

### *A Note to Myself*

The definitive discussion of the concept "person" in Luther's thinking and speaking is Gerhard Ebeling's in Ch. XII: Christperson und Weltperson, in *Luther, Einführung in sein Denken*: 219-238.

The primary text that provides the sufficient evidence for his interpretation of Luther's complex (and confusing!) terminology is the Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount (*LW*, 21: 23, 108 f.)

Ebeling's main points are:

1. "Person" as used by Luther is systematically ambiguous, being used: (1) in distinction from the work, or office, of a human being to mean the unity and wholeness of her or him in her or his being simply as a self *coram Deo* (In this first sense, "person" is very close in meaning to "conscience."); and (2) to mean the mask or role that a human being wears or plays in and before the world (*coram mundo*), thanks to her or his works or office, corresponding to the function she or he performs and behind which her or his naked being simply as a self *coram Deo* is hidden (It is in this second sense that "person" is used in the biblical expression that "God accepteth no man's person" (KJV, or NRSV, "God shows no partiality."))

2. This distinction is variously expressed by Luther in a terminology allowing for three possibilities of distinguishing either (1) between "person" and "office"; or (2) between two persons; or (3) between two offices (this last being plausible insofar as being a Christian as such, as witnessing with the word of faith, is an office/ commission in and for the world.

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