

Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

Intuitu fidei

(*Lat.* "in view of faith"). Phrase often used in the *Predestinarian* Controversy* that burst upon conservative Lutheranism in *Am. ca.* 1880. The expression had been adopted by *Luth.* theologians chiefly through influence of *A. Hunnius.** In opposing the Calvinistic view that the election of God is absolute, Hunnius and others taught that divine election is not absolute, but that God chose people for eternal life "in view of faith." The term may have the meaning that God, in electing people to salvation, included faith in the decree of election, resolving to lead men to heaven through faith. But it came to mean that God chose certain people for salvation because of the faith which He foresaw they would have; in this view, faith is a cause of election, the factor which "explains" the mystery of *predestination**; this contradicts complete and free grace. The term fell into disuse in the Missouri Synod as a result of the Predestinarian Controversy. There is no Scripture warrant for it, and though the phrase is capable of correct interpretation, it can be seriously misunderstood. The *Chicago* Theses*, in the 1928 revision, opposed use of the term, as did the 1938 Declaration of the Representatives of the *Am. Luth. Church* (see *American Lutheran Church, V*). The *Brief* Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod, par. 36*: "Nor does Holy Scripture know of an election 'by foreseen faith,' 'in view of faith,' as though the faith of the elect were to be placed before their election; but according to Scripture the faith which the elect have in time belongs to the spiritual blessings with which God has endowed them by His eternal election." WA

F. Pieper, Die Grunddifferenz in der Lehre von der Bekehrung und Gnadenwahl (St. Louis, 1903); T. C. Graebner, "The Missouri Synod's Attitude Towards the Doctrine of Election 'Intuitu Fidei,' CTM, XV (September 1944), 616-621.