

# The Pastoral Character of Herman Bezzel

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## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

*Hermann Bezzel (1861–1917) was an influential Bavarian Lutheran churchman shaped by the confessional awakening associated with Erlangen. Unfortunately he is as yet little known in the English-speaking world. He served as the rector of the deaconess institution at Neuendettelsau from 1891 to 1909, when he became bishop of the Bavarian Church. He held this position until he died of an illness acquired while visiting German troops on the front lines in World War I. Bezzel is often cited positively by Hermann Sasse and J. Michel Reu as an outstanding voice for confessionalism over and against calls for theological diversity in the Lutheran Church. Nine devotional excerpts from Bezzel's writings appear in John Doberstein's Minister's Prayer Book (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986). Bezzel was known as a strong and courageous preacher of repentance who did not fail to deliver the comfort and consolation of the gospel to the broken. He is remembered for his accent on the "condescension of God" by way of the theology of the cross. This 1938 essay by Johannes Rupprecht (1884–1964) takes its place alongside Reu's "Hermann Bezzel: Aspects of His Life for our Time" as a worthy introduction to the pastoral theology of this significant Lutheran.—John T. Pless*

## NOTE FROM THE TRANSLATOR

The following translates a 1938 booklet by Johannes Rupprecht under the title, "*Was hat Hermann Bezzel unserer Zeit zu sagen*" (Leipzig: Dörfling & Franke, 1938) ["What has Hermann Bezzel to say to our times?"]. This publication was written when Nazi party power was at its zenith and evangelical Christians in the *Landeskirche* (state/territorial church) were increasingly pressured to become less evangelical and more national-socialist. Here the reader will find not so much an academic work on a particular theological subject but many Bezzel quotations compiled by Johannes Rupprecht to address various contemporary theological matters. Of course it is reasonable to ask whether or not such a compendium, written in this particular context, has any validity today. Yet as the wisdom literature of the Old Testament already states, "There is nothing new under the sun" (Eccl 1:9). Today, as in the days of Bezzel and Rupprecht, we are still living in the church militant. What they have suffered, we are suffering, as does the church catholic.

It is often the case in our "postmodern" world that truth seems to be everywhere and nowhere. Everyone can do as he sees fit, that is, pick from the apple tree of theology those things he likes and ignore those he does not. Man constructs a God as he likes him, as he wants to worship him. Yet as the Old Testament says (Gen 3), this is earthly and sinful wisdom. True wisdom, on the contrary,

begins with the fear of the Lord, that is, true worship. Satan tries with all his power to suppress this. No church body, let alone confessional church, is not feeling and seeing the results of man abandoning the worship of God. Yet amongst all the shaking, God raises up prophets to point to the Messiah, the revealed God, and to expose the earthly wisdom for what it is: death. In hindsight, one can call Bezzel such a man, for in all his working and laboring in God's vineyard, his theology was about the fear of the Lord. Hence, you can be assured to find true wisdom in his words. I can only encourage the reader to read Bezzel and then reflect on his own situation. As Rupprecht says:

Agnes come and go, all flowing into time and out into eternity. Even though our time is so captivated and governed by the idea of the here and now, it remains oriented on eternity; irrespective of it being conscious of this, even its last value rests in eternity. But people of eternity, people who have encountered the eternal God in Jesus Christ, can provide the simple yet so precious service, not only to their contemporaries but also to future generations, of pointing to this ultimate goal, acting as road signs to this final destination, even though they have mistakes and are lacking and are bound to the errors of their time.

What follows is an edited, topically reorganized digest of Rupprecht's original pamphlet, in which many themes seemed to be strewn about without any organization. Through the work flowed an emotional current: the typical German resentment at having lost World War I due to the "betrayal of Austria"—the empire for which they had gone to war in the first place. Hence, many portions of the booklet not applicable to the church catholic were not translated. In a pedagogical method very common in Germany, some sentences are written as short theses. It is taken for granted that the person understands what is being said (has prior knowledge); if he does not, he is forced to stop reading and think on what is meant. I have attempted to preserve this style, as well as the text's typically richer use of imagery and expressions.

## INTRODUCTION

Hermann Bezzel, rector of the Diaconal Institute in Neuendettelsau (1891–1909) and president of the Monarchical Upper Consistory of the Evangelical Lutheran State Church of Bavaria (1909–1917), loved the German nation and his fatherland with all his soul. He was one of few people in Germany proficient in the history of his country. He was particularly enthusiastic about the history of the German emperors, as presented by the historian

Wilhelm von Giesebrecht. Of the German houses of nobility he held the house of Hohenzollern especially dear. He once wrote the following in his “Memories from official visits to the front” (1917):

This much is certain: that our emperor, just as his great ancestor Frederick Wilhelm,...is a man of history, and therefore a simple man in the depths of his soul...He must also be inclined to depression, just as his ancestors—but not to inactive complaining, like Atlas complains about the pain of carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders; rather, to a courageous overcoming, which does not allow sadness to lame him into inaction. This kind of overcoming teaches that suffering makes one strong as steel and brings victory. I left the headquarters [of the emperor], departing from a man who looked upon his responsibility with deference. I have a manly sympathy for the sovereign, whose heart is wracked with so many desperate questions.

Bezzel’s love for his people also made him ponder their social problems, bearing a true empathy for all those who had lived shattered existences. In a 1910 New Year’s sermon, he posed this question to his congregation:

When at night you go to bed, do you think at all of the souls of your people that are in prison; of those who are lonely, those who live in tight quarters and have no window open towards Jerusalem? Do you think of the wayward, those who even now sojourn on paths of sin while you place your own sleep into the hands of your sleepless guardian?...Oh that we had more empathy with the souls of our nation, that we would but pray ourselves into the hearts of the dispossessed, the abandoned, those who were betrayed and lied to!

In a session of the Chamber for Workforces of the Empire held on 30 April 1914, he warmly encouraged the state to care for those without work and insurance, “as was intended by the One who sent this need, that we not ignore the needy but rather lift them up and improve their lot as much as possible.” He gave the needy so much of his own possession that often he did not know from where he himself should receive.

Yet the height of his love to the people and fatherland came about in the years of the [First] World War. In a joyful willingness to serve during the war, he gave more than seems possible for a human. In addition to the duties of his office, he also represented those pastors that had been recruited. He cared for the well-being of those who were afield, those who were fighting, and those who were prisoners. He mourned those who had fallen, writing many letters of condolence to those who were left behind. With embarrassing conscientiousness he followed the state regulations on the restriction of consumables without giving much thought to his already sickly condition. He sacrificed his last energies on his two journeys to the front in the spring and mid-summer of 1916. Only in his oral and written reports did he indicate the exertion that these two journeys brought with them. Yet he never tired of giving praise to the accomplishments of those afield, in their brave battles and their wooden patience.

The Germans’ best personal worth awoke in the war and became strong, the *robur ac constantia* [strength and constancy, orig. Tactitus], which informs one that this is not about good luck but rather honor. Whether I went through bombed-out towns in the grey of first-light in the spring morning or through the silent woods in the red of first-light during the August mornings, I was always met by individual people, often covered with dust or dirt and a shovel over the shoulder, coming back from the graves to their poor quarters or their positions afield. All this was done in the tempered spirit of the self-evident, which knows nothing else but the law of duty, and this absolutely so.

Bezzel provided encouragement when faintheartedness and despair wanted to end the war. He encouraged them to look up to God the Lord:

In one night a spirit of worry has come upon our nation, coming out of the depths of that lie which claims that it is not possible for us to end this, where He is the true warrior who breaks spear and wagon, war and weapon. He is the rich and true Lord before whom the flour in the box does not empty, and whose oil jar is always full. A thousand questions come out of rumors that race with each other in the night’s wind. Despairing, nebulous constructions and a thousand complaints rise up from a fool, and so the snowflake that is thrown from its branch by a fleeing bird falls into the vale as an avalanche that buries everything beneath it.

Yet even he, himself, in his second journey to the front, could not look upon the end of the war without fear. He began a Bible study on 18 December 1916 by saying:

Thus, dear Christians, we have come to the end of a year filled with pain and suffering. There is no one among us who has not been led past graves and crosses; there is no one among us who has not buried hopes, expectations, and prayers from the previous year. Added to this, there is this horrifying war that extends its broad shadow over the entire world: All this fear from far and near, fear of the bloody past [Germany’s prior wars against other European hegemonies], about the sorrow of the present time, and worry about that which past and present will bring.

He did not witness the collapse of the German legions, due to the greater number of enemy combatants and the knife stabbed in our back. On 8 June 1917, after a long and excruciating illness, he was called away.

### A CHRISTIAN’S SERVICE IN HIS COUNTRY

Hermann Bezzel would certainly have fought against all efforts to propagate a faith in God without faith in Christ: Do not let the message of Jesus Christ fall silent! As he himself did not hold a sermon that did not have Jesus Christ as its center, so he would also make this the duty of each preacher. In his last Bible study of 1916,

he comforted his congregation with these words:

Instead of letting our arms fall to our sides motionless in lethargic depression and moping about with our heads bowed, we should instead gather around the Word which our fathers gathered around when they were fearful and their consciences were heavy laden. We should wish to enter the house of Him to whom this fast-ending year also belongs, the one who walks over the waves of the many years and centuries, the King of time and Lord and Victor over all its fears. We should flee to Jesus, as our fathers have done in all difficult times; times when the hymns of the cross and its comfort arose like glorious flower-buds out of the fears of the Thirty Years' War. It is unspeakably great and rich in peace that we do not artificially, fearfully, and worrisomely have to look for something greater to comfort us—for a helper who would perhaps go with us a little of the way—but rather that we have our trust and faith in the eternal arms of our hope, in the ancient God...Let us look at two thoughts in a simple and uncomplicated way: fear and comfort. Fear is: darkness without Jesus! Comfort is: Jesus in darkness!"

In his last sermon on the divine office (The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent 1916) he stated,

Oh, how many modern preachers we have seen in the past who are lonely and poor preachers who did not know anything other than the cross of Christ and the grace of Jesus, who—even when they were in their graves—were still mentioned with a thankful spirit and praised with the words: You opened to me the way unto salvation.

This is fidelity, my dear Christians, when someone does not take away from that which God has given to the congregation through Jesus Christ, nor adds anything to it. Even if the entire congregation—irrespective of whether or not she is made up of intellectuals—the entire holy church were to laugh at such outmoded sermons, at least she has to say this one thing about us [pastors] when we are home [heaven]: He was faithful in the entirety of his house. The pastor never looked to his own interests and never put himself into the center, nor did he stumble over the stones of sycophantism—all by the grace of God. What he did do, however, was preach the ancient Gospel, which our great and priceless teachers gained for us, in good times and in bad times. The ancient Gospel stands immutable, even when heaven and earth break into pieces.

A life without Jesus Christ was for Bezzel futile and worthless:

And if you were not earthenware, but rather made out of pure gold and created in glory, and yet the thought of Jesus were to you unknown, then your beauty would be a cold beauty and only an external sheen. And were you to possess everything in external goods and your entire earthly form were illuminated with the highest intellect

and yet you did not know Jesus and His light, then your glow would be borrowed, your sheen false and your light dead.

To those who do not want to deny Jesus completely, yet at the same time want to portray him in a light different than that of the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, which has shown him as he is since the days of the apostles, Bezzel would always confess:

This is what it is all about. It is believing that someone who was called Jesus from all eternity became Christ in this time; that this Jesus Christ remained the Son of God and yet still became the Son of Man; that divinity and humanity touched each other in him, that he became like me, yet did not lose his identity because of it—to make this one's own means to have faith.

My eyes desire aid; the comfort of men is of no worth to me. The faithfulness of man cannot rejuvenate me. In whom shall I find my comfort? I hope upon you, for my eyes have seen your Savior. This is not an alien salvation, not a salvation that has been made up by the twentieth century, but the Savior upon whom our nation has been calling for the last 1200 years, the Savior who led our Dr. Martin Luther—our faithful father in Christ—and from whom we learned as children: "I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father...is my Lord."

However, in view of Christ's work, Bezzel would not place the teachings of Jesus but his death on the cross and resurrection in the foreground. He continuously confessed the necessity of the atonement accomplished through the death of Christ and tried to give it substance, especially in his Lenten devotions on the last words of Jesus. In a 1916 Lenten Bible study on Isaiah 53:1–5, he says,

This is what the Gospels—as much as they differ from each other in various places—have given to us in a great act of love, the image of the cross and the suffering one. Even in all the varying depictions of this one great thing, blessed harmony has been given in the most necessary and important: 'Behold, this is the Lamb of God, who bears the sins of the world.' He is given for the sake of your sins; my beloved one—the most beautiful amongst all—has been thus deformed. Hanging on the cross we recognize His gestures, gestures which we have recognized in ourselves since the days of our youth; we see upon His lips words spoken because of our guilt, and suddenly the scales fall from our eyes: this is my sin and my misdeed that hangs before me, it is these He carries! Behold, this is how you come to know Jesus. Not through his beauty and majesty, not through the glory of the one who has returned home, not from the glory that glows forth from His crown, but through the gestures that you have embossed upon Him. Your lies have deformed His face, your lusts have depressed His holy and blameless face, your bitterness and enmity, everything that expresses itself upon your face as a blemish—all of this He took upon himself. Not at His beauty, but at the

ugliness that our soul gave to Him does our soul recognize Him.

The insult to God is atoned for through the bringing forth of Jesus' sinless life of sacrifice. Injured life is only assuaged through self-sacrificed life...All those who have lived before Jesus were poorer than those who lived during His time, but when Jesus did a work, then Abraham has as much part of that work as do I. "Jesus Christ yesterday, today, and tomorrow."

Next to his crucifixion, Bezzel would maintain the resurrection as a fundamental part of proclamation:

This my heart speaks as often as it becomes frightened of death, His true Word testifies to me, and history proves to me: A dead person cannot conquer the world. But Christ has conquered it and is still conquering it. As many of our brothers remain in the battle and struggle, suffer, pass away, and are laid to rest in their graves under the flag of Christ, just as many throw their wavering glance upon the Nazarene on the cross and testify to this: You are risen from the dead.

In a 1910 Ascension Day sermon, he celebrates

The absolute and wonderful image of that which overwhelms us, all the glory that towers up over us temporal beings, all the beauty of the stars and the furthest reaches of the heavens opened themselves to Him. He was drawn in by them, and is now in His home...We praise today, that all spaces have been filled with the fullness of His life and have been blessed. Now there is no space that can separate us from Him, He has opened every space. Now there is no distance that separates my poor, homesick heart from Him; He has nullified the distance and is next to me. Now even the closest space has been transfigured, and we can speak in unison with an old father of the church: "When you were near to me, you were far away from me; now that you are far away from me, you are near to me."

### ON DISCIPLESHIP

When it came to faith in Christ and the worship of Christ, Bezzel refused to let discipleship of Christ be ignored. Next to placing "Christ for us" into the foreground, he also placed "Christ ahead of us" into the same position.

The Lord Jesus Christ who died for me is the same one who goes ahead of me. I cannot have the one without having the other. If I wish to have Him in the one, then I will also have Him in the other. From the Savior to the example, from the example to the Savior! He, the most perfect amongst all children of men, gave us the most perfect example in all parts. He gave us the example of the most trustworthy, reliable and highest example of self-sacrifice since He made hay while the sun was shining.

What we have heard from His Words and seen of His miracles has bound us to Him. The disciples sail right through the middle of the turbulence, through the deceiving sea...journeying toward death, because the master wishes this.

To acquiesce to Jesus, insofar as He would cover your path with roses, yet to ignore Him otherwise; to let Jesus rule in you when He gives beautiful sounds, sunshine and good weather—that is not discipleship! Where Jesus is not the force and content of your life but rather the decoration and a diversion during the day, then it is better not to have known Him at all.

Bezzel had a distaste for false piety, a piety that only wishes to cultivate its flowerbed of Jesus-love. He would accuse such piety of being degenerated Christian individualism, something just as bad or even worse than the unchristian or even antichristian selfishness and hedonism.

Anything but this emotion-driven Christianity, anything but this emotional being that has been dissected by all kinds of external and alien spices. The Lord destroys this pursuit of pleasure, a pleasure which is unsatisfied with life, an enemy of work and constantly distancing itself from having to make hard decisions. This is an egotistical and selfish Christianity which does not have the promise of overcoming the world.

A second horizon that Bezzel would point to—especially in regards to people who think the world rotates around themselves—is the horizon of self-denial: faithfulness in all matters of life, a willing obedience, service to the poor and needy, and the patient willingness to suffer.

It is not true that there is such a work for a Christian that dishonors him—unless it is the work of sin and the devil. The more you are grounded in your being a Christian and start to live in discipleship, the more the trifles of life will become meaningful to you, and the more the unsightly things will become great things to you. The need of a poor man, whom you have never met before, becomes your chief concern, because the poor man is trying to find his Savior in you. He wishes to find his King in you—and then you go and dismiss him because you have no time to spare.

To have time and energy for those suffering in life, this is a service which Christ welcomes, a sign of true Christian vocation.

The ship of our life needs ballast; it must have some stones in it or it will sink into the abyss. As the ship of one's life cannot be without ballast, so also the picture of one's life cannot be without wounds, and no day of one's life without tears.

## ON REVERENCE FOR HOLY SCRIPTURE

Bezzel would always encourage one to be reverent toward Scripture because the fundamental and measuring witness of the right faith in Christ and true Christ-discipleship is laid out in Holy Scripture and nowhere else.

If one takes away from any part of that what Scripture says about the deeds of Christ, one will be pushed to the point where one will finally say, “Jesus did not exist.” Truly, if Christ were not such as Scripture testifies Him to be, then it would be irrelevant whether or not He truly did exist or not.

All of Holy Scripture...should be regarded as a free gift from God that shames us in our fears and justifies our trust, whose smallest characteristic is the inerrancy of Scripture and its greatest its eternality, whose smallest breeze creates new courage, yes, a wholly new man.

When—in regard to the many centuries past—I look at the short span of life that I have lived and contemplate the many foolish attempts made by people during this time to remove the image of Christ out of the hearts of the members in the congregations, I ask myself, who knows their names and still reads their books today? It has all passed away. But the New Testament, with the peace-greeting and with the nearness of the comfort of Christ is continuously taking a great number of people by the hand and by the heart: Your Word is truth!

Do not be deceived, when the apparitions of the day blind you! Do not be impressed by those who have not been given authority by God; rather, believe: These ideas pass away and these interpretations fade away, and these false—even if exciting lights—disappear, but those who are in the Word of God and in Him remain for all eternity.

Bezzel would also warn against irreverence toward the Old Testament and emphasize that the Old Testament cannot be separated from the New Testament, even though it has a servant-form.

Therefore fearlessly—not evading the danger or being called backward—establish the unbroken relationship between the Old and the New Testament on the grounds of Him who honors the love that searches<sup>1</sup> in the poor Old Testament, because it is this that testifies to Him.

We may admit that the Old Testament belongs to those torn robes, behind which His majesty hides itself. We admit that the poor man (Jer 28) who was lowered into the well was pulled out of that hole wearing rags. Yet these tattered rags—here I use a word from Hamann—

were his aid and salvation. So also the asperity of the Old Testament is filled with salvation for us.

We have the Word behind which and in which Christ is, the ‘written Christ’ placed into the poor letters, yet it is a Word which extends far beyond anything else in meaning and elevates much higher than this state we are in, because it is a living Word that incorporates the entire life as...it came into this small reflection of eternity. Though this Word is hidden in the Old Testament, having only some discernable contours, it speaks to us openly and clearly in the new covenant, not in doctrines, nor in infallible decisions, but as God-born tangibility of the intangible goodness of God, through which the Lord gives attention to our soul.

Bezzel would most probably react to atheistic biblical scholarship with a grin. He would, for example, take Paul under his protection:

Paul’s work lay therein that he, the greatest of all apostles, glorified Jesus through speech and Scripture, through teaching and suffering, through joy and tribulation—right unto death! Perhaps you can call fishermen simple-minded people, but was Paul simple-minded? Was he not educated, yes even more educated than many professors of today—professors who complain about him and take away from him, just as there are bunglers that insult their masters in hope of becoming masters themselves by these means. Was Paul an epileptic, a man who following his sickness saw visions? A man who on his way to Damascus, through the heat of the sun, the dust of the road and the near lying chalk hills, was deluded into seeing a picture that actually never existed? To ask these questions is to negate the witness. This is not the way in which the Lord builds his church!

Luther, as a rejuvenator of the ancient gospel, of Pauline Christianity, would be highly praised by Bezzel—in contradiction to the mainstream, which relativized Luther.

Luther carried in one strong hand the hammer of the [Ninety-five] Theses and annihilated bars and barriers—truly a far-sighted hero. In the other hand, he held the ladle<sup>2</sup> whereby a sanctified construction was built upon a unified and eternal foundation. He did not build a new church on sand and dust, but on the ground that is the apostles, prophets, martyrs, and fathers, whose names have been written in heaven. Through a tradition that was found true, he let the poor church renew itself, a church in whose furthest corners the hymn is sung of the free grace in Christ, from whose pulpit no opinions of man flow, but rather the unquenchable blessed light of the Gospel, which blazes forth with a quiet and joyful glow into hearts and houses. This is not Luther’s church,

<sup>1</sup> I have translated “*die suchende Liebe*” here quite literally. It probably refers to OT believers, who through their faith were seeking the will of God.

<sup>2</sup> Yes, a *soup ladle*. Bezzel perhaps plays on Luther’s image of Scripture as a well from which one “*ladles the water of life*.”



nor the church of the new-formation,<sup>3</sup> but rather the church as the hidden church of the apostolic community, and the conquering and missionary power of the Pauline faith.

### ON THE CONFESSIONS OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

As a convinced Lutheran, Bezzel would still emphasize that the confessions of the Lutheran church not only give us the correct understanding of Scripture, but also are necessary for the renewal of the church.

Upon our Confessions rests the blessing of faithfulness. The confessions represent the way in which men have confessed themselves to Christ, men who knew much and laid everything they learnt and experienced before the feet of Him who served them in the Word and consoled them in forgiveness. Our Confessions are not wooden expressions of knowledge. Rather, our Confessions are the strong, victorious, manly, joyful language of the confessors; of people to whom a world lay open that was filled with glory, honor, and desirable pleasures—yet who denied themselves this, so that people would not say of them one day that they were opportunists who enjoyed a fine and pleasurable life. Instead, one is able to say something about the mystery of the one who remains faithful, and how this faithfulness does not leave him who remains in it. It has become fashionable to ignore the Confessions of our church.”

In his last presentation, “The state church in the protection of the Confessions and its own protection” (4 January 1917), he said:

When the state church finally will show an interest in its younger theologians, when she can and may no longer tolerate that unripened, inexperienced, and unrhymed material that these younger theologians presented to the congregations, only then will she fulfill her holy duty. She cannot listen to the preaching of the *Heiltümer* [holy medicaments] from the pulpits, yet also allow persons to preach who destroy these *Heiltümer*.

However, Bezzel would not advocate an overestimation of the confessions. He was constantly falling back on the foundational confession of the church, as it is spoken out in John 6:68–69. In his last presentation the words are written, “this is the most simple confession: We acknowledge that you are the holy one of God, completely on the side of your heavenly Father, completely on the side of your erring and fallible brothers; wholly anchored in the one who is your great likeness, and wholly clothed in destitution and a beggar-like state...‘the holy one amongst sinners,’ holy after He was made to be sin[fullness] for us.”

In a Bible study he once commented on John 16:3, “Dogmatics

should not be treated badly, so that one, on the one hand, learns it and yet, on the other hand, builds the church on different principles. Without clear knowledge of God and Christ, things will turn awry; with possession of this knowledge, however, there will be a correct appropriation of the relations.” At another point in time he said, “Christendom spread throughout the world shows that the Holy Spirit opens his doors to the heavy-laden and makes the paths wide for those who are searching. Truly this is not a Christendom without dogma—such a thing is a strange construct that falls to pieces even before it has been completely finished—no, better is a Christendom that understands the unlimited suffering and desire of humanity, and wholly surrounds it with a renewing Christianity.”

These statements, however, do not exclude the fact that Bezzel took the charge of a dead orthodoxy seriously. “Yes, perhaps it has a correct piety, yet one without inner faith! It is a piety that burns for Him without ever knowing Him—as though one could not become old and grey with the confessional writings of the church alone.”<sup>4</sup> Another time he said, “There is an orthodoxy that destroys more than mere false belief. This is the orthodoxy of comfortableness.” In the same vein he would not support an “addiction” of people constantly laying heresy-charges, even if they were well intended. That he tried to keep himself clear of declaring anyone a heretic is seen in his writings to Friedrich Rittelmeyer, a man who had reminded Bezzel to be more stringent with the oath of office. “I cannot exclude these people [from the church]. Rittelmeyer is too religious for me.” On his death bed, where he suffered under a heavy onslaught of *Anfechtung*, he said: “If now I enter a different world, I am looking forward to finally understanding Rittelmeyer; upon this earth I never understood him.”

Bezzel was always patient with evangelical preachers who were new to the office. He wrote, “The church can tolerate it when the young apprentice teaches that of Christ which has become sure to him, if he teaches this under the prerequisite that the little he knows is the highest<sup>5</sup>...The church can wait. She knows that the whole process of the Holy Spirit, who leads from one truth to another, fulfills itself upon the entirety of the church as it does upon the individual.”

In the same vein, Bezzel would fully understand a justified fanaticism, something that he himself was no stranger to. “This is the greatness of Paul which makes one so envious of this man and makes him so praiseworthy. For the sake of Christ he was taken to be a fool and a *Schwärmer* [enthusiast] until the point in time where he had carried the Word of Jesus through the world and passed away, all to his honor.” Yet Bezzel would vehemently ward off a false fanaticism wherever it appeared in the church. “A man who lives in spirit can decide whether or not he wants to live cavalierly and without reserve, but he should not become fanatical. Fanatics are always superficial people who try to make up for their lack in thoughtful contemplation through a charismatic use of words, which we know is always a thoroughly trite substitution. Of their enthusiasm one can and should expect little for the kingdom of

<sup>3</sup> Here Bezzel most probably plays on AC 1’s “*Ecclesiae magnus consensu apud nos docent*, etc.” The church of the Re-formation is the church brought back to its pure and clean catholic form; the church of the “New-formation,” then, is a church that has broken all ties to its catholic roots, *a.k.a* the Reformed churches.

<sup>4</sup> That is, “the study of the confessions suffice for a life time.” Bezzel clearly sees the problem of orthodox theologians busying themselves too much with dogmas and not doctrines. In other words, “Look guys, next to the Bible, the Confessions are what you should study—these are the writings that have the right to be called catholic—and not the systems developed by individual people.”

<sup>5</sup> That is, the most important; what is necessary for salvation.

God.”

Bezzel would always advise taking the golden middle path, even though he himself was a man who felled decisions very quickly.

We stand in the middle. I would like to say that it is the unthankful but genuinely Lutheran principle to fix the path again and again in the middle, not because this is the most comfortable path, but because it is the most difficult path. To such drawing of the line in the middle belongs a measure of self-restraint and self-condescension. Only the church is capable of carrying the shame of Jesus with seriousness. It is the church that has never been afraid to carry the humiliation of its Savior and has kept any thoughts of domination from her life, this is why she is able to draw this middle line.

Bezzel always managed to drive toward scriptural and confessional truth in a wise and pastoral manner. In a Bible study on the 10 October 1910, he said,

Perhaps you have become disillusioned about Jesus, since you've become so well-read; you have not yet come to the point of denying his historicity—because you do not want to appear like a fool—but you have come so far, that the worship of Him according to the second article seems like foolishness to you. How would it be, if you just let go of the entire second article and replaced it with: “The one you sent.” You will not be left standing half-way to the end of the path, you will be pushed to its conclusion; you will be pushed forward until you reach the point where his disciples—who heard his foolishness and saw in horror his helplessness on the cross—were. At this point you will say with them: “This is truly God.” I always said wherever I had to teach: Let us begin at the human Jesus, then we will be going on the path of God.

Bezzel would give his respect and support to a person who disagreed with him, a person who is true and honest and who does not wish to veil his intentions but confesses his convictions publicly, even though he could not give this to a person such as David Friedrich Strauß. Bezzel once said of this man:

In contrast to them (Wichern and Löhe) stands the remarkable person of David Friedrich Strauß, also born in 1808, whom no one can put aside without tears. Strauß fell more and more away [from faith], he fell deeper and deeper, yet he remained a gentleman, whose earnest desire it was to lead a highly moral life. The last words of his life were like a lament on lost fortune, a questioning if the Savior isn't, after all, the one whom the church teaches Him to be. He answered the question of whether we were really Christians or not with a clear no, ‘We are never again Christians.’ This was too honest for the modern people; and we cannot tolerate him because he robbed us of our holy things. Now he stands there like a poor man who has burnt down the house of our fathers and only now realizes with horror that it was his own fathers' house...I have read with interest the reflections about David Friedrich Strauß, who to me for years has

been the most honest of all the Lord's enemies.

Just as Bezzel not only experienced the *Anfechtung* of doubt when he was dying, but also throughout his life, he sought to understand those whose doubts were earnest and not frivolous:

My dear Christians, to doubt is no shame. When someone like John doubts, who knew the Lord Jesus Christ so well and lived and suffered for Him, how should I then be ashamed if this same doubt visits my heart and I start to ask the question “Is it really so as the church and its doctrine has taught me?” ... Is it such a shame if a called servant of the church sits before the Gospel, wringing his hands and says: I can't believe anymore, I can't believe...Do you really think the content of our proclamation was learnt without effort? We fought for it through doubt and tribulations. It was tested at death-beds and proved at graves.

If a *Seelsorger* no longer continuously runs to the empty tomb, there to see “the miracle of the Lord, who causes so much destruction upon this earth,” then he has failed his calling. If a *Seelsorger*, however spiritual he may be, does not have compassion on a soul that searches for its Lord yet does not find Him, then the *Seelsorger* is useless for this doubting soul.

#### THE CONDESCENSION AND TRANSCENDENCE OF GOD

The thought Bezzel liked to dwell on most was the condescension of God, the self-degrading and adjusting love of God, which in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is in pursuit of those who are lost, and does not rest or dally until it has succeeded in finding them and calling them home.

Behold, in this way the God of German history; the Lord who imprinted the picture of his Son deeply into this nation...approaches us again: With the hands of a mother he leads those who are His...He comes to every fellow citizen who calls to Him and says to each person: Am I then not good enough for you? You look to mankind for help and yet you find none; do you not think that I can help you? You knocked on many doors, and none of them opened to you—you only heard the sadistic laughter of those on the inside. Why then do you not knock at my door? Is my hand shortened, that I can no longer help? ... This is His mercy...this is the great and divine condescension, that it calls the smallest of all...the greatest, before which God bows himself.

Bezzel would always emphasize this condescension; through remembrance of it, he would console and lift people up who were suffering before the face of the hidden God. However, the praise for the searching and courting love of God, which knocks on one's door suppliantly and asks for us to open the door of our heart, he would not proclaim to those who deride God, those who no longer value and desire the love of God, wishing to be God themselves. Instead, against these he would emphasize the transcendent majesty of God

and give them the following as food for thought: The living God is also one who can be seriously angry, and therefore must be greatly feared. "God is not one atom poorer when I am completely annihilated; God is not richer when I return home. He does not need me." In a Bible study he once said,

Behold, this is the way in which we must once again come to know God; as one who with one mere word can destroy an entire nation; as one who can quickly pulverize our universities and academies, palaces and plans. This is how we must come to recognize Him, or we will not be healed. God who destroys everything in his wrath and throws away our life as though it never was...this is what we pray for when we pray for insight into the wrath of God.

### THE REALITY OF DEATH, HELL, AND SATAN

In a similar vein, Bezzel would not shy away from pointing to hell as a terrible reality, in the face of which all frivolous laughter and joking would suddenly fall silent. For me it was a very disquieting experience to witness him one day posing the question: "Is it not true that there were hours in your life, where, if you had died, you would have gone to hell?" He was particularly poignant about the eternity of hell in one of his Bible studies held on the text of Revelation 14:6–20:

In a time that is afraid of everything except God, a generation that is more afraid of the numbers seven and thirteen than of their sins against the Ten Commandments, it seems a miracle and a remnant of a far too weak theology that one still speaks about the eternity of hell. The idea is a false one that God is so merciful that He receives to His meal those who threw His bread to the dogs.

God will wake everyone from the dead on Judgment day to an eternal life, even if it is a life spent devouring itself for all eternity. Certainly, if this life would then finally annihilate itself completely, that one then could say "in fifty thousand years it is completely annihilated," then they would suffer these fifty thousand years as a dream, for they would know that there would be an end to the suffering. But my dear Christians, listen to what Luther says: "These teachers of mercy would do better if they would teach more in this time about the seriousness of hell than to diminish the seriousness of hell in eternity."

Bezzel would also tirelessly oppose those who laugh about the reality of Satan and joke about it:

Whoever does not believe that there is a personal lord of the lie who is active in the world, he cannot be helped; whoever does not know what power the spirits under the heaven have, the spirits of deception and lies, of wrong opinions and erroneous statements, this person has wasted his time studying history.

The clearer the eye becomes the more one begins to look

at what lies behind the principalities that rule the world. These are not obscure, medieval dogmas; these are not theological ideologies of people still caught in the delusion of fantasy; this is the great and terrible fact that behind our world of definitions lies a person. Behind evil stands the evil one...we are fighting against lords, against living personalities.

### JUSTIFICATION

One would have to think that Bezzel was no evangelical Christian, were it not for the continual hymn of praise and thanksgiving he sung for the justifying faith, which comes only from grace.

In the midst of this world of war, suffering and fighting...there runs a small, narrow, steep and difficult path. Upon this path Christ is walking with all of His faithful ones. Where He makes His rest, there sin parts and injustice falls silent, for He says: "Peace be with you!" And where a soul falls open to His revelation, there He says: "Believe in me and you shall be justified." Then you shall be justified alone out of faith. Behold, when our heart condemns us for the year that has passed, then He is greater than our heart. We believe that He is more precise than our heart, far more legalistic, far more thorough. No! When our heart condemns us...when we have succumbed to our self, He says 'go, you are free.' Oh, if all that I have is knowing that your grace is with me, then I will gladly suffer all shame, persecution and loss of material things.

Bezzel emphasized the evangelical message of the *sola gratia* and *sola fide* during times of war. In a 1915 Advent letter to the pastors on the front, he writes:

A preacher of the Gospel should not preach in such a way that only the greatness of man's duty is praised, so that only the glory of the sacrifice is praised and the certainty of eternal reward is based upon this sacrifice—that would not be the full blessing that is the Gospel. Rather, there would be no more blessed service to the sons of our nation—people who have moved away from the shine of the world and are now more than ever opened to the seriousness of hard reality—than that we let them come to know the thundering Word of eternity in their consciences and let them drink the living waters of the Lord of life.

Faith never was to Bezzel only a confident hope upon God's forgiving mercy, but also a certainty of God's care and protection under his mighty hand, a confident trusting and building upon God's wise providence, whose goal is never displaced but drives forth into glory.

Everything that God wishes, everything as God wants it! Everything that God wants, be it difficult or easy, be it serious or joyful; take He what is most precious or most loved by us, as long as He remains with us. If He wishes



to lead me quickly [that is, give me a short life], then I will not struggle against it; and if He wishes to accompany me slowly, then I will learn patience. The most trivial things are meaningful in His hand; in His mercy the most impossible paths are the greatest paths.

Over the waves of the sea of nations—above which now lightning strikes and storm weather brews—above all that which brings us suffering and separation, and from the depths where the souls of the nations are shaken and are moved in all their foundation, through this storm the call of the holy church, this lonely guardian cries out in the face of the dawning day: “It is the Lord!” Not a blind, grey fate that calls to man like a machine and butchers them, not some unforeseeable, uncalculated fate that mockingly throws millions of people out onto the land and throws millions more into the destruction of the sea, not this unbearable something before which man stands terrified until he mutely submits. No! “It is the Lord!”

### REPENTANCE

Yet, as strongly as Bezzel would emphasize the *quietiv* [passive] function of faith, he would emphasize even more strongly the *motiv* [active] function of faith. Faith has to be the engine for the willing and doing. He always contended against a lethargic quietism that excuses all failure and neglect with the appeal to God’s providence, “as though there were a power in passivity and a truth in resignation, as though we were born of the Holy Spirit to give the field to the enemy without a fight.” Not without some irony, and at the same time with worry, Bezzel identified the inclination amongst Lutherans to remain passive in faith instead of becoming active in faith and through faith. “When we overlook that which God has given and are deaf to His warnings, when we do not use the time He sojourns with us to earnestly repent and turn to Him—then, we should not be amazed that our heritage is shortened and taken from us.”

Bezzel, a preacher of repentance of rare quality, would not at any hour let the call to repentance fall silent. This call would always be focused on the single person as well as a whole community, all done in a true care for his church and his people.

If our church were a satisfied and secure church, no longer judging and prosecuting, but only thinking of its own glory and drunk on its own fame, then she would be the church and congregation of Satan.

There is no one amongst us who cannot remember hours and days of which he must be very ashamed. How many unclean thoughts have passed through my soul, how much hate and bitterness has filled up my heart, how many foolish, hard, and malicious words have hurried from my lips; and I can answer with nothing more than: “I, a poor and sinful man.”

Since we are in a time of denial and decline, it is imperative that we earnestly mourn the falling away of our nation and our own unfaithfulness. Take care that neither the demanding wistfulness of lethargy, nor the

trite penitence of laziness is shown on your faces, but rather the silence of mourning: “I am sorry and sad that I have not been faithful all my life.”

Still today he would demand of the proclamation of the church that the damages done by the nation be branded as such, that public wrong be named and subsequently disciplined.

Life is not weakened and devalued under sacrifice and the heavy yoke of relationships; rather, lust is that which digs the grave of the nation’s wellbeing; living in pleasures wastes the energy for the struggle.

When the bonds of marriage should become loose, when divorce increases, when the faithfulness of marriage is exposed to greater danger, then for the sake of truth we have to say: This is not right! If our young men are exposed more and more to the sins against purity and chastity; when it is heard and seen, as they say, that this is just natural, yes indeed something praiseworthy and helpful for development, then we have to step in and say: This is not right!

How much injustice has occurred in Germany, how much pride and chauvinism, oh how enamored we have been with the constitution of this nation while this nation sinned: all these things have angered the Holy Spirit! Oh, how secure we have become, and how lazy in prayer!

In context of the wellbeing of the nation, he writes to women who practice abortion:

To German women who fear and flee children—a fear which shall diminish our church in fifty years because the confessing people have become so few—you must know that the horror of God’s gift being obstructed and destroyed through the medium of murder in secret places will witness against you one day. Napoleon once cried out: “Who will give me mothers, that I may save France?”

Though Bezzel’s call to repentance had a character that sharpened the conscience, this call to repentance was not done in a pharisaic and judgmental spirit.

It could be that your hard words find far greater pardon with God than your embittered approach to life. It could be that a quick blow made in wrath appears less to the Lord than a long nurtured hatred. God judges many things less harshly than a pharisaic mind.

When—to explain this practically—one looks into many married people’s lives, one will recognize that many couples would have had an easier life if both had understood each other better and would understand each other better if they had the courage to confess to each other their weaknesses. They would have gone much further had they not refused to be a sinner before the other person. But because the one side cloaked itself in the mantle of virtue, the other side only saw fit to do the

same thing. Thus the relationship towards each other became more frozen, colder, dead, and finally the “for each other” and “with each other” turned into a mere ‘next to each other.’

There are people who live so scrupulously correctly that even the lie is too comfortable for them; there are people who never show a frown of displeasure, so virtuous are these people—and yet they do not belong to the holy church; they are quite content with themselves. But whoever suffers under his mistakes, who groans under the weight of his old nature, who desires and prays for the day to come where he is finally freed from the weight of the “I,” this man is a member of the holy church.”

Someone might say “I have always been upright in my life,” but when the king of memories comes again to judge, then all correctness falls to the ground like rotten cinder. How would it be, if a terrifying lie exists opposite to your appropriate and scrupulously correct being and laughs at your existence, a lie awakened from the father of hell and belonging to him! And you, who showed so much unevenness in your life and let your fellow man suffer under so many failings, you whose life was so blemished and only had external worth—you can be joyful that the Lord transfigures your ugly life with grace and says to people who have misjudged you: “He did what he could, let him be at peace!”

### RENEWAL

Bezzel also prayed and hoped for a rebirth and renewal of the nation [in the Christian faith].

Is salvation still possible there where godlessness and self-righteousness are taking over, where love is growing cold and faithfulness and simplicity are becoming rare? Do not despair, because your truest friend has spoken the *Konsumatum* (words of consummation, that is, “It is finished”) over this earth covered in the night of winter.

Our faithful Lord and Savior will not leave our nation completely, if it does not depart from Him. Everyone who has hope for the renewal of his nation will cleanse himself of useless and unclean words, words that hurry to maintain the appearance and increase the emptiness, words that create nothing nor gain anything. The power and honor of the precise and holy Word must return, so that the lie can be stopped and His kingdom may increase.

The people who live in the countryside were a special concern of Bezzel, namely that they would be kept in the Christian faith and be strengthened in this faith.

Even up to now there are still many healthy powers in our nation; Christianity is still a force; Christian custom and order are still reservoirs. Especially our people on the land are entrusted to our prayer, its health is a essential

part of the health of the nation. We must pray that they are given deeper insight into the way of Christendom and wish for them that the idea of community which they possess and which sharpens the conscience can be led into the tracks of the church. Whoever has seen the terrible admixture of churchliness and simple lust of the flesh, the shame of abomination and sins not called out but left to quietly mushroom next to the Christianity of custom, these people must pray and work that His Spirit may blow strongly over the dried out bones and create life.

He would exhort the family, the nucleus of the nation, not to let go of the customs of the church, but rather to move nearer to the Word of God through continual visit to the *Gottesdienst* and the keeping of daily devotion.

Sunday was made for the family! If the father, as a result of his vocation and the great weight of his work, has no time during the week for those who are dependent upon him for spiritual well being and for their eternity, then at least he should take Sundays off when he is lord of the house, house father, and house priest!

These are the most blessed marriages, marriages where man and wife raise their voices in song: “From the depths I call to you, O Lord.” These are the most happy families, where parents and children—without making any great ado—daily come together under the cross and lift up their voices because their needs and those of others are weighing on their shoulders.

When dark spirits enter a Christian house and a Christian marriage, they are vaporized through the faith, just like mist dissipates before the sun.

Bezzel also tried to show how the renewal of the church is to be understood or strived after.

[Renewal] does not depend on the church growing in external sheen, honor and power. These are things worked not by Him who is life, has life, and is the authenticity of life.

We have to hold out as long as the Lord does not himself give the order to abandon, and learn to recognize His image in the most distorted streaks of the state church. We have to learn to recognize His honor in the caricatures made of Him, and in many a deprivation in the church learn to recognize a trace of His richness and hold dear Luther’s words: “It would be better for us the moment we start to pray for something we are carrying with difficulty, rather than sitting in judgment about it.”

When the theological faculties should one day fail, and all that they do is teach the false truth, then the church will have to start thinking about its theological education and take the stigma of being backward upon itself, and build its own in the middle of the desert.

If the church in its temporal form...with all the rough imperfections and inequities that adhere to its earthly state, can no longer guard the entrusted deposit, then the church must summon the courage to break asunder its particular form, always certain of the fact that a new form, one more true to the duty of the church, has been prepared by the Lord.

### THE CHURCH MILITANT

Bezzel always struggled for the rights of the church: "One should not remove outposts in order to protect the troops; neither does one do away with the outer defenses if one wishes to hold the fortress." In this vein of thought it was a given for Bezzel that every Christian had to be a warrior.

Some people are apathetic to fighting, yet it is the greatest dishonor God can send upon any person. That person is not worthy to lead any battle, nor will he be skilled enough to survive war; and whoever does not fight will not have the joy of victory. Being without struggle is to be without God, without the one who has ordained the war so that we become strong and learn to cherish peace.

In the hour that we consult with the Lord, so that He would declare us capable for an honest fight and make us strong for such a fight, in that hour all pettiness, childishness, and immaturity departs as a shadow departs before the victorious sun and suddenly we are free. We are again those men as God created them, as those personalities He disciplined us to be, as those Christians He imprinted us to be. Having strength in the Lord, we step up against the whole world.

Lutherans, take the Word—your weapon—into your hand, so that it gets used to you and you get used to it, so that sword and man understand each other and are deserving of each other! Take it; it does not break. Swing it; it will never sink to the ground. Use it; it will never fail! Just as the enemy must let the Word remain, so also it will let you remain standing so that you can fight, struggle, and conquer!

Bezzel lamented over those in the office of the ministry, and the lack of respect and honor people had before it.

All the graces that we daily hear, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, Christ's intercession for us and God's mercy—these are all such well-known things that only the smallest number are thankful for them. Yet it must also be said...if the heavens proved themselves closed and the abyss of disconsolation opened itself; if the Lord silenced his stewards and his mysteries, if the church bells no longer called out every Sunday and hymns no longer rejuvenated our hearts, and if in the eternal unity of each day it were not heavenly animation which offered variety but rather satanic excitement, this life would be terribly empty and poor!

Bezzel already noticed in his days the loss of people thinking about eternity, that a symptom of his time was a clear tendency to think in very earthly and worldly terms.

The time has passed where one goes to the graveyard to learn who one really is. It is no longer modern to think about dying, rather one tries to ignore this; and when it does make an appearance, then one swathes the horror of death in all manner of flowers and drapery. The seriousness of death is seemingly lightened with the process of cremation when the body has been burnt to ashes.

Contrary to this tendency, Bezzel would show through his way of living that he was already living in eternity.

Every end of the week brings me closer to my inheritance. Every year's end brings me closer to the end of my road and my home. My hairs become gray and my flesh is terrified about this, but my soul says: God be thanked, the path goes homeward bound. External energies are failing and the flesh complains about this state in comparison to what one could do in one's youth. But the soul answers: Weaker? No, stronger! Narrower? No, wider! More bound? No, freer! This is so because one's inheritance is close at hand.

Bezzel would always visit the graveyard and find the witnesses of man's infirmity.

It is always so amazing to walk through these acres of God. You get an impression of the kind of power at work. You go from grave to grave and ask yourself: what did this or that man see and experience, struggle with, suffer, fear, and labor on—and then the answer to all his life's work was a few spades of sand."

Against those who wished to forget dying or at least tried to take away from the seriousness of this by deconstructing it, Bezzel would always hold up the approach of their own death, the fear and desperation experienced in dying.

Our whole being carries with itself the sore of makeup and whitewash. Each breath of yours proves that you live, yet it also brings your death closer. That very sleep that rejuvenates you during the night has brought you closer to your last hour of life. Every respite that you give yourself, and every relaxation that you look for are not only powers for life, but also hurrying conveyors of your hour of death, for everything is vanity.

We have all seen people who are dying. What a poor thing it is indeed when the Lord undresses one so for the sake of something else: He takes away one's sight, sight that was still able to see a friendly face; then He takes away one's touch, touch that was still sensitive to the pressure of a friend's hand; then He takes away one's hearing, so that it seems as though His own Word no

longer strikes the soul. The eyes which so often looked upon vain things are broken so that in our last hour we see only Him; the ears which so often heard with lust the tumult of this world are closed, so that one can only hear the roar of eternity.

Behold, O soul, there is a moment that your wildest fantasies could not have imagined, nor the profoundest word could have described well enough; this is the moment of the last dialogue of your parting soul with its Lord. How your eyes will hang on every word from his holy lips, how your broken sight will be fixated on his mouth when He speaks: "Truly, truly, I say to you!" Will He continue with the words: "I know you not?" Or will He say to you: "I know those who are mine." Will He say to you in your hour of death: "Come here!" Or will you, after having lived a life filled with disappointments, hear the terrible and decisive letdown: "I know you not!"

Finally, as a comfort in the face of death, Bezzel would paint the world of fulfillment in glorious colors:

We can expect a heaven that is not one in which the sun apathetically sends thousands of people every day into their death, that shines on so much war and tribulations of war without any regard or mercy, that shines upon so many fields of death and heartlessly illuminates the death-rattles of thousands. No, we can expect a heaven in which the sun of righteousness majestically makes its victory run, not ever reaching an end but rather becoming greater and greater. All of the world is full of the Lord and His clarity. We await a new heaven...the joy of spring, the joy of youth, peace, and glory! It is no longer that heaven under which many are waiting for the appearance of that glorious day, but rather that cloud of light in which the witnesses have—from the beginning of the world until its very last hour—been reunited. Praise, honor, power, and glory be to Him who reigns on the throne, our God the Lamb!

We hope upon a new world. Is this too much? Imagine this, that we will one day experience a history in which sin has no more part, a life without erring paths and byroads! Think of the joy: to wake up never having to sin again, not to think carefully about each thought, whether it is a pure thought or not! Imagine being free from this pain, finally being able to be as you ought to be, whereas now you are something else than you should be. Therefore take up all your relations on earth which you hold dear, your joys of life, your joy at parents, your relations to friends, your relations to work, everything that is the core and star of your life; gather everything and write with a hopeful hand above all of this: "I wait upon a new earth, in which all relations of earth are not destroyed but transfigured, and all earthly things will be renewed according to the picture of the master of all beauty."