1965). This study is limited to only of the HKBP and the GKPI.

to the LWF somehow would obstruct the ecumenical movement. At a roundtable discussion, Soedarmo, pastor from the Church of Central Java and lecturer in the field of Dogmatics at Jakarta Theological Seminary, expressed his opinion that the church doctrines contained in the 1951 Confession of the HKBP were not unique to Lutheranism, and so its admission to the LWF would not hinder cooperation between the HKBP and other Indonesian churches. At that time, none of the others had adopted such a confession and joined any confessional body.³

Assessing the Confession of 1951 of the HKBP Lothar Schreiner⁴ contends that there is no any special Lutheran character in the Confession of 1951. Schreiner argues that the main purpose of the confession is to respond to the challenges and problems in its surroundings. The Confession of 1951 is not typical of a certain denomination. It is contextual in character, in Schreiner's view, because through it the Batak Church formulated its response to social and cultural problems, faced as it was by Islam, syncretism, heathenism as well as those who lived without any faith.⁵ Schreiner also points out to an assessment of the East Asia Christian Conference of 1964. Their statement reads:

There are those churches which are not the result of the work of any particular denomination in the West. The confessional position of these churches will be acceptable to more than one confessional family. For instance, the Batak Church could equally well belong to the Presbyterian World Alliance as to the Lutheran World Federation. Membership in more than one confessional family for such churches will be useful as pointing to the fact it is not all that simple to fix denominational labels with their

³ But interestingly Soedarmo also acknowledged that even though the 1951 Confession of the HKBP in general was not unique to Lutheranism, the HKBP's understanding of the sacraments was unique indeed. Soedarmo's view on this matter is described in brief in Paul B. Pedersen, *Batak Blood and Protestant Soul* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1970), 165; cf. Walter Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*. Suatu Survey mengenai Gereja-gereja di Sumatera Utara (Jakarta: LPS DGI, 1976), 201.

³ Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 201.

⁴ Lothar Schreiner taught at HKBP Seminary at Pematangsiantar in 1956-1965. His writings greatly advanced an understanding of the theology and history of the Rhenish Mission in Batakland.

⁵ Lothar Schreiner, "Pengakuan Percaya (Konfesi) HKBP 1951 dengan Usianya," in B.A. Simanjuntak (ed.), *Pemikiran tentang Batak* (Medan: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Batak Universitas HKBP Nommensen, 1988), 4, 6.

Western connotation on the churches in Indonesia to belong to any World Confessional Organization.⁶

Christian de Jonge shares this view.⁷ Referring to a survey carried out by the PGI (Communion of Churches in Indonesia/CCI), he asserts that membership of Indonesian churches in denominational ecumenism (so not only the HKBP) in bodies such as World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the LWF, etc. was mainly evident in their presence at conferences. Membership was not internalized, as it had little other effect.⁸

Moreover, at the time Indonesian theologians and church leaders thought that HKBP joined the LWF simply because of the financial assistance it would receive.⁹ De Jonge also agrees.¹⁰ He refers to Ulrich Duchrow, who insisted this was the motive, although the LWF had made it clear beforehand that their aid had nothing to do with the issue of membership.¹¹ Duchrow says,

One powerful motive – if not the main one – for the Batak Church was the desire to escape from the distressing situation of an ‘orphaned’ mission church with the help of the financially strong Lutheran World Federation.

⁶ The Christian Community within Human Community, Containing Statements from the Bangkok Assembly of the EACC (February-March 1964). Minutes, part 2, 80. The quote is taken from Nyhus and Schreiner, “The Confession of Faith of the Batak Church, Indonesia (1951),” in Gerald H. Anderson (ed.), *Asian Voices in Christian Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1976), 226.

⁷ De Jonge, at that time, was a lecturer on Church History at Jakarta Theological Seminary.

⁸ Christian De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja: Sejarah Dokumen-dokumen dan Tema-tema Gerakan Oikumenis* [Towards Unity of the Churches: The History of the Ecumenical Movement’s Documents and Themes] (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1996), 66. The survey mentioned above was conducted by the Institute for Research and Studies of the Council of Churches in Indonesia, and was published in 1976. See F. Ukur & F. Cooley (eds.), *Jerih dan Juang. Laporan Nasional Survey Menyeluruh Gereja di Indonesia* (Jakarta: LPS DGI, 1976).

⁹ Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 201.

¹⁰ De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja*, 66.

¹¹ U. Duchrow, *Conflict over the Ecumenical Movement. Confessing Christ Today in the Universal Church*. Translated from the German by David Lewis (Geneva: WCC, 1981), 208-209. De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja*, 66; cf. Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 24-25 Nopember 1948 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1948), 14; Fredrik A. Schiøtz, “Lutheran World Missions,” in *International Review of Mission*, XLIII, July 1954, 315, 317, 320; Fredrik A. Schiøtz, “Lutheran World Missions: At the Halfway Mark in this Twentieth Century,” in *The Lutheran Quarterly*, 2 no. 1, Feb. 1950, 66.

According to Batak custom, moreover, it is difficult to accept a gift without giving something in return.¹²

Nevertheless, the success of the HKBP in formulating its own confession was praised. In a book about Lutheranism, we find the following comment:

One of the most dramatic events in the history of the LWF was the acceptance of one of the younger churches and its new Lutheran confession. ... The Batak confession is the only new Lutheran confession besides the Augsburg Confession.¹³

K. Sitompul, General Secretary of the HKBP in the period of 1950-1957 and one of the members of the Confessional and Doctrinal Commission which prepared the draft of the 1951 Confession, mentions that joining the LWF and the new confession were both highly appreciated.¹⁴ The success of the HKBP in drafting its own confession is acknowledged by Jan S. Aritonang, in the GKPI's 50th year jubilee book, as one of important step in the HKBP.¹⁵

However, questions and doubts have been raised concerning the Lutheran identity of Batak churches. The expression "tidak murni Lutheran" (it is not truly Lutheran) is often repeated.¹⁶ Even Darwin Lumbantobing, scholar and former President of HKBP Seminary, contends that the HKBP is theologically not Lutheran

¹² Duchrow, *Conflict over the Ecumenical Movement*, 208-209. De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja*, 66; cf. Schiotez, "Lutheran World Missions," 315.

¹³ Eric W. Gritsch, *A History of Lutheranism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010, 2nd ed.), 232-233.

¹⁴ K. Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 66. This document contains his explanation of the first draft of the 1951 Confession prepared by the bishop of the HKBP of the period of 1942-1972, Justin Sihombing. See Justin Sihombing, *Panindangion - haporseaon (Belijdenis) ni HKBP*.

¹⁵ Jan S. Aritonang, *Yubileum 50 Tahun GKPI. Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan ke Depan* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2014), 26.

¹⁶ Jan S. Aritonang, *Berbagai Aliran di dalam dan sekitar Gereja* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1996, 2nd ed.), 23; Aritonang, *Yubileum 50 Tahun GKPI. Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan ke Depan*, 16; Jan S. Aritonang, "Kata Sambutan," in *Katekismus Besar Martin Luther*. Translated by Anwar Tjen (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2007, 5th ed.), vii; M.S.E. Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther dan Relevansinya di Indonesia* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, 2008), 248, 282, 303; Darwin Lumbantobing, *Persekutuan Orang Kudus. Suatu Kajian Dogmatis terhadap Pemahaman dan Penghayatan Gereja Lutheran, khususnya HKBP tentang Persekutuan Orang Kudus*. Thesis STT Jakarta 1991, 80. Anwar Tjen considers that pastors of Batak churches in general can be described as knowing Lutheran theology and tradition on a small scale ("mini"). See "Memaknai Gerakan Reformasi, termasuk Kaitannya dengan Pemahaman Bersama Ajaran Pembeneran oleh Iman," 5. (A paper presented at a seminar on the anniversary of The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, STFT St. Thomas, 30 October 2004).

at all. Lumbantobing says that “HKBP’s membership of the LWF is organizational rather than an acceptance of Lutheran theological understanding or accepting Lutheran Confessions.”¹⁷

J.R. Hutauruk, a historian from HKBP Seminary and a former Bishop of the HKBP, points out that the HKBP did not embrace Lutheranism through its confession. It was not drafted to embrace Lutheranism confessionally.¹⁸ Hutauruk argues that the HKBP did not actually become Lutheran on admission to the LWF in 1952.¹⁹ This position is different, for example, to the HKI, which clearly states that their church is confessionally bound to Lutheranism by adopting the Augsburg Confession of 1530.²⁰

So far there are two important studies that discussed the Confession of 1951. One is Andar Lumbantobing’s dissertation. In his dissertation from 1957, which was published in 1961, *Das Amt in der Batak-Kirche* (The Ministry in the Batak-Church), with the Indonesian edition of this book being available in 1992 (under the title, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak*; The Meaning of Ministerial Position in the Batak Church), Andar Lumbantobing conducted a study on the development of ministry in the Batak church.²¹ Actually Lumbantobing did not only focus on the 1951 Confession. However, Lumbantobing also examined some of the contents of

¹⁷ Darwin Lumbantobing, *Burning and Current Theological Issues. Isu-isu Teologi Hangat dan Terkini di HKBP* (Pematangsiantar: L-SAPA, 2013), 20.

¹⁸ J.R. Hutauruk, “Peranan Konfesi dalam Tantangan Hidup Rohani khususnya Konfesi 1951,” in *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, ed. J.R. Hutauruk, et. al. (Pematangsiantar: STT HKBP Pematangsiantar, 1991), 84.

¹⁹ Hutauruk, “Peranan Konfesi dalam Tantangan Hidup Rohani khususnya Konfesi 1951,” in *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, 84.

²⁰ See HKI, *Tata Gereja Huria Kristen Indonesia (HKI) 2005* (Church Constitution of HKI) (Pematangsiantar: HKI, 2009), 4, 81.

²¹ Andar Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak*, translated by K.M. Lumbantobing, E.F. Lumbantobing-Lezar, Jan S. Aritonang (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1996, 2nd ed.). As Lothar Schreiner correctly mentioned, this study is practically a history of the Batak church through the discussion of its ministry. In his reviews on Andar’s dissertation, Schreiner says, “This highly informative and revealing study is almost a history of Batak-Church under the central aspect of the ministry,” See Lothar Schreiner, review of *Das Amt in der Batak-Kirche* (The Ministry in the Batak-Church), by Andar Lumbantobing, *The S.E. Asia Journal of Theology*, vol. 4 no. 3 (January 1963), 71.

the 1951 Confession especially on articles that showed relationship to the understanding of ministry in the Batak church. Lumbantobing discussed the addition of church discipline, in addition to the gospel and Sacraments, as a mark of the true church. Lumbantobing contended that church discipline was not of the same rank as the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. In his view, the exercise of church discipline should be ranked as an instrument of the gospel and the sacraments. To support his opinion Lumbantobing quoted Luther, who once mentioned that church discipline was “a helping-tool and effort in battle with sins and evil desire.”²² Lumbantobing criticized the inclusion of the exercise of church discipline as equal in importance to the proclamation of the gospel and administration of the sacraments in the teaching on the church. Lumbantobing’s views is important, but he did not discuss the whole articles in the 1951 Confession. The other scholar is F.H. Sianipar. Sianipar, who discussed the 1951 Confession at length in 1973, basically wanted to show the importance of doing contextual theology.²³ Within that framework Sianipar appreciated highly the existence of the 1951 Confession as the guidance for clergies, on the one hand, and elders and church members, on the other hand, in facing the contextual problems and challenges of Batak people, namely, *adat* (law and custom) and poverty. But, despite respecting a number of valuable things, Sianipar also criticized certain formulation in the Confession of 1951. One of his criticisms that I discuss is on the understanding of salvation. According to Sianipar, Article VII of the Confession of 1951 was about future and not present salvation. Such a theology of salvation, Sianipar contended, was not relevant to the Batak people, who at the same time faced the influence of

²² Lumbantobing quoted it from of E. Thurneysen. See Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak*, 252.

²³ F.H. Sianipar, *Suatu Problema tentang Metode Theologia dalam Ketegangan yang Dialami oleh Masyarakat Batak Kristen Masakini* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1974).

two other forces, namely *adat* (law and custom) and secularization.²⁴ I think Sianipar is correct when he emphasized that salvation should also concern the present.

However, Article VII of the 1951 Confession concerning Salvation, though it gives primary attention to the relationship of faith and good works, has not altogether neglected present salvation. If understood carefully, the teaching of justification by faith alone is very positive in encouraging people who have received the grace of God to do good works voluntarily and freely to serve and please God and at the same time to serve their neighbor in love, as Luther emphasized. In this sense, it is not correct to assume that the 1951 Confession has put too much emphasis on future-oriented salvation. It is, therefore, increasingly important to explain the relationship of faith and good works as understood by Lutheran churches. In Lutheran theology, good works are not unimportant; good works are necessary. It is true that good works are not needed to obtain salvation. Nevertheless, those who are justified will do good works freely and spontaneously.

1.1.1 Lutheran churches in Indonesia

Today 13 churches are members of the LWF in Indonesia.²⁵ Most of these churches, except the HKBP,²⁶ the GKPI,²⁷ and the GKPS,²⁸ have not yet drafted their

²⁴ F.H. Sianipar, *Suatu Problema tentang Metode Theologia dalam Ketegangan yang Dialami oleh Masyarakat Batak Kristen Masakini*, 25.

²⁵ 1) HKBP (Protestant Christian Batak Church) joined the LWF in the year of 1952; number of members: 4,500,000; 2) GKPS (Simalungun Protestant Christian Church) in 1967; number of members: 220,586; 3) HKI (The Indonesian Christian Church) in 1970; number of members: 355,000; 4) GPKB (Batak Christian Community Church) in 1972; number of members: 25,000; 5) GKPI (Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia) in 1975; number of members: 587,985; 6) GKPA (Christian Protestant Angkola Church) in 1977; number of members: 29.455; 7) GKPM (Protestant Christian Church in Mentawai) in 1984; number of members: 50,000; 8) GKLI (Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church) in 1994; number of members: 17,305 9) GKPPD (Pakpak Dairi Christian Protestant Church) in 2000; number of members: 39,428; 10) GPP (The United Protestant Church) in 2000; number of members: 12,057; 11) BNKP (The Protestant Christian Church) in 2001; 456,802; 12) AMIN (Christian Communion of Indonesia Church in Nias) in 2002; number of members: 18.500; and, 13) ONKP (Communion of Protestant Christian Church) 2014; number of members: 63.274. See Website of the LWF, www.lutheranworld.org/country/indonesia. Accessed on Mon 15 Aug 2016 at 20:15; cf. M.S.E. Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther dan Relevansinya di Indonesia* (2008),

own confession. But in their church constitutions they state that they adopt the Augsburg Confession of 1530.²⁹

In addition, there is another Lutheran church in Indonesia which is not a member of the LWF, but of the International Lutheran Council, namely, *Gereja Lutheran Indonesia* (Lutheran Church in Indonesia).³⁰ This church was founded in 1964 and its Church Constitution Article 4 this church states that they adopt and are bound by the Augsburg Confession, Smalcald Articles, Formula of Concord, Small Catechism and Large Catechism as contained in the Book of Concord of 1580.³¹

1.1.2 The use of Luther's Small Catechism

248-249; Arintonang, *Berbagai Aliran di dalam dan sekitar Gereja* (1994), 23; E. Theodore Bachmann and Mercia Brenne Bachmann, *Lutheran Churches in the World: A Handbook* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1980), 228-239.

²⁶ See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996* (Pearaja: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 2000).

²⁷ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991) (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, t.t.); *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993) (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, 1993).

²⁸ See Article of the Confession of the GKPS (Indonesian: Konfesi GKPS). This confession is issued by the Sinode Bolon ke- 42 (General Assembly) of the GKPS on 9-14 July 2015 at Balei Bolon GKPS Pematang Siantar. The 42th Synod Bolon Assembly of the GKPS decided that the confession would be discussed again before the Executive Board Committee would draft the final version in October 2015. By 2016 the document would be sent to all congregations of the GKPS. See Minutes of the 42th Sinode Bolon Assembly of the GKPS (Risalah Sinode Bolon GKPS ke- 42). Pematangsiantar, 9 Juni-14 Juni 2015, 85-99.

²⁹ For example, Article 6, 3 concerning Confession of Faith of the GPKB. See GPKB, *Tata Gereja GPKB* (Church Constitution of GPKB) (Jakarta: Majelis Pusat GPKB, 2011), 7; and, Article 6 concerning Confession of the HKI. In the explanation of this article, the HKI clearly states that its church is confessionally bound to Lutheranism by adopting the Augsburg Confession 1530. See HKI, *Tata Gereja Huria Kristen Indonesia (HKI) 2005* (Church Constitution of HKI) (Pematangsiantar: HKI, 2009), 4, 81.

³⁰ Arintonang mentions that the establishment of this church was sponsored by Lutheran churches in Scandinavian. See Arintonang, *Berbagai Aliran di dalam dan sekitar Gereja*, 23; Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther dan Relevansinya di Indonesia*, 249. On my visit to this church, August 2016, Pastor Warsito, Bishop of Gereja Lutheran Indonesia, mentioned that their sister church is a Lutheran church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin USA.

³¹ See Articles 2 and 4 of "Pernyataan Keputusan Rapat Sidang Gereja Lutheran Indonesia," no. 1, 2009, 2-3.

Lutheran churches in Indonesia use Luther's Small Catechism.³² This has been the practice since the period of the Rhenish Mission.³³

In 1970s, as part of a partnership with the Lutheran Churches of Australia (LCA), a number of churches in North Sumatra undertook the project of translating all the documents of the Lutheran Confessions (Lutheran Literature Team), including Luther's Small Catechism, into the Indonesian language.³⁴ Cooperation with LCA,³⁵ in addition to the translation project, includes a scholarship program, Lutheran Hour on radio, and an exchange minister. As exchange minister the LCA sent Rev. G.D. Dahlenburg and his wife, who worked and served the GKPI from 1986 to 1991.³⁶ Dahlenburg wrote two small but valuable books on Lutheranism.³⁷

³² There is also a church within these Lutheran churches that make use of both Luther's Small Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism. See Article 9 of Tata Gereja BNKP (Church Constitution of The Protestant Christian Church), 2007, 7.

³³ See the discussion of the use of Luther's Small Catechism within Batak churches in section 2.2 of Chapter II.

³⁴ Despite continuing to reprint the *Luther's Small Catechism*, which was translated into Toba Batak language by Nommensen in 1874, the first document to be translated in this project was *the Augsburg Confession* in 1978 and after that *the Large Catechism* in 1980, and, the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* in 1983, and then the *Formula of Concord*. See *Konfesi Augsburg Then. 1530: Yang Diserahkan kepada Kaisar Karel V Tgl. 21 Januari 1530*. Diterjemahkan oleh Team Ahli Gereja-gereja Sumatera Utara atas Kerja Sama dengan Lutheran Church of Australia, 1978; *Katekhismus Besar Dr. Martin Luther*, Team Gereja-gereja Sumatera Utara atas Kerjasama dengan Lutheran Church Australia (Lutheran Literature Team, 1980) [Translated in cooperation with LCA Australia]; *Apologi Konfesi Augsburg Thn. 1531*. Diambil dari "The Book of Concord" (Th. G. Tappert, 1979) dan diterjemahkan oleh Tim Literatur LKS atas kerjasama dengan Lutheran Church of Australia (Pematangsiantar: Lembaga Komunikasi Sejahtera, 1983) [Taken from "The Book of Concord" ed. by Th. G. Tappert and translated by LKS Team in cooperation with LCA Australia]; *Rumus Konkord. Thn: 1577*. Diterjemahkan oleh Lutheran Literature Team atas kerjasama dengan Lutheran Church of Australia [Translated in cooperation with LCA Australia]. These translations were edited once again and reprinted in 2004. See *Buku Konkord. Konfesi Gereja Lutheran*. Ed. by M.S.E. Simorangkir (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004); cf. E. Theodore Bachmann and Mercia Brenne Bachmann, *Lutheran Churches in the World: A Handbook*, 228.

³⁵ According to E. Theodore Bachmann and Mercia Brenne Bachmann, this project was aided not by the LCA alone but also by the International Lutheran Laymen's League (LCMS/USA). With the support of these two institutions, the Sumatra Lutheran Hour and Lutheran Literature Team were formed in 1977. Later the two projects merged in 1982 and took the name "Lembaga Komunikasi Sejahtera" (Society for the Communication of Spiritual Blessings). For Luther's 500th anniversary (1983) this institution published a small book, entitled, *Martin Luther: Tokoh Gereja yang Dikenal Sepanjang Masa* (Martin Luther: A Famous Church Father of All Time). See E. Theodore Bachmann and Mercia Brenne Bachmann, *Lutheran Churches in the World: A Handbook*, 228; cf. *Martin Luther: Tokoh Gereja yang Dikenal Sepanjang Masa* (Pematangsiantar: LKS, 1983).

³⁶ R.W. Gerhardy, "Pengertian Dan Pengalaman Gereja Lutheran Australia dalam Bekerjasama dengan Gereja-gereja Lutheran di Indonesia," in *Missio Dei. Kumpulan Karangan Kenang-kenangan pada Ulang Tahun ke- 60 Ds. Dr. A. Lumbantobing*, eds. R.M.G. Marbun and A. Munthe (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase/Publikasi Pusat GKPI, 1980), 55, 58; Aritonang, *Yubileum 50 Tahun*

Luther's Small Catechism remains an important source for Lutheran churches in Indonesia, particularly for its use in catechetical instruction and Sunday Service.³⁸ The catechetical instruction book used for confirmation class in the HKBP at present, *Buku Sipangkeon ni Parguru Manghatindangkon Haporseaon di HKBP* (Catechetical Instruction Used by Catechumens in the HKBP), reprinted in 2011 as *Buku Parguru Manghatindangkon Haporseaon di HKBP* (Catechetical Instruction for Catechumens in the HKBP) follows the content and structure of Luther's Small Catechism namely, the Ten Commandments, Creeds, the Lord's Prayer, the Holy Communion, and Holy Baptism. In addition, in HKBP's book come the following chapters: The Word of God, and The Church.³⁹ Meanwhile, catechetical instruction books of the GKPI only refer to Luther's Small Catechism in related topics.⁴⁰

However, no matter which book is used for confirmation, it is obvious that within the

GKPI. Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan ke Depan, 260; *Suara GKPI* [=“Voice of GKPI”: GKPI's monthly bulletin] no. 5 May 1987, 17-18; *Suara GKPI* no. 01/1992, 19-20; C.G. Schmidt, “Pdt. W. Lumbantobing dan Gereja Lutheran Australia,” in *Penatalayanan yang Baik. Buku Kenangan Jubileum 70 Tahun Bapak Pdt. W. Lumbantobing*, 1984, 14-15; E. Theodore Bachmann and Mercia Brenne Bachmann, *Lutheran Churches in the World: A Handbook*, 228; cf. Information from the LCA's side on LCA's engagement in Indonesia provided by Glenice Hartwich. Mail correspondences on April 13, 2015 and May 11, 2015.

³⁷ G.D. Dahlenburg, *Konfesi-konfesi Gereja Lutheran. Pengantar dan Cuplikan Penting Konfesi-konfesi Gereja Lutheran* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2000, 2nd ed.); G.D. Dahlenburg, *Pemberitaan Firman dan Pelayanan Sakramen* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1991). Dahlenburg also wrote a number of articles on Lutheranism published in the church magazine of the GKPI, *Suara GKPI* (Voice of the GKPI). See Dahlenburg, “Kerjasama GKPI dan LCA” [Cooperation between GKPI and LCA] in *Suara GKPI* no. 02/1989, 32-34; Dahlenburg, “Theologi Martin Luther (Part 1),” [Theology of Martin Luther] in *Suara GKPI* no. 4/1989, 19-21; Dahlenburg, “Theologi Martin Luther (Part 2),” in *GKPI* no. 5/1989, 21-23; Dahlenburg, “Theologi Martin Luther (Part 3),” in *GKPI* no. 6/1989, 40-41; Dahlenburg, “Theologi Martin Luther (Part 4),” in *GKPI* no. 7/1989, 25-27; Dahlenburg, “Kemerdekaan Orang Kristen,” [The Freedom of a Christian] in *Suara GKPI* no. 11/1989, 26-27; Dahlenburg, “Penyampaian Firman dalam Bentuk Khotbah dan Penelaahan Alkitab [Part 1],” [Proclamation of the Word of God in the form of Preaching and in Bible Study] in *Suara GKPI* 01/1990, 41-42; Dahlenburg, “Penyampaian Firman dalam Bentuk Khotbah dan Penelaahan Alkitab [Part 2],” in *Suara GKPI* 02/1990, 39-42; cf. “Pdt. G.D. Dahlenburg Kembali ke Australia,” [Rev. Dahlenburg Leaves Indonesia to go back to Australia] in *Suara GKPI* no. 01/1992, 19-20.

³⁸ See Section 2.2 of Chapter II.

³⁹ See *Buku Sipangkeon ni Parguru Manghatindangkon Haporseaon di HKBP* (Peraja, Tarutung: Kantor Pusat HKBP), 73-76; *Buku Parguru Manghatindangkon Haporseaon di HKBP* (Peraja, Tarutung: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 2011), 122-129.

⁴⁰ Jan S. Aritonang, *Buku Katekisasi di Gereja Kristen Protestant Indonesia (GKPI)* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, 2001); *Buku Katekisasi Sidi di Gereja Kristen Protestant Indonesia (GKPI)* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2013). The latter is aimed to replace the previous one.

circle of Batak Lutheran churches in Indonesia the use of Luther's Small Catechism in their confirmation class continues.

There are also efforts to provide alternative catechetical instruction material, especially for confirmation classes within the circle of Batak Lutheran churches in Indonesia, in which Luther's Small Catechism (together with the Bible) is used as reference and guidance in teaching selected topics. The following books, *Buku Panduan Pelayanan Sidi*⁴¹ and *Bertumbuh sebagai Umat Allah*⁴² have such intention.

The Lutheran Heritage Foundation has tried to spread the teaching and message of Luther's Small Catechism through its translation projects in books that elaborate Luther's Small Catechism into many languages of different countries, including in Indonesia.⁴³

1.1.3 The Lord's Supper in the "Agenda" (Book of Liturgy) of Batak churches

The Rhenish Mission introduced and translated the Prussian Church Agenda⁴⁴ into Batak and used it as the "Agenda" (Book of Liturgy or worship directory) of the Batak Church.⁴⁵ In this book of liturgy, "the real presence" of

⁴¹ *Buku Panduan Pelayanan Sidi*, translated by Marudut Manalu, et. al. (Pearaja: HKBP, 2000). Translated from Kenneth Smith, et. al., *Handbook for Confirmation Ministry*.

⁴² *Bertumbuh sebagai Umat Allah*, translated by A.A. Sitompul, et. al. (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1991). Translated from E.W. Janetzki, et.al., *Growing as God's People. A Learning Resource Based on Luther's Small Catechism*.

⁴³ Such as *Landasan Iman Kristen dengan Penjelasannya oleh Martin Luther*. Dua edisi: Edisi Guru dan Edisi Siswa (Two edition: Teacher and Student) (Macomb, Michigan: Lutheran Heritage Foundation, 2006). Translated from *Exploring Luther's Small Catechism. A Workbook for Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation; Landasan Iman Kristen dengan Penjelasannya* (Macomb, Michigan: Lutheran Heritage Foundation, 2004). Translated from *Luther's Small Catechism*.

⁴⁴ In 19th-century, Prussia, Germany, Union Church, namely the union of the Lutheran and Reformed, used a single worship directory. See Wolfgang Neugebauer, "Prussia," *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. X, 485; Wilhelm H. Neuser, "Agendenstreit (Liturgical Dispute)," in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. I, 101.

⁴⁵ The *Agenda* of the Batak Church was drawn up in 1904. Missionaries Steinsiek and Jung were assigned to prepare it by referring to the Prussian book of liturgy and adapting it to the context and needs of the Batak Church. Prussia's book of liturgy itself was composed in 1895 by 23 theologians from Lutheran and Reformed backgrounds. See Andar M. Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1996, 2nd), 234; Th. Müller Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja di Indonesia* (Djakarta: Badan Penerbit Kristen, 1966, 2nd), 223-224; J.R. Hutauruk, "Agenda HKBP: Sejarah dan Perkembangannya," Seminar Liturgi/Ibadah HKBP, Medan, 04 Juni 2013, 1;

Christ's body and blood in the elements of bread and wine were not mentioned.⁴⁶ Up to the present, some churches still use that "Agenda" though some have revised it.

The GKPS and the GKPI have revised their book of liturgy. The revision made by the GKPS in its book of liturgy on the section of the Holy Communion shows the tendency toward "real presence". The Book of Worship of the GKPS inserts this notion in its liturgy of the Holy Communion:

Do you believe in the Word of God, which says that the bread and wine in the Holy Communion are the body and blood of Lord Jesus Christ? Yes, I believe.⁴⁷

In its recently drafted confession, the GKPS formulates its understanding on the Lord's Supper as follows:

The GKPS acknowledges and teaches that in the Holy Communion the body and blood of Christ are truly present under the bread and wine, which become the vehicle of the sacrament. It is the Word that differentiates the bread and wine of the Holy Communion from the regular bread and wine. It is also the Words that institute the bread and wine to become the body and blood of Christ (Luke 22: 19-20).⁴⁸

Meanwhile, the GKPI has clearly embraced "the real presence" in its formulation of the Lord's Supper. The Book of Liturgy of the GKPI states:

The Holy Communion is a spiritual feast, the feast of believers with God. This sacrament of Holy Communion is truly the body and blood of our Lord

Wilhelm H. Neuser, "Agendenstreit (Liturgical Dispute)," in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. I, 101; See Wolfgang Neugebauer, "Prussia," *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. X, 485; J.R. Hutauruk, "Kelutheran Gereja-gereja Batak Anggota LWF di Indonesia," July and August 2006, 4

⁴⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prussian_Union_of_churches. Accessed on 17 August 2016. 12.12; Wilhelm H. Neuser, "Agendenstreit (Liturgical Dispute)," in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. I, 101; See Wolfgang Neugebauer, "Prussia," *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. X, 485

⁴⁷ GKPS, *Tata Ibadah Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungun (GKPS)* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPS, 2004), 140, 146.

⁴⁸ See Article of the Confession of the GKPS (Indonesian: Konfesi GKPS). This Confession is issued by the Sinode Bolon ke- 42 (General Assembly) of the GKPS on 9-14 July 2015 at Balei Bolon GKPS Pematang Siantar. The minutes of the of the 42th Synod Bolon Assembly of the GKPS record that this confession should be discussed again in order to have a final draft at the Executive Board Committee in October 2015 and by 2016 the document would be officially issued to all the congregations of the GKPS. See Minutes of the 42th Synod Bolon Assembly of the GKPS (Risalah Sinode Bolon GKPS ke- 42). Pematangsiantar, 9 June-14 June 2015, 85.

Jesus Christ in the form of bread and wine through his Word, as instituted by Jesus Christ himself for us his people to eat and drink.⁴⁹

The GKPI itself had already formulated “the real presence” in its understanding of the Lord’s Supper earlier on when this church drafted its confession in 1991. The Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI state:

The Holy Communion is the message of Lord Jesus Christ who says: “Take, eat, this is my body,” and, “All of you drink it, for this is my blood ...” (Matt. 26:26-27). Because of the Words that accompanied the physical eating and drinking, we, therefore, receive the true body and blood of Christ.⁵⁰

The *Gereja Lutheran Indonesia* (Lutheran Church in Indonesia), a member of the International Lutheran Council, not the LWF, mentioned earlier also uses “the real presence” language in their Book of Liturgy on the Lord’s Supper:

Take this, eat, this is the true body of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, given into death for your sins.
Take, drink, this is the true blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, shed for the forgiveness of your sins.⁵¹

This formulation precisely follows the formulation of Lutheran churches as contained in *Lutheran Service Book: Pew Edition*.⁵²

1.1.4 Church Discipline

As inherited from the Rhenish Mission all Lutheran churches in Indonesia affiliated to the LWF exercise church discipline in the life of their churches. The strong emphasis on the exercise of church discipline is then one of the characteristics of the churches that emerged from the work of the Rhenish Mission. This practice of

⁴⁹ GKPI, *Buku Tata Ibadah Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia (GKPI)*, 58, 62.

⁵⁰ Article IX, 6 (The Sacraments). See GKPI, *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (The Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI) (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, 1991), 26.

⁵¹ “Tata Cara Kebaktian Perjamuan Kudus”. [Liturgy of the Holy Communion]. See Gereja Lutheran Indonesia, *Tata Cara Kebaktian Gereja Lutheran Indonesia*, 18.

⁵² See *Lutheran Service Book* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006).

church discipline can be traced back to Calvin. However, the practice of church discipline was not prominent in Lutheran churches.⁵³

The exercise of church discipline in the time of the Rhenish Mission aimed to punish and to block the practices of ancestor worship. Of course, the exercise of Church Discipline was not just about banning ancestor worship; it dealt with everything concerning church government and prohibited anything contrary to the Ten Commandments. In later times, the practice of church discipline was not simply to exercise punishment; more emphasis was given to pastoral care.⁵⁴

1.2 Thesis statement

Many question the Lutheran identity of the HKBP and other Lutheran churches in Indonesia, saying “tidak murni Lutheran” (it is not truly Lutheran) or “theologically not Lutheran at all”. Such views closely relate to the history of Batak churches. The Batak Church and later other Lutheran churches in Sumatra frequently used the Small Catechism in catechetical instruction and Sunday worship. Nonetheless, the Batak Church itself was the result of a mission body that was confessionally neutral. Moreover, the Rhenish Mission also introduced a book of liturgy that had its origin in the worship directory of the Union church which united Lutherans and Reformed. Moreover, the mission introduced the practices of church discipline that showed Calvinist influence.

When the Batak Church in 1951 applied for membership in the LWF, rather than adopting the Augsburg Confession, it chose to draw up its own confession. It

⁵³ See Robert v. Friedburg, “Church Discipline. I. History,” in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. III, 89; P.G. Lindhart. Tr., “Church Discipline,” in *the Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, vol. II, 505-509.

⁵⁴ The Order of Church Discipline of HKBP has been revised four times, first in 1897, second in 1924, third in 1952 and the latest in 1987. See *Buku Ruhut Parmahanion dohot Paminsangon di Huria Kristen Batak Protestan*, (Pearaja: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 1987). The Order of Church Discipline of GKPI was written for the first time in 1968. It was revised in 1981 and then in 2013, under the title *Tata Pengembalaan GKPI* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2014).

was then on the basis of the Batak Church's confession that the LWF received them. There is therefore definite grounds for arguing that any discussion of the Lutheran identity of the Batak Church should be based not just on the period before 1951 but also what happened afterwards.

Through an examination of the confessions of Batak churches, this study demonstrates how Batak churches that originated as non-confessional churches but later became Lutheran understand their Lutheran identity. Based on the examination of their confessions, Batak churches have clearly expressed their Lutheran identity. However, these confessions do not clearly show an effort to link Lutheran theological convictions to or use Lutheran theology to deal with the contextual challenges facing Batak churches. Although Batak churches have embraced Lutheranism, they are not yet seriously working on a theology to fit their Lutheran identity.

1.3 The Purpose and scope of this study

This study aims to examine the Lutheran identity of Batak churches through an examination of their confessions. The goal is to know how Batak churches understand their Lutheran identity.

This study is limited to the HKBP and the GKPI, which already have their own confessions. Both these churches come from the same root and only split into two different churches because of organizational, not doctrinal, dispute.

1.4 Methodology

I make use of the study of the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg about the ten basic theological convictions that characterize Lutheran

churches.⁵⁵ Accordingly, this study will focus on the teaching of justification by faith alone, faith and good works, law and gospel, the teaching on the church, the teaching on the Lord's Supper, and on several others (on the servant of God in the church, on church rites, on government, and on foods).

After that, I use "Compare and Contrast" methodology,⁵⁶ comparing and contrasting the 1951 Confession, the 1996 Confession of the HKBP and the Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI with the Lutheran Confessions. I also study Luther's writing outside the Lutheran Confessions, especially in relation to topics such as justification - faith and good works, law and gospel, and the Lord's Supper. Discussion on the Lord's Supper is especially long, as it is here that differences between the Lutheran and Reformed/Calvinist tradition are clearest, and these differences, to some extent, influenced the Batak Church.

In my effort to understand the Lutheran Confessions I especially pay attention to several Luther/Lutheran Confessions scholars, such as Holsten Fagerberg, Edmund Schlink, Wilhelm Maurer, Conrad Bergendoff, Willard Dow Allbeck, J.L. Neve, Günther Gassmann and Scott Hendrix, Leif Grane, Friedrich Mildenerger, Carl C. Braaten, Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, Bernhard Lohse, Oswald Bayer, and Vilmos Vajta.

1.5 Difficulties

Because I am unable to read German and Latin, I have only consulted works in English concerning the Lutheran Confessions, Luther's works, related sources and

⁵⁵ *Lutheran Identity*. Final Report of the Study Project: "The Identity of the Lutheran Churches in the Context of the Challenges of our Time" (Strasbourg, Institute for Ecumenical Research, 1977). In addition to this I also consider Gassmann and Hendrix's list of the characteristics. See Günther Gassmann and Scott Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999).

⁵⁶ Sharon Sorenson, *Webster's New World Student Writing Handbook*, 3rd Ed. (New York: MacMillan, 1997).

documents. I realize that this is a weakness. Nevertheless, there are many translations and scholarly studies in English; these have been a great help.

CHAPTER 2 THE BATAK CHURCH AS THE RESULT OF THE RHENISH MISSION (1861-1940)

The Batak Church is the result of the Rhenish Mission's evangelization. Heavily influenced by pietism, the mission, which stood as a confessionally neutral mission body, served Batak land for 80 years. However, later in 1952, when HKBP had become an autonomous church, it joined the Lutheran World Federation. This chapter will describe the background of the Rhenish Mission, and the legacies that the Batak Church inherited from the Rhenish Mission. This part will also show in what ways the Batak Church became acquainted with the idea of the Reformation, in general, and with the topic of faith and good works in particular.

2.1 The Rhenish Mission Society

The Rhenish Missionary Society (*Rheinische Missions-Gesellschaft*) was founded in Barmen, Germany, on September 23, 1828,⁵⁷ through a merger of several local missionary societies.⁵⁸

2.1.1 The Influence of Lutheran Pietism

⁵⁷ See Jan S. Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland (Indonesia): 1861-1940*, translated by Robert R. Boehlke. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 69.

⁵⁸ They were Elberfeld (established in 1799), Barmen, Cologne, and Wesel. See "Rhenish Mission Society," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. II, edited by Julius Bodensieck (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1965), 1646; Andreas Feldtkeller, "United Evangelical Mission (Vereinigte Evangelische [Rheinische] Mission," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. XIII, ed. by Hans Dieter Betz, Don S. Browning, Bernd Janowski, and Eberhard Jungel (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2013), 205.

The Rhenish Mission⁵⁹ and many missionary societies came into existence in the wake of the Evangelical Awakening of the late 18th century in Germany.⁶⁰ This movement can be traced back to Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705) and August Hermann Francke (1663-1727). In his essay *Pia Desideria* (1675), Spener urged a more extensive use of the Scriptures. He felt that all believers should diligently exercise a spiritual priesthood, giving an active and devout life (*praxis pietatis*) priority over all theory. It was Spener who set forth all the basic ideas and aspirations of Pietism.⁶¹ He believed church life was stuck in the shoals of institutionalism, dogmatism, and polemics,⁶² and badly in need of reform. Since, in his view, the church as a body was reluctant and wicked, the best way to bring about such a reform was by bringing together and encouraging the eager and the devout.⁶³ Central to Pietism was regeneration (conversion, new birth). Spener viewed conversion as a one-time act, consisting of God's offer of grace and man's decision to accept it. The result of this process was the "new man". The saved had an immediate awareness of being God's children.⁶⁴

Francke made the University of Halle, founded in 1694, a center of Pietism.

⁵⁹ In 1971, the Rhenish and Bethel Missions were combined into the *Vereinte Evangelische Mission* (*United Evangelical Mission*). The Zaire Mission joined in 1978. Today UEM is a global communion of 34 Protestant churches in Africa, Asia and Germany and the von Bodelschwingh Foundation Bethel. UEM's statement on corporate identity says: "Following the Biblical call we are a communion of 34 Protestant churches in Africa, Asia and Germany and the von Bodelschwingh Foundation Bethel united in mission. Our roots are in the Rhenish Mission (founded 1828), the Bethel Mission (founded 1886), and the Zaire Mission (founded 1965). Since 1996, the UEM has been internationally organised and staffed with its headquarters in Germany and also there are regional offices in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Medan, Indonesia. See "Who We Are," <http://www.vemission.org/en/about-uem/who-we-are.html> (accessed 1 March 2014); Andreas Feldtkeller, "United Evangelical Mission (Vereinigte Evangelische [Rheinische] Mission," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. XIII, 205.

⁶⁰ See James A. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 25.

⁶¹ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 17; Scherer, *that the Gospel may be sincerely preached throughout the world*, 20; Johannes Wallmann, "Pietism," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. X, 114; Martin Schmidt, "Pietism," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 1902.

⁶² Martin Schmidt, "Pietism," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 1898.

⁶³ Wallmann, "Pietism," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. X, 114.

⁶⁴ Schmidt, "Pietism," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 1899.

He applied Spener's reform to Halle by replacing Aristotelian philosophy with biblical philology; Bible study and practical training for the ministry were made central. Personal piety was more important than knowledge.⁶⁵ He required the reader to be reborn in order to recognize Christ as the core of Scripture.⁶⁶ Francke also made Halle Pietism into missionary practice, sending missions to many countries (Scandinavia, Russia, southeast Europe, and India).⁶⁷ At home, he established an educational institution in which piety and the attainment of job skills were the educational goals.⁶⁸ Education became a big enterprise with many international contacts.⁶⁹ According to Schmidt, the goal of Francke's reform can be expressed by the formula "Changing the world by changing individuals".⁷⁰

Many of Francke's students, among them many sons of the nobility, became spreaders of pietism. One of them was Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760). Later Zinzendorf – based on his reading of Luther, the Scriptures, and extensive ecumenical contacts – dissociated himself from Halle and coined his own type of piety.⁷¹ In 1722, he accepted Protestant refugees from Moravia to his estate in Saxony and formed the community of Herrnhut (lit. [under] the Lord's watch). This community, also known as the Brethren Unity, grew into an interdenominational renewal movement and mission church. Zinzendorf became the acknowledged leader

⁶⁵ Johannes Wallmann, "Pietism," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. X, 114.

⁶⁶ Martin Brecht, with Carter Linberg, "Pietism," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, Vol. 4, 220.

⁶⁷ Johannes Wallmann, "Pietism," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. X, 114; Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 18.

⁶⁸ Johannes Wallmann, "Pietism," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. X, 114.

⁶⁹ Martin Schmidt, "Pietism," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 1903.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Wallmann, "Pietism," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. X, 114.

⁷¹ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 22; Schmidt, "Pietism," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 1903.

of the Brethren and imposed his own theological views on them.⁷² For Zinzendorf the preaching of the Crucified Lamb replaced the Halle Pietist emphasis on spiritual regeneration (which produced only leading individuals). Zinzendorf viewed the church as a community of forgiven sinners. Reconciled at the foot of the cross, they were formed by the Holy Spirit into the living congregation of Jesus Christ. Zinzendorf directed his missionaries abroad to gather small flocks of new believers. He preferred individual conversion rather to “group conversions”. Zinzendorf also opposed introducing the confessional churches of Western Christendom to the newly converted in the mission field. In his view, the preaching of Christ crucified must be the core of mission; it should not be mixed with historical confession.⁷³ It is clear that with Francke and Zinzendorf with his Brethren the relationship between pietism and evangelization is close. Those touched by the mercy of God felt impelled to share the Good News with non-Christians.

Pietism in Lutheranism tended more toward “nonpartisanship”, but, according to Scherer, despite its moderate confessional stand, Halle was ultimately faithful to churchly Lutheranism.⁷⁴ This is clear from the work in Tranquebar in South India (1706), where Halle maintained Lutheran ecclesiological identity and sought to conserve the Lutheran heritage within the church.⁷⁵ On the other hand, the Herrnhut viewed that historical confessions were not needed for the church of the future and they should be replaced by a Christocentric proclamation.⁷⁶

The Evangelical Awakening in Germany in the late 18th century gave rise to fresh movements of renewal and impulses to mission. In 1780, for example,

⁷² Brecht and Linberg, “Pietism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, Vol. 4, 221; Schmidt, “Pietism,” in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 1903.

⁷³ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 23; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 253-254.

⁷⁴ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 23; Wallmann, “Pietism,” in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. X, 115.

⁷⁵ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 19-20, 24.

⁷⁶ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 25.

Urlspurger founded the German Society for Christianity.⁷⁷ This was followed by other mission societies. These German mission societies had their roots in the continuing influence of Halle Pietism and of Herrnhut, but partly arose as a reaction against the rationalistic Enlightenment.⁷⁸ The awakening had caused Christians in Germany to come together “on a regional basis to express their missionary concern, appealing to common scriptural teachings rather than to particular confessions.”⁷⁹ This was the background of the founding of the Basel (1815), Rhenish (1826), and North German (1836) mission societies, in which Lutherans and other evangelical Christians cooperated, appealing to common scriptural teachings rather than to their particular confessions.⁸⁰

Christians in Germany who founded the Rhenish Mission came from different backgrounds - Lutheran, Reformed, and Union congregations.⁸¹ Scherer uses the term a “supraconfessional-union”⁸² to describe the Rhenish Mission position. By it, he means that the Rhenish Mission was not bound to any particular denomination. But unlike the Basel Mission (1815), which deliberately excluded Lutheran and Reformed confessional statements from its doctrinal basis, the Rhenish Mission was more closely related to the life of the churches. Scherer states,

Its original doctrinal standpoint had been that of a “consensus union,” viz., the doctrine of the Reformed and Lutheran confessions insofar as these

⁷⁷ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 280.

⁷⁸ Scherer says, “Missions of the Evangelical Awakening owed something to the continuing influence of Halle Pietism and of Moravianism, but they were the direct offspring of the *Christentumsgesellschaft* (1780).” See James A. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 25.

⁷⁹ See James A. Scherer, ...*that the Gospel may be sincerely preach throughout the world. A Lutheran Perspective on Mission and Evangelism in the 20th Century* (Geneva: The LWF, 1982), 20-21, 24.

⁸⁰ See James A. Scherer, ...*that the Gospel may be sincerely preached throughout the world. A Lutheran Perspective on Mission and Evangelism in the 20th Century*, 20-21, 24.

⁸¹ Other expression: “Lutherans, Reformed, members of Union congregations and free church people worked together with very little friction and actually to their mutual enrichment.” See “Rhenish Mission Society,” in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, 1646.

⁸² James A. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 27. Andar Lumbantobing uses the term “the non-confessional,” while Hasselgren prefer “interdenominational.” See Andar M. Lumbantobing, “The Confession of the Batak Church. An Introduction and Explanation.” In *The Church and the Confessions*, 119; Hasselgren, *Rural Batak, Kings in Medan*, 80.

agreed.⁸³

As part of his argumentation of the Batak Church's roots, Andar Lumbantobing tried to make clear that the Rhenish Mission that came and served the Batak people was neither Lutheran nor Reformed. To support his argument Andar quoted the Rhenish Mission's statement of its own identity from 1847, saying:

In our mission society, members of both of the protestant confessions now still separated, as also of the United Church, are fraternally united. We are far from disparaging the importance of the difference between the two confessions, and we are just as far from wanting to urge anyone to give them up and set them aside. But we are firmly convinced that they are not and must not be a reason why we should not work together for the cause of Jesus Christ.⁸⁴

Later, as seen further in the field, Lutheran and Reformed elements would be used by the Rhenish Mission's missionaries in their work in Batakland.⁸⁵ This was a time when the Rhenish Mission faced confessional contention inside their organization, not only in Batakland but also in their other missionary fields. Nevertheless, the Rhenish Mission was able to resolve this problem in Batakland by stating their non-affiliation to any particular denomination.⁸⁶ Elsewhere, as in South Africa, the Rhenish Mission decided to use three catechisms side by side, i.e. Luther's Small Catechism, Heidelberg Catechism (Reformed), and Union Catechism

⁸³ James A. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 27.

⁸⁴ "Die Rheinische Mission in der Heimat," in *Geschichte der Rheinischen Mission*, vol. I, ed. by Ed Kriele (Barmen, 1928), 114 as quoted in Andar M. Lumbantobing, "The Confession of the Batak Church. An Introduction and Explanation." In *The Church and the Confessions*, 119. This is also quoted in Andar M. Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak*, 84.

⁸⁵ Bridston, who taught in the Seminary of HKBP in 1954-1956, contends that the Rhenish Mission combined both Lutheran and Reformed elements in its work in Batakland. See Keith R. Bridston, "The Batak Church and Christian Identity," in *Horas HKBP! Essays for a 125-Year-Old Church*, ed. by A.A. Sitompul and Arne Sovik (Pematangsiantar: STT HKBP, 1986), 150.

⁸⁶ Lothar Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," in *Missio Dei. Kumpulan Karangan Kenang-kenangan pada Ulang Tahun ke-60 Ds. Dr. A. Lumbantobing*, eds. R.M.G. Marbun and A. Munthe (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase/Publikasi Pusat GKPI, 1980), 137.

(Lutherans and Reformed united).⁸⁷

Before the merger, the Barmen Society had already established a mission seminary in 1825. Therefore, as early as 1829, the Rhenish Mission had been able to send out four missionaries to begin work in South Africa. In addition, other fields were opened: Borneo in 1834, South China in 1846, Sumatra in 1861, Nias in 1865, and the Mentawai Islands in 1901.⁸⁸ The Barmen Seminary continued to be a seminary for the Rhenish Mission Society. Of the 163 missionaries sent to the Batak area during the period 1861-1940, almost all of them were educated at Barmen.⁸⁹

2.1.2 The Theology of the Teachers of the Barmen Seminary

Since 1866, the admission requirements of the Barmen Seminary had emphasized spiritual qualifications. The Seminary was looking for students who had native intelligence renewed by faith and love of Christ, and good behavior indicative of such a spiritual renewal.⁹⁰ Thus, piety continued to be the main requirement for admission in the next period. Each candidate was asked to examine whether he had truly experienced conversion and was "new-born".⁹¹

In general, education at the Barmen Seminary placed emphasis on developing students' ability to communicate the Gospel and to seek the conversion of non-Christians overseas. The Seminary focused upon the need of humankind to find salvation. Students were taught to share Christ's redemptive work, which brings a close, personal, and individual relationship to God. This message, the joy of a

⁸⁷ Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," in *Missio Dei*, 137.

⁸⁸ See "Rhenish Mission Society," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. II, 1646.

⁸⁹ Some of them came from the Netherlands and some were university graduates. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 70.

⁹⁰ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 92.

⁹¹ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 94.

personal experience of salvation, was to be preached to the ends of the earth.⁹²

In order to understand the background of the missionaries working in the Batakland we need to discuss briefly the theological emphasis of the Barmen Seminary's teachers.⁹³

J.H. Richter⁹⁴ (1799-1846), whose roots lay in the pietism of Francke and Zinzendorf, was one of those who laid Barmen's theological foundations. Richter's core instruction was a basic knowledge and understanding of the Bible, and the teaching on salvation. Richter conceived Christian mission as an effort to build and to promote the kingdom of God.⁹⁵

J.C. Wallmann⁹⁶ (1811-1865), whose theology of redemption originated from the revival movement, emphasized the needs of each individual for redemption, repentance and salvation. He understood the religions of indigenous people as a proof of the darkness of paganism. Therefore, he emphasized the Gospel as the light that overcomes that darkness through the conversion of indigenous people.⁹⁷ But in contrast to most of his contemporaries, Wallmann never idolized Western civilization or equated it with Christianity. Wallman, a Pietist and Lutheran conservative,⁹⁸ considered that church and mission should go together. At the time, many fellow churchmen in Rhineland, influenced by the theological liberalism, showed no interest in doing mission. He insisted on stressing the unity of mission

⁹² Aritonang, Jan S. and Karel Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2008), 536-537; cf. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 252.

⁹³ The source for this part is mainly Aritonang, who follows Schreiner's presentation on the theology of the spiritual fathers and the teachers in the Rhenish Mission Seminary. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 99-128 (Lothar Schreiner, *Adat und Evangelium* (Güttersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1972), 33-85).

⁹⁴ Richter taught from 1827-1846, and also served as the first inspector for the Rhenish Mission Society, and so none of his students became missionaries in the Batakland. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 70.

⁹⁵ Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 70, 71.

⁹⁶ Wallmann taught at the seminary and was also the Rhenish Mission inspector from 1848-1857. Nommensen and Johannsen were the only two of the Rhenish Mission's missionaries in the Batakland who studied under Wallmann. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 71.

⁹⁷ See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 71.

⁹⁸ See Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 81.

and church, and so ‘each missionary would have his basic relationship with the church without questioning the church’s theological convictions’.⁹⁹

G.L. von Rohden¹⁰⁰ (1817-1889) saw world history and church history as united and illustrating the history of the Kingdom of God. But he was aware of the distinction between civilization, or culture, and Christianity. He stressed that although missionaries participated as a civilizing force, nevertheless this had to be grounded in obedience to the Lord. One should bear in mind that it is faith, rather than civilization or culture, which makes the Gospel triumph over pagan society.¹⁰¹

Friedrich Fabri¹⁰² (1824-1891), who emphasized personal piety and a literal understanding of the Bible, centralized his theology on the Kingdom of God (*Reichstheologie*). He differentiated three kinds of kingdoms: the Kingdom of God, worldly kingdoms and the devil’s kingdom. Everyone has fallen into sin, but humankind continues to have a consciousness of God and the world. In Fabri’s opinion, the impact of the Fall was different on Europeans (white race) than on dark-skinned people. He believed that the white race had received God’s special blessing in the form of recovery of God’s knowledge and a high civilization. But dark-skinned people remained in darkness, and so the mission’s task is to communicate the Gospel from the white race to them.¹⁰³ In this understanding, evangelism must run parallel with civilization. But even though his thinking on mission was that at the end all nations would receive the Gospel, this does not mean that evangelizing pagan peoples would result in mass conversion. For him mass Christianization was a

⁹⁹ See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 72.

¹⁰⁰ Rohden taught from 1846-1889 and so the majority of the missionaries who served in the Batakland were his students. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 73.

¹⁰¹ See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 74.

¹⁰² Fabri was a very important figure in the Rhenish Mission history. He became the inspector during the period 1857-1884. His position with the Rhenish was an outcome of the effort to recruit academics to teach at the seminary. Fabri earned his doctoral degree in 1847. See Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 82; Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 74.

¹⁰³ Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 75.

misconception. Instead, he embraced mission as the conversion of individuals (*Einzelbekehrung*), as the way to gather them in an elect community.¹⁰⁴ Fabri, as Wallmann did, viewed that mission and church should go together, and so he stressed “the mission must be an ecclesiastical institution and mission work is one of the tasks of the church”.¹⁰⁵ Fabri was also known as a colonial politician.¹⁰⁶ He urged the German government of his era, Chancellor Bismarck, to engage in colonialism because, Fabri argued, Christian nations in the west had a duty to take part in spreading Christianity and Western civilization to the rest of the world.¹⁰⁷ He demanded that the German government as the government of a Christian nation should support Christian mission.¹⁰⁸

Gustav Warneck¹⁰⁹ (1834-1910) can be classified as neo-Pietist, as he rejected liberal and rationalistic theology. However, he also endeavored to bridge the gap between the liberal and the conservative sides,¹¹⁰ and made a strong contribution to the emphasis on the Christianizing of all nations (*Volkschristianisierung*). He meant that one could not make a sharp contradiction

¹⁰⁴ Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 76; Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 82.

¹⁰⁵ Expressed by Fabri at the RMG festival 1884, in BRMG 1884, p. 263, as quoted in Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 76.

¹⁰⁶ In 1884 he was forced to leave his position in the Barmen Seminary because of his activities involving colonial propaganda. See Horst Gründer, “Fabri, Friedrich Gotthardt Karl Ernst,” in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. V, 1-2.

¹⁰⁷ The German government did begin colonialization starting from the 1880s. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 76; Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 82-83.

¹⁰⁸ See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 76; Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 82-83.

¹⁰⁹ Warneck served as a teacher from 1871-1874. Apart from teaching he was also a Rhenish Mission inspector. As already begun with Fabri, the presence of Warneck in the Rhenish Mission was part of the policy to recruit academics to teach at the seminary. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 79. Feldtkeller mentions that in the era when mission societies were still controversial in Germany, Warneck ‘played a decisive role in giving academic study of missions a recognized place within theological faculties’. His importance also stems from his five volume *Evangelische Missionslehre* [Evangelical Theory of Mission] that was ‘the first comprehensive and systematic presentation of the theological basis of mission and missionary practice’. See Andreas Feldtkeller, “Warneck,” in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. XIII, 417.

¹¹⁰ Warneck did not stand on the pietistic principle that the purpose of missions was the conversion of individuals. He also disagreed with the view of ‘instant conversion’ that the Pietists held, but rather embraced evangelism ‘as involving a process, through many stages of development, until the convert becomes a perfect disciple’. See Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission*, 45, 46.

between the conversion of nations and of individuals. Warneck maintained that the salvation of individuals and the Christianizing of nations should be combined in that the Christianizing of nations follows the conversion of individuals.¹¹¹ Warneck, who was familiar with the teaching of Henry Venn (1776-1873) and Rufus Anderson (1796-1880) on ‘the Three Selves’ formula (‘self-supportive, self-governed and self-propagating’), took on new accents in building an autonomous native Church.¹¹² According to Venn and Anderson, the young churches should not be dependent on financial support or personnel from abroad. Indigenous Christian leaders should take over from the missionaries, and local leaders should take over the task of expanding the Church.¹¹³ However, Warneck, though he did not object to the principles, felt that autonomy should be placed on “a firm biblical foundation, a life firmly rooted in indigenous culture and with the leadership of steadfast, trained and committed people” and so he urged missionaries “to proceed slowly and carefully in the application of these principles, and to be more concerned with the training of indigenous personnel and building up the Church than with rash attempts to treat it as fully grown, regardless of its actual stage of development.”¹¹⁴ The native Church also can only become autonomous, Warneck argued, if it is not forced to embrace Western denominational differences. The mission churches should be taught only “basic creeds like the Apostles’ Creed, plus some simple but distinctly Protestant statement of faith.”¹¹⁵ In his understanding of Christianizing nations Warneck laid very great stress on the need for the church to be truly indigenous. He emphasized

¹¹¹ See Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 75. This work is based on *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*, by Peter Beyerhaus, 1956.

¹¹² See Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission*, 45; Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 85; Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 116.

¹¹³ See Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission*, 25-33; Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 84.

¹¹⁴ See Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission*, 48; Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 84, 85.

¹¹⁵ See Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission*, 48.

the use and preservation of the mother tongue in church, school, and in any training institution. He also claimed that natural social ties must be preserved and strengthened in the process of Christianization. In addition, Warneck urged the missionaries to appreciate and welcome any folk customs which were not spiritually incompatible with the Christian belief.¹¹⁶

August Schreiber¹¹⁷ (1839-1903) was the first missionary who was a university graduate. He studied at Halle and Erlangen. Before becoming the Inspector of the Rhenish Mission, Schreiber was a missionary in Batakland from 1867 to 1873. Then in 1874 he became a teacher at the Barmen seminary – replacing Gustav Warneck. Like most of the Rhenish Mission leaders, Schreiber was educated in an environment that was highly influenced by Pietism. Like Warneck, Schreiber emphasized the importance of Christianization of the whole nation and the establishment of an independent church. But more than Warneck, Schreiber contended that the leadership of the church should be handed over immediately to the indigenous personnel, at least at the parish level. Schreiber's more progressive views on the autonomy of the Batak church were influenced by his studies in England in 1864-1865, where he became acquainted with and influenced by the idea of the Three Selves formula. Schreiber was also quite critical about the relationship of the mission with colonialism. He considered that the mission should maintain a good distance from the colonial government. Indeed, the mission should exercise checks on colonization to protect the rights and culture of the indigenous peoples. Schreiber acknowledged that although the colonial government subsidized Rhenish mission schools, they could not always count on government support. Indeed, in the name of neutrality, the colonial government established a number of schools in

¹¹⁶ See Peter Beyerhaus and Henry Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission*, 48-49.

¹¹⁷ See Aritonang, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 89ff; Hasselgren, *Rural Batak*, 86-87.

competition with those of the mission. Schreiber believed this had a negative impact upon the Rhenish's efforts to redirect society and move the Batak church toward autonomy. Therefore, he tended to think the Rhenish mission should not seek government support.

2.1.3 The Theology of the Rhenish Mission's Missionaries in Batakland

Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen (1834-1918) was the pioneer of Batak Christianization. His arrival in 1862 marked the start of the Rhenish Mission there,¹¹⁸ and he got most of the credit and appreciation for its success. He is called "*Ompu i*" (Grand Father), and "Apostle to the Bataks".¹¹⁹ In 1954, a new university was named after him, Nommensen University, which is owned by the HKBP.¹²⁰ Writing about the importance of Nommensen for the Batak people, church historian Jan S.

Aritonang states,

Undoubtedly, Ludwig Ingwer Nommensen (1834-1918), a missionary sent by the Rheinische Missions-Gesellschaft (RMG) from Germany and who arrived in Batak in 1862, enjoyed enormous respect in Batak Christian churches and communities, particularly in the HKBP. They admired his dedication, vision, courage, humility, charisma, his leadership (including his tenure as *Ephorus* [=bishop] of the Batak Church from 1881 to 1918), and his peace-making character. He was known as the "Messenger of Peace". They also appreciated his contributions in various fields - spiritual / ecclesiastical, social institutions, education, health, etc.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Several attempts had been made by other missionary groups to convert the Batak people long before Nommensen's arrival. See Th. Müller Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia*, 208-212; Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh*, 109-111; Pedersen, *Batak Blood and Protestant Soul*, 47-56.

¹¹⁹ See Th. Müller Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia*, 212. On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Nommensen's birthday the faculty of the Seminary of HKBP Pematangsiantar published *Benih yang Berbuah*, a volume of writings on Nommensen's importance and role. See *Benih yang Berbuah*. Hari Peringatan 150 Tahun Ompui I Ephorus Dr. Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen (Pematangsiantar: STT HKBP, 1984) [Seed Bearing Fruit]; Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh*, 43; Schreiner, "Nommensen Studies – A Review," 246-247; Schreiner, "The Legacy of Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen," 81.

¹²⁰ Schreiner, "The Legacy of Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen," 82.

¹²¹ Jan S. Aritonang, *Berpikir dan Bertindak Historis Sekaligus Teologis*. Pidato Pengukuhan dalam Jabatan Guru Besar Sejarah Gereja pada Sidang Terbuka Senat Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Jakarta, Sabtu, 11 Juni 2011 (Jakarta: Unit Informasi dan Publikasi STT Jakarta, 2011), 38-39.

In Germany, and elsewhere in the western world, Nommensen was respected and honored. His success and his contribution to the work of mission were analyzed in a number of writings.¹²² Nommensen merits these tributes. After working at Silindung, he expanded the area of evangelization to other parts of Batakland (Humbang, Toba Samosir, Dairi and East Sumatra). He persistently requested the Rhenish Mission headquarters in Barmen to send more missionaries to assist in the work, while also involving native co-workers. He was the main architect. Lothar Schreiner wrote this about the pioneer's achievements:

By 1918, the year of his death, the Batak church was firmly established, with 34 pastors, 788 teacher-preachers, and 180,000 members. In addition, sixty European men and women of the Rhenish Mission served as coworkers with the Batak leadership.¹²³

Although the role of Nommensen is decisive, other figures' contributions should not be forgotten.¹²⁴ Schreiner, whose writings greatly advanced an understanding of the theology and history of the Rhenish Mission in Batakland, contends that a special partnership played an important part in the acceptance of Christianity in Silindung. This partnership was between three men: Nommensen, Pontas Lumbantobing and P.H. Johannsen. Pontas Lumbantobing (1830-1900) was a *raja*, a local chief who protected Nommensen and mediated between him and other chiefs. Johannsen was the second Rhenish missionary to be based in the Silindung valley. He joined the work in Batakland in February 1866. He played a vital role in training local teachers, writing or translating the course materials, and translating the

¹²² See information about studies on Nommensen/the Rhenish Mission provided in Schreiner, "Nommensen Studies – A Review," 247ff; Schreiner, "The Legacy of Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen," 81-82.

¹²³ See Lothar Schreiner, "The Legacy of Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen," 82.

¹²⁴ HKBP itself realizes this. In its 150-year history celebration, the HKBP, in addition to highly acknowledging the primacy of Nommensen, also recognizes that there are many other figures that played important roles in the evangelization of the Batak people. Therefore, the names and roles of other figures also need to be introduced. See Jubil Raplan Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 44.

Old Testament. For Schreiner, this three-sided partnership laid the foundations for the Christianization of the Batak people.¹²⁵

Nommensen was the first ephorus of the Batak Church. After him came Valentin Kessel (1918-1920), Johannes Warneck (1920-1932), P. Landgrebe (1932-1936), and Ernst Verwiebe (1936-1940).¹²⁶

Nommensen grew up in the Lutheran revival movement in Schleswig-Holstein. He was particularly influenced by “salvation history” theology (*Heilsgeschichte*) as taught by Fabri and Rohden.¹²⁷ According to Schreiner, this conservative interpretation of Christianity can be traced back to A. Tholuck¹²⁸ and A. Neander¹²⁹, who popularized the view of Christianity as “new life”.¹³⁰

2.1.3.1 Christianization of a Whole Clan

For roughly the first ten years, the invitation to receive this new life did not get a great response in Batakland. Consequently, from the late 1870s Nommensen changed tactics. Instead of converting individuals, he would now convert whole villages and clan groups. This move was the result of Nommensen’s better understanding of the structure of the local community, in which individuals closely relate to their *marga* (clan).¹³¹ According to Aritonang, Nommensen and his colleagues “began to realize that it would be impossible to separate the individual

¹²⁵ *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 541; See Lothar Schreiner, “The Legacy of Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, April 2000, 81; Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 8.

¹²⁶ See Jubil Raplan Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 397-398.

¹²⁷ Lothar Schreiner, “Ludwig Nommensen Studies – A Review,” in *Mission Studies* 9, no. 2 (1992), 241; Lothar Schreiner, “The Legacy of Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen,” 81.

¹²⁸ See Alf Christophersen, “Tholuck, Friedrich August Gottreu,” in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. XII, 687-688.

¹²⁹ See Alf Christophersen, “Neander, Johann Wilhelm August,” in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. IX, 76-77.

¹³⁰ Lothar Schreiner, “Ludwig Nommensen Studies – A Review,” 244.

¹³¹ See Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 72ff, 80; Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 45; Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh*, 112; Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 175.

from group relationships through the village and *marga* systems.”¹³² Nommensen saw that when *raja* Pontas,¹³³ converted in 1867, his clan members followed. This influenced other *raja*(s) (local chiefs from other clans and villages).¹³⁴ About the impact of the *raja* on the acceptance of Christianity among the Bataks, Andar Lumbantobing states:

The Rhenish Mission succeeded because they took into account local customs. The first step the missionaries took was to establish good relations with the tribal chiefs (*raja*(s)). For the Bataks, their *raja* was the bearer of ancestral tradition, or custodians of *adat*. Naturally, they would follow his actions as was made clear in the account of *raja* Pontas of Pearaja.¹³⁵

The transition from individual conversions (*Einzelbekehrung*) to the Christianization of a whole people or clan (*Volkschristianisierung*) became the trend from the late 1870s on.¹³⁶ This was not just the wish of the missionaries, for many *raja*(s) took the initiative to ask for large group baptisms, and for a missionary to be placed in their village, once a church and school had been built there.¹³⁷ Four missionary posts had been established in 1875, respectively in Silindung, Pansurnapitu, Sipoholon, and Simorangkir. Nommensen was stationed in Pearaja (clan Lumbantobing), Johannsen in Pansurnapitu (Panggabean Lumbanratus), August Mohri in Lumbansoit, Sipoholon (Simanungkalit, Situmeang, and Hutauruk), and Simoneit in Simorangkir (clan Simorangkir).¹³⁸ Andar Lumbantobing noted that groups of Bataks themselves were now coming in large numbers asking to be

¹³² Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 175.

¹³³ A new book on Raja Pontas' role and contribution to the successful Christianization of the Batak people has just been published. See *Raja Pontas Lumbantobing. Riwayat Hidup, Karya, dan Pengabdianannya bagi Pengembangan dan Kemajuan Gereja dan Masyarakat Batak*, edited by Jan S. Aritonang (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2013), 80.

¹³⁴ See Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 72ff, 80; Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 45; Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh*, 112.

¹³⁵ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 80.

¹³⁶ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 175.

¹³⁷ Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 24-25; Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 176-177.

¹³⁸ Hutauruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 42; Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 46.

accepted as Christian congregations.¹³⁹ Based on this fact Nyhus asserts that in this period “missionaries no longer had to seek out new areas of work, for *raja(s)* literally sought them out to Christianize their villages.”¹⁴⁰ This mission to the clans continued, and already in 1881 there were six districts in the Batak church. They were Sigompulon-Pahae, Sibolga, Silindung, Humbang, and Toba. This showed the close correspondence of the composition of the church with the arrangement of Batak tribal clans.¹⁴¹

Table 1.1 Membership Growth

[Cong. = Congregation; M'bers = Members; M = Main Congregation; Br = Branch Congregation; Missi. = Missionaries; Lay.M = Lay Man; Lay.F = Lay Female; Past. = Pastors; Evg = Evangelists Tchr = Teacher-preachers]

Year	Cong.		M'bers	West	Work-	Ers	Indi-	genous	Work-	ers
	M	Br		Missi.	Lay.M	Lay.F	Past.	Evg	Tchr	Elders
1861			3							
1867	7		115	7					-	
1868	7		728	7					-	
1870	10		1.071	10					5	
1871	10		1.250	10					5	
1875	11		2.056	11					13	
1877	11		2.156	12					20	
1879	11		3.402	11						
1880	11	26		16					28	64
1881	13	34	5.988	15						
1882	14	43	7.586	16					38	125
1883	13	43	8.239	17					43	133
1887	13	50	11.785	15			3		61	156
1889	13	71	15.124	19			9		85	210
1890	18	81	18.207	22		1	11		88	272
1900	28	175	40.723	41	1	11	23	18	202	725
1910	40	432	103.528	52	4	12	29	22	637	1.779
1911	40	415	103.528	56	4	12	26	27	688	1.857
1914	40	467	159.024	56	6	13	34	19	789	2.241
1918	40	465	185.731	53	7	11	43	19	788	2.241
1921	32	502	196.706	37	9	10	36	13	822	2.176
1925	26	497	223.069	28	10	10	48	19	652	2.182
1930	25	540	292.754	23	17	10	48	25	743	2.292
1935	27	636	368.535	25	16	17	55	10	953	3.011
1938	29	729	416.206	27	20	23	54	12	1.110	3.408

Source: Jan S. Arintonang, *Sejarah Pendidikan Kristen di Tanah Batak*¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 79, 92; Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 46.

¹⁴⁰ Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 25; cf. Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 92.

¹⁴¹ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 46.

¹⁴² Jan S. Arintonang, *Sejarah Pendidikan Kristen di Tanah Batak*, 196, 281, 364; cf. the English version of his book, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 152, 227, 301; Andar Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 74; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 25; Lempp Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 115.

In 1870 the Rhenish Mission sent 10 missionaries, numbers reaching a peak in 1911 when 55 missionaries were active. The number of missionaries declined in the 1930s, falling to fewer than 30 active, primarily as the result of the financial difficulties of the Rhenish Mission. (See table 1.1.).¹⁴³

Actually, Christianization of whole clans was less in line with Fabri and with pietism in general, where the accent was on personal conversion. Nonetheless, Nommensen was convinced that this new approach would be effective because of Batak's communal structure. For some of his colleagues, Nommensen's new approach had caused anxiety.¹⁴⁴ Krüger records it by saying,

Sometimes missionaries were concerned about the nature of the expansion. They worried that the movement would take place just physically with no spiritual profundity. They wanted to limit the expansion and devote their attention to the personality of each person. However, Nommensen was convinced that at that time their duty was "not to fish but to catch with nets." Indeed, that is why he always stressed how important it was to establish many parishes throughout the area, so those whom they caught with nets should be properly taken care of. In all his efforts Nommensen considered the need for workers who came from the tribe itself. So from the beginning he always urged educating them.¹⁴⁵

From the very beginning Nommensen's approach was to involve native co-workers, as *sintua*¹⁴⁶ (elders), *guru huria*¹⁴⁷ (teacher-preachers or catechists),

¹⁴³ Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 33.

¹⁴⁴ Aritonang also mentions the differences of opinion about this approach among the missionaries. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 175ff.

¹⁴⁵ Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia*, 219.

¹⁴⁶ Nommensen appointed *sintua* in every congregation. The incentive to become an elder was not just religious, for though unpaid, the position granted a prestige almost on the level of the chief, since they too were responsible for village welfare (in the spiritual field). See Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 114, 119 (114-123); cf. Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 34-36. About the *Sintua*, Schreiner, who highly values their role, says that especially in branch churches, community life revolves around them. They even become the real shepherd of the village. In the first decade, their task was very hard, because in practice they were the main helpers of the missionaries. See Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 49-50.

¹⁴⁷ See the description of catechists or teacher-preachers on Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 139-144, 187-225, 277-280; Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 126-143; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 36-40.

evangelists,¹⁴⁸ *pandita* Batak¹⁴⁹ (ministers). This continued, and Batak participation together with that of the *raja*(s),¹⁵⁰ played an important role.¹⁵¹ In order to have more indigenous co-workers,¹⁵² especially full-time workers such as catechists, ministers, and evangelists, Nommensen, Johannsen and Mohri established in 1874 a Wandering School (*Singkola Mardalandalan*)¹⁵³ which educated 20 students selected from the best elementary school graduates. This course was an emergency measure to deal with the increased need for catechists. Back in 1868 Dr. Schreiber was able to open a Catechetical School for adult students in Parausorat. This school only graduated three classes of students as Dr. Schreiber's poor health forced him to move back to Germany. His successor, Leipoldt, also faced the same problem.¹⁵⁴ Because the graduates of Parausorat did well and *Singkola Mardalandalan* was ineffective, the missionaries decided in 1877 to establish a permanent catechetical school, later called a seminary, at Pansur Napitu. This seminary was led by Johannsen. Johannsen served at the seminary until his death in 1898, when he was replaced by Johannes Warneck. In 1901 this seminary moved to Sipoholon near Tarutung, where the compound was wider and larger. This seminary remained the primary educational center for church leaders until the 1950s.¹⁵⁵ Nommensen and his colleagues also provided places in the church for influential persons, such as the *raja* who had joined

¹⁴⁸ See the description of evangelists on Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 123-126.

¹⁴⁹ See the description of *pandita* Batak in Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 143-151; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 40-41.

¹⁵⁰ See description about *raja* on Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 44-45.

¹⁵¹ Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 26; Jan S. Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 543.

¹⁵² From the beginning, Nommensen had a very clear vision of the need to prepare indigenous workers immediately. He believed that one day the Bataks would be independent, and able to train their own catechists and ministers. See Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 143.

¹⁵³ The Batak students learned by visiting the three missionaries on alternate days: On Mondays and Tuesdays, students gathered in Nommensen's place at Saitnihuta, on Wednesdays they were with Johannsen at Pansurnapitu, and on Fridays, the students were taught by Mohri in Sipoholon. For details see Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 140; Jan S. Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 544.

¹⁵⁴ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 129; Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 138.

¹⁵⁵ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 140; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 37.

the church.¹⁵⁶ Nommensen, for example, authorized the local chiefs to deal with members of the congregation in matters relating to *adat* and always invited them to attend the synod.¹⁵⁷ Later, in the Constitution of 1930, Warneck created the position of trustee (*kasbestuur*) responsible for finances and property. The missionaries had learnt that when the leaders of Batak community were involved in the church organizational matters within the church went more smoothly.¹⁵⁸ Andar Lumbantobing considered that in the pioneering days this kind of engagement was necessary, but that it should not automatically bind the church for the future. Moreover, sometimes the local chief had no real interest in the church, but only wanted a share in managing it because it gave him respectability.¹⁵⁹

However, despite Lumbantobing's skepticism, all bishops after Nommensen, including Johannes Warneck, continued the *Volkschristianisierung* method.¹⁶⁰ Warneck was encouraged in this by his father, Gustav Warneck, who actively promoted this concept of mission.¹⁶¹ It is clear that this approach accelerated the widespread acceptance of Christianity, aiding the formation of a people's church. This emphasis on the community rather than the individual helped preserve the existing ethnic structure and in this way created an ethnic folk church.¹⁶² This is one of the secrets of success of Christianization in Batak; the missionaries noticed the Batak people's "genealogical and sociological [identity], and put it into the structures

¹⁵⁶ Lumbantobing mentions that the king was also pleased to be involved in the life of the church by Nommensen and his colleagues because it meant recognition of their role in life. Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 199-201.

¹⁵⁷ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 201; Schreiner, "Nommensen Studies – A Review," in *Mission Studies* 9, no. 1992, 245.

¹⁵⁸ Warneck had learned from Nommensen about giving space in the life of the church for certain elements of the Batak people that did not clash with Christianity, including the involvement of influential persons such as local chiefs. Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 199-202; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 41-42.

¹⁵⁹ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 287-288.

¹⁶⁰ According to Nyhus the Christianizing of the entire people in accordance with the Batak's genealogical ties continued to the end of the missionary period. See Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 32.

¹⁶¹ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 260.

¹⁶² See Schreiner, "Nommensen Studies," 246.

of the church".¹⁶³

But if Nommensen's strategy of catching people with nets worked, what about their spiritual formation once they had been caught? It should be noted that for Nommensen, Johannes Warneck and the other Rhenish missionaries *Volkschristianisierung* was a strategy of necessity. The original intention of the missionaries was to create small congregations of true believers.¹⁶⁴ And so *Einzelbekehrung* and *Volkschristianisierung* should not be placed in opposition to one another.¹⁶⁵ Warnek realized the impossibility of insisting on individual baptism in a situation in which large numbers, households and even whole villages, wanted to be baptized. In such a situation, the mission needed to ensure the continued spiritual growth of all these converts. As Warnek says, the answer was to prepare a staff of competent native workers.¹⁶⁶ This caring for spiritual growth was the focus of Verwiebe, the last *ephorus* (bishop) from the Rhenish Mission, who in 1940 was suddenly forced to leave Batakland.¹⁶⁷ Verwiebe directed his attention towards the younger generation. For him, the young, now the third generation of Batak Christians, no longer faced the issue of paganism but of modern secularism.¹⁶⁸

To get some idea of how hard it was to ensure the spiritual growth of so many new converts we can read Andar Lumbantobing. His study shows how traditional Batak culture influenced the way the function of church office-holders was seen and

¹⁶³ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 51.

¹⁶⁴ Johannes Warneck, "The Growth of the Church in the Mission Field – Among the Bataks," in *The International Review of Missions*, Vol. 1 No. 1 January 1912, 38; J.R. Hutauruk, *Johannes Warneck: Penggagas, Pengamat dan Pelaku Kemandirian Gereja Batak, 1907-1944* (Medan: Lembaga Pemberdayaan Media dan Komunikasi, 2014), 3.

¹⁶⁵ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 175-176.

¹⁶⁶ Johannes Warneck, "The Growth of the Church in the Mission Field – Among the Bataks," 38-39.

¹⁶⁷ On May 10, 1940, Germany occupied the Netherlands. On that same day, the Dutch East Indies colonial government interned all the Rhenish Mission's German workers as a retaliatory response. So, after having existed for almost 80 years in the Batak area, the Rhenish Mission's work there had come to an end. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 303.

¹⁶⁸ E. Verwiebe, "The Youth Problem in the Batak Church in Sumatra," in *The International Review of Missions*, Vol. XXVII No. 106 April 1938, 208.

practiced. It also shows how this hindered their functioning in a truly biblical manner.¹⁶⁹ The *datu*, for example, a healer figure, who in the view of the old religion has *sahala* (authority), was never called a servant. Therefore, given the connotations of the Batak term, it is rather difficult to apply the notion of servant to certain offices in the church.¹⁷⁰ It is also the reason why deacons, *kasbestuur*, and other leaders in the Batak church still find it difficult to accurately carry out their duties, because cultural influences are still strong in the Batak church. Church officials see themselves as leaders, not as servants.¹⁷¹ For Lumbantobing, the way the Bataks had been converted, and which had created a people's or ethnic church, resulted in the ethnic sociological bond replacing the Christian bond (servant of the congregation). It was the clan that was important. Ever since the era of Nommensen everyone went to the church of the clan. People who lived in a rather remote village, which was closer to the church of another clan, would go to the church of their own clan, even though it was further away.¹⁷² Therefore, Lumbantobing thought the territorial characteristics of the Batak church needed to be balanced with the concept of the church as a whole. In his views, the Church Constitution of 1930 had given sufficient emphasis to this need.¹⁷³

2.1.3.2 The Missionaries' Attitude towards *Adat*

Nommensen and his colleagues applied the new life to every aspect of indigenous experience: daily life and order, custom, law, time, and so on.¹⁷⁴ In the

¹⁶⁹ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 242.

¹⁷⁰ Andar Lumbantobing, "Sahala of a Medicine Man and a Theological Graduate. A View of the 'Image of the Ministry' in the Batak Church," in *The S.E. Asia Journal of Theology*, Vol. 4 No. 3 Jan. 1963, 9.

¹⁷¹ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 311-312.

¹⁷² Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 92.

¹⁷³ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 96-98.

¹⁷⁴ Lothar Schreiner, "The Legacy of Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen," 81. According to Warneck, with the rapid Christianization in the period of 1890-1915 the formulation of regulations to govern

field of spiritual formation, the missionaries compiled a book of liturgy (*Agenda*),¹⁷⁵ book of songs,¹⁷⁶ translation of the Bible,¹⁷⁷ and Luther's Small Catechism,¹⁷⁸ as well as composing or translating spiritual books.¹⁷⁹ On Sunday, people were not supposed to work in the fields.¹⁸⁰ It was the duty of elders to remind the congregation to worship daily. Elders were also responsible for visiting those who did not come to church on Sunday and to make sure that the sick were not brought to the *datu*. In this situation, elders would provide care and medicines.¹⁸¹ In the early days of Christianity missionaries gathered members of the church in the morning to read the Bible and praise God with song and prayer before they went to the fields. They also held evening prayers. At 6 o'clock every morning and in the evening the church bells rang so that wherever people were, whether at home or in the field, or on the go, they

Christian life became a necessity. For him, in the spirit of Christianity's rapid acceptance in Batakland all became new: customs, laws, mind, imagination, ideals. See footnote 3 in Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 76.

¹⁷⁵ The *Agenda* of the Batak Church was drawn up in 1904. Missionaries Steinsiek and Jung were assigned to prepare it by referring to the Prussian book of liturgy and adapting it to the context and needs of the Batak church. Prussia's book of liturgy itself was composed in 1895 by 23 theologians from Lutheran and Reformed backgrounds. See Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan...*, 234; J.R. Hutaaruk, "Agenda HKBP: Sejarah dan Perkembangannya." Makalah pada Seminar Liturgi/Ibadah HKBP, Medan, 4 Juni 2013, 1; J.R. Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 182. The Book of Liturgy (*Agenda*) of the Batak church was a mixture of elements of the liturgy of the "United" church in Germany, which also contained Calvinist elements, such as passages on the Ten Commandments. Original elements of the liturgy of the "United" church were "Hallelujah," "Amen," and the final section of the Lord's Prayer was sung by the congregations. Likewise, a custom to use a series of passages according to the lectionary was taken from the "United" church. The Epistle (on a Sunday worship) was explained briefly by an elder, and the gospel was preached by a teacher-preacher. Communion was ministered according to the custom of the "United" church, meaning the participants were not sitting around the table, but coming to the front to receive the bread and wine from the pastor's hands. Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia*, 223-224.

¹⁷⁶ Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 179-181; Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 131. The *Buku Ende* was a collection of church hymns. These were gradually translated from the hymn books of the church in Europe, particularly from Germany. Among them were hymns written by Luther, P. Gerard, Calvin's psalms, and hymns introduced by Pietism. Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia*, 223.

¹⁷⁷ Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 171.

¹⁷⁸ Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 174-176.

¹⁷⁹ Hutaaruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 60; Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 172-174; Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 131.

¹⁸⁰ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 115, 120; Nyhus, 47.

¹⁸¹ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 115; cf. *Agenda di GKPI* (GKPI, 1997), 22; *Agenda di HKBP* (HKBP, 2005), 35, 44.

would pause to pray to God.¹⁸² According to Andar Lumbantobing, the custom of assembling in the church every day no longer continued when the Bible was translated into the Batak language. People were encouraged to read at home.¹⁸³ The Church Constitution of 1881 explained that elders and teacher-preachers were to instruct that family worship was compulsory for every member of the congregation. In addition, it was part of the duty of elders to oversee it. At that time, apparently, Christian congregations conducted evening services every day. The Church Constitutions of 1930, 1940 and on no longer contain this instruction.¹⁸⁴

Efforts to Christianize the whole lives of the Batak Christians was also evident from the missionaries' attitude towards *adat* (law and custom). While at one time many western missionaries regarded the local culture as barbaric and heathen, the Rhenish Mission's attitude towards Batak's *adat* was more nuanced. In general, the Rhenish Mission classified Batak cultural elements into three categories: those positive, those neutral and those negative.¹⁸⁵ Schreiner mentions that missionaries distinguished elements of Batak beliefs that are contrary to the Gospel, such as ancestor worship, from the elements that are in line with the gospel, such as monogamy. In addition, there are neutral elements, such as the laws pertaining to the land, for example, regarding the rice field. This distinction enabled missionaries to tolerate some of the *adat* and in later time, this became the basis, in cooperation with

¹⁸² Andar Lumbantobing, "Christian Education in the Batak Church," in *Lutheran World*, Vol. II, No. 3, Autumn 1955, 293. There is also an argument that at the time of Nommensen the church bell rang five times a day as to remind the congregation to have a short prayer five times a day. See Jusen Boangmanalu, "Doa Lima Waktu "Liturgi Harian HKBP 2001": Suatu Kajian Historis dan Upaya Berteologi Kontekstual di HKBP," in *Kontekstualisasi Pemikiran Dogmatika di Indonesia*. Buku Penghormatan 70 Tahun Prof. Dr. Sularso Sopater, ed. by A.A. Yewangoe, et. al. (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004), 399.

¹⁸³ Lumbantobing, "Christian Education in the Batak Church," 293.

¹⁸⁴ J.R. Hutauruk, *Menata Rumah Allah. Kumpulan Tata Gereja HKBP* (Tarutung: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 2008), 43, 45.

¹⁸⁵ Many scholars have criticized this approach, arguing that it failed to see the culture as a totality and it did not consider that all the *adat* were entrenched in Batak ancestor worship. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 338, 354-355; Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 79.

the Christian chiefs, for them to draw up the "Christian civil laws".¹⁸⁶ It might be true that this categorization had failed to see the Batak culture as a totality, but the Rhenish Mission's decision to accommodate Batak culture into Christian life had also something to do with the preservation of Batak culture itself.¹⁸⁷ Basically, the missionary attitude towards Batak culture was that they wanted to keep people away from the worship of ancestors. However, they took advantage of those customs and traditions which did not conflict with Christianity.¹⁸⁸ These dealt with birth, marriage, death, land ownership, lawsuits, crimes, and punishments. The worship of ancestors, rites of sacrifice and spirit, on the other hand, were regarded, not as *adat*, but as the old beliefs of the Batak people.¹⁸⁹

In an effort to foster this new Christianity and simultaneously manage the organization of the church, regulations were set. These rules were originally intended to release and fortify the Christians from the practice of ancestor worship. They were the Church Constitution,¹⁹⁰ the Order of Church Discipline,¹⁹¹ and the "Christian civil laws". The first two became the responsibility of the missionaries, while the "Christian civil laws," intended to create a Christian *adat*, or to modify *adat*, operated under the responsibility of local chiefs within their own villages. These civil laws regulated marriage law, inheritance and so on.¹⁹² For example, in accordance

¹⁸⁶ Schreiner, "Nommensen Studies – A Review," in *Mission Studies* 9, no. 1992, 245.

¹⁸⁷ Togar Nainggolan has also criticized the Rhenish Mission and HKBP's approach towards the *adat* and the worship of ancestors, saying that an appropriate approach should rather avoid linking the worship of ancestors to animism by seeing it as part of the Batak culture. See Togar Nainggolan, *Batak Toba di Jakarta: Kontinuitas dan Perubahan Identitas*. [Batak Toba in Jakarta: Continuity and Changing Identity]. Translated from *Continuïteit en verandering: Identiteit van Toba-Batak in Jakarta* (Medan: Penerbit Bina Media, 2006), 239.

¹⁸⁸ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 52ff, 60, 67.

¹⁸⁹ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 52, 60, 67.

¹⁹⁰ See the explanation of each constitution of 1866 to 2002 in J.R. Hutauruk, *Menata Rumah Allah*. Kumpulan Tata Gereja HKBP (Pearaja: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 2008); Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 188-190; Hutauruk, *Johannes Warneck*, 27-37.

¹⁹¹ See Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 185-187; Hutauruk, *Johannes Warneck*, 67-70.

¹⁹² The first "Christian civil laws" were drawn up in 1867 for *Huta Dame*, the village which was founded by Nommensen. The second were drawn up by Johannsen in 1892. And the third were from

with Batak custom, marriage within the same *marga* is not allowed, although there is no family tie in the European sense. Another example is that an adult Christian male is not allowed to marry his stepmother even though custom at the time obliged him to marry her if she had become a widow. A candidate for baptism who had married his stepmother could only be baptized after he had divorced her.¹⁹³

The Church Constitution of 1866, which was the first constitution drafted in the Batak Church, emphasized the prohibition against ancestor worship. The Order of Church Discipline drawn up in 1897 contained a more detailed list of prohibitions. For example, the church forbade its members to conduct or take part in the rite *mangalap tondi ni (manahui tua sian) na mate*¹⁹⁴ (a ritual to possess the spirit of the dead person) at a funeral. They were also prohibited to take part in *mangongkal holi* (an *adat* of reburial of the bones of the dead in a new tomb). Anyone who took part in ancestor worship would be banned.¹⁹⁵ Of course, the Church Constitution and the Order of Church Discipline were not just about banning ancestor worship; they dealt with everything concerning church government and prohibited anything contrary to the Ten Commandments. Moreover, later on, the Order of Church Discipline did not simply prescribe certain punishments, it also prescribed pastoral care.¹⁹⁶

Schreiner, until now the most important source of discussion on the *adat* and

1913. See Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 64, 72, 74, 75. After Dutch colonial government entered Silindung in 1878 this regulation was revised several times and later from 1920 on came under the authority of the colonial government. See Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 71; cf. Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 25, 36.

¹⁹³ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 68.

¹⁹⁴ *Buku Ruhut Parmahanion dohot Paminsangon di Huria Kristen Batak Protestan*, (Pearaja: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 1987), 22.

¹⁹⁵ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 174-195.

¹⁹⁶ The Order of Church Discipline of HKBP has been revised three times. First published in 1897, it was revised in 1924, in 1952 and then in 1987. See *Buku Ruhut Parmahanion dohot Paminsangon di Huria Kristen Batak Protestan*, (Pearaja: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 1987). The Order of Church Discipline of GKPI was written for the first time in 1968. The revision came in 1981. And the latest, which was set in 2013, the name became *Tata Penggembalaan GKPI* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2014).

Christianity,¹⁹⁷ contends that the selective attitude adapted towards indigenous culture was inadequate and even impossible. He thinks Nommensen and colleagues failed to understand that *adat* was a totality and that *adat* as a whole was rooted in ancestor worship.¹⁹⁸ Realizing that the Batak people cannot be separated from their dead, Schreiner proposes a solution through the concept of *familia Dei* and *patria*, an idea of communion with Christ after death and the idea of the universality of salvation. Through this concept, a place for fellowship and communion with the dead is opened, without making people dependent on the dead.¹⁹⁹

Another aspect of the effort to remove ancestor worship is the prominence of the prohibitions. This is already visible in the decision of Nommensen to divide the First Commandment into two in the Batak version of Luther's Small Catechism. In this way, Nommensen intended to emphasize the prohibition on worshipping other gods or idols gods, precisely because the Batak people were so rooted in ancestor worship.²⁰⁰ The same was true of the missionary's decision to draw up the Order of Church Discipline 1897. This rule was widely used to punish or remove members of the congregation who were involved in ancestor worship.²⁰¹ Some scholars have highlighted that the number of rules aimed at eliminating certain customary practices, especially those associated with ancestor worship, had caused Christianity

¹⁹⁷ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*. A festschrift in Indonesian was given to Schreiner on his 75th birthday. This was recognition of his expertise and to his contribution in the field of *adat* and Christianity in the context of Batak people. See *Injil dan Tata Hidup* (The Gospel and Life Order). Buku Penghargaan untuk 75 Tahun Pdt. Prof. Dr. Lothar Schreiner, edited by A.A. Sitompul and Karl H. Federschmidt (Pematangsiantar: STT-HKBP, 2001).

¹⁹⁸ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 78-78.

¹⁹⁹ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 195-226.

²⁰⁰ J. Warneck, *Sechzig Jahre Batakmission in Sumatra* (Barmen: RMG, 1925) as quoted in J.R. Hutaaruk, "Katekismus Kecil Martin Luther: Lahirnya dan Penggunaannya oleh Martin Luther di Jerman Abad ke-16 dan oleh I.L. Nommensen serta Jemaat "Batak"/Gereja-gereja Lutheran di Tanah Batak/Indonesia Abad ke-19, 20 dan 21," Makalah untuk Seminar "Lutheran Teaching" diselenggarakan oleh Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Pematangsiantar, 19-21 Juni 2007, dan Tarutung, 26-28 Juni 2007. Probably Nommensen here influenced by Reformed tradition's in which practicing the same numbering of the commandments following Calvin.

²⁰¹ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 53.

to be regarded as a new law.²⁰² This legalism, according to Schreiner, stemmed from the background of the missionaries. They were influenced both by the high ideals of holiness of the spiritual Awakening in Germany in the 18th century and by the Reformed tradition that prominently practiced Church discipline. However, it was not just missionaries; the Batak held a legalistic view of life through their *adat*.²⁰³ Meanwhile, church discipline is not prominent in Lutheran circles.²⁰⁴ In this connection, it is important to note the observations of Sandler below as they maintain a balance between law and grace,

Africans, Indonesians, Papuans, Indians and others are deeply interested in legal matters, and often have much experience of trials; this training they bring with them into the Christian Church, where the problem of church discipline is pressing. There is however a marked tendency towards legalisms. The commonest punishment is exclusion from communion for a definite period: six months to a year or more. There are churches in which delinquents are placed in a "penitents' class" which, under a simple village evangelist, is little more than a catechetical exercise. There are also "penitent forms", which the sinner must occupy when in church, placed at the front of the church or chapel.

It has been asked in a Lutheran theological college in South Africa why [the] Lutheran Church does not have a collection of detailed rules for moral behavior and conduct in various situations. We see how easy it is for the emphasis to shift from the free grace of the Gospel to the merits of observing the law.²⁰⁵

²⁰² Bengt Sundkler, *The World of Mission* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1965), 185-186; Keith R. Bridston, "The Batak Church and Christian Identity," in *Horas HKBP! Essays for A 125-Year-Old Church*, edited by A.A. Sitompul and Arne Sovik (Pematangsiantar: STT HKBP, 1986), 147-148; Schreiner, "Nommensen Studies," 247-249; Schreiner, "The Legacy of Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen," 81.

²⁰³ Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 76; Jan S. Arintonang, *Yubileum 50 Tahun GKPI (Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia). Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan Ke Depan* [Jubilee 50 Years GKPI (Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia). Historical Overview and Future Views] (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2014), 16.

²⁰⁴ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 253.

²⁰⁵ Sundkler, *The World of Mission*, 185-186. Similar issues were raised at the Pastor Conference of HKBP of 1962. The guest speaker from the Norwegian Lutheran church, Rev. A. Tang, mentioned that the Lutheran Church of Norway did not have the Order of Church Discipline. A delegate asked for clarification. Tang replied that for them it did not count as the mark of the true church. A mark of the true church is when there the gospel is preached harmoniously according to a pure understanding of it and the sacraments are administered in accordance with the divine Word. Rev. Tang said his church did not have juridical and administrative rights. The Church only has spiritual power. See "Notulen ni Rapot Pandita HKBP di Seminari Sipoholon 6 s/d 10 Maret 1962," 14-15.

I have frequently mentioned Andar Lumbantobing, the first Batak pastor to earn a doctor of theology degree from Germany. He acknowledges that the application of the Order of Church Discipline is complicated. The difficulty lies in how and when it is imposed. Indeed, the Order of Church Discipline has been introduced in the life of the Batak church to direct people towards a good, orderly, and virtuous Christian life. But the downside is, as Lumbantobing stresses, that God's grace can become blurred and invisible.²⁰⁶

2.1.3.3 A Unity between School and Church

Another feature of Nommensen and his colleagues' strategy is that from the beginning they created a unity between school and church. The Rhenish Mission had a strategy of establishing and operating schools to found new Christian communities. The Rhenish Mission built church and school in one complex, thus introducing the unity of the church-schools model. Therefore, as Nyhus mentions, wherever the church spread, schools were built.²⁰⁷ This created an interest in schooling among the Bataks and gave many of them an education.

It is generally acknowledged that the church, through the Rhenish Mission, was one of the key factors enabling the development of the Batak people.²⁰⁸

Throughout the Rhenish Mission's existence (1861-1940) in Batakland, the church was associated with education.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 253, 255.

²⁰⁷ Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 38.

²⁰⁸ Pedersen states that with Christianity, three alien realities were introduced into Batakland, namely, the church, medical science, and the educational institutions of the church. See Paul B. Pedersen, *Batak Blood and Protestant Soul. The Development of National Batak Churches in North Sumatra* (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1970), 80-88.

²⁰⁹ The presence of the church along with schools on the other hand was very time-consuming for missionaries. They often complained that the organization of the school did not leave them enough time to do their main task in the church, i.e. doing pastoral ministry. See Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir, *Laporan dari Simorangkir. Laporan Perkembangan Kekristenan di Simorangkir Berdasarkan Laporan Misionaris RMG* [Reports from Simorangkir. Christianity's Progress in the Simorangkir

Table 1.2 Schools Growth

[M = Main Congregation; Br = Branch Congregation; Tchr = Teacher-preachers; Elem = Elementary School; HS = High school; B-E = Boys at Elementary School; G-E = Girls Elementary School]

Year	M	Br.	Tchr	Elem.	HS	B-E	G-E	Pupils at HS
1861								
1867	7			7		120 (B)		
1868	7			7	1	161 (B/HS)		
1870	10		5	10	1			
1871	10		5	15	1			
1875	11		13	15	2	265 (B/HS)		
1877	11		20	24	2			
1879	11			31	1	837 (B/HS)		
1880	11	26	28	37	1	995 (B/HS)		
1881	13	34			1			
1882	14	43	38	57	1	1.132 (B/HS)		
1883	13	43	43	56	1	1.123 (B/HS)		
1887	13	50	61	63	1	1.371 (B/HS)		
1889	13	71	85	84	1	1.936 (B/HS)		
1890	18	81	88	92	1	2.666 (B/HS)		
1900	28	175	202	206	1	6.995 (B/HS)	1.168	
1910	40	432	637	494	3	22.314	5.171	225
1911	40	415	688	506	4	23.157	5.856	267
1914	40	467	789	510	5	26.310	6.480	309
1918	40	465	788	520	4	Total: 26.796		
1921	32	502	822	510	5	22.355	3.640	367
1925	26	497	652	414	5	19.175	5.708	765
1930	25	540	743	462	6	26.819	8.733	697
1935	27	636	953	576	5	28.629	12.693	
1938	29	729	1.110	646	5	36.181	18.300	

Source: Jan S. Aritonang, *Sejarah Pendidikan Kristen di Tanah Batak*²¹⁰

The Rhenish Mission as a tool to support evangelization and church establishment conceived schools. The purpose of the organization of the schools was to help church members to be able to read the Bible and other Christian literature. In other words, education and other social work were intended to win the Batak people for the gospel. This often caused conflict between the Rhenish Mission and the Batak people. The Rhenish Mission did not like the attitude of the Batak people who demanded that they open and provide schools to enable people to find good jobs and

Based on Rhenish Missionaries Reports] (Bandung: Penerbit satu-satu, 2013), especially 187-188, 199, 201, 215-216, 218-219, 230-232, 236 but also 156-158, 165-166, 172, 176-177, 205, 211-212, 240.

²¹⁰ Jan S. Aritonang, *Sejarah Pendidikan Kristen di Tanah Batak*, 196, 281, 364; cf. the English version of his book, *Mission Schools in Batakland*, 152, 227, 301.

to attain good positions (such as administrative personnel on plantations or other jobs in the colonial era of the time), namely, schools that used and taught the Dutch language.²¹¹ The Rhenish Mission finally gave in to this demand, although disagreeing with their worldly motivation. For the Bataks the purpose of education was to enable them to achieve wealth, position (high office, prestige) and power for their future life. Concerning this matter Verwiebe – affected by his pietistic understanding – interestingly said,

People were constantly asking for more and better schools; fathers wanted their sons to become professors and doctors; others wished them to find employment with the Dutch government or with European firms or estates. Although the missionary foresaw many of the destructive influences which would thus enter into the Batak community, he could do nothing but fulfill the urgent desire for wider knowledge for the younger generation.²¹²

Regarding the tension between missions and the Batak people at that time, Kraemer²¹³ suggests a way of solving it in a very broad-minded way. He encouraged the Rhenish Mission to try to better understand the pagan past of the Batak people and - while touched by all the extraordinary sacrifices and sincerity of the missionaries in doing mission for the Batak people – he requested that the Rhenish Mission would put themselves on the side of the Bataks and pay attention to their heart's desire. Kraemer says,

If we want to give a short characteristic of the mistakes and shortcomings of missions in the Batak lands, we should, I believe, say that they have regarded the Batak people too exclusively as material for the realization of missionary

²¹¹ See some other expressions: “The Bataks wanted more than conversion to Christianity. They wanted an improved material existence and the opportunity to break out of the limitations imposed by traditional isolationism.” See Paul B. Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 92. “The only things that interested them in their first contacts with the Gospel were increased wealth, prestige and power. If the Gospel could bring them these things, they were ready to listen, if not, they were not.” See Hendrik Kraemer, *From Mission field to Independent Church: Report on a Decisive Decade in the Growth of Indigenous Churches in Indonesia* (Boekencentrum: The Hague, 1958), 44.

²¹² E. Verwiebe, “The Youth Problem in the Batak Church in Sumatra,” in *The International Review of Missions*, vol. XXVII, no. 106, April 1938, 208.

²¹³ Kraemer made a visit to the Batak Church in February to April 1937 at the invitation of the Bishop of Batak Church, Dr. Johannes Warneck. See Kraemer, *From Mission field to Independent Church*, 43.

aims (in themselves excellent). Missions were at stake and not the Batak people. They were interested in education as a missionary instrument and not as an instrument or nucleus of power for the education and elevation of the people. ... Thus, the Bataks are also generally convinced that missions have always been half-hearted in introducing and promoting so-called Western education in the Batak lands.²¹⁴

Aritonang asserts that since 1883 the Rhenish Mission began to take steps to fundamentally reform its educational system.²¹⁵ Educational effort was no longer treated merely a kind of tool, rather it became more important in itself. The quality of the schools was enhanced by increasing the number of European teachers, opening new secondary schools, improving the curriculum and teaching methods, etc.²¹⁶ Nevertheless, overall, it can be said that Aritonang still views the educational effort of the Rhenish Mission as a secondary activity or a support for the primary task, namely evangelization. Therefore, the missionaries were still far from understanding that their educational efforts were in themselves in keeping with the content of the gospel.²¹⁷

Their other efforts in the social sphere were medical: hospitals and service to the lepers, the blind and deaf.²¹⁸ The first hospital was founded in Batak on June 2, 1900, with one doctor, Dr. Julius Schreiber. The number of doctors became two when Dr. Johannes Winkler arrived. Likewise, there were cottage hospitals in Butar and Pangaribuan, also a number of polyclinics²¹⁹ and school for nurses and midwives. The second hospital was founded in 1928 in Balige, which had been a cottage hospital since 1917. Hutasaalem is a settlement for lepers, established in 1900

²¹⁴ Hendrik Kraemer, *From Mission field to Independent Church*, 68.

²¹⁵ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 153.

²¹⁶ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 153-225.

²¹⁷ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 183-184.

²¹⁸ Source for this part is J.R. Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar, dan Bertumbuh*, 260-286 and J.R. Hutauruk, *Tuhan Menyertai Umatnya*. *Garis Besar Sejarah 125 Tahun Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) 7 Oktober 1861 – 1986* (Pearaja: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 1986), 158-160, 166-167.

²¹⁹ According to the information provided in *Tuhan Menyertai Umatnya*, there were 14 cottage hospitals and 12 polyclinics See J.R. Hutauruk, *Tuhan Menyertai Umatnya*, 167.

at Laguboti. *Hephata* is a home for the blind and deaf, founded in 1923 at Laguboti.

These efforts brought the church closer to the everyday struggle of people. Before the Dutch colonial government occupied Batakland, people brought their problems to the missionaries for advice, writes Andar Lumbantobing. However, when the Dutch colonial government arrived in the land of Batak, people had to deal with Dutch government employees. He remarks:

For the missionaries, on the one hand, it was a huge relief. On the other hand, it caused the missionaries and the Batak to become estranged, and the number of people who came to church services was declining.²²⁰

2.2 The Use of Luther's Small Catechism

Although the Batak Church was not bound to any particular denomination, it was influenced by Lutheran theology and pietism. From the very beginning, Nommensen used Luther's Small Catechism for guidance on baptismal preparation and especially for catechetical instruction in the Batak Church, and in the mission schools.²²¹ Later he translated it.²²² In mission schools,²²³ or in Sunday school, or in catechetical instruction, students were taught to memorize the content of Luther's

²²⁰ See Andar M. Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak*, 163-164.

²²¹ See Andar M. Lumbantobing, "The Confession of the Batak Church. An Introduction and Explanation." In *The Church and the Confessions*, 119; J.R. Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berkembang dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 174; Lothar Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus [Around Confession Issues, Augsburg Confession and Witnessing the Divinity of Christ]," in *Missio Dei. Kumpulan Karangan Kenang-kenangan pada Ulang Tahun ke- 60 Ds. Dr. A. Lumbantobing* [Missio Dei. Recollection Articles for Celebrating 60 years Rev. Dr. A. Lumbantobing], eds. R.M.G. Marbun and A. Munthe (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase/ Publikasi Pusat GKPI, 1980), 138; Th. Müller Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia*, 224; Edward O.V. Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change: The Batak Protestant Christian Church, 1942-1957*. A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin (Madison, 1987), 192.

²²² Around ten years after Nommensen settled in Batakland, Luther's Small Catechism was translated into the Toba Batak language and published in 1874. See J.R. Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berkembang dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus. Sejarah 150 Tahun Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) 7 Oktober 1861 – 7 Oktober 2011* [Birth, Developing and Growing in Christ. 150 Year History of the Batak Christian Protestant Church (HKBP) October 7, 1861 - October 7, 2011] (Tarutung: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 2011), 174; Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther Dan Relevansinya di Indonesia* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2008), 255; Th. Müller Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia* [Church History in Indonesia] (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1966), 224.

²²³ Especially in the pioneering period, at every school of each level owned by the Rhenish Mission, the Bible was the main textbook, followed by catechism, hymns, etc. Books on science and general knowledge were also included by the missionaries. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 130ff.

Small Catechism, especially about the Ten Commandments.²²⁴

According to Schreiner, Nommensen and other missionaries, supported by Fabri, planned the Batak church to be confessionally neutral. This was reflected in the Constitution of the Batak Church of 1866, written by Nommensen. It stated that all missionaries working in Sumatra were bound by the Bible, Luther's Small Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism.²²⁵ But only the Bible²²⁶ and Luther's Small Catechism²²⁷ were translated into Batak. Luther's Small Catechism in Batak was printed in Barmen in 1874 and the Toba Batak Bible was printed in Elberfeld in 1876.²²⁸ Confessional neutrality was emphasized again in the Constitution of 1881, which made no explicit reference to either the Luther's Small Catechism or the Heidelberg Catechism. Schreiner argues that the Rhenish's missionaries had based their teaching in the Batak Church on Luther's Small Catechism and the Lutheran

²²⁴ T.O.B. Simaremare, "Peranan Katekismus Lutheri Kecil," in *Benih yang Berbuah*. Hari Peringatan 150 Tahun Ompu I Ephorus Dr. Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen Almarhum (6 Februari 1834 – 6 Februari 1984) (Pematangsiantar: STT HKBP Pematangsiantar, 1984), 96.

²²⁵ Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," in *Missio Dei*, 137ff; Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther Dan Relevansinya di Indonesia*, 252, 255; cf. Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 112.

²²⁶ Information about the year of translation and publication of the Old and New Testaments are varied among scholars. Lempp recorded that the Old Testament was translated into Toba Batak language by Johannsen in 1894, and the New Testament by Nommensen in 1878. See Walter Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII. Suatu Survey Mengenai Gereja-gereja di Sumatera Utara* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian dan Studi Dewan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia, 1976), 113. Mainwhile Krüger mentioned that Old Testament had entirely been translated by 1890. See Th. Müller Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia*, 223. Another note mentions that the Old Testament was translated over 13 years by P.H. Johannsen, assisted by his students at the Pansurnapitu seminary, among others was Josua Hutabarat, before being finally published in 1894. See Jubil Raplan Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 171, 173; Jan S. Aritonang mentions that the New Testament was translated by Nommensen in 1876 and published in 1885. Later on O. Marcks with the assist of J. Warneck revised Nommensen's translation (in 1932; see Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh*, 173; Schreiner mentions that Warneck dan Marcks did the revision of the New Testament in 1921-1925. See Schreiner, *Adat dan Injil*, 79, 83). Johannsen began translating the Old Testament in the 1870s with the assistance of his students at the Pansur Napitu Seminary (among others Josua Hutabarat) and completed the work in 1891. It was published at Barmen in 1893. See Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 131.

²²⁷ Translated into Toba Batak by Nommensen and published in 1874. See Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther Dan Relevansinya di Indonesia* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2008), 255. The first edition of this translation records that Luther's Small Cathecism was translated by Nommensen and his colleagues. This note refers to August Mohri and Peter H. Johannsen. See Jubil Raplan Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 174.

²²⁸ Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther Dan Relevansinya di Indonesia*, 255.

pietism that most of the German missionaries stood for.²²⁹

Johannes Warneck, as the *ephorus* (bishop) of the Batak Church since 1920, was not pleased with the initiative of missionary Eigenbrod²³⁰ in translating and circulating the Heidelberg Catechism. He opposed Eigenbrod's initiative because it introduced Reformed influence to the Batak Church.²³¹ In contrast, Warneck supported the publication of another book explaining Luther's Small Catechism.²³² We can imagine the tendency among the majority of the Rhenish's missionaries working in the Batakland. Although not bound to a particular denomination, many missionaries preferred Lutheran pietism. This does not mean that there was no difference of opinion about the use of Luther's Small Catechism among the Rhenish missionaries. Let us consider the opinion of Th. Müller Krüger, who had experience working as a Rhenish missionary in Batakland before taking a teaching position in the Hoogere Theologische School in Bogor/Batavia (later to become Jakarta Theological Seminary). Krüger thinks that the missionaries used Luther's Small Catechism because it was so structured and easy to communicate, not, Krüger argues, because they wanted to spread Lutheranism.²³³

The Batak churches still up to this time use Luther's Small Catechism, which is available in both the Batak and Indonesian languages, as they have done in the past. It is used as the main source for catechetical instruction. Beside its function in catechetical instruction, the Batak Churches also use Luther's Small Catechism in Sunday school, and in the Sunday service in which the reading of the Ten

²²⁹ Lothar Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," in *Missio Dei*, 138.

²³⁰ See Fr. Eigenbrod, et. al., *Pangarimpunan ni Oegama Hakristenon*. (Lagoeboti: Zendings-Drukkerij, 1931); J.R. Hutauruk (ed), *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, 75.

²³¹ Lothar Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," in *Missio Dei*, 138.

²³² Lothar Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," in *Missio Dei*, 138.

²³³ Th. Müller Krüger, *Sedjarah Gereja Di Indonesia*, 224.

Commandments is a fixed part of the liturgy. Sometimes the reading of the whole Ten Commandments is replaced by one of the Ten Commandments followed by an explanation taken from Luther's Small Catechism.²³⁴ Perhaps the difference in past and present of the use of Luther's Small Catechism is that young people no longer have to memorize it.²³⁵

The numbering of the Ten Commandments in Nommensen's translation of Luther's Small Catechism is different from the original one. Nommensen had divided the first commandment into two (and merged the ninth and the tenth). According to Warneck, Nommensen had decided to do that because of a special challenge within the Batak context. Realizing that the Batak people worshipped their ancestors, Nommensen saw that it would be necessary to emphasize the prohibition of worship of other things than God.²³⁶

In his translation of Luther's Small Catechism Nommensen also did not include "the Confession and Absolution" part.²³⁷ In addition, the way the catechism is used in Batakland strongly emphasizes the Ten Commandments at the expense of the rest of the catechism. This imbalance might have led to the Batak churches not grasping Luther's overall thought:

What is that? (Or what does this mean?). The simple paraphrase of catechetical texts elicited by that question is matched by its insistence on

²³⁴ Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther Dan Relevansinya di Indonesia*, 255; Jubil Raplan Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 176; T.O.B. Simaremare, "Peranan Katekhismus Lutheri Kecil," in *Benih yang Berbuah*, 96.

²³⁵ Jubil Raplan Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 176.

²³⁶ J. Warneck, *Sechzig Jahre Batakmission in Sumatra* (Barmen: RMG, 1925) as quoted in J.R. Hutauruk, "Katekhismus Kecil Martin Luther: Lahirnya dan Penggunaannya oleh Martin Luther di Jerman Abad ke-16 dan oleh I.L. Nommensen serta Jemaat "Batak"/Gereja-gereja Lutheran di Tanah Batak/Indonesia Abad ke-19, 20 dan 21," Makalah untuk Seminar "Lutheran Teaching" diselenggarakan oleh Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Pematangsiantar, 19-21 Juni 2007, dan Tarutung, 26-28 Juni 2007, 6; Jubil Raplan Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 175. Cf. As mentioned before, probably Nommensen here influenced by Reformed tradition's in which practicing the same numbering of the commandments following Calvin.

²³⁷ J.R. Hutauruk, "Katekhismus Kecil Martin Luther: Lahirnya ...," 5; Jubil Raplan Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 175.

moving from law (Ten Commandments) to gospel (Creed and Lord's Prayer) and by expansion of material found in traditional catechisms to include explanations of holy baptism and the Lord's Supper.²³⁸

2.3 The Rhenish Mission's Missionaries Views on Salvation in general, and on Faith and Good Works in particular

As said before, the Rhenish Mission was rooted in Pietism. Pietism regarded the official church as too cold and intellectual. Pietism preceded but also responded to the Enlightenment. Pietism wanted believers to rely not on their intellects but to rely fully on the sacrifice that Jesus had made for all humanity. God reveals himself through this sacrifice as full of grace. Awareness of this arouses love of God in believers. This awareness leads those who have realized God's mercy to want to share the Good News to non-Christians.

When training for the mission field, the Rhenish missionaries had been taught to focus upon the need for humankind to find individual salvation from sin. Missionaries were expected to be able to communicate the Gospel and to convert non-Christians overseas.²³⁹ Hutaaruk notes that in the German edition of the Church Constitution of 1907 the missionaries were asked to focus their sermons on the proclamation of salvation. The outline of such a sermon clearly emphasized the history of salvation: creation, the Fall, and the work of salvation in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the way of life that brings sinners back to God; everyone who calls on the

²³⁸ See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 346. In the advertisement of a study edition of Luther's Small Catechism published by ELCA on 500 years of Reformation, Luther's explanation of God as not the stern judge but a loving parent in the Small Catechism is highly appreciated. The great value of Luther's Small Catechism, as it is still one of the most effective tools for learning and teaching Christianity, the writers argue, lies on Luther's achievement in formulating a simple question-and-answer format that reveals a God who offers unconditional grace and in turn invites Christians to live accordingly. See *Reformation 500 Sourcebook. Anniversary Resources for Congregations*, ed. by Robert Farlee (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2016), 137-138.

²³⁹ Aritonang, Jan S. and Karel Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 536-537.

name of Jesus faithfully and with words and deeds to prove his faith, will become a child of God.²⁴⁰

Since 1909, Catholics had tried to enter Batakland.²⁴¹ It was not merely the desire of the Catholic side. However, the Dutch colonial government had passed legislation that prohibited double mission in one area. Moreover, since 1881 the colonial government had reserved Batakland for Protestant missions.²⁴² Nonetheless, a number of appeals came from the Bataks themselves, requesting the Catholic Church to establish churches and schools. Around 1912 some Batak representatives asked the leadership of the Catholic Church in the city of Padang to enter Batakland. The request was not met. Other requests followed, but did not succeed until after 1933, when the government granted the Catholic Church permission to establish parishes in Batakland.²⁴³ However, Aritonang notes that in reality the Catholics had opened stations and schools in Silindung from 1924 on in spite of protests from the Rhenish Mission.²⁴⁴ Having obtained official permission, Catholic parishes and schools were established in Balige (1934), Hutaraja (1935), Lumban Sormin (1936), Lintong ni Huta (1936), Pangaribuan (1936), Tarutung (1938), and Aek Raja (1939).²⁴⁵

As we see, the Catholic presence made rapid progress in Batakland. This was partly due to the excellent reputation of the Catholic schools in Medan, Padang and Batavia (Jakarta) and the desire of the Bataks for their children to have access to schools of a similar quality. Catholic and Rhenish mission attitudes towards the *adat*

²⁴⁰ Hutaauruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 61.

²⁴¹ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 167.

²⁴² Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 30.

²⁴³ Karel Steenbrink and Paule Maas, *Orang-orang Katolik di Indonesia 1808-1942*, 559, 561, 562; Kurrus, 25.

²⁴⁴ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 281.

²⁴⁵ R. Kurrus, *Pelangi di Bukit Barisan. Gereja Katolik Memasuki Tapanuli* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2006), 31-122; cf. Th. Van den End dan J. Weitjens, *Ragi Carita 2: Sejarah Gereja di Indonesia 1860-an – Sekarang*. (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2011, cet. ke-9), 449-451.

that could be interpreted as ancestor worship were very different. For the Rhenish Missionaries there could be no compromise with what they felt was ancestor worship. Events in Hutaraja and Hutabarat illustrate the difference. Spurred by the unwillingness of the Batak church to receive the *adat* of death or *mangongkal holi*, which contained ancestor worship, people at both places switched to Catholicism.²⁴⁶ As mentioned, Catholic attitudes toward Batak culture and customs were quite different from the Rhenish Mission. For example, Catholic priests were not questioned about the people who were dancing around the bodies of the dead or around the bones of the dead to be reburied in a new cemetery or monument. Actually, the dance allowed the Bataks to persuade the spirits of the dead not to harm their offspring but bless them with descendants, riches and prestige. One time a Catholic priest participated in a dance like this. Certainly, he did not want to worship the dead person. In his opinion, the body of the dead must be respected as a temple of the Holy Spirit, and his participation in the dance was an expression of gratitude to God for the gift of life which he has bestowed on the dead man while still alive.²⁴⁷ Thus, according to the Catholics, ceremonies surrounding the *adat* of deaths or *mangongkal traditional* can still be celebrated, but, of course, they must be filled with the Christian faith. Instead of calling the spirits of ancestors and speaking to them, the Batak people were advised to call on Jesus Christ, who has redeemed and consecrated us all.²⁴⁸ Indeed, Catholics have had long accumulated experience of inculturation in all corners of the world. Therefore, in Batakland, too, the Catholic mission had approached Batak culture with respect and as far as possible tried to fill

²⁴⁶ Kurris, *Pelangi di Bukit Barisan*, 88, 93-94.

²⁴⁷ Karel Steenbrink dan Paule Maas, *Orang-orang Katolik di Indonesia 1808-1942*. Jilid 2: Pertumbuhan yang Spektakuler dari sebuah Minoritas yang Percaya Diri 1903-1942. Translated by Yosef Maria Florison (Maumere: Ledalero, 2006), 568-569; Joosten, 89, 102.

²⁴⁸ Kurris, *Pelangi di Bukit Barisan*, 95; Joosten, 102.

it with Christian values,²⁴⁹ and purify and raise it to a higher level.²⁵⁰

Catholic plans to enter the Batakland since 1909 also caused the Rhenish missionaries to emphasize the Protestant doctrine of salvation in their teaching to distinguish between Protestant and Catholic doctrine.²⁵¹ The Rhenish Mission publishing house gave out several books introducing the history of the Reformation, and especially Luther's thought. These efforts were part of the Rhenish Mission's missionaries' attempts to stem the Catholic influence that was spreading at that time.²⁵²

The book *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant* (The Essence of the Sermon in the Protestant Church) of 1891, explains the history of the reformation and the difference between Protestant and Catholics. According to this book, the Protestant church is based solely on the Word of God, whereas the Catholic Church claims that Scripture and tradition (the unwritten word of God) together are its foundation. The other basic conviction of the Protestant church is that humans obtain salvation only through the grace of God.²⁵³ Therefore, the book states that Protestant understanding rejects Catholic teaching about a variety of matters: the pope and the church, tradition, good works, the abolition of the punishment of sin, saints, sacraments, confession, Mass, purgatory.²⁵⁴ The book notes,

Therefore, one must examine the characteristics of the visible church to make

²⁴⁹ Kurrus, *Pelangi di Bukit Barisan*, 94-95.

²⁵⁰ Leo Joosten, *Potret sebuah Paroki. Pendirian, Pertumbuhan dan Kehidupan Paroki Pangururan* (Kabanjahe, 2008), 89.

²⁵¹ Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 282; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 29.

²⁵² The books, to mention a few, are P.H. Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*. [The Essence of the Sermon in the Protestant Church] Revised by J.H. Meerwaldt in 1914 (Pearaja: Kolportase Pusat HKBP, 1962), *Pangarimpoenan ni Oegama Hakristenon* [The Essence of Christian Religion], na pinatoere ni Pandita Fr. Eigenbrod rap dohot deba donganna saolaon. Rongkoman Paopathalihon. Laguboti: Zending-Drukkerij, 1931; *Sungkunsungkun tu angka parguru, na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng tardidi* [Questions for Catechumen to Receive Confirmation and Baptismal], pinature ni W. Müller, pandita di Bonandolok. Nironkom di Pangarongkoman – Mission Laguboti – Toba, 1919; *Katechismus Djamita Huria* [Catechism of Church Sermon]. Translated into Batak by P.H. Johannsen. Elberfeld: R.L. Friderichs & Comp., 1891.

²⁵³ P.H. Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*, 16.

²⁵⁴ P.H. Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*, 16-17.

sure that the visible church is the true church wherever it is. These are the signs: 1. If the gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ is preached correctly (John 8, 31. Acts 4, 12; 2) and the sacraments are administered correctly according to what Lord Jesus has established (1 Corinthians 11, 22-28).²⁵⁵

The book explains the teaching of the Catholic Church about good works as follows:

Humans are capable of obtaining eternal life by doing good works.²⁵⁶

The book registered good works as follows: charity, fasting, attending the Mass, the Hail Mary (asking for the intercession of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus), pilgrimage, cloister/monastery, the selling of indulgences. The book says that the Protestant churches rejected them because according to Romans 3:24 and Galatians 6:16 man is justified only by the mercy of God not by obeying the Torah (law).²⁵⁷ But it is interesting that in further explanation, this book associates justification by faith with new life. The Catholic Church, this book says, teaches that humans are capable of consecrating themselves, "capable of doing good works for God, although not reborn yet through the Holy Spirit", whereas, according to 2 Peter, good works can only be done through faith.²⁵⁸ This shows the influence of the pietistic interpretation of Luther.²⁵⁹

This book confirms that in accordance with God's Word Protestant churches understand that humans cannot obtain their own salvation; only through the grace of God alone can humans gain salvation. Believers should certainly do good works. However, what counted as good works are the deeds of faith (Romans 14, 23).

²⁵⁵ P.H. Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*, 23.

²⁵⁶ P.H. Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*, 28.

²⁵⁷ Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*, 28-29.

²⁵⁸ Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*, 29.

²⁵⁹ Elsewhere in the book the writer mentions rebirth as the mark of the visible and invisible church. See Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*, 23. The interpretation of Luther's teaching adding the aspect of rebirth or new birth had been common in Pietism. Pietists sought to bring the justification of the sinner by grace through faith into the realm of actual experience by laying all emphasis upon man's regeneration. See Schmidt, "Pietism," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 1901.

Moreover, only the re-born person in whom the Holy Spirit dwells is able to do good works. Luther is quoted about the close relationship between justification and good works:

Luther says: Remember the parable of Jesus in Matthew 7:17: Every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. It is not the fruit that makes the tree good, but the tree must first be good, then the tree will bear good fruit. The same goes for humans: not everything done makes one good; he must be good first; then he will be able to do good works. God's Word does say that good works should be done, but the good deeds are the result of true faith. When faith is right, it must be accompanied by good works; and if faith is without works, that shows that faith is just words. Just like a tree, it is not the fruit that makes a tree into a good tree, but the fruit shows that the tree is good. Faith also should be recognized by its fruit.²⁶⁰

Another book, *Pangarimpoenan ni Oegama Hakristenon* (The Essence of Christian Religion), of 1931,²⁶¹ teaches that a person becomes righteous before God only by faith in the Lord Jesus. It is not because of their kindness and ability that God grants humans justification and holiness. Justification is an act of God's mercy. Through it, the sinner becomes like a person who never sinned, and like a person who has totally obeyed God in the way that Jesus did. God grants all of this freely. All that is necessary is to accept grace. Three Biblical verses are cited to support this interpretation: Romans 3: 28; Romans 3:24; Romans 4: 5.²⁶² There follows a discussion of "*Hamoebaon ni roha dohot oelaon na denggan*," (Repentance and Good Works) which emphasizes that anyone who claims to be a believer without a change of heart will stay in the old life and not receive salvation. Various examples of staying in the old life are mentioned: fornicators, *sioloi begu* (*begu* = the spirit of the dead; *sioloi begu* means someone who obeys the spirit of the dead; the Bible text

²⁶⁰ Johannsen, *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*, 30-31.

²⁶¹ This book does not mention what year the book was published, but Hutaaruk mentions that the book was published in 1931. See Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh*, 174.

²⁶² *Pangarimpoenan ni Oegama Hakristenon* [The Essence of Christian Religion], na pinatoere ni Pandita Fr. Eigenbrod rap dohot deba donganna saoealaon. Rongkoman Paopathalihon. Laguboti: Zendings-Drukkerij, 1931, 23.

uses "idolaters"), adulterers, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers (1 Cor. 6: 9-10). Probably because the book has already stressed that salvation is a gift, and not obtained as a result of human effort, the question arises, "*boasa pola ingkon patoepaonta dope angka oelaon na denggan?*" (Why we must still need to perform good works?). By way of answer, the book emphasizes that good works are essential to show gratitude to God who has saved us from destruction.²⁶³ Good works, the book underlines, are all things done through a true faith in accordance with the Commandment to love God and work for His glory. Performing good works also serves the purpose as a guide for others and as an example of a life lived in accordance with the Word of God.²⁶⁴

W. Müller, a missionary at Bonandolok, published *Questions for Catechumen to Receive Confirmation and Baptism* in 1919 (*Sungkunsungkun tu angka parguru, na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng tardidi*). It contains no special section on justification or on faith and good works, but in the section about God the Father, question 246 asks, "*Ala ni aha umbahen songon i roha ni Debata tu hita?*" (Why God has such an attitude toward human beings?). The answer given is, "*Tung ala ni asi ni rohana sambing do dohot ala ni denggan ni basana, ndada ala ni denggan ni parangenta*" (Only by God's mercy and because of his grace, not because of our good behavior).²⁶⁵ Therefore, the good things in life are God's gift and not the result of human efforts or achievements. What humans are responsible for is their response to God's grace, for only those who believe in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus with all their hearts will gain salvation. The 561 questions

²⁶³ *Pangarimpoenan ni Oegama Hakristenon*, 35.

²⁶⁴ *Pangarimpoenan ni Oegama Hakristenon*, 35.

²⁶⁵ *Sungkunsungkun tu angka parguru, na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng tardidi* [Questions for Catechumen to Receive Confirmation and Baptismal], pinature ni W. Müller, pandita di Bonandolok. Nirongkom di Pangarongkoman – Mission Laguboti – Toba, 1919, 58.

and answers that make up the Christian instruction for adult baptismal and confirmation classes are summarized in three points. One of the three items is: “*Hamubaon ni rohanta marhitehite haporseaon di Tuhanta Jesus Kristus, i do siringkotan ni rohanta gumodang*” (We must above all else attend to the repentance our heart through faith in the Lord Jesus.).²⁶⁶

²⁶⁶ *Sungkunsungkun tu angka parguru, na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng tardidi*, 77, 129.

CHAPTER 3

THE BATAK CHURCH JOINED THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION (1952)

This chapter provides a description of the entry of the Batak Church into the LWF, and also the decision of the Batak Church to draft its own confession. In addition, a description of Lutheran identity in general is provided.

3.1 Situation of the Batak Church Post Rhenish Mission Leadership

When HKBP joined the LWF in 1952 many people questioned the move. In Indonesia, those outside HKBP focused on what they felt was the absence of a distinctive Lutheran character within the HKBP.²⁶⁷ They thought the HKBP wanted to join the LWF solely because of the financial assistance it would receive.²⁶⁸ Christian de Jonge²⁶⁹ shared this view.²⁷⁰ He felt that in becoming a member of the LWF, HKBP had ignored the characteristics of "union" that had been established by the Rhenish Mission. De Jonge discusses the matter in writing about denominational ecumenism. He refers to a survey carried out by the Communion of Churches in Indonesia, which concluded that membership of Indonesian churches in

²⁶⁷ See Soedarmo's view on this matter on Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 165; cf. Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 201.

²⁶⁸ Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 201.

²⁶⁹ De Jonge, at that time, was a lecturer on Church History at Jakarta Theological Seminary.

²⁷⁰ Christian De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja: Sejarah Dokumen-dokumen dan Tema-tema Gerakan Oikumenis* [Towards Unity of the Churches: The History of the Ecumenical Movement's Documents and Themes] (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1996), 66. The survey mentioned above was conducted by the Institute for Research and Studies of the Council of Churches in Indonesia, and was published in 1976. See F. Ukur & F. Cooley (eds.), *Jerih dan Juang. Laporan Nasional Survey Menyeluruh Gereja di Indonesia* (Jakarta: LPS DGI, 1976).

denominational ecumenism (so not only the HKBP) in bodies such as World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the LWF, etc., was mainly evident in their presence at conferences. Membership was not internalized, as it had little other effect.²⁷¹ De Jonge uses the opinion of Ulrich Duchrow to strengthen the survey's conclusion.²⁷² Duchrow insisted that LWF's financial assistance was the motivation behind the Batak Church joining the organization, although the LWF had made it clear beforehand that their aid had nothing to do with the issue of membership.²⁷³ Duchrow says,

One powerful motive – if not the main one – for the Batak Church was the desire to escape from the distressing situation of an ‘orphaned’ mission church with the help of the financially strong Lutheran World Federation. According to Batak custom, moreover, it is difficult to accept a gift without giving something in return.²⁷⁴

Within the LWF, HKBP's entry into the LWF was considered theologically and ecclesologically significant.²⁷⁵ This was because the LWF constitution of 1947 stated that a church could be accepted as a member only if it accepted the LWF constitution. The LWF Constitution of 1947 reads:

The Lutheran World Federation acknowledges the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the only source and the infallible norm of all church doctrine and practice, and sees in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Catechism, a pure exposition of the Word of God.²⁷⁶

²⁷¹ De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja*, 66.

²⁷² De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja*, 66.

²⁷³ U. Duchrow, *Conflict over the Ecumenical Movement. Confessing Christ Today in the Universal Church*, translated from the German by David Lewis (Geneva: WCC, 1981), 208-209. De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja*, 66; cf. Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 24-25 Nopember 1948 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1948), 14; Fredrik A. Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," in *International Review of Mission*, XLIII, July 1954, 315, 317, 320; Fredrik A. Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions: At the Halfway Mark in this Twentieth Century," in *The Lutheran Quarterly*, 2 no. 1, Feb. 1950, 66.

²⁷⁴ Duchrow, *Conflict over the Ecumenical Movement*, 208-209. De Jonge, *Menuju Keesaan Gereja*, 66; cf. Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 315.

²⁷⁵ *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, edited by Jens Holger Schjorring, Prasanna Kumari, Norman Hjelm (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 55; Eric W. Gritsch, *A History of Lutheranism*. Second Edition (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 232.

²⁷⁶ This constitution was adopted by the LWF First Assembly, Lund, Sweden, 1947. The doctrinal basis of the LWF, adopted by the Eight Assembly, Curitiba, Brazil, 1990, made a slight change as

However, the HKBP did not entirely adhere to the Augsburg Confession or other traditional Lutheran documents. On the other hand, it had a confession with Lutheran elements that was accepted by the LWF. The LWF assessed that the HKBP's own confession, adopted in 1951, was in harmony with the Lutheran confessions, and therefore, accepted HKBP as a member in 1952. This showed a new openness within the LWF.²⁷⁷

Openness was not an easy task. The application to become a member of the LWF led to sharp discussions on Lutheran identity. What is Lutheran? Writing for the 125th anniversary of the HKBP, Keith R. Bridston, a former lecturer at HKBP Seminary Pematangsiantar, examined the various reactions inside the LWF community. Some were very critical of the Batak Church's application for LWF membership. The LWF constitution emphasized Lutheran identity as a criterion for membership. The Batak Church obviously did not meet this criterion. However, what won the day was non-insistence on it. Had the LWF insisted, the older Lutheran churches would have needed to authenticate their own Lutheran identity by reevaluating their historic confessions.²⁷⁸ Here Bridston refers to the opinion of modern Lutheran theologians who were aware of different or even new contexts, which had widened the horizons of the LWF. Bridston makes use of Helmut Zeddies' theological thinking. Zeddies argues that formulating a confession needs to

follows: "The Lutheran World Federation confesses the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only source and norm of its doctrine, life and service. It sees in the Three Ecumenical Creeds and in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially in the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, a pure exposition of the Word of God." See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 527, 530.

²⁷⁷ *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 55.

²⁷⁸ Keith R. Bridston, "The Batak Church and Christian Identity," in *Horas HKBP! Essays for a 125-Year-Old Church*, ed. by A.A. Sitompul and Arne Sovik (Pematangsiantar: STT HKBP, 1986), 151.

take into account the questions which confront the church.²⁷⁹ This brought a more open attitude towards HKBP's case.

It was this greater openness and the awareness that Lutheranism faced fresh challenges that opened the door to HKBP membership. This comes out clearly in the remarks of Paul C. Empie. Empie was one of the executive directors of the National Lutheran Council.²⁸⁰ Speaking on behalf of the LWF, Empie explained that after studying HKBP's Confession carefully, the LWF membership Committee, reported that although the exact language of the unaltered Augsburg Confession is not used the essential substance is in fact there. Therefore, the committee concluded that the Batak Church may be regarded as meeting the requirements for LWF membership.²⁸¹

As we have seen, the membership application brought debate both within the HKBP and the LWF. It was not easy for the LWF to come to a final decision. The process was long, and it took careful consideration.

How did the HKBP see its entry into the LWF? After the Second World War ended Bishop Sandegren sought contact with the Batak Church. Justin Sihombing, bishop (*ephorus*) of the HKBP at that time, referred to Sandegren's initiative as the starting point of the HKBP's effort to become members of the LWF.²⁸² What bishop Sihombing, with typical oriental reticence, did say was that HKBP avoided contact with the Rhenish Mission. HKBP preferred a relationship with a western church or other organization rather than with the Rhenish Mission.

²⁷⁹ Helmut Zeddies, "The Confession of the Church," in *The Lutheran Church: Past and Present* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1977), 102.

²⁸⁰ Founded in 1918 by American and Canadian Lutherans. See footnote no. 32.

²⁸¹ Joseph Ellwanger, "The Batak Protestant Christian Church," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, St. Louis, January, 1959, 15-16.

²⁸² J. Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant* (Medan: Philemon & Liberty, tt), 126ff. In the bibliography of Nyhus' book, Sihombing's book title is *Seratus Taon Huria Kristen Batak Protestant, 1861 – 1961* and the date of publication is given as 1961. See Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 576; while in the biography of J. Sihombing, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, the book is titled: "Sejarah HKBP 100 Taon, taon 1960". See F.H. Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing* (1978, no mention of publishing house), 161.

3.1.1 Critical Attitude towards the Rhenish Mission Leadership

HKBP reluctance to continue the relationship can be explained by an increasingly critical attitude towards the Rhenish Mission's leadership. As early as 1917 *Hatopan Kristen Batak* (Batak Christian Association) was founded. This was basically a struggle for the unity and progress of Batak Christians.²⁸³ Eventually three groups seceded from the Batak church and set up new churches.²⁸⁴ This was not just triggered by the desire for independence from the Rhenish Mission. Since 1920 each Rhenish Mission church had its parish council (*kerkeraad*), giving Bataks a bigger role in leading and managing the affairs of the church.²⁸⁵ Additionally, the Rhenish Mission called a Synod in 1930 that took the big decision to separate the church from the mission. Thus, the Batak church became an independent organization under a new name, the *Huria Kristen Batak Protestan* (HKBP). This synod also ratified a new church constitution.²⁸⁶ This Constitution of 1930, prepared by Warneck, created a Synod Executive Board (*Hoofdbestuur*) chaired by the bishop (*ephorus*) with members: two pastors representing *pendeta resort* (pastors who lead a *resort*, a group of parishes), five representatives from districts (each district represented by one person), one representing Batak pastors, and one representing teacher-preachers.²⁸⁷ Here the Rhenish Mission gave a bigger role to the indigenous officers in organizing the church and in decision-making in the Batak

²⁸³ Hutaaruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 84-128; Aritonang, and Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 548-550.

²⁸⁴ They were "Huriah Kristen Batak" or "HChB" (Batak Christian Church) at Pematangsiantar on 1 May 1927, "Gereja Mission Batak" or "GMB" (Batak Mission Church) at Medan on 17 July 1927, and "Punguan Kristen Batak" or "PKB" (Batak Christian Gathering) at Batavia/Jakarta on 10 July 1927. See Hutaaruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 131-149; Aritonang, and Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 549.

²⁸⁵ Hutaaruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 122.

²⁸⁶ Hutaaruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 127; Aritonang, and Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 550.

²⁸⁷ Hutaaruk, *Menata Rumah Allah*, 71-73; Hutaaruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 127; Aritonang, and Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 550.

church. However, the missionary leadership still dominated. Similarly, Bataks were not yet allowed to become a *pendeta resort* (a parish pastor in a resort; a “resort” consists of several parishes in which one is the main congregation and the others are branch congregations; the pastor resides in the main congregation), and especially not to hold the position of bishop (*ephorus*). The Rhenish Mission felt that Batak officers were still not ready to lead HKBP independently.²⁸⁸ Accordingly, Hutauruk argues that independence movements in the Batak church can only be properly understood if we see the overall picture. Hutauruk contends that history, culture and sociology, mingled with political factors, led to a growing nationalism among the Batak Christians in particular, and the people of Indonesia in general.²⁸⁹

Secondly, in 1940 the Dutch East Indies colonial government interned all the Rhenish Mission’s German workers. This was an act of retaliation for the German occupation of the Netherlands on May 10, 1940. So, after almost 80 years, the Rhenish Mission’s work there had come to an end.²⁹⁰ After the arrest of the German missionaries, the HKBP held an extraordinary General Synod. Rev. K. Sirait, a Batak minister from Sibolga, was elected. He defeated Rev. de Kleine, the Dutch missionary, on the third ballot. It showed a desire for independence; they no longer wanted to be led by foreign missionaries. That is why the Rev. Sirait successfully won the election. But in this period new institutions were established to administer schools, hospitals and other institutions outside the church. The colonial government handed administrative control over the Rhenish Mission’s property to the

²⁸⁸ Hutauruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 115-128; Aritonang, and Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, 548-550; cf. Verwiebe, “The Youth Problem in the Batak Church in Sumatra,” 209; Kraemer, who appreciated the genuineness and sincerity of their effort in Batakland, encouraged the Rhenish missionaries to pay full attention to the background of the various grievances of the Bataks. Kraemer, *From Missionfield to Independent Church*, 64.

²⁸⁹ A thorough study of the movement which sought independence from missionary leadership is provided in J.R. Hutauruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 73-218.

²⁹⁰ See Jan S. Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 303.

Zendingsconsulaat (ZCt) of the Dutch in Batavia (later Jakarta). Then, ZCt formed a new mission agency, the Batak-Nias Zending (BNZ; Batak Nias Mission)²⁹¹ to supervise schools and hospitals. There were 450 subsidized schools (*Volksscholen* and *Vervolgscholen*). The establishment of the BNZ and the administrative control over schools given to this new body disappointed the HKBP. The HKBP still ran 220 unsubsidized schools, but the HKBP leaders wanted to control all schools (both subsidized and unsubsidized schools) in order to preserve the dual role of the *guru huria* (teacher-preachers) in school and church. The BNZ policy of separating schools from the church had caused a chaotic situation for many congregations since many *guru huria* (teacher-preachers) who supported the separation refused to continue to serve in their congregations. Many teacher-preachers agreed to the separation of schools from the church, because they wanted to be free from duties in the congregation, and they assumed that the BNZ would give them a better salary.²⁹²

3.1.2 Efforts in Overcoming its Shortcomings as the Consequence of the World War II

After the Japanese invaded and occupied Indonesia, Batakland became part of Japan's colony. The situation of the Batak Church was far worse than under Dutch rule. The Japanese colonial government took over the schools and hospitals of the

²⁹¹ See Edward O.V. Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 70ff; cf. Jan S. Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 304.

²⁹² Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 77; Jan S. Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 309; J.R. Hutauruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 192. Lumbantobing, Hutauruk and Aritonang discuss the two views on the church's relationship with the school. One side is of the Rhenish Mission pattern that understands schools as an integral part of the church, and the other side is the Dutch Mission pattern that separates it from the task of the church. See J.R. Hutauruk, *Kemandirian Gereja*, 193-196; Jan S. Aritonang, *Mission Schools*, 310-311; Andar Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan*, 168-169. So in the understanding of Batak leaders, as inherited from the Rhenish Mission, the church needed to organize schools as part of its ministry.

Rhenish Mission. In 1945 the allies forced Japan to surrender and leave Indonesia.²⁹³

The changing situation at the end of Dutch rule and the terrible conditions during the Japanese occupation explain why the HKB needed help to overcome its shortcomings. But having gained its independence from the Rhenish Mission, the HKBP did not want to lose it. Had HKBP wanted to establish a relationship with the Germans, then HKBP would have wanted it with the church, not the mission body. Or if it should be associated with the Rhenish Mission, it no longer wanted to be in a relationship like that before the war.²⁹⁴ This is the context for the HKBP affiliation with the LWF. And it was very important for the HKBP that the LWF treated them as an independent church.²⁹⁵

3.2 Decision to Join the Lutheran World Federation

3.2.1 Contacts with the LWF

Contact with the LWF can be traced back to when the representative of the HKBP attended the Tambaram Conference of the International Missionary Council in 1938. Representing the HKBP at this meeting, Dr. Verwiebe and Pajaman Sitompul told about the circumstances and difficulties HKBP encountered.²⁹⁶ The Batak church had been increasingly recognized internationally as operating within

²⁹³ About the difficulty and bitterness of life in the days of Japan see Nyhus' study, *An Indonesian Church in the Middle of Social Change: The Batak Protestant Christian Church, 1942-1957*. Nyhus' study focuses on the early history of the autonomous HKBP and on the Japanese period (1942-1945). In March 1942, the Japanese invaded the Dutch East Indies. Cf. J.R. Hutauruk, *Tuhan Menyertai UmatNya. Garis Besar Sejarah 125 Tahun Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) 7 Oktober 1861 – 1986* (Tarutung: Kntor Pusat HKBP, 1986), 37-40.

²⁹⁴ Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 203ff.

²⁹⁵ The words "We're not going to master you" expressed by representatives of the LWF in several occasions demonstrated an understanding of the concerns of Batak church leaders. See Notulen ni Rapot Pandita HKBP di Pearaja Tarutung ari 13-16 Agustus 1948 (Minutes of Pastor Conference of HKBP of 1948), 21; Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 24-25 Nopember 1948 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1948), 14; Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111; Schioltz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317; Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 181; cf. Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 202.

²⁹⁶ F.H. Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing* (1978, no information about publisher), 110; cf. Fredrik A. Schioltz, "Lutheran World Missions," 316.

the framework of the Tambaram Conference. A document containing the history of the Batak church, and a description of the strategy and success of the mission of the Rhenish Mission in Batak was presented. The document was written by J. Merle Davis for the International Missionary Council. In one part Davis writes:

The influence of Lutheran theology is evident in the work of the Mission. Although the Rhenish Mission is not a denominational body, Luther's theology and pietism are manifest in the sense of urgency to redeem the Batak people by a saving knowledge of God through Christ.²⁹⁷

On the occasion of the Tambaram Conference there was apparently a contact between the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church of South India and representatives of the Batak church. This contact had given a sense of brotherhood. When the Japanese occupation of Indonesia came to an end in August 1945, the Executive Committee of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India was trying to find a way to have further contact with the Batak Church.²⁹⁸ In 1947, after discussions with Dr. Ralph Long of the National Lutheran Council (founded in 1918 by American and Canadian Lutherans), Dr. Johannes Sandegren, Bishop of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church made a visit to Indonesia. But he could not enter into Batakland because of the Police Action between the Dutch and the Republic.²⁹⁹ However, Bishop Sandegren was able to meet Prof. Dr. Sutan Gunung Mulia Harahap, a member of the church council of the HKBP, and also De Niet and Van Beyma of the Dutch Mission Consuls, missionaries Gramberg of Oegstgeest and De Kleine of the Rhenish Mission. Bishop Sandegren shared his church's wish to help

²⁹⁷ J. Merle Davis, *The Batak Church. An Account of the Organization, Policies and Growth of the Christian Community of the Bataks of Northern Sumatra. A Document prepared for the Tambaram Conference, 1938*, 4; cf. Before Davis, Hendrik Kraemer had also visited the Batak Church. Kraemer's visit was from February to April 1937 at the invitation of the Bishop of the Batak Church, Dr. Johannes Warneck. See Kraemer, *From Mission field to Independent Church: Report on a Decisive Decade in the Growth of Indigenous Churches in Indonesia* (Boekencentrum: The Hague, 1958).

²⁹⁸ Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 316; cf. Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111; Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 181.

²⁹⁹ Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 316; cf. Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111; Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 181.

the Batak Church.³⁰⁰ Dr. Mulia reported the meeting to Bishop Sihombing, informing him about Bishop Sandegren's plan to visit the HKBP.³⁰¹ After returning back to India, Bishop Sandegren himself sent a letter to Bishop Sihombing. He informed the leader of the HKBP about his church's intention. In his account on this subject, Bishop Sihombing emphasized Bishop Sandegren's compassionate message, which quoted 2 Cor. 1:24, "Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are fellow workers with you for your joy. For you stand firm in faith." This message moved the leaders of the Batak Church. And the Batak Church replied by informing Bishop Sandegren that they were pleased to receive assistance from his church.³⁰²

From his recent visit to Jakarta Bishop Sandegren was convinced that a westerner would have difficulties in going to Indonesia during the country's struggle to retain its independence, and so he sent an Indian Christian and physician. Dr. D.R. Williams was sent as a medical missionary to assist the HKBP. He arrived in Tarutung on March 30, 1948.³⁰³ Dr. Williams was placed in Hospital Balige. At this time the hospital was operated by the Indonesian government, which did not hand it over to the HKBP until December 1954.³⁰⁴ Later Dr. Williams established a polyclinic in Balige, and then at several places, such as Bonandolok, Paindoan and Porsea. In a report to the general assembly of the HKBP in 1950, he mentioned that 11,226 patients had come to him.³⁰⁵ Dr. Williams soon gained the respect and

³⁰⁰ Schioltz, "Lutheran World Missions," 316; cf. Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111; Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 181.

³⁰¹ Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111.

³⁰² Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111.

³⁰³ Notulen ni Rapot Pandita HKBP di Pearaja Tarutung ari 13-16 Agustus 1948 (Minutes of Pastor Conference of HKBP of 1948), 21; Schioltz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317; Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 181; Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111.

³⁰⁴ Hutaauruk, *Tuhan Menyertai UmatNya*, 167.

³⁰⁵ Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP di ari 31 Oct. ro di 4 Nov. 1950 di Seminarie Sipoholon, Tarutung, (Minutes of the General Synod of 1950), 39; cf. Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 182.

affection of the Bataks. Bishop Sihombing mentioned that many people were pleased with Dr. Williams's work because he was caring and conscientious.³⁰⁶ But a more important role for Dr. Williams was to act as the HKBP liaison with the LWF.³⁰⁷ At the Pastors' Conference of 1948 he had suggested the HKBP should become a member of the LWF and invited Bishop Sandegren to attend HKBP's Great Synod.³⁰⁸ The visit finally took place after the Synod, through Dr. Williams, invited LWF representatives to visit Sumatra. In this period HKBP leaders seemed to have wanted HKBP to become a member of the LWF.³⁰⁹ When Bishop Sandegren and Dr. Frederick A. Schiotz of the Commission on Orphaned Younger Churches and Missions of the LWF came to Sumatra in November 1948,³¹⁰ they met with the leadership of the HKBP and members of Synod Executive Board (*Hoofdkerkbestuur*).³¹¹

3.2.2 The Decision to Apply for LWF Membership and to Draft its own

Confession

At this meeting HKBP conveyed its desire to be a member of the LWF, but

³⁰⁶ Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111.

³⁰⁷ Cf. Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111.

³⁰⁸ Notulen ni Rapot Pandita HKBP di Pearaja Tarutung ari 13-16 Agustus 1948 (Minutes of Pastor Conference of HKBP of 1948), 22;

³⁰⁹ Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317.

³¹⁰ There are differences regarding the timing of the arrival of the delegation from the Lutheran Church between HKBP's sources and other sources. According to sources from the HKBP, the arrival took place in August 1948. However, according to an article by Schiotz the visit took place in November. Schiotz's record seems more accurate because the advice of the physician Dr. Williams to the HKBP to invite Bishop Sandegren to visit Sumatra was given in August 1948. At the Pastors' Conference of August 1948 Dr. Williams regretted that Bishop Sandegren and Dr. Schiotz were not able to stay until November so that they might attend the General Synod held on 24-25 November 1948. See Notulen ni Rapot Pandita HKBP di Pearaja Tarutung ari 13-16 Agustus 1948 (Minutes of Pastor Conference of HKBP of 1948), 22; Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 24-25 Nopember 1948 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1948), 133; Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berkembang dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 177; cf. Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317, 320; Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 182.

³¹¹ Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 126; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 111.

the LWF delegation were more interested in focusing their visit on the state and the needs of the HKBP for LWF assistance.³¹² It became clear to the LWF that the HKBP did not want to deal with the Rhenish Mission, or at least that the time was not ripe, as we can see from the answers given to the LWF at a meeting with the Synod Executive Board of the HKBP.³¹³

In reply to the HKBP desire to become a member, the LWF explained that according to the constitution of the LWF there were several stages to be gone through before membership could be granted. HKBP should not rush, but consider carefully and consult all its districts first.³¹⁴ However, a copy of the constitution of the LWF was given to the HKBP.³¹⁵

The Great Synod of 1948 that discussed the offer of assistance from the LWF evidently decided that both membership of the LWF and its assistance should be filed simultaneously. Thus at this synod the HKBP formally decided to apply for LWF membership. The synod also stated it was not willing to accept personnel of the Rhenish Mission.³¹⁶ It came up in the conversations, when the LWF offered to bear the cost of a number of Rhenish Mission personnel who had been working in HKBP to return to their former posts.³¹⁷

³¹² Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 24-25 Nopember 1948 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1948), 15; cf. Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 183.

³¹³ Schioltz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317; cf. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 161.

³¹⁴ Schioltz, "Lutheran World Missions," 318; cf. Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 183.

³¹⁵ Later in the Synod of 1948 the essence of this constitution was presented by the leaders of the HKBP. See Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 24-25 Nopember 1948 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1948), 10.

³¹⁶ The strict leadership of the Rhenish missionaries, especially post Nommensen, brought a sort of unwillingness in the Great Synod of 1948 to accept Rhenish Mission personnel back in the HKBP. See Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 24-25 Nopember 1948 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1948), 16-17. For more detail about the relationship between the HKBP with the Rhenish Mission after World War II see Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 203-209; Hutaaruk, *Tuhan Menyertai UmatNya*, 209-212; Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh*, 300-302.

³¹⁷ See the discussion of the topic on Bibelvrow School (biblevrouw=bible women; woman preacher). In a conversation the LWF mentioned that they were willing to bear the cost of personnel from Germany who had been leading the school before the War World II. However, the Synod specified that for the time being a pastor or biblevrow of the Rhenish Mission could not be accepted. See

The HKBP informed the LWF of this decision. Having discussed the matter internally, the LWF then invited the HKBP to attend the meeting in Rajahmundry, India, in January 1950. The HKBP was represented by Bishop Justin Sihombing and Rev. K. Sirait (former bishop), and accompanied by Dr. Williams. The LWF was represented by Bishop Nygren, then president of the LWF, Bishop Sandegren and Dr. Schiotz.³¹⁸ This meeting was held in the middle of increasing criticism from the Rhenish Mission, the Dutch Missionary Council, and the International Missionary Council. They criticized the LWF for confessional imperialism and buying the church with promises of financial assistance.³¹⁹ In addition, they feared that joining the LWF would deprive the HKBP of communion with other churches in Indonesia.³²⁰ At the Rajahmundry meeting³²¹ it was agreed that the LWF connection would not change the existing teaching of the HKBP. Similarly, the HKBP would not be kept away from other churches in Indonesia, nor prevented from cooperating with the Jakarta Theological College. On the contrary, HKBP participation in the LWF would rather help to further enrich its fellowship with sister Christian churches. Moreover, eligibility for financial assistance from the National Lutheran Council was

Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 24-25 Nopember 1948 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1948), 16-17.

³¹⁸ Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317; Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 127; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 112; Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 162.

³¹⁹ In 1949, ie after the visit Bishop Sandegren and Schiotz in November 1948, HKBP received assistance from the LWF. Besides Dr. Williams, who had already come earlier, the LWF sent two theological professors (one American, Dr. J.E. Gronli, and one Indian, Rev. Devanesan). Also material assistance in the form of a car, 5 typewriters, 100 books, 1 mimeograph, the money to support the program in the field of evangelism f5500 (f = the Dutch guilder), also pastor robes. This assistance was channeled by CYCOM (Commission on Orphaned Younger Churches and Missions) of the LWF. See Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 23-24-25 November 1949 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1949), 16, 17; Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP ari 28-30 Nopember 1951 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of Great Synod of HKBP of 1951), 11; Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317-318; Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 182-183.

³²⁰ Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 185-186; Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 162.

³²¹ For the content or outcome of the Rajahmundry meeting, see Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317; Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 128-129; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 112-113; Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 162-163; Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP di ari 31 Oct. ro di 4 Nov. 1950 di Seminarie Sipoholon, Tarutung, (Minutes of the General Synod of 1950), 38.

not contingent upon membership in the LWF. The LWF mentioned that doctrine was an obstacle to HKBP's desire to become a member. The Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism were mentioned. Therefore, the LWF advised the HKBP to consider the matter further. The HKBP would need to show that they had studied the Augsburg Confession and that nothing in their teachings was incompatible with Lutheran teaching. In the concluding session, speaking on the issue of the application, Bishop Nygren reminded Batak leaders that according to the usual order, the application should be placed before the LWF Assembly in 1952.³²² Bishop Sihombing noted that the HKBP concluded the meeting by stating that membership in the LWF could not be decided because the HKBP did not yet have a confession. And that only in 1952 would there be acceptance of membership in the LWF. He also mentioned that according to the LWF the HKBP needed to study the statutes of - the LWF.³²³

Why did the HKBP join the LWF? The answer is because the Batak Church did not want to be in a relationship with the Rhenish Mission like the one it had before WW II,³²⁴ and that they saw themselves as closer to the Lutherans. When Bishop Nygren asked whether the Bataks considered their church Lutheran, they replied that Luther's Small Catechism had occupied a central place in their church.

³²² Schiotz, "Lutheran World Missions," 317; Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 128-129; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 112-113; Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 162-163; Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP di ari 31 Oct. ro di 4 Nov. 1950 di Seminarie Sipoholon, Tarutung, (Minutes of the General Synod of 1950), 38.

³²³ Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 128; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 112.

³²⁴ Symbolically it was important that on October 1, 1948 the Rhenish Mission officially declared that the property of the Rhenish Mission in Sumatra belonged to the HKBP. Only after 1950 did the HKBP invite personnel of the Rhenish Mission. However, they wanted not priests but physicians and engineers. In 1951 HKBP requested pastors by name but the Rhenish Mission could not meet the request, not because they did not want to but because the ones mentioned was not able to do so. Ephorus Sihombing's visit to Germany for five months helped restore relations. In the years after the visit, some personnel from the Rhenish Mission returned to work in the HKBP. But the relationship had its ups and downs. See Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 23-24-25 November 1949 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1949), 17; Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 205; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church in the Midst of Social Change*, 183.

Rev. Sirait added that “we felt that though we may not be one hundred per cent Lutheran, we are closer to the Lutherans than to anyone else.”³²⁵ Later, LWF acknowledged³²⁶ that the use of Luther's Small Catechism to teach people who wanted to become members, in catechetical instruction, and in preaching brought the Batak church really close to the requirements of the LWF's Constitution.³²⁷

Prior to this meeting, but after the decision of the Synod of 1948, the *Kerkbestuur* of the HKBP had appointed a commission that studied the Augsburg Confession in connection with the teachings in the HKBP. This commission, which consisted of Bishop J. Sihombing, Rev. K. Sirait, Ds. K. Sitompul, and Rev. M. Siregar, then translated the Augsburg Confession into Batak.³²⁸ When the results were presented to the Synod of 1949, the Synod felt that the HKBP had actually applied the contents of this confession in the life the HKBP even though the Augsburg Confession was not published by the HKBP. The HKBP felt that its dogma was quite the same as the Lutheran.³²⁹

The Pastors' Conference of 1950 discussed the results of the Rajahmundry meeting. Similarly, the work of the Confessional and Doctrinal Commission which had prepared an overview of the Augsburg Confession, including articles 1 to 28, and a translation of the articles 1 to 10 was brought to this conference.³³⁰ This

³²⁵ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 164; Schlotz, “Lutheran World Missions,” 318-319; cf. Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 185; Lumbantobing, “The Confession of the Batak Church,” 120.

³²⁶ A brief statement of this meeting was prepared by the LWF representatives. See Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 128; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 112-113; cf. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 164.

³²⁷ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 164; Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 128; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 112-113.

³²⁸ Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 23-24-25 November 1949 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1949), 27.

³²⁹ Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP Ari 23-24-25 November 1949 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of the General Synod of 1949), 27; Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berkembang dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 177; cf. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 162.

³³⁰ See “Ina ni Angka Artikel Taringot tu Haporseaon”; Notulen Rapot Pandita HKBP 13-16 Juni 1950 di Seminarium Sipoholon (Minutes of Pastor Conference of 1950), 5-7; Schreiner, “Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus,” 140;

conference³³¹ raised two proposals: first, adopting the Augsburg Confession fully; second, composing its own confession.³³² The Conference, and likewise later the Great Synod of 1950, chose to prepare their own confession. The reason was that although the Augsburg Confession in general was not considered contrary to the belief of the HKBP, it mentioned matters that were alien to the Batak church.³³³ For example, “Donatist” and “Anabaptist”. These were seen as irrelevant to the Christian faith of today in Indonesia. The Pastors’ Conference did not feel the Augsburg Confession properly formulated their faith. It was not that the HKBP pastors saw any difference between what they taught and what was in the Augsburg Confession but rather that its historical background was different from that of the HKBP. The difference lay in the challenges faced by HKBP.³³⁴ Bishop Sihombing was expressing this when he said:

This quarrel of theirs in ancient times (16th century) is not equal to our problems today; the development of their church was not the same as the background of our church.³³⁵

Along with discussions on the Augsburg Confession the conference saw that

³³¹ The Batak Church agreed with the LWF that the Bible is the only and infallible source of all church doctrine and practice; and declared that Luther’s Catechism is a pure exposition of the Word of God, although Luther’s Catechism, especially Luther’s Large Catechism had not, at the time, been translated into Batak. But even for the leaders of the HKBP, the Augsburg Confession was not familiar yet. See K. Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 65.

³³² Notulen Rapot Pandita HKBP 13-16 Juni 1950 di Seminarium Sipoholon (Minutes of Pastor Conference of 1950), 5-7; Schreiner, “Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus,” 140.

³³³ Cf. J. Sihombing, *Panindangion - haporseaon (Belijdenis) ni HKBP*, 2.

³³⁴ Notulen Rapot Pandita HKBP 13-16 Juni 1950 di Seminarium Sipoholon (Minutes of Pastor Conference of 1950), 5-7; Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP di ari 31 Oct. ro di 4 Nov. 1950 di Seminarie Sipoholon, Tarutung, (Minutes of the General Synod of 1950), 38; Schreiner, “Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus,” 140; Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 165. In his article of 1980, Sutan Hutagalung mentioned that churches in Asia and Africa might be unfamiliar with some of the heresies mentioned in the Augsburg Confession, such as the Manicheans, Valentinians, and Eunomians. See Sutan Hutagalung, “The Confession of Augustana as a Confession of Faith in the Present Historical Setting,” in *Confessio Augustana 1530-1980: Commemoration and Self-Examination*, edited by Vilmos Vajta, *LWF Report* no. 9 June 1980, 35.

³³⁵ Schreiner, “Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus,” 140; cf. J. Sihombing, *Panindangion - haporseaon (Belijdenis) ni HKBP*, 2.

the real and urgent challenge facing the Batak church came from the Roman Catholics, sects such as the Enthusiasts and the Bible Circle group, and heathenism. The Batak pastors would have preferred that the Batak Church's confession paid attention to how to overcome these challenges, and gave guidance to church members on how to deal with the problems facing them in these circumstances.³³⁶

In a further development Bishop Sihombing drafted a confession,³³⁷ using the Augsburg Confession as its source.³³⁸ His draft had 33 articles. In general, it followed the Augsburg Confession. In a certain number of articles (such as on God and on sin) the description was broken down into several articles. This was also the reason why its numbering was different from that of the Augsburg Confession. In addition, there were topics that did not exist in the Augsburg Confession (ancestor worship and Sunday, and God's Word was given a special space, whereas the Augsburg Confession discusses justification and emphasizes the gospel. Also, some of the articles in the Augsburg Confession were not included in this draft (the Mass; monastic vows). Another difference was that the draft - as already discussed in the Pastors' Conference of 1950 – gave much attention to the real challenges faced by the Batak church. These were listed and described in the draft. They were the Roman Catholics, Adventists, Pentecostal, Pinksters Enthusiasts, *Siradjabatak* (which preserved Batak heathenism), *Bijbelkring* (the Bible Circle group), Nationalistic Christianity (which falsified Christian doctrine to support a political agenda), syncretistic religion, heathenism, Islam, *adat* and culture. They are placed

³³⁶ Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 66; cf.

³³⁷ According to other records, in the midst of the debate over whether to adopt unanimously the Augsburg Confession or to write its own confession, Ephorus Sihombing received advice from a Rhenish missionary. He advised the HKBP to formulate its own confession. This advice suited him and he was pleased to start work on it. See Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 165. Scherer quoted this from Schreiner, *Das Bekenntnis der Batak-Kirche, Entstehung, Gestalt, Bedeutung und eine revidierte Übersetzung* (Munich: Kaiser, 1966), 13.

³³⁸ J. Sihombing, *Panindangion - haporseaon (Belijdenis) ni HKBP*.

in the front of this confessional draft.³³⁹

3.2.3 The Batak Church Became a Member of the LWF

Bishop Sihombing's draft was then discussed in committee and received many responses. The Commission eventually condensed the draft into 18 articles.³⁴⁰

The Great Synod of 1951 accepted this draft and approved it as the Confession of the HKBP.³⁴¹ Based on this confession and the use of Luther's Small Catechism, the 1952 Assembly of the LWF, held at Hannover, Germany, granted HKBP membership.³⁴²

³³⁹ J. Sihombing, *Panindangion - haporseaon (Belijdenis) ni HKBP*, 5-7.

³⁴⁰ Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," 141; Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 66.

³⁴¹ Notulen ni Synode Godang HKBP ari 28-30 Nopember 1951 di Seminarie Sipoholon (Minutes of Great Synod of HKBP of 1951), 5; Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 67; Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 128; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 113; Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," 141; Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 165; Hutauruk, *Tuhan Menyertai UmatNya*, 207; Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berkembang dan Bertumbuh*, 178.

³⁴² Schiotez, "Lutheran World Missions," 320; Sihombing, *Sejarah ni Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 128; Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 113; Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfessi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," 141; Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 165; Hutauruk, *Tuhan Menyertai UmatNya*, 207; Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berkembang dan Bertumbuh*, 178. At the Rajahmundry meeting, the HKBP had submitted a proposal to the LWF for assistance in developing educational institutions. According to the HKBP, about 40 percent of Indonesian education leaders were from HKBP. Therefore, the HKBP felt strongly that the highest institution of theological training should be in the Batak Church. After HKBP become a member of the LWF, assistance to the HKBP was coordinated by CYCOM. To avoid overlapping aid the LWF, the Rhenish Mission and HKBP established CORIA (Committee on Reconstruction Inter-Church Aid). Schiotez, "Lutheran World Missions," 319, 320-321. With the help of the LWF and also with the support of the Rhenish Mission, at the Seminary Sipoholon once established by the Rhenish Mission, the *Sekolah Theologia Menengah* (Theological Secondary School) was opened on November 4, 1950. The LWF and the Rhenish Mission provided assistance in the form of foreign staff and the cost of organizing this seminary. Having established the Nommensen University of the HKBP on October 7, 1954 in Pematangsiantar, the *Sekolah Theologia Menengah* was transferred to the Faculty of Theology of the University Nommensen in Pematangsiantar. Other assistance such as scholarships for the theological faculty development plan, physical development of the campus, and others see Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, 134; Hutauruk, *Tuhan Menyertai UmatNya*, 199; Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh*, 210; Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 167-171; Cunningham, Clark E., *The Postwar Migration of the Toba-Bataks to East Sumatra* (Yale University, South East Asia Studies, Cultural Report Series, 1958), 178-179. Through the National Lutheran Council the Ford Foundation helped to build the campus of the Nommensen University in Medan. In the period 1957-1964 the Ford Foundation had assisted the development of the Economics Faculty by sending and financing seven foreign professors for a period of one or two years each, sending seventeen students from Nommensen

The Batak Church clearly sees itself closer to Lutheranism. The HKBP was earnest in strengthening its Lutheran identity by formulating a confession that by and large adopted the contents of the Augsburg Confession. The Batak church had specifically studied the Augsburg Confession. This is what will be discussed in the next chapter.

3.3 Lutheran Identity

To understand more about the Lutheran character of the Batak Church we need to discuss Lutheran identity briefly. Before joining the LWF, rather than adopting the Augsburg Confession, the HKBP wrote its own confession. This provoked discussion about “What is Lutheran?, “When is a church Lutheran, and what makes it so?”³⁴³ As already mentioned above, when the HKBP applied for membership, the LWF Constitution of 1947 stated that its members were churches which declared their acceptance of the Constitution of the LWF.³⁴⁴ It then declared that the doctrinal basis of the LWF of this time consisted of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and the confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially the Augsburg Confession and Luther’s Catechism.³⁴⁵ From 1990 on, the doctrinal basis consists of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the three Ecumenical Creeds, and the confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, which are seen as a pure exposition of the Word of God.³⁴⁶ So, from the perspective of the LWF, what could be regarded as the characteristic of Lutheranism is the acceptance of the

to America for advanced degrees, and providing large quantities of textbooks and educational equipment. See Pedersen, *Batak Blood*, 172.

³⁴³ Cf. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 171; Arne Sovik, “The Church, Local and Universal,” 136.

³⁴⁴ See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 527.

³⁴⁵ See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 527.

³⁴⁶ See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 530.

Lutheran Confessions, especially the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther.

3.3.1 Key Points that Mark Lutheranism

In the period before the 1957 Minneapolis Assembly of the LWF,³⁴⁷ a vital issue was the place of the Lutheran Confessions in the life and doctrine of Lutheran churches around the world. Defining Lutheran identity was important for at least two reasons: firstly, to know more of how Lutheran churches see themselves and how they would like to be understood; secondly, to convince Lutheran churches that their confessional element and their Lutheran identity was not an obstacle but, on the contrary, best served ecumenism.³⁴⁸

Therefore, Lutheran identity was chosen as a study project. *The Institute for Ecumenical Research* in Strasbourg, which belongs to the LWF, conducted a study, which it published in 1977, aiming to highlight the basic theological convictions that are essential components of Lutheran identity. The background of this study, as noted earlier, was the awareness among the LWF's member churches that their involvement in the ecumenical movement had nothing to do with abandoning their own particular confession and tradition. Rather, they were taking seriously their ecumenical commitment as well as their own confessional identity.³⁴⁹ Another reason was the situation of union (Lutherans and Reformed churches) and of diversity and variety among the Lutheran Churches.³⁵⁰ There were some Lutheran

³⁴⁷ *The Church and the Confessions. The Role of the Confessions in the Life and Doctrine of the Lutheran Churches*, ed. by Vilmos Vajta and Hans Weissgerber (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), iii.

³⁴⁸ *The Lutheran Church – Past and Present*, ed. by Vilmos Vajta (Minneapolis: Augsburg Confession, 1977), vi, 80; Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology*, 44.

³⁴⁹ *Lutheran Identity. Final Report of the Study Project: "The Identity of the Lutheran Churches in the Context of the Challenges of our Time"* (Strasbourg, Institute for Ecumenical Research, 1977), 5.

³⁵⁰ *Lutheran Identity*, 6.

churches that entered into pulpit and altar fellowships or even established a church union with non-Lutheran churches (in Germany);³⁵¹ there were different geographical, cultural and socio-political contexts in which the Lutheran churches lived;³⁵² there were different theological trends and ecumenical relations.³⁵³ These all raised new questions about Lutheran identity.³⁵⁴

The Institute for Ecumenical Research underlined that there were ten basic theological convictions that mark Lutheran Identity³⁵⁵:

1. Affirming God's loving condescension as the only way to salvation.
2. Witnessing to God's justifying action in Jesus Christ as the essence of the message of salvation (gospel), as a criterion of the church's proclamation and as the foundation of Christian existence.
3. Distinguishing between law and gospel so as to safeguard the character of grace in the saving message.
4. Emphasizing the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the sacraments as means necessary for salvation, means by which Christ through the Holy Spirit creates, preserves and sends his church into the world.
5. Stressing the priesthood of all baptized believers to indicate the equality of all Christians before God and the apostolic obligation of the whole Christian community.
6. Affirming the world as the good creation of God, who gives life through the Word and the Spirit and leads the earth to his glory.
7. Defining the Christians' secular responsibility as obedient participation in God's activity in the world.
8. Using Holy Scripture as the norm for the church's proclamation and teaching while at the same time observing the differentiation (but not separation) between gospel and Scripture.
9. Committing to the Church's confession as a way to safeguard right proclamation of the gospel and church fellowship.
10. Seeking intensively for the theological truth for the truth of the proclamation which is to take place here and now.

It should also be noted that the list of the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg above does not mention the true presence of the body and blood of Christ

³⁵¹ *Lutheran Identity*, 6.

³⁵² *Lutheran Identity*, 6.

³⁵³ *Lutheran Identity*, 7.

³⁵⁴ *Lutheran Identity*, 7.

³⁵⁵ The Report reminds us that not all the following points represent exclusively Lutheran convictions because the Lutherans hold many of them in common with other churches. But in its totality, the Report underlines, and its integration and inter-relation, they reveal the essential marks of Lutheran confessionality and identity. See *Lutheran Identity*, 14-30; cf. Eric W. Gritsch, *A History of Lutheranism*. Second Edition. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 235.

in the Lord's Supper as characteristic of Lutheranism. This obviously is typically Lutheran and needs to be included in the list, as it was in a similar list made by Gassmann and Hendrix, containing twelve items as essential components of Lutheran identity.³⁵⁶ On Sacraments, Gassmann and Hendrix say, “Through them the Holy Spirit creates faith, and Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is truly present with his salvation and new life for each believer and for his whole church.”³⁵⁷ That is indeed the Lutheran understanding of the Sacraments as recorded in the Augsburg Confession or Luther's Small Catechism.³⁵⁸

From the list above, we can see that the most important Lutheran teachings have been listed. Above all, the core of the Lutheran tradition is the doctrine of justification by faith. In a popular form, the website of the LWF likewise summarizes Lutheran identity as evangelical, sacramental, diaconal, confessional and ecumenical.³⁵⁹ It acknowledges its roots in the Bible and its history without

³⁵⁶ Günther Gassmann and Scott Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 180-182. The study guide of the book *Together by Grace: Introducing the Lutherans*, published by ELCA on 500 years of Reformation, lists these items as foundational concepts to Lutheran faith: justification by grace through faith, law and gospel, means of grace, theology of the cross, saint and sinner, and vocation. See Susan M. Lang, *Together by Grace: Introducing the Lutherans. Study Guide* (Augsburg Fortress, 2016), 4; cf. *Together by Grace: Introducing the Lutherans*. Ed. by Kathryn A. Kleinhans (Augsburg Fortress, 2016), 9-45. Meanwhile, as part of the programs of celebrating 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in the year 2017, the LWF published four booklets: “Liberated by God’s Grace,” “Salvation – Not for Sale,” “Human Beings – Not for Sale,” and “Creation – Not for Sale.” “Liberated by God’s Grace” is the LWF’s main theme for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation (2017) and the other three are the sub-themes that help to elaborate different aspects of the main theme. In his introductory words Martin Junge, general secretary of the LWF, admits that it is difficult to talk about “the” Lutheran identity within the family of the LWF since member churches are diverse in terms of their formative experiences, social and cultural backgrounds. The other writers, now especially in relation to the doctrine of justification by faith, seem also trying to respond to voices that suspect the concept of grace/mercy. Nevertheless, these writings are generally firm that the doctrine of justification by faith is relevant or applicable to today’s context as it was in Luther’s times. See *Liberated by God’s Grace*, edited by Anne Burghardt (Leipzig/Geneva: Evangelische Verlanganstalt GmbH/The Lutheran World Federation), 5, 7, 8; Friederike Nüssel, “The Human Condition – A Lutheran Perspective,” in *Human Beings – Not for Sale*, edited by Anne Burghardt (Leipzig/Geneva: Evangelische Verlanganstalt GmbH/The Lutheran World Federation), 7-13.

³⁵⁷ Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 181.

³⁵⁸ “What is the Sacrament of the Altar? Answer: It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.” See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362.

³⁵⁹ www.lutheranworld.org/content/our-lutheran-identity (sccessed 20 November 2015).

forgetting the context of its member churches in shaping its faith, theology and understanding of God's mission. The LWF understands its Lutheran identity as "evangelical" by stating:

We proclaim the "good news" of Christ's life, his death on the cross, and his resurrection. Together we witness that, despite our sins, we are accepted unconditionally: forgiven, saved and justified by God's grace for Christ's sake through faith alone.³⁶⁰

Given the Lutheran Confessions as the basic element for Lutheran identity, it does not mean it is not possible to make a new confession. This is the argument of Helmut Zeddies. Therefore, Zeddies argues, taking the declaration of Barmen and the Foundations of the Church (Kirkens Grunn) from Norway as examplest, a given situation requires a new act of confession.³⁶¹ In fact, the Lutheran Confessions themselves, at least partly, must have resulted from an act of direct witness. Orthodoxy in Lutheran circles had indeed taken the Lutheran Confessions "out of their immediate functional setting and turned them into independent doctrinal bases on which to build a doctrinal system."³⁶² But for Zeddies the right attitude is to place the Lutheran Confessions in "their original context, the occasion on which they were drafted and their intention."³⁶³ In this understanding, at least in theory, "it is quite possible not only to develop, but to add to the confessional statements of the Reformation."³⁶⁴ So, for Zeddies, the challenge for Lutherans is how to continue to realize that an act of witness and confession must always happen afresh; and how, using the Lutheran Confessions, people are assisted to confess.³⁶⁵ Something similar is also stressed by Friedrich Mildenberger. In the introduction to his book

³⁶⁰ www.lutheranworld.org/content/our-lutheran-identity (accessed 20 November 2015).

³⁶¹ Zeddies, "The Confession of the Church," 117.

³⁶² Zeddies, "The Confession of the Church," 119.

³⁶³ Zeddies, "The Confession of the Church," 117.

³⁶⁴ Zeddies, "The Confession of the Church," 117.

³⁶⁵ Zeddies, "The Confession of the Church," 120.

Mildenberger underlines that people can, “at one and the same time, agree with the confession and disagree with the confessional writings.”³⁶⁶ By the confessional writings Mildenberger means and points to the Lutheran Confessions, the Leuenberg Agreement, and the Barmen Declaration. It appears that for Mildenberger, the need to develop a confession is much more important than just to preserve the historical writings. In the need to respond to the issues that currently confront us, Mildenberger contends, it is important that there is freedom to have a different view from the historical writings.³⁶⁷ Such awareness is also what makes someone like Heinrich Meyer appreciate the efforts of the Batak Church in writing its own confession as well as the LWF’s willingness to make an exception to its usual requirement to allow the Batak Church to become a member. Meyer sees in this acceptance an acknowledgement by the Lutherans that their sixteenth-century confessions have their limitations, and that the younger churches must be invited to confess the same Christ in their locality, in their time and language.³⁶⁸

In other words, Helmut Zeddies, Friedrich Mildenberger and Heinrich Meyer point out that the Augsburg Confession itself arose out of the needs of the time and that new times may require new confessions to meet new challenges. It is not as though one confession is adequate for all time; at intervals the church needs to rethink its confession to address new challenges.

Here should be mentioned the discussion on justification at the Helsinki assembly of 1963. Many Lutherans around the world expressed their doubt that the message of justification by faith was still relevant to modern people. The Commission on Theology of the LWF had prepared a document, whose purpose was

³⁶⁶ Friedrich Mildenberger, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*. Translated by Erwin L. Lueker, edited by Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), xi.

³⁶⁷ Mildenberger, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, xi.

³⁶⁸ G.Z. Oosthuizen, *Theological Battleground in Asia and Africa*. The Issues facing the Churches and the Efforts to Overcome Western Divisions (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1972), 215.

“to foster the proclamation of the message of justification to people today and thus to make it useful to the way the church expresses its faith and life.”³⁶⁹ It examined how the problems modern humans faced were different from those faced by Luther in the sixteenth century when he came to his convictions on justification by faith. The challenge was no longer how to be justified before God but how to be justified in the eyes of fellow human beings.³⁷⁰ Even now, it is God who is facing judgment for the suffering of innocents and of his “absence” in the midst of human beings’ problems.³⁷¹ The document reads, “Rather than asking, how I can find a gracious God? People today are asking the more radical, fundamental question, where is God?”³⁷²

But this effort to interpret the doctrine of justification in a new situation was unsuccessful, because members could not agree on the contemporary meaning of justification by faith.³⁷³ An analysis stated that the failure lay in “the fact that the relation between justification and experience was not pursued in several areas but rather the document concentrated only on the aspect of judgement.” However, the comments continues, “Luther’s belief that God alone acts in matters of salvation was not really considered.”³⁷⁴ Carl E. Braaten, criticizing notions that doubt the relevance of the message of justification to “modern man,” considers that the question of the

³⁶⁹ Diversity and variety among the Lutheran Churches necessitated an examination of confessions used by LWF member churches. The Third Assembly in Minneapolis had mandated it. See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 377; AGTC no. 98. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue. A Study on the Doctrine of Justification by Faith by the German Ecumenical Study Commission (DÖSTA)* (Geneva: The LWF, 2008), 40.

³⁷⁰ See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 378.

³⁷¹ AGTC no. 101. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*, 41; Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 47.

³⁷² See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 379; AGTC no. 101. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*, 41.

³⁷³ See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 377-379; cf. Eric W. Gritsch, *Fortress Introduction to Lutheranism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 93.

³⁷⁴ See *From Federation to Communion. The History of the Lutheran World Federation*, 379.

existence of God cannot be totally separated from the question of the grace of God.³⁷⁵

3.3.2 Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification

In 1999, a significant ecumenical event took place when the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation signed the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ). The Lutheran and Catholic churches declared that they had reached a consensus or common understanding of the basic truths of the doctrine of justification. The document says,

Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our heart while equipping and calling us to do good works.³⁷⁶

The formulation clearly covers the Lutheran understanding of justification by faith alone, although the phrase "by faith alone" is avoided. The problem is only in relation to the place and meaning of good works in the justification as far as Lutherans are concerned. It is clear that Lutherans and Catholics together confess that all persons are sinners and are "incapable of turning by themselves to God to seek deliverance, of meriting their justification before God, or attaining salvation by their own abilities."³⁷⁷ However, Catholics' concept of human "cooperation" in the event of justification by grace remains to be accepted by the Lutherans. The JDDJ states:

When Catholics say that persons "cooperate" in preparing for and accepting justification by consenting to God's justifying action, they see such personal consent as itself an effect of grace, not as an action arising from innate human

³⁷⁵ Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology*, 47-48.

³⁷⁶ JDDJ no. 15. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. The Lutheran World Federation and The Roman Catholic Church. (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 15.

³⁷⁷ JDDJ no. 19. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 17.

abilities.³⁷⁸

Thus human “cooperation” is described in three ways: it is a matter of “personal consent”; it is “itself an effect of grace”; and, it is “not an action arising from innate human abilities.” With such formulation the tendency is clear, as Catholics perceive that persons cooperate toward their justification through their consent to God’s justifying action.³⁷⁹ Human involment, however, is certainly foreign to Lutheranism because one cannot speak of “contributing to one’s own justification”.³⁸⁰

Lutheran and Catholic views on the status of good works do not seem to be merely a misunderstanding. One can suggest that a clear difference is evidently there when it comes to the place of good works in justification. Indeed, there has been a different structure of thinking and mode of expression from the beginning. German Protestant-Catholic theologians who worked intensively in a five-year study program called *The Ecumenical Study Group of Protestant and Catholic Theologians on the Examination of the Sixteenth-Century Condemnations* underline that Catholics and Protestants in the sixteenth century were basically different in their “concerns” and interpretative stresses. The document states:

In the sixteenth century, Catholic theology was afraid that the result of the Reformers’ doctrine of justification could be summed up as: no freedom, no new being, no ethical endeavor, no reward, no church (depreciation of baptism). Protestant theology was afraid that the result of the Catholic doctrine of justification could be summed up as: the triviality of sin, self-praise, a righteousness of works, purchasable salvation, a church intervening between God and human beings.³⁸¹

Obviously the difference in structure of thinking and mode of expression between

³⁷⁸ JDDJ no. 20. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 17.

³⁷⁹ Cf. AGTC no. 47. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*, 23.

³⁸⁰ JDDJ no. 21. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 17.

³⁸¹ See Karl Lehmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 40-41.

Lutherans and Catholics affected their understanding of the position and meaning of good works fundamentally. As the Ecumenical Study Group of Protestant and Catholic Theologians observes,

The Reformers teach in the strongest terms that, although good works performed out of faith in God's grace are certainly the consequence and fruit of grace, they are in no way a "merit" in the sight of God. The doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, on the other hand, insists that the good works of those who are justified, performed in the power of grace, are in the true sense meritorious before God, not because of the human achievement as such, but by virtue of grace and the merits of Christ.³⁸²

It is sometimes said that Catholics are optimistic in their views of humankind (anthropology) while Lutherans are more optimistic of the assurance of salvation.³⁸³

The JDDJ text regarding "God's grace and human cooperation" expresses that to some extent Lutherans can talk about "human involvement" in justification, namely in the sense that "in faith the heart is involved, when the Word touches it and creates faith."³⁸⁴ The JDDJ makes clear that for Catholics "human cooperation" or the renewal of human beings in faith does not contribute to justification. The JDDJ explains:

While Catholic teaching emphasizes the renewal of life by justifying grace, this renewal in faith, hope, and love is always dependent on God's unfathomable grace and contributes nothing to justification about which one could boast before God (Rom 3:27).³⁸⁵

In the section on "the good works of the justified" the JDDJ stresses that

³⁸² Lehmann and Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?*, 35.

³⁸³ Anwar Tjen, "Pemahaman Bersama mengenai Ajaran Pembenaan: Beberapa Catatan dari Seorang Penafsir "Lutheran"," in *Tak Berbatas, Tak Bermegah. Warisan Rasul Paulus*. Punjung Tulis Prof. Dr. Martin Harun, OFM (Jakarta: LAI, 2011), 242; Dieter Becker, *Pedoman Dogmatika. Suatu Kompendium Singkat* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, ⁵2001), 149-150; JDDJ no. 34, 35, 36. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 23-24.

³⁸⁴ JDDJ no. 21. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 17, 30; Lehmann and Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?*, 46f; *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. A Commentary by the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg* (Geneva: the LWF, 1997), 34.

³⁸⁵ JDDJ no. 27. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 20, 33-34.

good works are the consequence of justification and are its fruits. The JDDJ states, “We confess together that good works – a Christian life lived in faith, hope, and love – follow justification and are its fruits.”³⁸⁶

However, in the subsequent description there is a passage that is less precise in describing Lutheran teaching. It explains good works as an obligation. Lutherans do not perceive good work as an obligation but a natural consequence of justification.³⁸⁷ The JDDJ states that Lutherans can accept “the concept of a preservation of grace and a growth in grace and faith.”³⁸⁸ This is an accommodation to Catholic understanding that “good works contribute to growth in grace.”³⁸⁹ In turn, the JDDJ argues, justification brings persons to experience “growth in its effects in Christian living”, and accordingly, Lutherans may also approve the meritorious character of good works as long as the character of those works as gifts is not contested.³⁹⁰ In the understanding of Catholics, the meritorious character of good works is based on Scriptures that teach that those who perform good works are promised a reward in heaven. Lutherans, in contrast, so the JDDJ claims, understand eternal life as a reward, not because of the believer’s merits but because of God’s promise to the believer.³⁹¹

A number of professors of theology, especially within the German-speaking world, reacted by saying no agreement had been achieved on the matter of decisive importance to the churches of the Reformation, namely, whether faith assures salvation, nor on the question of whether the justified are sinners, nor on the

³⁸⁶ JDDJ no. 37. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 24.

³⁸⁷ The Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg comments as follows: “Here an “obligation” is spoken of, unusual language for Lutheran ears. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. A Commentary by the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg*, 44.

³⁸⁸ JDDJ no. 39. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 25.

³⁸⁹ JDDJ no. 38. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 25.

³⁹⁰ JDDJ no. 38. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 25.

³⁹¹ JDDJ no. 39. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 25, 39.

significance of good works for salvation.³⁹² One of the theologians who made a thoroughgoing critique of the JDDJ is Eberhard Jüngel.³⁹³

Here I will only discuss one thing,³⁹⁴ namely, about “the justified as sinner”. Actually, the JDDC also raises this topic specifically.³⁹⁵ Thus is not entirely correct to say that JDDJ ignores it, for there Catholics and Lutherans confess that the justified “are continuously exposed to the power of sin still pressing its attacks,” and “must ask God daily for forgiveness... [They] are ever again called to conversion and penance, and are ever again granted forgiveness.”³⁹⁶ However, Jüngel is correct in his view that Catholics cannot really accept the Lutheran view of the justified person as still a sinner (*simul iustus et peccator*).³⁹⁷ Luther coined this formula, “To the extent that I am a Christian, I am righteous, devout and belong to Christ, but to the extent that I look back to my self and my sin I am miserable and the greatest of sinners.”³⁹⁸

Catholics state clearly that the formula is not acceptable.³⁹⁹ The JDDJ

³⁹² AGTC no. 14. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*, 12.

³⁹³ Jüngel was professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion at University of Tübingen. He has retired. Interestingly, Jüngel did not sign a famous letter of protest written in 1999 in which many theology professors in Germany were involved. According to Jüngel himself his criticism springs not from Protestant or Lutheran commitments but from the gospel itself. Therefore, he was not concerned with preserving past formulations such as the Lutheran Confessions or those of Luther himself. See Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith. A Theological Study with an Ecumenical Purpose*, xxvi; Ian Taylor, “Without Justification? The Catholic-Lutheran Joint Declaration and its Protestant Critics,” in *The Way*, 43/3 (July 2004), 111.

³⁹⁴ In the previous part of this sub-section I have discussed other matters. See earlier paragraphs of this 3.3.2 section.

³⁹⁵ On section “The Justified as Sinner”. JDDJ no. 28, 29, 30. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 20-22.

³⁹⁶ JDDJ no. 28. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 20, 21.

³⁹⁷ Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, 215; Cf. Lehmann and Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?*, 47.

³⁹⁸ Luther, “The Third Disputation Against the Antinomians (1538),” in *WA* 39/I, 508, 2-8; cf. Luther, “Heidelberg Disputation,” in *LW* 31, 39; Luther, “Romans,” in *LW* 25, 160; Luther, “The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priest,” in *LW* 38, 158; Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, 216.

³⁹⁹ Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, 215; Ted M. Dorman, “The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification: Retrospect and Prospects, in *JETS* 44/3 (September 2001), 427; Lehmann and Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?*, 47.

explains that Catholics perceive that the justified still have an inclination (concupiscence) that comes from sin and presses toward sin. However, Catholics do not see this inclination as sin in an authentic sense.⁴⁰⁰

The formulations in the JDDJ certainly need to be seen in the context of an effort to bring Lutherans and Catholics closer together, in which each party has to make space for its counterpart's position. The text of the JDDJ uses a method of discourse known as "differentiated consensus". This term refers to an approach that does not attempt to reach a comprehensive consensus in which each side must agree on each and every point of the doctrine of justification.⁴⁰¹ The JDDJ acknowledges that differences remain between Lutherans and Catholics about justification but they are no longer the occasion for doctrinal condemnations.⁴⁰²

A number of theologians such as Jüngel maintain the strict exclusion of human works from the economy of salvation and firmly resist the language of human participation in justification. However, the JDDJ and German Protestant-Catholic theologians who formed *The Ecumenical Study Group of Protestant and Catholic Theologians on the Examination of the Sixteenth-Century Condemnations* maintain that cooperation can be accepted because "in faith the heart is involved, when the Word touches it and faith is created."⁴⁰³ However, no matter which position is taken, surely all can accept this conclusion:

⁴⁰⁰ JDDJ no. 30. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 22; cf. AGTC no. 58. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*, 25-26.

⁴⁰¹ JDDJ no. 5. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 10-11; cf. AGTC no. 40-41. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*, 20-21.

⁴⁰² Such as a common understanding of justification for social ethics, a teaching about the church. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. A Commentary by the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg*, 10; cf. JDDJ no. 5. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 11; AGTC no. 40, 41. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*, 21.

⁴⁰³ Lehmann and Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?*, 182.

The doctrine of justification – and, above all, its biblical foundation – will always retain a special function in the church. That function is continually to remind Christians that we sinners live solely from the forgiving love of God, which we merely allow to be bestowed on us, but which we in no way – in however modified a form – “earn” or are able to tie down to any preconditions or postconditions.⁴⁰⁴

The JDDJ sees the assurance of salvation stressed in the doctrine of justification as central because, experiencing the misery of sin, human beings can only put their trust in God. Grace and the working of the Holy Spirit make good works possible. By accepting this, humans can grow in grace. In this sense, humans cooperate with the Holy Spirit.⁴⁰⁵ Only from the viewpoint of thinking about God’s love, “deeply penetrated by the unlimited power of God who hold the failure and halfheartedness of human beings toward this gracious activity,” *The Ecumenical Study Group of Protestant and Catholic Theologians on the Examination of the Sixteenth-Century Condemnations* contends, can one essentially speak of good works as of secondary importance.⁴⁰⁶

3.3.3 Lutheran Identity of Asian Lutheran Churches

Member churches within the LWF family all over the world discussed the JDDJ. Discussions were not limited to Lutheran churches or Catholics; churches of other denominations also debated the topic. Such discussions also took place in Indonesia.⁴⁰⁷ However, Asian Lutheran churches did not hold large-scale studies or

⁴⁰⁴ Lehmann and Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?*, 69.

⁴⁰⁵ Cf. Lehmann and Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?*, 182; JDDJ no. 34-36, 37-39. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 23-25.

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. Lehmann and Pannenberg (eds.), *The Condemnation of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?*, 182; JDDJ no. 34-36, 37-39. See *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 23-25.

⁴⁰⁷ See Ramli S.N. Harahap, *Deklarasi Bersama tentang Ajaran Pembeneran oleh Iman* (aslinya adalah Thesis pada STT Jakarta) [Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification by Faith (this book is originally a M.Th thesis presented to STT Jakarta)] (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2014); Anwar Tjen, “Pemahaman Bersama mengenai Ajaran Pembeneran: Beberapa Catatan dari Seorang Penafsir “Lutheran”,” in *Tak Berbatas, Tak Bermegah. Warisan Rasul Paulus*. Punjung Tulis Prof. Dr. Martin

discussions on the JDDJ as happened in the West.⁴⁰⁸ Pilgrim Lo, Luther scholar from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong, mentions that translating and understanding the doctrine of justification by faith is a contextual problem in a Chinese context. It is so, Lo contends, because the translation of the word “justification” in the Union Version Chinese Bible could carry the meaning of “designated to be righteous because of belief”.⁴⁰⁹ Furthermore, aside from the language issue, Lo points out that many Chinese Christians will not be able to understand the concept of salvation in which good works are not substantially involved. For Chinese Christians, according to Lo, after conversion “good moral behavior” is still “necessary for salvation.”⁴¹⁰ Jan S. Aritonang, Church historian from Jakarta Theological Seminary, Indonesia, despite his appreciation of the Reformation’s insights, doubts that the teachings of the Reformation Fathers are relevant for Indonesia within its socio-political and economic context.⁴¹¹

What is actually the state of Lutheran identity in the Asian Lutheran churches? According to some scholars, Lutheranism in Asia is not always obvious.⁴¹² Efforts are still being made to raise awareness of Asian Lutheran

Harun, OFM (Jakarta: LAI, 2011); Anwar Tjen, “Pemahaman Bersama Ajaran Pembeneran: Beberapa Catatan dari Sudut Pandang Lutheran,” A Paper, presented in a Lutherans-Catholics seminar in celebrating of 5 years “The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification,” held in STFT St. Thomas, 30 October 2004; Anwar Tjen, “Memaknai Gerakan Reformasi, termasuk kaitannya dengan Pemahaman Bersama Ajaran Pembeneran oleh Iman: Menarik Pelajaran dari Warisan Sejarah dan Teologi,” A Paper presented in a seminar in celebrating 491 years of Reformation of Dr. Martin Luther, held by Universitas Kristen Indonesia, 31 October 2008.

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. Harahap, *Deklarasi Bersama tentang Ajaran Pembeneran oleh Iman*, 216, 218; Pilgrim W.K. Lo, “Reception in the Chinese Context of Hong Kong,” in *The Doctrine of Justification: Its Reception and Meaning Today*. LWF Studies No. 02/2003, ed. by Karen L. Bloomquist and Wolfgang Greive (Geneva: The LWF, 2003), 35.

⁴⁰⁹ Lo, “Reception in the Chinese Context of Hong Kong,” 36.

⁴¹⁰ Lo, “Reception in the Chinese Context of Hong Kong,” 37.

⁴¹¹ Jan S. Aritonang, “Supaya Engkau Membuka Belenggu-belenggu Kelaliman: Menelusuri Kiprah dan Kepedulian Gereja-gereja Indonesia di Bidang Sosial.” Orasi Dies Natalis ke- 58 Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Jakarta [Opening Shackles of Tyranny: Tracing the Effort and Care of Churches in Indonesia in the Social Sector". Oration of 58th Anniversary Jakarta Theological Seminary] 25 September 1992, 15.

⁴¹² J. Paul Rajashekar, “Lutheranism in Asia and the Indian Subcontinent,” in Arland Jacobson and James Aageson (eds.), *The Future of Lutheranism in a Global Context* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2008), 71; cf. Rajashekar, “Introduction: Harvesting the Stories of Asian Lutheranism,” 13.

churches. For example, the Asian desk of the LWF has held a series of conferences to enhance and develop an Asian Lutheran identity.⁴¹³ This is because there is recognition that the Lutheran Confessions are little used in the Asian Lutheran churches.⁴¹⁴

At the conference organized by the Asia desk of the LWF on 17- 21 November 2014 in Medan, Indonesia, participants raised this issue.⁴¹⁵ One of the speakers asserted that “Lutheran identity in Asia was largely understood as a denominational identity and not so much as confessional identity.”⁴¹⁶ Attendants at the Conference on Asian Lutheranism and Lutheran Identity, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 5-8 November 2013, listed the key components of Lutheran theology essential to Lutheran identity as justification by faith, law and gospel hermeneutics, theology of the cross, Lutheran liturgy and spirituality.⁴¹⁷ On this occasion, the participants formed the Asia Luther Studies and Research Network. The aim was to enhance Lutheran identity in Asia.⁴¹⁸

The above assessment seems to support the view of J. Paul Rajashekar, who argues that Asian Lutheran identity is not very obvious. Asian Lutherans have not been burdened with questions of Lutheran theological identity.⁴¹⁹ Asian Lutheran

⁴¹³ See Steven Lawrence, “Towards an Asian Lutheran Identity and Self-Understanding,” Department for Mission and Development, Lutheran World Federation, 19 December 2014 <<https://www.lutheranworld.org/blog/towards-asian-lutheran-identity-and-self-understanding>> (accessed 18 November 2015).

⁴¹⁴ See Steven Lawrence, “Towards an Asian Lutheran Identity and Self-Understanding.”

⁴¹⁵ See Steven Lawrence, “Towards an Asian Lutheran Identity and Self-Understanding.”

⁴¹⁶ See Steven Lawrence, “Towards an Asian Lutheran Identity and Self-Understanding.”

⁴¹⁷ Martin Yee, “Lutheran Identity in Asia Boosted by Research Network,” The Lutheran World Federation Communication, 17 December 2013. <<https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/lutheran-identity-asia-boosted-research-network>> (accessed 18 November 2015).

⁴¹⁸ Yee, “Lutheran Identity in Asia Boosted by Research Network.”

⁴¹⁹ J. Paul Rajashekar, “Introduction: Harvesting the Stories of Asian Lutheranism,” in Edmond Yee and J. Paul Rajashekar (eds.), *Abundant Harvest - Stories of Asian Lutheranism* (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2012), 13

identity is more a historical or sociological than a theological profile.⁴²⁰ According to Rajashekar, Asian Lutheran churches are not really rooted in Lutheran theological convictions.⁴²¹ Luther and Luther 's reformation of the Church are popular for Asian Lutherans but it is also obvious, argues Rajashekar, that the burning religious, cultural and theological issues that Asian Lutheran face are neither explicitly addressed in Luther's Catechisms nor in the Lutheran Confessions.⁴²² Therefore, there is a need for developing an Asian Lutheran theology dealing with the Asian context.⁴²³

However, at the same time Rajashekar also makes special reference to the Batak (HKBP) Church as the sole exception in Asia that chose to write its own confession rather than only to "translate" European Lutheran confessions to an Asian context. While the Batak Church had addressed its cultural and ethical values (*adat*) in their new Lutheran confession of 1951, most Asian Lutheran churches, in Rajashekar's view, made no effort to contextualize the Lutheran theological heritage.⁴²⁴

Indeed, Asian Lutherans must consider not just Lutheran identity⁴²⁵ but how Lutheran theology, in dialogue with history, culture and society, helps Asian Lutheran churches to face their common challenges, namely, poverty and injustice,

⁴²⁰ J. Paul Rajashekar, "Lutheranism in Asia and the Indian Subcontinent," in Arland Jacobson and James Aageson (eds.), *The Future of Lutheranism in a Global Context* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2008), 71; cf. Rajashekar, "Introduction: Harvesting the Stories of Asian Lutheranism," 13.

⁴²¹ Rajashekar, "Introduction: Harvesting the Stories of Asian Lutheranism," 13.

⁴²² Rajashekar, "Introduction: Harvesting the Stories of Asian Lutheranism," 15.

⁴²³ Rajashekar, "Lutheranism in Asia and the Indian Subcontinent," 72; cf. Pongsak Limthongviratn, "Focus and Issues in the Lutheran Church in Asia Now and Tomorrow," in Jacobson and Aageson (eds.), *The Future of Lutheranism in a Global Context*, 53.

⁴²⁴ Rajashekar, "Lutheranism in Asia and the Indian Subcontinent," 71.

⁴²⁵ The problem is that not all feel that they are really Lutherans. In early 2008 the LWF Department for Theology and Studies held a seminar under the theme "What do we believe, teach and practice?". Although most churches in Asia are rooted in denominationally-based mission work (or mission societies), it is also clear that "being self-consciously Lutheran has not been the main theological concern of most Lutheran-initiated churches in Asia and beyond." See Karen L. Bloomquist, "Introduction," in *Identity, Survival, Witness. Reconfiguring Theological Agendas*, edited by Karen L. Bloomquist (Geneva: LWF, 2008), 7.

fundamentalism, various religions (multi-religions), culture values and customs that contradict the Gospel.

CHAPTER 4 LUTHERAN CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CONFESSION OF 1951

This chapter elaborates the Lutheran characteristic of the Confession of 1951 to show in what sense the Batak Church is Lutheran. The purpose of the Confession of 1951 was to show approval of the Augsburg Confession (AC). In other words, although Luther's Small Catechism had been used for a long time, the Batak Church only studied the Augsburg Confession when preparing to write a confession; it neither translated nor studied the Apology (Ap.) of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles (SA), the Large Catechism (LC), and the Formula of Concord (FC) until after joining the LWF.

4.1 Its Content in General

In the Confession of Faith of 1951 the HKBP identified a number of groups that caused problems and threats to the faith and the life of the church. Until that time there were only two beliefs/religions the Batak Church competed with: animism and Islam. Now there were many more. In the confession the Batak Church rejected several groups that can be classified in four categories:⁴²⁶ 1. Non-Christian religions

⁴²⁶ For this classification, with a little adjustment, I follow Sutan Hutagalung, "The Confession of Augustana as a Confession of Faith in the Present Historical Setting," in *Confessio Augustana 1530-1980: Commemoration and Self-Examination*, edited by Vilmos Vajta *LWF Report* no. 9 June 1980, 49; cf. Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 167. In addition to a description of the various religions and doctrines that are recorded in the Confession, see also the details of each of these groups in Lumbantobing, "The Confession of the Batak Church," 121-135; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church*, 105-125.

(the *Sirajabatak*, heathenism/animism: traditional beliefs,⁴²⁷ Islam, syncretism);⁴²⁸ 2. Doctrines of other churches (the Roman Catholics, Adventists, Pentecostals, Fanatics/Enthusiasts [the “Congregation of Redemption”, abstainers from the blood, *Sibindamora*, *Sionomhudon*, the Bible-Circle group];⁴²⁹ 3. Churches that had split from the Batak Church [Mission Batak, HChB, PKB, and HKI]),⁴³⁰ and political and ideological groups (nationalistic Christianity, theosophy, communism, capitalism),⁴³¹ in which the Confession expressed its position toward them or its rejection of them; and 4, The Batak Church also stated its position on the *adat* or local traditions, saying carefully that apart from those things that were considered good for Christianity, not everything was in harmony with Christian faith, and so there were inherent dangers.⁴³²

The Confession was firmly based on the Scripture,⁴³³ and understood as a continuation of the previously existing creeds: the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed.⁴³⁴ After the first part, the Confession includes 18 articles which were prepared by partially following the Augsburg Confession. These articles followed a certain pattern: After formulating what was believed (“we believe and confess”), it concluded by stating “we oppose and reject”. This follows the Augsburg

⁴²⁷ See explanation in the Confession itself, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 4; cf. Lumbantobing, “The Confession of the Batak Church,” 121-125; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church*, 105-112.

⁴²⁸ See explanation in the Confession itself, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 4; cf. Lumbantobing, “The Confession of the Batak Church,” 126.

⁴²⁹ See explanation in the Confession itself, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 3-4; cf. Lumbantobing, “The Confession of the Batak Church,” 127-132; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church*, 112-120.

⁴³⁰ See explanation in the Confession itself, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 4; cf. Lumbantobing, “The Confession of the Batak Church,” 128-129; Nyhus, *An Indonesian Church*, 120-124.

⁴³¹ See explanation in the Confession itself, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 4; cf. Lumbantobing, “The Confession of the Batak Church,” 133-135. C

⁴³² *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 4; *Panindangion Haporseaon Pengakuan Iman The Confession of Faith Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) 1951 & 1996* (Tarutung: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 2000), 17.

⁴³³ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 5.

⁴³⁴ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 6.

Confession, which contained polemical passages ("damnamus"). The Confession of 1951 formulated its understanding concerning God (Articles I-III), the Word of God (IV), sin (V-VII), the church (VIII), those who minister in the church (IX), the Holy Sacraments (X), church order (XI), government (XII), Sunday (XIII), food (XIV), faith and good works (XV), remembrance of the dead (XVI), the angels (XVII), and, the last judgement (XVIII).⁴³⁵

As outlined in the previous description, the Confession of 1951 was written in connection with the application to become a member of the LWF. To do this the Batak Church had been studying the Augsburg Confession. The influence was clearly visible in the Confession of 1951. But at the same time the HKBP stated what was a challenge for them - doctrines and views which it opposed and rejected. Therefore it can be said that in general this confession addressed both of these objectives.

For some scholars, such as Sutan Hutagalung,⁴³⁶ Gassmann and Hendrix,⁴³⁷ the two objectives are very clear. By comparing the titles of the articles, Hutagalung shows how the Confession of 1951 followed the Augsburg Confession. In so doing, the Confession of 1951 really wanted to convince readers of its Lutheran character. But at the same time, Hutagalung argues, the confession was "closely related to the desire to bear witness to problems faced by the church in its own religious, cultural, and political situation."⁴³⁸ Gassmann and Hendrix see that the Confession of 1951 is a response to other churches and to the growing influence of sects and other

⁴³⁵ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 6-14.

⁴³⁶ Prof. Dr. Sutan M. Hutagalung was general secretary of GKPI (Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia) from 1966-1977, 1983-1988. He earned his Ph.D. from Yale University, New Haven, USA. In the years of 1977-1982 he was appointed as a research professor at the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg, France. See Sutan Manahara Hutagalung, *Pemberian adalah Panggilan*. Edited by Rainy M.P. Hutabarat and P. Hasudungan Sirait (Jakarta: Institut Darma Mahardika, 2013), 339.

⁴³⁷ Günther Gassmann and Scott Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 188.

⁴³⁸ Sutan Hutagalung, "The Confession of Augustana as a Confession of Faith in the Present Historical Setting," 46.

religions, while remaining faithful to the main conviction of the Lutheran Reformation.⁴³⁹

Other scholars, such as Schreiner, do not see any special Lutheran character in the Confession of 1951. Schreiner argues that the main purpose of the confession is to respond to the challenges and problems in its surroundings. For Schreiner the Confession of 1951 is not typical of a certain denomination. It is contextual in character, in Schreiner's view, because through it the Batak Church formulated its response to social and cultural problems, faced as it was by Islam, syncretism, and heathenism as well as those who lived without any faith.⁴⁴⁰ The Confession showed both the correctness of the gospel and the rejection of doctrines and attitudes that were contrary to the gospel.⁴⁴¹ To further emphasize the lack of a distinctive Lutheran character in the 1951 Confession, Schreiner mentions that with this confession the HKBP could have also gone to the Presbyterian World Alliance.⁴⁴² Schreiner refers to the assessment of the East Asia Christian Conference of 1964:

There are those churches which are not the result of the work of any particular denomination in the West. The confessional position of these churches will be acceptable to more than one confessional family. For instance, the Batak Church could equally well belong to the Presbyterian World Alliance as to the Lutheran World Federation. Membership in more than one confessional family for such churches will be useful as pointing to the fact it is not all that simple to fix denominational labels with their Western connotation on the churches in Indonesia to belong to any World Confessional Organization.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁹ Günther Gassmann and Scott Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 188.

⁴⁴⁰ Lothar Schreiner, "Pengakuan Percaya (Konfesi) HKBP 1951 dengan Usianya," in B.A. Simanjuntak (ed.), *Pemikiran tentang Batak* (Medan: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Batak Universitas HKBP Nommensen, 1988), 4, 6.

⁴⁴¹ Lothar Schreiner, "Pengakuan Percaya (Konfesi) HKBP 1951 dengan Usianya," 6.

⁴⁴² Schreiner, "Pengakuan Percaya (Konfesi) HKBP 1951 dengan Usianya," 7; cf. Edward Nyhus and Lothar Schreiner, "The Confession of Faith of the Batak Church, Indonesia (1951)," in Gerald H. Anderson (ed.), *Asian Voices in Christian Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1976), 213.

⁴⁴³ "The Christian Community within Human Community, Containing Statements from the Bangkok Assembly of the EACC (February-March 1964)," Minutes, part 2, p. 80. The quote is taken from Nyhus and Schreiner, "The Confession of Faith of the Batak Church, Indonesia (1951)," 226.

Schreiner asserts,

The truth is that to enter into the LWF the HKBP did not consider whether or not it was Lutheran. The Confession should be understood as a theological examination of its tradition and the witness that need to be enforced.⁴⁴⁴

Schreiner's assessment will be explored, especially in the next section, because to say the Confession has no Lutheran character is not correct either. To better understand the Confession of 1951 and the desire of the Batak Church to strengthen its Lutheran identity, we should not overlook the draft prepared by Bishop Sihombing, because there are more elements from the Augsburg Confession in it. Here is a general comparison of the Augsburg Confession and Sihombing's draft of the Confession of 1951, based on the topic of each article.

<i>Sihombing's Draft</i> ⁴⁴⁵	<i>The Augsburg Confession</i> ⁴⁴⁶	<i>The Confession of 1951</i> ⁴⁴⁷
Concerning God (1)	Concerning God (I)	Concerning God (I)
The Trinity (2)	Concerning Original Sin (II)	The Trinity (II)
The Special Acts of the Triune God (3)	Concerning the Son of God (III)	The Special Acts of the Triune God (III)
Salvation made by Christ (4)	Concerning Justification (IV)	The Word of God (IV)
Origin of Sin (5)	Concerning Ministry in the Church (V)	Origin of Sin (V)
Inherited Sin (6)	Concerning the New Obedience (VI)	Inherited Sin (VI)
Salvation from Sin (7)	Concerning the Church (VII)	Salvation from Sin (VII)
Confession of Sin (8)	What is the Church (VIII)	The Church (VIII)
Works of Preaching (9)	Concerning Baptism (IX)	Those Who Minister in the Church (IX)
Bible – The Word of God (10)	Concerning the Lord's Supper (X)	The Holy Sacraments (X)
The Word of God and the Holy Spirit (11)	Concerning Confession (XI)	Church Order (XI)
Those Who Minister in the Church (12)	Concerning Repentance (XII)	Concerning Government of the State (XII)
Concerning the Marriage of Priest (13)	Concerning the Use of Sacraments (XIII)	Sunday (XIII)
Obedience (14)	Concerning the Church Order (XIV)	Concerning Food (XIV)
Invisible Church (15)	Concerning Church Rites (XV)	Faith and Good Works (XV)
Visible Church (16)	Concerning Civic Affairs (XVI)	Remembrance of the Dead (XVI)

⁴⁴⁴ In Indonesia the sentence reads: "Dengan sebenarnya, gereja HKBP untuk masuk ke LWF tidak mempertimbangkan apakah dia Lutheran atau tidak, melainkan dia memaparkan pemeriksaan Kristen tentang tradisinya serta kesaksiannya yang seharusnya ditegakkan." See Schreiner, "Pengakuan Percaya (Konfesi) HKBP 1951 dengan Usianya," 7.

⁴⁴⁵ Sihombing, *Panindangion - haporseaon (Belijdenis) ni HKBP*, 9-18.

⁴⁴⁶ *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 37ff.

⁴⁴⁷ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 6ff.

The Holy Sacraments (17)	Concerning the Return of Christ for Judgement (XVII)	Concerning the Angels (XVII)
The Use of Sacraments (18)	Concerning Free Will (XVIII)	The Last Judgement (XVIII)
Baptism (19)	Concerning the Cause of Sin (XIX)	
The Holy Communion (20)	Concerning Faith and Good Works (XX)	
Concerning Bread and Wine (21)	Concerning the Cult of the Saints (XXI)	
Purgatory, the Saints and Reliquary (22)	Concerning Both Kinds of the Sacrament (XXII)	
Heathenism (23)	Concerning the Marriage of Priest (XXIII)	
Enthusiasts (24)	Concerning the Mass (XXIV)	
Church Order (25)	Concerning Confession (XXV)	
Concerning Government of the State (26)	Concerning the Distinction of Foods (XXVI)	
Free Will (27)	Concerning Monastic Vows (XXVII)	
The Meaning of Confession Lapatan ni na manopoti dosa (28)	Concerning the Church's Power (XXVIII)	
Faith and Good Works (29)	Conclusion	
The Saints (30)		
Concerning Foods (31)		
Sunday (32)		
The Second Coming of Christ (33)		

4.2 Lutheran Characteristic of the Confession of 1951

4.2.1 On Justification

Article VII of the 1951 Confession is not entitled “justification” but it contains the same substance as AC Article IV concerning justification.⁴⁴⁸ The content and the nature of the doctrine of justification is explicitly present there. The Confession of 1951 emphasizes that salvation is gained through the grace of God, not the result of human achievement. Article VII concerning Salvation from Sin of the Confession of 1951 reads:

We believe and confess that salvation from sin cannot be gained by means of good works, or through one's power, but only by the grace of God through the redemption of Jesus Christ. Salvation is received by faith which is wrought by the Holy Spirit so that the believer appropriates the forgiveness of sin which Jesus Christ has provided through His death. Such faith is reckoned

⁴⁴⁸ Article IV concerning Justification in the Augsburg Confession, see *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 39. SM Hutagalung mentions that Article VII concerning Salvation from Sin of the 1951 Confession is similar to Article Augsburg Confession Article IV concerning Justification. See Sutan Hutagalung, “The Confession of Augustana as a Confession of Faith in the Present Historical Setting,” in *Confessio Augustana 1530-1980: Commemoration and Self Examination*, ed. Vajta, LWF Report, June 1980, 48.

by God as righteousness before Him.⁴⁴⁹

Here the Confession of 1951 emphasizes that justification is exclusively a divine work of grace without human contribution. In the original words of the Confession of 1951 the second sentence above says that the way to receive salvation is through “faith which is wrought by the Holy Spirit so that the believer appropriates the forgiveness of sin which Jesus Christ has provided through His death.”⁴⁵⁰ Here the Confession emphasizes that, from a human point of view, faith in Christ’s redemptive work is the only thing that is required for a human to be declared righteous. And, according to the Confession, faith itself is the work of the Spirit. In short, the Confession wants to declare that God is the sole cause of people’s salvation.

The formulation of the Confession of 1951 on justification clearly follows the Augsburg Confession, article IV of which states:

Furthermore, it is taught that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God through our merit, work, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God out of grace for Christ’s sake through faith when we believe that Christ has suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us. For God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness in his sight, as St. Paul says in Roman 3[:21-26] and 4[:5].⁴⁵¹

Basically the main idea in this article is the conviction of the Reformation that salvation is God's work alone. Humans are not capable of saving themselves. The only way they can be saved is through faith in God’s work in sending Jesus Christ for humanity’s salvation. Melanchthon formulated this conviction in the

⁴⁴⁹ Article VII concerning Salvation from Sin. See *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 9.

⁴⁵⁰ The original wording in Batak reads: “ia dalam manjalo i, i ma marhite sian haporseaon...” See *Panindangion Haporseaon Pengakuan Iman The Confession of Faith Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) 1951 & 1996*, 23.

⁴⁵¹ Article IV concerning Justification in the German Text. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 36, 38.

Augsburg Confession (AC) and Apology of the Augsburg Confession (Ap.). Melanchthon got the idea from Luther's writings.⁴⁵² However, in the Lutheran Confessions, there are only three of Luther's writings, namely the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Smalcald Articles (SA). In SA, Luther briefly emphasizes the idea that humans depend entirely on the grace of God in order to be saved, and that man's good works are not an element that leads to salvation. Within this framework Luther understands that good works are a response to or a fruit of justification. In SA Luther says:

Here is the first article: That Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, "was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification" (Rom. 4[:25]); and he alone is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1[:29]); and "the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53[:6]); furthermore, "All have sinned," and "they are now justified without merit by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ... by his blood" (Rom. 3[:23-25]).

Now because this must be believed and may not be obtained or grasped otherwise with any work, law, or merit, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us, as St. Paul says in Romans 3[:28, 26]: "For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law"; and also, "that God alone is righteous and justifies the one who has faith in Jesus."⁴⁵³

In Ap. Melanchthon uses forensic language to make it clear that justification has nothing to do with performing good works, but is an act of God.⁴⁵⁴ However, though Melanchthon has already made Luther's ideas clear in AC, he does not use forensic language there. AC IV formulates justification as both "to pronounce" and

⁴⁵² Melanchthon had made use of Luther's "The Schwabach Articles," in writing the AC. See Wilhelm Maurer, *Historical Commentary on The Augsburg Confession*, translated by H. George Anderson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 285ff; cf. "The Schwabach Articles," in *Sources and Contexts of the Book of Concord*, ed. by Robert Kolb and James A. Nestingen (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 83ff.

⁴⁵³ SA II, 1,2,3,4. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 301.

⁴⁵⁴ Ap. IV: 252, 305 in *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 159, 165; Ap. IV: 252, 305 in *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 143, 154.

“to make” righteous; to pronounce righteous when AC IV says that “God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness,”⁴⁵⁵ and to make righteous when AC states that we “become righteous before God.”⁴⁵⁶ In Ap. “to pronounce” and “to make” righteous are further explained:

Instead, we maintain that, properly and truly, by faith itself we are regarded as righteous for Christ’s sake, that is, we are acceptable to God. And because “to be justified” means that out of unrighteous people righteous people are made or regenerated, it also means that they are pronounced or regarded as righteous.⁴⁵⁷

Melanchthon wants to make it even clearer, which is why he resorts to the forensic metaphor in Ap.⁴⁵⁸ He explains the word “justify” (in Rom. 5:1) as meaning “to absolve a guilty man and pronounce him righteous.” Because the accused cannot be declared innocent on the basis of his own righteousness, since he is guilty, so he can only be righteous on the basis of the righteousness of another, that is, Christ. So “to be justified” means to be regarded as righteous. The Ap. reads:

This is how Scripture uses the word “faith,” as this statement of Paul shows, “Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God” (Rom. 5:1). In this passage “justify” is used in a judicial way to mean “to absolve a guilty man and pronounce him righteous,” and to do so on account of someone else’s righteousness, namely, Christ’s, which communicated to us through faith. ... Because the righteousness of Christ is given to us through faith, therefore faith is righteousness in us through imputation. That is, by it we are made acceptable to God because of God’s imputation and ordinances, as Paul says (Rom. 4:5), “Faith is reckoned as righteousness.”⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁵ CA IV, German Text. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 40.

⁴⁵⁶ CA IV, German Text. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 38.

⁴⁵⁷ Ap. IV: 72 in *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 132.

⁴⁵⁸ Ap. IV, 252, 305. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 159, 165; cf. Ap. IV 252, 305 in *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 143, 154.

⁴⁵⁹ Ap. IV 304, 305 in *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 154. Tappert uses the quarto edition [called so because of its printing format] of April/May 1531, while Kolb and Wengert use the octavo edition [called so because of its smaller format] of September 1531. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 108-109. Paragraph 305-6 in the quarto edition is rewritten in the octavo edition as follows: “... justification here means to

According to Jüngel, Melancthon's description of the forensic act of the justification of the sinner as the imputation or reckoning of one's righteousness is intended to make really clear that justification is an event by which God accepts sinners and that God's acceptance is purely on the basis of Christ's righteousness.⁴⁶⁰ This righteousness is completely extraneous to the sinners and that is why believers are described as those who "are made acceptable to God because of God's imputation,"⁴⁶¹ the imputation of God's righteousness.⁴⁶² Here Melancthon echoes Luther's thought that God's righteousness comes to the believers from outside humanity. In his *Lecture on Romans* Luther said that "all of our good is outside us."⁴⁶³ The intention is to stress that justification is a process of salvation where no human's cooperation at all is involved. Only God, in Christ, effectively pronounces sinners righteous. In the understanding of AC and Ap., the forensic judgment of God, in which God pronounces sinners righteous, is effective to make the sinners righteous. Accordingly, AC and Ap. indicate a forensic as well as an effective understanding of justification.⁴⁶⁴ Jüngel clearly shows that these two aspects are

be regarded as righteous. However, God does not regard a person as righteous in the way that a court or philosophy does (that is, because of the righteousness of one's own works, which is rightly placed in the will). Instead, he regards a person as righteous through mercy because of Christ, when anyone clings to him by faith. Therefore faith can be called righteousness because it is that which is reckoned as righteousness (as we say with Paul), regardless of where it is located in the justified person. For this does not prevent divine reckoning, even if we locate this faith in the will." See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 165.

⁴⁶⁰ Eberhard Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, translated by Jeffrey F. Cayzer (Edinburgh & New York: T&T Clark, 2001), 205.

⁴⁶¹ Ap. IV 304, 305 in *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 154.

⁴⁶² Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, 206.

⁴⁶³ Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, in *LW* vol. 25, 267; cf. Jüngel also, when discussing this matter, makes reference to Luther's thought in *Lecture on Romans (LW 25, 257)*. See *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, 206.

⁴⁶⁴ Some scholars have drawn this conclusion, for example, Jüngel, Maurer, Gassmann & Hendrix, Olli-Pukka Vainer. See Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, 210-211; Maurer, *Historical Commentary on The Augsburg Confession*, 341; Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 79; Olli-Pekka Vainio, *Justification and Participation in Christ* (Lieden/Boston: Brill, 2008), 72. But Luther scholars of the early 20 century, such as P.

elements present in the justification embraced by Lutheran theology. Jüngel says:

The *imputation of extraneous righteousness (imputation alienae iustiae)* can only be rightly grasped when it is seen as God *granting* divine righteousness in such a way as to *effectively* change the *being* of humans. If sinners are pronounced righteous by God's judging Word – which is also pre-eminently creative in its judging power – and thus *recognized* by God as being righteous, then they not only *count* as righteous, they *are* righteous.

Since Holl there is an idea that in the AC and Ap. Melanchthon presented a doctrine of justification by faith different from Luther's.⁴⁶⁵ Holl contended that Melanchthon taught justification on the basis of extrinsic righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, communicated to the believer through faith. Meanwhile, Holl argued, Luther taught an 'analytical' justification based on the intrinsic righteousness in the believer.⁴⁶⁶ In later Lutheranism, as expressed in the Formula of Concord, the forensic character of justification is preserved. FC III states that faith in Christ's merit is what justifies:

Regarding the righteousness of faith before God, we unanimously believe, teach, and confess ... that poor sinful people are justified before God, that is, absolved ... without the least bit of our own "merit or worthiness" ..., apart from all preceding, present, or subsequent works. We are justified on the basis of sheer grace, because of the sole merit, the entire obedience, and the

Althaus, R. Hermann, K. Holl, and others, disagree about Melanchthon's forensic understanding of justification and claim that he deviates from Luther's understanding of justification. See Green, "Melanchthon, Philipp," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. II, 1523; Christiane Tietz, "Justification – 3. Reformation and Protestant orthodoxy," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. VII, 122, 121.

⁴⁶⁵ Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, 205; Maurer, *Historical Commentary on The Augsburg Confession*, 341; Gritsch and Jenson, *Lutheranism. The Theological Movement and Its Confessional Writings*, 52-53; Lowell C. Green, "Melanchthon, Philipp," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. II, 1523; Christiane Tietz, "Justification – 3. Reformation and Protestant orthodoxy," in *Religion: Past and Present. Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, vol. VII, 121, 122.

⁴⁶⁶ According to Lowell C. Green, Holl is correct about the young Luther because in 1519 Luther taught that "Christ's gift to us is righteousness. All our righteousness is imputed to us by God's grace" (S.A. 1, 24). But after 1519 Luther more and more consistently based the justification of the sinner before God not on the righteousness worked by Christ within the individual (*iustitia intrinseca*), but on the righteousness freely given the believer by God for Christ's sake (*iustitia extrinseca*). Green asserts that Luther's later teaching agreed basically with Melanchthon's best formulations on justification. See Green, "Melanchthon, Philipp," in *The Encyclopedia of The Lutheran Church*, vol. II, 1523; cf. Jüngel's discussion on Holl's approach to Luther's thinking on justification. See Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, 208ff; Gregory A. Walter, "Karl Holl (1866-1926)," in Mark C. Mattes (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Lutheran Theologians* (Göttingen/Bristol: Vandenhoeck, 2013), 58ff; Maurer, *Historical Commentary on The Augsburg Confession*, 341.

bitter suffering, death, and the resurrection of our Lord Christ alone, whose obedience is reckoned to us as righteousness.⁴⁶⁷

... the word “justify” here means to pronounce righteous and free from sins and to count as freed from the eternal punishment of sin because of Christ’s righteousness, which is “reckoned to faith by God” (Phil. 3[:9]).⁴⁶⁸

But at the same time FC also emphasizes the distinction between the forensic side and the effective side of justification. FC treats *regeneratio* (“rebirth”), which means renewal or sanctification, and *vivificatio* (“making alive”) as the result of justification, not to be confused with justification by faith.⁴⁶⁹ So FC did not treat the effective side of justification as an integral part of justification by faith but rather as the result of justification.

Within this emphasis on the forensic meaning of justification, FC distances itself from the effective side of justification. FC states:

The only essential and necessary elements of justification are the grace of God, the merit of Christ, and the faith that receives this grace and merit in the gospel’s promise, through which Christ’s righteousness is reckoned to us. From this we obtain the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, and our adoption as children, and the inheritance of eternal life.⁴⁷⁰

On renewal and sanctification FC especially emphasizes that:

Likewise, too, although renewal and sanctification are a blessing of our mediator Christ and a work of the Holy Spirit, they do not belong in the article or in the treatment of justification before God but rather result from it.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁷ SD, III, 9. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 563.

⁴⁶⁸ SD, III, 17. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 564.

⁴⁶⁹ SD, III, 18, 19, 20, 21. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 565.

⁴⁷⁰ SD, III, 25. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 566.

⁴⁷¹ SD, III, 28. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 566. It was often claimed, Bernd Oberdorfer argues, that only an “imputative”/forensic justification (“speaking” people righteous) was appropriate for the Lutheran understanding of justification, and not including an “effective” justification (“making” people righteous). But such distinction, Oberdorfer contends, is not appropriate to the Reformers since

The Confession of the HKBP does not discuss justification in such detail. Similarly, the Confession of 1951 also does not make a special mention of the doctrine of justification as part of their core teaching. Meanwhile, for Lutheranism the doctrine of justification is openly treated as the main message of Christianity. In the Smalcald Articles Luther calls justification by faith “the first and chief article.” Luther designates salvation through faith alone in Christ’s saving work as that on which “stands all that we teach and practice against the pope, the devil, and the world.”⁴⁷² The doctrine of justification by faith is “the cornerstone of the Lutheran confessions”⁴⁷³ and this message is applied throughout the confessions as the chief criterion for Lutheran teaching and practice.⁴⁷⁴

It should be noted too that the Augsburg Confession does not make any statement regarding the doctrine of justification as "the first and chief article". According to Gritsch and Jenson, Melancthon avoids emphasizing the preeminence of the usage of “the chief article”. And so, it is not without any reason, Gritsch and Jenson argue, that Melancthon places the article on justification after the articles on God, sin and Christ.⁴⁷⁵

Thus, while the 1951 Confession is not as detailed as the Lutheran Confessions, especially the Apology and the Formula of Concord, and does not make the doctrine of justification the chief element in its teaching, it does express the core

for them God’s Word always creative and when God “speaks” someone righteous, God also “makes” them righteous. See Bernd Oberdorfer, “How do I find a Gracious God?” in *Salvation – Not for Sale*, edited by Anne Burghardt (Leipzig/Geneva: Evangelische Verlangsanstalt GmbH/The Lutheran World Federation), 9-10.

⁴⁷² The first article of the Smalcald Articles. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 301; cf. Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 51.

⁴⁷³ See Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheranism. The Theological Movement and Its Confessional Writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 45.

⁴⁷⁴ See Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 51.

⁴⁷⁵ Gritsch and Jenson, *Lutheranism. The Theological Movement and Its Confessional Writings*, 49.

of this belief. Moreover, the Confession of 1551 contains more about justification in articles on the Holy Spirit (article III); the church (article VIII); and, of course, faith and good works (article XV).

4.2.2 On Faith and Good Works

4.2.2.1 Close relationship of AC Articles IV, VI, and XX

Actually, faith and its relationship to good works are dealt with in AC Articles IV and VI. Article IV declares that a person is justified purely on account of Christ's merit, not because of that person's good works or merit. Article VI states that believers should do good work because it is the command and will of God. Therefore, for Lutherans good works are neither a requirement for nor a way to salvation but a natural consequence of justification and obedience to God's command. AC VI states, "Likewise, they [Lutherans] teach that this faith is bound to yield good fruits and that it ought to do good works commanded by God on account of God's will and not so that we may trust in these works to merit justification before God."⁴⁷⁶

If the matter is dealt with in these two articles, why does Article XX discuss the relationship? Many scholars believe that AC XX was written in reaction to the Catholic accusation that Lutherans neglected the necessity of performing good works.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ AC VI, 1 (Latin Text). Cf. German text's formulation: "A person must do such good works as God has commanded for God's sake." See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 41, 40; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 31.

⁴⁷⁷ See Neve, *The Augsburg Confession. A Brief Review of Its History and An Interpretation of Its Doctrinal Articles* (1914), 139; Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession* (1930), 70; Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions*, 97; Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession* (1952), 111; Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary* (1959/1981), 199; Beck, *The Doctrine of Faith. A Study of the Augsburg Confession and Contemporary Ecumenical Documents* (1987), 106; Nestor Beck, *The Doctrine of Faith. A Study of*

4.2.2.2 Faith Affects Good Works and the Necessity of Good Works

A number of scholars have pointed out that Melancton and Luther differed on the place of good works in the teaching of justification. According to them, Luther sees good works as the fruit that proceeds from faith, a consequence of faith.⁴⁷⁸ Maurer, for instance, contends that in the 1520s Luther did not insist that Christians must do good works precisely because he saw them as fruits rather than an obligation.⁴⁷⁹ Bayer also shares this view: good works follow voluntarily and freely from faith.⁴⁸⁰ That they interpret Luther correctly can be seen in SA:

“Through faith” ... we receive a different, new, clean heart and that, for the sake of Christ our mediator, God will and does regard us as completely righteous and holy. ... Good works follow such faith... if one has a gracious God, then everything is good. Furthermore, we also say that if good works do not follow, then faith is false and not true.⁴⁸¹

This notion pops up not just in the Lutheran Confessions but in many of Luther’s other writings. In *Disputation Against Scholastic Theology* (1517), Luther says, “We do not become righteous by doing righteous deeds but, having been made righteous, we do righteous deeds.”⁴⁸² This is the core of Luther’s thought. In fact whenever Luther explains the place of good works in the justified person, he declares that such works are performed freely and spontaneously. In *Treatise on Good Works* (1520), Luther emphasizes that, because of faith, Christians do the will of God willingly and

the Augsburg Confession and Contemporary Ecumenical Documents (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987), 106; Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions* (1999), 167.

⁴⁷⁸ Among others are Maurer and Bayer. See Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, 371; Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 288.

⁴⁷⁹ Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, 371.

⁴⁸⁰ Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 288.

⁴⁸¹ SA, III, 13. See *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 325; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 315.

⁴⁸² *Disputation Against Scholastic Theology* (1517), *LW* vol. 31, translated by Harold J. Grim. See *Martin Luther’s Basic Theological Writings*, ed. by Timothy F. Hull, 2nd ed, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 36.

spontaneously.⁴⁸³ According to Bayer, Luther thinks that through faith “the human being receives the desire to fulfill God’s commands.”⁴⁸⁴ In *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), Luther explains that being freed in faith one receives the freedom to serve and please God and at the same time to serve neighbors in love.⁴⁸⁵ In his *Thesis Concerning Faith and Law* (1535), Luther underlines that good works are performed voluntarily, seemingly correcting the tendency toward obligation in Melancthon’s thought.⁴⁸⁶ Luther clarifies: “We confess that good works must follow faith, yes, not only must, but follow voluntarily, just as a good tree not only must produce good fruits, but does so freely.”⁴⁸⁷ Doing good works is not a matter of obligation but a natural consequence of faith. Bayer even asserts that one misunderstands Luther if his thought on the necessity of good works is interpreted as a moral obligation in a deontological sense. Because, as has been pointed out, Luther understands good works “as a consecutive, as an internal natural consequence.”⁴⁸⁸ In this way, faith will always be active in good works. For Bayer, Luther’s view of the relationship between faith and good works is “not a temporal or psychological consequence, but is a consequence that proceeds logically from the nature of faith.”⁴⁸⁹ Another scholar, who like Bayer emphasizes the spontaneity of good works, is Lennart Pinomaa. Pinomaa asserts that the moral obligation approach is incompatible with Luther’s spontaneous good works.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸³ *Treatise on Good Works* (1520), LW 44, 35; cf. Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 288.

⁴⁸⁴ Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 290.

⁴⁸⁵ *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), in Tranvik, 73, 74, 76, 80, 81, 82.

⁴⁸⁶ Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 288.

⁴⁸⁷ *Thesis Concerning Faith and Law* (1535), LW 34, edited by Lewis Spitz; General Editor Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960), 111. Cf. Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 288.

⁴⁸⁸ Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 286.

⁴⁸⁹ Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 286.

⁴⁹⁰ Lennart Pinomaa, *Faith Victorious. An Introduction to Luther’s Theology*. Translated by Walter J. Kukkonen (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), 171, 172, 173.

In contrast, Melanchthon puts more emphasis on the obligation of the believers to perform good works, because that is what God commands and wills.⁴⁹¹ This is what AC VI states. Melanchthon repeats this in AC Article XX: “Our people teach that it is necessary to do good works, not that we should count on meriting grace through them but because it is the will of God.”⁴⁹² Good works should be done because God commands them (Latin text). The German text carries this formulation “for God’s sake and to God’s praise”⁴⁹³ as the purpose of doing good works.

So it is correct that Melanchthon’s main argument is that good works must be done because they are commanded by God. However, the idea that good works are the consequences that flow from justification is not entirely lost in AC. It is true that the notion is absent in AC VI, but not in AC XX, where Melanchthon adds that good works are the fruits of justification. The Holy Spirit drives those who are justified to perform good works. So, Melanchthon also can speak of faith spontaneously producing good works.⁴⁹⁴ This is very clear from AC XX, 29, which states, “Moreover, because the Holy Spirit is received through faith, consequently hearts are renewed and endowed with new affections so as to be able to do good works.”⁴⁹⁵

AC XX further confirms that whoever is justified now willingly does good works. AC XX, 36 sees that it is faith that affects believers to perform good works:

Hence it is readily apparent that no one should accuse this teaching of prohibiting good works. On the contrary, it is rather to be commended for

⁴⁹¹ Bayer calls Melanchthon’s notion of the relationship of good works and faith as “a prescriptive ethic”. See Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 288; Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, 371.

⁴⁹² XX, 27 (Latin text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 57; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 45.

⁴⁹³ XX, 27 (German text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 56; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 45.

⁴⁹⁴ Cf. Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 168.

⁴⁹⁵ XX, 29 (Latin text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 57; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 45.

showing how we can do good works. For without faith human nature cannot possibly do the works of the First and Second Commandments. Without faith it does not call upon God, expect anything from God, or bear the cross, but seeks and trusts in human help.⁴⁹⁶

Here Melancthon seems to understand, as Luther did, that through justification one is also made capable of good works,⁴⁹⁷ that is, good works proceed from justification. Nonetheless, Melancthon does emphasize obligation.⁴⁹⁸ This emphasis reoccurs when he treats the subject of “the fulfillment of the law” in Ap. XX.⁴⁹⁹

The Schwabach Articles and Marburg Articles - which are Melancthon’s sources in preparing the AC – maintain a close relationship between faith and good works. The sixth article of Schwabach Articles reads:

Such faith is not a human work, neither is it possible by our power. Rather, it is God’s work and gift, which the Holy Spirit gives through Christ and effects in us. . . . It bears much fruit; it always does good toward God (by praising, thanking, praying, preaching, and teaching) and toward the neighbor (by loving, serving, helping, offering counsel, giving, and suffering all kinds of evil until death.⁵⁰⁰

A similar notion is stated in the tenth of the Marburg Articles:

[We believe] that this faith is bestowed through the work of the Holy Spirit, and through it we are regarded as – and become – righteous and holy. This faith effects good works through us: love of neighbor, prayer to God, and endurance in all kinds of persecution.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁶ XX, 35-37 (Latin text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 57; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 46.

⁴⁹⁷ According to Vainio, Melancthon presented the teaching of justification as both forensic and effective in which one who has been justified is also made capable of performing good works. However, the act of performing good works is not understood as the cause of salvation; only faith is. See Vainio, *Justification and Participation in Christ. The Development of the Lutheran Doctrine of Justification from Luther to the Formula of Concord (1580)*, 74.

⁴⁹⁸ XX, 29-37 (Latin text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 57; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 45-46.

⁴⁹⁹ Ap. XX, 15. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 237; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 229.

⁵⁰⁰ The Schwabach Articles, “The Sixth [Article]”. See *Sources and Context of The Book of Concord*. Edited by Kolb and Nestingen, 85.

⁵⁰¹ The Marburg Articles, “On Good Works”. See *Sources and Context of The Book of Concord*. Edited by Kolb and Nestingen, 90.

As the wording of the Schwabach Articles and Marburg Articles shows, good works are the fruit of faith, the consequences of faith, not a matter of obligation: “It bears much fruit; it always does good toward God and toward the neighbor” (the Schwabach Articles), and, “This faith effects good works through us” (the Marburg Articles). As Beck pointed out, the Schwabach Articles and Marburg Articles “use the indicative when they affirm that faith bears much fruit and does good works,”⁵⁰² whereas AC VI uses the imperative to command the Christian to do good works.

4.2.2.3 Which Works Must be Done

After emphasizing the obligation and necessity of doing good works, AC VI also states which works are to be done. It is very clear that for Lutherans the expression “good works” refers to the works commanded by God. Article VI states that “This faith is bound to yield good fruits and that it ought to do good works commanded by God on account of God’s will.”⁵⁰³ Although not explicitly mentioned in Article VI, “good works commanded by God” clearly points to works demanded by the Ten Commandments. This becomes evident in the foreword of Article XX which mentions the term “Decalogue”.⁵⁰⁴

While reaffirming that the Lutherans do not overlook good works, but truly have taught good works AC XX shows that good works are those which God commands in the Ten Commandments. AC XX, 1-2 states the matter clearly:

⁵⁰² Beck, *The Doctrine of Faith. A Study of the Augsburg Confession and Contemporary Ecumenical Documents*, 101.

⁵⁰³ AC VI, 1 (Latin Text). Cf. German text’s formulation: “A person must do such good works as God has commanded for God’s sake”. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 41, 40; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 31.

⁵⁰⁴ AC XX, 1-2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 52, 53; cf. Tappert uses the term “the Ten Commandments”. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 41.

Our people are falsely accused of prohibiting good works. But their writings concerning the Decalogue and other writings demonstrate that they have given [a] good and useful account and admonition concerning proper Christian walks of life and works.⁵⁰⁵

AC XX, 1 refers to “the Decalogue,” and a number of the good works listed clearly refer to the Ten Commandments: “to call on God, to have patience in suffering, to love the neighbor, to engage diligently in legitimate callings, to be obedient, to avoid evil lust, etc.”⁵⁰⁶ What God has commanded concerning daily life as summarized in the Ten Commandments are indeed the “true Christian estates and works,”⁵⁰⁷ not “childish and needless works” or the unnecessary things that were preached by the Catholic church, such as: “rosaries, the cult of saints, joining religious orders, pilgrimages, appointed fasts, holy days, brotherhoods.”⁵⁰⁸

Since what is decisive for good works is God’s command (God’s *mandatum*),⁵⁰⁹ that is, the Ten Commandments, AC XX now shows that good works are related to one’s station/estate in life or one’s vocation/calling.⁵¹⁰ AC XX calls it “all kinds and walks of life.” The term “walks of life” or “estates” points to the notion of Luther’s time that God organized human existence in three fundamental forms: church (ecclesiastical), household (which is at times also referred to by the

⁵⁰⁵ AC XX, 1-2 (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 52; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 41.

⁵⁰⁶ AC XX, 37 (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 56; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 46.

⁵⁰⁷ XX, 2 (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 41.

⁵⁰⁸ AC XX, 3 (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 52; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 41; cf. Neve, *The Augsburg Confession. A Brief Review of Its History and An Interpretation of Its Doctrinal Articles*, 139.

⁵⁰⁹ Fagerberg emphasizes that the concept of *mandatum*, command, is very vital for the Lutheran Confessions and the Reformation theologians. See Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 281.

⁵¹⁰ Beck, *The Doctrine of Faith. A Study of the Augsburg Confession and Contemporary Ecumenical Documents*, 107-108; Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 200.

term “economy”), and state (political).⁵¹¹ Article XX underlines that whatever one’s particular work might be, each individual possesses his or her vocation. The Latin text of AC XX, 2 states “They [Reformers’ writings on the Ten Commandments and others on similar topics] have given good and useful instruction concerning all kinds and walks of life: what manner of life and which activities in every calling please God.”⁵¹² This notion certainly can be traced back to Luther, who applied the term “vocation” or “calling” – prior to Luther’s time a term only reserved for a religious call to be priest, monk or nun – to everyone: father, mother, master, mistress, judge, office holder, government officer, scribe, servant, maid.⁵¹³ Luther’s idea is that “every person is called to his/her particular work” so that “everything can be an act of worship if one’s life is directed toward God and aimed to praise God.”⁵¹⁴ For Luther, as stated by Hans Schwarz, it is a social reality and God’s will that “some are in the marital, others in spiritual, and still others in the station of government, and yet none of these stations is higher than the others.”⁵¹⁵ Luther seemed to want to make every Christian aware that “every vocation is divine service.”⁵¹⁶ For “whatever you may be, son, servant, or maid in the meanest circumstances, stay where you are, because you are in a station where God has put you.”⁵¹⁷ It is an important element of Luther’s concept of vocation that everyone serves others, no matter the nature of the

⁵¹¹ See SA Preface 14. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 300; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 291; Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 122-123.

⁵¹² AC XX, 2 (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 53; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 41.

⁵¹³ LW 37, 365; Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 141; H.

Echternach, “Work, Vocation, Calling,” in *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 2504.

⁵¹⁴ This description owes to the fine explanation given by H. Echternach, “Work, Vocation, Calling,” in *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, vol. III, 2504.

⁵¹⁵ Hans Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God: An Introduction to Luther’s Life and Thought*, translated by Mark William Worthing (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1996), 136.

⁵¹⁶ Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God: An Introduction to Luther’s Life and Thought*, 138.

⁵¹⁷ Luther, commenting on Isaiah 65:12, *Lectures on Isaiah*, in LW 17:384. Cf. Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God: An Introduction to Luther’s Life and Thought*, 137.

calling. Once he preached this: “If everyone served his or her neighbor, then the whole world would be filled with divine service.”⁵¹⁸ At the same time Luther also considered many traditions connected with popular piety and monasticism as lacking God’s Word and, therefore, unnecessary and uncommanded.⁵¹⁹ Understanding good works as God’s command, Luther asserted that “the daily work of servants is far superior to the holiness and rigorous life of the monks.”⁵²⁰ Luther, rejecting the tendency to regard monasticism as the authentic life of Christians, located it in the ordinary Christians’ life of sincere love of God and the neighbor in their daily lives in the world.⁵²¹ To Luther, as Pinomaa sharply points out, the vocational activity directed toward neighbors is “the only form in which the love of Christ can be real.” It is so because, Pinomaa adds, Luther understands that in the monastery it is impossible to serve all people, and all activities in it were done in order to make one holy.⁵²² His arguments about vocation show Luther’s opposition to the idea that salvation is determined by what humans can do through performing various traditions, rites and ceremonies, “the great and difficult works that they have invented and piled up for themselves,” but which God does not command.⁵²³ Therefore, for Luther, who taught that salvation is God’s grace and good work is the fruit of faith, “what fulfills the command of God should be identified as a good

⁵¹⁸ Luther, sermon on Matthew 22:34ff, as quoted in Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God: An Introduction to Luther’s Life and Thought*, 138.

⁵¹⁹ *Treatise on Good Works* (1520) in Hendrix, 114; SA II, 18,20,21,22,24,25; LC I, 74,92,93,118, see *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 304-305, 396, 399, 402-403; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 296-297, 374, 377, 381.

⁵²⁰ LC I, 145 as rephrased by Fagerberg. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 406; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 385; Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 285.

⁵²¹ Karl-Heinz zur Mühlen, “Luther, Martin,” in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. III, 345-346.

⁵²² Pinomaa, *Faith Victorious. An Introduction to Luther’s Theology*, 169.

⁵²³ LC I, 312. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 428; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 407.

work.”⁵²⁴ This is what Luther elaborates in his *Treatise on Good Works* (1520). For Luther one does good works only when obeying the Ten Commandments. Luther writes, “No good works exist other than those that God has commanded. . . . Whoever wishes to identify and perform good works need only to learn God’s Commandments.”⁵²⁵

Luther expresses the same idea in LC:

Here, then we have the Ten Commandments, a summary of divine teaching on what we are to do to make our whole life pleasing to God. They are the true fountain from which all good works must spring, the true channel through which all good works must flow. Apart from [these] Ten Commandments no action or life can be good or pleasing to God, no matter how great or precious it may be in the eyes of the world.⁵²⁶

In *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), good works in the Ten Commandments serve two motives and purposes, namely, “to do that which is pleasing to God,”⁵²⁷ and to serve “the need and advantage of the neighbor.”⁵²⁸ Through Christ God gives all righteousness and salvation to all believers without any merit on their part. In turn, as a Christian I give myself as “a Christ to my neighbor.”⁵²⁹

By pointing to the Ten Commandments as the “true Christian estates and works”, AC XX follows Luther in regarding invented practices, such as rosaries, the cult of saints, joining religious orders, pilgrimages, appointed fasts, holy days and brotherhoods, as “childish and needless works.” It should be noted that, except for

⁵²⁴ Bayer’s overview about the essence of Luther’s thought in *Treatise on Good Works*. See Bayer, *Martin Luther’s Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation*, 284.

⁵²⁵ Martin Luther, *Treatise on Good Works*, trans. and introduced by Scott H. Hendrix (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 17; cf. W.A. Lambert, revised by James Atkinson, *LW vol. 44*, edited by James Atkinson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 21-114.

⁵²⁶ LC I, 311. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 428; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 407.

⁵²⁷ *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), in Tranvik, 76; cf. 73, 74.

⁵²⁸ *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), in Tranvik, 80; cf. 81, 82.

⁵²⁹ *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), in Tranvik, 82; cf. Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 201.

monasticism, the traditions and rites mentioned in AC XX are not rejected in themselves. What is unacceptable is when those activities are taken “to merit grace and make satisfaction for sins.”⁵³⁰ Lutherans consider that not all traditions practiced by the Catholic Church are contrary to the will of God. In fact, later many were preserved in the Lutheran church (see the description of “Church rites” in section 4.2.6.2). Therefore, as Grane emphasizes, one needs to refer to AC Article XXVII to understand Article XX properly, since what was rejected is “the concept of the monastic life as a state of perfection.”⁵³¹ Article XXVII “Concerning Monastic Vows”, which rejects the concept of monastic life, asserts that Christian perfection is

earnestly to fear God and, at the same time, to have great faith and to trust that we have a gracious God on account of Christ; to ask for and to expect with certainty help from God in all things that are to be borne in connection with our calling; and, in the meantime, diligently to do good works for others and to serve in our calling.⁵³²

The “good works commanded by God” is the criterion AC XX uses to reject the monastic profession.⁵³³ This view is also expressed in AC XXVII⁵³⁴ and Ap. XXVII, which state that “monastic vows” are not accepted as a “vocation” or “calling” for Christians because monasticism “has neither a command nor a promise

⁵³⁰ AC XX, 21 (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 55; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 44; cf. Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 201.

⁵³¹ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 201.

⁵³² AC XXVII, 49 (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 89; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 78-79; cf. Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 201.

⁵³³ AC XX, 21 (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 55; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 44.

⁵³⁴ AC XXVII, 36, 48; cf. AC XXVII, 57, 58 (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 87, 89, 91; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 76, 78, 80.

of God,”⁵³⁵ or “no proof from the Word of God,”⁵³⁶ or is “without the command of God,”⁵³⁷ or “without a Word of God.”⁵³⁸

4.2.2.4 The Comparison to the Confession of 1951

Despite its tendency to lump together several important thoughts and its rather unharmonious arrangement, the 1951 Confession includes all the essential elements of Lutheran teaching on the place of good works in Christian life. The Batak Church teaches that good works are the fruits of justification by faith, of trust in Christ who has forgiven us our sins. The Confession of 1951 states very carefully,

We believe and confess that good works must be the fruit of faith. He errs who hopes to obtain righteousness, life, comfort and bliss by doing good works. The Lord Jesus alone can forgive sins and bring a man into relationship with God.⁵³⁹

With this formulation the Batak Church follows Luther in emphasizing good works as the fruit that comes from faith as a consequence of faith.

The 1951 Confession also explicitly mentions the Ten Commandments in describing the relationship between faith and good works. Even though it does not mention the Ten Commandments as the source and reference in speaking about “real good works,”⁵⁴⁰ the Batak Church teaches that Christians must observe the

⁵³⁵ Ap. XXVII, 20. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 280; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 272.

⁵³⁶ Ap. XXVII, 23. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 281; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 273.

⁵³⁷ Ap. XXVII, 42. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 284; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 276.

⁵³⁸ Ap. XXVII, 58. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 287; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 279.

⁵³⁹ Article XX, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁵⁴⁰ Neve, *The Augsburg Confession. A Brief Review of Its History and An Interpretation of Its Doctrinal Articles*, 140; cf. XX, 1-2, 27 (Latin text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 53, 57; *The Book of*

Commandments while underlining that their observance cannot earn anyone salvation. Article XV states, “Although we have to keep the Ten Commandments, man lives by faith and not by doing good works.”⁵⁴¹ The wording lacks Melancthon’s imperative duty to observe the Ten Commandments as AC Article VI Concerning the New Obedience clearly maintains.

The Batak Church also follows Luther’s notion that God moves us to do good through the Holy Spirit: “The Holy Spirit moves a man to do good works and if he is not urged by the Spirit, good works become sin.”⁵⁴² This is in line with the role of the Holy Spirit described in AC XX.⁵⁴³ Without the Holy Spirit human beings are too feeble to do good: “Because the Holy Spirit is given through faith, the heart is also moved to do good works. For before, because it lacks the Holy Spirit, the heart is too weak.”⁵⁴⁴

Through its presentation on the relationship between faith and good works, Article XV of the 1951 Confession has shown its basic and core understanding of the teaching of Martin Luther and Lutheran Confessions on the doctrine of justification by faith.

Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 41, 45.

⁵⁴¹ Article XX, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13. The original formulation of this part in Batak version actually maintains believers’ responsibility to perform good work (motivated by Christ’s redemptive work), not a matter of obligation. Moreover, this article has stated earlier that good work comes from faith as the consequence of faith. See *Panindangion Haporseaon Pengakuan Iman The Confession of Faith Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) 1951 & 1996*, 28; footnote 535 above.

⁵⁴² Article XX, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁵⁴³ This is in agreement with AC V on the role of the Holy Spirit, which says, “He gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith”. See AC V, 2 (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 40; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 31. Beck uses this formulation, “Faith is caused by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel,” in his explanation on the matter. See Beck, *The Doctrine of Faith. A Study of the Augsburg Confession and Contemporary Ecumenical Documents*, 100.

⁵⁴⁴ AC XX, 28-32 (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 56; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 45.

4.2.3 On Law and Gospel

In the Confession of 1951, there is no explicit emphasis on the distinction between law and gospel. "The gospel" is mentioned several times, but it is not linked or compared to "the law". However, the relationship between the two crops up sporadically in the 1951 Confession, and these mentions make it clear that gospel has primacy over law, as we shall see.

In article III concerning "The Special Acts of the Triune God," in the section on the Holy Spirit, the Confession of 1951 states, "[W]e oppose and reject the doctrine that states that the Holy Spirit can descend on man through his own efforts, not necessarily through the gospel."⁵⁴⁵ The introduction of the 1951 Confession mentions various churches and sects which taught that the Holy Spirit can be possessed through one's own efforts, holiness and prayer. The confession stresses that we cannot obtain salvation by obeying the law, that is, by obeying the Commandments and doing good works, for only grace can save us. The Holy Spirit comes to us as a gift from God.⁵⁴⁶ However, in the article concerning God in AC, there is no reference to the rejection of the doctrine that one can possess the Holy Spirit through one's own efforts.

In article VIII concerning "the Church," the Confession of 1951 states, "We believe and confess that the true church is present when the gospel is purely preached."⁵⁴⁷ Its parallel in AC is article VII "Concerning the Church". The background of this notion in AC was the existence of a variety of traditions practiced in the Catholic Church at that time. According to the Lutherans, it is sufficient for the true church that the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered

⁵⁴⁵ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 7.

⁵⁴⁶ See the discussion of "Law and Gospel" of the 1996 in Chapter V.

⁵⁴⁷ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 7.

rightly according to the gospel.⁵⁴⁸ Like AC, the Confession of 1951 also designates the true marks of the church. The notion that “the Gospel is purely preached” here is not chiefly related to the dialectic of law and gospel, something that can be said also of AC. But as Maurer says, it is important to see that for AC VII “the main emphasis lies on the pure proclamation of the gospel.”⁵⁴⁹ So the teaching in AC VII refers to the gospel with its promise of grace, not the preaching of the law.⁵⁵⁰ It should be noted further that the Batak Church includes "Church Discipline" as one of the marks of the true church. This will be discussed later in the section on the church. Point C in article VIII of the Confession of 1951 also mentions "the Gospel" as one of the gifts from Jesus Christ, but not in the context of the dialectical relationship between law and gospel.⁵⁵¹ Indeed, there is no further explanation about the relationship between the two and how the gospel comes first. However, the law and gospel principle, the distinction of gospel from law, lies behind the emphasis on the gospel made by the 1951 Confession in its sporadic mention of the gospel.⁵⁵²

The Confession of 1951 also adopts AC article V, which lists the duties of those who minister in the church. Among those duties it lists, “Preaching the Gospel to the members of the church and to those who are not yet members.”⁵⁵³ Here there is no description as in AC, stressing that in the message of the Gospel “we have a

⁵⁴⁸ *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 42, 43.

⁵⁴⁹ Wilhelm Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, translated by H. George Anderson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 385.

⁵⁵⁰ See Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, 385-386.

⁵⁵¹ *Panindangion Haporseaon Pengakuan Iman The Confession of Faith Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) 1951 & 1996*, 23-25. Lumbantobing’s translation does not use the A, B, C, D, E subdivision as the original. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 9-10. Cf. Nyhus and Schreiner’s translation, which keeps the subdivision. See Nyhus and Schreiner, “The Confession of Faith of the Batak Church, Indonesia (1951), 220-222.

⁵⁵² See the discussion of “Law and Gospel” of the 1996 in Chapter V.

⁵⁵³ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

gracious God, not through our merit but through Christ's merit."⁵⁵⁴ For AC V, as emphasized by Bergendorff, the proclamation of the Gospel is the content and center of the preaching.⁵⁵⁵ Although the article itself is not explicit, Maurer emphasizes that the relationship between law and gospel is implied. That is, AC V wants to emphasize that the main message of the sermon is the gospel, not the law; the forgiveness of sin, not condemnation.⁵⁵⁶ Meanwhile, the Confession of 1951 only mentions that one among several of the duties of those who minister in the church is "preaching the gospel". No additional explanation discusses its relation to the law.

The lack of explicit discussion of law and gospel on the Confession of 1951 is probably due to the fact that the writers of the Confession of 1951 focused their studies only on AC. In AC, more or less, the discussion of the distinction between law and gospel is not as explicit and deep as that contained in Ap., SC, LC, SA, and FC. However, according to some scholars, there are articles in AC showing the Lutheran principle of law and gospel, i.e., article XI "Concerning Confession" and article XII "Concerning Repentance". In AC XI the Lutheran Church did not reject the practice of confession but refused the practice of that time which emphasized confession more than absolution. Article XI states, "Concerning confession it is taught that private absolution should be retained and not abolished. However, it is not necessary to enumerate all misdeeds and sins, since it is not possible to do so."

⁵⁵⁴ *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 40-41.

⁵⁵⁵ Bergendorff's full explanation reads: "In the preaching of the Gospel with its Word and Sacrament God has revealed Christ and the salvation that is in Him. Since there is no 'other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved' (Acts 4.12), and His Name is the subject of all Christian preaching, it is clear that salvation is inseparably bound up with the proclamation of the Gospel. For it is in them that hear the Gospel that the Holy Spirit can work faith in Him who is proclaimed." Conrad Bergendorff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confessions* (Rock Island, Illinois, Augustana Book Concern, 1930), 45.

⁵⁵⁶ My analysis refers to Maurer's description of this: "The Spirit-filled Word spoken of in CA is never associated with the law but is always associated with the Gospel. Wherever the Holy Spirit is, one finds the Gospel and with it the forgiveness of sins; the Holy Spirit does not wield the sword any more than Christ does. His Gospel is the Word of righteousness and grace; the law is the office of death. The task of preaching consists entirely on bringing Christ near to us." Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, 362.

The very concise emphasis on confession in AC XI is further explained in article XXV. Grane understands that confession is maintained in the Lutheran church but with emphasis on absolution.⁵⁵⁷ Emphasis on the absolution or forgiveness of sin is intended to correct the practice at the time: “In former times, the preachers, while teaching much about confession, never mentioned a single word about these necessary matters but instead only tormented consciences with long enumerations of sins, with satisfactions, with indulgences, with pilgrimages, and the like.”⁵⁵⁸ So Article XXV teaches that “confession is to be retained because of absolution.”⁵⁵⁹

In article XI the Lutherans revised the medieval sacrament of penance by rejecting “the interrogation that sought to elicit every sin and made confession so oppressive.”⁵⁶⁰ In this rejection, as emphasized by Gassmann and Hendrix, it is the principle of law and gospel that became the reference.⁵⁶¹ By the connection to article XXV, Grane, another scholar, sees that the dialectic of law and gospel is the reference for the Lutherans to change the medieval confessional practice so that it is not necessary to enumerate all sins. Grane explains,

It is the absolution, however, that is decisive, being defined so that it becomes a proclamation of the Gospel, emphasizing primarily the comfort which it gives to the conscience. Thus the absolution is the voice of God which promises the forgiveness of sins. Clearly the AC’s interpretation of absolution involves a complete change in the basis of penance.⁵⁶²

So in article XI, the Lutherans apply the principle of law and gospel by making confession and absolution, in Bergendoff’s words, “not the basis of a worldly judicial

⁵⁵⁷ Grane mentions that Article XXV functions as a commentary on Article XI. See Leif Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, translated by John H. Rasmussen (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1987), 128.

⁵⁵⁸ *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 72.

⁵⁵⁹ *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 74.

⁵⁶⁰ Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 58.

⁵⁶¹ Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 58.

⁵⁶² Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 128.

system administering, as it were, the law of God, but a means whereby a troubled soul may find comfort and peace, or grace, as we might say. They are to be, not an inquisition into the sores of the soul, but a proclamation of the Gospel, of the forgiving power of Christ.”⁵⁶³

Meanwhile, in AC XII, confession and absolution (penitence) are more fully described. The Lutherans teach that repentance consists of two parts, namely contrition and faith.⁵⁶⁴ Article XII states that contrition and terror “strike the conscience when sin is recognized.”⁵⁶⁵ And so in contrition the contrite person is conscious of God’s wrath. Then in this very moment comes the other part of the act of penitence, namely, faith. Article XII reads: “and yet at the same time to believe in the Gospel and absolution that sin is forgiven and grace is obtained through Christ. Such faith, in turn, comforts the heart and puts it at peace.”⁵⁶⁶ While in contrition God frightens and demolishes, in faith He brings the oppressed conscience to life by the forgiveness of sins. The rest of the Article XII reads: “This faith believes that sins are forgiven on account of Christ, consoles the conscience, and liberates it from terrors.”⁵⁶⁷

Indeed, there is no such explicit law and gospel terminology in article XII. But as revealed by Fagerberg, penitence in article XII works on the principle of law and Gospel. Fagerberg considers that article XII views penitence as a process in which God works in a human, “condemning him through the Law and restoring him

⁵⁶³ Conrad Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession* (Illionis: Augustana Book Concern, 1930), 62.

⁵⁶⁴ AC XII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 45.

⁵⁶⁵ AC XII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 45.

⁵⁶⁶ AC XII (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 44.

⁵⁶⁷ AC XII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 45.

via the Gospel (the Promise).”⁵⁶⁸ Fagerberg adds that, therefore, “penitence was another expression of the Law and the Gospel in function.”⁵⁶⁹ Compared to the division of the steps of penitence in the Catholic Church at that time, namely contrition, confession, and satisfaction, the Lutheran focus on contrition and faith absolutely has a special purpose. Article XII, as Fagerberg asserts, intends to show the Evangelical position that even repentance, which is contrition and confession, and which according to the Catholics are the role and responsibility of humanity, is God’s work. Contrition is the stage where God, through the Law, makes a person aware of his or her sin and at the same time feel unable to meet the law. Fagerberg, because of this understanding, suggests that it can be said that “contrition is God’s work in us through Law,” or, “God is the active cause of contrition, not its object,” or, “contrition is God’s work in man, accomplished through the Law.”⁵⁷⁰

The other part of the act of penitence, beside contrition, is faith. Here the Gospel comes in. For Fagerberg it is important to realize that “apart from faith, God’s judgment leads to despair,”⁵⁷¹ and so the law should not be released from the Gospel, i.e., the promise of the forgiveness of sins. In the understanding of the Lutherans on penitence, says Fagerberg, it is clear that “both contrition and faith are God’s work in man.”⁵⁷² Both are in a dialectical relationship of law and Gospel. Fagerberg says, “While in contrition God frightens and demolishes, in faith He brings the oppressed conscience to life.”⁵⁷³ It should be noted that Fagerberg also sees the importance of linking the forgiveness of sin to the sacraments. Because, according to Fagerberg, in the context of penitence the promise of the forgiveness of

⁵⁶⁸ Holsten Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, translated by Gene J. Lund (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), 206.

⁵⁶⁹ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 206.

⁵⁷⁰ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 209, 212.

⁵⁷¹ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 215.

⁵⁷² Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 216.

⁵⁷³ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 216.

sins has the special meaning of absolution.⁵⁷⁴ And Absolution is a very important element in the sacraments. Fagerberg states,

This concept of absolution as a sacrament can be readily harmonized with what we have found to be characteristic of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The effective power comes from God, who works through the spoken Word, the promise.⁵⁷⁵

The same thing is also emphasized by Bergendorff. Bergendorff argues that in the understanding of the Lutherans, confession and absolution is the process by which a person experiences that the law reveals to him the sinfulness of his heart, making him grieve for his sin and long for deliverance from sin.⁵⁷⁶ Bergendorff adds that only by the Gospel, when he hears the Gospel and receives Christ, is he justified, he has forgiveness of sins before God.⁵⁷⁷ Emphasis on absolution in the Lutheran understanding of penance makes other experts, e.g. Grane, assume that Article XII can be entitled "Human Beings under the Law and Gospel."⁵⁷⁸ Grane sees that the Lutherans sincerely want to emphasize that penance is God's work. It is God who drives people to be aware of their sins and receive forgiveness from Him. By associating Article XII with SA, which speaks about the office of the law retained in the New Testament because each person stands accused of sin, Grane stresses that in the understanding of the Lutherans, "the contrition becomes the way through which God draws humans to himself." Grane contends that in the Lutheran understanding of penance the principle of law and Gospel is at work. Grane emphasizes that "because humans continuously live in sins, however, they must always be brought from the law to the Gospel anew, i.e., live in repentance."⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁴ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 217.

⁵⁷⁵ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 218.

⁵⁷⁶ Bergendorff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 64.

⁵⁷⁷ Bergendorff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 64.

⁵⁷⁸ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 141.

⁵⁷⁹ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 141.

Article XII declares that the Gospel makes it clear that humans cannot fulfill the demands of the law. Maurer states that for Lutherans the confession of sins “no longer held the highest rank” as in the sacrament of penance in the Catholic Church of that time; instead “the consolation of absolution became the principal thing.”⁵⁸⁰ He further claims that this article lays the foundation of an evangelical doctrine of repentance that excludes synergism from the start.⁵⁸¹

Meanwhile, Gassmann and Hendrix in particular also see that in rejecting the position taken by the Anabaptists, Novatians, and the medieval understanding of sacrament, AC XII demonstrates a typical Lutheran understanding of the relationship between law and gospel.⁵⁸² For Lutherans the law is not neglected but placed under the gospel. And in fact, according to Gassmann and Hendrix, that is “the distinctive feature” of AC XII, namely, “the forgiveness of sin through faith in Christ as the consoling outcome of repentance.”⁵⁸³

The Confession of 1951 has no article on "Confession" and "Repentance". But the article VII of the Confession of 1951 entitled "Salvation from Sin" is similar to AC Article XII “Concerning Repentance”. The similarity lies in regarding salvation from sin as available only in Jesus. Humans themselves by their own power are unable to escape from their status as sinners; they are unable by their own efforts, through good deeds, and by their strength to free themselves from sin. However, this description in the Confession of 1951 does not exactly match AC XII, where the law demands awareness of sin and the gospel grants forgiveness. It should be noted that in Sihombing’s Draft there is an article on "Confession of Sin", but with different

⁵⁸⁰ Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, 411.

⁵⁸¹ For Maurer, Luther shows very clearly that “conversion occurs through the Word of God” because it is God who calls us to repentance. Conversion is therefore a work of the faith that the Spirit has induced. Maurer, p. 412. Cf. WA 31.2:397.27ff. That in this case Melancthon shows another development is another matter. See Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, 413.

⁵⁸² Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 58.

⁵⁸³ Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 58.

contents from AC XI or XII. Sihombing only emphasizes that the practice of "confession of sins" applies in the Batak Church.⁵⁸⁴ It is a question of whether article VII of the Confession of 1951, which used Sihombing's Draft, aimed to adopt AC Articles XII "Concerning Repentance". Moreover, although Article VII of the Confession of 1951 does indeed talk about the "Salvation from Sin", it does not speak specifically about justification by faith. In Sihombing's Draft the next article – which was not finally included in the Confession of 1951 - concerns "Confession".⁵⁸⁵ In other words, Sihombing placed article VII "Salvation from Sin" close to Article VIII concerning "Confession" in the Draft, just as AC Article XI "Concerning Confession" and Article XII "Concerning Repentance" are next to one another. For Sutan Hutagalung, Article VII of the Confession of 1951 is parallel with AC Article IV "Concerning Justification".⁵⁸⁶

In relation to this "confession" and "repentance," it is worth noting that although the Batak Church has used Luther's Small Catechism from the beginning, Luther's concept of the role of law and gospel in "confession and absolution" did not get through to Batak readers. It happened because Nommensen's Batak translation did not include the subject of "Confession and Absolution". There Luther explains that confession consists of two parts; one is the confession of sins, and the other is the declaration of the forgiveness of sins.⁵⁸⁷ This description shows that in the light of the Ten Commandments someone realizes and repents of his sins, but then hears and receives the forgiveness of sins. The demands of the law heavily burden and

⁵⁸⁴ Sihombing, *Panindangion - haporseaon (Belijdenis) ni HKBP*, 11.

⁵⁸⁵ Sihombing, *Panindangion - haporseaon (Belijdenis) ni HKBP*, 11.

⁵⁸⁶ Sutan Hutagalung, "The Confession of Augustana as a Confession of Faith in the Present Historical Setting," 48.

⁵⁸⁷ SC V, 16. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 360; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 349.

distress the conscience, but hearing the absolution, the Gospel, the heart will be relieved and comforted.⁵⁸⁸

It should be noted that the dialectical relationship of law and Gospel in the Confession of 1951 is clearer in other parts that do not talk directly about the relationship. In article XI (“Church Order”) the notion is maintained. This article reads: “But it must be distinctly remembered that the faithful observance of all these [church order and festivals] cannot bring us the benefit of the forgiveness of sin.”⁵⁸⁹ This article teaches that the rules of the church and church festivals are important, but these things have their own function and are not to be understood as contributing to salvation. Article XI concerning “Church Order” of the Confession of 1951 is clearly adopted from AC XV “Concerning Church Rites,” although the list of customs or traditions or festivals are given different names. The Batak Church refers to the rules of the church and church celebrations, while AC refers to specific celebrations, festivals, the observance of Sunday, of Christian holidays, forms of worship and customs connected with devotional life. Lutheran churches pretty much maintain the customs and traditions of the Catholic Church. The difference is that the Lutherans avoid interpreting those habits and customs as a way to gain salvation. Fasting, for instance, is valued neutrally. If someone considers it as a good work that merits grace from God, then it must be eliminated. But if it is employed as a means of self-discipline, well and good. The same goes to giving alms, attitude in prayer, etc.⁵⁹⁰

Likewise, article XIV “Concerning Food” adopts AC XXVI. Following the Lutheran distinction of law and Gospel, the Confession of 1951 asserts that “One

⁵⁸⁸ SC V, 20, 29. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 360, 362; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 350, 351.

⁵⁸⁹ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 12.

⁵⁹⁰ Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 72.

does not become holy by observing food regulations but receives holiness from God through faith.”⁵⁹¹

Probably the clearest instance of the application of this distinction in the Confession of 1951 is in Article XV concerning “Faith and Good Works”: “Although we have to keep the Ten Commandments, man lives by faith and not by doing good works.”⁵⁹² The idea is taken from AC XX and applies the dialectic between law and Gospel, where the law is neither neglected nor made a requirement for salvation. Salvation is understood as solely the work of God, which is received by faith. What is lacking in Article XV of the 1951 Confession is an explicit statement that the law makes demands that humans are incapable of fulfilling but that the Gospel grants forgiveness.

The notion of law and Gospel also appears in article I “Concerning God”. Here the Confession of 1951, in describing the nature of God, integrates the two dimensions. God is "a righteous judge" but also "of great mercy" and "gracious". The AC article I concerning God has nothing corresponding to this. According to A.A. Sitompul, this formulation intends to emphasize that the "God of the Bible is not only [the] God of law" (Ten Commandments), but also the source of the Gospel, the message of salvation or God of Gospel.”⁵⁹³ This is clearly different, Sitompul points out, from the understanding of God in Batak traditional religion. This god reacts to the kindness and generosity of people who worship him. In this traditional religion there is no element of grace.⁵⁹⁴

4.2.4 On the Church

⁵⁹¹ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁵⁹² *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁵⁹³ A.A. Sitompul, “Arti dan Makna tentang Allah dalam Pengakuan Iman (Konfesi),” in J.R. Hutaauruk, et. al. (eds.), *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini* (Pematangsiantar: STT HKBP, 1991), 136.

⁵⁹⁴ Sitompul, “Arti dan Makna tentang Allah dalam Pengakuan Iman (Konfesi),” 136.

The Confession of 1951 and AC describe the church in similar terms. However, the Batak Church wished not just to differentiate itself from the Catholic Church but also from the various breakaway Batak churches. The difference in what the two confessions say about the church arises from the difference in circumstances. The 1951 Confession spends three paragraphs distinguishing HKBP from the breakaway churches before dealing with its Lutheran identity. AC and other Lutheran confessions concentrate on the distinctive marks of a Lutheran or, Evangelical, as Melancthon put it, Church and on rejecting Catholic elements that were not essential to the church's identity. This is made clear in AC VII:

The church is the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly. And it is enough for the true unity of the church to agree concerning the teaching of the gospel and administration of the sacraments. It is not necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies instituted by human beings be alike everywhere.⁵⁹⁵

By following the Creed, both AC and the Confession of 1951 echo the definition of church as a “communion of saints”. AC defines church as “the assembly of saints” (Latin text) or “the assembly of all believers” (German text), while the Confession of 1951 uses the term “the gathering of those who believe in Jesus Christ.” AC emphasizes that the church is the assembly of saints among whom “the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly”. This is not echoed in the Confession of 1951, for the Batak church defines “the gathering” as those “who are called, gathered, sanctified and preserved by God through the Holy Spirit.”⁵⁹⁶ Thus the Confession of 1951 does not show the close relationship between “the assembly of all believers” and “the gospel and sacraments”. Schlink was quite clear about the relationship, writing that “the gospel and sacraments are ‘in’ the

⁵⁹⁵ AC VII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 43; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 32.

⁵⁹⁶ *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 9.

assembly of all believers as instruments through which the Holy Spirit produces faith and creates the assembly of believers.”⁵⁹⁷ In other words, the gospel and sacraments are decisive and they are the cause of the church.

AC always focuses on the gospel and sacraments in its discussion of the church. If AC VIII defines the church as the assembly of the saints, it admits that among Christians too there are many hypocrites and evil persons. Nevertheless, the church remains holy because it possesses Jesus Christ – both through the sacraments and the Word⁵⁹⁸ – who is holy.⁵⁹⁹ The same notion is applied by the Confession of 1951. The Church is holy not because of the sanctity of its members but because Christ is holy. Article VIII of the 1951 Confession explains that “the church becomes holy because Christ has sanctified it, and because God, for His sake, reckons the Christians as saints.”⁶⁰⁰ But AC always links Jesus Christ with the Word and the Sacraments, an emphasis that does not always appear in the Confession of 1951. AC VIII even anticipates the reality that there are unholy people within the assembly of all believers and saints by pointing out that sacraments may be administered by unholy priests. Are sacraments ineffective because administered by an evil priest, or is the church unholy because it has unholy priests? No, according to AC VIII, because “both the sacraments and the Word are efficacious because of the ordinance and command of Christ, even when offered by evil people.”⁶⁰¹

Both AC and the Confession of 1951 speak about the universality of the church. Unity lies in the person of Jesus Christ. Regarding the universality of the

⁵⁹⁷ Schlink, *The Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, 200.

⁵⁹⁸ AC VIII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 43; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 33.

⁵⁹⁹ Cf. Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 53.

⁶⁰⁰ *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 9-10.

⁶⁰¹ AC VIII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 43; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 33.

church, Article VIII of the 1951 Confession reads:

We believe and confess that the church is universal and as such is the gathering of all saints from every country and people, from every tribe and race and tongue who, though their ceremonies and forms differ, partake in the same Lord Jesus Christ and his gifts – the gospel, the Holy Spirit, love and hope. ... We believe and confess that there is one church. For there is one body, that is the church, and even though there are many members there is but one body. The unity of the church as expressed here is a spiritual unity and is different from the secular unity usually asserted by men.⁶⁰²

Like AC, the confession of 1951 mentions that churches do not have to be uniform in the matter of “human traditions, rites, or ceremonies” (AC) or, in the words of the Confession of 1951, “though their ceremonies and forms differ”.⁶⁰³ The important thing, however, is the unity in Jesus Christ. But AC, in contrast to the 1951 Confession, adds that Jesus is manifested in the Word and the Sacraments.⁶⁰⁴ This means that, Jesus is always associated with the One who is working among us through the Word, which is the Gospel, and sacraments.⁶⁰⁵ So, in comparison with AC, the 1951 Confession is more general, not always directly linking the church to the "Word, the Gospel, and the Sacraments" as consistently is the case for AC.

The final Lutheran characteristic appears in the last point of Article VIII of the 1951 Confession in this formulation:

We believe and confess that the true church is present when the gospel is purely preached, when the two sacraments are truly administered as instituted by the Lord Jesus and when the church discipline is exercised in order to prevent sin.⁶⁰⁶

⁶⁰² *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

⁶⁰³ The complete formulation is as follows: “We believe and confess that the church is universal and as such is the gathering of all saints from every country and people, from every tribe and race and tongue (Rev. 7:9) who, though their ceremonies and forms differ, partake in the same Lord Jesus Christ and his gifts – the gospel, the Holy Spirit, faith, love and hope.” See Article VIII (The Church), *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

⁶⁰⁴ Interestingly, Andar Lumbantobing emphasizes the same thing when assessing the definition of the church in the 1951 Confession. See Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak*, 247.

⁶⁰⁵ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 269.

⁶⁰⁶ The original text written in Batak has a special title for section “E”: “Marks of the True Church”. See *Panindangion Haporseaon Pengakuan Iman The Confession of Faith Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) 1951 & 1996*, 25. The subtitles “A to E” in this article VIII concerning the Church

This last clause, namely, the exercise of church discipline, is characteristic of the Batak Church, in which church discipline also counted as an essential mark of the true church and was necessary to prevent sin. In the view of Scherer, this additional mark, which is alien to the Lutheran Church, corresponds to the Batak Church's practice, as from the beginning church discipline had a firm place in the life of the Batak Church.⁶⁰⁷ Andar Lumbantobing, an HKBP theologian who was among the first to earn a doctorate in theology from Germany, discusses the addition of church discipline, in addition to the gospel and Sacraments, as a mark of the true church. Lumbantobing contends that church discipline is not of the same rank as the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. In his view, the exercise of church discipline should be ranked as an instrument of the gospel and the sacraments.⁶⁰⁸ To support his opinion Lumbantobing quotes Luther, who once mentioned that church discipline was "a helping-tool and effort in battle with sins and evil desire."⁶⁰⁹

4.2.5 On Sacraments

In the Confession of 1951 the Batak Church, as a Protestant church, declared that there are only two sacraments instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ in the Scripture. They are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Confession of 1951 goes on

are not included in the official translation of the Confession of the HKBP, see *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 9-10; meanwhile in the other translation they are included. See Nyhus and Lothar Schreiner, "The Confession of Faith of the Batak Church, Indonesia (1951)," 220-222.

⁶⁰⁷ Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 169.

⁶⁰⁸ See more on Lumbantobing's description of the background and history of the application of church discipline in the Batak Church. Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak*, 252-255.

⁶⁰⁹ Lumbantobing quoted it from of E. Thurneysen. See Lumbantobing, *Makna Wibawa Jabatan dalam Gereja Batak*, 252.

to oppose and reject the Catholic doctrine that there seven sacraments.⁶¹⁰ The

Confession of 1951 article X concerning “The Holy Sacraments” reads:

We believe and confess that there are only two sacraments which we should administer as commanded by the Lord Jesus, Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. The Lord Jesus has instituted them for His church in order to grant through visible signs His invisible grace, namely, forgiveness of sins, salvation, life, and bliss, which are to be received by faith.⁶¹¹

This formulation, especially the last sentence, stresses that Sacraments are first of all acts of God granting his grace. The emphasis on the sacraments as “visible signs” of God’s will toward people echoes AC XIII. AC XIII says that “the sacraments were instituted . . . to be signs and testimonies of God’s will toward us, intended to arouse and strengthening faith in those who use them.”⁶¹² Thus AC XII lay very great stress on the idea that the sacraments from God’s side are, as Bergendoff points out, “another way of proclaiming His Word, a way seen by eyes, a visible Word.”⁶¹³ God’s action only requires faith in the hearer, a belief in Christ, who is proclaimed in the Sacraments. This is the AC XII’s intention in saying, “Accordingly, sacraments are to be used so that faith, which believes the promises offered and displayed through the sacraments, may increase.”⁶¹⁴ Article X of the Confession of 1951 reveals the same intention. In the context of the AC, of course, the emphasis refers to the Catholic understanding opposed by the Lutherans. The Lutherans interpret the Catholic understanding of the Sacraments as giving more emphasis to the sacraments as the carriers of God’s grace to humanity. Lutherans, on the other hand, emphasize faith in God's action in the sacrament rather than on the sacraments operating

⁶¹⁰ *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 11.

⁶¹¹ *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 11.

⁶¹² AC XIII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 47; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 35.

⁶¹³ Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 67.

⁶¹⁴ AC XIII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 47; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 35.

automatically (the power of the Sacraments works of itself). So, in article XII, AC opposes those who teach that the sacraments work “*ex opera operato* and do not teach that faith, which believes that sins are forgiven, is required in the use of sacraments.”⁶¹⁵

The understanding of baptism shows great parallels. The Confession of 1951 shows that through baptism “the believer receives the forgiveness of sin, regeneration, redemption from death and the devil, and life everlasting.”⁶¹⁶ The benefits baptism grants are taken from Luther’s Small Catechism.⁶¹⁷ The benefits of baptism are also stated in AC IX “Concerning Baptism”. It says that “the grace of God is offered through baptism.”⁶¹⁸ Likewise, both AC and the Confession of 1951 emphasize that the church agrees to and practices infant baptism. AC IX, then, rejects the Anabaptist view of this sacrament that baptism is only valid for adult believers; the Confession of 1951 also mentions that full immersion is not necessary when baptizing.

4.2.5.1 The Formulation of the Lutheran Confessions

Lutherans understand the Lord’s Supper in a distinctive manner. Indeed, the doctrine of the real presence of Christ’s body and blood in the elements of bread and

⁶¹⁵ AC XIII (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 47; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 35.

⁶¹⁶ *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 11.

⁶¹⁷ Nyhus dan Schreiner makes a reference to Luther’s Small Catechism in the translation of the Confession of Faith of the Batak Church. See Nyhus and Schreiner, “The Confession of Faith of the Batak Church, Indonesia (1951),” 228. See into the wording of this part in the Batak translation of Luther’s Small Catechism on: *Katekhismus Kecil Dr. Martin Luther* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, t.t.), 42; *Dr. Martin Luther. Katekhismus. Bahasa Batak & Bahasa Indonesia* (Pematangsiantar: Percetakan HKBP Pematangsiantar, 2011), 67; cf. SC IV, 5, 6. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 359; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 348-349.

⁶¹⁸ AC X (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 44; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 34.

wine is a basic theological conviction of Lutherans. This has also led to much criticism that Lutherans bind the real presence too closely to the elements of bread and wine.⁶¹⁹

There have been a number of attempts to mitigate the differences on the Lord's Supper, for example, between Lutherans and Reformed/Calvinists in the *Arnoldshain Theses*, 1957, and then, in the *Leuenberg Concord*, 1971, which further developed Arnoldshain. These documents suggested that the real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper should not be associated with the elements of bread and wine but with his personal presence.⁶²⁰ Faith and Order in WCC's document, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM), also emphasizes the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. However, at the most this document could only make a statement that the bread and wine are "the sacramental signs of Christ's body and blood."⁶²¹ Therefore, a number of Lutheran churches, although not all, reacted and voiced their objection to the fact that there is "no mention of a real presence of Christ's body and blood in the elements of bread and wine and a physical eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood" in that document.⁶²²

⁶¹⁹ Braaten mentions such criticism in his chapter "The Sacramental Principle". See Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 124.

⁶²⁰ See the texts of "Arnoldshain Theses, 1957," and, "Leuenberg Agreement, 1973," in *Creeds & Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, vol. III, especially on Thesis 4 and Thesis 5 (Arnoldshain Theses), 560, 2.b "The Lord's Supper," 784; "The Leuenberg Agreement," in *The Leuenberg Agreement and Lutheran-Reformed Relationships*, eds. William G. Rusch and Daniel F. Martensen (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 148-149; cf. Dieter Becker, *Pedoman Dogmatika*, 160-161. Many Protestant theologians also prefer to speak of a "personal presence" of Christ in the Lord's Supper. See Notger Slenczka, "Real Presence," in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. X, 646; Jörg Baur, "Lutheran Theology," and, Michael Beintker, "Reformed Theology," in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. IV, 632-636.

⁶²¹ Especially on point 14 and 15. See *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (Geneva: WCC, 1982). This document had been translated into Indonesian on the initiative of the HKBP under the title *Baptisan, Perjamuan, Jabatan*. Hasil Sidang Lengkap Komisi Iman dan Tata gereja DGD, Lima, Peru, 1982.

⁶²² Michael Seils, *Lutheran Convergence? An Analysis of the Lutheran Responses to the Convergence Document "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry of the WCC Faith and Order Commission, in LWF Report 25*, (Geneva: The LWF, 1988), 66; cf. *Churches Respond to BEM*, ed. Max Thurian (Geneva: WCC, 1986). As a comparison of a long held theological conviction, it is interesting to note that, for instance, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, a guide to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, a relatively new work, retains and preserves the teaching on transubstantiation. See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1994), 347.

All documents in the Lutheran Confessions maintain the conception of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the elements of bread and wine. The Latin text of AC X states: "Concerning the Lord's Supper they [Lutherans] teach that the body and blood of Christ are truly present and are distributed to those who eat the Lord's Supper."⁶²³

This formulation focuses exclusively on the real presence of Christ's body and blood and therefore clearly excludes a symbolic meaning to the presence of Christ in the sacrament.⁶²⁴ The same thing happens in Ap.: "In the Lord's Supper, the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present and are truly distributed with those things that are seen, the bread and wine, to those who receive the sacrament."⁶²⁵

Melanchthon makes no statement about the relationship of the elements of bread and body and wine and blood.⁶²⁶ In other words, as Fagerberg explains, Melanchthon did not relate the real presence to the elements in the same way as Luther.⁶²⁷

In contrast, in his writing in the Lutheran Confessions Luther clearly emphasizes "the real presence" of Christ in the elements. In SA, Luther teaches: "We maintain that the bread and the wine in the Supper are the true body and blood of

⁶²³ AC IX (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 45; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 34. There is a slight difference between the Latin and German texts concerning the location of Christ's presence. Grane argues that the Latin text locates Christ's presence in the Supper of the Lord, while the German text locates it "under the form of bread and wine". See Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 113. The German text reads: "Concerning the Lord's Supper, it is taught that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper and are distributed and received there". AC IX (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 44; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 34.

⁶²⁴ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 113; Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions*, 88; Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession*, 408.

⁶²⁵ Ap. X, 1 (The Holy Supper). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 184; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 179.

⁶²⁶ Schlink, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, 170.

⁶²⁷ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 190-191.

Christ.⁶²⁸

For Luther the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine is justified by the Words of institution.⁶²⁹ Luther contends that Scripture teaches the real presence.⁶³⁰ The following two quotations, from SC and LC respectively, clearly show this:

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians, to eat and drink.⁶³¹

What is the Sacrament of the altar? Answer: It is the true body and blood of the Lord Christ, in and under the bread and wine, which we Christians are commanded by Christ's word to eat and drink.⁶³²

Luther stresses that Christians receive Christ's body and blood "in and under" the bread and wine and that the guarantee of his presence for us in the sacrament is based on the Words of institution proclaimed by Christ himself.⁶³³ Luther clearly points this out as follows:

Eating and drinking certainly do not do it [eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood], but rather the words that are recorded: "given for you" and "shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." These words, when accompanied by the physical eating and drinking, are the essential thing in the sacrament, and whoever believes these very words has what they declare and state, namely, "forgiveness of sins."⁶³⁴

In LC he maintains the same: "It is the Word, I say, that makes this a sacrament and

⁶²⁸ SA, 6, 1. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 320; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 311.

⁶²⁹ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 192; Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation*, 270.

⁶³⁰ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 121.

⁶³¹ SC, V, 2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 351.

⁶³² LC V, 8. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 467; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 447.

⁶³³ SC V, 7-8; LC V, 10; SA [6:] Concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, 4. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362-363, 468, 320; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 311, 352, 448.

⁶³⁴ SC, V, 7-8. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 363; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 352.

distinguishes it from ordinary bread and wine, so that it is called and truly is Christ's body and blood."⁶³⁵

Luther's emphasis on the real presence has been generally understood as relating to two fronts that he confronted in relation to his teaching on the Lord's Supper.⁶³⁶ On the one hand was the medieval Catholic Church with its teaching on transubstantiation and the sacraments as sacrifice. On the other hand were Reformed theologians, who rejected the bodily presence in the sacrament.

Luther disagreed with the teaching of transubstantiation in the Catholic Church, which claimed that the Words of institution make the bread and wine become substantially the body and blood of Christ even though the form of bread and wine remain. The Council of Trent (1551) declared:

By the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood.⁶³⁷

For Luther, however, the bread remains bread and wine remains wine but with the Words of institution Christ's body and blood are present in the elements.

In his confrontation with Zwingli, who viewed the bread as only a symbol and taught that Christ is not present in the Lord's Supper, Luther maintained that the elements are no longer "mere bread and wine" after the Words of institution. The bread and wine are more than a mere sign. The bread and wine are "the vehicle" of

⁶³⁵ LC, V, 10. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 468; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 448.

⁶³⁶ Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheranism. The Theological Movement and Its Confessional Writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 70; Vajta, *Luther on Worship. An Interpretation*, 101; Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 109ff.

⁶³⁷ See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 347. Luther died before the Council of Trent, so he was not responding to the Council's teaching. But of course the Council of Trent had made use of earlier sacramental teaching in this formulation.

the presence of Christ.⁶³⁸ The Word is the one that makes Christ present in the elements of bread and wine. Luther thus is very much concerned with the Words of institution as the basis for the understanding of the Lord's Supper and for the presence of Christ "in and under" the bread and wine.⁶³⁹ Calvin, who also rejects Zwingli's position that shows "too little regard for the signs, [and] divorce[s] them from their mysteries,"⁶⁴⁰ teaches the real presence spiritually:⁶⁴¹

We are lifted up to heaven with our eyes and minds, to seek Christ there in the glory of his Kingdom, as the symbols invite us to him in his wholeness, so under the symbol of bread we shall be fed by his body, under the symbol of wine we shall separately drink his blood, to enjoy him at last in his wholeness. ... He shows his presence in power and strength... as if he were present in the body. He feeds his people with his own body, the communion of which he bestows upon them by the power of his Spirit. In this manner, the body and blood of Christ are shown to us in the Sacrament.⁶⁴²

Zwingli also revised his position to include receiving the real presence in a spiritual way.⁶⁴³ He maintained that the

true body of Christ is present by the contemplation of faith; that is, that they who thank the Lord for the kindness conferred on us in his Son acknowledge that he assumed true flesh, in it truly suffered, truly washed away our sins in his own blood; and thus everything done by Christ becomes present to them by the contemplation of faith.⁶⁴⁴

Outside the Lutheran Confessions, Luther also wrote a number of writings on the topic of the Lord's Supper. One of the writings that is considered his most

⁶³⁸ Cf. Vilmos Vajta, *Luther on Worship. An Interpretation*. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 92. (Fortress Press, 1958; Previously published by Muhlenberg Press, 1958).

⁶³⁹ SC V, 7-8; LC V, 10; SA [6:] Concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, 4. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362-363, 468, 320; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 311, 352, 448.

⁶⁴⁰ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. II, ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: The Westminster, 1975), 1364.

⁶⁴¹ See Notger Slenczka, "Real Presence," in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. X, 645.

⁶⁴² Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. II, 1381.

⁶⁴³ See Notger Slenczka, "Real Presence," in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. X, 645.

⁶⁴⁴ Ulrich Zwingli, "A Reckoning of the Faith," (1530) in *Creeds & Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, vol. II, edited by Jaroslav Pelikan and Valerie Hotchkiss (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003), 262. In Zwingli's "anamnetic presence," as Meyer's studies reveal, "Christ is truly present – not, however, in the Eucharistic elements but *in mente fidelium*, in the mind of the faithful, who commemorate the unique sacrificial death of Christ on the cross and are thus strengthened in their confession of faith." See Emidio Campi, "Zwingli, Ulrich," in *Religion: Past & Present*, vol. XIII, 2013, 723.

detailed and most profound teaching on the Lord's Supper is *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* (1528).⁶⁴⁵ In this treatise Luther describes his theory of "sacramental union," namely that Christ truly unites himself with the bread and wine without causing it to cease being bread and wine.⁶⁴⁶ Luther teaches:

Even though bread and body are two distinct substances... , out of two kinds of objects a union has taken place, which I shall call a "sacramental union," because Christ's body and the bread are given to us as a sacrament. This is not a natural or personal union, as is the case with God and Christ. ... He who takes hold of this bread, takes hold of Christ's body; and he who eats this bread, eats Christ's body.⁶⁴⁷

And so Luther's concept of the Lord's Supper is better suited to "sacramental unity" than to "consubstantiation," a term that he never used.⁶⁴⁸ The concept of consubstantiation is contrary to Luther's understanding of the union of Christ's body and bread if what lies behind this term is the process of the mixing of body and bread to constitute a third substance.⁶⁴⁹ Luther rejects such an idea if both the bread and the body somehow change in substance:

It is not necessary, meanwhile, that one of the two disappear or be annihilated, but both the bread and the body remain, and by virtue of the sacramental unity it is correct to say, "This is my body," designating the bread with the word "this." For now it is no longer ordinary bread in the oven, but a "flesh-bread" or "body-bread," i.e. a bread which has become one sacramental substance, one with the body Christ. Likewise with the wine in the cup, "This is my blood," designating the wine with the word "this." For it is no longer ordinary wine in the cellar but "blood-wine," i.e. a wine which has been united with the blood of Christ in one sacramental substance.⁶⁵⁰

FC also speaks about this "sacramental union," *union sacramentalis* is, with

⁶⁴⁵ Editor's Introduction for "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper," and General Introduction for LW Vol. 37. See *LW 37*, xv, 158.

⁶⁴⁶ Luther, "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper," (1528), *LW 37*, 299-303; cf. Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confession*, 193; Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology. Its Historical and Systematic Development* (1995), 309; Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation*, translated by Thomas H. Trapp (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans, 2008), 273; Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 126-127.

⁶⁴⁷ Luther, "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper," (1528). See *LW 37*, 299-300.

⁶⁴⁸ Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology. Its Historical and Systematic Development* (1995), 309.

⁶⁴⁹ Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions*, 89.

⁶⁵⁰ Luther, "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper," (1528). See *LW 37*, 303.

direct reference to Luther's treatise, *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* (1528), which introduces the concept. FC uses Luther's concept of "sacramental union" in its affirmation that the body and blood of Christ are really present but not locally enclosed, in the elements of bread and wine.⁶⁵¹ FC states:

This is my body. Just as in Christ two distinct, unaltered natures are inseparably united, so in the Holy Supper two essences, the natural bread and the true natural body of Christ, are present together here on earth in the action of the sacrament, as it was instituted. This union of Christ's body and blood with the bread and wine, however, is not a personal union, as is the case with the two natures in Christ. Rather, as Dr. Luther and our people called it in the Articles of Agreement of 1536 (mentioned above) and in other places, it is a *sacramentalis unio* (that is, a sacramental union).⁶⁵²

4.2.5.2 The Formulation of the 1951. A Comparison with the Lutheran Confessions and Luther

4.2.5.2.1 Position of the formulation of the 1951 Confession on the Lord's Supper

The views of scholars on the formulation of the 1951 Confessions on the Lord's Supper can be categorized into four opinions: a) It is not typically Lutheran (Scherer);⁶⁵³ b) It is neither Lutheran nor Reformed, but somewhere in between the two (Darwin Lumbantobing);⁶⁵⁴ c) It is unclear, although its formulation basically follows the line of SC (F.H. Sianipar,⁶⁵⁵ Lothar Schreiner and Dieter Becker);⁶⁵⁶ d) The formulation points to the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the

⁶⁵¹ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confession*, 193; Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 118.

⁶⁵² FC SD VII, 37-38. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 599; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 575-576.

⁶⁵³ Scherer contends that 1951 Confession does not have the special Lutheran emphasis on Christ's real presence in the Holy Communion. The Batak Church, Scherer argues, was not aware of the polemics between Luther and Reformed theologians on Christ's "real presence" in the sacrament. See Scherer, *Mission and Unity in Lutheranism*, 169.

⁶⁵⁴ Darwin Lumbantobing, *Burning and Current Theological Issues. Isu-isu Teologi Hangat dan Terkini di Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (HKBP)*, 92.

⁶⁵⁵ F.H. Sianipar, *Suatu Problema tentang Metode Theologia*, 29.

⁶⁵⁶ Becker, "Arti dan Fungsi BEM antara Gereja Masa Kini Dilihat dalam Perspektif HKBP," in J.R. Hutaauruk, et. al. (eds.), *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, 191-192.

elements of bread and wine (K. Sitompul).⁶⁵⁷

4.2.5.2.2 The 1951 Confession's formulation on the Lord's Supper can be traced back to the position of the Rhenish Mission and Nommensen's translation of Luther's Small Catechism

HKBP's formulation on the Lord's Supper can be traced back to the position of the Rhenish Mission toward the traditional doctrinal differences on the Lord's Supper between Lutherans and Reformed. As already mentioned before, the Rhenish Mission obviously had taken a neutral position toward the quarrel between the Lutheran and Reformed theologians.⁶⁵⁸ The formulation of the 1951 Confession on the Lord's Supper, which the 1996 Confession retains, basically was taken from Nommensen's translation of Luther's Small Catechism. However, Nommensen's translation did not strictly follow the formulation of Lord's Supper in Luther's Small Catechism. Nommensen translated it as follows:

What is the meaning of the Holy Communion?

Eating the bread as a means of mediating the body of Lord Jesus Christ and drinking the wine as a means of mediating the blood of Lord Jesus Christ as instituted by Christ for Christians.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁷ K. Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 66. It is interesting to find that Soedarmo, a lecturer in the field of Dogmatics at Jakarta Theological Seminary, during a roundtable discussion of an ecumenical movement in Indonesia in the 1950s, expressed his opinion that, even though the 1951 Confession of the HKBP in general was not unique to Lutheranism, the HKBP's understanding of the sacraments was indeed unique. Soedarmo's view on this matter is described briefly on Pedersen, *Batak Blood and Protestant Soul*, 165.

⁶⁵⁸ In its policy, the Rhenish Mission decided to use both Luther's Small Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism in its mission fields. The neutrality of the Rhenish Mission also could be seen in the use and translation of the Prussian Church's Book of Liturgy into Batak. In it "the real presence" of Christ's body and blood in the elements of bread and wine was not mentioned. Meanwhile, in the correspondence between the Rhenish Mission's leader and one of its missionaries in Batakland mention was made that beside Luther's Small Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism the Rhenish Mission also planned, when all Batak congregations and leaders were mature enough, to introduce the Augsburg Confession to the Batak Church. See the description on the use of Luther's Small Catechism and a short description on the "Agenda" of the Batak Church in Chapter II; cf. J.R. Hutaaruk, "Agenda HKBP: Sejarah dan Perkembangannya," Seminar Liturgi/Ibadah HKBP, Medan, 04 Juni 2013, 1; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prussian_Union_of_churches. Accessed on 17 August 2016. 12.12; Wilhelm H. Neuser, "Agendenstreit (Liturgical Dispute)," in *Religion: Past and Present*, vol. I, 101; J.R. Hutaaruk, "Kelutheran Gereja-gereja Batak Anggota LWF di Indonesia," July and August 2006, 4.

⁶⁵⁹ GKPI, *Katekhismus Kecil Dr. Martin Luther*, 45; HKBP, *Dr. Martin Luther. Katekhismus. Bahasa Batak & Bahasa Indonesia*, 72; cf. SC VI, 1, 2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362; *The Book of*

As shown, Nommensen's translation did not entirely follow Luther's use of the phrase "the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ". Nommensen was not literally faithful to Luther's text in the SC, in which reads, "It [Sacrament of the Altar] is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians, to eat and drink."⁶⁶⁰

Interestingly, the Indonesian translation of Luther's Small Catechism was not translated from the Batak version of Nommensen's translation but entirely followed the text from SC as it appears in the Book of Concord.⁶⁶¹ In the 1970s, as part of a partnership with the Lutheran Churches of Australia (LCA), a number of churches in North Sumatra undertook the project of translating all the Lutheran Confessions into Indonesian.⁶⁶² The Indonesian translation of the Lord's Supper entirely followed Luther's Small Catechism text as contained in the Book of Concord. Ever since the Rhenish Mission all Batak churches have used Luther's Small Catechism for

Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 351.

⁶⁶⁰ SC VI, 1, 2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 351.

⁶⁶¹ The version used was *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959). This document had been translated in the 1970s by a team from the Lutheran churches in North Sumatra, Indonesia, and printed separately (AC, Ap., SA, LC, and FC). These translations were edited once again and reprinted in 2004. See *Buku Konkord. Konfesi Gereja Lutheran*, edited by M.S.E. Simorangkir (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004).

⁶⁶² Despite continuing to reprint the *Luther's Small Catechism*, translated into Toba Batak language by Nommensen in 1874, the first document to be translated in this project was *the Augsburg Confession* in 1978 and after that *the Large Catechism* in 1980, and, the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* in 1983, and then the *Formula of Concord*. See *Konfesi Augsburg Thn. 1530: Yang Diserahkan kepada Kaisar Karel V Tgl. 21 Januari 1530*. Diterjemahkan oleh Team Ahli Gereje-gereja Sumatera Utara atas Kerja Sama dengan Lutheran Church of Australia, 1978; *Katekhismus Besar Dr. Martin Luther*, Team Gereje-gereja Sumatera Utara atas Kerjasama dengan Lutheran Church Australia (Lutheran Literature Team, 1980) [Translated in cooperation with LCA Australia]; *Apologi Konfesi Augsburg Thn. 1531*. Diambil dari "The Book of Concord" (Th. G. Tappert, 1979) dan diterjemahkan oleh Tim Literatur LKS atas kerjasama dengan Lutheran Church of Australia (Pematangsiantar: Lembaga Komunikasi Sejahtera, 1983) [Taken from "The Book of Concord" ed. by Th. G. Tappert and translated by LKS Team in cooperation with LCA Australia]; *Rumus Konkord*. Thn: 1577. Diterjemahkan oleh Lutheran Literature Team atas kerjasama dengan Lutheran Church of Australia [Translated in cooperation with LCA Australia]. These translations were edited once again and reprinted in 2004. See *Buku Konkord. Konfesi Gereja Lutheran*, edited by M.S.E. Simorangkir (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004).

catechetical instruction and in the Sunday service when there are readings of the Ten Commandments along with explanations taken from Luther's Small Catechism as translated by Nommensen. After the Indonesian translation of Luther's Small Catechism was available, all Batak churches included it too. Thus the Indonesian text of Luther's Small Catechism (translated by Literature Team of Batak churches) is placed side by side with the Batak translation. The Indonesian translation of the Lord's Supper is as follows: "The Holy Communion is the eating of the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine for us Christians, according to the institution of Jesus Christ himself."⁶⁶³

It is obvious that the above Indonesian translation of the Lord's Supper is different from the Batak translation of Nommensen, since the Indonesian translation of Luther's Small Catechism literally followed Luther's formulation: "What is the Sacrament of the Altar? Answer: It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians to eat and to drink."⁶⁶⁴

Returning to the formulation of the 1951 Confession, we can see that the formulation was intentionally based on the wording of Luther's Small Catechism, because this formulation combines the part describing "what is the sacrament of the altar" with "the benefit of receiving it" in Luther's Small Catechism. Schreiner, as cited by Becker, also mentions this, saying that the description of the Lord's Supper in the Confession of 1951 "combine[s] the answers to the first question and the

⁶⁶³ GKPI, *Katekhismus Kecil Dr. Martin Luther*, 22; HKBP, *Dr. Martin Luther. Katekhismus. Bahasa Batak & Bahasa Indonesia*, 36; cf. SC VI, 1, 2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 351.

⁶⁶⁴ SC VI, 1, 2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 351.

second of section V” of the Lord’s Supper in Luther’s Small Catechism.⁶⁶⁵ Thus the formulation of the Holy Communion in the Confession of 1951 entirely uses Luther’s Small Catechism as a source and reference in explaining the Lord’s Supper. The description of the HKBP combines the answer to the first question: “What is the Sacrament of the Altar?” Answer: “It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians to eat and to drink”⁶⁶⁶ and with the answer to the question of the benefit of such eating and drinking, which is “for the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.”⁶⁶⁷ Indeed, as mentioned before, the wording there is not exactly the same. This is due to the translation of Nommensen, which does not exactly follow the formulation of the Lord’s Supper as given by Martin Luther in his Small Catechism.

The use of the phrase “a real presence” of Christ’s body and blood in the elements of bread and wine does not explicitly appear in the 1951 Confession. Nevertheless, the 1951 Confession is close to “the real presence,” since eating the bread and drinking the wine are taken as receiving the body and blood of Christ. Moreover, there is nothing to suggest the rejection of the bread and wine as the very body and blood of Christ. Neither is there any suggestion that the bread and wine are merely “a divine sign and confirmation” of Jesus’ body and blood as, for example, in the Heidelberg Catechism, from which catechetical material had been translated earlier into Batak.⁶⁶⁸ Another example can be seen in the book, *Pamusatan ni*

⁶⁶⁵ Dieter Becker, “Arti dan Fungsi BEM antara Gereja Masa Kini Dilihat dalam Perspektif HKBP,” in J.R. Hutauruk, et. al. (eds.), *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, 191.

⁶⁶⁶ SC VI, 1, 2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 351.

⁶⁶⁷ SC VI, 5, 6. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 352.

⁶⁶⁸ Sungkunsungkun no. 64 (question no. 64). In the Batak version of the HC, when the bread and wine were compared with water in baptism, the Batak translation did not precisely translate the phrase, “it is only a divine sign and confirmation of it.” See Fr. Eigenbrod, ET. al., *Pangarimpunan ni*

Djamita Huria Protestant (The Essence of the Sermon in the Protestant Church), originally drafted by P.H. Johannsen in 1891, and in 1914 reprinted under J.H. Meerwaldt. It can be presumed that Meerwaldt altered certain formulations in the section of the Lord's Supper since it emphasizes that the bread "is not the real body of Christ" and the wine "is not the real blood of Christ."⁶⁶⁹ Indeed, P.H. Johannsen may not have embraced Lutheran convictions about the Lord's Supper, as Warneck or Müller did, but in another work, *Pangarimpunan ni Podapoda Sihaporseaon ni Halak Kristen* (The Essence of the Doctrine to be Believed by Christians) from 1895, Johannsen wrote that bread and wine are "the visible vehicle" of Christ's body and blood; "they transport the body and blood of Christ."⁶⁷⁰ Johannsen admitted that common sense found it difficult to grasp that "the bread and wine are truly the body and blood of Christ," but he meant that was how Christians understood Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper.⁶⁷¹

As previously stated, the Rhenish Mission which had brought Christianity to Batakland did not favor any particular denomination, such as Lutheran or Reformed but it was neutral, embracing Lutheran, Reformed and United.⁶⁷² Nonetheless, it was Luther's Small Catechism that was extensively used as catechetical instruction. It is true that the Heidelberg Catechism was soon also introduced and available in the

Oegama Hakristenon. (Lagoeboti: Zending-Drukkerij, 1931), 29. Cf. Question no. 78. *Heidelberg Catechism*. German – English. (Wisconsin: Reliance Publishing, 1950), 175; *Creeks & Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*. Vol. II, edited by Jeroslav Pelikan and Valerie Hotchkiss (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003), 444.

⁶⁶⁹ *Pamusatan ni Djamita Huria Protestant*. Written by P.H. Johannsen in 1891. Second edition, 1914, edited by J.H. Meerwaldt. (Pearadja-Tarutung: Kolportase Pusat HKBP, 1962).

⁶⁷⁰ P.H. Johannsen, *Pangarimpunan ni Podapoda Sihaporseaon ni Halak Kristen* (Bielefeld: Ernst Siedhoff, 1895), 64.

⁶⁷¹ Johannsen, *Pangarimpunan ni Podapoda Sihaporseaon ni Halak Kristen*, 64.

⁶⁷² According to Scherer the Rhenish Mission can be categorized as a "supraconfessional-union". Concerning United churches, Nüssel explains that Lutheran and Reformed churches in Germany, especially in Prussia, were organized as federative administrative unions, in which confessional distinctions were left at congregational level, and there was an awareness that the two confessions embodied a unified overall type. See Friederike Nüssel, "Unions, Church," in *RPP* Vol. XIII (2013), 194; J.R. Hutauruk, "Kelutheranan Gereja-gereja Anggota LWF di Indonesia. Contoh HKBP," 3-4; cf. Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 121.

Batak language.⁶⁷³ It is interesting to learn that J. Warneck, Bishop of the Batak Church from 1920 to 1932, was not pleased with the publication of the Heidelberg Catechism. In contrast, he was happy to support the publication of *Hatorangan ni Katechismus ni Dr. Martin Luther* (The Explanation of the Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther) in 1919, adapted by W. Müller and entitled, *Sungkunsungkun tu angka Porguru na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng Tardidi* (Questions for Catechumen on their Preparation to Receive Confirmation and Baptism). This contained 562 questions and answers expanded from Luther's Small Catechism.⁶⁷⁴ In the section on the Lord's Supper, a similar definition to Nommensen's translation of Luther's Small Catechism is maintained. However, this definition is elaborated by emphasizing that the bread and wine received by the believers in the Holy Communion are the real body and blood of Jesus Christ.⁶⁷⁵ Question no. 516 asks, "Do you believe that the bread and wine received in the Holy Communion are Christ's body and blood himself?"⁶⁷⁶ And the answer is explained as follows: "I do believe."⁶⁷⁷ In the question no. 516 emphasis was made that the foundation for this conviction is the Words from the Lord Jesus Christ, who says, "This is my body; This is my blood"....⁶⁷⁸ This catechetical instruction also clearly opposed an understanding that

⁶⁷³ This book was adapted into Batak by Fr. Eigenbrod and friends. See Fr. Eigenbrod, et. al., *Pangarimpunan ni Oegama Hakristenon*. (Lagoeboti: Zendings-Drukkerij, 1931). This book, printed in 1934, is in its fourth edition. At present it is Luther's Small Catechism, not the Heidelberg Catechism, that is officially used in HKBP and other Batak churches.

⁶⁷⁴ W. Müller, *Sungkunsungkun tu angka Porguru na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng Tardidi* (Laguboti: Pangarongkoman Mission, 1919); cf. Schreiner, "Di Sekitar Masalah Pengakuan Iman, Konfesi Augsburg dan Menyaksikan Ketuhanan Kristus," in R.M.G. Marbun and A. Munthe (eds.), *Missio Dei*, 138; J.R. Hutaaruk (ed), *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, 75.

⁶⁷⁵ Questions no. 513-517. See Müller, *Sungkunsungkun tu angka Porguru na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng Tardidi*, 121.

⁶⁷⁶ Question no. 515. See *Sungkunsungkun no. 513-517*. See Müller, *Sungkunsungkun tu angka Porguru na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng Tardidi*, 121.

⁶⁷⁷ Answer to question no. 515. See *Sungkunsungkun no. 513-517*. See Müller, *Sungkunsungkun tu angka Porguru na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng Tardidi*, 121.

⁶⁷⁸ Question no. 516. See Müller, *Sungkunsungkun tu angka Porguru na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng Tardidi*, 121.

did not accept the conception of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the elements of bread and wine. Question and answer no. 517 formulates it as follows: "Are not the bread and wine only a sign and confirmation of Jesus' body and blood? No, they are not. They are the real body and blood that we receive in the Holy Communion. Since it is said: This is my body; this is my blood."⁶⁷⁹

A brief church history, published in Batak in 1891, covering the period up to 1880, devoted many pages to the history of the Reformation. The work had a strong Protestant bias. Its author, missionary P.H. Johannsen, worked in the Batakland from 1866-1898 and produced a lot of writing.⁶⁸⁰ He described the difference between Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper as follows: Luther understands that "the bread is the body of the Lord Jesus," meanwhile for Zwingli the bread is "tudosan" (a symbol) of Christ's body.⁶⁸¹ Since the Rhenish Mission did not take sides in the differences between Lutheran and Reformed, each missionary brought his own position, depending on whether his background was Lutheran, Reformed or United. Warneck and Müller, for example, took a Lutheran position on the Lord's Supper, whereas Eigenbrod and his colleagues had a Reformed understanding of the Lord's Supper.

⁶⁷⁹ Question no. 517. See Müller, *Sungkunsungkun tu angka Porguru na naeng mangkadjongdjongkon haporseaon manang na naeng Tardidi*, 121. On the catechetical instruction used in the HKBP at present, *Buku Sipangkeon ni Parguru Manghatindangkon Haporseaon di HKBP*, t.t., (Catechetical Instruction Used by Catechumen in the HKBP; no mention is made of the year of the publication of this book) reprinted in 2011 as *Buku Parguru Manghatindangkon Haporseaon di HKBP*, (Catechetical Instruction for Catechumen in the HKBP). This book also follows the content and structure of Luther's Small Catechism namely the Ten Commandments, Creeds, the Lord's Prayer, the Holy Communion, Holy Baptism. In addition come the following chapters: The Word of God, and The Church. In the section on the Lord's Supper the explanation also follows the formulation of Luther's Small Catechism as translated by Nommensen. See *Buku Sipangkeon ni Parguru Manghatindangkon Haporseaon di HKBP* (Peraja, Tarutung: Kantor Pusat HKBP), 73-76; *Buku Parguru Manghatindangkon Haporseaon di HKBP* (Peraja, Tarutung: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 2011), 122-129.

⁶⁸⁰ Including the translation of the Old Testament into Batak. See description on this topic in Chapter II.

⁶⁸¹ P.H. Johannsen, *Katechismus Djamita Huria* (Elberfeld: R.L. Friderichs & Comp., 1891), 68.

From the above explanation it is clear that the local word “parhitean,” (as a means of mediating; medium, bridge, a vehicle) does not exclude the real presence in the description of the Lord’s Supper formulated by the 1951 Confession. This is obvious from Müller’s treatment of that term. Therefore, Darwin Lumbantobing’s opinion is not entirely correct when he says that the use of “parhitean” indicates that the 1951 formulation does not agree with a Lutheran understanding of the Lord’s Supper.⁶⁸²

It is very important now to pay attention to K. Sitompul, General Secretary of the HKBP from 1950 to 1957 and one of the members of the Confessional and Doctrinal Commission which prepared the draft of the 1951 Confession.⁶⁸³ He wrote an explanation of the draft of the 1951 Confession written by Bishop Sihombing. Sitompul noted that in preparing the article on the Holy Communion, the Confessional and Doctrinal Commission was very much aware of the importance of the Words of institution of Christ in order to understand the Holy Communion. Therefore, the Commission tended to favor the formulation that the elements of bread and wine after the words of institution are the real body and blood of Christ. Sitompul wrote:

It is generally accepted by many that they should not question that “the bread and wine are truly the body and blood of Christ”. If Lord Jesus himself says that the bread and wine are his body and blood, no one has the right to say anything that in contrast with it.⁶⁸⁴

However, the above formulation was not finally included in the 1951 Confession.

Sitompul explained that it was not incorporated into the 1951 Confession because the

⁶⁸² Darwin Lumbantobing, *Burning and Current Theological Issues. Isu-isu Teologi Hangat dan Terkini di Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (HKBP)*, 91-92.

⁶⁸³ K. Sitompul’s role and contribution to the finalization of the 1951 Confession is recognized and explicitly mentioned by Bishop Justin Sihombing, as the man behind the confession. See F.H. Sianipar, *Barita ni Ompu I Dr. Justin Sihombing*, 161.

⁶⁸⁴ K. Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkön. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 66.

Commission thought it could be misinterpreted as the teaching of another church. This probably refers to the teaching of the Catholic Church on transubstantiation. At that time tension between the Batak Church and the Catholic Church was still quite intense, a tension inherited from the rivalry of the Rhenish Mission with the Catholic Church.⁶⁸⁵ Therefore, Sitompul explained, the final formulation concerning the Lord's Supper adopted by the Commission was the one Nommensen had introduced in his translation of Luther's Small Catechism. Nommensen's translation was already familiar to Batak people, with its use of the local word "parhitean" (as a means of mediating; medium, bridge, a vehicle). That term was accepted as not reducing the meaning of the real presence of Christ in the elements of bread and wine: "hite do dalam, dalam do hite" (a bridge is a way; indeed, a way is a bridge as well). Another metaphor was also used, about medicine in the form of tablet: "peel i do ubat i, ubat i do pel i; ndang tarsirang i" (a tablet is a medicine; a medicine is a tablet; they are inseparable).⁶⁸⁶ It appears that this statement refers to the unity of "the sign" and the presence of Christ. Sitompul strongly affirmed that the formulation of the 1951 Confession "stressed the conviction that Christ himself is received in the Lord's Supper."⁶⁸⁷

4.2.6 On Several Other Topics

The Confession of 1951 and AC also have parallels on the topics of the servant of the church, church rites, civil government, and food.

⁶⁸⁵ See the description of the antipathy of the Rhenish Mission towards the Catholic Church in Chapter II.

⁶⁸⁶ Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 66.

⁶⁸⁷ Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon. Panorangion tu Panindangion Haporseaon ni HKBP*, 41.

4.2.6.1 On the Servant of God in the Church

In discussing the office of the ministry, the Batak Church begins by recognizing the universal priesthood of all believers. Article IX of the 1951 Confession declares, “We believe and confess that every Christian is called to be Christ’s witness.”⁶⁸⁸

Although AC XIV does not include this formula,⁶⁸⁹ it is a very Lutheran idea. In his *To the Christian Nobility*, Martin Luther declares that believers do not require the mediation of a priest in order to be able to approach God. Every Christian is a priest in the sense that in faith one receives God’s grace through and on account of Christ.⁶⁹⁰ However, this does not mean that Luther overlooked the role of the ordained ministry in the church. Luther opposed certain features of the Catholic Church. He rejected the sharp division between clergy and laity, the absolute clerical hierarchy and ordination as a sacrament.⁶⁹¹ However, Luther still maintained the divine mission of the ministry of the pastor in proclaiming the Word and administering the Sacraments.⁶⁹²

AC V states that the distinctive marks of the church are preaching the gospel purely and administering the sacraments rightly. AC XIV describes the office of the ministry: “Concerning church order they [Lutherans] teach that no one should teach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments unless properly called.”⁶⁹³

⁶⁸⁸ Article IX, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

⁶⁸⁹ Scholars like Grane regretted that AC did not explicitly refer to the priesthood of all believers in article XIV: “By avoiding any mention of the teaching of priesthood of all believers, the AC has suppressed an important premise in Luther’s perspective on the ministry.” See Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 153.

⁶⁹⁰ Luther, “To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate” (1520) in *LW* vol. 44, 123-217. Cf. Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 69.

⁶⁹¹ Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions*, 97.

⁶⁹² Cf. Lohse, *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work*, 184.

⁶⁹³ AC XIV (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 47; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 36.

All Christians are, indeed, called to witness to the gospel, but in the church only those who are ordained can publicly teach the Word and administer the sacraments. Bergendoff explains the distinction in this way: “Individually and in his home the Christian should testify of his Lord and Master, but publicly, in the Church, only [those] whom the congregation has called should teach and serve.”⁶⁹⁴

Some scholars, such as Bergendoff, Allbeck, and Fagerberg, see that this formulation is intended to protect the orderliness of church administration and the welfare of the congregation.⁶⁹⁵ The office of the ministry is important because, as Fagerberg elaborates, “the ministry must remain and function, so that through its service the Word, the sacraments, and absolution may be made available for the church’s life and growth.”⁶⁹⁶

In Mildenerger’s analysis, linking article XIV and article V is important because of the difficulty in finding the right balance. If the pastor is completely independent in his role as pastor and has exclusive right to preach in church, what does this mean for the freedom of each believer to witness? And if too much emphasis is placed on the congregation from whom the pastor’s call derives, then the pastor becomes dependent on the congregation. Mildenerger was of the opinion that neither of these two models matches the viewpoint of AC, and contended that for AC the power of the office of the ministry is derived solely from the gospel.⁶⁹⁷ This task, the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, is the important thing, not the office. The ministry serves the gospel, and in this context, Mildenerger argues, the office of the ministry can demand obedience from the congregation. But it is also very important that obedience should be to the gospel, not

⁶⁹⁴ Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 70.

⁶⁹⁵ Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions*, 97; Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 69.

⁶⁹⁶ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*, 250.

⁶⁹⁷ Mildenerger, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, 117.

to the person of the minister. According to Mildenerger, article XXVIII of AC is clear on the matter: “When bishops teach or ordain anything contrary to the Gospel, churches have a command of God that forbids obedience.”⁶⁹⁸ Therefore, the office exists to preach the gospel, as Mildenerger emphasizes: “The ministry has divine right only when it is proclaiming the gospel.”⁶⁹⁹ Therefore, in the Lutheran understanding of the ministry, the priesthood of all believers and the office of ministry are equally important; both are bound to the gospel. The priesthood of all believers is not ruled out but served by the office of the ministry in order for all to listen together to the gospel. As Mildenerger concludes, “Understood as this kind of process, the office of the ministry preserves the freedom to believe, a freedom that is not bound to the authority of the ministry but to the gospel.”⁷⁰⁰

The Confession of 1951 combines AC articles V (on ministry in the church) and XIV (on church orders). But for the Confession of 1951 the essential tasks of the ministry are not only “preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments,” but also doing diaconal work and exercising church discipline: “Doing works of mercy (diakonia)” and “preserving pure doctrine as well as opposing false doctrine through the exercise of spiritual discipline.”⁷⁰¹

4.2.6.2 On Church Rites

The 1951 Confession builds on previous practice and therefore article XI states that church order should be preserved in order to organize the life of the

⁶⁹⁸ Mildenerger, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, 118; AC Article XXVIII “Concerning the Power of Bishops,” 20-21 (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 94; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 84; Mildenerger, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, 118.

⁶⁹⁹ Mildenerger, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, 118.

⁷⁰⁰ Mildenerger, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, 119.

⁷⁰¹ Article IX, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

church for the good and peace of the church itself. The Batak Church also firmly stresses that church order must be based on the Word of God. By church order the Batak Church means the ministry and organization of the church in a wide sense. K. Sitompul, who wrote an explanation about the Confession of 1951, mentions that in article XI church order refers to things such as the office of the ministry, rules regarding sacraments, the order of service (liturgy), offerings, festivals, etc.⁷⁰² By church festivals, the Batak Church refers to its celebration of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day, and Pentecost. The Batak church embraces the church order and church festivals as positive and valuable things. However, as a church that recognizes and bases itself on justification by faith alone, the Batak Church understands that the faithful observance of church order and all festivals “cannot bring us the benefit of the forgiveness of sin.”⁷⁰³

In principle, Lutherans are not opposed to practices in the Catholic Church that have grown over the centuries: the observance of Sunday, the Christian holidays, forms of worship, customs connected with devotional life.⁷⁰⁴ Therefore, AC XV makes clear that certain observances of Christianity should be retained: “Concerning church rites they [Lutherans] teach that those rites should be observed that can be observed without sin and that contribute to peace and good order in the church, for example, certain holy days, festivals, and the like.”⁷⁰⁵

Nonetheless, some practices are rejected, such as praying to the saints and the Virgin Mary. The most important thing emphasized in AC XV is the basic principle

⁷⁰² Sitompul, *Tahaporseai djala Tahatindangkon*, 31. Since 1866 the Batak Church had created its constitution regulating the church. See Hutaauruk, *Menata Rumah Allah. Kumpulan Tata Gereja HKBP*, XVff.

⁷⁰³ Article XI, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 12.

⁷⁰⁴ Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 72.

⁷⁰⁵ AC XV (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 49; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 36.

that observance of rites, regulations, and ceremonies are not meritorious. They are not “necessary for salvation.”⁷⁰⁶ When understood as meritorious, or “to win God’s favor, merit grace, and make satisfaction for sins,” then it is not true anymore, and clearly contrary to the belief of the “gospel and the teaching of faith.”⁷⁰⁷ Therefore, the Lutherans understand that fasting is a good example and should be maintained because through it Christians train themselves in self-discipline; but when fasting is considered a good work meriting grace from God then this custom must be given up.⁷⁰⁸

Both AC and the 1951 Confession apply the same basic principle, and conclude that those rites and regulations that do not contradict the Gospel should be retained. The difference lies in the customs and rites listed. The Batak church refers to church order, and the celebration of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day, and Pentecost. AC has a much longer list: the observance of Sunday, of the Christian holidays, forms of worship, customs connected with devotional life, fasting, the giving of alms, attitudes in prayer, customs in church services, and the like. AC is drawing a demarcation line between what of Catholic practice should be preserved and what abandoned.

4.2.6.3 on Government

Both AC and the Confession of 1951 understand that the source of authority in government is God, and the government has the function to enforce the law and

⁷⁰⁶ AC XV (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 49; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 36.

⁷⁰⁷ AC XV (Latin Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 49; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 36.

⁷⁰⁸ Bergendoff, *The Making and Meaning of the Augsburg Confession*, 72.

seek the welfare of society. The Batak church explicitly mentions the basis for this understanding by citing two biblical texts, Romans 13 and I Timothy 2:2.

Similarly, both the Confession of 1951 and AC state that if governmental laws prescribe what is sinful, Christians should disobey them. Both cite Acts 5:29 on this point: one must obey God rather than any human beings.⁷⁰⁹

Unlike the Confession of 1951, AC XVI focuses on the participation of the Christian in the affairs and benefits of government, saying, “Christians may without sin exercise political authority; be princes and judges; pass sentences and administer justice according to imperial and other existing laws; punish evildoers with the sword; wage just wars; serve as soldiers; buy and sell; take required oaths; possess property; be married; etc.”⁷¹⁰ The Confession of 1951, in contrast, is far more cautious about government, given its context in Indonesia, is the country with the world’s largest Muslim population. Those who occupy public office are, therefore, mainly Muslim. Article XII states:

By means of this doctrine we confess that the church ought to pray for the government that it may walk in righteousness. However, the church ought also to make its voice heard to the government. By means of this doctrine we oppose and reject the conception that the state is a religious state, for the state remains the state and the church remains the church (Matt. 22:21b).⁷¹¹

Another thing that is not mentioned in the Confession of 1951 is AC’s rejection of any definition of Christian perfection that requires people to forsake their families

⁷⁰⁹ Article XII, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 12; AC XVI (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 50; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 38.

⁷¹⁰ Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions*, 102; AC XVI (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 48; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 37.

⁷¹¹ Article XII, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 12.

and to refrain from legitimate worldly activities.⁷¹² AC is referring to monks and nuns, but only Anabaptists are explicitly mentioned.

4.2.6.4 On Foods

The title of AC XXVI is misleading since food is only mentioned at the very beginning. The article does not specifically talk about distinctions among types of food. In fact, it mostly discusses various church traditions that had arisen, and is, therefore, not much different from AC Article XV on church rites. Grane is correct in saying that the title is inadequate.⁷¹³

Lutherans object to Catholic teaching that Christians should abstain from meat and instead eat fish on Fridays and that this and fasting are useful to earn grace and to make satisfaction for sins. Other things referred to as "human traditions" are fasting, clothing (vestments, monastic habits), acts of worship, festivals, rites, prayer. In principle, these traditions are not prohibited; what is suspect is the motivation behind these traditions. AC XXVI states: "It is also taught that all are obliged to conduct themselves regarding bodily discipline, such as fasting and other work, in such a way as not to give occasion to sin, but not as if they earned grace by such works."⁷¹⁴

Therefore the Lutherans retain many ceremonies and traditions of the Catholic church, such as the order of reading in the Mass, singing (canticles), festivals, etc.,⁷¹⁵

⁷¹² Gassmann and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, 145.

⁷¹³ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession. A Commentary*, 233.

⁷¹⁴ AC XXVI (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 78; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 69.

⁷¹⁵ AC XXVI (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 80, 81; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 69.

because what is important is that they are not understood as efforts to make people righteous before God.

Meanwhile the 1951 Confession focuses only on the basic idea that all kinds of food are eatable and that none are prohibited, because they are all created by God: “We believe and confess that everything created by God is good and nothing is prohibited which is received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and by prayer.”⁷¹⁶

The Batak Church echoes Luther: “Man does not become holy by observing food regulations but receives holiness from God through faith.”⁷¹⁷

⁷¹⁶ Article XIV, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁷¹⁷ Article XIV, *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

CHAPTER V

THE LUTHERAN CHARACTERISTIC OF THE 1996 CONFESSION OF THE HKBP AND OF THE BASIC ARTICLES OF FAITH OF THE GKPI

5.1 The Emergence of the 1996 Confession of HKBP

In 1996, HKBP drafted a revision of the Confession of 1951. The 48th Great Synod of 1987 launched proposals for this,⁷¹⁸ and from January 11 to 16, 1988 HKBP conducted a workshop on the need for a new confession.⁷¹⁹ Initiatives to revise the confession of the HKBP came from the HKBP leadership in the period 1986-1992. Bishop Dr. S.A.E. Nababan vigorously campaigned to prepare church members to welcome the era of industrialization.⁷²⁰ He argued that HKBP required a new confession for a pluralistic country, diverse in culture and religion, but where *Pancasila* is the principle of the nation's community life.⁷²¹ At the same time, it was

⁷¹⁸ See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 73. Back in January 1985, HKBP had conducted workshops to discuss the HKBP confession. Then on August 3, 1987 HKBP held consultations on the HKBP Confession. See *Notulen Rapot Pandita 10-14 Nopember 1989* (Minutes of the Pastor Conference of the HKBP 10-14 November 1989), 345; *Notulen Sinode Godang pa-49 hon HKBP, 10-15 Nopember 1988* (Minutes of 1988 General Synod of the HKBP), 386.

⁷¹⁹ See J.R. Hutauruk, et. al., *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*. Lokakarya Konfesi HKBP 11-16 Januari 1988 (Pematangsiantar: STT HKBP, 1991).

⁷²⁰ See *Pidato Pembukaan Sinode Godang HKBP ke- 49 tanggal 10-15 Nopember 1988*, 2; *Notulen Sinode Godang pa-49 hon HKBP, 10-15 Nopember 1988* (Minutes of 1988 General Synod of the HKBP), 309, 347-348; J.R Hutauruk also recorded this of Bishop Nababan's initiatives on the 150th anniversary of the HKBP in 2011. See J. R. Hutauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 332; cf. *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*, edited by Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink, 561, 562.

⁷²¹ *Pancasila* (The Five Pillars), which is listed in the preamble of *Undang-Undang Dasar 1945* (the Indonesian Constitution), is the state philosophy. *Pancasila* consists of five principles: recognition of the one and only God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of the Indonesian people, democracy in the sense of the traditional means of reaching consensus, and social justice for all Indonesians.

also realized that every church needed to show its participation in the development of Indonesia. In addition to demonstrating an awareness of the diversity of Indonesia, a new confession should assist church members to enter the era of industrialization.⁷²² A new confession should integrate awareness of new contexts and challenges.⁷²³ A whole series of challenges were listed: consumerism, poverty and marginalization, injustice and environmental damage, all tendencies damaging to society.⁷²⁴ Opposing these negative trends were development programs that presented people with opportunities for improvement in their lives. Later these thoughts would be included in the Confession of 1996. Article IV (Concerning Society) showed an awareness of the context of Indonesia's diversity. It also covered several other matters: the church's responsibility to contribute towards overcoming poverty, suffering, and injustice; the church's responsibility towards development; and the principle of equality between women and men. Article V Concerning Culture and Environment dealt with attitudes towards *Adat* (law and custom) and culture and environment.⁷²⁵

However, when the plan to revise the 1951 Confession was announced, some objected that it was uncommon to revise a confession,⁷²⁶ while others argued that

Pancasila guarantees religious freedom. Although the majority of Indonesians are followers of Islam, it acknowledges the existence of other religions and declares that the state should not discriminate against other faiths. There are six religions that are recognized by the state, namely, Islam, Christianity [referring to Protestant Churches], Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

⁷²² S.A.E. Nababan, "Bimbingan Lokakarya Konfesi," in Hutauruk, et. al., *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, ix.

⁷²³ S.A.E. Nababan, "Bimbingan Lokakarya Konfesi," in Hutauruk, et. al., *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, xi; cf. J. Boangmanalu, *Kristologi Lintas Budaya Batak* (Medan: Universitas HKBP Nommensen, 2014), 224.

⁷²⁴ See *Pidato Pembukaan Sinode Godang HKBP ke- 49 tanggal 10-15 Nopember 1988*, 3-4; *Notulen Sinode Godang pa-49 hon HKBP, 10-15 Nopember 1988* (Minutes of 1988 General Synod of the HKBP), 310-311; Hutauruk, et. al., *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, 90.

⁷²⁵ *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 73; Nababan, "Bimbingan Lokakarya Konfesi," in Hutauruk, et. al., *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, ix-x.

⁷²⁶ See Hutauruk, et. al., *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, 60.

what was needed was not a revision but a completely new confession to meet the challenges of a new era.⁷²⁷

At the 49th Great Synod of November 10-15, 1988, the HKBP formed the Confession Commission with the task of revising the 1951 Confession.⁷²⁸ This commission was asked to present its work at the scheduled Pastor Conference of 1989, held on 10-14 November.⁷²⁹ There the commission presented a number of changes.⁷³⁰ It added several new articles, namely, concerning human beings, concerning society, and concerning culture and environment (respectively chapters 3, 4 and 5). Article I concerning God needed to be reformulated in order to emphasize more clearly the meaning of Christology and Pneumatology. The new confession did not insert statements that were no longer relevant to supporting good relations among the churches in Indonesia ecumenically.⁷³¹ The new confession would try to meet existing challenges. In addition, it would no longer include chapters about angels because they were not significant.⁷³² Later, the 1991 Pastor Conference continued to discuss the draft of the new confession, concluding that several areas of the draft needed reformulating, especially the section on “the authority” and the preamble. Moreover, there were articles that needed to be clarified.⁷³³

We see that as HKBP worked on the revision, the conviction of its importance grew. HKBP leadership realized that all its members and ministers needed to

⁷²⁷ See Hutaaruk, et. al., *Mengaku Kristus Masa Kini*, 63.

⁷²⁸ The personnel of this commission were as follows: Prof. Dr. A.A. Sitompul, B. Nainggolan, M.Th., Prof. Dr. F.H. Sianipar, Dr. J.R. Hutaaruk, J. Boangmanalu, M.Th., J.M. Manullang, M.Th., dan R. Hutapea, STh. See J. Boangmanalu, *Kristologi Lintas Budaya Batak*, 255.

⁷²⁹ *Notulen Sinode Godang pa-49 hon HKBP, 10-15 Nopember 1988* (Minutes of 1988 General Synod of the HKBP), 220.

⁷³⁰ See *Notulen Rapat Pendeta HKBP 10-14 Nopember 1989*, 346. The record of these points are on pp. 47-48 in the minutes.

⁷³¹ As has been explained in Chapter IV, many churches, such as Catholic, Adventist, Pentecostal and Charismatic churches and churches that grew out of and separated from the HKBP at that time were officially rejected by the 1951 Confession. This rejection no longer applied.

⁷³² In fact, article on angels is retained by the 1996 Confession. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 92.

⁷³³ The resume of these points are from the 1991 Pastor Conference of the HKBP. See *Butir-butir Pergumulan Teologis, Praksis dan Keputusan-keputusan Rapat Pendeta HKBP Tahun 1931-2005*, 39.

understand the context the HKBP operated in and the challenges it faced. The 1951 Confession had been formulated in a context in which the threats came from Islam and paganism on the one hand, and conflict and schism within the church, on the other hand.⁷³⁴ Now the leadership of the HKBP saw matters differently. Indonesia was a pluralistic society with diversity of culture and religion. *Pancasila* is the principle of Indonesian society enabling all groups to live in harmony. The other new context was the coming industrialization of Indonesia. HKBP members needed to prepare for the changes this would bring so that they would not be overwhelmed by its negative effects.⁷³⁵ In this situation the leaders of the HKBP felt, firstly, that the church needed to help its members to be mature and resilient in faith. Secondly, the church needed to increase the unity and solidarity of church members in spreading the gospel to all creatures.⁷³⁶ Moreover, unlike the 1951 Confession, the 1996 Confession showed a highly ecumenical spirit. This was probably due to Dr. S.A.E. Nababan, who, before becoming Bishop of the HKBP (1986-1992), worked for a long time as General Secretary and General Chairman of the PGI (Communion of Churches in Indonesia), as well as holding positions in many other world-wide ecumenical institutions. The HKBP policy on pastor placement criteria, especially those assigned to urban, industrial parishes, specified among other things that the candidate should be "ecumenical".⁷³⁷

After a long process, the Great Synod of 17 to 22 November 1996

⁷³⁴ This point is mentioned in the introduction of the 1996 Confession. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 73; cf. The introduction of the 1951 Confession. See *Confession of Faith of the HKBP*, approved by the Great Synod at Sipoholon, November 28-30, 1951, 3-4.

⁷³⁵ Nababan, "Bimbingan Lokakarya Konfesi," in J. R. Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, ix.

⁷³⁶ Nababan, "Pidato Pembukaan Sidang Sinode Godang ke- 49 HKBP," in *Notulen Sinode Godang pa-49 hon HKBP, 10-15 Nopember 1988* (Minutes of 1988 General Synod of the HKBP), 309-310.

⁷³⁷ See *Notulen Rapot Pandita 10-14 Nopember 1989* (Minutes of the Pastor Conference of the HKBP 10-14 November 1989), 85.

approved the new Confession, calling it the second confession.⁷³⁸ The decision to use the term "second confession" seems intended to avoid the perception that by drafting a new confession the HKBP might be judged to have forgotten or negated the previous confession or that the 1951 confession had vanished or was no longer needed. The use of this term confirms the appreciation and recognition that the Confession of 1951 was still valid as guidance for the HKBP theologically, but that certain points needed corrections or adjustments to meet the new circumstances.⁷³⁹

5.2 The Lutheran Characteristic of the Confession of 1996 of the HKBP

Before discussing each aspect of the Lutheran identity of the 1996 Confession, I present the following table comparing the list of articles contained in the 1951 Confession, the Augsburg Confession, and the 1996 Confession:

<i>The Confession of 1951</i> ⁷⁴⁰	<i>The Augsburg Confession</i> ⁷⁴¹	<i>The Confession of 1996</i> ⁷⁴²
Concerning God (I)	Concerning God (I)	Concerning God (I)
The Trinity (II)	Concerning Original Sin (II)	The Word of God (II)
The Special Acts of the Triune God (III)	Concerning the Son of God (III)	The Human Being (III)
The Word of God (IV)	Concerning Justification (IV)	Society (IV)
Origin of Sin (V)	Concerning Ministry in the Church (V)	Culture and Environment (V)
Inherited Sin (VI)	Concerning the New Obedience (VI)	Salvation (VI)
Salvation from Sin (VII)	Concerning the Church (VII)	The Church (VII)

⁷³⁸ J. R. Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 179; J. Boangmanalu, *Kristologi Lintas Budaya Batak*, 224, 225.

⁷³⁹ At the Pastor Conference of 2001 there was another proposal to revise the confession of the HKBP. It expressed the thoughts that the 1996 Confession does not yet fully address the challenges in the society. The proposed revision would concentrate on certain articles, namely, concerning government, which suggested the need for deep studies on Romans 13, 1-7, Revelation 13, 1ff., Acts 5, 29, concerning human beings, requiring attention on gender issues, on faith in relation to science, and, finally, on distinguishing between theology and organization when describing the church. Before, the 56th Great Synod of the HKBP, held on November 20-24, 2000, some had voiced the need to draw a new confession combining the 1951 and 1996 Confessions. The 56th Great Synod of 2000 was a reconciliation synod for the HKBP, namely the first synod meeting after the HKBP became involved in an internal conflict starting in 1992 resulting in two separate leaderships. See *Butir-butir Pergumulan Teologis, Praksis dan Keputusan-keputusan Rapat Pendeta HKBP Tahun 1931-2005*, 54; cf. J. R. Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus*, 179; *Risalah Sinode Godang HKBP ke- 56, 20-24 November 2000*, 114.

⁷⁴⁰ *Confession of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 6ff.

⁷⁴¹ *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 37ff.

⁷⁴² See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 74-92.

The Church (VIII)	What is the Church (VIII)	The Holy Sacraments (VIII)
Those Who Minister in the Church (IX)	Concerning Baptism (IX)	Those Who Minister in the Church (IX)
The Holy Sacraments (X)	Concerning the Lord's Supper (X)	Church Order (X)
Church Order (XI)	Concerning Confession (XI)	Sunday (XI)
Concerning Government of the State (XII)	Concerning Repentance (XII)	Good Works and Faith (XII)
Sunday (XIII)	Concerning the Use of Sacraments (XIII)	Concerning Government of the State (XIII)
Concerning Food (XIV)	Concerning the Church Order (XIV)	Concerning Food (XIV)
Faith and Good Works (XV)	Concerning Church Rites (XV)	Remembrance of the Dead (XV)
Remembrance of the Dead (XVI)	Concerning Civic Affairs (XVI)	The Lord's Second Coming (XVI)
Concerning the Angels (XVII)	Concerning the Return of Christ for Judgement (XVII)	Concerning the Angels (XVII)
The Last Judgement (XVIII)	Concerning Free Will (XVIII)	
	Concerning the Cause of Sin (XIX)	
	Concerning Faith and Good Works (XX)	
	Concerning the Cult of the Saints (XXI)	
	Concerning Both Kinds of the Sacrament (XXII)	
	Concerning the Marriage of Priest (XXIII)	
	Concerning the Mass (XXIV)	
	Concerning Confession (XXV)	
	Concerning the Distinction of Foods (XXVI)	
	Concerning Monastic Vows (XXVII)	
	Concerning the Church's Power (XXVIII)	
	Conclusion	

5.2.1 On Justification

Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation⁷⁴³ continues to show Lutheran understanding of the justification by faith alone, which emphasizes that salvation is the redeeming work of God in Christ. The 1996 Confession reads:

Out of his mercy and love God provides salvation for human beings through the redemption of his only Son Jesus Christ ... Human beings obtain salvation through faith, in which faith is worked by the Holy Spirit, and such faith is reckoned by God as the righteousness of human beings.⁷⁴⁴

⁷⁴³ The title has been corrected as "Salvation". The 1951 Confession used the title "Salvation from Sin".

⁷⁴⁴ Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 82.

The 1996 Confession also uses the phrase “salvation is the greatness of God and a blessing for human beings”.⁷⁴⁵ This is another way of expressing that salvation comes solely by the grace of God, and takes place through the work of God in Jesus Christ, whose work is a blessing for humankind. With this formulation, the 1996 Confession makes it clear that salvation is not obtained by humans’ performing good works. The last part of this article underlines this: “We reject the doctrine which teaches that salvation is determined by one’s own effort.”⁷⁴⁶ In addition, the 1996 Confession contains other passages about the teaching of justification by faith.⁷⁴⁷

But Article VI of the 1996 Confession intentionally avoids using the same wording as the AC (the Augsburg Confession), which Article VII of the 1951 Confession chose to follow, namely, because justification is by faith alone, human beings cannot obtain righteousness and salvation through good works. This does not appear in Article VI of the 1996 Confession. The Confession of 1996 differs from that of 1951 in not making this distinction. Has this change of emphasis to do with an idea that the issue of faith and good works was a burning issue in Luther’s day but

⁷⁴⁵ Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 82. I pay attention to the English translation provided in this document, see p. 133, but I make my own translation from the Batak original version of the texts as an effort to get a meaning closer to the original texts. For this purpose I also notice the Indonesian translation, p. 109. This approach is also applied to other parts that are discussed throughout this study.

⁷⁴⁶ Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 83.

⁷⁴⁷ The emphases on salvation as God’s gift in Jesus Christ, not because of human works, is expressed in a number of other parts of the Confession of 1996. On “God the Son” in Article I Concerning God, in the section that lists several rejected teachings, the 1996 Confession states that it rejects a teaching that teaches: “good works performed by human beings can bring salvation”. Similar notions also appear in Article III concerning Human Being, which asserts that “Human beings do not have any power to obtain salvation,” but “the only way to obtain salvation is by the mercy of God granted through Jesus Christ’s redemptive work”. Article XII “Work and Faith” also confirms the inability of humans by their own power and works to obtain salvation. Article XII states, “One is mistaken who hopes to obtain righteousness, life, comfort and blessing by doing good works (Ep. 2:8; Rom 5:1)”. Article I Concerning God in the Confession of 1996; Article III entitled Human Being; Article XII Work and Faith. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 77, 79-80, 89. But on the other hand the 1996 Confession leaves out one expression of Article VIII of the 1951 Confession that emphasized the teaching of justification by faith, which stated: “By means of this doctrine we oppose and reject the doctrine which states that holiness can be gained through one’s own works.” Article VIII entitled “The Church”. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

is no longer so vital for the HKBP? It seems not, because the end of this article includes a rejection of the idea that one can obtain righteousness by one's own power.⁷⁴⁸ What is certain is that the focus now is not solely on justification by faith alone. Article VI of the 1996 Confession is concerned not only about future salvation but also about salvation in the present. God acts to save believers in their daily struggles, physically and spiritually, individually and as a community.⁷⁴⁹

The emphasis on present salvation can be traced back to the Batak theologian, F.H. Sianipar, who discussed the 1951 Confession at length in 1973.⁷⁵⁰ According to Sianipar, Article VII of the Confession of 1951 was about future and not present salvation. It did not explain, Sianipar argues, the relationship of salvation with the "here and now". It entirely overlooked present salvation.⁷⁵¹ Such a theology of salvation, Sianipar contended, is not relevant to the Batak people, who at the same time faced the influence of two other forces, namely *adat* (law and custom) and secularization. A fully alive theology, besides talking about eternal salvation should emphasize salvation as something that has already begun in this life, something that can be experienced and bears fruits.⁷⁵² Therefore, Sianipar emphasized, a relevant theology was needed, namely, a theology that addressed and proclaimed present salvation. This theology, according to Sianipar, could become the guidance and basis for transforming the world, in which secularization is not the sole power, and *adat*

⁷⁴⁸ Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 83.

⁷⁴⁹ Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 82-83.

⁷⁵⁰ Sianipar was one of the theologians whose thought was taken into consideration by the Confession Commission of the HKBP. See *Notulen Rapot Pandita 10-14 Nopember 1989*, 344.

⁷⁵¹ F.H. Sianipar, *Suatu Problema tentang Methode Theologia dalam Ketegangan yang Dialami oleh Masyarakat Batak Kristen Masakini* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1974), 25.

⁷⁵² F.H. Sianipar, *Suatu Problema tentang Methode Theologia dalam Ketegangan yang Dialami oleh Masyarakat Batak Kristen Masakini*, 25.

(law and custom) is not the single measure of relationships among the Batak.⁷⁵³ He claimed such an approach could be the basis for the church to proclaim salvation as therapy for the misery caused by cultural conflict.⁷⁵⁴

Article VI of the 1996 Confession makes use of Sianipar's thinking. It states:

Believers have obtained salvation, though they still have to face and experience many challenges in this world. God, through and by his wonderful love, always saves believers from any kind of trouble in their daily lives, physically and spiritually, both as individuals and as a community.⁷⁵⁵

However, Article VII of the 1951 Confession concerning Salvation, though it gives primary attention to the relationship of faith and good works, has not altogether neglected present salvation. If understood carefully, the teaching of justification by faith alone is very positive in encouraging people who have received the grace of God to do good works voluntarily and freely to serve and please God and at the same time to serve their neighbor in love, as Luther emphasized.⁷⁵⁶ As for Sianipar's criticism and proposals, while it is vital to maintain the Lutheran explanation of the relationship of faith and good works, Sianipar is right that salvation should also concern the present. Good works are not unimportant; good works are necessary. It is true that good works are not needed to obtain salvation. But someone who is justified will do good works freely and spontaneously. In this case a good work refers to the Ten Commandments, which God desires and commands the believers to perform in their life as praise to God and service to neighbors. Without good works, faith is not obviously faith. This is the position of Luther.⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵³ F.H. Sianipar, *Suatu Problema tentang Metode Theologia dalam Ketegangan yang Dialami oleh Masyarakat Batak Kristen Masakini*, 26.

⁷⁵⁴ F.H. Sianipar, *Suatu Problema tentang Metode Theologia dalam Ketegangan yang Dialami oleh Masyarakat Batak Kristen Masakini*, 27.

⁷⁵⁵ Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 82-83.

⁷⁵⁶ See the discussion of this matter in section 4.2.2 of Chapter IV.

⁷⁵⁷ See the discussion of this matter in section 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 of Chapter IV.

Although the Confession of 1951 is closer to the AC on faith and works, other elements of the presentation of the 1996 Confession concerning salvation show significant similarities with both the 1951 Confession and the AC. The 1996 Confession carefully maintains Luther's emphasis on good works as the fruit of justification, meaning justification makes humans capable of producing good works freely and spontaneously. Article VI says:

Salvation is received by faith, which is worked by the Holy Spirit. Such faith is reckoned by God as the righteousness of human beings before Him. ... The realization of the justification in the life of the believers in this world is when the believers live in holiness which bears fruits of the Holy Spirit (1 John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Acts 4:12; Galatians 5:22).⁷⁵⁸

5.2.2 On Faith and Good Works

The title of the article in the 1996 Confession has been changed to "Works and Faith." This article, Article XII, retains the notion of justification by faith alone: "Faith in Jesus should bear good work. One is mistaken who hopes to obtain righteousness, life, comfort and blessing by doing good works (Eph. 2:8; Romans 5:1)."⁷⁵⁹

Nevertheless, the general tone of this article has changed, exhorting Christians more firmly "to work diligently and skillfully". Therefore, this article places more emphasis on one's responsibility in one's vocation and in general on obeying God's commandments and will. In contrast to the 1951 Confession, this article uses

⁷⁵⁸ Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 82-83.

⁷⁵⁹ Article XII of the 1996 Confession Concerning Works and Faith. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 89.

imperatives in its presentation of faith and good works: “Faith in Jesus should bear good work.”⁷⁶⁰

Now it is not just that good works come spontaneously from faith. The believer has a duty to do good work.

5.2.3 On Law and Gospel

Like the 1951 Confession, although not to the same degree, the 1996 Confession shows its awareness of the relationship of law and gospel. Neither the 1951 nor the 1996 Confession possesses a particular article concerning law and gospel. But both of them, like AC, although not to the same degree, distinguish between the law and the gospel. AC does not contain an article devoted to the topic either. However, the principle of distinguishing law and gospel is applied throughout AC.⁷⁶¹ A more lengthy and detailed description of this distinction can be found in other documents of the Lutheran Confessions: Ap.,⁷⁶² SC and LC,⁷⁶³ SA,⁷⁶⁴ FC.⁷⁶⁵

⁷⁶⁰ Article XII of the 1996 Confession Concerning Works and Faith. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 89.

⁷⁶¹ As already explained in section 4.2.3 in Chapter IV, AC explains the distinction in Article XI Concerning Confession and Article XII Concerning Repentance. See the discussion of them in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV.

⁷⁶² In response to the Catholic reaction in *The Confutation of the Augsburg Confession* that opposed the Lutherans’ greater emphasis on gospel over law, Ap. defends the distinction. Without overlooking the law’s function, which “reveals, denounces, and condemns sin,” Ap. stresses that human beings, to be saved, entirely rely on the gospel, namely, the act of God, who grants the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, Ap. explains that basically the Scripture or God’s works can be divided into two parts, law and gospel, in which law reveals, denounces, and condemns sin, while the gospel is the promise of grace given in Christ. Ap. [XII] Repentance, XII, 28,29,35,44, 53,80. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 191-192, 193, 195, 201; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 185-186, 187, 189, 194; cf. “The Confutation of the Augsburg Confession,” in Kolb and Nestingen (eds.), *Sources and Contexts of the Book of Concord*, 113.

⁷⁶³ As already mentioned in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV, Luther, on “Confession and Absolution” in SC and on “A Brief Exhortation to Confession” in LC, has maintained a dialectic, or more precisely, comparison of law and gospel. Luther explains that through the law we realize our sins. In the light of the Ten Commandments we know that we are sinners, and, therefore, confess our sins. Then the second part of confession comes to the believers, namely, the absolution, that is, the forgiveness of sins. Luther maintains that the believers should concentrate more on the Word or absolution that is the gospel not chiefly on confession. Luther made this warning because he saw that the practice of confession in the Catholic Church of his time was deeply focused on the effort on the confessor’s side

Presentation of the distinction of law and gospel in all the documents of the Lutheran Confessions especially in Ap. XI and XII was made in reaction to the Catholic Church's response to AC.⁷⁶⁶ The Reformation side felt a need to elaborate the distinction throughout Ap. but particularly in Ap. XI and XII. In addition, over time Lutheran theologians came to differ on the position and function of law in Christian life (in FC V and VI in particular).⁷⁶⁷

of performing the confession, not on what God did, namely, God's declaration of the forgiveness of sins. Besides that, Luther also utilizes the principle of the distinction of law and gospel when he gives the conclusion of his explanation of the Ten Commandments. Luther asserts that the Ten Commandments contain both a divine threat and a divine promise. The "promise" is dialectically related to human inability to obey the Commandments. Because, Luther argues, nobody is able to keep even one of the Ten Commandments and therefore all people depend on God's grace. SC V, 16,20,21,29; SC I, 22; LC A Brief Exhortation to Confession, 15,16,18,22; LC I, 316, 322; LC II, 69; LC III, 2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 360-362, 354, 478, 428-429, 440; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 349-351, 344, 458-459, 408-409, 420.

⁷⁶⁴ In SA Luther also consistently brings out the distinction of law and gospel in his explanation about salvation. For Luther "the chief function of the law is to make the sin obvious, because no one is righteous. It is the judgment of the law that makes sinners contrite. Into this experience of the judgment of the law the gospel immediately comes as the "consoling promise of grace". SA [3:] Concerning Repentance, 2, 3, 4. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 312-313; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 304.

⁷⁶⁵ FC Article V Concerning Law and Gospel and Article VI Concerning the Third Use of the Law were caused by a dispute among Lutherans on the proper distinction of law and gospel. Some theologians held that the word and meaning of the gospel should be applied broadly as to maintain that gospel is not only the proclamation of the grace but also a preaching of repentance and rebuke, which condemns sin and unbelief, meaning that some things are condemned not only in the law but also by the gospel. On the other hand, other theologians held that the gospel as a whole is not a proclamation of repentance or judgment because this function belongs to the law of God. FC affirms that the distinction of law and gospel should be preserved. FC states: "The two teachings of law and gospel dare not be mingled with the other and mixed together, and the characteristics of one dare not be ascribed to the other. . . . The true and proper distinction between law and gospel must be advocated and maintained most diligently". FC SD V Concerning Law and Gospel, SD V, 1, 2, 27; cf. Epitome, V Concerning Law and Gospel, Ep. V, 1, 2. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 581,586, 500; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 558,563, 477-478.

⁷⁶⁶ See "The Confutation of the Augsburg Confession," in Kolb and Nestingen (eds.), *Sources and Contexts of the Book of Concord*, 113.

⁷⁶⁷ Mainwhile, FC 6 gives the explanation to the dispute about the third function of the law. It was argued that the law of God is used in three functions, namely, 1) to maintain external discipline and respectability against dissolute, disobedient people; 2) to bring such people to a recognition of their sins; and, 3) To be used by those who have been born anew through God's Spirit. Since nevertheless the flesh still clings to Christians, they need the law to orient and conduct their entire life. Lutherans disagreed over whether the law was a necessary guide for good works produced after being justified. One party taught and held that the reborn do not need to learn from the law about new obedience or good works in their life because the reborn have been liberated by Jesus Christ. Meanwhile, the other party taught that believers still need God's written law even though those who believe in Christ are

Following the 1951 Confession, the Confession of 1996 sporadically mentions and emphasizes the gospel. Although references to the gospel are not always directly linked to the law, in the sense that on the one hand the law “reveals, denounces, and condemns sin,” but on the other hand the gospel promises grace given in Christ or justifies “the terrified or make[s] them alive,” Batak Church Confessions are substantially aware of the distinction.⁷⁶⁸

Furthermore, as discussed in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV, the Confession of 1951 shows no similarities with the AC on a very important area regarding this distinction. The same thing happened also in the 1996 Confession. Neither the Confession of 1951 nor the Confession of 1996 provides a special article on Confession and Repentance, whereas in the explanation of the two, confession and repentance, AC shows how the principal of distinguishing law and gospel is fundamentally applied.⁷⁶⁹

The 1996 Confession retains the notion of the 1951 Confession about the gospel in several articles: Article III concerning “the Special Acts of the Triune God”; Article VIII concerning “the Church”; Article IX concerning “Those Who Minister in the Church”; Article XIV Concerning Food; and Article I “Concerning God”. Meanwhile, the Confession of 1996 omits the notion of gospel in Article XI of the

truly motivated by the Spirit of God and do the will of God according to their new life, being justified and freed by Christ. The Holy Spirit uses the written law to teach them how to serve God in their life. FC VI affirms that believers should be taught the law. FC explains that “although Christians who believe faithfully have been truly converted to God, and have been justified are indeed freed and liberated from the curse of the law, they should daily practice the law of the Lord.” [FC SD VI, 4]. In order not to misunderstand the fulfillment of the law in the life of justified believers as the works of the law, FC maintains that even though good works done by the liberated Christian conform to the law, they are not “works of the law but works and fruits of the Spirit” (FC SD VI, 17). FC SD Concerning the Third Use of the Law, SD VI, 1,2,3,4, 15,17; cf. Epitome, VI Concerning the Third Use of the Law, Ep. VI, 1-7. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 587,589, 590, 502-503; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 563-564, 566, 479-481.

⁷⁶⁸ Ap. XII Repentance, XII, 53. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 195; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 189.

⁷⁶⁹ See the discussion of this notion in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV.

1951 Confession entitled "Church Order". The same also happens to Article XV of the Confession of 1951 concerning "Faith and Good Works", in which the reformulation is weaker to some extent than that of the 1951 Confession. Likewise, a closer examination of Article VII of the 1951 Confession and Article VI of the 1996 Confession concerning salvation will be provided. Furthermore, the Confession of 1996 adds emphasis in certain places that maintain the distinction of law and gospel.

5.2.3.1 The Formulations that Retain the 1951 Confession's Emphasis of the Distinction of Law and Gospel

The 1996 Confession retains, with little change, the formulation of the 1951 Confession about gospel in Article III concerning "The Special Acts of the Triune God," in the section on the Holy Spirit, in which the Confession of 1951 says that "we oppose and reject the doctrine that states that the Holy Spirit can descend on man through his own efforts, not necessarily through the Gospel".⁷⁷⁰ This part is reformulated in the 1996 Confession as follows:

He [the Holy Spirit] is the one who makes the Gospel bears fruit. He also establishes the Church in the world. The Holy Spirit works in the believers and so the fruits are not determined by any effort of human being (Gal. 5: 22-23; Eph. 4: 3-6). He is the source of every great work (miracle) that glorifies God.⁷⁷¹

As explained in the discussion of this topic in the Confession of 1951, the background for this was the challenge of Pentecostals and Enthusiasts, who had introduced glossolalia.⁷⁷² Pentecostals and Enthusiasts were understood to teach that

⁷⁷⁰ Article III entitled "the Special Acts of the Triune God". See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 7.

⁷⁷¹ Article I Concerning God in the Confession of 1996. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 77-78.

⁷⁷² See section 4.2.3.

the Holy Spirit can be possessed through one's own efforts, holiness and prayer.⁷⁷³ The 1996 Confession describes such phenomena as "spiritism" and "glossolalia,"⁷⁷⁴ as "the teaching that equates the Holy Spirit to the spirits in this world," demonstrating that the HKBP still faces such challenges.⁷⁷⁵ HKBP condemns them as false doctrines about the Holy Spirit. In rejecting them, one of the arguments used in the Confession of 1996, which follows the 1951 Confession, is the principle of the distinction of law and gospel. Good works are produced through the agency of the Holy Spirit, not by the efforts of the believer. The gospel is mentioned in this article to show that the Holy Spirit is present as a gift from God, and it is the Holy Spirit that enables the believer to produce good works.

The 1996 Confession retains unaltered the formulation of Article VIII about "the Church," in which the Confession of 1951 states, "We believe and confess that the true church is present when the gospel is purely preached".⁷⁷⁶ The 1996 Confession formulates it as follows, "The signs of the true church are: a) when the gospel is purely preached and taught."⁷⁷⁷ The parallel of this notion is on AC Article VII "Concerning the Church".⁷⁷⁸

The 1996 Confession also keeps the formulation of Article IX of the 1951 Confession Concerning Those Who Minister in the Church, which lists the duties of

⁷⁷³ Article III entitled "the Special Acts of the Triune God". See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 7.

⁷⁷⁴ Article I Concerning God in the Confession of 1996. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 78.

⁷⁷⁵ Article I Concerning God in the Confession of 1996. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 78. This reference captures the rejection of the influence of Batak traditional ancestor worship over its understanding of *tondi* (the essence of human being; soul-power, spirit). See the discussion of this matter in section 2.1.3.2 and in section 6.2; cf. Ph. O. L. Tobing, *The Structure of the Toba-Batak Belief in the High God*, 98-101; Harry Parkin, *Batak Fruit of the Hindu Thought*, 145-149.

⁷⁷⁶ The 1951 Confession lists three signs of the true church. They are a) the pure teaching of the gospel b) the proper administration of the two sacraments as instituted by Christ c) the exercise of church discipline in order to prevent sin. Article VIII concerning the Church. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

⁷⁷⁷ Article VIII concerning the Church of the 1996 Confession. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 85.

⁷⁷⁸ See the discussion of this topic in section 4.2.3 section.

those who minister in the church. As discussed in section 4.2.5.1, the Confession of 1951 adopted this notion from AC article V, which lists the duties of those who minister in the church highlighting especially, “preaching the gospel to the members of the church and to those who are not yet members.”⁷⁷⁹ This formulation is retained in the 1996 Confession and the duty widened to include: “Preaching the Gospel to the members of the church in this world, and to all creation.”⁷⁸⁰ Although this article in the HKBP Confessions contains nothing resembling AC’s declaration that in the gospel “we have a gracious God, not through our merit but through Christ’s merit,”⁷⁸¹ by including “preaching the gospel” in its confession, the HKBP has substantially maintained its awareness of the distinction of law and gospel.⁷⁸²

Likewise, the inclusion of article XIV “Concerning Food” in the 1951 Confession which adopts AC XXVI is also retained in the Confession of 1996. The principle of law and gospel is maintained in the Confession of 1951 when it asserts that one “does not become holy by observing food regulations but receives holiness from God through faith.”⁷⁸³ The substance of this notion is retained in the 1996 Confession when it states, “One does not becomes holy by observing the distinction among foods. It is faith which makes holiness happen.”⁷⁸⁴

Similarly, the notion of law and gospel, which appears in article I “Concerning God” of the Confession of 1951, is retained in the Confession of 1996.

⁷⁷⁹ Article IX of the 1951 Confession concerning Those Who Minister in the Church. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

⁷⁸⁰ Article IX concerning Those Who Minister in the Church of the 1996 Confession. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 87. The inclusion of the phrase “to all creation” in this article of the 1996 Confession is to give space for a new, current and burning issue in the Batak church, and in Indonesian churches in general, especially at the level of church leaders. It was also part of the program of the worldwide movement of churches ecumenically to promote “Justice, Peace and [the] Integrity of Creation”.

⁷⁸¹ Article V of AC Concerning the Office of Preaching (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 40-41.

⁷⁸² See the discussion of this matter in 4.2.3 section.

⁷⁸³ Article XIV Concerning Food. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁷⁸⁴ Article XIV concerning Foods of the 1996 Confession. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 91.

As argued in section 4.2.3, the formulation of the nature of God, which integrates the dimensions of righteous judgement with mercy and grace, is intended to maintain the principle of distinguishing law from gospel.⁷⁸⁵ The 1996 Confession retains this notion and continues to describe God as both “full of anger to those who do not obey his word” and “gracious, of great mercy, full of compassion, full of forgiveness, savior.”⁷⁸⁶

5.2.3.2 The 1996 Confession Omits the 1951 Confession’s Emphasis on the Distinction of Law and Gospel

In general, the 1996 Confession retains the basic message of Article XV of the Confession of 1951 concerning “Faith and Good Works”. It states, “He errs who hopes to obtain righteousness, life, comfort and bliss by doing good works. The Lord Jesus alone can forgive sins and bring a man into relationship with God.”⁷⁸⁷

Article XII “Work and Faith”⁷⁸⁸ of the 1996 Confession substantially retains the above formulation by stating, “One is misguided if one hopes one can obtain righteousness, life, comfort, and bliss by doing good works (Ep. 2:8; Rom 5:1).”⁷⁸⁹

It means that the emphasis on the distinction of law and gospel in the 1951 Confession is also found in the 1996 Confession. However, one important part in the 1951 Confession is missing from the 1996 version. The 1951 Confession states, “Although we have to keep the Ten Commandments, man lives by faith and not by

⁷⁸⁵ See Section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV.

⁷⁸⁶ Article I Concerning God of the 1996 Confession. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 74.

⁷⁸⁷ Article XV of the 1951 Confession entitled “Faith and Good Works”. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁷⁸⁸ The title of this article has been altered from of “Faith and Good Works” (the 1951 Confession) to become “Work and Faith” (the 1996 Confession).

⁷⁸⁹ Article XII entitled “Work and Faith” in the Confession of 1996. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 89.

doing good works.”⁷⁹⁰ The 1996 Confession omits this, making the presentation of the distinction of law and gospel in Article XII slightly weaker compared to the 1951 Confession.⁷⁹¹ As already shown in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV, the 1951 Confession accommodates the idea from AC XX which maintained the distinction of law and gospel in such a way that law is not neglected but is not a requirement for salvation either.⁷⁹²

Now, attention can be given to the similarities and differences of the two confessions according to the strength of their emphasis on the distinction between the roles of law and gospel in obtaining salvation. Clearly, both formulate salvation in terms of this distinction. However, while neither Confession directly use the terms law or gospel in the article about salvation, the distinction lies behind the formulation of each. Article VI of the 1996 Confession entitled “Salvation” is to some extent weaker in its presentation of the distinction of law and gospel. Article VI of the 1996 Confession makes its adherence to “faith alone” abundantly clear:

Out of his mercy and love God provides salvation for human beings through the redemption of his only Son Jesus Christ ... Human beings obtain salvation through faith, which faith is worked by the Holy Spirit, and such faith is reckoned by God as the righteousness of human beings.⁷⁹³

However, the distinction of law and gospel in Article VII “Salvation from Sin” in the Confession of 1951 has vanished from the 1996 Confession, which simply reads, “We believe and confess that salvation from sin cannot be gained by means of good

⁷⁹⁰ Article XV concerning Faith and Good Works. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁷⁹¹ Article XV concerning Faith and Good Works. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 13.

⁷⁹² See the discussion of this topic in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV.

⁷⁹³ Article VI of the 1996 Confession Concerning Salvation. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 82.

works, or through one's own power, but only by the grace of God through the redemption of Jesus Christ.”⁷⁹⁴

As already shown in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV, the 1951 Confession accommodated the idea from AC IV, emphasizing that human beings cannot obtain salvation through their own work. In its further explanation of the teaching of justification by faith, the Lutheran Confessions emphasize the distinction of law and gospel in many places.⁷⁹⁵

The 1996 Confession also omits the notion of law and gospel in its article on "Church Order". This 1951 article applies a dialectical relationship of law and gospel to explain the need for church order in organizing the church, on the one hand, and, on the other, to insist that by observing all church order and regulation one should not think of such acts as necessary for salvation. The article reads, “But it must be distinctly remembered that the faithful observance of all these cannot bring us the benefit of the forgiveness of sin.”⁷⁹⁶ This part is omitted in the 1996 Confession. As explained in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV, the inclusion of the law and gospel principle in explaining church order shows how the Confession of 1951 embraces the Lutheran conviction.⁷⁹⁷

5.2.3.3 The newly added formulations in the 1996 Confession on the Distinction of Law and Gospel

In certain places the 1996 Confession adds emphases that maintain the distinction of law and gospel. In the description about “God the Son” within Article I Concerning God, the 1996 Confession, in the rejection section, states that the HKBP

⁷⁹⁴ See the discussion of this topic in section 5.2.1.

⁷⁹⁵ See the discussion of this topic in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV.

⁷⁹⁶ Article XII concerning Church Order. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 12.

⁷⁹⁷ See the explanation of this topic in section 4.2.3 of Chapter IV.

rejects the teaching that “good works ... performed by human beings are able to obtain salvation for them.”⁷⁹⁸ A similar notion also appears in Article III concerning Human Being, a new article that previously did not exist in the 1951 Confession. This says, “Human beings do not have any power to obtain salvation,” but “the only way to obtain salvation is by the mercy of God granted in Jesus Christ’s redemptive work.”⁷⁹⁹ By both the emphases of these two newly added passages the 1996 Confession clearly maintains an awareness of the distinction of law and gospel in its presentation of salvation, even though, as explained earlier, there is an important phrase omitted from the article on salvation.

5.2.4 On the Church

The Confession of 1996 does not change the formulation of the 1951 Confession concerning the church. It follows the common description of the universal nature of the church, defining the church as communion of saints and characterizing it as holy, catholic (universal), and one (united). The HKBP added to this universal formulation a typically Lutheran understanding of the church in the following words: “The true church is present when the gospel is purely preached, [and]when the two sacraments are truly administered as instituted by the Lord Jesus.”⁸⁰⁰

However, as already mentioned in the discussion of this matter in the 1951 Confession, in addition to gospel and sacraments, the Confession of 1996 also affirms another mark for the true church, namely, the exercise of church discipline.

⁷⁹⁸ Article I Concerning God in the Confession of 1996. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 77.

⁷⁹⁹ Article III entitled “Human Being” in the Confession of 1996. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, the Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 79, 80. Cf. The Indonesian and English translation are provided in this document consecutively on pp. 106 and 131.

⁸⁰⁰ Article VIII of 1951 Confession and Article VII of 1996 Confession.

For the Batak Church, church discipline is needed, and in order to prevent sin is also counted as an essential mark of the true church. It appears that the 1996 Confession, although it does not omit church discipline as one of the marks of the true church, made a little revision concerning the position of church discipline among the true marks of the church. According to the HKBP, the exercise of church discipline is still considered important and cannot be forgotten in the description of the church, but, as the 1996 Confession now emphasizes, the true marks of the church are first of all the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. The 1996 Confession does not omit church discipline but emphasizes the primary importance of the gospel and the two sacraments by adding the following: “By means of this doctrine we emphasize that God reveals himself and makes reconciliation in Jesus Christ through the gospel and the two sacraments.”⁸⁰¹

As discussed in section 4.2.4 of Chapter IV, Andar Lumbantobing had criticized the inclusion of the exercise of church discipline as equal in importance to the proclamation of the gospel and administration of the sacraments in the teaching on the church. This addition shows that the criticism has been duly noted and accepted.

It should also be noted here that in the description of the character of church, the 1996 Confession omitted one expression from Article VIII of the 1951 Confession that stated, “By means of this doctrine (justification by faith) we oppose and reject the doctrine which states that holiness can be gained through one’s own works.”⁸⁰² This shows that for the 1996 Confession the emphasis on justification by faith in the description of the characteristics of the holy church is not considered as essential as in the 1951 Confession.

⁸⁰¹ Article VII of the 1996 Confession entitled “the Church”. See *Panindangion Haporsean, Pengakuan Iman, the Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 85.

⁸⁰² Article VIII entitled “The Church”. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 10.

5.2.5 On Sacraments

5.2.5.1 Similarities to the 1951 Confession

The description of sacraments in Article VIII of the 1996 Confession is almost the same as Article X of the 1951 Confession. There is no significant change. In the explanation of the sacrament the 1996 Confession added only that the existence of faith in believers is due to the intervention of the Holy Spirit. It states:

There are only two sacraments in the Protestant Church, namely, Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. The Lord Jesus has instituted them for His church in order to grant through visible signs His invisible grace, namely, [the] forgiveness of sins, salvation, reconciliation, life and bliss, which are to be received by faith worked by the Holy Spirit.⁸⁰³

Meanwhile the Confession of 1951 describes the matter in this way:

There are only two sacraments which we should administer as commanded by the Lord Jesus, Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. The Lord Jesus has instituted them for His church in order to grant through visible signs His invisible grace, namely, [the] forgiveness of sins, salvation, life and bliss, which are to be received by faith.⁸⁰⁴

An understanding that faith is present in the believer as the intervention of the Holy Spirit, however, is not absent in the 1951 Confession. It is explained in the Article about salvation (Article VII), which is also retained in the 1996 Confession (Article VI).⁸⁰⁵ It means that the emphasis on faith as a result of the work of Holy Spirit was not repeated in the 1951 Confession description of sacraments, while the 1996 Confession emphasizes it once again.

5.2.5.2 No new efforts to better bond with the formulation of the Lutheran Confessions

⁸⁰³ Article VIII of the 1996 Confession entitled “The Sacraments”. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 85.

⁸⁰⁴ Article X entitled “The Holy Sacraments”. See *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 11.

⁸⁰⁵ See the discussion of the matter in 5.2.1 section.

The 1996 Confession fully retains the formulation of the 1951 Confession concerning the Holy Communion, which reads,

Holy Communion is the eating of the bread as a means of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the drinking of the wine as a means of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby we obtain the forgiveness of sins, life, and bliss.⁸⁰⁶

Even though the HKBP has been a member of the LWF since 1952, the 1996 Confession does not improve the formulation on the Lord's Supper in a way that would fully embrace the Lutheran conviction of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the elements of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.

It is worthy of note that the other members of the LWF in Indonesia, namely the GKPI and the GKPS, have shown a clearer understanding. The GKPI, which wrote its own confession in 1991, long after the 1951 Confession, states clearly in its Basic Articles of Faith,

The Holy Communion is the message of Lord Jesus Christ, who says: "Take, eat, this is my body," and, "All of you drink it, for this is my blood ..." (Matt. 26:26-27). Because of the Words that accompany the physical eating and drinking, we, therefore, receive the true body and blood of Christ.⁸⁰⁷

The GKPS in its new formulated confession from 2015 emphasizes the real presence in their description of the Holy Communion. The Confession of the GKPS states,

The GKPS acknowledges and teaches that in the Holy Communion the body and blood of Christ are truly present under the bread and wine, which become the vehicle of the sacrament. It is the Word that distinguishes the bread and wine of the Holy Communion with the regular bread and wine. It is also the

⁸⁰⁶ Article VIII entitled "The Sacraments," of the 1996 Confession. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 86. Cf. *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 11; "Confession of Faith of the Protestant Christian Batak Church (H.K.B.P.)," edited by Edward Nyhus and Lothar Schreiner in Gerald H. Anderson (ed.), *Asian Voices in Christian Theology*, 223.

⁸⁰⁷ Article IX, 6 (The Sacraments). See GKPI, *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (The Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI) (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, 1991), 26.

Words of institution that make the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ (Luke 22: 19-20).⁸⁰⁸

5.2.5.3 Indonesian translation of the 1996 Confession and Luther

The Indonesian version of the 1996 Confession uses the term “vehicle”⁸⁰⁹ for bread and wine. The Indonesian version reads as follows:

Holy Communion is the eating of the bread as a vehicle of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the drinking of the wine as a vehicle of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby we obtain the forgiveness of sins, life, and bliss.⁸¹⁰

The use of the term “vehicle” in the Indonesian version of the Confession of 1996 probably has something to do with Luther’s use of the word “sign” because from the discussion of “sign” in relation to the elements of bread and wine came along also the explanation of the bread and wine as “the vehicle” of the presence of Christ.

Basically Luther could use the term “sign” of the element of bread. In his treatise, *The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods* (1519), Luther affirmed that bread (and wine) is “a sure sign”.⁸¹¹ This is particularly emphasized by Luther in his rejection of the teaching of

⁸⁰⁸ See Article of the Confession of the GKPS (Indonesian: Konfessi GKPS). This Confession was issued by the Sinode Bolon ke- 42 (General Assembly) of the GKPS on 9-14 Juli 2015 at Balei Bolon GKPS Pematang Siantar. At the 42th Sinode Bolon Assembly of the GKPS it was decided that this confession would be discussed again in order to have a final draft at the Executive Board Committee in October 2015 and by 2016 the document would be officially issued in all the congregations of the GKPS. See Minutes of the 42th Sinode Bolon Assembly of the GKPS (Risalah Sinode Bolon GKPS ke- 42). Pematangsiantar, 9 June-14 June 2015, 85.

⁸⁰⁹ The Indonesian word “sarana” is a translation for the Batak term “parhitean”, which literally means “as a means of mediating,” “medium,” or “bridge”. Etymologically, the word “parhitean” comes from “hite,” which means “a bridge,” or a small bridge made from a tree or plank, laid across a stream. The prefix “par” and suffix “a” give the word meaning “the bridge which one uses”. See J. Warneck, *Kamus Batak Toba – Indonesia*. Translated by Leo Joosten (Medan: Bina Media, 2003), 133; cf. Andar Lumbantobing, “The Confession of the Batak Church,” in *The Church and the Confessions*, 205; Darwin Lumbantobing, *Burning and Current Theological Issues. Isu-isu Teologi Hangat dan Terkini di HKBP*, 91.

⁸¹⁰ Article VIII entitled “The Sacraments” of the 1996 Confession. See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 113.

⁸¹¹ Luther, “The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods” (1519), *LW* 35, 52.

transubstantiation of the Catholic Church, which states that by the Words of institution the bread and wine become substantially the body and blood of Christ even though the form of bread and wine remain. For Luther, however, the bread remains bread and wine remains wine but with the Words of institution Christ's body and blood are present in the elements. In his confrontation with Zwingli, who thought that the bread was only a symbol and that Christ was not present in the Lord's Supper, Luther maintained that the elements are no longer "mere bread and wine" after the Words of institution. The bread and wine are more than a mere sign. The bread and wine are "the vehicle" of the presence of Christ.⁸¹² The Word is the one that makes Christ present in the elements of bread and wine. Luther thus is very much concerned with the Words of institution as the basis for the understanding of the Lord's Supper and for the presence of Christ "in and under" the bread and wine.⁸¹³ Furthermore, in the writing considered Luther's most detailed and most profound teaching on the Lord's Supper,⁸¹⁴ *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* (1528), Luther described his theory of "sacramental union," namely, that Christ truly unites himself with the bread and wine without causing it to cease being bread and wine.⁸¹⁵

The formulation of the 1951 and the 1996 Confessions on the Lord's Supper is close to Lutheran teaching. Firstly, it basically follows the formulation of the

⁸¹² Cf. Vilmos Vajta, *Luther on Worship. An Interpretation*. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 92. (Fortress Press, 1958; Previously published by Muhlenberg Press, 1958).

⁸¹³ SC V, 7-8; LC V, 10; SA [6:] Concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, 4. See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 362-363, 468, 320; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 311, 352, 448.

⁸¹⁴ Editor's Introduction for "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper," and General Introduction for LW Vol. 37. See *LW 37*, xv, 158.

⁸¹⁵ Luther, "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper," (1528), *LW 37*, 299-303; cf. Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confession*, 193; Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology. Its Historical and Systematic Development* (1995), 309; Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation*, translated by Thomas H. Trapp (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans, 2008), 273; Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 126-127.

Lord's Supper in Luther's Small Catechism. In so doing, it needs to realize the background of the use of the local word "parhitean" (as a means of mediating; medium, bridge, a vehicle) in the presentation of the HKBP on the Lord's Supper, as explained by K. Sitompul. The term "parhitean" does not exclude the real presence (a bodily presence) of Christ in the elements of bread and wine. Secondly, the formulation of the HKBP clearly does not express the idea that the bread and wine are only signs without the presence of Christ. Furthermore, there is no rejection in this formulation of the bread and wine as the very body and blood of Christ no statement or understanding that the bread (and wine) is only "a divine sign and confirmation" of Jesus' body (and blood), as for example maintained in the Heidelberg Catechism, which had earlier been translated into the Batak language and introduced into the Batak Church. Christ is understood as present in the Lord's Supper, although the formulation does not proceed with the language of the real presence. It is true that Reformed churches, following Calvin, also understand that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper, but Christ is present spiritually not bodily. This position was also adopted by Zwingli in the latter version of his presentation of the Lord's Supper.⁸¹⁶ It is also obvious that the HKBP needs to decide which of these doctrines it embraces.

5.2.6 Several Other Topics

5.2.6.1 On the Servant of God in the Church

In the explanation of the office of the ministry, Article IX of the 1996 Confession formulates a clear Lutheran principle of the universal priesthood of all believers. The 1996 Confession, following AC, understands that only those who are ordained can

⁸¹⁶ See the description of the views of Zwingli and Calvin on the Lord's Supper in section 4.2.5.

publicly preach the Word and administer the Sacraments. In addition to this, the Batak Church also defines several other tasks of the office of the ministry, namely, doing pastoral care, overseeing the true and pure doctrine through exercising church discipline, and doing diaconal work. The 1996 Confession adds some more to this list: overseeing the entire life of the church, helping people to overcome poverty and stupidity, taking care of the state of advancement of the society on the basis of justice and truth, and respecting every single person as made in the image of God (*Imago Dei*). These additions show the church's awareness of social issues outside the church building. This is in the spirit of the "development plan," initiated and promoted by the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI). The 1996 Confession emphasizes that it is the minister who will be responsible for the fulfillment of all these tasks. This is in accordance with the Lutheran view of the office of minister.

The Confession of 1996 states:

In churches of the Reformation it is the office of the ministry which is responsible for all the tasks mentioned above. Therefore, we oppose anyone in the church who administers the Sacraments without being ordained to be a pastor.⁸¹⁷

5.2.6.2 On Church Rites

In the 1951 Confession the description concerning "Church Order" relating to "Church Rites" (AC XV) concludes with the statement, "[I]t must be distinctly remembered that the faithful observance of all these cannot bring us the benefit of the forgiveness of sin."⁸¹⁸ However, the article in the 1996 Confession concentrates on the necessity of "Church Order" as an instrument in regulating the life of the church. Unlike the 1951 Confession, there is no more exhortation on the importance

⁸¹⁷ Article VII of the 1996 Confession entitled "the Church". See *Panindangion Haporseaon, Pengakuan Iman, The Confession of Faith HKBP 1951 & 1996*, 87.

⁸¹⁸ *Confession of Faith of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant*, 12.

of doing all good works without falling into the error of thinking that this brings us merit.

One of the ways the HKBP ensures good order in the church is through its Constitution. The Batak Church, which later became the HKBP, had since the period of the western missionaries possessed a Church Constitution. The first church constitution is from 1868. The HKBP has revised its church constitution many times. The current Church Constitution is the 11th edition, accepted at *Sinode Godang HKBP* (general assembly of the HKBP) in 2002.⁸¹⁹

The 1996 Confession emphasizes the importance of the existence of the Order of Church Discipline, a second way in which the HKBP maintains church order. The existence and practice of “the Order of Church Discipline” is one of the characteristics of the Batak churches, originally primarily intended to oppose ancestor worship.⁸²⁰ Within the rules maintained by “the Order of Church Discipline” every action and behavior contrary to the Ten Commandments will be punished. Problems that often occurred in Batak churches, in addition to the involvement in ancestor worship, were sex before marriage, polygamy/polyandry (mostly in the past), etc. The HKBP has already revised its Order of Church Discipline three times (1924, 1952, 1987), and for the latest document the church has already altered the enforcement of Church Discipline from punishment to pastoral care. This changed the name of the document on church discipline to “Ruhut Parmahanion dohot Paminsangon” (Order of Pastoral Care and Punishment) in which pastoral care is emphasized rather than punishment.⁸²¹ In addition, this document also guides the congregation to cope with new problems such as re-baptism; in vitro

⁸¹⁹ Hutaauruk, *Menata Rumah Allah* (2008), 21-22; cf. Hutaauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus* (2011), 188-191; *Aturan dan Peraturan HKBP 2002*, 3.

⁸²⁰ Hutaauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus* (2011), 185.

⁸²¹ Hutaauruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus* (2011), 186-187.

fertilization (IVF); living together without being married; using narcotics, morphine, or marijuana; pornography, “action porn;” prostitution; homosexuality; “marriage contracts;” abortion; corruption; etc.⁸²²

5.2.6.3 On Government

The 1996 Confession retains the basic and most fundamental principle of the role of the state or government. The government is also God’s servant. Its main duty is to maintain law and order.

But the 1996 Confession adds an emphasis on the pluralistic context of Indonesia in which the church highly values the *Pancasila*. *Pancasila* is the principle of Indonesian society that all groups should live in harmony.⁸²³ This confession also acknowledges that the church should work to bring justice and prosperity.

5.2.6.4 On Foods

The 1996 Confession reiterates the position that all foods are eatable. This refers to the practice of prohibiting certain foods. The HKBP wants to make clear that this church does not practise any such prohibition. Some Christians from other denominations in Indonesia do. Moreover, the majority of Indonesians are Muslims, and they do practise food prohibitions (pork is banned and meat must be halal).

⁸²² Hutaaruk, *Lahir, Berakar dan Bertumbuh di dalam Kristus* (2011), 187; *Buku Ruhut Parmahanion dohot Paminsangon di Huria Kristen Batak Protestan*, (Pearaja: Kantor Pusat HKBP, 1987), 25, 26, 41.

⁸²³ *Pancasila* (The Five Pillars), which is listed in the preamble of *Undang-Undang Dasar 1945* (the Indonesian Constitution) is the state philosophy. *Pancasila* consists of five principles: recognition of the one and only God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of the Indonesian people, democracy in the sense of the traditional means of reaching consensus, and social justice for all Indonesians. *Pancasila* guarantees religious freedom. Although a majority of Indonesians are Muslims, the constitution acknowledges the existence of other religions and guarantees their equal status under the law. There are six religions recognized by the state - Islam, Christian [referring to the Protestant Churches], Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

It is interesting that this confession advises church members to eat to fill normal needs and not to waste food. At any feast in Batakland the church knows that people tend to eat and drink as much as possible without regard to others. So this article advises its member to show consideration to others in such a situation.

5.3 The Emergence of the Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI

The GKPI was established on August 30, 1964 as a result of internal conflict in the HKBP.⁸²⁴ Since the split from the HKBP was not caused by a doctrinal dispute but by a leadership conflict, the structure and content of GKPI's Basic Articles of Faith are similar to those of the HKBP. Jan S. Aritonang, who wrote a history of the GKPI for its 50th year jubilee, mentions that the confession of the GKPI was "more or less inspired by the Confession of the HKBP."⁸²⁵

It is interesting that in the First General Synod Meeting of the GKPI of 1966 the decision was made that the GKPI would continue to use the 1951 Confession as its confession. At that time, the GKPI was not ready yet to draft its new confession.⁸²⁶ This is also evidence that the separation of the GKPI from the HKBP had nothing to do with doctrinal dispute.

In its Church Constitution of 1966, despite making reference to Jesus Christ as the only foundation of the church as the Bible of both Old and New Testaments proclaims, the GKPI clearly stated that the Apostle Creeds and Luther's Small

⁸²⁴ There are a number of books that cover the history of the emergence of the GKPI, such as Walter Lempp, *Benih yang Tumbuh XII*, Suatu Survey mengenai Gereja-gereja di Sumatera Utara (Jakarta: LPS-DGI, 1976); Radja Lubis, *Timbul dan Berkembangnya Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, 2007); T.M.S.P. Marbun, *GKPI dalam Sejarah dan Konteks Pergumulannya* (Medan: Partama Mitra, 2012). The GKPI itself published an official history of this church. See Jan S. Aritonang, *Yubileum 50 Tahun GKPI. Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan ke Depan* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2014).

⁸²⁵ Aritonang, *Yubileum 50 Tahun GKPI. Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan ke Depan*, 26-27.

⁸²⁶ *Laporan Ringkas Synode Am ke-1 Geredja Kristen Protestan Indonesia (GKPI) 18-22 April 1966* [Brief Report to the 1st Synod Assembly of the GKPI] (Pematangsiantar: Kantor Pusat GKPI), 14; Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther dan Relevansinya di Indonesia*, 304.

Catechism were their guidance in fulfilling the three basic functions of the church (*koinonia* [fellowship], *marturia* [witness], and *diakonia* [service]). The GKPI saw that in these two documents the essence of its faith was substantially expressed.⁸²⁷ In later the Church Constitution of the GKPI reference to Luther's Small Catechism is replaced by "Luther's Catechism". It apparently means that the GKPI now refer not exclusively to Luther's Small Catechism but to both Luther's Small Catechism and Large Catechism instead.⁸²⁸

The General Synod of the GKPI in 1988 decided to draft its own confession.⁸²⁹ The driving force for this decision was the existence of sects and various teachings that created confusion and challenges to members of the GKPI. The General Synod of 1988 was convinced that a confession would help church members to understand the identity and teachings of the GKPI.⁸³⁰ The decision is mentioned in the section entitled "Dogma, Confession and Identity of the GKPI" at General Synod of 1988: "Assigned to the Central Executive Board of the GKPI to draft a confession of the GKPI that will clearly describe the convictions and identity of the GKPI."⁸³¹

Two years before, in the General Synod of 1986 there was still objection to acknowledging the need for drafting a confession from those who said that "the time

⁸²⁷ See "Tata Geredja – Geredja Kristen Protestant Indonesia. Yang Disahkan dan Ditetapkan oleh Sidang Pleno Synode Am-I pada tanggal 20 April 1966," [Church Constitution of the GKPI which passed by 1st Synod Assembly of] 1966] in *Laporan Ringkas Synode Am ke-1 Geredja Kristen Protestan Indonesia (GKPI)* 18-22 April 1966, 5-6; cf. GKPI, *Almanak ni Geredja Kristen Protestant Indonesia 1966* (Pematangsiantar: Colportase GKPI, 1966), 5; Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther dan Relevansinya di Indonesia*, 306.

⁸²⁸ Tata Gereja GKPI (Church Constitution of the GKPI) Article II, 1b; PRT GKPI (Bylaws) Article 81, 4. See in *Almanak GKPI Tahun 2015*, 389, 441

⁸²⁹ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 3; *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1993), i.

⁸³⁰ See *Intisari Keputusan Sinode Am IX GKPI, 5-9 September 1988, Medan* (Minutes of 9th General Synod of the GKPI, 1988), 89.

⁸³¹ *Intisari Keputusan Sinode Am IX GKPI, 5-9 September 1988, Medan* (Minutes of 9th General Synod of the GKPI, 1988), 72.

for drafting a confession is not yet at this very moment.”⁸³² Even Andar

Lumbantobing, who led the church as bishop for 24 years, expressed a view that GKPI’s formulation in its constitution, brief though it might be, was adequate.

Lumbantobing pointed to Article II, 1 of Church Constitution of the GKPI which reads,

The Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia (GKPI) believes in Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior, as revealed by God’s Word, namely the Old Testament and New Testament. This confession motivates and illuminates the whole life of the members of the GKPI.⁸³³

In a paper presented in 1990, Andar Lumbantobing, in which he wrote as theologian rather than former church leader, voiced out that a newly separated confession was not needed.⁸³⁴ Instead, Lumbantobing recommended the GKPI to draw up a sort of “Catechism for Adults” as had been done in Germany a few years previously. This Pastors’ Conference of 1990 respected Lumbantobing’s view that, basically, the GKPI had had a confession. Therefore, what the GKPI needed, the Conference argued, was guidance on basic articles of faith.⁸³⁵ Lumbantobing argued that two small books written by Dahlenburg concerning Holy Baptism and Holy Communion were sufficient as guidance on the issue of the church doctrine.⁸³⁶ Nonetheless, it had been decided to draft a new confession.

⁸³² See Aritonang *Yubileum 50 Tahun GKPI. Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan ke Depan*, 103.

⁸³³ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 3; *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1993), i; cf. Pasal 1, Tata Gereja GKPI yang Disahkan dan Ditetapkan oleh Sidang Pleno Sinode Am I pada tanggal 20 April 1966; Tata Gereja GKPI 2013, Pasal II, 1 tentang Pengakuan dan Tujuan [Church Constitution of 2013, Article II, 1 Concerning Confession and Goals], See *Almanak GKPI Tahun 2015*, 388.

⁸³⁴ Andar Lumbantobing, “Perluakah GKPI Menyusun suatu Konfessi pada Masa Kini?” [Is it Necessary for our Church to Draft a Confession at this Time?] in *Notulen Rapat Pendeta GKPI XX, 26-28 Maret 1990, Tomok* [Minutes of Pastors’ Conference of 1990], 11-12.

⁸³⁵ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 3; *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1993), i; *Notulen Rapat Pendeta GKPI XX, 26-28 Maret 1990, Tomok*; Simorangkir, *Ajaran Dua Kerajaan Luther dan Relevansinya di Indonesia*, 310; Aritonang *Yubileum 50 Tahun GKPI. Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan ke Depan*, 103.

⁸³⁶ Andar Lumbantobing, “Perluakah GKPI Menyusun suatu Konfessi pada Masa Kini?” in *Notulen Rapat Pendeta GKPI XX, 26-28 Maret 1990, Tomok*, 12. The titles of the books that Lumbantong referred to were not mentioned specifically but perhaps he referred to these books of Dahlenburg’s:

A year later, at the Pastors' Conference in 1991,⁸³⁷ the Committee for Drafting GKPI's Confession presented a draft entitled "Pokok-pokok Ajaran Iman GKPI" (Basic Doctrines of the GKPI), which consisted of 16 articles.⁸³⁸ The 16 articles concern: 1) The Bible, 2) God, 3) Human Beings, 4) The Justification of Sinners, 5) The Church, 6) Three Tasks of the Church, 7) The Sacraments, 8) Confirmation, 9) Priesthood of All Believers, 10) Those Who Minister in the Church; 11) Christian Family, 12) Worship, 13) Offering, 14) Faith and Culture (*Adat*), 15) Faith and Science, and, 16) Church and Government.⁸³⁹ The Committee stated that they consulted several sources, namely, the Bible, the Lutheran Confessions, especially Luther's Small Catechism, Large Catechism, Augsburg Confession, and Formula of Concord, and also the Church Constitution and Details of Organizational Affairs (Bylaws), and a document called "Pemahaman Bersama Umat Kristen di Indonesia" (Common Understanding of Christians in Indonesia), which had been drafted by the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (CCI).⁸⁴⁰ After discussing the material, the Pastors' Conference of 1991 concluded that the title was to be changed to "Pokok-pokok Iman Gereja Kristen Protestant" (Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI) and added five new articles to be worked out by the committee, namely Sin,

G.D. Dahlenburg, *Konfesi-konfesi Gereja Lutheran. Pengantar dan Cuplikan Penting Konfesi-konfesi Gereja Lutheran* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2000, 2nd ed.), and, G.D. Dahlenburg, *Pemberitaan Firman dan Pelayanan Sakramen* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1991).

⁸³⁷ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 3-4; *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1993), i-ii.

⁸³⁸ The Committee for Drafting GKPI's Confession consisted of 12 persons and all were ordained pastors: B. Aritonang, W. Lumbantobing, P. Sipahutar, Jan S. Aritonang, B. Siadari, S.H. Siregar, M.S.E. Simorangkir, A. Hutaauruk, R.F. Simamora, S. Manurung, P. Manalu, and, M. Siregar. See *Konsep Pokok-pokok Ajaran Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (17 pages), 2.

⁸³⁹ See *Konsep Pokok-pokok Ajaran Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (17 pages), 3-17.

⁸⁴⁰ See *Konsep Pokok-pokok Ajaran Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (17 pages), 1; cf. "Pemahaman Bersama Umat Kristen di Indonesia" (Common Understanding of Christians in Indonesia) of the CCI contains seven articles, namely, concerning God, concerning Creation and Preservation, concerning Human Beings, concerning Salvation, concerning God's Kingdom and New Life, concerning the Church, and concerning the Bible. See *Dokumen Keesaan Gereja* (Jakarta: PGI, 2003), 18-30, 33-39; *Dokumen Keesaan Gereja Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (DKG-PGI) 2014-2019* (Jakarta: PGI, 2015), 101-116, 121-133.

Law and Gospel, Blessing, Ecumenism, and Eschatology.⁸⁴¹ The General Synod in September 1991 then formally accepted the draft together with all suggestions that came from the floor during the sessions. The committee was asked to edit all suggestions in the final draft.⁸⁴² At the Pastors' Conference of 1992, many pastors, including some members of the committee, criticized the chairperson of the committee for not editing all comments and suggestions from the General Synod of 1991 in the draft.⁸⁴³ This made the Conference take the decision to appoint a team, which in part also came from the previous committee, to finalize the draft.⁸⁴⁴

After *The Basic Articles of Faith* of the GKPI was issued for the first time in 1991 and then was discussed again by the Pastor's Conference of the GKPI in 1992 and 1993, the General Synod of the GKPI on 20-24 September 1993 officially received it.⁸⁴⁵ The GKPI drafted its own confession because of "the need for a more systematic and clearer explanation of the doctrine of the GKPI,"⁸⁴⁶ to serve as guidance at all levels of the GKPI.⁸⁴⁷

Although the contents of *Basic Articles* of 1991 and of 1993 are generally the same, Lutheran identity is stronger in the version of 1991. The article concerning Law and Gospel, for instance, is no longer treated as a separate article in the 1993

⁸⁴¹ "Keputusan Rapat Pendeta GKPI XXI," in *Notulen Rapat Pendeta GKPI XXI, 7-9 Maret 1991*, Pematangsiantar [Minutes of Pastors' Conference of 1991].

⁸⁴² Laporan Pertanggungjawaban Pelaksanaan Tugas dari Biro I/Kerohanian untuk Synode Am XI, 20-24 September 1993, p. 5 in *Notulen Rapat Pendeta GKPI XXIII, 23-28 Juli 1993, Pematangsiantar* (Minutes of Pastors' Conference of 1993); *Notulen Rapat Pendeta GKPI XXII, 14-19 Oktober 1992* (Minutes of Pastors' Conference of 1992), 33-36, 76-78.

⁸⁴³ In this Pastors' Conference, for example, Patut Sipahutar presented a written commentary and suggestions for the draft. See Patut Sipahutar, "Tanggapan dan Usul Perbaikan atas Naskah Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI," in *Notulen Rapat Pendeta GKPI XXII, 14-19 Oktober 1992* (Minutes of Pastors' Conference of 1992), Appendixes, 63-65.

⁸⁴⁴ The committee consisted of B. Aritonang, C.P. Hutagalung, Jan S. Aritonang, B. Siadari, R.F. Simamora, Adolf Hutaauruk, Sahat Mt. Radjaguguk, and M.S. Hutagalung (language consultant). See *Notulen Rapat Pendeta GKPI XXII, 14-19 Oktober 1992* (Minutes of Pastors' Conference of 1992), 35, 77.

⁸⁴⁵ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), ii.

⁸⁴⁶ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 4.

⁸⁴⁷ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), ii.

version, although the core of the message is still maintained in Article V concerning Salvation and Justification of Sinners.⁸⁴⁸

5.4 Special Emphasis of Priesthood of All Believers in the GKPI

From the beginning, the GKPI felt that the church needed to encourage the broad participation of the laity in the life of the church. In the establishment of the GKPI and in its early development, lay people played an important role working hand in hand with ordained ministers. Earlier the synod had two leaders who were equal in terms of hierarchy. An ordained pastor acted as Chairperson of Spirituality and a layperson served as Chairperson of Organisation.⁸⁴⁹ Where did the GKPI obtain inspiration for this? According to the GKPI, it came from the Bible itself, in particular 1 Peter 2: 5, 9, and especially from the teaching of Martin Luther. The GKPI strongly emphasized the principle of the priesthood of all believers (in Indonesian: *Imamat Am Orang Percaya*), at least as a slogan or motto. As Aritonang stresses, the theme of the priesthood of all believers is periodically echoed in the GKPI, such as at the Pastor's Meetings or the General Synod. Questions about how this should be implemented remained a concern. However, it is clear that from the beginning, constitutionally, the GKPI has always place an emphasis on the priesthood of all believers in its constitution. The Church Constitution of 2013, Article VIII states, "To achieve the goals and fulfill the programs of the GKPI, all

⁸⁴⁸ Perhaps this also has something to do with the fact that the team that prepared the 1991 version was accompanied by G.D. Dahlenburg (together with Dr. Andar Lumbantobing). Dahlenburg was sent by LCA Australia and worked for the GKPI as an exchange minister from 1986-1991. Through his writings and presentations, he influenced the awareness of Lutheran identity among Batak churches. See Section 1.1.2; *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 6; cf. A list of the contents of The Basic Articles of 1991 and of 1996 is provided in section 5.5 below; Section 5.5.2 on Law and Gospel. See also minutes of several Pastor Meetings.

⁸⁴⁹ Aritonang, *Yubileum 50 Tahun GKPI. Tinjauan Sejarah dan Pandangan ke Depan*, 197; Jan S. Aritonang, "Jatidiri GKPI dan Pendetanya – Dan Tantangan yang Dihadapi," Makalah pada Rapat Pendeta ke- 38 GKPI di Toledo Inn – Tuktuk, Samosir, 10-13 September 2012 (Identity of the GKPI and Its Pastors, and the Challenges They Face. A Paper presented at the Pastor Meeting in 2012), 2.

church members are called to be responsible in the spiritual field as well as in the material field. This understanding is based on the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9).⁸⁵⁰

The Broad Outlines of Church Direction (*Garis-garis Kebijakan Umum (GKU) GKPI*) says,

Vision, Mission and Motivation of the GKPI as body of Christ on the implementation of its Broad Outlines of Church Direction for the term of 2010-2015 is continued to be motivated by the principle of priesthood of all believers as a motto of ministries within the GKPI. Meaning: All members and servants of the GKPI are a fellowship of priesthood of all believers who are called to serve based on talents and gifts of each member. The GKPI maintains the classification of tasks in an orderly and well-planned system, made effective by the awareness and willingness of every member to cooperate in a mutual way as the body of Christ.⁸⁵¹

5.5 The Lutheran Characteristic of the Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI

This study will treat both documents, the 1991 and 1993 Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI, as sources in order to compare the GKPI position on various topics used earlier in this study for examining the Lutheran characteristics of the HKBP Confession. While the main purpose here is to examine the Lutheran identity of the GKPI by comparing its confessions with the Lutheran Confessions (*The Book of Concord*), it also clear that on certain topics the 1991 and 1993 documents show a slight differences. So, throughout this part I also compare the GKPI positions in both years.

⁸⁵⁰ Article VIII of the Church Constitution of 2013. See *Almanak GKPI 2015* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase Pusat GKPI, 2015), 390.

⁸⁵¹ GKU Article I, 4.5. See *Garis Kebijaksanaan Umum GKPI Periode 2010-2015* (Pematangsiantar: Kolportase GKPI, 2010), 10. Although its substance remains basically the same, this document is renewed every 5 years.

<i>The Basic Articles of Faith of GKPI. The 1991 Version</i> ⁸⁵²	<i>The Augsburg Confession</i> ⁸⁵³	<i>The Basic Articles of Faith of GKPI of 1993</i> ⁸⁵⁴
The Word of God (I)	Concerning God (I)	The Scripture (I)
God (II)	Concerning Original Sin (II)	God (II)
The Human Being (III)	Concerning the Son of God (III)	Creation and Preservation (III)
Sin (IV)	Concerning Justification (IV)	The Human Being (IV)
Justification of Sinners (V)	Concerning Ministry in the Church (V)	Salvation and Justification of the Sinners (V)
Law and Gospel (VI)	Concerning the New Obedience (VI)	The Church: Its Nature, Form, and Marks (VI)
The Church (VII)	Concerning the Church (VII)	(VII)
The Priesthood of All Believers (VIII)	What is the Church (VIII)	The Sacraments and Preaching of the Word (VIII)
The Sacraments (IX)	Concerning Baptism (IX)	The Priesthood of All Believers and Those Who Minister in the Church (IX)
Catechism (X)	Concerning the Lord's Supper (X)	Worship, Prayer and Offering (X)
Worship (XI)	Concerning Confession (XI)	Catechism and Confirmation (XI)
Those Who Minister in the Church (XII)	Concerning Repentance (XII)	Christian Family (XII)
The Duty and Calling of the Church (XIII)	Concerning the Use of Sacraments (XIII)	Church and Culture (XIII)
Christian Family (XIV)	Concerning the Church Order (XIV)	Church and State (XIV)
Offering (XV)	Concerning Church Rites (XV)	Last Days and Escathon (XV)
Faith and Culture (XVI)	Concerning Civic Affairs (XVI)	
Faith and Science (XVII)	Concerning the Return of Christ for Judgement (XVII)	
Church and Governement (XVIII)	Concerning Free Will (XVIII)	
Concerning the Angels, Devil, and Wicked Spirits (XIX)	Concerning the Cause of Sin (XIX)	
The Escathon (XX)	Concerning Faith and Good Works (XX)	
	Concerning the Cult of the Saints (XXI)	
	Concerning Both Kinds of the Sacrament (XXII)	
	Concerning the Marriage of Priests (XXIII)	
	Concerning the Mass (XXIV)	
	Concerning Confession (XXV)	
	Concerning the Distinction of Foods (XXVI)	
	Concerning Monastic Vows (XXVII)	
	Concerning the Church's Power (XXVIII)	
	Conclusion	

5.5.1 On Justification

The GKPI clearly expresses its position as part of the Reformation church by embracing the basic conviction that human beings are justified before God as a gift

⁸⁵² *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 1-45.

⁸⁵³ *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 37ff.

⁸⁵⁴ *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 1-45.

on account of Christ. GKPI's *Basic Articles of Faith*, Article V, states, "A sinner is justified only on account of God's mercy through the salvific work of Jesus Christ."⁸⁵⁵

The following formulation elaborates this:

With all his/her efforts human beings will not be capable to release themselves from the power of sins and from the consequences of sins. Human beings can only be freed from sins on account of God's grace and God's salvific work through Jesus Christ.⁸⁵⁶

The GKPI's Basic Articles of Faith does not possess a separate article on Faith and Good Works but in this Article V there is a description of the relationship between faith and good works. The Confession of the GKPI maintains that good works performed by human being are the effects or result of justification. In this understanding the *Basic Articles* makes clear that good works are performed by believers as the consequence of being justified and as gratitude and praise to God who has justified them. As the *Basic Articles* teaches, "Good works are not vehicles or a medium for obtaining salvation from sins but the gratitude toward God who works the justification and redemption."⁸⁵⁷

5.5.2 On Law and Gospel

The *Basic Articles* of 1993 does not retain from the *Basic Articles* of 1991 the separate article on Law and Gospel. But in its Articles V there is a notion of the law and gospel principle behind the explanation of the work of salvation. The *Basic Articles* of 1993 says,

⁸⁵⁵ Article V, 1 (Justification of Sinners). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 15.

⁸⁵⁶ Article V, 3 (Salvation and Justification of Sinners) See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 14.

⁸⁵⁷ Article V, 6 (Salvation and Justification of Sinners) See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 15; Article V, 5 (Justification of Sinners). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 16-17.

Even by obeying the Torah we are not justified since the justification happens outside the Torah. The Torah is only to make known our sins and violations. The Torah becomes the guidance for us to believe the salvific work performed by Jesus Christ.⁸⁵⁸

The *Basic Articles* of 1991 begins by explaining several functions of the law, even though the text itself does not specifically refer to “the two or three functions or use of the law”. One of the functions is that the Torah teaches what is right and pleasing to God.⁸⁵⁹ The other function of the Torah is to show sins and that sinners will be punished by God because they have sinned.⁸⁶⁰ One more function, or perhaps a variation from the one mentioned earlier,⁸⁶¹ is to act as guidance for the justified who now readily to obey the Torah even though they are aware that as long as they remain in this world they will never be perfect.⁸⁶² After presenting the law, the *Basic Articles* of 1991 describe the Gospel as Good News for humanity. The Law accuses but the Gospel pardons, granting forgiveness of sins and salvation.⁸⁶³

5.5.3 On the Church

Both *The Basic Articles* of 1991 and 1993 teach the universal nature of the church characterized as catholic, holy, one, and apostolic. Each of these natures is explained in detail.⁸⁶⁴ In addition to these the Confession of the GKPI maintains the true nature of the church when the church proclaims the Word and administers the

⁸⁵⁸ Article V, 5 (Salvation and Justification of Sinners) See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 15. This part also occurs in Article V, 5 (Justification of Sinners). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 16.

⁸⁵⁹ Article VI, 1 (Law and Gospel). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 17.

⁸⁶⁰ Article VI, 1, 2 (Law and Gospel). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 17-18.

⁸⁶¹ It is not very clear from the presentation and the redaction.

⁸⁶² Article VI, 3 (Law and Gospel). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 18-19.

⁸⁶³ Article VI, 4 (Law and Gospel). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 19.

⁸⁶⁴ Article VI, 1, 2,3,4,5 (The Church: Its Nature, Existence and Sign). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 17-18; Article VII, 1, 2,3,4,5 (Law and Gospel). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 19-21.

sacraments.⁸⁶⁵ Within this formulation, differently from the HKBP, the *Basic Articles of Faith* of the GKPI does not include church discipline but only refers to the Word and Sacraments. However, it appears here that that the phrase “the gospel is preached harmoniously according to a pure understanding and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the divine Word”⁸⁶⁶ is not precisely inserted.

5.5.4 Sacraments

The Confession of the GKPI teaches the real presence of Christ’s body and blood in the elements of bread and wine. *The Basic Articles* of 1991 states,

The Holy Communion is the message of Lord Jesus Christ, who says: “Take, eat, this is my body,” and, “All of you drink it, for this is my blood ...” (Matt. 26:26-27). Because of the Words that accompanied the physical eating and drinking, we, therefore, receive the true body and blood of Christ.⁸⁶⁷

As can be seen, *The Basic Articles* of 1991 inserts the precise phrase from Luther’s Small Catechism in the GKPI’s formulation on the Lord’s Supper. This shows that the GKPI consciously considers itself a Lutheran church and stresses its embrace of “the real presence”. *The Basic Articles* of 1993 does not fully retain the formulation of the Basic Articles of 1991 on the Lord’s Supper. However, while *the Basic Articles* of 1993 uses the term “signs” when referring to the bread and wine, it also states that after the Words of institution the bread and wine are truly Christ’s body and blood:

The Holy Communion is the sign of commemoration of Lord Jesus Christ’s suffering, and the fellowship with the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16), which is embodied in the signs of bread and wine, as instituted by him: “Take, eat, this is my body...,” and, “All of you drink it, for this is my

⁸⁶⁵ Article VI, 6 (The Church: Its Nature, Existence and Sign). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 18; Article VII, 5 (Law and Gospel). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 21.

⁸⁶⁶ AC VII, 2 (German Text). See *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, 42; *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 32.

⁸⁶⁷ Article IX, 6 (The Sacraments). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 26.

blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the remission of sins. (Matt. 26:26-28; Luk. 22:19). Because of the Words that accompanied the physical eating and drinking, we, therefore, receive the true body and blood of Christ.⁸⁶⁸

5.5.5 Several Other Topics

5.5.5.1 On the Servant of God in the Church

In this part the Confession of the GKPI maintains that every member of the church is called to be the servant of God and that the task of the servant is to serve every member of the church. The nature of ministry is traced back to Jesus as role model for servants of the church.⁸⁶⁹ In this article various servant roles are mentioned, including ordained minister.⁸⁷⁰

5.5.5.2 On Government

The Confession of the GKPI teaches that God is the source of every authority. In this understanding the government is also the servant of God. God uses it to maintain law and order:⁸⁷¹ The GKPI says, “If the government does not maintain its function properly and even becomes evil force, the church has the freedom to witness, as Peter did, and proclaim that “We must obey God rather than men.”⁸⁷²

⁸⁶⁸ Article VII, 6 (Sacraments and the Proclamation of the Word). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 23.

⁸⁶⁹ Article IX, 7, 8 (Priesthood of All Believers and Servant of God in the Church). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 26; XII, 1, 2 (Servant of God in the Church). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 32-33.

⁸⁷⁰ Article IX, 8 (Priesthood of All Believers and Servant of God in the Church). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 26; XII, 4 (Servant of God in the Church). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 33.

⁸⁷¹ Article XIV, 1, 2 (Church and State). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 37; XVIII, 1 (Church and Government). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 42.

⁸⁷² Article XIV, 3 (Church and State). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman Gereja Kristen Protestan Indonesia* (1993), 37; XVIII, 2 (Church and Government). See *Pokok-pokok Pemahaman Iman GKPI* (1991), 43.

In this formulation the GKPI maintains its Lutheran conviction on the nature of two regimes.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

It is important that the Batak Church in 1951 chose to draft its own confession rather than simply to adopt the whole Lutheran Confessions as contained in *The Book of Concord*. This shows that although the Batak Church saw itself standing in the line of Lutheran faith, at the same time, from the late 1940s to the beginning of the 1950s the Batak Church was aware that they had different challenges from those faced by German or European Christians in the 16th century. For that reason, in addition to the formulation of teachings on such major topics as salvation, the church, and the Lord's Supper, the Confession of 1951 also described the challenges and the context of the Batak Church. The challenges, already described in Chapter 4, were Batak traditional beliefs, *adat*, Islam, and doctrines of other churches and sects. Similarly, the 1996 Confession also emerged out of a certain situation in which the need for guidance on the impact of industrialization and the context of pluralism in Indonesia was the reason for drafting a new confession. Actually, it is more appropriate to say that the 1996 Confession added several articles to the 1951 Confession. Meanwhile, the *Basic Articles* of the GKPI, which first appeared in 1991, also showed awareness of its own context. For, in addition to the Lutheran teachings of the church, the *Basic Articles* included in its contents responses to matters that this church faced as a Batak church.

However, these confessions do not clearly show an effort to link Lutheran theological convictions to or use Lutheran theology to deal with the contextual challenges facing Batak churches.

This final chapter consists of two parts, conclusion and reflection. In the first part I present my conclusion, namely, that based on the examination of their confessions, Batak churches have clearly expressed their Lutheran identity. Then, in the second part, I show that although Batak churches have embraced Lutheranism, they are not yet seriously working on a theology to fit their Lutheran identity. To my mind, this would be advantageous, as I will point out later. Finally, I reflect on how to do this.

6.1 Conclusion

Batak churches are rooted in Pietism and established in Lutheranism. This study shows that Batak churches clearly belong to the family of Lutheran churches not only organizationally but also in accepting the basic theological convictions essential to Lutheran identity. Although some parts of their confessions are not formulated as clearly as those in the Lutheran Confessions, my studies show that the confessions of Batak churches are not just in line with but truly embrace Lutheranism.

Areas that seem less strongly Lutheran concern the signs of the true church and the Lord's Supper. However, as I have shown, the formulation of the HKBP on such topics is clearly still in line with Lutheran understanding. Meanwhile, the formulation of the GKPI, which emerged forty years after the 1951 Confession of the HKBP, is closer to the Lutheran Confessions in both articles.

The HKBP includes church discipline as one of the essential marks of the true church. HKBP's formulation, "The true church is present when the gospel is purely preached, [and] when the two sacraments are truly administered as instituted by the Lord Jesus," clearly uses the language of AC Article VII. However, according to the HKBP, the exercise of church discipline is also considered an essential mark of the true church. It cannot, therefore, be excluded from the description of the church. Not everyone agreed. Andar Lumbantobing criticized the inclusion of church discipline as being of equal importance as proclaiming the gospel and administering the sacraments. Church discipline, Lumbantobing argues, is not an essential mark of the church. Indeed the *Basic Articles of Faith* of the GKPI does not include church discipline but only refers to the Word and Sacraments. However, GKPI's formulation does not exactly follow AC's well-known formulation, namely, that "the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel."

6.1.1 On Justification by Faith and the Relation of Faith and Good Works

Batak churches' understanding of justification by faith alone is similar to the Lutheran Confessions. Article VII of the 1951 Confession is not called "justification" but in substance it is the same as AC Article IV concerning justification. In other words, it clearly follows AC Article IV. The content and the nature of the doctrine of justification is explicitly and strongly present in the 1951 Confession. However, the 1951 Confession contains no discussion of the distinction between the forensic and effective side of justification, such as we find in FC. FC does this to exclude any suggestion that humans work the effective side. According to FC, renewal and

sanctification are the result of justification. The 1951 Confession does not discuss justification in such detail.

The title used by the 1951 Confession, “Salvation from sin”, is changed in the 1996 Confession to “Salvation” without altering the substance of the presentation on justification. Article VI of the 1996 Confession, Concerning Salvation, continues to show a Lutheran understanding of justification by faith, emphasizing that salvation is the redemptive work of God in Christ. But the focus of the 1996 Confession is not solely on justification by faith alone and the relationship between faith and good works. Article VI of the Confession of 1996 maintains its focus not only on future-oriented salvation but also on present-oriented salvation. The intention of this new emphasis is to push believers to be lively and energetically active in this world by creating a better life for themselves and for others.

Some have criticized the 1951 Confession for putting too much emphasis on future-oriented salvation. However, it cannot be said that the contents of Article VII of the 1951 Confession had eliminated the present aspect of salvation. Rather, if understood carefully, the teaching of justification by faith alone is very positive in encouraging people, who have received the grace of God, to do good works voluntarily and freely. Therefore, good works are placed as the consequence of being justified, namely, to serve and please God and at the same time to serve neighbors in love, as Luther had emphasized.

It is important to explain the relationship of faith and good works as understood by Lutheran churches. In Lutheran theology, good works are not unimportant; good works are necessary. It is true that good works are not needed to obtain salvation. Nevertheless, those who are justified will do good works freely and spontaneously. In this case, good works refer to the Ten Commandments, which God

desires and commands believers to perform as praise to God and service to neighbors. Without good works, such faith is not obviously faith. This is the position of Luther. In the 1951 Confession, the Batak Church embraces Luther's understanding of the relation of faith and good works. Luther understood that good works follow from faith, from justification, not the other way around. In its understanding of good works as indicative, not imperative, as a natural consequence of faith, not a matter of obligation, the Batak Church is in line with Luther.

The confession of the GKPI also maintains that human beings perform good works as the result of justification. *The Basic Articles* confirms this understanding: believers do good works as the consequence of being justified and as gratitude and praise to God, who has justified them.

6.1.2 On Law and Gospel

In the Confession of 1951, there is no article on law and Gospel. However, "the Gospel" is mentioned several times without immediately being linked to "the law". Nonetheless, the relationship between law and gospel and the primacy of the gospel is made clear in sporadic mentions throughout this confession. Its writers fail explicitly to discuss law and gospel because their focus was exclusively on AC, where the distinction is not as clear as in Ap., SC, LC, SA, and FC. However, according to some scholars, certain articles in AC show the Lutheran principle of law and gospel, for example, article XI "Concerning Confession" and article XII "Concerning Repentance".

In relation to the theme of "confession" and "repentance," it is worth noting that Nommensen's Batak translation of Luther's Small Catechism does not include Luther's concept of the role of the law and gospel in confession and absolution. Here

Luther explains that confession consists of two parts: confession of sins, and the declaration of the forgiveness of sins. This description shows that the Ten Commandments cause sinners to realize they have sinned so they can repent. Once they have repented, they hear and receive the forgiveness of their sins. The demands of the law heavily burden and distress the conscience, but hearing the absolution, the Gospel, the heart will be relieved and comforted.

Like the 1951 Confession, although not to the same degree, the 1996 Confession shows an awareness of the law and gospel principle. Neither the 1951 Confession nor the Confession of 1996 possesses a particular article concerning law and gospel. However, both of them, like AC, although not to the same degree, contain and apply the distinction of law and Gospel.

Following the 1951 Confession, the Confession of 1996 sporadically mentions the Gospel. These references are not always directly linked to the law in the sense that, on the one hand, the law “reveals, denounces, and condemns sin,” but, on the other hand, the gospel promises grace given in Christ, or justifies “the terrified or makes them alive.” However, Batak Church Confessions are substantially aware of the distinction of law and gospel.

Meanwhile, *The Basic Articles* of the GKPI does contain an article concerning law and gospel in which the law accuses but the Gospel forgives and grants salvation. The Confession of the GKPI also mentions the function of the law for Christian lives. The law also guides the justified who now readily obey the Torah, even though they are aware that as long as they remain in this world, they will never be perfect.

Thus, the presentation of the law and gospel principle in the 1996 Confession is rather weak, especially in comparison to the 1951 Confession. In the revised

confession, the HKBP did not present the principle of law and gospel in a more systematic way. *The Basic Articles of Faith* of 1993 of the GKPI omits the presentation of law and gospel as a separate article, whereas the earlier version of 1991 maintains it as a separate article and clearly explains the distinction. However, the 1993 version still provides a short description of law and gospel.

6.1.3 On the Real Presence

The 1996 Confession of the HKBP fully retains the formulation of the 1951 Confession concerning the Lord's Supper. But it also makes clear that the HKBP did not try to make it closer to the formulation of the Lutheran Confessions. That said, the HKBP formulation is not inconsistent with the Lutheran understanding of the real presence. Indeed, the formulation is close to Lutheran teaching. Firstly, it basically follows the formulation of Luther's Small Catechism. Nommensen's translation of Luther's Small Catechism introduced a local word "parhitean" (as a means of mediating; medium, bridge, a vehicle) in its efforts to explain about the elements of bread and wine. However, the use of the term "parhitean" does not necessarily exclude the real presence (a bodily presence) of Christ in the elements of bread and wine. Sitompul makes it clear that the Confessional and Doctrinal Commission tended towards the interpretation that, according to the words of institution, the elements of bread and wine are the real body and blood of Christ. However, because of tension with the Catholic Church, the Confessional and Doctrinal Commission were afraid that such a formulation would be confused with the teaching of the Catholic Church on transubstantiation. Therefore, the Commission avoided the language of "real presence". In a catechetical instruction book that was an adaptation and elaboration of Luther's Small Catechism, Müller also made use of "parhitean"

but went on to explain that the bread and wine received by the believers in the Holy Communion are the real body and blood of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the word “parhitean” does not exclude the real presence. Secondly, the formulation of the HKBP clearly does not imply that the bread and wine are only the signs without the presence of Christ. Furthermore, there is no rejection in this formulation of the bread and wine as the very body and blood of Christ. Nor is there any statement that the bread and wine are only “a divine sign and confirmation” of Jesus’ body (and blood), as in the Heidelberg Catechism, which had earlier been translated into Batak and introduced into the Batak Church. Christ is understood as present in the Lord’s Supper, although the formulation does not explicitly proclaim the real presence.

The Indonesian version of the 1996 Confession uses the term “vehicle” for bread and wine. Luther also referred to the bread and wine as “the vehicle” of the presence of Christ. The Word is what makes Christ present in the elements of bread and wine. The bread and wine are more than a mere sign. Luther actually can speak of the element of bread [and wine] as a “sign” but after the Words of institution the elements are more than a mere sign. In his treatise, *The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods* (1519), Luther affirmed that bread is “a sure sign”. Luther particularly emphasizes this in his rejection of the Catholic dogma of transubstantiation, which claims that by the Words of institution the bread and wine become substantially the body and blood Christ even though the form of bread and wine remain. For Luther, however, the bread remains bread and the wine remains wine, but with the Words of institution Christ’s body and blood are present in the elements. In his confrontation with Zwingli, who considered the bread only a symbol and taught that Christ is not present in the Lord’s Supper, Luther maintained that the elements are no longer “mere bread and wine” after the Words of

institution. Luther thus is very much concerned with the Words of institution as the basis for understanding the Lord's Supper and for the presence of Christ "in and under" the bread and wine. Furthermore, in what is considered his most detailed and most profound teaching on the Lord's Supper, *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* (1528), Luther described his theory of "sacramental union," namely, that Christ truly unites himself with the bread and wine without their ceasing to be bread and wine.

It is true that the Reformed churches, following Calvin, also understand that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper, but Christ is present spiritually not bodily. Zwingli also adopted this position in the latter version of his presentation on the Lord's Supper.

HKBP's position is perhaps not entirely clear, though it does seem to lean towards the Lutheran interpretation. In contrast, the confession of the GKPI clearly teaches the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the elements of bread and wine. *The Basic Articles* inserts the wording of Luther's Small Catechism in the GKPI's formulation on the Lord's Supper: "Because of the Words that accompany the physical eating and drinking, we, therefore, receive the true body and blood of Christ." In this reality, the GKPI consciously considers itself a Lutheran church and stresses its embracing of "the real presence".

6.2 Reflection

I have dealt in detail about the legacies that Batak churches inherited from the Rhenish Mission. It is clear that the church, through all the works of the Rhenish Mission in its 80-year presence in Batakland, was one of key factors enabling the development of the Batak people. From the beginning, the Rhenish Mission's

strategy was to operate an educational program parallel to its mission program; schools were a tool to reach and educate the Batak people. The mission was obviously successful in its efforts to elevate the Batak people in many aspects. However, the Bataks were also convinced that the Rhenish Mission was half-hearted in introducing and promoting so-called Western education in Batakland. The Bataks urged the Rhenish Mission to open and provide schools so alumni could find good jobs and attain good positions, such as administrative personnel on plantations or other jobs in the colonial era of the time. This meant that schools should teach Dutch and use it as the medium of instruction. The mission did not like this worldly attitude. The Rhenish Mission finally gave way to this demand but often complained that the Batak were more interested in the modern spirit of progress than in the spirit of the Gospel. However, different attitudes appeared in the post-Rhenish period. In the 1950s, the new autonomous Batak Church got direct support from the LWF to open Nommensen University in North Sumatra.⁸⁷³ Could the LWF's openness have been affected by a Lutheran understanding of the relation of faith and good works?

Indonesia is seen as a religious nation because religious practices dominate public life.⁸⁷⁴ Church buildings are common in North Tapanuli, in other parts of Sumatra, and other provinces where Christians are the majority (such as North

⁸⁷³ See "Letter of Information from the Lutheran World Federation Concerning Their Assistance to the HKBP," in Clark E. Cunningham, *The Postwar Migration to the Toba-Bataks to East Sumatra* (Southeast Asia Studies, Cultural Report Series, Yale University, 1958), 178.

⁸⁷⁴ Six religions are recognized by the government - Islam, Christian, Catholic, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. What I mean by religion dominating public life is the rampant practice of religious rituals in most public activities, for example: religious studies as a compulsory subject in schools; "Azan Magrib" (Maghrib Azan) played on almost all television (i.e. every dawn and sunset); prayer as one element in state official events; an opening greeting of state official's speech always contains religious references, namely, "Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh" (May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be with you), and, "Salam sejahtera" (Peace be with you"). The latter is a Christian greeting that is used with the Islamic one as a representation of other religions. The Indonesian population, according to the last official census of 2010, numbered 237,641,326 - of which 207.176.162 (87.18 %) are Muslims: 23.436.386 (9.86 %); Christian (Protestant 16.528.513; Catholic 6.907.873); Hindu: 4.012.116 (1.69 %); Buddhist: 1.703.254 (0.72 %); Khong Hu Chu: 117.091 (0.05 %); Other: 174; not stated: 139.582; not asked: 757.118. Source: <http://www.bps.go.id/eng> [this is an official website owned by the Central Statistics Agency of the Indonesian Government].

Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara, Papua) or half of the population in the region (Moluccas, North Sumatra, and West Kalimantan). Mosques can be found almost everywhere in Indonesia. Many Christians go to church on Sunday, and every Friday many mosques will be full of people worshipping. Indeed, so many come to some mosques that the overflow spills onto the road outside.

On the other hand, although religious practices shape the daily lives of the people, levels of corruption,⁸⁷⁵ intolerance,⁸⁷⁶ and poverty⁸⁷⁷ are also very high in Indonesia. It is true that religiosity is very evident in ceremonies, confessions and celebrations, but this is not too visible in actual deeds and works of love. To put it another way, actions do not match words. It is worth noting, however, that church social engagement received overwhelming endorsement in the 1970s. This led to the establishment of institutions such as *Pelayanan dalam Pembangunan* (Church Programs in Supporting Development) and *Partisipasi dalam Pembangunan* (Participation in Development Programs), which operated at national, regional or

⁸⁷⁵ Many government officers and leaders (such as mayors or governors) as well as politicians have been jailed for corruption. At the end of May 2014, the KPK (the Corruption Eradication Committee) named the Minister of Religious Affairs, Suryadharma Ali, who at that same time held the position of the general chairman of an Islamic party, namely, the United Development Party (PPP), as a suspect in a corruption case linked to hajj pilgrimage management. See news captured the case on “Religious affairs minister named suspect in corruption case,” *Antaranews.com*, 23 Mei 2014, <http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/94165/religious-affairs-minister-named-suspect-in-corruption-case> (accessed 22 September, 2014). Before him, Luthfi Hasan Ishaq, the president of Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), an Islamic political party, which is well known in Indonesia as a party that calls themselves an anti-corruption party and a pure Islamic party, aiming to bring about a central role of Islam in the public life, was caught by Corruption Eradication Commission, and later sentenced by the Jakarta Corruption Court to 16 years in prison for graft and money laundering. See “Former PKS boss gets 16 years for graft,” in *The Jakarta Post*, 10 December 2013, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2013/12/10/former-pks-boss-gets-16-years-graft.html> (accessed 22 September 2014).

⁸⁷⁶ For example: Many churches were forced to close [such as HKBP Ciketing, GKI Yasmin]; several districts of Indonesia, especially in Java and Aceh, have adopted Shari’ah laws/regulations as part of their constitution in recent years; there have been incidents of violence against Ahmadiyah and Shia followers.

⁸⁷⁷ Based on the Indonesian government's official poverty line of 233,740 rupiah per capita per month, which less than US\$ 28 (less than \$ 1 per day), there are over 30 million classified as poor. Cf. The World Bank’s assessment (based on US\$ 1, 25 as poverty line): More than 32 million Indonesians currently live below the poverty line. But if the poverty line is US\$ 2 per day, half of the Indonesian population can be classified as poor. The Indonesian population according to the last official census (by Central Statistics Agency) that took place in 2010 is 237,641,326 people. See <http://www.bps.go.id/eng>

local levels. Special concern for social issues remained an important thing for the PGI (Communion of Churches in Indonesia/CCI) and for many theologians in Indonesia as well. The huge problem of poverty in Indonesia lay behind this.⁸⁷⁸ Social concern is never absent from theological discourse in the family of the PGI. However, implementation is always an issue as well. In 2011, the PGI held the National Theological Consultation, which identified current Indonesian problems, such as poverty, corruption and abuse of power, humiliation of human dignity and human rights violations, and the existence of hardline Islamic groups. Many agreed that the ecumenical movement in Indonesia should concentrate on implementing social work that addresses the needs of churches and society rather than other things, such as worship and ceremonial activities.⁸⁷⁹

Indonesian society in general seems to place more emphasis on faith than good works, at least professions of faith rather than the fruits of faith. The Batak people, in contrast, are known for judging people by their deeds and achievements. Their worldview is clearly expressed in their ideals: *hamoraon* (wealth), *hagabeon* (fecundity), and *hasangapon* (honor, glory), commonly called the "3Hs" ("H" is the first letter in those three words). Any person who has achieved wealth (rich), fecundity (having many children) and respect and honor obtains the so-called *sahala*

⁸⁷⁸ See Jhon Piter Enriko Simorangkir, *Pergumulan Hidup Sopir dan Kernet Batak Toba di Jakarta: Sebuah Studi Etika Sosial*. Magister Theology Thesis at Jakarta Theological Seminary (Jakarta: STT Jakarta, 2004), 139ff.; Jan S. Aritonang, "Supaya Engkau Membuka Belenggu-belenggu Kelaliman: Menelusuri Kiprah dan Kepedulian Gereja-gereja Indonesia di Bidang Sosial." Orasi Dies Natalis ke-58 Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Jakarta [Opening Shackles of Tyranny: Tracing the Effort and Care of Churches in Indonesia in the Social Sector ". Oration of 58th Anniversary Jakarta Theological Seminary] 25 September 1992, 8ff.; Jan S. Aritonang, "Perkembangan Pemikiran teologis di Indonesia, 1960-1990-an", in Ferdinand Suleeman, et. al., (eds.), *Bergumul dalam Pengharapan. Buku Penghargaan untuk Pdt. Dr. Eka Darmaputera* (Struggling in Hope. A Tribute to the Rev. Dr. Eka Darmaputera) (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, ^{3rd}2004), 266-271.

⁸⁷⁹ See Jan S. Aritonang, et. al. (eds.), *Meretas Jalan Menuju Perdamaian, Keadilan, dan Keutuhan Ciptaan: Konsultasi Teologi Nasional 2011* [Paving the way to Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation: 2011 National Theological Consultation]. (Jakarta: PGI, 2012), xx, 5.

(authority; the ability to exercise special types of power).⁸⁸⁰ Meanwhile, in social life, what is expected from any individual is to conduct his life according to *adat* (custom and law), namely, to follow the principles of what is good and bad, what is allowed and not allowed, prohibited, and inappropriate (*tongka, unang, na so jadi*) as instilled by the ancestors.⁸⁸¹ In other words, one is expected to fulfill the traditional relationship with others as demanded by *adat*. Life events that must be carried out by *adat* rite or ceremony are the birth of a child, marriage (*pamuli boru, pangolihon anak*), and burial of the dead, reburial of the bones of the dead in a new tomb (*mangongkal holi, panangkonhon saring-saring ni natua-tua tu tambak na tumimbo*). There are other things which were later added but which are not considered obligatory (*adat na niadathon*), namely, the *adats* of celebrating baptism (*mamestahon anak na tardidi*), confirmation (*pesta malua sian panghangkungi*), birthday, thanksgiving for earning a degree (*mamestahon anak mandapot gelar sarjana*).⁸⁸² In those events the three elements that form the social structure of Batak society, which is called *Dalihan na Tolu* (three-stones hearth), are present. *Dalihan na Tolu*⁸⁸³ is a philosophy of life of Batak people that established social relationships through three inter-related groups that formed Batak society: *Hulahula* (wife-giver side), *dongan sabutuha* (the same *marga*; clan), and *boru* (wife-receiver side).⁸⁸⁴ The

⁸⁸⁰ For a deeper explanation of this concept of *sahala*, see Ph. O. L. Tobing, *The Structure of the Toba-Batak Belief in the High God*, 2nd ed. (Makassar: South and South-East Celebes, Institute for Culture, 1963), 101-106; A.B. Sinaga, *The Toba-Batak High God – Transcendence and Immanence* (St. Augustin: Anthropos Institute, 1981), 103-104; Harry Parkin, *The Batak Fruit of Hindu Thought* (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1978), 276.

⁸⁸¹ A.B. Sinaga, "Pengertian Adat dan Implikasinya terhadap Agama," in B.A. Simanjuntak, ed. *Pemikiran tentang Batak* (Medan: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Batak Univ. HKBP Nommensen, 1986), 88ff; Jhon Piter Enriko Simorangkir, *Pergumulan Hidup Sopir dan Kernet Batak Toba di Jakarta: Sebuah Studi Etika Sosial*. Tesis Magister Theologiae STT Jakarta (Jakarta: STT Jakarta, 2004), 22.

⁸⁸² I. Simanjuntak, "Pesta Adat di Kalangan Suku Batak Toba yang Beragama Kristen," in *Pemikiran tentang Batak*, 114-116.

⁸⁸³ Literally means the three stones hearth: three pillars implies stability, a well-balanced society.

⁸⁸⁴ *Hulahula* points to one's father-in-law and his nearer *dongan sabutuha*. *Dongan sabutuha* literally means "womb companions". It points to agnatic relationship which is also called *dongan samarga*, i.e. *marga* companions (coming from the same kinship unit). And, *boru* indicates one's son-in-law and his

principle of the *Dalihan na Tolu* is aimed to maintain the rule of *somba marhulahula* (showing respect to wife-giver side), *elek marboru* (showing kindness to wife-receiver side), and, *manat mardongan tubu* (careful in living with *marga* companions; relatives within the same kinship units). In the Batak worldview, those who meet the above demands of *adat* gain salvation.⁸⁸⁵ Therefore, salvation in the Batak worldview depended upon one's effort and achievement. In another words, one is saved by one's own efforts.

Given this cultural background, the Lutheran theology of justification by faith, especially its understanding of the relation of faith and good works, is particularly pertinent. We have seen that in Indonesia in general professions of faith are rarely matched by accompanying deeds, whereas the Batak traditionally lays great emphasis on deeds and achievements. The Lutheran discourse of faith and good works strikes the right balance between the two. It would enable the Batak Lutheran churches to answer their call to deal with the challenges of poverty, corruption and oppression that face Indonesia.

We have seen that the Batak people traditionally idealized the 3 Hs as part of the "struggle for self-justification". In this tradition, each individual is dependent on the recognition of others. It is true that Batak people are still highly oriented towards "achievements". In many ways, Bataks measure these achievements materially, though it would be incorrect to equate them only with material possessions, since the 3 H concept relates to holistic ideals of physical and spiritual welfare. Accordingly, one might think that the message of justification is irrelevant for Batak people

nearer *dongan sabutuha*. See Ph. O. L. Tobing, *The Structure of the Toba-Batak Belief in the High God*, 2nd ed. (Makassar: South and South-East Celebes, Institute for Culture, 1963), 84.

⁸⁸⁵ Juaksa Simangunsong, "Keselamatan di dalam Agama Kristen Diperhadapkan dengan Keselamatan di dalam Ajaran Suku Batak Asli," in *Kontekstualisasi Pemikiran Dogmatika di Indonesia*. Buku Penghormatan 70 Tahun Prof. Dr. Sularso Sopater. Ed. by A.A. Yewangoe, et. al. (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004), 203.

because the question is no longer how to be justified before God, but rather how to be justified in the eyes of fellow humans. Actually, the two are neither incompatible nor separate.⁸⁸⁶ Moreover, even for people who stress “achievements”, the message of justification by faith is relevant since this instructs us that it is not success and achievements that determine the meaning of our lives but grace and the promise of God. We cannot create or purchase everything in life; we are granted much as gifts (our existence, our health, our families).⁸⁸⁷ My views tend more toward a reflection on how the Batak can benefit from Lutheran theology in which good works are a necessary fruit of grace. To my mind, this is a line the Batak churches should pursue.

By pursuing such a Lutheran theology, Batak churches can still maintain good ecumenical relations with other churches in Indonesia in which confessionalism is not a tendency. At the same time, they can contribute theologically to the lives of churches and society. Doing theology from the values and the convictions of a certain denomination is not a problem. Lutheran churches around the world do not see their confessional element and their Lutheran identity as an obstacle. On the contrary, it best serves the ecumenical interest. Fundamentally, for Lutherans the real focus is the gospel of Christ, as is the case with all members of the ecumenical movement. Article VII of the Augsburg Confession says, “It is enough for the true unity of the church to agree concerning the teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.” Identity is not an a priori and I think the important question to answer is this: why and how a certain theological conviction is necessary and relevant in doing contextual theology.

My main purpose in this study is to show how Batak churches embrace Lutheranism through their confessions. Although I shall not enter into detail, I also

⁸⁸⁶ See Section 3.3.1 in Chapter III.

⁸⁸⁷ ACTC no. 113. See *Accepted by God – Transformed by Christ: The Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*, 45.

want to point out how Batak Lutheran churches can use Lutheran theology to develop a contextual theology dealing with cultural challenges and poverty.

The Batak churches have still to apply the Lutheran doctrine of the relationship of faith and good works to the Batak people's 3 Hs and to the broader Indonesian context. Rather than approaching those needs and characteristics from a Lutheran perspective, the 1996 Confession seems to prefer "salvation today", or social theology. This is not to say "salvation today" is not a good theology. Indeed it is. However, in my opinion, Batak churches need to deal with the problem of culture and poverty by utilizing Lutheran doctrine: justification is by faith alone, but the fruits of true faith are good works.

As explained above, the context of Batak churches clearly requires a theological thinking that emphasizes the importance of good works. I contend that, properly understood, Lutheran theology provides such an emphasis. There is this impression that good works are less important for Luther and Lutheranism. Of course, this is very wrong. It is true that good works are not needed to obtain salvation. But, and this is very important, those who are justified will do good works freely and spontaneously. Of course, this assurance of salvation and the conviction that good works follow justification is not understood in a mechanical way, for believers will freely and spontaneously perform good works, thanks to God's grace. Lutheran understanding in this area is valuable, because good works are viewed as a response to justification. In other words, we are not allowed to consider ourselves as the center of everything. The center is God. And so, this is our position: Being justified we do good deeds, because we are justified by God.

This theology of the necessity of good works, which is maintained in the framework of justification by faith alone, is a corrective both to Indonesian society at

large and to Batak society in particular. As we have seen, in Indonesia generally there is a tendency for professions of faith without corresponding deeds. In Batak society, there is a traditional bias to judging people by their deeds and achievements.

I want to emphasize that the 1951 Confession embraces Luther's understanding of the relation of faith and good works. It interprets Luther correctly when emphasizing that good works follow from faith, from justification, not the other way around. The 1951 Confession shows clearly that its understanding of good works is indicative, not imperative. It means that good work is a natural consequence of faith, not a matter of obligation. The confession of the GKPI also maintains that good works performed by human beings are the effects or result of justification. In addition, in this understanding *The Basic Articles* makes clear that believers perform good works as the consequence of being justified and as gratitude and praise to God, who has justified them.

I have said that the formulation of the 1996 Confession on faith and good works is weaker than the 1951 Confession. Actually, both are equally strong in stressing the importance of good works. The difference, in my opinion, lies in their different approaches. The 1996 Confession in its efforts to emphasize good works as something important and urgent does not primarily make use of the Lutheran theology of the relationship of faith and good works but rather uses social theology to emphasize that Christians are called to address the problems society faces (salvation today). The 1996 Confession also adds a new emphasis on a need for an active attitude, a skill in working and even a theology of work that seems to be not substantially connected with Luther's insights about calling or vocation. Meanwhile, the 1951 Confession purely explains this matter from the relationship of faith and good works as it is perceived in the Lutheran Confessions.

Through their confessions, the Batak churches have shown their understanding of Lutheran theology. However, this in itself is not enough. To deal with the issues facing not just Batak communities but Indonesia as a whole, the Batak churches must apply Luther's doctrine of the necessity of good works.

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