

The Pietist Theologians

An Introduction to Theology in the
Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Edited by

Carter Lindberg
School of Theology
Boston University

The Pietist Theologians

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To the Fellows of the Mill Creek Institute

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Carter Lindberg
All Saints Day 2003

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Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|---|
| AGP | <i>Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Pietismus</i> |
| Brecht 1 | Martin Brecht (ed.), <i>Geschichte des Pietismus</i> (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), vol. 1, <i>Der Pietismus vom siebzehnten bis zum frühen achtzehnten Jahrhundert</i> . |
| Brecht 2 | Martin Brecht and Klaus Deppermann (eds), <i>Geschichte des Pietismus</i> (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), vol. 2: <i>Der Pietismus im Achtzehnten Jahrhundert</i> . |
| BWKG | <i>Blätter für Württembergische Kirchengeschichte</i> |
| CH | <i>Church History</i> |
| JEH | <i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i> |
| KTP | <i>Kleine Texte des Pietismus</i> |
| LQ | <i>Lutheran Quarterly</i> |
| LW | <i>Luther's Works</i> , Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (eds), 55 vols. (St Louis: Concordia/Philadelphia: Fortress, 1955–86), cited as LW vol.: page. |
| NKZ | <i>Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift</i> |
| NZSTh | <i>Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie</i> |
| PuN | <i>Pietismus und Neuzeit</i> |
| RGG | <i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> (3rd edn, Tübingen: Mohr, 1957f.). |
| SCJ | <i>The Sixteenth Century Journal</i> |
| TGP | <i>Texte zur Geschichte des Pietismus</i> |
| TRE | <i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i> , Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller (eds) (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, from 1977). |
| UF | <i>Unitas Fratrum</i> |
| WA | <i>D. Martin Luthers Werke</i> , kritische Gesamtausgabe (Weimar: Böhlau, 1883ff.), cited as WA vol.: page, line. |
| WNM | Martin Schmidt, <i>Wiedergeburt und neuer Mensch: Gesammelte Studien Zur Geschichte des Pietismus</i> (Witten: Luther Verlag, 1969). |

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|------|---|
| WTJ | <i>Westminster Theological Journal</i> |
| ZKG | <i>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</i> |
| ZRGG | <i>Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte</i> |
| ZThK | <i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i> |

Introduction

Carter Lindberg

Why include a volume on Pietist theologians in a series on major theologians in Christian history? Was not Pietism precisely a movement that criticized academic theology as a religion of the head in contrast to a religion of the heart? To paraphrase Tertullian, what does Wittenberg “the undisputed citadel of extreme Lutheran orthodoxy”¹ (or any other citadel of academic theology) have to do with Jerusalem? Does not talk about God displace the walk with God? After all, as Gottfried Arnold notoriously emphasized in his “impartial” history (*Unparteiischen Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie*, 1699/1700) intellectually sophisticated theologians are not necessarily paragons of the Christian life, whereas so-called heretics may be true saints. Does not heart religion always trump head religion?

Clichés about Pietism could fill many pages, but the point is that the post-Reformation turn to what George Lindbeck has aptly termed “experiential-expressive” religion has long been suspected of being short on theology.² Pietism has been associated with medieval mysticism, radical Reformation enthusiasm, and charismatic outbreaks which elevate religious experience over doctrine and thus appear inimical to theological study and reflection. In short, there may be appreciation for Pietism’s hymnody, devotional writings, missionary impetus, and social contributions, but Pietism itself has not generally been thought of as a major theological movement.³

Yet the Pietist emphasis upon prayer and hymnody running through the following chapters echoes Prosper of Aquitaine’s (c.390–c.463) “axiom that ‘the rule of prayer should lay down the rule of faith [*ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*].’”⁴ The sense that praxis is a source for theology is not a modern invention but has a long history, of which Pietism is a recent expression. The following chapters address the general misunderstanding that Pietism, including here Puritanism, was a theologically barren interlude between the Reformation and the theological ferment of the nineteenth century.

“What is Pietism?” The question is reminiscent of St. Augustine’s reflection on time in Book 11 of his *Confessions*, where he wrote that as long as no one asks him to explain it he knows what it is. Pietism – at least in its broad sense – has been a

slippery phenomenon to grasp, and its definition and explication have been controversial. “Uncertainty about the origins of Pietism has been so compounded by the obscurity of the concept itself as to lead Michel Godfroid to inquire whether it ever existed.”⁵ Godfroid’s provocative claim is that Pietism is but the history of Protestantism’s multiplicity of reactions to the de-sanctification of the world. Similarly, C.H. George “asserts that Puritanism is ‘a bad concept . . . [which] should be abandoned’.”⁶ Godfroid and George notwithstanding, scholars may argue over the breadth and multiformity of Pietism, but do agree that it is a historically describable phenomenon.⁷

The descriptions, analyses, and evaluations of Pietism usually focus on its representative figures, a logical orientation in light of both the Pietist emphasis upon the individual regenerate life, and the consequent multiplicity of Pietist expressions. Our volume follows that orientation. Only recently has scholarly work on Pietism expanded beyond studies of its movers and shakers to those who in various ways foreshadowed it⁸ and embraced it – the theologians and pastors of the immediate post-Reformation period, and women,⁹ farmers, businessmen, and persons in their social and family relationships.¹⁰ While we can find a range of specific answers to our question from the literate Pietist leaders, it is more difficult to ascertain the views of their followers. It is easier to research texts of doctrine, hymns, and edification than it is to assess their impact on lived faith.¹¹ Not that there are not sources such as funeral sermons and personal diaries, but these sources are yet to be fully exploited. The funeral sermon reminded the congregation of death and resurrection in the mirror of the decedent’s biography, and recalled his or her life as an example for the living. Diaries and autobiographies, a peculiar genre of Pietism, focused on conversion and inner life, and are the forerunners of modern psychological introspection and analysis.¹² I suspect the views of pious folk mirrored the vocabulary and model experiences of written and preached Pietism, but the subject of the relationship of elite and popular culture is too complex, not to mention controversial, to delve into here.

But back to our question: What is Pietism? What is piety? What characterizes a pious person? Here we jump with both feet into the vast swamp of Pietism studies. The scholars of Pietism give us many and sometimes conflicting maps for traversing this swamp. The debate over the temporal and geographical boundaries of Pietism has a long history. The leaders of the most recent discussion of this debate are Johannes Wallmann and Martin Brecht. Wallmann, a “strict constructionist” of Pietism, emphasizes that Pietism in the proper sense of the term begins with Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705) and extends into the eighteenth century. Spener’s distinctive contribution is the development of the conventicle movement, the *ecclesiola in ecclesia*; the chiliastic hope for “better times;” and pronounced emphasis upon Bible reading and study. From this perspective, Spener is the normative figure for understanding Pietism.¹³ In extensive and sharply critical reviews of recent studies of Pietism, Wallmann further argues that the broadening of the concept of Pietism so blurs the contours of church history that Pietism as a movement is no longer definable and distinguishable from other movements.¹⁴ The issue is whether Pietism is a concept of a particular period of history or an a-historical, typological concept.¹⁵

Brecht, on the other hand, expands the conception of Pietism to a transnational and transconfessional phenomenon beginning in a post-Reformation crisis of piety rooted in the difficulties the Reformation churches experienced in realizing Christian life and activity.¹⁶ Thus Brecht's temporal parameters begin with Arndt¹⁷ and continue into the twentieth century; and his geographical and confessional parameters include English Puritanism, the "further Reformation" (*nadere Reformatie*) in the Netherlands, the devotional movements in Germany including "Radical Pietism," Zinzendorf and the Moravians, and Methodism and the Awakening movements as continuations of Pietism.¹⁸ Brecht's implementation of this broad conception of Pietism in the first volume of the *Geschichte des Pietismus* is, according to Wallmann, a "false start."¹⁹ Brecht responded that the editorial board consciously decided for the larger picture because they deemed it "unsatisfactory" to present the rich history of seventeenth-century European Protestantism as just the prehistory of a later epoch.²⁰

It is not our task here to resolve this and other disputes over the interpretations of Pietism.²¹ It is enough for our purposes to be aware of the scope of definitions that reflect the range of contemporary scholarship and the manifold nature of Pietism. To borrow a page from research on Anabaptist origins, we might speak of the "polygenesis" rather than the "monogenesis" of Pietism.²² Our selection of figures ranging from Arndt to Wesley seeks within the limited confines of a short text to reflect such polygenesis as well as Pietism's transnational and transconfessional expressions and reciprocal influences between England and the Continent and America. Although comparative studies of Pietism, Puritanism, Jansenism, and Quietism are still in their infancy, the reader may at least see representatives of some of these movements.²³

The multiplicity of Pietist and Puritan manifestations has contributed to the claim that Pietism is "one of the least understood movements in the history of Christianity."²⁴ Brecht admits "the phenomenon of pietism is very controversial in many respects."²⁵ Thus he recommends caution before sweeping statements about Pietism, noting both its various historical manifestations as well as multiple expressions of a nevertheless coherent programme of religious renewal.²⁶ Indeed, Pietism has inspired polar evaluations as either a narrow-minded moralistic, biblicistic flight from the world²⁷ or as the "most significant Protestant religious movement since the Reformation."²⁸

The term "Pietist" appears for the first time in a 1680 letter by Spener in which he refers to its use as a term of abuse and derision.²⁹ "Pietist" became a catchword soon thereafter through the poem composed by Joachim Feller (1628–91), the Leipzig professor of rhetoric and friend of Francke, for the funeral of a theology student, a member of the local Pietist circle.

Pietists – the name is now well-known throughout the world.³⁰

What is a Pietist? One who studies God's Word
And also leads a holy life according to it.

...

Piety must first of all nest in the heart.³¹

This and a following poem by Feller dismayed Spener because he believed the self-designation of “Pietist” would provide opponents the possibility of branding Pietism as a sect.³² Feller’s poem, however, highlights Pietism as a Bible-centered movement concerned for holy living that flows from the regenerate heart.³³

There has been a tendency to focus too quickly on holy living, either pejoratively as moralism or sociologically as Weber’s inner-worldly asceticism, as *the* characteristic of Pietism. Thus Wallmann provides a salutary reminder that Pietism was not just concerned with “godliness” (*Frömmigkeit*³⁴) and sanctification, but with Bible reading and study. “The study of the Word of God . . . in the home by individuals or in the family, in addition the communal reading of the Bible in special meetings of edification – this belongs essentially to Pietism, and this central reference to the Bible may not be dropped in answering the question ‘What is Pietism?’”³⁵

With this thumbnail definition of Pietism in mind, we can refer to the brief general descriptions of Pietism by some of its leading interpreters. According to Wallmann, “Pietism arising in the seventeenth century and coming to full bloom in eighteenth-century continental European Protestantism as a *religious renewal movement* is, next to Anglo-Saxon Puritanism, the most significant religious movement of Protestantism since the Reformation. . . . Pietism pressed for the individualization and interiorization of the religious life, developed new forms of personal piety and communal life, led to sweeping reforms in theology and the church, and left profound marks on the social and cultural life of the countries grasped by it.”³⁶

Brecht provides a similar although more expansive description. “Pietism is the most significant devotional movement [*Frömmigkeitsbewegung*] of Protestantism after the Reformation, and as such is primarily a religious phenomenon. Its spatial, temporal, social, spiritual, churchly-confessional, and theological range is simply astonishing and altogether constitutes its greatness as a historical subject. Pietism arose around the turn of the sixteenth to the seventeenth century from criticism of the existing ecclesiastical and spiritual relations at nearly the same time in England, the Netherlands, and Germany, spreading from there to Switzerland, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, and the United States. It contributed to a great extent to the world-wide Protestant mission, and has remained a living movement into the present. . . .”³⁷

As mentioned above, Brecht sees the essential reasons for the emergence of Pietism in the difficulties the Reformation churches had in realizing the Christian life. Luther himself became so upset by his own town’s failures to live out the new faith that on more than one occasion he threatened to leave. Wittenberg was not unique in failing to live out the gospel; other Reformers also bitterly experienced deaf ears to their exhortations to realize the ethical fruits of faith active in love. The more “radical” Reformers accused Luther of a lack of seriousness for the regenerate Christian life and an unseemly and faithless alliance with political authorities. Those who parted ways with Luther on this issue are seen as sources for later Pietism in their promotion of the spirituality and devotion of late medieval mysticism and the *Devotio moderna*. Brecht refers specifically to Kaspar von Schwenckfeld (1489–1561), Theophrast Bombast von Hohenheim (Paracelsus, c.1493–1541), and Valentin Weigel (1533–88) as transmitters of mysticism to the seventeenth-century devotional movement to and through Johann Arndt.³⁸

To this brief list should be added the work and influence of Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt (1486–1541), initially Luther’s Wittenberg colleague and then bitter opponent. One of the most prolific publicists next to Luther, Karlstadt broke with Luther over the issues of images and the theology of the Lord’s Supper. Karlstadt’s theology of regeneration and sanctification, also a major bone of contention with Luther, was mediated to Pietism through Valentin Weigel and other Reformation Spiritualists. Ulrich Bubenheimer has painstakingly tracked the Pietist reception of Karlstadt’s writings, especially on *Gelassenheit* (inner yieldedness to God’s will). Karlstadt himself received rehabilitation in Pietism by, among others, Gottfried Arnold.³⁹

One of the most influential Spiritualists of the post-Reformation generation was Jakob Boehme (1575–1624) whose mystical and theosophical writings tapped renewed interest in God in nature and ancient Jewish mysticism expressed in cabbalistic writings in a system that wrestled with the relations of good and evil, wrath and love in God’s inner nature. His conceptions of God as primal abyss and the divine principle of Sophia as well as his visions of the essence of God prompted followers to see him as the “German philosopher” and opponents to condemn him as a Gnostic heretic. His influence derived not only from his speculative writings but also his devotional tracts collected under the title *The Way to Christ* (1624). Boehme’s works, translated into English, were admired from Jane Leade to William Law. In Germany, he was taken up by the late Romantic movement and Idealism.⁴⁰

Luther, too, of course was a major influence upon Protestant Pietism and its self-understanding of being the continuation of the Reformation, a “new Reformation,” or “second Reformation.”⁴¹ So Spener could write: “[O]ur Reformation . . . has not come as far as it should but rather has remained, so to speak, at the point of having laid the groundwork for the building. Therefore I certainly desire . . . that what remains should be made good.”⁴²

Luther’s “groundwork” for the regeneration of Christian living was seen in his linkage of faith and rebirth in his *Preface to Romans*. “Faith, however, is a divine work in us that changes us and makes us to be born anew of God, John 1:(12–13). It kills the old Adam and makes us altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers; and it brings with it the Holy Spirit. O it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly.”⁴³ Furthermore, Luther’s emphasis upon theology as wisdom gained through experience fostered by prayer, meditation, and trial was attractive to Pietists such as Spener, Francke, and Bengel.⁴⁴

It would be fascinating to examine all the spiritual eddies, quicksands, and springs of Pietism, but the complex cartography of Pietism studies and the limitations of space have dictated the choice of central figures. The collection of figures also provides some flavor of the varieties of Pietism among Puritans, women, Roman Catholics, and its more radical proponents. The scope of the collection from Arndt to Wesley is intended both to suggest the post-Reformation context for Pietism proper manifested in the person and work of Spener, and to present some of the theologians and who are often omitted or glossed over in standard handbooks on historical theology.

We begin with Johann Arndt (1555–1621) not only because of his incredible influence but because he exemplifies the positive connection between Pietism and Orthodoxy. It is not uncommon, especially in efforts to schematize church history, to find Pietism described as a reaction to the theological system building of Protestant Orthodoxy.⁴⁵ The Pietists' penchant for sloganeering no doubt contributes to this perspective. Their emphasis that the Christian life is a walk not a talk, a becoming not being, that heart religion opposes head religion, that life is over doctrine, and their criticism of the mere appearance of godliness, was succinctly summed up by Christian Hoberg (1607–75) who stated that "Justification is fiction, rebirth is fact."⁴⁶ In less radical phrasing, the central concern for the mediation of doctrine to lived faith was captured by the French Protestant Pierre Poiret's (1646–1719) work *La théologie du coeur* (*The Theology of the Heart*)⁴⁷ and Spener's question, "How do we bring the head into the heart?"⁴⁸

But the assumption that Orthodoxy separated theology and piety in an obsessive drive to right belief distorts the picture.⁴⁹ It may well be that struggles over confessional claims created a tough skin, but beneath it there pulsed a rich and heartfelt spiritual life. The period of Orthodoxy is the classical period of devotional literature and poetry. Pastors advocated at least morning and evening household prayer as well as at meals. The goal was to inculcate regular home devotions with readings from edifying literature and singing of spiritual songs. The numbers of printed hymnals, sermons, and devotional writings directed to the laity indicate both the readiness and the market for household edification prior to Pietism.⁵⁰ Piety blossomed in the hymnody of Paul Gerhardt (1607–76). Gerhardt can hardly be accused of dissolving doctrine in pietistic emotions for he lost his Berlin pastorate when he would not submit to the prince's prohibition of chancel polemics against other confessions. Church music also flowered in the period of Orthodoxy with the likes of Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672) and Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) to name but the most famous.

The Orthodox roots of Pietism were stimulated to incredible growth by Johann Arndt whose writings were so popular that their hundreds of editions⁵¹ overshadowed Luther's influence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The dictum was: "Whoever does not savor Arndt's *True Christianity* has lost his spiritual appetite."⁵² By the mid-seventeenth century Orthodox theologians began to exhort Lutherans not to forget to read the Bible because they were so taken by reading Arndt.⁵³

Arndt addressed a different context than had Luther. Luther's proclamation of justification by faith, the good news that salvation is received not achieved, addressed late medieval people who sought salvation by good works, pilgrimages, and indulgences. Thanks to the acceptance of that message peoples' religious interest turned to the consequences of justification. What follows from faith? The emphasis shifted from justification to sanctification and rebirth, to the godly life.

Thus there arose a piety of interiority and introspection. Arndt's affinity to the Reformation Spiritualists' critique of the externality of worship may be seen in his frequent reference to the Spiritualist locus classicus for true worship, John 4:23 ("But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the

Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.”). Arndt wrote: “Our worship in the New Testament is no longer external in figural ceremonies, statutes, and obligations, but rather inward in spirit and truth, that is, in faith in Christ.”⁵⁴ The critique of religious externality was more sharply phrased by Heinrich Müller (1631–75), one of Arndt’s followers, who censored his contemporaries for trusting the “four dumb idols of the church . . . the baptismal font, the pulpit, confessional, and altar” while “denying the inner power of Christianity.”⁵⁵ While Luther in the Small Catechism petitioned that the Kingdom of God come *to us*, Arndt spoke of the Kingdom that will be established *in us*.

Arndtian interiority did not lead to passivity and quietism. His perspective was oriented entirely to true, active, living faith, to Christian praxis. There proceeded from Arndt a major renewal movement based upon practical Christianity. Johann Amos Comenius (1592–1670), the bishop of the Moravian Brethren and the most significant reform educator of the early modern period, reckoned himself among the students of Arndt. And Johann Valentin Andreae (1586–1654), one of the most active reformers of the Lutheran church in the period of Orthodoxy, credited Arndt’s writings for his awakening “to true praxis and active faith.” Andreae dedicated his *Christianopolis* (1619), the first utopian social novel in Lutheran Germany, to Johann Arndt. Andreae pictured an ideal Christian social order developed upon platonic-communitistic foundations, and took steps to institutionalize it. The Färber-Stift founded in 1621 by Andreae in Württemberg Calv, a foundation for the poor supported by citizens enriched by cloth-dyeing, is among the oldest social institutions of the early bourgeois period. After the Thirty Years’ War, Andreae introduced in the Württemberg church the Calvinist church discipline he had learned in Geneva. However the attempt failed because the nobility evaded moral supervision. Andreae lamented lazy Lutheran preachers whose ideal was “short sermons and long bratwursts.” A clever line, but as Andreae himself realized, the crisis in preaching was due to overlong sermons that failed to engage the congregation by going over their heads.⁵⁶ He increasingly viewed the “new papacy” of the state-controlled church as the strongest obstacle to any moral improvement.⁵⁷

These developments did not occur solely with regard to academic theology, but in the context of the general deterioration of living conditions after 1600 culminating in the Thirty Years’ War (1618–48). By the end of the War the unity of church and society was shattered, and princely absolutism and the seeds of the Enlightenment had begun to emancipate political and intellectual life from the power of the confessional church bodies and their theological traditions. Although the German territorial states remained confessionally stamped, “the lava flowing from the confessional movements of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation solidified in the mid-seventeenth century into hard confessional bodies.”⁵⁸ The incorporation of the churches into the modern state was the main task of princely church policy.

The profound upheaval of the War cannot be underestimated.⁵⁹ Understood as a consequence of human depravity, the War provided an impetus for Pietism’s great yearning for peace and its condemnation of all violent conflicts between confessions.⁶⁰ Along with the crisis of war, the ruling Protestant Orthodoxy suffered an inner crisis. Christians should ameliorate the social-spiritual conditions of crisis,

but they appeared rather to contribute to them. The central role of the sermon to turn the tide appeared ineffectual. These conditions and the sharpening of class differences within the church as well as the society led to increasing criticism of the church and society. Separation from the church and a home-grown practical atheism reached its high point between 1690 and 1730, and in turn stimulated a spate of reform proposals.

It was in this context that Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705) presented a seventeenth-century “theology of hope”⁶¹ that proclaimed a better future based upon the renewal of society through renewal of the church. In contrast to pessimism concerning the future fostered by the crises of the time, Spener spoke of the coming great time of mission possibilities to the whole world, of Judaism’s turn to Christianity,⁶² and an overcoming of the Counter-Reformation.

Spener’s *Pia Desideria* or *Heartfelt Desire for a God-pleasing Reform of the true Evangelical Church, Together with Several Simple Christian Proposals Looking Toward this End* appeared in spring 1675 as the foreword to a new edition of Arndt’s sermons. The perceived deplorable condition of the church was ascribed to all three estates – the civil authorities, the preachers, and the laity. The church’s lack of true, living faith was to be countered by bringing God’s Word more fully into the church and world through reading and discussing the Bible in devotional assemblies. Thus Pietism became a Bible movement that strove to activate the universal priesthood of all believers (or at least all the reborn), shift the focus from the theory to the praxis of Christianity, limit confessional polemics, reform theological studies in the sense of the Praxis Pietatis, and finally redirect preaching to the edification and cultivation of the “inner person.” Spener believed the improvement of the church possible for God promised in the Bible a splendid future for his church. The signs of the fulfillment of this promise are there. Thus Spener’s chiliastically influenced eschatology is closely connected to his reform programme.⁶³

The *Pia Desiderata* became the programmatic writing of Pietism and largely reflected Arndt’s concerns: the interiorizing of faith, individual experience, the directing of justification toward the “new creature” and the fruits of rebirth. Spener desired to reform the church not by the improvement of the non-pious, but rather through the cultivation of the pious. The laity should have the opportunity to gather together with the clergy for common Bible study. The people are not to be “objects” of sermons and pastoral activity, but “subjects” to be involved in practicing Christianity by means of the meditative appropriation of the whole Bible. The laity were not just to be “catechized” but “biblicized.” The formation of voluntary circles within the church, the *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, for the cultivation of the pious to complement public worship was epoch making in this regard. The *ecclesiola in ecclesia* was a new strategy for church reform that shifted from the Orthodox emphasis upon church discipline for the whole community, recalcitrant and willing alike, to the gathering of the godly to promote a renewal movement for the church.⁶⁴ Spener defended the conventicle movement, the *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, against increasing criticism by the Orthodox by referring to Luther’s “Preface to the German Mass” of 1526 and its recommendation of special assemblies of earnest Christians.

Thus when Spener died in 1705 in Berlin, he was viewed as the second greatest theologian in Lutheranism after Luther. This “patriarch of Pietism” was succeeded by August Hermann Francke. Francke (1663–1727) – preacher and pastor, theologian and educator, incredible organizer – spent more than three decades developing the most historically significant form of Pietism, Halle Pietism. During his student days he experienced, after days of inner struggle, a sudden life-determining conversion (1687) that made him certain of God’s existence and his own rebirth. The importance of a sudden, datable, and one-time conversion – still alien to Spener – entered Pietism through Francke. Apparently arising from English influences mediated first through Theophilus Grossgebauer (1627–61) to German Lutheranism, the conversion experience in the form of the “*Busskampf*” (repentance-struggle) became the major characteristic of the type of piety influenced by Francke.⁶⁵

Francke did not hesitate to emphasize the third use of the law because standing still in the growth of faith is a symptom of sickness. “For where continual repentance and improvement of life do not have priority, but rather the person in a year is only as pious as the others, not stronger in faith, not more fervent in prayer, not more zealous in overcoming all sins, not more diligent in the exercise of all good; it is a certain and clear sign that the life which is from God is no longer in him. For where it is in the person, there is no standing still but rather a continual advance and perpetual growth.”⁶⁶

Francke received through Spener’s influence an academic post as Professor of Oriental Languages in the Prussian University of Halle and a pastoral charge in the suburb of Glaucha. The growth of the Halle institutions is legendary. The “Franckean Institutions” included an orphanage, training schools for teachers and pastors, various schools for different levels and classes of students, a *collegium orientale* for Scripture study and translation, publishing house, science laboratory and apothecary. Francke titled his own account of these developments, *Die Fussstapfen des noch lebenden Gottes* (*The Footprints of the Still-Living God*, 1701–09). This classic defense of Pietism was printed in English as *Pietas Hallensis* (1727) and strongly influenced the British Isles.

Francke was in many respects a modern man. His entrepreneurial ability enabled him to initiate the above-mentioned institutions with only the few dollars he found in his parish poor box into an imposing series of Baroque buildings. He was also modern in arranging these institutions. He separated the orphanage from the poorhouse, the workhouse, and the house of correction. The orphanage itself was the most advanced of its time. Among other things it was a pioneer of modern hygiene. At a time when no one took offence at bodily uncleanness, Francke and his colleagues insisted that children brush their teeth, bathe, and have clean clothes and bedding.⁶⁷ Here cleanliness, as John Wesley affirmed, was indeed next to godliness.⁶⁸

The reform of theological studies and the theological faculty at Halle soon made it the most frequented faculty for theology students in all Germany. The study of theology was tied directly to praxis. With Francke’s organizing genius and zeal, “Lutheran Pietism became the dominant cultural force in the German states of the eighteenth century.”⁶⁹ The Prussian state prescribed study in Halle for all its pastors

and teachers. Francke introduced relevant studies into his schools with the motto that a Christian “shall be equipped and sent out so that all the world may see that no more useful people may be found than those who belong to Jesus Christ.” Thus the Halle programme’s drive to establish the credibility of faith emphasized the utility of faith in social and economic activism. To Francke “a realist is one who takes God seriously.” The Prussian state recognized the value of this early form of “praise the Lord and pass the ammunition,” and sent a major portion of the Prussian bureaucracy and officer corps to Halle for their education. With the orientation of its education toward fear of God and performance of one’s duty, Halle Pietism became a kind of “Prussian state religion.”⁷⁰

The Latin etymology of “Pietism” suggests its appeal to the Prussian state. The first meaning of *pietas* is “dutiful conduct, as the result of which one shows proper respect and love to elders and fatherland.” The second meaning refers to devoutness as a synonym of religion.⁷¹ Francke’s “Rules for Living” condemned laziness, and stressed hard work and obedience to authority. “You shall work because (1) God demands it of you. ‘Whoever does not work, shall not eat’ (2 Thess. 3: 10); (2) by work you manifest love to your neighbor in works . . . ; (3) you thereby support your body.” Body and soul are to be rightly ordered. “The body is the servant and not the Lord. Therefore it must be satisfied if it receives what belongs to a servant: bread, punishment, and work (Gal. 5:24; 1 Cor. 9:27).” His critique of luxury prohibited spending time on one’s appearance, looking in the mirror, or being concerned for finery and jewelry. Francke exhorted his readers not to weary in examining their consciences. Works, words, desires, and ideas are to be scrutinized. Ideas and thoughts are to be controlled because “a child can more easily stamp out a spark than a hundred men can extinguish a raging fire.” This is serious business, and Francke warned against unnecessary laughter at jokes and foolish things that distract the mind.⁷² Pietism’s strongest moral influence was upon the ethics of the bourgeoisie. As Francke emphasized in his tracts on educating youth, the three central virtues of a God-pleasing life are love of the truth, obedience, and diligence. These religious virtues of industriousness, thrift, and obedience were obviously pleasing to early modern states. Precisely as demanders of bourgeois virtues the Pietists often found themselves at least indirectly to be supporters of state powers.⁷³

These themes are consonant with those of the English devotional literature so influential upon the development of German Pietism: conversion, sanctification, and social-control.⁷⁴ Devotional literature presented the ideal of individual praxis-oriented piety in a thoroughly rationalized, psychologically reflective manner conceived for efficiency. The drive toward “social disciplining” extended to rationalized directions for the conduct of Christian life and modern methods of psychological-analytical self-knowledge and self-regulation. English devotional literature was not confessional-specific but sought to concretize the ideal of the Christian life and make it feasible.

The means of conversion remained the preached Word. However in England as in Germany the new conception of piety claimed that personal meditation is required to make the sermon effective. One of the most influential devotional works in this regard is Lewis Bayly’s *Practise of Piety* that first appeared in 1611. By 1636 it had

gone through at least 36 editions in English, and by 1628 a German edition with the Latinized title *Praxis Pietatis* appeared and that also went through many editions. The pervasive availability of Bayly's works in nearly every European language and even the Native American Algonquin (1665, 1686) shows how attractive this methodology was. The preached sermon had to be self-applied by meditation to become effective. The Word alone is not sufficient. Thus James Usher in his *A Method for Meditation* (London, 1651) stated that an hour spent in meditation is worth more than a thousand sermons. Sermons are like medical lectures. Listening to them does not make anyone healthy: "the medicine must be applied, such a Dosis, etc. So in Preaching, the same word heard in publike, the same word applied; everyone must spread the Plaster on his own heart."⁷⁵

The greater part of English devotional literature focuses on sanctification. The order of sanctification includes denial of the self (see the emphasis upon *abnegatio sui* in Baxter's *Treatise of Selfe-Denyall*) and contempt of the world seen in the numerous tracts for the mastering of the Christian's everyday life. Rules of life such as Francke's *Lebensregeln* and Henry Scudder's *The Christian's Daily Walk* (1633; German translation: *Tägliche Wallfabrt*, 1635) showed what a person should think and do in every day, hour, and minute of life.⁷⁶

The rules of life are impressively concrete. The Christian life is anatomized⁷⁷ and broken into a network of individual rules that cover every aspect of daily life. The focus was on the regulation of the course of the day and especially the hallowing of Sunday. *Praxis Pietatis* meant not only the "exercise" but above all the "systematic practice" of the Christian life. Baxter exhorted his readers to think not only of consoling words but to practice the rules he gives them. Practice brings advance in sanctification. When the motive of the pilgrim is evoked, then it comprehends not only the Christian's alienation from the earth but above all his goal-directedness: *The Pilgrim's Progress*.⁷⁸

The control of the pilgrim's progress was already set forth by Loyola, whose *Spiritual Exercises* developed a schema for daily examination of the conscience and drew up a table for the statistical analysis of the daily struggle against sin. Jesuit casuistry became a precise analysis of conscience by the English Puritan William Perkins, the father of Reformed Pietism, and entered into English and Continental Reformed Protestantism. Two directions developed from this. First the casuistry of confession set forth an analysis of conscience that individualized penance and placed the individual Christian directly before God without the mediating agency of the church. Handbooks for pastoral caregivers became manuals for self-knowledge and self-control to enable the individual's responsible decision in doubtful cases. Secondly, in the frame of the Calvinist doctrine of predestination the question of one's own membership in the elect took on a central significance. Even though Calvin had excluded the possibility of a differentiation on the basis of external criteria, the question became a matter of intense self-analysis. English devotional literature developed a schema of "signs" which enabled the Christian to reach a judgment of his condition through self-examination. This literature was to expose false confidence so that the pilgrim is not fooled about his future blessedness without previous penance and rebirth. It required only a little linguistic, but a far-reaching dogmatic, correction

to suppress or blunt the talk about election in order to make the theme of this literature fruitful within the Lutheran framework of salvation. With the same earnestness and threatening background of damnation, the unregenerate are reminded of the dangerousness of their condition and called to repentance, while the zealous Christian was guided in continued observation of his growth in the Christian life. What were formulated as the signs of election were translated as signs of rebirth.

Personal circumstances may not be isolated from the religious consequences arising from such issues as failed harvests and famines, epidemics, the rise in mortality, and war. Even if people did not always experience these events personally, they often observed them close at hand. Responses to crises may take many forms, but at least the Pietist Patriarchs did not lack clear answers. Their hymns and funeral sermons dwelt on death and vanity. Active engagement with the Bible and devotional literature served the quest for salvation, as well as teaching how conscientiously to fulfill vocational duties. The conduct of the so-called “children of the world” served as a negative foil, and the steadfastness of fellow Pietists as confirmation of their faith. The strength of the Pietist inner world lay in that here a closed theological system offered a clear moral claim through representative spokespersons. In a period of crisis it is not surprising that people were interested in control. The Pietist sermons and writings obviously met the “heartfelt desires” of a significant portion of the middle class who had internalized, in contrast to court life and traditional popular culture, a this-worldly ethic of achievement reflecting the “religiously desirable qualities such as love of order, punctuality, integrity and honesty, which were a necessary precondition of economic success.” Hence Pietism must “be regarded as an additional impressive, as well as effective, response to the grievous misery of the era. . . . [Devotional literature provided] the means to conquer their worries and fears on a spiritual level and progress to an ethically grounded and constructive way of conducting their daily lives.”⁷⁹

In addressing the religious and social needs of their time, the Pietist theologians also foreshadowed the Enlightenment and modern theology. Pietism’s affinity with the Enlightenment is noted in some of the chapters that follow. Indeed, one may think of Pietism and the Enlightenment as sibling movements that may be characterized by the imprecise concept “modernity.” Certainly the struggle against dogmatism and the experiential surmounting of doctrinal difference are not the preserve of the Enlightenment but the groundbreaking orientation of Pietism. Again, it was not the Enlightenment that single-handedly overcame the post-Reformation confessional era. Spener’s idea of the *ecclesiola in ecclesia* broke through the governmental ordinances and church discipline measures that had maintained the church in the confessional era.⁸⁰ Nor is it too great a stretch to perceive in chiliasm the realized eschatology that preceded Enlightenment concern for self-improvement. The Pietist ideal of perfection manifest in ethical as well as spiritual renewal focused on the individual. The Pietist emphasis upon religious experience prompted the question of how to distinguish the Holy Spirit from other “spirits.” One answer proposed by Spener is reason.⁸¹ Pietism then is the other side of the coin of Rationalism and the Enlightenment. This may also be seen in Pietism’s abiding concern for free associations and for education, for an “empiricism” of religious experience and practice not unrelated