

# The Formula of Concord

## Lesson Eleven

### Of Other Factions [Heresies] and Sects

#### Historical Background

*We wanted everyone to be able to see that we were not proposing or hiding anything with intent to deceive and that our agreement was not a mere pretense but that we wanted to help matters fundamentally. We wanted to set forth our position so clearly that our very adversaries would have to confess that in all these questions we abide by the true, simple, natural, and proper meaning of the Augsburg Confession. (SD XII:5-6)*

#### Anabaptists

##### General characteristics

- Pacifists or revolutionaries
- Caused tension/friction with existing governments and church bodies which did not measure up to their standards of the “truly pious”
- Legalistic
- Known for their rejection of infant baptism and insistence that those baptized as infants must be rebaptized
- Viewed baptism and the Lord’s Supper as mere symbols of conversion
- The Bible and sacraments were of secondary importance to the Spirit’s immediate bestowal of the “Word” directly on people
- Some were anti-Trinitarian

#### Schwenkfelders

##### General characteristics

- Human spirit more important than the inspired Word
- Taught perfectionism
- Casper Schwenkfeld himself rejected
- justification by faith
- Scripture’s authority
- efficacy of the means of grace (i.e. the ability to produce a desired or intended result)
- infant baptism
- virtually all of the Augsburg Confession

#### New Arians

##### General characteristics

- Various Anabaptists
- Denied divine nature of Christ

# Anti-Trinitarians

## General Characteristics

- Stripped Christ of true deity and power as the Son of God
- Held that the Spirit was only a power and not a person
- Only accepted Scripture in so far as it fit with human reason
- Denied that the Son of God existed before Christ

## Application

- Some have accused Luther and the Reformers as being the cause of all the problems in the church today. How would you respond? Where do these problems find their origin?
- Are the views listed in Article XII still a problem in the church today? In what denominations and sects?
- Why is a consistent and correct confession of the Trinity so crucial for 21st Century Lutherans?

*All these and similar articles, and whatever other further errors are attached to these or follow from them, we reject and condemn as incorrect, false, heretical, and opposed to the Word of God, the three Creeds, the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, the Smalcald Articles, and the Catechisms of Luther. All upright Christians would and should avoid them if they hold dear the welfare of their souls and their salvation. (SD XII:39)*

## Summary

### THE IMPORTANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE FORMULA OF CONCORD

- ✪ We can learn from the \_\_\_\_\_ and the doctrinal battles which were fought
- ✪ “Nothing \_\_\_\_\_ under the sun”
- ✪ Shows how to settle a controversy and answer false doctrine – STUDY the \_\_\_\_\_
- ✪ It is an “unfolding” of the Augsburg Confession and even more \_\_\_\_\_
- ✪ Important in our postmodern culture of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

*“If you are willing to believe nothing but what your reason teaches you, you will have to put aside all the articles of faith on a heap; for not one is so insignificant but that your reason will say that it is impossible.” (What Luther Says: 3719)*