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A LOOK AT THE AUTHORITY OF THE PARISH PASTOR

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May 1, 1997

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CONCORDIA SEMINARY

A LOOK AT THE AUTHORITY OF THE PARISH PASTOR

A MAJOR APPLIED PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

PRACTICAL DEPARTMENT

BY

MARTIN E. KOELLER

IRON MOUNTAIN, MICHIGAN

MARCH 21, 1997

DEDICATIONS

TO MY LOVING WIFE

LINDA

for her encouragement, prayers and joy in God's service

TO OUR LOVING CHILDREN

PETER, ELIZABETH AND JONATHAN

and their generation in continuing the Gospel ministry of reconciliation

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCHES

GOD HAS ALLOWED ME TO SERVE

who are fellow members of the Priesthood of all Believers

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.C.	Augsburg Confession
Apol.	Apology of the Augsburg Confession
CTCR	Commission on Theology and Church Relations
CTM	Concordia Theological Monthly
E	Erlangen edition of Luther's Works
F.C.	Formula of Concord
K.J.V.	Kings James Version of the Bible, herein cited for all Bible passages unless otherwise noted
L.C.	Large Catechism
LC-MS	The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
S.A.	Smalcald Articles
S.C.	Small Catechism
SL	St. Louis edition of Luther's Works
Tr. or "Of the Power"	Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope
Trig.	<i>Concordia Triglotta</i> (St.Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921)
W.A.	Weimar edition of Luther's Works

PREFACE

During my 18 years in the ministry I have come to know many pastors with a variety of gifts, talents, experiences, as well as frustrations. I have come to know humble pastors, as well as not-so-humble. I have listened with admiration to retired pastors who, with a gentle spirit, recounted their blessings in the ministry over the years, but have also sat in private discussion with young vibrant pastors who were ready to throw in the towel and give up the ministry. I have heard some pastors talk of their successes in their parishes, but have heard from the same parishes the failures of their pastors. I have heard the murmurings of Jeremiahs and Elijahs who felt no one in their congregations was listening, but have also experienced the excitement of the members of those very same congregations when they spoke with respect, awe and admiration of their pastors, feeling that their pastors were God's gift to the church.

It is amazing how different the opinions can be concerning the same situations. The difference is in perspective which in turn influences a difference in attitude. The same can probably be said about the relationship between pastor and laity. How one views self, as well as how one views the other in relation to self, will greatly influence the attitude, atmosphere, as well as appreciation of self and the other in the work of the ministry of the church.

Does the pastor own the church? No! Does he see himself as the "boss" in charge of mobilizing the production of the workers (laity)? I hope not! Do the laity look at the pastor as the "hired hand"? I pray not! Or do they view him as the "infallible vicar of God"? They will be disappointed! What role does the pastor play in the congregation? What role does the Bible say he should play?

A lesson in perspective and role is beautifully related in a devotion by Pastor Kenneth Klaus in the Lutheran Laymen's League Lenten devotions for 1997:

Years ago, two lady friends, each married to a pastor, got together to pass the time as they did their mending. One of them said, "Poor Carl, he's so depressed. He's actually thinking of leaving the ministry. Nothing seems to go right for him." Without looking up from her needle, the other replied, "That's sad, Joseph says it seems the Lord is nearer to him now than ever." In silence the wives continued to mend their husband's slacks: one patching the seat and the other the knees.¹

As pastors and laity, the day that we lose sight of the mission of the church as the ministry of reconciliation and we view our congregations as our missions rather than God's, and seek to fulfill its demands and projects through our own strengths or wills rather than through prayer and God's Will and strength, and when we seek our own agendas rather than God's (for the saving and edification of souls), our perspectives and roles will surely fail.

God calls us all into a priesthood of all believers. Together, pastor and laity alike, we share in God's ministry and mission, through Word and sacrament. There will be fewer power struggles between clergy and laity, between clergy and clergy, and between laity and laity, and the whole issue of power and authority will not even be an issue, when we realize that the one and only authority is God's. The one and only mission is God's. The authority God gives to the church is His, and the Means of Grace, Word and Sacrament, though entrusted unto us for the ministry of reconciliation, is still His. We are His servants.

¹ Rev. Kenneth Klaus, "An Uncustomary Prayer", Uncustomary Love (St. Louis, MO: Int'l Lutheran Laymen's League, 1997) 16.

ABSTRACT

Changes in society, misuse and abuse of authority in the pastoral office and changes in congregations concerning the role of the pastor, have all led to a need for defining and identifying what authority in the church is, and what authority the pastor has.

The scope of this project was to look at the Scriptural and Confessional foundations of Pastoral Authority along with discussions with the Board of Elders, Constitution Committee and Bible Study groups, to draw a basis for: 1) a definition of "Pastoral Authority"; and 2) the right use of that authority in the office of the parish pastor.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"A Look at 'Authority' and the Parish Pastor"

The question always intrigued me, "How much power, or authority, does the parish pastor really have?" From the little child who looks up to the pastor and calls him 'Jesus', to the older person who says, "What right does that young man have to tell me what to do?", I felt the question of pastoral authority needed to be addressed. There seemed to be too much room for the pastor to abuse the elevation given by some. At the same time, there also seemed to be too much room for the laity to abuse the pastor and despise his position because of personality, character, or other traits if they looked down upon him.

I observed that there seemed to be a "King of the Hill" game being played in many churches. Sometimes it was the pastor; sometimes it was the laity. But with each game played, the loser always seemed to be God. With each power push to the top, the power and Kingship of God was pushed to the side. Pastor or laity would impose their words above the other, and in some cases even in the place of, or above, God's Word; their message or agenda in front of God's agenda; and the church became 'their' church instead of being 'God's' Church.

What authority did the pastor really have? Was his authority to come from the congregation? Or from self? Or solely from Scripture?

Without a clear understanding of the authority given him by the Scriptures, many misuses and abuses can and probably do take place. There are some churches in which

the pastor seems to be dictatorially governing the church with an iron fist, and there are others in which the pastor seems to have no authority to do anything other than what the congregation dictates to him. Is the pastor over the congregation? Is the congregation over the pastor? Or are both of them of one body governed by God? The latter is the premise of this paper.

In search of the answer, the following steps were taken to define the authority of the pastor and how it is to be handled: 1) a look at the history of ministry to find the development of differences in pastoral authority and church polity; 2) a study of the word 'exousia', and what authority it speaks of; 3) a look at the Scriptural and Confessional references concerning the conduct and authority of pastors in their relationship to their congregation; and 4) on the practical application side: to study how Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Kingsford, Mich. has, through its Constitution and Diploma of Vocation for the Pastor, described the authority and responsibilities of pastor and laity to ensure that misuse and abuse of power does not take place.

REMEMBERING BACK

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PASTOR AND PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

Phillips Brooks, in addressing the students of the Harvard Divinity School in February of 1884 said,

I am reminded at once, as I begin, of the largely prevailing conception there is of the difference which has come in the relations which the Christian Minister holds to his people and to the community. As we look back and see the position which he held fifty years ago, we are constantly reminded of this difference. We are told a great many anecdotes of the way he stood then, of the prestige which clothed his position, of the authority with which it was invested. We are then pointed to the great changes that have taken place, in which the minister has been stripped of all

that prestige, and has no such authority clothing the utterances which he gives from the pulpit.¹

The world was changing. What Phillips Brooks was observing within the church and the office of the pastor was also happening in the secular world itself. These changes would continue, and almost 90 years later Lesslie Newbigin, in the book The Good Shepherd, wrote:

All over the world there is a break-down of the older authoritarian patterns. People are not prepared to tolerate the kind of arbitrary authority which was accepted a generation ago as part of the order of nature. There is a demand everywhere for participation. People insist on being consulted about decisions which effect their lives.²

The trend has not changed. In 1997, G.Lloyd Rediger in his new book, Clergy Killers, writes:

A pastor is no longer a power player in many communities. People do not fear the pastor's disapproval, and . . . is seldom consulted about significant personal, family, and community issues. . . . Without the prestige and respect of office, with growing, unrealistic expectations, and with the likelihood of being the scapegoat for parish discontent, the pastor's confidence wanes.³

Authority was under attack, within the church and without. In the secular world in the 1960's the Hippie, Peace, and Free Love movements were examples of outright rebellions against the establishment, government, war, and religious morals. Their cry was for freedom. They questioned the authority of everything, and everyone, in a position of authority over them: the law; government; Scripture; pastors; and teachers. Dr. Robert Smith, a professor at Pacific Lutheran in Berkeley said on his cassette "Authority in

¹ Phillips Brooks. "The Minister And His People." reprinted from The Harvard Theological Review, (April 1908), 224.

² Lesslie Newbigin, The Good Shepherd (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977), pp. 54-55.

³ G. Lloyd Rediger, Clergy Killers (Inver Grove Heights, MN: Logos Productions Inc., 1997), p. 24.

Matthew's Gospel" : "If we do not question authority, are we being gullible and are we being led by the nose and taken where we may not want to go?"⁴ Authority was being questioned, and those in the positions of authority were losing the esteem and respect that they once enjoyed.

But in the giving up of all authority and authoritative voices which guided society, did they find their freedom? Not really! Without an authoritative voice from without to guide the decisions, order, and purposes of their lives, they became their own authoritative voices. They became their own law. Just as many non-denominational churches claim their independence from denominations, they become a denomination unto themselves. J.I. Parker, in his book Freedom and Authority, states:

We cannot have the freedom we want until we receive it on God's terms, that is, by giving up our rebellious independence and letting God be God to us. Real freedom is only ever found under authority --God's authority in Christ, authority which reaches us via God's written Word.⁵

In an address to a college audience in 1966, the president-elect of the International Convention of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) said: "The American clergyman has lost prestige in recent years. The image of the pastor is not what it used to be." (New York Times, May 8, 1966)⁶ Remember, this is what Phillips Brooks was talking about back in 1884.

The clergy were losing their prestige and esteem in the eyes of the people. But this loss of prestige resulted because of the fight against authority. The authoritative voice with which the pastor once spoke was now being challenged. If the pastor was speaking on his own behalf, with his own views, his authority was questioned. If the pastor was

⁴ Robert H. Smith, "Authority In Matthew's Gospel", Resource XIV, No. 10 (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, (June 1987), side 1.

⁵ J.I. Parker, Freedom And Authority , ICBI Foundation Series 3. (Oakland, CA: International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, 1981), p. 14.

⁶ James D. Glasse, Profession: Minister (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 101.

proclaiming the Word of God, the authority of the Word of God was being challenged. It was not that the pastor had less authority, for his authority was that of the proclamation of the Word of God, but in people's struggle against authority, anyone who spoke with words of authority, including the clergy, would be looked down upon.

The television, newspapers, magazines, music groups and tabloids were (and continue to be) instrumental in advancing the cause against authority. And these did not spare the religious communities from their attacks. The negative views of the church that they were promoting did not go unnoticed.

Hollywood's portrayal of the corrupted pastor had an impact on the church community. While talking with confirmation students, some of them said that they have suspicions about clergy in general. They wonder if many have the traits portrayed on TV.

But an even greater impact of the negative media dealing with pastors and the church occurred in the unchurched communities. Not having a close knowledge of, or relationship to, the church and those within the church, many of them began to distrust the clergy, parishioners, and the church as a whole. Although many would not admit it, their lack of trust becomes known through little things which are said during evangelism calls, adult confirmation classes, and home visits. Unfortunately, the greatest evidence of it is made known in their questioning of the authority of the Scriptures. In their lack of trust in the messenger, many of them distrusted, or took lightly, the message that came through them, even though it was the Word of God.

HAS THE PASTOR LOST AUTHORITY, OR STATUS?

James Glasse quotes Charles Merrill Smith's book How to Become a Bishop Without Being Religious: "Surveys show that American young people put the profession of the clergy near the bottom of the list of occupations they would like to enter, ranking it

in desirability just a cut above undertaking."⁷ On the other hand, the loss of prestige for the pastoral office, says Gerhardt (CTM XIII,214 "Things Hostile to the Ministry of the Word"), may be the fault of the pastors themselves: 1) due to abuse of the office and of the power of the Keys; 2) due to their corruptions of doctrine, which degenerate into heresies; or 3) due to faults in their character and life."⁸ An example of this goes back even so far as the Old Testament. In the book of Hosea, Hosea speaks against the priests who went astray: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hos.4:6).

The blame for the low esteem of those in the church was not always from the world and those apart from the ministry. When the blame was from within, from the pastors themselves, its impact was even far more reaching and destructive. Many people in (as well as outside of) the church can still remember the scandals of the TV evangelists during the 1980's. The impact of those scandals will be felt for years to come.

A new topic coming into the open recently is the clergy killer phenomenon researched by G. Lloyd Rediger in his book, Clergy Killers. In his studies, Rediger reports that many clergy are now the targets of abuse by individuals or congregations. Not only has the minister lost his respected position he once held, but some have even lowered the pastor to a position of disrespect. Not only have they stripped him of the authoritative voice, but they have placed him in the position of the scapegoat to be attacked for all that they feel wrong in their individual congregations today.

So what did the pastors lose? Was it esteem? Prestige? Status? Authority? Authoritative voice? The authority invested in them? What happened over the years was an erosion of the high position pastors once enjoyed in the eyes of the community, and in

⁷ James D. Glasse, p. 101.

⁸ Heinrich Schmid, Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1899), p. 615.

some cases, in the eyes of the laity. What did not change, was the power of the message (the Gospel) they were to bring to the world, or the authority invested in them by the Lord to be His workmen in the spiritual care of His people. Luther insisted: "Let the preacher of the Gospel be sure that he has a divine call. Moreover, it is expedient for him to follow the example of Paul and highly praise and exalt his calling before the people (e.g., 1 Cor 4:14) so that he may gain the respect of those who hear him, just as a royal ambassador highly commends his embassy" (W.A. 40 I,56f).

In too many cases, people were placing the focus on the person of the pastor ahead of the Gospel he was to proclaim. They had reduced the pastor to simply being another individual, stripping him of his position as an ambassador for God. The messenger had gotten in the way of the message (either through the pastor's own doing, or through the doing of others). God's message, still pure and powerful, was in many cases, not being heard.

DID WE LOSE MUCH?

With the stripping away of prestige and air of authority, did the parish pastor really lose that much? I don't believe so. Phillips Brooks wrote:

Now when one says to me that I have lost much that the Christian minister in other times used to have; when one says to me that I am not able to speak with the authority with which a Christian minister used to speak, so that my life is gone and my function is useless, I turn to these three things: It is my place to awaken and to make active the spiritual sense of men; to tell men everything that I have found with regard to spiritual truth; and to make men hope with every possible assertion of their relation to the highest and divinest which it is in my power to make.⁹

Over the years many of the traditional tasks assigned to the pastor have changed in many ways (as will be brought out in our next section on the history surrounding the pastoral office: e.g. being the community leader besides the spiritual leader, to being a

⁹ Brooks, p. 231.

spiritual leader who was asked to refrain from any political stance), but his one constant and main task remained the same: to preach the Word (2 Tim. 4:1-5); to administer the Sacraments (Matt. 28:18-19); to forgive the sins of the penitent and retain the sins of the impenitent as long as they do not repent (Matt. 16:18-19; 18:18-20; Jn 20:21-23); to serve Christ and His people; and to be an example unto the flock so as not to be a stumbling block unto the faith of any.

Although the world was changing the way that it viewed the pastor, the pastor was not to change his view of his office, his mission, nor the way he felt about his true position -- that of being an "Ambassador for Christ". Most of all, it was not to change the message that he was to bring to the people, the Gospel of Christ. Blessed is the pastor who is able so to live the blameless life that those who would look at his life rather than his doctrine may not be led astray. And blessed is the pastor who is able so to teach the Word of God, that those who know him personally will still follow for the sake of the Word, inspite of his life.

The pastors, as well as all believers, are the jars that God wants to use to bring His pure wine to the world. Unfortunately, when the jars are soiled, or are viewed as soiled, even though the wine that comes from God is pure, the wine is viewed as contaminated, or even may be contaminated. Some people will look at the jar, see its condition, and desire not the pure wine from God. In that sense, not only has the pastor lost much, but the whole church has lost much. The whole world has lost much. On the same hand, if the jars (specifically the pastors), consider themselves more important than the wine they are to transport, or if they add their own ingredients to the wine, so as to add or subtract from it and make the wine muddied, then the jars need to be cleaned up! Therefore, if the loss of prestige and status of the pastor was able to humble him and refocus him on being the vessel for carrying God's pure wine, then this loss for the pastor is not totally bad, but may even be a good thing for the sake of the Gospel.

CHAPTER 2

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC MINISTER

When someone tries to write a short history of anything, there are many facts which are overlooked for the sake of brevity. This chapter is not an exhaustive history, but rather a sampling of changes which took place in the church throughout the years to help us understand the changing attitude concerning the clergy and laity which took place and influenced, and still influences, the church polities of today. The greatest influence, which would lead to a completely distinct difference between the Roman Catholic church and the churches of the Reformation, would be the doctrine of justification.

OLD TESTAMENT TIMES

At the beginning of the Old Testament times, people had direct communication and contact with God. They could speak directly to Him, and He would answer them (Adam and Eve). As time went on, and as the population of the people grew, God elected to work through individuals (Moses and the Prophets). Within the structure of His chosen people, God chose the family of Levi to take care of all things pertaining to the worship of the Lord. Over the centuries, a highly developed theocracy administered by a number of officials and semi-official public servants arose:

- 1) Priest - overseers of the temple system of worship;
- 2) Scribes or Rabbis - custodians and teachers of the laws and traditions, they also superintended the worship and educational activities of the synagogues;
- 3) Prophets - God's spokesmen (moral, ethical, political);
- 4) Wisemen - tried to pass on, especially to the younger generation, the accumulated experiences of their race in successful living;

5) Rulers - Carried out the responsibilities of the state.¹⁰

The people believed that the choice of these leaders was guided by God and that they functioned as God's representatives. As such, their rule, whether spiritual or temporal, was looked upon as the rule of God.

But these leaders were not to act and speak on their own behalf. They were to be God's laborers for the sake of communicating to the people the whole council of God. To some was given the task of preserving the laws and commandments of God. To others, the task of worship and sacrifice. To some, namely the Prophets, to speak forth God's directives for the present and/or future (Heb. 1:1). Many of the prophets knew that the messages they were to relay to the people were not what they (the people) wanted to hear, nor was it the message they (the prophets) felt comfortable giving, because it would certainly not help their standing in the community. But the messages the prophets spoke were from God. They spoke for the Lord the words of condemnation, destruction, as well as hope and blessing, as God directed them. They were to direct the believers toward God. They were to foreshadow the priesthood of Christ and His believers in the New Testament. They were only to speak and act under God's authority and not their own, and deliver only God's messages, and not what men wanted to hear, or what they wanted themselves to speak!

APOSTOLIC CHURCH

As we enter the New Testament Church, the priesthood is still in existence. As a priest in the temple, he stood as a mediator between God and man. Hebrews 5:1 states: "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." Zechariah, father of John the

¹⁰ Ilion T. Jones, The Pastor: The Man and His Ministry (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), p.11-12.

Baptist, was in the temple offering prayers for the people on the day that he received the message from the angel about the coming birth of his son.

With the coming of Christ, and through His sacrifice on the cross for the forgiveness of sin, we now have a new "High Priest" from the order of Melchisedec. The Old Testament order of Priests was done away with. They (O.T. Priests), were a priesthood according to the law. But Christ, through His death and resurrection, is a High Priest according to the Gospel. The writer to the Hebrews, in chapters 5-10, describes the priesthood of Christ and how His sacrifice, once and for all, grants believers forgiveness and salvation. Now we have only "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). And His sacrifice was sufficient: "he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:2). Through His blood, He now calls all believers into the holy priesthood (priesthood of all believers). In 1 Peter 2:9, we read: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. . . ." This was prophesied in the book of Isaiah, chapter 61 concerning the believers at the time of the coming of the Messiah: "But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God:" (Is. 61:6).

We now find the only authority to be recognized in the beginning of the New Testament church would be God's own authority conveyed through the life and ministry of Jesus, our High Priest. But even as High Priest, Jesus said that His authority was simply that which was given to Him from His Father in Heaven: "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (John 8:28-29). In John 5:30 Jesus said to the Jews that approached him: "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." (cf. also John 6:38, 8:26, 12:49-50, 14:31, 17:4)

By the authority of God, believers in Christ have now become the new priesthood with direct access to God. In Revelations 1:5,6 we read: " And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Lewis Spitz relates this office of priesthood in this way:

All who by faith in Jesus Christ as their Redeemer and Mediator have forgiveness of sins are priests before God. Since sin no longer separates us from God, we have free access to Him. They may approach Him personally. Thus the name "priest" belongs to every believer. It is no longer reserved for any particular order within the Church. And this name is not a mere empty title; it gives expression to the rights and powers of Christ's people. It also reminds them of their duties and responsibilities.¹¹

Out of this priesthood of all believers Jesus personally called and commissioned twelve men to be his apostles (αποστολοι). The basis of their authority stemmed out of their call from the Lord and the authority Christ conferred upon them. They were sent forth to preach the Gospel, to administer the sacraments, to enforce church discipline, and to ordain others into the ministry. The Lord did not place them in rank or power over others, nor was there a ranking among themselves, but rather, they were equally commissioned by God into service for the sake of the Gospel. As we read in Mark 10:42-44: "But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all." The position of the Apostles was not to be marked by ranks. Jesus called them all brothers (Matt. 23:8), and said if they were going to give glory to anyone,

¹¹ L.W. Spitz, "The Universal Priesthood of Believers", The Abiding Word Vol. 1, ed. by Theodore Laetsch (St.Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947) 329.

let it not be among themselves, but only to God (1Cor. 3:21). Even Paul in Galatians chapter two (vs. 7ff) said that he was no less of an apostle than Peter simply because he was not confirmed by Peter (Of the Power, 8-11, Trig.).

It was only natural that when the early church created a leadership structure for the sake of order, they chose the apostles first, chosen and trained by the Lord, to assume leadership roles in the church. Theirs was the supreme authority as personally called ambassadors of the Lord, although we read in Acts 1, that others from the church shared in some of the decision making (e.g. the casting of lots for the successor to Judas).

In Acts 6 we read that Deacons were first appointed to relieve the apostles from the burdens connected with distribution to the needy. The account arose over difficulties in Jerusalem between Aramaic-speaking Christians (the Hebrews) (Acts 6:1), and the Greek-speaking Jewish Christians (the Hellenists) -- the so-called fellowship of Stephen.¹² Because of the fact that a controversy arose when an apparent neglect of material support to the Greek-speaking members of the community was demonstrated by the Aramaic-speaking Christians (Acts 6:1), the Apostles, together with the community (Acts 6:2) appointed seven members of the Greek-speaking Christian community in Jerusalem to look after the Greek-speaking Christians in Jerusalem. This event, showed the beginning of the church's own election of rulers. But it did not grant them any new authority above the Christian community other than the care and support of souls entrusted to them.

St. Paul introduced himself as 'an apostle' commissioned by God (1Cor. 1:1); called as an apostle (2 Cor. 1:1; Rom. 1:1); through the will of God (Col. 1:1; Eph. 1:1).¹³ As such, he saw himself in the sense of being a 'messenger' or 'representative' of God. St. Paul emphasized freedom for his congregations which put limits on the degree of authority

¹² Edward Schillebeeckx, Ministry (Crossroad, New York, 1981), p. 6ff.

¹³ R.R. Williams, Authority in the Apostolic Age (London: SCM Press LTD, 1950), p.46.

he was willing to recognize for himself.¹⁴ When he defended his own authority, it was to point to Christ who called him and not to recognize some other authority or order. He was even willing to abandon his authority if it ran the risk of undermining the gospel (Gal. 1:8-9).¹⁵ God was the ultimate giver and basis of all authority.

The Apostolic office was not continued after the Apostles died. In the New Testament, God called others to work for His Church through the Apostles and gave them gifts for the spreading of the Gospel. God set them apart, not with their own authority, nor for their own authority, but for the working of His (God's) authority among men.

Presbyters (also known as Elders, or Bishops) became associated with the apostles in Jerusalem. Elders were eventually ordained into all the churches to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments. There is no evidence in the New Testament that there was any distinction between bishops and elders. As time went on, Bishop became distinct as one who presided over other presbyters, or elders. The office then was merely for the sake of good order and expediency.

The founders of many of the new communities springing up in the late first century were not local community leaders, but rather, proclaimers of the Gospel of Jesus. These first Christian communities were 'communities of God'. As Jerome wrote: "There can be no church community without a leader or team of leaders."¹⁶ One of the duties of the early church community (Priesthood of all Believers), was to have the entire congregation participate in the choosing of pastors and servants (Acts 13:2).

It was around AD 100 that the leadership in the church developed into an Episcopacy to handle the growing administrative problems of the growing church. There

¹⁴ David A. Steele, Images of Leadership and Authority For the Church (New York: University Press of America, 1986), p.8.

¹⁵ Hans von Campenhausen, Ecclesiastical Authority And Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries, translated by J. A. Baker (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 33-38.

¹⁶ Schillebeeckx, p. 1.

developed a leadership of Bishops who were overseers of lower orders of the clergy, e.g. deacons. "These men were set apart by rank and station, in which they exercised human authority over people, consciences, and property."¹⁷ This Episcopal system was looked upon as a continuation of the rule of the Twelve Disciples.

Towards the end of the 1st Century, there was a church order according to which a group of 'presbyters' (πρεσβυτεροι) were responsible for the leadership and the pastoral care of the local communities (Acts 14:23; 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-11; James 5:14; 2 John 1:1).¹⁸ St. Paul does not use the word *presbuteroi* outside of the Pastoral letters, except for when he calls himself a *presbutes* in the book of Philemon. He does use the word *Diakonos* 19 times, but uses it in the sense of 'service' rather than an office. The church was slowly developing a system of offices of leadership to handle the increasing diverse tasks of the church, in addition to the preaching of the Word, but the emphasis was still on 'service'.

2ND CENTURY TO THE REFORMATION

Coming into the 2nd Century, the persecution of the church, the desire to unify the church under a central voice for cohesion, and the prominence of the elders within the church emerged. There also arose a focus centered on the title, "bishop" who would rule over a number of elders. This figurehead position of the bishop eventually led him to be the authority figure over the clergy under his supervision.

In Acts 11:30, we find the term 'elders' for the first time used in conjunction with the Christian church. They were also called overseers, bishops, or shepherds. In Acts 20 Paul commits the flock to the elders. The elders were to protect the church from evil, both within and without.

¹⁷ Richard R. Caemmerer, "The Universal Priesthood and the Pastor," *Concordia Theological Monthly* Vol. XIX, No.8 (August 1949) 566.

¹⁸ Schillebeeckx, p. 15.

By the time we get to 1 Corinthians, Paul is calling upon the whole church at Corinth to deal with the problems within the church. Everyone had a place in the church because all were given different gifts. Because of these gifts, there was a shared responsibility for the whole (1 Cor. 12). God called some to special offices in the church (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers - 1 Cor. 12:27-31; Eph. 4:1-16). God entrusted these with gifts for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edification of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-12). But Paul also writes: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor. 12:4-7).

The 'priesthood of all believers' would come out even stronger in Peter's first letter. He writes: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). They would be blessed by the Holy Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22-23) to carry out their lives as disciples of the Lord.

A Sacerdotal System was also slowly arising. The Means of Grace had power because of Christ and the Holy Spirit, but there was also a growing emphasis on the character and the office of the man who employed them. The early church, in trying to protect itself against false teachings and teachers, looked at the pastor's background to determine who his teachers were. If he was taught by one of the Apostles, or was a descendant student of the Apostles, he was given more credibility than one who was not. Paul spoke of his credibility as being one who was an eye witness of the Lord Jesus, just like Cephas, James, and the rest of the Apostles (1 Cor. 15).

Pastors were also beginning to be known as priests, and the ministry was slowly growing apart from the common people.¹⁹ Already at this early date some of the leaders overseeing the church were losing sight of the sole authority which comes from God to the church and were beginning to add an authority of the church. It was not a conspiracy to do away with the sole authority of Scripture. In their attempt to meet the practical needs of the early church and the needs of the people, the church leaders were simply trying to find a system to guide the people in the counsel of God. Unfortunately, it led them to turn the people also toward the counsel of man, who at times walked with Scripture and sometimes walked beyond what Scripture was saying. Without the Scripture as the sole authority for life and doctrine, aberrations were sure to follow. The people, like sheep, followed their teachings and rule. For who were they to question the men they believed God had placed over them?

A growing emphasis was on the individual in office. Ignatius (2nd Century) wrote:

I urge you to aim to do everything in godly agreement. Let the bishop preside in God's place, and the presbyters take the place of the apostolic council, and let the deacons... be entrusted with the ministry of Jesus who was with the Father from eternity and appeared at the end (of the world).²⁰

Notice the words of St. Cyprian (3rd Century): "The Church is founded upon the bishops, and every act of the Church directed by these same presiding offices."²¹ The foundation of the church was still on the foundation of Christ and His Word alone, but there was beginning to grow a foundation of apostolic succession and importance of the teaching of the individual. This was made evident when Clement of Rome originally traced the apostolic succession (93-97); in Ignatius who, in his letter to Smyrna,

¹⁹ Caemmerer, p. 567.

²⁰ Ignatius "The Letter of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, to the Ephesians", trans, and ed. Cyril Richardson, Early Christian Fathers Vol. 1, Library of Christian Classics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953) 93.

²¹ Basil Minchin, Every Man In His Ministry (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1960), p. 118.

admonished that no one should do anything without the bishop who "represented Jesus Christ ([Ignatius to] Eph. 3:2) and God, himself (Magnesians 3:1)"²²; and when Clement's apostolic succession and Ignatius' monarchical bishop combined by the middle of the second century.²³ The importance of the clergy's background in the apostolic succession was gaining momentum. The focus was no longer just on the Word of God.

There was a very close connection between the priest and the local community. In Canon 6 of the Council of Chalcedon (451), it says that "No one may be "ordained" priest or deacon in an absolute manner. . . unless a local community is clearly assigned to him."²⁴ Ordination as minister would place an individual not only over the congregation, but also over the community in which the church was located. This also made it impossible for the leader to be moved to another community.

The exaltation of the clergy class separated the clergy more and more from the "lowly believers", and clericalism had begun.²⁵ Jerome also recorded that by the 3rd and 4th Centuries the office of the Bishop was separating itself farther and farther from the other ministries of the church.²⁶ The hierarchy of authority in the church was developing further. The Roman Catholic branches of the church were continuing to emphasize that the final seat of authority in the church was the church itself. The church was replacing the priesthood of all believers with a select group of persons who were claiming to have a special relationship to God on the basis of their office.²⁷ The church by the third century was looking to the Bishops to understand the authority of Scripture, but in so doing had

²² Steele, p. 46.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Schillebeeckx, p. 38.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

²⁶ Enoch Pond, Lectures on Christian Theology (Boston, Mass.: Congregational Publishing Society, 1875), p. 656.

²⁷ Steele, p. 48.

opened the doors for the Bishops to have basically the same authoritative voice as Scripture in their interpretation and application of them.

After the fall of Rome in the 4th century, the people were in a state of confusion. The church stepped in to help restore law and order. And they were a great asset to the populace in their state of emergency. Unfortunately, when the emergency was over, the church did not step aside and return the governing to the civil authorities. The church instead continued to rule both the temporal and spiritual kingdoms. The priesthood of all believers and the authority of the local congregation continued on a decline from the first through the fourth centuries as the hierarchical form of church authority continued to increase.

By the Middle Ages the church became a body of clergy under bishops, who in turn were under the chief bishop of Rome. Salvation was granted only to the people who accepted the formulas of belief laid down by the bishops and as they submitted to the ministrations of the clergy.²⁸ It was only by one's submission to the authority of the church that one was considered Christian or not by the church.

Another interesting change that came about in the church occurred in the 12-13th Centuries. Under Pope Alexander III, the 'ecclesiological titulus ecclesiae' was interpreted feudally to mean: no one may be ordained 'unless he has been assured of a proper living.' [Concilium Lateranense III (1179)]²⁹ This was a change of policy which said that the person ordained no longer had to be 'assigned a community', but now only had to be guaranteed a proper salary and living. This 3rd Lateran Council began to demonstrate a lack of regard for Scripture, for the words and decisions of appropriate individuals within the church were now regarded as more authoritative than Scripture itself.³⁰

²⁸ Caemmerer, p. 568.

²⁹ Schillebeeckx, p. 53.

³⁰ Steele, p. 55.

REFORMATION

During the period of the Reformation, the reformers sought to bring back the original parity of the clergy. Martin Luther said that the minister is a priest only in the same degree to which all believers are priests. Luther points out that it is through Baptism that all Christians are consecrated to the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9; Rev. 5:10), clergy and laity alike. Luther wanted to see no distinction made between the minister and the layman in the sense of a two tier system of humanity. He emphasized 'coram deo'. Ministers are called out of the congregations to the pastoral office - but it does not give him a closer rank with God as if his office was a sacrament. His was an office of proclamation instead. The only difference that Luther saw was one of function and work (Amt) [responsibility and office], not of rank or station (Rang or Stand).³¹

Before God there is no distinction of individuals. One is not closer to God and the other farther. One is not sinful and the other without sin. In the study of the doctrine of justification, the reformers realized that all are the same before God, monk and farmer alike. We are all sinful human beings in need of repentance, forgiveness, and of salvation. One does not hold a different rank before God simply because of one's office in the church.

The clergy are men from the priesthood of all believers, called by God through the church, to minister to and serve the church by the administration of the means of grace. These duties are the marks that God has given to His entire church, the priesthood of all believers. But they are exercised in public by the called clergy for the sake of order and harmony.

To guard against men self-appointing themselves into the office of the ministry, Article 14 of the Augsburg Confession states that "nobody should publicly teach or preach

³¹ Caemmerer, pp. 568-569.

or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call."³² Luther identifies the 'Call' as coming in two forms: immediate and mediate. The immediate call, he identifies with the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New Testament. These men were called immediately by God Himself. The mediate call, Luther said, is that which takes place through means, through men. This is how God now calls men to the ministry of the Word, through His Church.³³ The Gospel ministry, Luther says, is the greatest office in the church (W.A. 12,191), it is instituted by God and done through men (W.A. 47,191 f), but the only difference between clergymen and laymen is one of office, not of right (W.A. 25,255).

Luther denied that ordination had a sacramental character. He wanted to stress that the traditional distinction between the clergy and the laity which had developed over the previous 14 centuries should be done away with altogether (W.A. 6,563,27ff).³⁴ The call issued by a congregation makes a person a minister, nothing else. He is called to serve. He is called as an ambassador of God with the responsibility of proclaiming the Word. Although he will stand as a representative now of the congregation, his authority and power is that which belongs to God alone. Guided by God's Gospel he is now sent to tend to the flock of God and to reach out to those not yet in the household of faith with the Gospel in order to save souls.

Whereas the church over the past centuries began to look at ordination into the pastoral office as a sacrament -- placing the clergy above the laity -- the church of the Reformation was now looking at the ministry as conferring the office of proclamation upon an individual (c.f. A.C. XXVIII). The clergy were not placed above the laity to rule

³²Theodore G. Tappert, Trans. and Ed., The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 36.

³³Ewald M. Plass, Ed., What Luther Says, Vol.II (St.Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1972) 946.

³⁴Werner Elert, The Structure of Lutheranism (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), p. 346.

them, but rather, called by them and to them, to be proclaimers of the Gospel of Christ. Theirs was a Gospel ministry, not a law ministry. Although they were sent to preach the full counsel of God's Law and Gospel, they were sent to bring the good news of God's saving work and forgiveness through Christ Who died and rose again for lost sinners. Through Word and Sacrament, clergy were the bearers of God's Good News.

Martin Luther and John Calvin brought back the emphasis on the teaching function of the clergy to guide the laity back to the authority of Scripture itself. A re-emergence of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers resulted in a greater stress on the ministry of the laity. For the first time in a long time clergy authority could be challenged on the basis of poor performance.

At the same time that Luther was trying to reunite the clergy and the laity, the Roman Church continued on its march for their separation. Josse Clichtove says that in the 15 - 16th Centuries the Priest had become so separate that he was to be "detached from the world, even the world of the Christian laity."³⁵ The amount of contact between Priest and laity was becoming so detached that there was no question as to why there was such a great rise in the number of monks and monasteries in the Christian world. The monks felt that if they could be totally separated from the world and all of its temptations, that they would be closer to God. They also felt that the common person who was in the world was farther from God. Instead of seeing themselves as servants of the Lord for the sake of the ministry of the Gospel, they thought it best to be separate from the people for the sake of remaining a servant unto the Lord.

At the council of Trent, it was decided that the community no longer was to be involved in the nomination of its ministers.³⁶ This was quite a change from the policies of the first two centuries where the opposite attitude was taken.

³⁵ Schillebeeckx, p. 58ff.

³⁶ Ibid.

In Vatican II, the role of clergy/laity was changed in the Roman Catholic Church. The bishop and priest retained the authority of Word and Sacrament, but the role of the laity was greatly expanded. Now the laity could assist in worship, catechism teaching, and in the care and ministry to the needy.

17TH CENTURY

One of the greatest developments of the 17th Century consisted in the revival of the medieval conception of the "care of souls" (cura animarum, Seelsorge) as one of the duties of the pastor.³⁷ This was a great stride back to the Biblical principles of tending to, and feeding, the flock of Christ. The office of the ministry was now, at least for part of the Christian church, returning to an office for the guidance and care of human souls.

19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

So strong over the years had the center of authority in the hierarchy of the church been stressed over the priesthood of all believers, that by the middle of the nineteenth century, many churches were wrestling with the question of authority in the church.

In negative reaction against Roman and Anglo-Catholic sacerdotalism, an anti-clericalism movement grew up in Evangelical churches. When the doors were opened for immigrants to come to America under the call of freedom, many disenchanted people also fled to America for 'religious freedom'. They not only wanted freedom from the suppression of their governments, they also wanted to escape from the suppression of the church and wanted to come to a new home to exercise their religion (e.g. Anabaptist, Quakers, etc.). It is a movement to remove all distinctions between clergy and laity, and

³⁷ Elert, p. 363.

in some cases, even to the point of choosing their own leaders of worship from the laity of the congregation with a total disregard for 'ordained' clergy.³⁸

Even our own Lutheran Church was wrestling with the issue of authority. Pastor Martin Stephan, one of the spiritual and secular leader of the Saxon immigrants, while crossing the ocean to America in 1839, was invested with the office of bishop on ship. This was followed by a pledge of submission, signed by those on ship, as well as signed by others from the other ships, when they reached St. Louis. The 'Stephanites' had made Stephan's an autocratic rule.³⁹ Due to ungodly conduct in his personal life, Stephan was disposed of his office and sent across the Mississippi River into Illinois. With Stephan's departure, there was distress among the immigrants. Many were disillusioned, and wondered if they really had a right to be called a "church" in this new land. Some even swung from their veneration of the clergy to stressing the power of the laity and questioning if they even needed a pastor. Others became so anticlerical, that one baker by the name of F. Sproede, denounced the clergymen in the colony as "spirits of the devil, thieves, robbers, murderers, and wolves, false brethren."⁴⁰

In what would become known as the "Altenburg Debate", (a debate between C.F.W. Walther and Dr. Marbach at Altenburg in April of 1841), Dr. Marbach took the position that the German immigrants by separating themselves from the church in Germany, had ceased to form a Christian congregation, and lacked all power and authority to perform any ecclesiastical functions. Dr. Walther contended that the immigrants did constitute a Christian congregation and therefore had the authority to establish a church here in America. He argued that the church exists wherever God's Word and Sacraments

³⁸ J.P. Baker and R.T. Beckwith "The Question of Ordination," Christ's Living Body, edited by John Baker (London: Coverdale House Publishers, 1973), p. 133.

³⁹ Carl S. Meyer, Moving Frontiers (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), p. 134.

⁴⁰ Alan Graebner, Uncertain Saints (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1975), p.6.

are; the local congregation has the right to call its own pastor, because the local congregation is the seat of all church power; and laymen have the right to vote in church courts and councils, and even pass judgment on matters of doctrine, because the minister was not to place himself in a position of domination over the church.⁴¹

In 1852 Dr. Walther drew up a Thesis on the Church to attack Pastor J.A. A. Grabau, who had organized the Buffalo Synod in America. Grabau set up a semi-Episcopal form of government similar to that of Stephan. He insisted on clergy supremacy and a centralized form of government. Walther, speaking for the Missouri Synod, on the other hand, insisted on clergy-lay equality and decentralization.⁴²

The same issue would divide Walther and J.K.W. Loehe. Loehe also endorsed clergy supremacy. He was afraid that democratic principles in the church would lead to great harm.⁴³ Loehe broke with the Missouri Synod in 1853, and in 1854 helped to organize the Iowa Synod.

In his address to the Synodical convention in 1848, Dr. Walther asked and answered a very important question concerning pastoral, as well as synodical, authority:

Why Should and Can We Carry On Our Work Joyfully Although We Have No Power but the Power of the Word?

The principal and most important motive is the following: Because Christ has *given* His servants only this and no other power, and because even the holy apostles *have appropriated* to themselves no other power and therefore have seriously *warned* the servants of the church against claiming every other power...

But Christ not only declares that He alone has the power in His church and exercises it by His Word, but He also expressly denies to all others any other power, any other rule, any other authority to command in His church. Not only does He say, as already stated, "One is your Master, even Christ," but He also adds: "And all ye are brethren," that is, in My church you are all *equal*, all subject to Me and no one the lord and commander of the other.⁴⁴

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴² Meyer, pp. 164-165.

⁴³ Meyer, p. 122.

⁴⁴ Meyer, pp. 171-172.

Dr. Walther also drew up 10 Theses on the Ministry. (See Appendix E)

In these theses, he holds true to his conviction that there was to be no centralization of power in the church, and the pastor was not to be elevated to a different level than the laity. Walther described the ministry as an office distinct from the priestly office (of all believers), and of divine origin, but it was not a peculiar order set over and above the laity. He said in Theses IX:

Reverence and unconditional obedience is due to the ministry of preaching when the preacher is ministering the Word of God. However, the preacher may not dominate over the Church; he has, accordingly, no right to make new laws, to arrange indifferent matters and ceremonies arbitrarily, and to impose and execute excommunication alone, without a previous verdict of the entire congregation.⁴⁵

In 1879 Dr. Walther, in an attempt to help to persuade the Iowa Synod churches to join the Missouri Synod, wrote an essay to explain the relationship between Synod and congregations. Not only did he say that Synod would not arrogate excessive authority over the congregations, but he also reiterated that the authority of the local congregation and the priesthood of all believers is to be subject to, and not contradictory to, God's Will. Walther wrote:

The Smalcald Articles assert: "Christ gave the highest and final judgment to the church when He said "Tell it to the church." (Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, paragraph 25)

Every truly Lutheran preacher will exert great pains to assist the congregation in the exercise of this freedom. The false preacher will conceal this freedom. Ever since the Missouri Synod was organized, we have had to wage a strenuous battle to preserve the freedom of the congregation. . . .

Luther declared: "A bishop as bishop has no power to establish one ordinance or ceremony without the consent being given by the church. . . .They are only servants and stewards, not masters over the church. . . ."

⁴⁵ Wm. Dallmann, W.H.T.Dau, and Theo. Engelder, eds., Walther and the Church, translated by W.H.T. Dau (St.Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), pp. 71-85.

While. . . no preacher can give any commands to his congregation. . . . the Synod has the power to give orders and commands to the congregation that it must, to be faithful to God's will, obey? By no means! . . .

The Constitution of the Missouri Synod in Article IV, section 9 declares: "The Synod in its relation with its autonomous individual congregations is only an advisory body."⁴⁶

By the twentieth century even the church architecture was beginning to show the changing foci of the church from clergy domination back to priesthood of all believers with the pastor as 'overseer'. Richard Niebuhr points out that the modern churches with their multi-purpose rooms give the indication that the pastor is more of an 'overseer' and 'pastoral director' of church activities. There is renewed emphasis on laity participation and activity, and a returning of "ecclesia", the gathered body of Christ, as the primary source of authority.⁴⁷ This authority, of course, limited and directed by the Word and Will of God.

With laity participation, there are times when the pastor may still feel inclined to 'be the boss' for the sake of expediency. This he should guard against. Dr. John F. Johnson, President of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, while on sabbatical leave in Texas, commented in the February 1997 issue of the *Reporter*: "There were times when I found myself thinking, 'If this committee would just do what I ask them to do, then all this would be taken care of and we wouldn't have this hassle. . . . That's something that we constantly try to work on here at the Seminary among our students -- that they are there in the congregations to be servants of people and not to be bosses.'"⁴⁸

⁴⁶ C.F.W. Walther, Thesis II "Authority in the Church," Concordia Theological Monthly, translated by Arnold Krugler (November 1973): pp.375-378.

⁴⁷ Steele, p. 75.

⁴⁸ Paula Schlueter Ross, "Sem president takes time to rediscover life of parish pastor," Reporter, (February 1997), pp. 1-2.

Another negative reaction against the hierarchy of authority based in the church was a movement called 'secularism.'⁴⁹ In this movement, not only was there a breakdown between clergy and laity, but also, because the people behind this movement were primarily from outside of the church, they also broke down all distinctions between the church and the secular world. In other words, there would be no recognition of any authority or power at all from the church, Scripture, or from God.

Finally, one more negative reaction against church authority came in the form of 'self-authority'. James Marineau, himself holding these same views, found authority not from the church, or from others, but rather from one's own individual conscience and mind. "Reason for the rational, conscience for the right' was his watchword".⁵⁰ What eventually resulted from this line of thinking was a total breakdown of any recognition of Scriptural authority.

Daniel Day Williams, in his book, The Minister and the Care of Souls, (1961), places a renewed emphasis on the authority of the pastor. Renewed authority, according to Williams, is found in charisma and knowledge. He says: "real personal authority arises out of the concrete incarnation of the spirit of loving service which by God's help becomes present in the care of souls."⁵¹ Williams was realizing that personal example in the loving and caring of souls did elevate the personal authority and acceptance of the pastor. This again was one of the strong characteristics of the life of Christ. His (Christ's) life was the perfect example in the loving and caring of souls. But it seems that during the years that the church was emphasizing more and more the separation of clergy and laity, they were stressing less and less emphasis on the care of souls, which was one of the primary instructions for the apostles to carry out from Jesus Himself.

⁴⁹ Steele, p.134.

⁵⁰ Williams, Apostolic Age, pp. 114-115.

⁵¹ Daniel Day Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1961), p. 43.

Dealing with Social Issues in the 20th century within our own Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod, Norman Temme quotes a 1957 statement of Senator Paul Simon who wrote in the Troy, Illinois "Tribune": "The fact that you are a pastor does not reduce your responsibility as a citizen."⁵² Temme goes on to say:

A pastor who is silent on controversial issues with dear moral and spiritual implications is not true to his Lord. . . Now, if there actually is no message from the Lord, the pastor perhaps should remain silent. . . The pastor ought to evaluate timely topics to decide whether he can bring something of God's counsel to enlighten the discussions. . . Any message for the Church from its spokesmen needs to make clear the foundation on which it builds its case. It should shout: "Thus saith the Lord." There is always the danger that the pastor will make the Lord say what he wants Him to say -- instead of being careful always to say only what God wants His servant to say.⁵³

With the abuse of the Office of the Pastor in the medieval church stressing temporal authority on civil matters, some of the churches separated themselves completely from civic matters. This was also stressed on account of the America government's stress on the First Amendments rules on the 'separation of church and state." In 1960, William Poovey of Wartburg Lutheran Seminary wrote in "*The Lutheran Standard*" that church and politics do not mix, and the pulpit should always be kept free from political announcements.⁵⁴ In 1963, President Oliver R. Harms (then President of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod) disallowed the LC-MS to be identified with civil or political movements, but he did recognize the rights of pastors and people to participate as individual Christians and concerned citizens.⁵⁵ Temme then concludes:

Declaring the whole counsel of God requires of the pastor that he speak out on certain international, national, and social issues of our day. . . The pastor will be well advised to exercise caution lest he pose as an authority on every issue. . .

⁵² Norman Temme, "The Pastor's Role in Social Action," Concordia Theological Monthly Vol. XXXV, No.2 (February 1964) 94.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.95.

⁵⁵ Temme., p.103.

Whatsoever he says should be clearly rooted in God's Word as revealed in the Scriptures and be in conformity with the Lutheran Symbols.⁵⁶

As pastors, we remain as God's ambassadors to the world. The world needs to know what God says concerning issues in the world today. How will they know unless someone teaches them concerning God's Word?

Within the Roman Catholic Church, the Pope seems to have lost some of his humanly derived authority over the church. In an United Press article from Rome on July 31, 1988, it was stated that: "When Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre broke with the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican immediately cried 'schism' and imposed the once-dreaded penalty of excommunication."⁵⁷ The article went on to say that Church Officials saw no signs of repentance, that they acknowledge that the punishment of excommunication has apparently lost the sting that it once had, and also that a senior Vatican official was quoted as saying that "Schism and excommunication are very antiquated terms."⁵⁸ In an historical overview, the article mentioned that during the Holy Roman Empire, excommunication was considered grounds for the death penalty; in the early years of the Catholic Church members were advised to shun excommunicated persons; by the 15th Century only the most serious offenders were known as "vitandi" (to be avoided); and finally, those of today, including Lefebvre, were considered "tolerati" (to be tolerated).⁵⁹ The Catholic Church seems to be softening on its punishments for offenses against its man-made laws and doctrines.

It is sad that the pastoral office has lost some of its prestige, but the authority of the pastoral office remains the same, for it is grounded in the authority of the Gospel itself. It was a grievous error that there ever was a wall of distinction and demarcation between

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ "Excommunication fails to move followers," Belleville (Illinois) News-Democrat July 31, 1988, sec. A, p. 9.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

the ministry and the congregation, for with it came not only a cleavage between the ministry and the people⁶⁰, but it also brought about the mistaken identity that the authority of the pastor came from the person rather than from the authority of God through His Word.

THE REASON FOR A FRESH LOOK AT AUTHORITY AND THE OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

Maybe now we see the pastor as we ought. The removal of the wall of demarcation between pastor and people may have brought about a good change: 1) That the people finally see the pastor as being more human and one with them; and 2) That it is the authority of God which is central again, rather than the authority of the pastor. As John the Baptist once bore witness of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30, KJV). The authority of the pastor is given, and thereby limited, by the Word of God.

⁶⁰ Karl Kretschmar, Mutual Obligations of the Ministry and the Congregation (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1934), p. 16.

CHAPTER 3

Εξουσία and Δυναμис

WHAT DOES 'AUTHORITY' MEAN?

As we search the Scriptures to see what authority God has given to those who are members of His church, we will seek to define the meaning of two words 'exousia' and 'dunamis' (from which we translate the words 'power' and 'authority'). These two words encompass the majority of all passages concerning authority in the New Testament.

Exousia (Εξουσία) def: freedom of choice, right, power, authority, ruling power, a bearer of authority; "εξουσιαζο" = have the right or power, exercise authority.⁶¹ From secular Greek exousia means unrestricted freedom of action, power, and authority. According to Plato (Definitiones 415b) "By contrast with dunamis, where any potential strength is based on inherent physical, spiritual or natural powers, and is exhibited in spontaneous actions, powerful deeds and natural phenomena, exousia denotes the power which may be displayed in the areas of legal, political, social or moral affairs."

In the New Testament understanding of the word exousia, the LXX looked to the Old Testament book of Daniel for helping us to understand the full extent of the type of authority exousia is talking about. The Aramaic word 'soltana' (equivalent to Greek exousia) means dominion, power, with reference to the whole world. The word is used to designate an authority which originates from the supernatural realm; is delegated by God; and whose rule is eternal.⁶² The exousia of God, is the authority which originates in Him. It is total authority over all things. Romans 13:1 states: "Let every soul be subject unto the

⁶¹ The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology Vol. 2, ed. by Collin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervon Publishing House, 1977) 606.

⁶² Ibid., p. 607.

higher powers. For there is no power (ἐξουσία) but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

Josephus stresses the aspect of authoritative ruling power. His basic premise is that the power of the world's governments are not gained without God (War 2,140), and that no one escapes from the power of God (Ant. 5,109). The authority of Jesus, of believers, and the church, all originate in God and His authority. God alone gives authority to others, for He alone has power to give: "To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 25).

There does exist the powers of Satan, the powers of darkness, the powers of the sinful nature. These do act under their own authority. But they continue only as long as God still gives the permission for them to continue. Exousia for everyone (except God), is the ability to exercise powers because permission has been granted by another.

God's authority is seen in the realm of nature (Acts 1:7); it controls Satan's power (Acts 26:18; Col 1:13); it is able to destroy (Rev 6:8; 16:9); and it is able to forgive sins (Matt. 9:6-8).

Dunamis (Δυναμις) def: power, might, strength, force, ability, capability, use of power; "δυναμαι" = to be strong enough to, be able to. Denotes power in someone, as well as something, to accomplish a task. Exousia, on the other hand, is used only in reference to someone.⁶³ It is the authority in someone, or given to someone, on account of their position.

When we speak of the exousia or dunamis of the church, of Jesus, of the Apostles, of the people of God, of the Spirit, we are always talking about the power and authority of God. His alone is the power. But God gives His power out to those who are His.

⁶³The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology Vol. 2, 601.

The following table of passages outlines the usages of the words exousia and dunamis in the New Testament.

GOD'S EXOUSIA (AUTHORITY)

1. No authority but God's	Rom 13:1
2. Head of all authority	Col 2:10, Jude 25
3. Authority as potter over clay	Rom 9:21 (c.f. Is.29:16; 45:9; Jer 18:6)
4. Authority to control times	Acts 1:17
5. Do not be afraid of authority of God	Rom 13:3
6. Do not resist authority of God	Rom 13:2
7. Authority to cast into hell	Lk 12:5
8. Authority to destroy	Rev.6:8, 16:9
9: Authority given in Revelations	Rev. 6:8; 9:3,10,19; 11:3,6; 13:2,4,5,7,12; 14:18; 17:12,13; 18:1
10. Sent His Gospel	1 Thess 1:5

GOD'S DUNAMIS (POWER):

1. Divine Power	Matt. 6:13; 22:29, Mk 12:24; Lk 1:35; Rom 1:20; 9:17; 1 Cor. 4:20; Rev 7:12; 15:8; 19:1
2. Power to reign	Rev. 11:17
3. Power to raise dead	1 Cor. 6:14
4. Power to keep us in faith	Rom 16:25
5. Will put down all authority and power	1 Cor. 15:24
6. By His power gives us all things	2 Pet 1:3

7. Power given in Revelations Rev 13:2; 16:8

GOD GAVE EXOUSIA TO JESUS:

Matt. 28:18 "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth"

Jn 5:26-27 "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment. . ."

Jn 10:18 ". . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again, This commandment have I received of my Father."

Jn 17:2 "As [God the Father] hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him"

Also: Matt.9:6; Jn 5:27

AUTHORITY (EXOUSIA) JESUS DEMONSTRATED:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Taught as one with authority | Matt. 7:29, Mk 1:22, Lk 4:32 |
| 2. Asked by what authority He spoke and acted | Matt.21:23,24:27,Mk 11:28,29:33, Lk 20:2,8 |
| 3. Authority to forgive sins | Matt. 9:6, Mk 2:10, Lk 5:24 |
| 4. Gave authority to believers to live as sons of God | Mk 13:34, Jn 1:12 |
| 5. Authority to lay down His life | Jn 10:18 |
| 6. Authority over all flesh to give eternal life | Jn 17:2 |
| 7. Authority over evil spirits | Mk 1:27, Lk 4:36, Eph 1:21 |
| 8. Authority to execute judgment | Jn 5:27 |

POWER (DUNAMIS) JESUS DEMONSTRATED:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Power in His coming | 2 Pet. 1:16 |
| 2. Power of His Word | Heb. 1:3 |
| 3. Power to cast out demons | Lk 4:36 |
| 4. Power to heal | Lk 5:17, Acts 10:38 |
| 5. Power by reason of resurrection | Rom 1:4, Phil. 3:10, Rev. 12:10 |
| 6. Sits on right hand of power | Matt. 26:64, Mk 14:62, Lk 22:69 |
| 7. Returning with power and glory | Matt. 24:30, Mk 13:26, Lk 21:27,
2 Thess. 2:9 |
| 8: Worthy of power and honor | Rev. 4:11, 5:12 |

DUNAMIS OF GOSPEL

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Power of God unto salvation | Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18, 24 |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|

EXOUSIA AND DUNAMIS OF POWER OF DARKNESS

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Tempted Jesus with authority | Lk 4:6 |
| 2. Simon of Samaria tricked people
to believe he had power from God | Acts 8:10 |
| 3. Simon of Samaria wanted authority
of laying on of hands and H. Spirit | Acts 8:19 |
| 4. God delivers us from power of
darkness | Col 1:13 |
| 5. God rescued Saul from authority
of Satan | Acts 26:18 |
| 6. Authority of prince of power of
air | Eph 2:2 |

EXOUSIA GIVEN TO MAN

Believers receive the right, the power, the authority, to be called the sons of God through the authority of Christ Himself: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power (exousia) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn 1:12). Christ gave the apostles their authority: "For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification. . ." (2 Cor 10:8); and therefore they should use their authority responsibly: "For the son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work. . ." (Mk 13:34).

In every reference below concerning the authority of man (except where it speaks of having authority over others, being under authority of others, Pilate, Ananius and Sapphira, or the authority of governors), the authority is something which is given by God.

Pilate, governors, Ananius and Sapphira, and authority above or below others, in most cases show the misuse of authority with disastrous consequences.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Authority from God | Matt. 9:8; 10:1; Mk 13:34; 2 Cor. 10:8 |
| 2. Authority against unclean spirits | Matt. 10:1; Mk 6:7; Lk 9:1 |
| 3. Authority to heal | Matt. 10:1; Mk 3:15; Lk 9:1 |
| 4. Authority to tread on serpents | Lk 10:19 |
| 5. Authority over nations | Rev. 2:26 |
| 6. Authority over will | 1 Cor 7:37; 11:10 |
| 7. Authority to eat and drink | 1 Cor 9:4 |
| 8. Authority to lend | 1 Cor 9:5 |

9. Authority to forbear work 1 Cor 9:6
10. Authority over others 1 Cor 9:12; Lk 19:17; 22:25
11. Not exercise authority for 1 Cor 9:12; 2 Thess 3:9
sake of Gospel
12. Authority of chief priests Acts 9:14; 26:10; 26:12
13. Authority of governors Lk 20:20
14. Under authority of others Matt. 8:9; Lk 7:8
15. Ananias and Sapphira Acts 5:4
fraud by own authority
16. Abuse not authority in 1 Cor 9:18
the Gospel
17. Pilate said he had authority Jn 19:10
to crucify Jesus
(Jesus responded, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it
were given thee from above..." Jn 19:11.

DUNAMIS GIVEN TO MAN

As sinful human beings, we are incapable, without power, to please God or to fulfill the law (Rom 8:7ff ". . .the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God. . .").

1. Power from God Lk 24: 49; Acts 1:8; Rom 15:13,19; 1 Cor 2:4; 4:9;
5:4; 2 Cor 4:7; 6:7; 12:9; 13:4; Eph 1:19; 3:7,20;
6:10; Col 1:11; 2 Tim 1:7
2. Faith from power of God 1 Cor 2:5; 1 Pet 1:5
3. Power over enemy Lk 10:19
4. Peter denied he healed Acts 3:12
with his own power

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 5. Power to preach | Acts 4:7, 33 |
| 6. Stephen with power did
great wonders and miracles | Acts 6:8 |
| 7. Body raised in power | 1 Cor 15: 43 |
| 8. Power of Church in
Macadonia | 2 Cor 8:3 |

AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH

When we talk about authority in the church, we understand that genuine authority is given by God. He assigned different tasks to individuals (apostles, prophets, presbyters, deacons), and to the church as a whole (priesthood of all believers). Luther recognized that although all are called 'priests' not all are called 'pastors':

For although we are all priests, this does not mean that all of us can preach, teach, and rule. Certain ones of the multitudes must be selected and separated for such an office. And he who has such an office is not a priest because of his office, but a servant to all the others, who are priests. . . This is the way to distinguish between the office of preaching or the ministry, and the general priesthood of all baptized Christians. (Exposition of Ps. 110:4 --W.A. 41,210) +⁶⁴

As the priesthood of all believers, all share in the same privilege before God: all may approach Him directly through the grace of Christ; all possess the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation through repentance and by grace through faith in Christ Jesus; all are commissioned to show forth the praises of God and to preach the Gospel to all the world. The goal of all authority dispensed is for the care and salvation of His people.

When God gives authority or power to individuals, those individuals should not be puffed up and arrogant. For those powers have been invested in them by God for the work of the ministry. The power and authority God gives too, are not powers for rulership, but rather, powers for servanthood. We read in John 12:26, "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will

⁶⁴ Plass, Vol. III, pp.1139f.

my Father honour." Jesus continues His emphasis on servanthood: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him" (Jn13:16).

WHAT AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH ENTAILS:

Authority in the church entails carrying out God's Word and will here upon earth. There is nothing that we are authorized by God to do except that which Christ has given to us. Therefore as Christ has authorized the office of the keys to the church, we then have the right to exercise the office of the keys:

Matt 16:19 "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
(c.f. Matt. 18:18-20; Jn 20:21-23)

We are a royal priesthood, not because of our own authority, but by the authority of God:

1 Peter 2:9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."
(c.f. Rom 12:1; Heb 13:15-16; 1Pet.2:4-5; Rev. 1:5-6; 5:8-10; 20:6)

We carry out specific tasks in the church, not by our own calling, but by the call and power which comes from God through the church:

Eph 4:11-12 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."
(c.f. Acts 6:3-4; 20:17,18,28; 2 Cor 3:4-6; 5:17-21; 1 Pet 5:1-3; 1 Tim 5:17; Titus 1:5-7)

CHAPTER 4

A SCRIPTURAL AND CONFESSIONAL LOOK AT "PASTORAL AUTHORITY" IN THE CHURCH

(See Appendix A for Bible References) (See Appendix B for Confessional References)

It is evidenced in Scripture that God has given unto His Church and ministry power and authority from above ("All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them . . . "Matt. 28:18-20). That power and authority consisted not in temporal powers ("For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal . . . " 2 Cor. 10:4), but in spiritual ("For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth . . . " Rom.1:16); and it did not elevate the ministers above the laity and give them special rank ("The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them . . . But ye shall not be so . . . "Lk. 22:25-26), but rather, it made them servants unto the sheep ("For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord: and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Cor. 4:5).

This role of servanthood did not demean the office of the ministry ("He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me . . . "Lk. 10:16), but rather, it elevated it (" . . . whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister . . . Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:26,28) and made it worthy of honor ("And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you: And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake . . . " 1 Thess. 5:12-13; "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." 1 Tim. 5:17); for in servanthood the

ministry takes on the role and example of Christ (" . . . And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death . . . "Phil. 2:6-8).

The authority that God gave to the church and ministry did not give the ministers the right to become lords (" . . . to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think . . . " Rom. 12:3) over the laity ("There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28), over each other ("But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Matt. 23:8), or over the Word of God ("Ye shall not add unto the word which I teach you . . . " Deut. 4:2; "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be cursed." Gal. 1:8; "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. 2:8); for if the ministers so elevated themselves, they were to be avoided ("Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Rom. 16:17) and not obeyed ("Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'" Acts 5:29).

There is only one Lord and Master of us all (" . . . one is your Master, even Christ. . . "Matt. 23:8), and there is only one Word that can give us eternal life, and that is the Word of God ("For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation . . . " Rom. 1:16).

Since the time of Christ, the authority of the pastor became temptation for personal power. And it was abused. It tempted the early church fathers to thirst for power which could be used for their own purposes, and thus the many articles about church and pastoral authority needed to be included in the Confessional writings. We must always return to the basics and realize that the authority which God left with His

church here on earth was an authority of servanthood, for the building up of the body of Christ, unto Him Who is the author of life, Jesus Christ our Lord.

DEFINITION OF MINISTRY

WORD & SACRAMENT OR OFFICE OF GRACE

Two very prominent themes evident themselves in the Scripture and Confessional writings: 1) that all authority within the church comes from God; and 2) this authority expresses itself through Word and Sacrament. God did not vest the church and its ministers with new power separate from Himself, but rather, vested the church and its ministers with His power. This power remains the power that originates and finishes in the marvelous workings of God.

So where do pastors come in? What powers do they possess? What authority do they have? From our Scriptural and Confessional writings, we begin with a definition of the word 'ministry'.

The word 'ministry' is derived from the Latin and in its widest sense means 'service'. The dictionary defines it as "the act of serving or performing a service."⁶⁵ This sense of 'serving' is the way that Jesus performed His ministry, as we read from Matt. 20:28, "The son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life as ransom for many."; in Luke 22:27, "I am among you as he that serveth"; and Phil. 2:6-8, "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant". Jesus, our Lord and Savior, Who has all power and authority that even the winds and the waves obey Him (Mark 4:41), expressed His authority here upon earth, not as an earthly king to rule over us, but rather as a servant that we might be saved. Dare we, the ministers of our Lord Jesus do otherwise?

⁶⁵ Kretzschmar, p. 8.

God calls His workers into service. As servants of His, we serve not ourselves, as the following passages point out: 2 Cor 4:5, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake"; Heb.6:10, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister"; Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore...to feed the Church of God"; Rom.15:15, "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God"; 1 Cor. 9:19, "Though I be free of all men, yet have I made myself servant..." A Christian minister must therefore conduct himself among the people of his congregation, first of all, as a servant of Christ.

God has called all of His followers to be servants of His by being His ministers (the Priesthood of all Believers), that we may all serve one another in love for the building up of the saints. That service rendered for God has been spelled out in the Scriptures: 1 Pet. 2:9, ". . . shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you . . ."; Matt. 28:18-19, "Jesus spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"; John 20:21-23, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you . . . Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." The authority which God gave to the church consisted of: the proclamation of the Word; the administration of the sacraments; and the Office of the Keys. Pastors, being called by God (divine commission) out of the Priesthood of all believers, are invested with this same authority, no more, and no less.

When the Scriptures specifically mention the work of the disciples commissioned by God, it mentions a list of special supernatural powers endowed upon them: Matt. 10:5-8, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils . . ."; Luke 9:1-2, "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal

the sick". But when we look at the descriptions of the authority that God gave to His church and His ministers, the list is confined (as was mentioned above) to the Preaching of the Word, the Administration of the Sacraments, and the Office of the Keys (forgiveness and retention of sins, excommunication), Matt. 16:18-19 ". . . I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom . . ."; 18:18-20 "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. . ."; 28:18-19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ."; John 20:21-23 ". . . as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. . . Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

A.C. V "To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments . . .", XXVIII 5-11 " Our teachers hold that according to the Gospel the power of keys or the power of bishops is a power or command of God to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer the sacraments . . . This power is exercised only by teaching or preaching the Gospel and by administering the sacraments. . . "; XXVIII 21 "Hence according to the Gospel . . . no jurisdiction belongs to the bishops as bishops (that is, to those to whom has been committed the ministry of Word and sacraments) except to forgive sins, to reject doctrine which is contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the fellowship of the church ungodly persons whose wickedness is known, doing all this without human power, simply by the Word"; Apol., XXVIII 13-16 "We like the old division of power into the power of the order and the power of jurisdiction. Therefore a bishop has the power of the order, namely, the ministry of Word and sacraments. He also has the power of jurisdiction, namely, the authority to excommunicate those who are guilty of public offenses or to absolve them if they are converted and ask for absolution . . ."

Within God's divinely instituted Office of the Ministry, we have a mandate of services: John 21:15-17, "Feed My lambs . . . "; Acts 20:28, "feed the church of God . . . "; 2 Cor. 5:18-19, "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus

Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation"; Eph. 4:11-12, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"; 1 Peter 5:1-5, "Feed the flock of God which is among you . . . "; John 13:13-15, "ye also ought to wash one another's feet"; Acts 1:8, "ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . "; Matt. 28:18-20, "teach . . . baptizing . . . "; Mark 16:15, "preach the Gospel", etc. What power does God supply to the minister - the power to carry out these works of His by the strength of His Holy Spirit for faithful service?

As ministers of our Lord, when we speak forth the Word of our Lord, we do bear the greatest power in the world: John 6:63, ". . . the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"; Rom. 1:16, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth". When we administer the Sacraments, we administer the means of grace unto His people. When we exercise the Office of the Keys and speak forth the absolution, it is as if God Himself were speaking that absolution (A.C., XXV,3, Catechism: "When the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command . . . this is as valid and certain in heaven also as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself"). But this power is not from us, or from within us, but it is given through us from God Himself.

MINISTRY IS INSTITUTED BY GOD, NOT BY HUMANS

It was God Himself who instituted the Office of the Ministry (Matt. 10:2-8 ". . . These twelve Jesus sent forth . . ."; 28:18-20 ". . . Go ye therefore, and teach. . . baptizing. . ."; Lk 9:1-10 "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick . . ."; Mk 16:15 "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."; Jn 20:21-23 ". . . as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. . ."; 21:15-17 ". . . Feed my lambs. . . Feed my sheep. . . Feed my sheep."). The minister must realize that his office and the service expected of him by God

and his congregation are a stewardship, a sacred charge, an exalted trust.⁶⁶ As such, the authority of his office does not rest on the arrangement made by the congregation, but rather on the fact that the office makes the voice of the Archshepherd (Christ) operative.⁶⁷ The office was instituted by God for the discharging and performing of the many necessary functions of the church. Therefore it is an exalted office, an expression of God's own thought -- the means by which His message of eternal salvation can permeate the minds and souls of men.

The pastoral ministry is God's means in His church by which His people are equipped to do the work He planned for them to do; it is a holy means by which His people are activated and directed to the target of unity and maturity and service.⁶⁸ The pastor's desire to help people begins with his conviction that God has set the pattern of life and determined the conditions under which real help can come.

The holy ministry, as a divine institution, is clearly stated by Paul when he tells the pastors at Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). To the Corinthians, Paul writes: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1), and "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers. . . ." (1 Cor.12:28); and to the church in Ephesus he writes: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"(Eph. 4:11,12).

⁶⁶ Kretschmar, p. 27.

⁶⁷ Elert, p. 372.

⁶⁸ Harry G. Coiner, "The Pastor in the Church", Toward a More Excellent Ministry, edited by Richard R. Caemmerer and Alfred O. Fuerbringer (St.Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), p. 14.

Pastors are placed into their office by the divine appointment of Christ, the head of the church. Therefore, as stewards of the mysteries of God (gifts for salvation embodied in Word and sacrament), let the pastor serve as one who serves Christ.

In the book, What Lutherans Are Thinking, T.F. Gullixson writes a beautiful little summary of the commission Jesus gave to His first ministers:

He it was who said to His first ministers, "I will make you fishers of men," and kept His Word. He sent His twelve disciples. He appointed other seventy also and sent them two by two. He trained His loyal band and promised them the Comforter, "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (Jn 14:26) He came, though doors were locked, to them on Easter Eve, to the eleven gathered together and them that were with them, (Lk 24:33). "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." (Jn 20:21,22) ... "Go ye into all the world and preach." (Mk 16:15) "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt 28:19,20) He acknowledged their ministries: "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." (Mk 16:20)⁶⁹

TOWARD A PROPER DEFINITION OF PASTORAL AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY IS SPIRITUAL

The power given to the church is purely spiritual: preaching the Word; administering the sacraments; and the Office of the Keys. Power is not given to the church or the pastor to exercise temporal powers, rules, or regulations that bind the consciences of men beyond those defined in the Scriptures.

When my wife and I were looking to purchase a different home, the real estate agent kept on saying to us: "There are three important factors which lend to the value of a

⁶⁹ T.F. Gullixson, "The Ministry", What Lutherans Are Thinking, edited by E.C. Fendt (Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1947), pp. 290-291.

house: 1) location; 2) location; and 3) location." When Jesus spoke with Peter after the resurrection, He asked Peter three times: "Do you love me?"(Jn 21:15,16,17) Peter's response was "Yes, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee" (Jn. 21: 15,16,17). Then Jesus said there are three ways to show and use that love: 1) "Feed my lambs" (Jn. 21:15); 2) "Feed my sheep" (Jn. 21:16); and 3) "Feed my sheep" (Jn 21:17). The Lord was reiterating what type of service Peter could render that would be of greatest value to his ministry. As we consider our ministry for the Lord, feeding the sheep of God, caring for His flock is of the greatest urgency, importance, and value. How can we best accomplish this? There are three ways: 1) Word and sacrament; 2) Word and sacrament; and 3) Word and sacrament. The Scriptures and Confessions both bear this out.

The pastor's authority is the authority of God's Word and the authority of service in the name of Christ. As he ministers, if he serves faithfully, people will see in him a person of authority, a person sent by God for their souls and salvation. As Luther wrote: "My jurisdiction and rule, however, pertain only to sin, to teaching you that because of your sins you must have been lost forever had not Christ paid and rendered satisfaction for them." (W 52,268 -E2,202f - SL 13a,541f)

PASTOR NOT TO TAKE AUTHORITY AWAY FROM GOD

As ministers of our Lord, we need to be watchful, as "stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1), never to take the Word of God into our own hands and our own understandings; so as not to add, subtract, nor contradict the Word of God.

The minister must preach Christ -- not himself, nor the words of man. As Peter says: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...that God in all things may be glorified" (1 Peter 4:11). St. Paul says in his letters: "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Cor. 2:13); "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received . . ." (1 Cor. 15:3);

"For do I now persuade men, or God" or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." (Gal. 1:10).

If a minister, or anyone else, should speak words, or delegate rules and regulations contrary to the Scriptures, they do so not with the authority of God, and therefore should not be obeyed as though they did have that authority from God. As we read from the Scriptures: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord" (Deut. 4:2); "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8); "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col, 2:8); "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink . . ." (Col. 2:16); "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing" (Matt. 7:15); "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29); "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). Whenever we speak outside of the Word of God, we speak as one man unto another; or in the case of the church, as one brethren unto another. But whenever we speak contrary to the Word of God, we should not be obeyed and we should be admonished.

In the Scriptures and in the confessional writings, authority of God and His Word supersedes all. No one has a right to decide the rules for salvation but God. Therefore God has already written down in Scriptures everything which is necessary for our learning and training in righteousness.

PASTOR SHOULD NOT EXERT HIS PERSONAL AUTHORITY IN PLACE OF GOD'S

There are many things in the world which are not specifically mentioned in the Bible as being commanded or forbidden by God (adiaphora). In these cases, the minister

must speak on behalf of God, not to add new doctrine, but to lean people toward an understanding of what God has already written in the Bible concerning the issues involved. For example, when the issues deal with the form of worship, we look at what God says about worship. The minister does not have the right to burden the consciences of people by adding traditions of his own which would suggest that they were rules given by God Himself.

Especially condemned in the confessional writings are the traditions of the early Roman Church which added many traditions to the church and made them as if they merited grace by their observance, and merited damnation by lack of observance. From the Augsburg Confession, Art. XV, Of Ecclesiastical Usages, we read: "Nevertheless, concerning such things men are admonished that consciences are not to be burdened, as though such observance was necessary to salvation. They are admonished also that human traditions instituted to propitiate God, to merit grace, and to make satisfaction for sins, are opposed to the Gospel and the doctrine of faith . . ." From Art. XXVIII of the Confession, we read in paragraphs 30-34 that "bishops have no power to decree anything against the Gospel." And from the Apology, Art. XXVIII, 18, we read: ". . . the expression Luke 10.16: He that heareth you heareth Me, does not speak of traditions, but is chiefly directed against traditions. For it is not a mandatum cum libera (a bestowal of unlimited authority), as they call it, but it is a cautio de rato (a caution concerning something prescribed), namely, concerning the special command [not a free, unlimited order and power, but a limited order, namely, not to preach their own word, but God's Word and the Gospel]" It doesn't make any difference if we lived at the time of the disciples, or if we live now in the 20th Century, we do not have the authority to preach any other gospel than that given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. And when we preach His Gospel, we have no right to change it in any way.

Many people will come to the pastor -- as the representative from God - for spiritual direction and help. The minister must always remember that he is accountable to

Christ, and is God's ambassador here on earth. The advice and help that he gives should so stem from God's Holy Word that it can be observed without sinning. The same may be said of any practices or customs which he initiates within a church: (Aug. conf., Art. XV, 1, Triglot, p.49: "Of Usages in the Church they teach that those ought to be observed which may be observed without sin, and which are profitable unto tranquillity and good order in the Church".)

NO DIFFERENCE IN RANK

Because the office of the Ministry is one of service, let us cast aside one of the greatest temptations of all, rank.

All ministers are equal in rank, Matt. 23:8, "all ye are brethren"; 1 Cor. 3:21, "let no man glory in men"; Gal. 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek. . ."; Eph. 4:4-6, "There is one body . . ."; 1 Cor. 1:1 "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother"; Phil 2:25 "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier . . ."; Col. 4:7 "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord:"; 1 Peter 5:1 "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder . . .". Christian pastors do not possess power over their congregations outside of that which God has given them as ministers of the Word. By divine right (iure divino) they have no power at all over their fellow-ministers.⁷⁰

Condemned in the Confessions was the rank of the Pope of Rome who says he is the supreme head and sole authority of Christ in the church: (S.A., Part II, Art.IV.12: "The Pope, however, prohibits this faith, saying that to be saved a person must obey him"); (S.A., Of the Power, 11: "Let neither the other ministers nor Peter assume for themselves lordship or superiority over the church; let them not burden the church with

⁷⁰ John Mueller, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1955), p. 579.

traditions; let not the authority of any avail more than the Word of God. . ."); (Of the Power,61: ". . . it is evident that this power belongs by divine right to all who preside over the churches, whether they are called pastors, presbyters, or bishops."); (Of the Power, 63,65: "Jerome therefore teaches that the distinction between the grades of bishop and presbyter (or pastor) is by human authority . . .not by divine right . . . This right is a gift given exclusively to the church, and no human authority can take it away from the church.") Authority is limited to the Word of God. (C.f., Matt. 20:26,28 "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;... Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many"; Mark 10:42-44 "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all"; Romans 12:3 "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.")

Concerning the different offices in the church, they are of human design and authority. As stated in the CTCR document on "*The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature*":

Every position in the church is one of service, of Christ-exaltation and self-abasement. However, it is useful for the church to arrange for various rankings and orders of supervision also among its pastors, teachers, and others. The distinction between pastors and holders of auxiliary offices is not merely a human distinction. It is not a ranking but a distinction of offices. Within the various offices (e.g., pastorate, teaching office) rankings may be made by human authority. There may, for example, be "senior pastors" and "assistant pastors," or principals and teachers. The nomenclature adopted by the church from time to time may indicate such rankings. Uniformity of terminology is highly desirable.

Rankings that are made by human right should be made for the sake of the work and not merely to elevate individuals. The fact that some members of the church

are called by God to be "overseers" does not make them a special caste. Moreover, it must be noted that where there is oversight, there is also submission. However, in the New Testament "submission" is not a term indicating inferiority.⁷¹

If a pastor, or anyone else who holds an office in the church, becomes proud and overbearing, let him remember that he remains as a servant of the Lord, and let him say as Paul did in 2 Cor. 12:9: ". . . therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

PASTOR RECEIVES HIS CALL THROUGH THE CONGREGATION

AUTHORITY OF PASTOR, REALLY IS AUTHORITY GIVEN TO THE WHOLE CHURCH

God did not give the authority to present His grace and forgiveness only to ministers, but to the whole community of believers, which He brought into being through His own precious blood: ". . . Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God. . ." (1 Pet. 2:4-5); "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood. . ." (1 Pet. 2:9); "And hath made us kings and priests unto God . . ." (Rev. 1:6; c.f. 5:10; 20:6).

God gave unto His church the authority to: 1) Call pastors and teachers; 2) Show forth the praises of God (1Pet. 2:9); 3) Teach and baptize all nations (Matt. 28:19-20); 4) Preach the Gospel (Mk 16:15); 5) Forgive and retain sin (Jn 20:22-23).

Every member of the church is a missionary: "Ministry in the church is ultimately the ministry of Christ. All members of the body of Christ are involved in it. The members of the priesthood of believers are not merely recipients of ministerial service."⁷² In 1 Cor.

⁷¹ "The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature," The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod: A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, (n.p., Sept. 1981), pp.28-29.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

12:12-27, and in Rom. 12:4-8, we are reminded that we are all parts of the one body, the body of Christ. We all have different functions, but we are all important in the ministry of the Lord. Lewis Spitz wrote:

As priests the believers not only enjoy great rights and privileges, but also have important duties and responsibilities. Through Christ they have access by one Spirit unto the Father (Eph.2:18). They may appear before Him in the Holy of Holies with their offerings of prayer, to pray, praise, and give thanks. But having done that, they step out of the Holy of Holies, as it were, to minister unto those without. The services which they render under their responsibilities as priests may be regarded conveniently as being performed within three spheres of activity: the church, the family, and the world.⁷³

But for order in the church, God established the holy ministry for the public administration of the priestly rites belonging properly to all believers. The public ministry was set apart by God, but the man who was set aside by God as a pastor remains a part of the Priesthood of all Believers. The authority of the pastor is not the authority of the congregation transferred to one of its members. As Coiner points out:

The idea of a transfer of the rights of the priesthood to the person of the pastor is foreign to the Lutheran Confessions (Schlink). The congregation may. . . grant. . . the task of preaching the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments on one whom they call and ordain. . . but this task they do not transfer (in the sense of giving right or title to) to individuals in its membership. . . In this office the pastor acts in the name and at the direction of God and in the stead of Jesus Christ. The called servant of the Word acts with authority given him not merely on the basis of an arrangement made by believers, but on the basis of the divine institution and the authority of the Word of God.⁷⁴

Lewis Spitz adds: "the members of the congregation in calling a pastor do not give up in the least any of their rights as kings and priests."⁷⁵ Rev. M. Loy, in his book also defines that the congregation is not giving up any of its authority or power when they call a pastor:

⁷³ L.W. Spitz, "The Universal Priesthood of Believers", The Abiding Word Vol. 1, ed. by Theodore Laetsch (St.Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947) 331.

⁷⁴ Coiner, p. 20.

⁷⁵ L.W. Spitz, p.333.

They have signed away nothing when they have elected a pastor. They never had the right to infringe upon the equal rights of others and never were appointed to the ecclesiastical office. When the work of the congregation is to be done, according to the Lord's direction they appoint some one to do it in their behalf, because it is impossible for each individually to discharge the duty directly in his own person. But the work which is thus done according to the Christian people's call is their work, for the public performance of which they have made the minister their agent.⁷⁶

In all of his duties, and in the authority he bears, the Christian pastor acts not in his own name, but by the authority and in the name of Christ as His servant. All effectiveness of the ministry will flow out of the authority that proceeds from God, not from him.

MINISTRY: POSITION OF SERVANTHOOD AND LEADERSHIP

The office of the ministry is an office of service within the congregation. But even in its servant role, the pastoral office occupies a position of leadership. The reason, is that because although he is a servant of the body of Christ (the church), he remains first and foremost the servant of the Lord (the Head of the church). As he serves the Head, he guides the rest of the body of believers in the direction of the Head (Christ). Leadership and servanthood always need to be held side by side: "Among you whoever wants to be first must be your servant" (Matt 20:26). But the minister must always remember that he leads not unto himself, but he is an ambassador of Christ to lead people unto Christ.

In the same way, when, according to Matt. 16:19 and John 20:23, the minister forgives the sins of the penitent, and retains the sins of the impenitent; the power to do this does not come from the pastor himself, but from the Lord, Who entrusted it unto him. It was Gregory who wrote: "The shepherd is not without authority, but it is of a special sort. The shepherd's authority is based on competence grounded in mutuality, yet this authority

⁷⁶ Rev. M. Loy, The Augsburg Confession (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1908), p.777.

requires accurate empathy to be properly empowered. Pastoral authority is not primarily a coercive authority, such as that of a judge or a policeman, but rather an authority based on covenant fidelity, caring, mutuality, and the expectation of empathic understanding (Gregory, ACW, vol.II, Part 2)."⁷⁷

It is so easy to allow the world's patterns of leadership to govern the church. To allow people to rule one another and to boss one another around, not in the name and rule of God, but rather, "teaching as doctrines the laws of men." L.M. Zimmerman wrote: "As ministers of God, we do well to remember that a prophet makes known the Will of God. He proclaims not his own message, but the message God has given him. He is to be God's mouthpiece. He speaks for God. He speaks to the people. He preaches God's message from the pulpit and as he goes from house to house."⁷⁸ The minister remains the "voice", like John the Baptist, who is to prepare the hearts and souls of people for the coming of Jesus.

TO FOLLOW CHRIST'S LEADERSHIP EXAMPLE

If a minister wishes to follow in the leadership style of Jesus, he must first deny himself: "If anyone would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." A great example of this is the life of St.Paul. When a group of people came up to him to challenge his authority and denied that he was an apostle, St.Paul answered: "As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger. . . We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor 6:4-

⁷⁷ Walter H. Greever, The Minister and the Ministry (Philadelphia: The Board of Publications of the United Lutheran Church In America, 1945), p. 53.

⁷⁸ L.M. Zimmerman, The Gospel Minister (Baltimore,MD: Meyer & Thalheimer, 1930), p. 19.

10) The greatest among us will be the servant of all. That is why the example of Jesus goes before us, because He endured even death upon the cross. That is why the example of St. Paul goes before us, because he too carried his crosses for the sake of the Gospel. This will be our test of leadership, to see how much we are willing to bear for Christ's sake.

The pastor must not be waiting for people to serve him, but rather, taking on the form of a servant, he goes out to see how he can minister unto the spiritual needs of others. That is his greatest task and pleasure.

TO SHOW THE WAY

A shepherd of sheep does not drive sheep from behind, but rather he goes on before them, and the sheep follow him. It is the shepherd who must show the way. He is the leader. There is only one way to come to God. This way is called salvation. The good pastor must know the way of salvation and guide the sheep in that way. "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) The pastor, as shepherd must know Jesus. The man who shows the way must know the way himself.⁷⁹

It is the ideal of the pastor to have his mind set only on the things which are above: "I determine not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Cor 2:2) Greater is the pastor who is able to lead numbers unto God, rather than numbers unto himself; who is able to focus on enabling people to reach their spiritual destination, rather than focusing on his own financial destination; and who cares more for the souls of the people than all the fame and fortune of the world.

⁷⁹ Seth Msweli and Donald Crider, The Shepherd and His Work (Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1974), pp. 12-13.

CHAPTER 5

PASTOR/PEOPLE RELATIONSHIP

CONGREGATION NOT TO DEGRADE THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY

In looking at the passages which speak of 'servanthood', the attitude of serving does not degrade the office of the ministry, but rather elevates it to its true level of excellence and elevates the respect and dignity of the faithful servant of our Lord.⁸⁰ Jesus earned the love and respect of many people by the love and the respect that He showed to others. From his lecture on Titus 1:7, Luther wrote:

Not, says Paul (2 Cor. 4:5), that we lord it over you; but we serve you for Christ's sake. I am not installed to rule any Christian as lord, but to be his minister. On is the Lord. But although ministers are servants, yet we must obey them and humble ourselves before them for the sake of the Lord. On the other hand, they are to serve us and also bear our infirmities also for the sake of the Lord. Therefore he who pleases himself cannot but offend and play the tyrant. (W.A. 25,23).

At the same time, a congregation should not think of its ministers as someone who is not important and treat him as such. Paul tells us in his first letter to Timothy: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward"(1 Tim. 5:17,18). Even though he is a servant, he is in the first instance, the servant of Christ.⁸¹ The pastor is always the undershepherd of Christ: working so as to turn the hearts of many unto the Lord.

CONGREGATION TO WATCH OVER THE PASTOR

⁸⁰ Kretzschmar, pp. 25-26.

⁸¹ Ewald M. Plass, Ed., What Luther Says, Vol. III (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1972) 926.

The greatest relationship which can exist between pastor and people is that of mutual love and concern for each other's soul. The pastor is not to be the only servant of Christ in the church. Rather, the pastor is to be the mentor, by example, and by the power of God's Word, to teach people how they, too, may serve one another, and in so doing to serve the Lord Jesus. Luther wrote in a sermon on John 13:1-17:

We should bear in mind that we are not preachers and ministers of the church in order to be great lords but to be meek and humble, faithfully to lead our churches, and to serve our neighbor with all the gifts we have and in this way constantly to wash the feet of others. Thus special honor and pleasure are given to the Lord Christ. Moreover, there is no better way for us to guard against the devil and his snares. For preachers especially are subject to this temptation: the devil attempts to induce them to seek their own honor and profit. If he is successful, he has won. . ." (W.A. 52, 221f -E1,327 -SL 13a, 324)⁸²

Pastors are not mediators between man and God, as though the salvation of the people depended upon them. The power to save resides in nothing else than Jesus Christ and His Word which is the power of God unto salvation. (Rom. 1:16). They are indeed overseers of the flock (Acts 20:28), but they were made such by God through the congregation.

Congregations also have a responsibility to watch over the ministry of their pastors and teachers, and to dismiss them in case they refuse to preach the Word of God in its truth and purity and to adorn it with the holy life, Col. 4:17; John 10:5; Matt. 7:15; Rom. 16:17,18.⁸³ It is sad when a congregation will follow a pastor blindly, and will allow themselves to be swept along "by every wind and doctrine".

Congregations must also watch themselves that they do not conceive of themselves as having the special privileges over and above the whole human race. For when they so conceive of themselves in this fashion, they are opening themselves up to Satan and

⁸² Plass, II, 938.

⁸³ Mueller, p. 577.

sinking into corruption. That is what happened in the early church, and the more power they conceived of themselves as possessing, the more corrupt they became. Once again, the key to ministry is the word "servant".

A caution must be mentioned about the old practice of separation of clergy and laity in the early centuries of the Christian church and the "too familiar" unity of the 1990's. In the same way the separation of clergy and laity led to abuse and harm to the church because it separated people into different classes and ranks within the church of God, so, too, the most recent development of what I will call the "Pastor Bob" syndrome, may have the same disastrous effect on the role of pastoral authority in the church. I have the feeling that if the pastors stress too much on familiarity -- that the pastors are no different than the normal laity in any way (doing away with the whole concept of the "calling" and divine office of the ministry) - the people will lose their ability to trust their pastors on the professional level and will no longer go to them for counseling or help. We remember what happened to Jesus when He returned to His home town. The people were not willing to accept Him nor the authority of His words because they only saw Him as the son of Joseph, the carpenter. As Jesus said: "A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house" (Matt. 13:57). Pastors are not above the congregation, nor below them, but always to be among them as one who serves as an ambassador of Christ the King. We must not forget that we are there to represent Christ, to speak for Him, to work for Him. The pastor has certain duties that he must perform: 1) They are to be the mouthpiece of the divine message of grace, the bearer of the news of salvation; 2) they are to teach God's truth to their fellow Christians, and lead souls to the Saviour; 3) they are to officially administer the spiritual treasures committed to the church; 4) they are to supervise the congregation, and organize people for the performance of the tasks laid out for all Christians by God. Our authority must never take away from these tasks. Our credentials come from God, the exalted King Who

rules all things in heaven and on earth. To Him we are totally dependent. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

The church is to be the light of the world and bear witness to the Light which came into the world (Jesus Christ). When this light ceases to cast its ray to the world, the church has forsaken its mission. When the pastor ceases to show forth the face of Christ, he too has ceased to be a minister.

PASTOR TO BE THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE

The key word here is the word "spiritual". People look to the church and to the pastor to guide them in the things which are spiritual. When the church and pastor forsake this guiding, and begin to guide things which are temporal, they will disenchant people concerning the true role and authority of the church. Therefore, the ministers and ministrations of the church must not go beyond the Word of God (Gal 1:8; 3:10).

Whoever goes beyond the Word of God insults the rule and majesty of God, does great harm to the church, and creates disorder and confusion. The church is bound to obey the Word of God unconditionally and for all times (John 17:20), and it is commanded to avoid those who teach doctrines contrary to those laid down in the Bible (Rom. 16:17).

Whoever adds to, or subtracts from, God's Word stands condemned by the Lord, who says, "Behold, I am against the prophets that use their own tongues and say, "He saith" (Jer. 23:31). "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9).

In most recent times, the church of our Lord has been torn apart by the corruption evidenced in the lives of some television evangelists. The world, when it saw that those inside the church were using the church for personal gain and advantage, and when they saw the sins that plagued the personal lives of those in the church, the shadow of darkness was cast over the message that they were proclaiming, and their churches not only lost the prestige, following, and trust that they once had, but it also effected the Christian church

as a whole. That is why we must be reminded that especially those in the church must so live as to be above reproach so we do not become a stumbling block to those with a weaker faith. We are to stand at all times and in all places as the representatives of God, realizing that the world, the devil, and our flesh, will always be warring against the message of God.

CHAPTER 6

AUTHORITY AS DEFINED AT OUR REDEEMER, KINGSFORD ACCORDING TO ITS CONSTITUTION, AS WELL AS ITS DIPLOMA OF VOCATION FOR THE PASTOR

In reference to our Church Constitution and the Diploma of Vocation (and it's Supplement) for the pastor, it became evident that every effort was made to make sure that there would not be a centralization of power in any one person, group, or office in the church. There would definitely be no room for the pastor, Chairman, or any other person to play 'king-of-the-hill' and corner the market on power within the congregation.

Beginning with the Constitution, we found a term 'Ex-officio' which seemed to indicate at first that there was an authoritative power invested to the pastor and to the Chairman above all the rest. But closer study showed otherwise. The pastor, by reason of his office as the Pastor of the congregation, is an ex-officio member of the Church Council. The Chairman, because of his position as chairman, is an ex-official member of all Boards and Committees.

But no Officer, Board, or Committee of the congregation has any power above that which is conferred upon them by the congregation. All matters, other than doctrine and conscience, are decided by majority vote of the congregation, unless it is a matter to which an officer or Board in the congregation has been granted the power to decide. But even these powers delegated to them can be altered or revoked by the congregation.

The Diploma and its Supplement for the pastor, does not list the powers invested to him, but rather, lists the areas of responsibility he is to uphold in carrying out his tasks of the ministry. Instead of using words like: "You have the authority to..."; "You have the final say in..."; or even "You have the absolute power to decide...", the Diploma and Supplement uses words like: "...assume the responsibilities..."; "To administer to us the

Word...the holy Sacraments..."; "To perform..."; "To guard..."; "To guide..."; "To promote..."; "To assist..."; and "To serve...." The office of the pastor is one of service to the congregation in leadership, not of ownership or power over.

In both cases, Chairman and pastor, both are subject to the congregation. So the congregation is the absolute power then, right? Wrong! The constitution says that the congregation has "supreme power" to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. But it also adds: "The congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions.... Any such decisions shall be null and void." It also states that all matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God. Therefore, the congregation limits itself to abide by the authority of God and His Word. If there is any centralization of power in the church, it is not to be found in the pastor, any group, office, or officer in the church, but solely in God and His Word.

STUDY NUMBER 1

A Look at the **Diploma of Vocation for the Pastor** (See also Appendix C)

(It is the typical Diploma of Vocation used throughout our Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod by congregations wishing to call a pastor)

(Large print letters are those of the original document, smaller letters are comments and notes from study and research with members of the Church Council, Board of Elders, and Constitution Committee.)

Having called on the Lord, our God, for guidance (The church looks to God for direction, help, and the final word) and in the exercise of the authority with which He has vested His church on earth, (God gives the power and authority to His church on earth to call pastors) we, the members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, of Kingsford, Michigan 49801, (The congregation as a whole, not one small group or individual) in lawful meeting on August 29, 1991, (Lawful meeting, meaning that: the meeting was properly announced to give everyone a chance to be in attendance and cast their vote; and a quorum (1/6 of the voting membership) was present) have elected you (By majority vote or consensus) to the office of Pastor and herewith extend to you this formal notification of your solemn call. (The Call that God mediately gives through the congregation)

In the name of the Triune God and by His authority (Not our own) WE (the members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church) ask you to assume the responsibilities of the office to which we have called you (Office of Word and Sacrament, as an ambassador of the Lord) and to faithfully perform all the duties of your office (As deferred by the congregation and as dictated by the Word of God) according to the Word of God (Source and norm of all that we teach and believe) and the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as drawn from the Sacred Scriptures and found in the Book

of Concord. (As a Lutheran Church, we hold to the Confessional writings of the Lutheran Church. We are not to take the freedom of interpreting Scripture to meet our own fancies, as though we had the authority to add or subtract from it. Because the Lutheran Confessions accurately guide us in the teachings of the Bible, and describe fully the doctrines of the Bible, we hold ourselves to confess our allegiance to them.) We ask you to do this according to the needs as specified in the accompanying document or as may be resolved and mutually agreed upon from time to time.

To the end that you may be enabled to do this, we pledge you our wholehearted and continuing cooperation and support in word and deed and in our prayers to God in your behalf. (The congregation and its people pledge their support to the pastor as a servant of the Lord and pledge their cooperation also in the ministry and work of the church.)

We pray God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has moved us to extend our call to you, to convince you by His Holy Spirit that it comes from Him; to induce you to accept it; to conduct you safely to your field of labor; and to bless your ministrations to the glory of His holy name, the building of His church, the temporal and eternal welfare of many people, and your own great joy and blessing. (The pastor comes to tend the flock of God, that the Kingdom of God may grow, that souls may be attended to, and that the welfare of all, especially spiritual, may be attended to. To this end, may it be the pastors joy and blessing.)

STUDY NUMBER 2

A Look at the *Supplement* to the Diploma of Vocation: PASTORS (See also Appendix D)

(It is the typical Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation used throughout our Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod by congregations wishing to call a pastor)

(Bold print letters are those of the original document, smaller letters are comments and notes from study and research with members of the Church Council, Board of Elders, and Constitution Committee.)

We authorize (The authority given to the pastor is none other than the authority that God gives to His whole church on earth) **and obligate** (The congregation calls the pastor to stand as Christ's representative and publicly preach and teach, administer the sacraments, and carry out the Office of the Keys in their stead) **our called minister:**(Servant of the Lord, overseer of the flock for Christ the Good Shepherd)

To administer (To proclaim and teach) **to us the Word of God in its full truth and purity as contained in the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament and as set forth in the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as found in the Book of Concord;**

To administer (To distribute; to dispense) **the holy sacraments in accordance with their divine institution;**

To perform (To accomplish; to do; to carry out) **the functions of a pastor in an evangelical manner** (Fair and impartial, without favoritism or discrimination, with loving service for the souls of all as Christ does); **to aid, counsel, and guide members of all ages and social**

conditions; to visit the sick and the dying; to admonish the indifferent and the erring;(To be one among us as one who brings the full counsel of God in Law and Gospel, care and love, in admonishing as well as forgiveness.)

To guard and promote faithfully (Directed by the Word of God) **the spiritual welfare of the members of this congregation,**(The pastor's call is a spiritual call. He comes to feed the flock, to tend to souls, and to be as God's ambassador to guide hearts and souls toward Jesus.) **in particular to instruct the catechumens, both children and adults, in the Word of God and thus prepare them for communicant membership in the church;**(The pastor feeds the flock by the Word of God, even as He is fed by the Word of God. He is a spiritual guide. He comes not with ideologies, philosophies, political perspectives, social motives, or self motives and messages. He comes forth with the pure spiritual milk which comes from God's Word alone, to equip the saints for ministry and life as God's people.)

To guide (To show the way; to lead; to direct a person in his conduct or course of life) **the congregation in applying the divinely ordained discipline of the church agreeably to the Word of God;**(Matt. 18:15-18) (All discipline is directed not by the whims and fancies of members of the church, nor from the personality of the pastor. All discipline looks to the Word of God as its directive and source of power. Discipline is not aimed at driving away those whom one does not agree with, but rather, to strive to bring back to the fold and nurture of the Lord the erring brother or sister who is sinning, in order that they may enjoy the communion and fellowship of the church and the forgiveness of God.)

To promote (To advance; to contribute to the growth and success of; to encourage by word as well as example) **and guide the mission activity of the congregation** (Seeking first the kingdom of God and the advancement of it in word and deed) **as it is related to the local community and to District and synodical endeavors,** (The congregation is not to be an entity unto itself, but it is also a member of a larger group, District and Synod, and together with other

congregations are a witness unto the world) **in particular to train** (Empowered through the Word of God) **workers** (Those who will take up the call of God to be His workers in the harvest fields) **and guide them** (Also participating in) **in evangelism activities and to enlist the support of the congregation** (Those who can witness, to witness; those who can teach, to teach; those can share other gifts they have from the spirit, to share those gifts for the kingdom. For all to help financially, or in prayer, the evangelism work of the church) **for mission work generally;**

To assist (To aid, to help) **the congregation in adopting administrative policies** (With the goal of serving Christ first and caring for souls) **and procedures** (Programs which advance Christ and His Word and Will above all things) **which will help it carry out the mission** (Being a light to the world, a community of believers, a fellowship committed to the temporal and eternal needs of each other and those around them , where the Word of God may be preached, the sacraments administered, and the discipline of the Lord adhered to.) **of a Christian congregation;**

To serve (To act like a servant; to be a servant of) **the congregation** (Not an end unto itself, but in serving the congregation the pastor is also serving God and His Kingdom) **as an example of Christian conduct,** (Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control (Fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22-23) **to endeavor earnestly** (Unselfishly and wholeheartedly) **to live in brotherly unity with members of the congregation** (When there is tension to be first in forgiveness, when there is strife to listen with a tender heart to seek a solution, to admit that the pastor is not always right, to seek God's helping hand and strength in human relationships) **and fellow workers** (The pastor should not place himself above other pastors, nor should he feel that his is of a lesser Call from God) **and sister congregations in the District and the Synod,** **and by the grace of God** (By God's strength and Spirit) **to do everything possible within the sphere of his calling toward the edification** (The building up of; to benefit spiritually) **of the congregation and the up-building of the church in Christ, both locally and generally.**

We obligate ourselves:(As the Priesthood of all Believers)

To receive our minister-elect as a servant of Jesus Christ, (The pastor is here, not just because we called him, but also because God sent him. We, the congregation receive the pastor, not as a hired hand, but as a servant of the Lord. He is to serve the desires of Christ over and above the desires of the congregation, therefore where the congregation may be in error of God's Word, may the pastor, as ambassador of Christ, admonish us and correct us) **to give him the honor and love and obedience which the Word of God prescribes,** (Not to look down upon the pastor. He is a slave to Christ and the Gospel, not a slave to the congregation.) **to aid him by word and deed, and to support him with our diligent, faithful assistance and prayers;** (We're in this together as a family, as the fellowship of believers, as workers together for the Kingdom, as servants of the Heavenly King and His glory.)

To make faithful and regular use of the means of grace (Not to forsake the gathering of ourselves together, but through diligence to the Word and in regular communion at the Lord's Supper, to be fed and strengthened for partnership in the ministry of reconciliation) **that God's enabling power may have free course among us to the end that we may carry out our God-given ministry to the service and glory of God and the welfare of all;**

To provide for his proper maintenance according to our ability and review his salary, housing arrangements, and all allowances periodically; (As a congregation we have called you to be among us for the work of the ministry. To enable you to extend your energies for the welfare of the flock, and without worry for yourself, we will provide for your welfare. God will provide for you, through us.)

STUDY NUMBER 3

A Look at Selected Articles of our **CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

(Bold print letters are those of the original document, smaller letters are comments and notes from study and research with members of the Church Council, Board of Elders, and Constitution Committee.)

Of the Powers of the Congregation:

PREAMBLE:

"The Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to
(Limit its power to) **this Divine Word in doctrine and practice (Ps. 119:105; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5)** (The Word of God is the source and norm of all that we teach and believe and practice) **and that all things be done decently and in order (1Cor. 14:40). Therefore we, the members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, accept and subscribe to** (Sign our name to; give our promise to; approve) **the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.**

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The purpose of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church shall be that of a religious organization; (We must not forget our mission and reason for being a church - that of the ministry of our Lord) **more specifically:**

- 1. To confess and worship the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit as revealed in Holy Scripture to be the one true God.**
- 2. To teach that faith in Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation and that this salvation is the gift of God through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross**

in payment for our sins, and that the Holy Spirit through the Word creates this saving faith and changes lives.

3. **To unite** God's people under the Lordship of Christ; to nurture and edify one another lovingly to all people.

4. **To administer** the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion as means of Grace instituted by God Himself.

5. **To promote** Christian harmony, fellowship and discipline among the members of the congregation (Matthew 18:15-18); to promote Christian concern and acts of Christian love in the community by the individual members and by the congregation.

6. **To provide** structures for Christian worship, Christian education and Christian evangelism.

7. **All of these purposes are to be accomplished according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church (Article III of this Constitution).**

(Notice the underlined words in #1-7. They are words which speak of 'service'. They are the same type of words used for the call of the pastor. The congregation is a service organization, made up of God's redeemed people, joined together, for the preaching of the Word, the administration of the Sacraments, for the caring of souls, for the advancement of the Gospel. The congregation is not a club, fraternity, or other type of organization whose only purpose is for self. Its goals are God's: for all people; at all times; in all places; for the edification of souls by the power of the Holy Spirit.)

ARTICLE III

CONFESSIONS

This congregation **acknowledges and accepts** all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and **acknowledges and accepts** all the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These Confessional Writings are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles',

Nicene, and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord. (Guided by the Scriptures and the Confessional writings, we teach and profess what all LC-MS churches are to teach throughout the world. We are a Christian church, and we are a LC-MS church which holds and teaches all that the Scriptures say as the Word of God.)

ARTICLE VI

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

A. GENERAL

The congregation as a body, through its congregational meetings shall have supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. (It sounds like the congregation answers to no one else. But remember above in Article III it bound itself to be guided by God's Word and the Confessions. Notice also the note at the end of this paragraph.) **The establishment and conduct of all institutions and societies within the congregation, such as the Christian Day School, Sunday School, youth societies, ladies' and men's organizations, choir, etc., shall at all times be subject to the approval and supervision of the congregation.** (The congregation consists of all members of it. They all have a similar vote. That is the reason for the Congregational Meetings - for every communicant-voting member to be able to voice their opinion and vote. The groups within the church are also governed by the vote of the congregation.) **The congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Article III). Any such decisions shall be null and void.** (The congregation has freedom and power to administer to its own affairs (Earlier note), especially temporal, but it does not have freedom to choose its own doctrines. That is why it is subject to the Word of God and the Confessions. No one, not even the congregation, has a right to teach anything contrary to the Word of God.

In matters of adiaphora, the congregation is to study or gain insight from what God has to say about the items in question by searching the Scriptures. The Confessional writings are especially useful in the research of many topics and doctrines.

Notice in this Article that there is no mention about the power and authority of the pastor. He is not considered outside of, or above, or separate from the congregation. Yes, he is called to an office of leadership, he is the shepherd of the flock, but his vote is of equal weight with the vote of all the rest of the congregation. In matters of vote, the pastor, although he may lend his counsel and direction, should remember that he is one of the fellowship of the priesthood of all believers.)

B. RIGHT OF CALLING

The right of calling pastors or teachers shall be vested in the congregation and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual. (To guard against centralization of power in any group or individual in the congregation, all affairs are to be decided by the congregation as a whole, unless the matter is of lesser importance and is delegated to a Board or Committed for the sake of expediency. In matters like the calling of a pastor or teacher, it shall be the voice of all in the congregation to prevent the call from being a call from an individual instead of a call from the congregation.)

C. DECISIONS

Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God;
(Centralization of God's power and rule) **other matters shall be decided by the congregation by a majority vote** (Prevention of centralization of power in groups or individuals) **unless otherwise specified by the Constitution or Bylaws.**

D. POWERS OF THE OFFICERS

Congregational officers or committees, whether elected or appointed by the

congregation shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them, and whatever power may have been delegated to them may at any time be altered or revoked by the congregation. (Whenever a group or individual is entrusted with power and authority to act on certain matters within the church, they are still subject to the power and authority of the congregation as a whole. Therefore, their power and authority can be altered or revoked.)

E. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Any officer, pastor, or teacher may be removed from office by the congregation, (Not only officers, but even pastors and teachers are subject to the authority of the congregation. No one is greater in rank or above authority. All are subject to the governance of the congregation.) **by ballot,** (By the authority of the majority in the congregational meeting with a quorum present) **in a Christian and lawful order, for one of the following causes: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, and inability to perform their official duties or willful neglect of them.**

BYLAWS ARTICLE II

MEETINGS

D. Every regular Congregational Meeting shall be announced (To avoid the possibility of a small select group of individuals trying to initiate something without the full knowledge and consent of the whole) **(by word or in the bulletin) at least two Sundays prior to it. Whenever a meeting has been thus announced, and at least 20 members** of the congregation are in attendance, it shall be considered a properly convened and legal meeting capable of transacting business. However, for amending the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and Bylaws, the erection of buildings, the purchase or sale of property, or the removal of a pastor or teacher or some other member from office, a **quorum of one sixth of the voting members is necessary, and a two-thirds favorable**

vote of those present shall be required for adoption of a resolution, unless otherwise provided by state law. (When the effort has been made of inform the congregation of the meetings to be held, it is also important that a minimum number of members are present in order for the meeting to proceed with business. This is to safeguard against small groups running their own agendas without the consent and approval of, or the concern for the welfare of, the congregation as a whole.)

Of the Powers of the Pastor

ARTICLE V THE OFFICE OF PASTOR AND TEACHER

The pastoral office of this congregation, as well as that of a called teacher in the Christian Day School, shall be conferred upon such ministers, teachers, and candidates only as profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of this Constitution and are well qualified for their work.

(The pastor, called among the people to serve, is submitted to the same articles of faith and practice as the rest of the congregation. He is among them as one who proclaims the Word of God in all of its truth and purity, Law and Gospel, and as one who practices also what he preaches and lives by and adheres to that Word of God himself.) **Pastors and teachers shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.**

BYLAWS ARTICLE VI CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council shall consist of the Chairman of the congregation, the Vice-Chairman, the chairpersons of the Board of Elders, Trustees, Missions, Education, and Stewardship, and the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Financial Secretary of the congregation. All other officers and the chairpersons of newly created boards shall be added to the Council as elected. The pastor shall be an ex officio member of the council. (By reason of

his call to the office of the pastor, the pastor has the authority and right to sit on the Church Council. Therefore the Church Council is not above the pastor. At the same time, the pastor is not above the Church Council, but rather, an official member of it.)

The Powers of the Chairman

BYLAWS ARTICLE VII TERMS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

The term of office of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be one year.

(By limiting the term of office, the centralization of power in the office of chairman is diminished. His is but a temporary position.) **The Chairman and Vice-Chairman can succeed themselves one term. The Chairman shall preside** (To occupy the seat of authority over) **at all Church Council and Congregational Meetings.** (Notice that the position of the chairman at the Council and Congregational meetings is above that of the pastor who is an ex officio member of the council. This is meant to prevent the pastor from assuming or taking control of, or exerting authority over the other elected officers and boards of the congregation, or even the congregation itself.) **He shall be an ex officio member of all Boards and Committees....** (By reason of his office as Chairman, he has the authority to sit on all Boards and Committees and be members of them. This does not give him a stronger vote than the others who are on those Boards and Committees.

The Power of the Board of Elders

BYLAWS ARTICLE VII TERMS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

BOARD OF ELDERS

The Board of Elders shall consist of one member for every 50 communicant members or fraction thereof....

They shall:

- 1. Assist the pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the congregation.**
- 2. Consider complaints and grievances of members of the congregation if Matt. 18:15,16 had been fully observed, and they shall report to the congregation those complaints and grievances which cannot be otherwise adjusted, in accordance with Matt. 18:17,18.**
- 3. Make every effort to induce members who have been negligent in their attendance of services, in the use of the Sacraments, and the financial support of the church, to mend their sinful ways and fully enjoy the rights and privileges of their membership.**
- 4. See to it that all services are conducted in such a manner as to avoid needless disturbance and to foster an attitude conducive to worship among those in attendance.**
- 5. Assist the pastor in arranging for pulpit assistance, special services, and guest speakers.**
- 6. Appoint and supervise ushers.**
- 7. Assist in preparing a list of candidates when the congregation is to call a pastor or teacher.**
- 8. Be an example of Christian conduct and conversation.**
- 9. Annually review pastor's salary and other salaries.**

(The duties of the Board of Elders are duties of service (as the underlined words in #1-9 indicate). They occupy not a position of leadership to run the church (as many Elder groups have in many churches decided was their job) nor do they have the authority to run the pastor (as many Elders groups have taken upon themselves to do - feeling that the church is *their church*, and the pastor is only the temporary help), but they are placed in a position to serve the church, assist the pastor, and help tend to the temporal and eternal needs of the members for the Lord.)

Delegate to District Convention

To ensure that there is an open voice of all the congregations in the District which our churches belong to, and to give congregations and pastors equal number of votes to guard against the Districts simply being run by the clergy, in our 1991 Handbook of the North Wisconsin District: 4.09 Convention Delegates states:

- a. Voting delegates shall include one pastor from each member congregation or parish and the duly elected lay representative of each member congregation or parish. If a pastor serves two or more member congregations, these shall be considered as one parish and shall be entitled to only one lay vote.

CHAPTER 7

COMMITTING TO THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

When a Christian minister truly realizes and understands his calling to be that of a servant of our Lord Jesus, not only would he not want to lord it over his people, but also, he would be all the more desirous of establishing the Lordship of Christ and the authority of God's Word among his parishioners.⁸⁴ It is to be the joyous goal of all ministers to make the resurrected Lord known to people. In preaching the Word (1 Tim 3:2-6), and as stewards of the mysteries of God (1Cor. 4:1), we proclaim the whole Word of God (Law and Gospel), so as to lead people into willing service for our Lord.

In the same way, when the people of God, through the working of the Holy Spirit within them by means of the Word and Sacrament, come to realize and understand the calling that God has given to the Church (the Office of the Keys), as well as to that of the pastor through them, they too would be all the more desirous of establishing, proclaiming, and adhering to, the Lordship of Christ in their midst. Theirs would not be, as the Gentiles did at the time of Christ (as well as our own sinful inclination still strives for today,) to lord themselves over each other, but rather, to humble themselves and serve one another, even as Christ came to serve, not to be served.

May the pastor and the church entrusted with the Office of the Keys ever seek to lead and guide people back to the fold of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the words of Martin Luther in his 1534 sermon on Jn. 10:12-16:

He who wants to be a minister should strive with his whole heart to seek only the glory of God and the improvement of his neighbor. If this is not his sole aim but his intention is to consider his profit and loss in this office, you dare have no hope that he will stand. Either he will shamefully flee and, forsaking the sheep, run

⁸⁴ Kretzschmar, pp. 25-26.

away, or he will be silent and let the sheep go on without pasture, that is, without the Word. (W52,277 -E2,217 -SL 13a,555)⁸⁵

May our gracious and loving Lord ever bless our pastors to take heed over the flock of God, to feed them with God's Word, to watch over them with God's care, and to minister unto them to the glory of God.

⁸⁵ Plass, II, 934-935.

APPENDIX A

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

A. Authority is founded in God's Word

1. Christ rules by His Word

Matt. 28:20 "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"

Jn. 6:63 "...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"

Jn. 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"

Jn. 18:37 "...for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

2. Christ is the only true authority and head of the Church

Eph. 1:22 "And gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

3. The Gospel alone is the "Power of God unto Salvation"

Jn. 8:31 "If you continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed"

Acts 5:29 "We ought to obey God rather than men"

Acts 20:32 "I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified"

Rom. 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

1 Cor. 2:4-5 "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

1 Pet. 4:11 "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth:"

4. Authority of God's Word Alone

Is.55:11 "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please."

Rom.1:16 "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth."

B. God established the office of the ministry

1. God gave authority to the church (Royal Priesthood) All should proclaim his word

1Cor 4:1 "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

1 Peter 2:9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that we should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Rev. 1:5b-6 "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father."

Rev. 5:10 "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests:"

2. God gave the authority of the Office of the Keys

Matt. 16:18-19 "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Matt. 18:18-20 "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Matt. 28:18-19 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

John 20:21-23 "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Matt. 18:20 "Where two or three are gathered together in My name..."

3. The office of the ministry established by God Himself

Is. 55:11 "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy..."

Matt 10:5-8 "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

Matt. 28:19-20 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"

Mark 16:15 "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Luke 9:1-2 "Then he call his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick."

Jn. 20:21 "...as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

Jn. 21:15-17 "...Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these: He saith unto him, Yes, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs..."

Acts 14:23 "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."

Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Acts 26:15.16 "And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee."

Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Rom. 10:5 "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them."

Rom 10:14-15 "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

1 Cor. 4:1 "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

1 Cor. 12:29 "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?"

2 Cor. 5:18,19 "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling he world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

Eph. 4:11,12 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelist; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

1 Tim 3:1ff "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work..."

2 Tim 2:2 "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

Titus 1:5 "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee."

James 3:1 "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."

1 Pet 5:1-5 "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of god which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

New Testament Church called Ministers

Acts 1:15-26 - Choosing of Matthias

Acts 6:3-4 - Choosing of the Seven Deacons

Acts 13:1-3 - Paul and Barnabas

Acts 14:23 - Paul and Barnabas appoint Elders in churches of Southern Asia Minor

Acts 15:22-23 - Judas, Surnamed Barsabas, and Silas

Acts 20: 17,18,28 - Presbyters of Ephesus

2 Cor 8:16-19 - Sending of Titus

Titus 1:5 - Titus appoints elders for the churches on Crete

4. Office of ministry is highest office

Rom 10:14-15 "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

C. Ministry: General Sense:

1. One of Service

Matt 20:25-28 "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, 'Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Matt. 23:11-12 "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

Luke 12:42 "And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?"

1 Cor 4:1 "Let a man so account of us, as of the minister of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

1 Cor 16:15 "I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)"

2 Cor 4:5 "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

2 Tim 2:24 "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient."

Titus 1:7 "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre."

Heb 6:10 "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

2. Christ's example

Matt 20:26,28 "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister... Even as the Son of man came not be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Lk 22:27 "For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth."

Jn 13:13-15 "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

2 Cor 8:9 "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye though his poverty might be rich."

Phil 2:6-8 "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

D. Christ gave authority to his ministers

Lk 9:1 "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases."

Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

1. Pastor not a lord

Mk 10:42-44 "But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all."

Rom 12:3 "For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

1 Pet 5:2-3 "Feed the flock of God which among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

a. He does not have civil nor spiritual powers over others -not temporal power

Luke 12:14 "Who made Me a judge or a divider over you?"

Lk 22:25-26 "And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

Jn 18:36 "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

2 Cor 1:24 "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand."

2 Cor 10:4 "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal..."

Phil. 3:20 "Our citizenship is in heaven"

2 Tim 2:4 "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

b. Pastor and people are not separate rank

Matt 23:8 "...for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

1 Cor 3:21 "Therefore let no man glory in men...ye are Christ's"

Gal 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Eph 4:4-6 "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

**c. All pastors are equal
-no lordship among the disciples or clergy**

Matt. 18:3-4 "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Luke 22:25-26 "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

John 20:21 "as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

1 Cor 1:1 "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother."

1 Cor. 3:5,6 "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

Phil 2:25 "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants."

Col 4:7 "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord."

1 Pet 5:1 "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed."

d. Not business of greed

Ps. 34: 1-4 "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O

magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

1 Tim 3:2-3:8 "A bishop then must be blameless..."

1 Tim 6:5 "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

1 Pet 5:2 "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind"

2. Pastor to be a laborer for Christ

Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore...to feed the church of God..."

Rom 15:15 "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."

1 Cor 9:19 "Though I be free of all men, yet have I made myself servant..."

2 Cor 4:1,5 "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not... For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

Col 4:17 "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it."

2 Tim 2:24 "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient"

3. Pastors are Christ's Ambassadors

Matt 10:2-8 - Twelve Disciples sent out

Matt 10:19-20 "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

Matt 28:18-20 "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..."

Mk 16:15 "And said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Mk 16:20 "And they went forth and preached everywhere..."

Lk 9:1-10 - Twelve Disciples sent out

Lk 10:16 "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."

Jn 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Jn 20:21-23 "...as my Father has sent me, even so send I you..."

Jn 21:15-17 "...Feed my lambs..."

Acts 13:2-4 "...Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them... So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia..."

2 Cor 4:5 "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus our Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

2 Cor 5:20 "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ..."

Pastor to speak God's Word

1 Cor 2:13 "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

1 Cor 15:3 "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received..."

2 Cor 5:18-20 "And all things are of God, who...hath given us the ministry of reconciliation."

Gal 1:10,11 "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me was not after man."

2 Tim 4:1-5 "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of the evangelist, make full proof of the ministry."

1 Pet 4:11 "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

4. Pastors are worthy of honor and obedience

Dan 12:3 "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Lk 10:16 "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me..."

1 Thess 5:12-13 "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake..."

1 Tim 5:17 "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."

5. Pastor's Sufficiency comes from God

Lk 21:15 "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."

Jn 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost,...he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

1 Cor 3:5-7 "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

1 Cor 15:10 "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

2 Cor 3:4-6 "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

6. Pastors and Church have no authority away from the Word -Authority of Word, not Papacy, Clergy, or Traditions

Deut 4:2 "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."

Matt 23:8 "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

Luke 10:16 "He that heareth you heareth Me"

1 Cor. 9:14 "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel, ."

Gal 1:8 "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

Col 2:8 "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"

Col 2:16-23 "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days..."

Titus1:14 "Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth."

Heb.13:17 "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves..."

7. Anything contrary to Scripture should not be obeyed -no authority to change God's Word

Matt 7:15 "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenging wolves."

Acts 5:29 "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."

Rom 16:17 "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

2 Cor 13:8-10 "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth..."

Gal. 1:8,9 "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that we have received, let him be accursed."

8. Pastors have no authority to ensnare consciences

Acts 15:10 "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

Rom 14:17 "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Gal 5:1 "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

APPENDIX B

(CONFESSIONAL REFERENCES)

A. Christ is the only true authority and head of the Church

Apol., Art. VII and VIII, Triglot, p.227 "This Church alone is called *the body of Christ*, which Christ renews [Christ is its Head, and] sanctifies and governs by His Spirit as Paul testifies, Eph. 1,22sq., when he says: *And gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.*"

S.A., Part II, Art IV, 1, Triglot, p.471. "The Pope is not, according to divine law or according to the Word of God the head of all Christendom (for this [name] belongs to One only, whose name is Jesus Christ),"

S.A., Part II, Art IV, 9, Triglot, p.473 "Therefore the Church can never be better governed and preserved than if we all live under one head, Christ, and all the bishops, equal in office (although they be unequal in gifts), be diligently joined in unity of doctrine, faith, Sacraments, prayer, and works of love..."

B. Authority of God's Word Alone

Apol. Art. XIII, 11, Triglot, p.311. "...the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises, Rom. 1,16: The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. Likewise, Is.55,11: So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please."

Apol. Art. XXVIII, 14, Triglot, p.447. "And they have the Word, they have the command, how far they ought to exercise jurisdiction, namely, if any one would do anything contrary to that Word which they have received from Christ. [For the Gospel does not set up rule independently of the Gospel.]"

S.A., Part II, Art. II, 15, Triglot, p.467. "The rule is: The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel."

C. God established the office of the ministry

A.C., Art. V, Triglot, p. 45. "That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. . ."

**God gave authority to the church (Royal Priesthood)
All should proclaim His word**

A.C., Art. XXVIII, Triglot, p. 85. "The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the sacraments."

God gave the authority of the Office of the Keys

A.C. Art.V, Triglot,p.45. "That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel."

A.C. Art.XXVIII,5-11,21, Triglot,p.85. "...the power of the Keys, or the power of bishops, according to the Gospel, is a power or commandment of God, to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer Sacraments...This power is exercised only by teaching or preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments, according to their calling, either to many or to individuals...These things cannot come but by the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments...Again, according to the Gospel, or, as they say, by divine right, there belongs to the bishops as bishops, that is, to those to whom has been committed the ministry of the word and the Sacraments, not jurisdiction except to forgive sins, to judge doctrine, to reject doctrines contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the communion of the Church wicked men..."

Apol. XIII, 7-13, Triglot,p.311. "The adversaries understand priesthood not of the ministry of the Word, and administrating the Sacraments to others, but they understand it as referring to sacrifice; as though in the New Testament there ought to be a priesthood like the Levitical, to sacrifice for the people, and merit the remission of sins for others."

Apol. XXVII, 13-16, Triglot, p.447. "We are pleased with the ancient division of power into power of the order and power of jurisdiction [that is, the administration of the Sacraments and the exercise of spiritual jurisdiction]. Therefore the bishop has the power of the order, i.e., the ministry of the Word and Sacraments; he has also the power of jurisdiction, i.e., the authority to excommunicate those guilty of open crimes, and again to absolve them if they are converted and seek absolution. But their power is not to be tyrannical, i.e. above law; but they have a fixed command and a fixed Word of God, according to which they ought to exercise their jurisdiction."

S.A., Part III, Art. VII, Triglot, p. 493. "The keys are an office and power given by Christ to the Church for the binding and loosing sin. . ."

S.A., Of the Power, 24, Triglot, p. 511. ". . . it is necessary to acknowledge that the keys belong not to the person of one particular man, but to the Church. . ."

S.A., Of the Power,67, Triglot, p.523. "For wherever the Church is, there is the authority [command] to administer the Gospel. Therefore it is necessary for the Church to retain the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers. And this authority is a gift which in reality is given to the Church, which no human power can wrest from the Church..."

S.A., Of the Power, 69, Triglot, p.523. "Here belong the statements of Christ which testify that the keys have been given to the Church, and not merely to certain persons, Matt. 18,20: *Where two or three are gathered together in My name...*"

The office of the ministry established by God Himself

A.C. Art.V, Triglot, p.45. "That we obtain this faith, *the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted...*"

A.C. Art. XIV, Triglot, p.49. "*Of Ecclesiastical Order* they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called."

Apol. XIII, 7-13, Triglot, p.311. "For the Church has the command to appoint ministers... because we know that God approves this ministry, and is present in the ministry [that God will preach and work through men and those who have been chosen by men]."

Apol. XIV, 24, Triglot, p.315. "...in the Church the administration of the Sacraments and Word ought to be allowed no one unless he be rightly called."

Small Catechism, I. 3rd Commandment, Triglot, p.541. "...that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."

Apol., Art. XIII, 11, Triglot, p.311. "For the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises."

-office of ministry is highest office

A.C. Art. XXV,3, Triglot, p.69. "Our people are taught that they should highly prize the absolution, as being the voice of God, and pronounced by God's command."

Apol., XIII, 13, Triglot, p.311. "And it is of advantage, so far as can be done, to adorn the ministry of the Word with every kind of praise against fanatical men, who dream that the Holy Ghost is given not through the Word, but because of certain preparations of their own..."

Apol., XV, 42, Triglot, p.327. "For the ministry is the highest office in the Church. Now, if this worship is omitted, how can there be knowledge of God, the doctrine of Christ, or the Gospel? But the chief service of God is to teach the Gospel."

Ministry: General Sense: One of Service

Christ's example

D. Christ gave authority to his ministers

1. Pastors and Bishops not lords

A.C., Art. XXVIII, 76, Triglot, p.95. "Peter, 1 Pet.5,3, forbids bishops to be lords, and to rule over the churches."

a. He does not have civil nor spiritual powers over others -not temporal power

A.C., Art. XXVIII, 10,18, Triglot, p.85. "Therefore, since the power of the Church grants eternal things, and is exercised only by the ministry of the Word, it does not interfere with civil government...For civil government deals with other things than does the Gospel...Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the Commonwealth. As Christ says, John 18,36: My kingdom is not of this world; also Luke 12,14: Who made Me a judge or a divider over you? Paul also says, Phil. 3,20: Our citizenship is in heaven; 2 Cor. 10,4: The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations.

After this manner our teachers discriminate between the duties of both these powers, and command that both be honored and acknowledged as gifts and blessings of God."

S.A., Of the Power, 31, Triglot, p.513. "Christ gave to the apostles only spiritual power, i.e., the command to teach the Gospel, to announce the forgiveness of sins, to administer the Sacraments, to excommunicate the godless without bodily force [by the Word], and that He did not give the power of the sword, or the right to establish, occupy, or confer kingdoms of the world [to set up or dispose kings]." (C.f., S.A., Of the Power, 60-61,67,69-70)

b. All pastors are equal -no lordship among the disciples or clergy

S.A., Of the Power, 8-11, Triglot, p.505-7. "I. Luke 22,25. Christ expressly prohibits lordship among the apostles [that no apostle should have any supremacy over the rest]...Christ reproves this error of the apostles, and teaches that there shall not be lordship or superiority among them, but that the apostles should be sent forth as equals to the common ministry of the Gospel.

II. Matt. 18,2. The same is taught by the parable when Christ in the same dispute concerning the kingdom places a little child in the midst, signifying that among ministers there is not to be sovereignty, just as a child neither takes nor seeks sovereignty for himself.

III. John 20,21. Christ sends forth His disciples on an equality, without distinction [so that no one of them was to have more or less power than any other].

IV. Gal. 2,7f. "St.Paul manifestly affirms that he was neither ordained nor confirmed [and endorsed] by Peter, nor does he acknowledge Peter to be one from whom confirmation should be sought. And he expressly contends concerning this point that his call does not depend upon the authority of Peter...

V. "In 1 Cor. 3,6, Paul makes ministers equal, and teaches that the Church is above the ministers. Hence superiority or lordship over the Church or the rest of the ministers is not ascribed to Peter [in preference to other apostles]. For he says thus: *All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, i.e.*, let neither the other ministers nor Peter assume for themselves lordship or superiority over the Church; let them not burden the Church with traditions; let not the authority of any avail more than the Word [of God]; let not the authority of Cephas be opposed to the authority of the other apostles, as they reasoned at that time: "Cephas, who is an apostle of higher rank, observes this; therefore, both Paul and the rest ought to observe this." Paul removes this pretext from Peter, and denies [Not so, says Paul, and makes Peter doff his little hat, namely, the claim] that his authority is to be preferred to the rest or to the Church."

S.A., Part II, 9, Triglot, p.473. "The Church can never be better governed and preserved than if we all live under one head, Christ, and all the bishops, equal in office."

2. Pastors and Church have no authority away from the Word -Authority of Word, not Papacy, Clergy, or Traditions

A.C., Art. XV Of Ecc. Usages 2,3, Triglot, p.49. "Nevertheless, concerning such things men are admonished that consciences are not to be burdened, as though such observance was necessary to salvation.

They are admonished also that human traditions instituted to propitiate God, to merit grace, and to make satisfaction for sins, are opposed to the Gospel and the doctrine of faith..."

A.C. Art. XXVIII, 30-34, Triglot, p.87. "But concerning this question it is taught on our part...that bishops have no power to decree anything against the Gospel, The Canonical Laws teach the same thing (Dist. IX). Now, it is against the Scripture to establish or require the observance of any traditions, to the end that by such observance we may make satisfaction for sins, or merit grace and righteousness."

A.C. Art. XXVII, 45, Triglot, p.89. "Paul says, Col. 2,16-23: *Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not: taste not: handle not, with all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of men?...* Also in Titus 1,14

he openly forbids traditions: *Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth.*"

Apol., Art. VII and VIII, 28, Triglot, p.237. "When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the Sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ. Those words of Christ teach us not to be offended by the unworthiness of the minister."

Apol. Art XXVIII, 18, Triglot, p.449. "...the expression Luke 10,16: He that heareth you heareth Me, does not speak of traditions, but is chiefly directed against traditions. For it is not a *mandatum cum libera* (a bestowal of unlimited authority), as they call it, but it is a *cautio de rato* (a caution concerning something prescribed), namely, concerning the special command [not a free, unlimited order and power, but a limited order, namely, not to preach their own word, but God's Word and the Gospel]...the Word delivered by men is efficacious, and that no other word from heaven ought to be sought."

Apol. Art. XXVIII, 19,20, Triglot, p.449. "Heb. 13,17: Obey them that have the rule over you, This passage requires obedience to the Gospel. For it does not establish a dominion for the bishops apart from the Gospel."

S.A. Part II, Art. IV, 12, Triglot, p.475. "The Pope, however, prohibits this faith, saying that to be saved a person must obey him. This we are unwilling to do, even though on this account we must die in God's name."

S.A., Of the Power,11, Triglot, p.507. "Let neither the other ministers nor Peter assume for themselves lordship or superiority over the Church; let them not burden the Church with traditions; let not the authority of any avail more than the Word [of God]; let not the authority of Cephas be opposed to the authority of the other apostles, as they reasoned at that time: "Cephas, who is an apostle of higher rank, observes this; therefore, both Paul and the rest ought to observe this."

Small Catechism, Table of Duties, Triglot, p.561. "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9,14."

Apol. XXVIII, 18,21, Triglot, p.449. "Neither should the bishops frame traditions contrary to the Gospel, or interpret their traditions contrary to the Gospel..."

3. Anything contrary to Scripture should not be obeyed -no authority to change God's Word

A.C., Art. XXVIII, 23, Triglot, p.87. "But when they teach or ordain anything against the Gospel, then the congregations have a commandment of God prohibiting obedience, Matt. 7,15: Beware of false prophets; Gal. 1,8: Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed; 2 Cor. 13,8: We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. Also: The power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction."

Apol., Art.XXVIII, 20,21, Triglot, p.447. "Neither should the bishops frame traditions contrary to the Gospel, or interpret their traditions contrary to the Gospel. And when they do this, obedience is prohibited, according to Gal. 1,9: *If any man preach any other gospel, let him be accursed.*

We make the same reply to Matt. 23,3: *Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe,* because evidently a universal command is not given that we should receive all things [even contrary to God's command and Word], since Scripture elsewhere, Acts 5,29, bids us *obey God rather than men.*"

Apol. Art.XXVIII, 18,21, Triglot, p.449. "Neither should the bishops frame traditions contrary to the Gospel, or interpret their traditions contrary to the Gospel..."

4. Pastors have no authority to ensnare consciences

A.C., Art. XV, 1, Triglot, p.49. "*Of Usages in the Church* they teach that those ought to be observed which may be observed without sin, and which are profitable unto tranquillity and good order in the Church.

Nevertheless, concerning such things men are admonished that consciences are not to be burdened, as though such observance was necessary to salvation..."

(E.f.,Apol.Art.XXVIII,15,Triglot,p.447) (E.f., F.C., Epitome X. Of Church Rites, Triglot, pp.829-831)

APPENDIX C

DIPLOMA OF VOCATION

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

To Rev. Martin E. Koeller, Pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church,
St. Peter, Illinois

Having called on the Lord, our God, for guidance and in the exercise of the authority with which He has vested His church on earth, we, the members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church of Kingsford, Michigan 49801, in lawful meeting on August 29, 1991, have elected you to the office of Pastor and herewith extend to you this formal notification of your solemn call.

In the name of the Triune God and by His authority we ask you to assume the responsibilities of the office to which we have called you and to faithfully perform all the duties of your office according to the Word of God and the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as drawn from the Sacred Scriptures and found in the Book of Concord. We ask you to do this according to the needs as specified in the accompanying document or as may be resolved and mutually agreed upon from time to time. To the end that you may be enabled to do this, we pledge you our wholehearted and continuing cooperation and support in word and deed and in our prayers to God in your behalf.

We pray God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has moved us to extend our call to you, to convince you by His Holy Spirit that it comes from Him; to induce you to accept it; to conduct you safely to your field of labor; and to bless your ministrations to the glory of His holy name, the building of His church, the temporal and eternal welfare of many people, and your own great joy and blessing.

APPENDIX D

***Supplement* to the Diploma of Vocation: PASTORS**

We authorize and obligate our called minister:

To administer to us the Word of God in its full truth and purity as contained in the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament and as set forth in the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as found in the Book of Concord;

To administer the holy sacraments in accordance with their divine institution;

To perform the functions of a pastor in an evangelical manner; to aid, counsel, and guide members of all ages and social conditions; to visit the sick and the dying; to admonish the indifferent and the erring;

To guard and promote faithfully the spiritual welfare of the members of this congregation, in particular to instruct the catechumens, both children and adults, in the Word of God and thus prepare them for communicant membership in the church;

To guide the congregation in applying the divinely ordained discipline of the church agreeably to the Word of God;

To promote and guide the mission activity of the congregation as it is related to the local community and to District and synodical endeavors, in particular to train workers and guide them in evangelism activities and to enlist the support of the congregation for mission work generally;

To assist the congregation in adopting administrative policies and procedures which will help it carry out the mission of a Christian congregation;

To serve the congregation as an example of Christian conduct, to endeavor earnestly to live in brotherly unity with members of the congregation and fellow workers and sister congregations in the District and the Synod, and by the grace of God to do everything possible within the sphere of his calling toward the edification of the congregation and the up-building of the church in Christ, both locally and generally.

We obligate ourselves:

To receive our minister-elect as a servant of Jesus Christ, to give him the honor and love and obedience which the Word of God prescribes, to aid him by word and deed, and to support him with our diligent, faithful assistance and prayers;

To make faithful and regular use of the means of grace that God's enabling power may have free course among us to the end that we may carry out our God-given ministry to the service and glory of God and the welfare of all;

To provide for his proper maintenance according to our ability and review his salary, housing arrangements, and all allowances periodically;

APPENDIX E

C.F.W. WALTHER'S THESES ON THE MINISTRY

THESIS I

The holy ministry, or the pastoral office, is an office distinct from the priestly office, which belongs to all believers.

THESIS II

The ministry, or the pastoral office, is not a human ordinance, but an office established by God Himself.

THESIS III

The ministry of preaching is not an arbitrary office, but its character is such that the Church has been commanded to establish it and is ordinarily bound to it till the end of days.

THESIS IV

The ministry of preaching is not a peculiar order, set up over and against the common estate of Christians, and holier than the latter, like the priesthood of the Levites, but it is an office of service.

THESIS V

The ministry of preaching has the authority to preach the Gospel and to administer the sacraments and the authority of a spiritual tribunal.

THESIS VI

The ministry of preaching is conferred by God through the congregation, as holder of all church power, or of the keys, and by its call, as prescribed by God. The ordination of those called, with the laying on of hands, is not by divine institution, but is an apostolic church ordinance and merely a public, solemn confirmation of the call.

THESIS VII

The holy ministry is the authority conferred by God through the congregation, as holder of the priesthood and of all church power, to administer in public office the common rights of the spiritual priesthood in behalf of all.

THESIS VIII

The ministry is the highest office in the Church, from which, as its stem, all other offices of the Church issue.

THESIS IX

Reverence and unconditional obedience is due to the ministry of preaching when the preacher is ministering the Word of God. However, the preacher may not dominate over the Church; he has, accordingly, no right to make new laws, to arrange indifferent matters and ceremonies arbitrarily, and to impose and execute excommunication alone, without a previous verdict of the entire congregation.

THESIS X

According to divine right the function of passing judgment on doctrine belongs indeed to the ministry of preaching. However, also the laymen have the right, and for this reason they also have a seat and vote with the preachers in church courts and councils.

(Wm Dallmann, ed., Walther and the Church, (St.Louis: CPH,1938). pp. 71-85.

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