

1. The most vicious point in Luther's system was the maintenance of the union of Church and State. As the uniting of Church and State had done more than everything else together to corrupt the Church; as this union always furnished the most unyielding obstacle to reform; so its retention by Luther made it absolutely impossible that any thorough reformation of the Church should find place. The impossibility of a purely religious reformation of a State Church lies in the following considerations:

First, the political relations of States are such that they rarely move without reference to temporal interests. Religion may furnish the ostensible motive, but when we are admitted into the confidence of the negotiators in politico-religious movements we shall almost always see that the matter of lands and dollars furnishes the decisive moment.

Secondly, admitting, as a possibility, the purely *religious* motives of the authorities in any politico-religious movement, the consciences of the people and their religious ideas are not the consciences and ideas of the authorities. The people, as a body, were at that time very likely to conform outwardly to the ecclesiastical arrangements of their rulers; yet, who would be so credulous as to think that the entire spiritual status of a nation could be changed in a day or in a year? The Spirit of God worketh not in this wise.

Thirdly, the very process of transferring a people suddenly from one communion to another, without any exercise of volition on their part, tends to foster in their minds the notion that religion is a mere matter of outward form. We might almost say that the heathen themselves are more accessible to purely religious influences than those brought up to believe that they are Christians by virtue of their membership in a State Church, apart from any choice of their own. A sense of carnal security is thus engendered antagonistic to any earnest efforts for salvation.

The leaders of the Protestant Revolution made Protestants by States as far as possible. Temporal advantages furnished the chief motive to most of the rulers. A thoroughly corrupt Christianity could not fail to be the result.

I believe that all the possible ill effects of a politico-religious reformation were realized in the Protestant Revolution of the sixteenth century.

2. Infant baptism has always gone hand in hand with State Churches. It is difficult to conceive how an ecclesiastical establishment could be maintained without infant baptism or its equivalent. We should think, if the facts did not show us so plainly the contrary, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone would displace infant