

# The Church's Ministry

C.F.W. Walther

## *Translator's Preface*

For almost 50 years, C. F. W. Walther was the leading voice of confessional Lutheranism in America. The influence of Walther, “the American Luther,” was felt around the globe through his writings and synodical publications. He shaped generations of Lutheran pastors inside and outside of the Missouri Synod. This leader and theologian, however, left no dogmatics book from his own pen. The closest Walther came to doing so was in 1879 when he published a new edition of Johann Wilhelm Baier’s *Compendium Theologiae Positivae* for use as his dogmatics textbook at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Walther took the concise summary theses of Baier and annotated them with German and Latin quotations from sixteenth and seventeenth century Lutheran dogmaticians. At times Walther included quotes from more recent Lutherans. While Walther’s comments are seldom included in the three volumes he published, these quotations provide a window into his classroom since he used them as illustrations in his teaching. In 1899 one of his students, Theodore Buenger, published an additional volume of indices with a section of Baier’s statements which Walther did not approve. Some of these “corrections” reference Walther’s classroom lectures. Throughout the *Compendium* Walther leads the reader to see not merely what Lutherans have written, but how they have answered the challenges of their day with God’s Word. Every quotation was chosen by Walther and merits attention. The translation presented here is volume three, chapter fourteen, *De Ministerio Ecclesiastico* from J. W. Baier, *Compendium Theologiae Positivae*, edited and annotated by C. F. W. Walther, St. Louis: Luth. Concordia-Verlag., 1879. This edition from Walther was based on Baier’s own third edition, *Compendium Theologiae Positivae*, Jena: Oehrling, 1694.

A few comments about this translation are in order. Although some classic Lutheran works are now in English, everything within this chapter has been freshly translated. (“Plow with your own heifer” remains timeless advice.) This includes statements from the Lutheran Confessions, Luther, and Chemnitz. For the Lutheran Confessions, the *Concordia Triglotta* references are listed for cross-reference purposes. The American Edition of Luther’s Works (LW) and the English translation of Martin Chemnitz’s *Examination of the Council of Trent* (CPH Kramer) are also noted where appropriate.

Occasionally Walther inserts a comment before or within a quotation. All quotations have been enclosed by quotation marks, and Walther’s comments are placed outside of the quotation marks. This follows the 1879 edition of Baier-Walther, as the italics within the translation also do. Additions by the translator have been indicated with brackets [ ] where necessary. The paragraph headings were created by the translator. They serve as a brief summary of each section and are listed on the contents page.

I would like to thank my fellow seminarians Nathaniel Biebert and Benjamin Foxen for their help with over a quarter of the initial translation work. It was my pleasure to work with these gifted brothers “as iron sharpens iron” (Prov 27:17). I am also grateful to Professor Joel Fredrich of Martin Luther College and Professor John Brug of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Both men helped in the review process. They opened my eyes to understand certain terms and a few of the more difficult sections within the translation. Any deficiencies, however, rest solely with my translating and editing. I pray this work will lead the reader to seek out the sources and, above all, soak in the scriptural theology of our Lutheran heritage. *Soli Deo Gloria!*

*Benjamin P. Schaefer, trans.*

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## § 1. *The Necessity of the Ministry*

It is necessary for the **a)** gathering and preservation of the church that certain human beings perform the office<sup>a</sup> of preaching the Word and administering the sacraments, **b)** so that faith is conferred on humans through these means and, once given, is strengthened and increased. This is **c)** that office which is called the *church's ministry*.

**a)** Surely *God is able without means* to illumine humans anywhere and to confer faith on them, to maintain and to strengthen the faith which has been given. But *it pleased* him to prescribe an *order*, a *means*, and a use of these means for the purpose of acquiring faith by his grace. Therefore he willed that the revelation, which was made to a few directly, is not only offered and publicized to many by the ministry of these and others who would follow after them, but he also willed that those things, which we must believe and do, are declared and instilled, set forth according to the capacity and station of various people, and established and defended from corruptions. From this especially, the necessity of the church's ministry is also easily recognized because the doctrine of faith exceeds the capacity of human reason and ought to be learned from Holy Scripture alone; although the light of reason teaches in a certain manner the necessity of entrusting the holy office to certain persons, and heathens to some degree recognize [this fact]. Confer the sainted Musaeus *A Refutation of the Writings from Certain Sects*, p. 54, 66. In addition, his "Tract on the Church," Part II, Disputation I, §. 36, p. 16, 17.

LUTHER: "Here it is remarkable to note, although *God* speaks with Paul from heaven, thus he *certainly does not want to abolish the preaching office, nor does he want to make someone an isolated individual, but directs Paul into the city to the pulpit or clergyman. There he should hear and learn what there is to learn.* God wills that we should go in and hear the gospel from those who preach. There one should find it, *and nowhere else...* Therefore Paul comes to the knowledge of Christ and of the Word through Ananias. He must receive his light from the little match Ananias, who didn't compare with Paul and was like a candle to the sun. Such is noteworthy in this history, that we might learn to think highly of the preaching office. For here it stands loud and clear, that Paul, the great teacher, received his understanding through the little teacher, Ananias." (*House Postil*, "The Festival of the Conversion of Paul," Walch Edition, Book XIII, p. 2528ff.)

LUTHER: "Where the preaching office remains, a few will still endure among the multitude, who properly submit to it or still come toward it. But if they lose the pulpit, it will do little good, even if one or more could read the Scriptures for themselves alone and imagine that they don't need any preaching." (*Church Postil*, Epistle Section, 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity. Book XII, p. 1218)

LUTHER: "Indeed, many come out and say: 'Why do we need more pastors and preachers? Couldn't we just read [the Word] at home?' So, they go out and they don't even read the Word at home. Or when they do in fact read it at home, thus *it is still not so fruitful, nor so powerful, as the Word is through public preaching and the mouth of the preacher*, whom God has called there and arranged it that he should preach and teach the Word to you." (*House Postil*, 8<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity. XIII, p. 1816-17)

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<sup>a</sup> The Latin term *officium* and its synonym *munus* will be translated with the terms "office" and "duty, function," as appropriate to context. The office is a combination of duties and attributes, which have been established by God. The office itself is not a concrete entity, but an abstraction. It is truly a concept in the mind of God and Holy Scripture, but Christ entrusts the office through his church to suitable individuals. They are the concrete entities. Throughout this section of Baier-Walther, there is no attempt to establish dogmatically one form of the ministry. A number of forms (Latin: *gradus*) and duties (*officia*) are listed, especially in quotations from Luther. This chapter supports the view that Walther's doctrine of the church's ministry agrees with the public doctrine of the WELS.

LUTHER: “I would like to further explain the term ‘the daily offering’ (Dan 12:11) in a spiritual manner: it is the holy gospel, which must remain together with the believers and the church until the end of the world. Yet it could happen that the world will become so completely Epicurean that there will be no public pulpit in all the world and the public speech will be an empty, epicurean abomination—but the gospel would be preserved in homes only by the head of the house. This would be like the time between the words of Christ on the cross: ‘It is finished’ and ‘Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.’ For just as Christ, after such completion, still would live a little longer, so also the church could remain for a little bit after the public silencing of the Gospel. And as the Jews’ daily offering was done away with in the seventh week by the Apostolic Council and still remained until the destruction of Jerusalem and was even observed by the apostles themselves, when they wanted (though without necessity), so also the Gospel could be dead and silent from the pulpit and still would be preserved by pious Christians in their homes. But such distress should not last longer than 1290 days, that is, three and a half years. For without public preaching faith cannot exist for long, because even at this time the world becomes more evil in a year.” (Preface to the Prophet Daniel. VI, p. 1487ff.)

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L. HARTMANN: “The term ‘*the Ministry*’ can be used in two ways: 1) *abstractly*, it refers to the station itself, namely the very office subject to Christian reflection. This is the way the Augsburg Confession presents it in article 5, *Concerning the Ministry*; 2) *concretely*, it refers to the persons, who are engaged in this holy office. This is the way article 14 of the Augsburg Confession presents this theme, namely that no one ought to teach publicly in the church or to administer the sacraments unless he is legitimately called.” (*Pastorale Evangel.*, p. 25) [Editor’s Note: Notice that the *Compendium* recognizes both the abstract and concrete use of the term ministry. Note especially the understanding of AC V.]

AUGSBURG CONFESSION: “*The ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted* that we may obtain this faith. For through the Word and the sacraments as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given. He works faith, when and where it pleases God, in those who hear the Gospel. That is to say that God, not on account of our merit, but on account of Christ, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace on account of Christ. They condemn the Anabaptists and others who think that the Holy Spirit comes to men without the external Word through their own preparations and works.” (*Triglotta* p. 45, Art. 5, para. 1-4)

B. MENTZER: “This fifth article [of the AC] was taken from the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter within those 17 [Torgau Articles], in which Dr. Luther embraced the Christian doctrine not much before the Augsburg assembly. His words are in Book 5 Jena Edition (folio 15, p.1, edit.a.75): ‘To obtain such faith or to give it to us men, God has established *the preaching office or spoken Word*, namely the gospel, through which he allows such faith and his power, advantage, and fruit to be proclaimed, and gives also through the same, as through means, faith with his Holy Spirit, how and where he wants. Apart from it, there is no other means or method, neither road nor path, to obtain faith. Therefore, any thoughts outside of and previous to the spoken Word, no matter how holy or good they appear, are still empty lies and errors.’” (*Interpretation of the Augsburg Confession*, Ed. 3, p. 221ff.)

FORMULA OF CONCORD: “God is pleased to call humans to eternal salvation, to draw them to himself, to convert, to regenerate and to sanctify through this means and in no other way, namely, through his holy Word when it is preached or read and through the legitimate use of the sacraments.” (*Triglotta* p. 901, Art. 2, para. 50)

FORMULA OF CONCORD: “We also condemn the Schwenkfeldian errors, which teach: ... 2. That the *church’s ministry, that is, the preached and heard Word of God*, [Editor’s Note: “Ministry here is clearly the means of grace itself] is not a means or an instrument, by which God the Holy Spirit teaches men and through which he gives to them the true knowledge of Christ.” (*Triglotta* p. 1101, Art. 12, para. 28, 30)

GERHARD: “The fact that Romans 10:17 says ‘faith comes *from hearing*,’ is not to be understood exclusively, that the hearing of the preached word is opposed to the reading of the written word. But we must understand this inclusively, that God has established as effective for faith and salvation not only the Word heard but also *read*, since the same is and remains the Word whether it is preached or heard, whether it is written or read. Consequently, John notably says regarding the gospel history that has been put in writing, and therefore, regarding the whole Old and New Testaments: ‘These things are written, that you may believe,’ (Jn 20:31), and ‘We write these things to you that your joy may be complete,’ (1 Jn 1:14). Therefore, it is also possible to draw out faith and spiritual joy and consequently, eternal life, from the *written* Word of God translated for our use in *reading* and *meditation*.” (“Exegetical Locus on Holy Scripture”, §. 364)

**b)** Namely it is *in their use* that they are established as those means of salvation. The seed of the word is sowed in the field of the church. Baptism (also known as the sacrament of initiation) produces spiritual children of Christ in the church, and the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ is given to more full-grown children for the strengthening of faith and spiritual nourishment of the soul. Cf. Musaeus “On the Church,” loc. cit.

**c)** Thus the apostolic office is called *διακονία* (Acts 1:17; 6:4; 20:19; Rom 11:13; 2 Cor 3:8, 9). Paul also calls others *ὑπερέτα Χριστοῦ καὶ οἰκονόμου μυστηρίων θεοῦ* (1 Cor 4:1). Elsewhere he calls himself *δοῦλον Χριστοῦ* (Tit 1:1).

SMALCALD ARTICLES: “In 1 Corinthians 3:6 Paul makes all church servants equal and teaches that the church is above the servants (*ecclesiam esse supra ministros*). Therefore one cannot say with any truth that Peter would have had sole superiority or power over the church and all other church servants before the other apostles. For he spoke in this way: ‘All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas,’ that is, *may neither Peter nor other servants of the Word assign to themselves sole power or superiority over the church*.” (“Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope,” *Triglotta* p. 507)

APOLOGY TO THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION: “Gabriel [Biel] lists among other reasons why both forms are not given to the laymen also this: it is necessary that there is a difference between the priests and the laymen. And I understand well that the greatest and foremost reason why they hold this so firmly today is that the priestly station would appear holier compared with the station of the layman. This is merely a human design and where it comes from is easy to see.” (*Triglotta* p. 359, Art. 22)

APOLOGY TO THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION: “Thus *liturgia* in Greek is really an *office* within which one *serves* the congregation. This fits well with our teaching that the priest, as a community servant, serves those who want to commune and administers the holy Sacrament.” (*Triglotta* p. 413, Art. 24)

GRAUER: “The church order is called the *ministry* because it is not some civil lordship, as the popes falsely imagine. For Christ expressly prohibits lordship for servants of the church (Lk 22:26). Nowhere in Holy Scripture are they called lords of the church, but watchmen, planters, water-ers, *servants* etc. Each and every one of these titles indicates that the duty of this class is not to rule in the church but to

serve. Accordingly it is also called the church's ministry." ("Preface on the Augsburg Confession," Ed.IV, p. 1138)

DANNHAUER: "Pastors are not purchased slaves but *servants* of the church, not only of God (1 Cor 3:5; Col 1:25). They are teachers of individuals, yet servants of the community, to whom we must give the final right of judgment." (*Hodosoph. Phaenom.* II, p. 79)

DANNHAUER: "All *ecclesiastical* power is instrumental and a servant for the whole community (2 Cor 4:5; Col 1:25; Rom 13:4). Certainly, a *magistrate* is a *servant* of God, but not in the same way of the community." (*Hodosoph. Phaenom.* II, p. 71)

H. BARNER: "Because not all have a divine call (they were not summoned to it or called), all do not hold publicly the teaching office in the public ministry. *There we must differentiate between estate and office, inter statum et officium.* To the *office* belongs a particular calling, *specialis vocatio.* The office must be commissioned and entrusted. But to the *estate* [the same does] not [apply]... All sons of the high priest were part of the high priestly class according to their birth, but only one was the high priest according to *office* Tom.7 f.346." (Summary of the New Man, approved by the theological faculty at Wittenberg, 1659. L.2 c.20. p. 379)

LUTHER: "Thus also a prophet is a higher position than the *position* of John, although the *function* of John is greater and more near at hand." (*Church Postil*, XI, p. 145)

GRAUER: "Our pastors are incorrectly called priests, because there is not an external sacrifice among us. Where there is not an external sacrifice, properly mentioned in this way, there are no priests. The custom indeed continues in our churches that preachers are called 'priests,' but improperly, since today in the New Testament no external sacrifice is held." (Grauer "Renewed, that is, Preface on the Augsburg Confession." Ed. IV, p. 763)

LUTHER: "For this reason also the Holy Spirit in the New Testament diligently prevented the name *sacerdos*, priest or cleric, from being given to any apostle or to various other offices, but it is solely the name of the baptized or of Christians as a hereditary name with which one is born through baptism. For none of us is born through baptism as an apostle, preacher, teacher, or pastor, but we are all born simply as priests and clerics. Afterward, some are taken from the ranks of those born clerics and called or elected to these offices, which they are to discharge *on behalf of all of us*... However, one should, I think, excuse the fathers for the fact that they called those who had been set apart *sacerdotes* [priests] and that the name thus became common usage, and for many other matters. If their consecration and ordination had been retained, then the name would have done no damage, for they set apart *pastors*. But the Abomination retained the name, because it was so glorious, and abandoned the fathers' consecration. In exchange for it, it set up its private consecration and thereby disgracefully devastated and destroyed our true priesthood and baptism." ("The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" XIX. p.1536ff.) [LW vol. 38, p. 188-189]

LUTHER: "It is pure invention that pope, bishop, priests, and monks are called the spiritual estate while princes, lords, artisans, and farmers are called the temporal estate. This is truly a piece of deceit and hypocrisy. Yet no one need be intimidated by it because of this reason: all Christians are truly of the spiritual estate, and there is no difference among them except that of office... *Therefore, when a bishop consecrates it is nothing else than that, in the place and stead of the whole community all of whom have like power, he takes a person and charges him to exercise this power on behalf of the others. It is like ten brothers, all king's sons and equal heirs, choosing one of them to rule the inheritance in the interests*

of all. In one sense they are all kings and of equal power, and yet one of them is charged with the responsibility of ruling. To put it still more clearly: suppose a group of earnest Christian laymen were taken prisoner and set down in a desert without a priest among them ordained by a bishop. And suppose they were to come to a common mind then and there in the desert and elect one of their number, whether he were married or not, and commit to him the duty to baptize, say mass, pronounce absolution, and preach the gospel. Such a man would be as truly a priest as if he had been ordained by all the bishops and popes in the world. *That is why in a case of necessity anyone can baptize and give absolution. This would be impossible if we were not all priests.* (“To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation,” 1520. X, p. 302ff.) [LW 44:127]

## § 2. *The Creator of the Ministry*

The **a)** main effecting cause of the church’s ministry, both **b)** in itself and **c)** by reason of the ministers who perform it is **d)** God, **e)** the Triune God, and **f)** Christ θεάνθρωπῶ [God-man].

**a)** The main effecting cause is the one to whom sufficient power or strength belongs for *establishing* the ministry and *committing* it to certain people and also for bestowing a good result or *producing* spiritual fruit through it.

**b)** To be sure, there is an *estate* of ministers, instituted and set apart with a sure rationale. In this respect [“ministry”] is viewed *abstractly*.

**c)** Or as far as it is considered *concretely* from the side of humans by whom this office ought to be performed and conducted.

**d)** For it belongs to him who is the *Author of Grace* to set apart *the office*, by which the means of grace are applied to humans. At this point we bear in mind 1) that God *revealed* what things pertain to carrying out this ministry rightly, for example, what we must preach as doctrine (Gal 1:8,9,12), what things are suitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting morals and training (2 Tim 3:14ff.), what things are *sacraments*, and how they are to be administered (1 Cor 11:23, etc.); and 2) that God *gives* this office to *particular* persons or sends humans for the purpose of performing it (see Ps 68:12; Matt 9:38; Lk 10:2), which they sometimes label as a *calling* (according to Rom 1:1 and Heb 5:4); and 3) that it agrees with the actions of servants (1 Cor 3:5ff.).

APOLOGY OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION: “God has established and commanded the preaching office and it has God’s glorious promise (Rom 1:16), ‘The Gospel is the power of God to all who believe’ etc. and (Is 55:11), ‘The Word which goes out from my mouth shall not return to me empty, but it shall do what pleases me.’ If someone wants to understand the sacrament of ordination in this way, then we may also call the laying on of hands a sacrament. For the church has God’s command that it should establish preachers and *diaconos* [servants]. This is now very comforting that we know God wants to preach and work through men, the same ones who were elected by men. Thus it is good that one should highly praise and honor this election, especially against the devilish Anabaptists, who despise and slander such an election together with the preaching office and the spoken Word.” (*Triglotta* p. 311, Art. XIII, para. 12, 13)

SMALCALD ARTICLES: “Because Paul clearly testifies that he did not want to seek out Peter that he would grant him permission to preach, even when he at last came to Peter, we have a genuine teaching that the preaching office proceeds from the general call of the apostles and that it is not necessary for all to have the call or confirmation of this one person, Peter.” (“Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope” *Triglotta* p. 507, para. 10)

LUTHER: “I truly hope that believers and whoever wants to be called a Christian knows very well *that the spiritual estate has been established and instituted by God*, not with gold or silver but with the precious blood and bitter death of his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. For the sacraments truly flow from his wounds (as they often depict on written documents with art). He paid dearly that people everywhere might have such an office, to preach, baptize, loose, bind, give the sacrament, comfort, warn, and exhort with God’s Word, and whatever else belongs *to the office of caretaker of souls*... I am not thinking, however, of the spiritual estate in the monastic houses and the foundations... But *I am thinking rather of the estate, which has the preaching office and the service of the Word and the Sacraments*, which gives the Spirit and salvation, blessings which cannot be attained by any amount of pomp and pageantry. It is, for example, *the pastoral office, teachers, preachers, lectors, priests (whom people call chaplains), sacristans, schoolmasters, and whatever other work belongs to these offices and persons*. This estate the Scriptures highly exalt and praise... Now if it is true and certain that God himself has established and instituted the spiritual estate with his own blood and death, we may conclude that he will have it highly honored. He will not allow it to be destroyed or to die out, but will have it maintained until the Last Day. For the gospel and the church must remain until the Last Day, as Christ says in Matthew 28:20: ‘Behold, I am with you always to the end of the world.’” (“A Sermon on Keeping Children in School,” 1530. X, p. 488ff.) [LW 46:219-222] [Editor’s Note: Note the clear reference to forms in addition to the pastoral office. This category is quite open-ended.]

e) For this is an *opus ad extra* [activity outside the Godhead]. So Paul attributes his calling to God the Father and Jesus Christ (Gal 1:1), but he elsewhere teaches that *the Holy Spirit establishes overseers to shepherd the church of God* (Acts 20:28). Cf. 1 Cor 12:4-11.

f) Certainly not only as God but also as man, [Jesus] determines the parts of this office and entrusts it to particular humans and works effectively. (See Matt 28:19ff; Mk 16:15; Eph 4:11, 12)

KROMAYER: “Although the good ministers of Christ today in the church militant are substitutes, nevertheless their establishment belongs to his royal office (Eph 4) where the ‘giving of pastors and teachers’ (v. 11) is very closely applied to his royal ascension above the heavens (v. 10), and in Matthew 28 where the ‘sending to teach and baptize’ (v. 19, 20) is connected with ‘all power in heaven and on earth has been given to him’ (v. 18). For in vain the question has been raised with great tension in England between the Episcopalians and the Puritans, whether this pertains to the priestly, kingly, or prophetic office.” (*Theologia Positivo-Polemica*. II, p. 530)

### § 3. *The Call into the Ministry*

However, God sometimes calls people to an ecclesiastical office **a) immediately** or **b)** without any arbitrating, mediating works of other people, and sometimes **c) mediately** through the church, which commits that office to certain persons **d)** in the name of God. Consequently, when this happens, the church is able to be called the *lesser principal* cause of the calling of ministers.

**a)** *Moses* (Ex 3:10) and many *prophets* in the Old Testament and likewise *apostles* in the New Testament had been called in such a way that God himself specifically designated these persons, by whom the holy office ought to be performed.

**b)** Sometimes servants of the church are called through humans, but humans who have relied on a single *express divine command* (not on their judgment or will), then the calling is nevertheless able to be called



*immediate*. Here belongs the example of Aaron, whom God indeed called through Moses, but whom he clearly designated by name. (Ex 4:14ff.; 28:1ff.)

c) After the church has been planted, the right and ability to establish servants belongs to it. For as the bride, it possesses the *keys of the kingdom of heaven* given by the bridegroom, Christ (Matt 16:18; 18:17). Therefore, just as she has the power to open and close the kingdom of heaven, so also it is hers to establish ministers, through whom she opens and closes. If we consider that the church is a great *republic* and that *ministers* of the Word are just like *magistrates* or managers of the public dealings to whom care of the whole republic will fall, then it is easily understood that the power of establishing those persons remains with the whole church *per se* and by its nature. It is also easily understood that it does not belong to some part of it, unless the power was transferred to one part by the common consensus of all. It is also well known that this was the *practice* of the early church from the *apostles'* time, in order that public ministers would be established by the consensus of the whole. See Acts 6:5, where deacons were called by the collective votes of those who constituted the church (although designated to the care of the church treasury, they were nevertheless not strangers to the office of teaching, and therefore, as far as a knowledge of holy teaching goes, were chosen before others, since they would be able to teach). In addition, Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:23) were said *to have established elders in individual churches by the collective votes* of the believers (*χειροτονήσαντες*, thus that individuals voted with outstretched hands). It is taught extensively, among other things (cf. M. Anton. *de Dominis* Book III on the Representative Church, Chapter 3), that after the time of the apostles down through the centuries, ministers of the church were accustomed to be set up in this way.

MELANCHTHON: "It is evident that in Holy Scripture the church's power and the keys express the same thing." (*Corp. Reform.* XII, 494)

LYSER: "The term 'the kingdom of heaven' embraces that function, power and authority, by which all things are accomplished which are necessary for the rule of Christ or the governing of the church." (*Harmony of the Gospels* on Matt 16:19. I, 1617)

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SMALCALD ARTICLES: "Therefore, because the appointed bishops still persecute the gospel and refuse to ordain qualified persons, every church has in this case a good reason and the right to ordain for itself church servants. For where the church is, there is indeed the command to preach the gospel. Therefore the churches must maintain the authority to summon, choose, and ordain church servants. Such power is a gift, which God has truly given to churches and no human power can take it from them, as St. Paul testifies in Ephesians 4 where he says: 'He has ascended above and has given gifts to men.' Among such gifts which are unique to churches, he classifies 'pastors and teachers' and attaches that such people have been given 'to build up the body of Christ.' Therefore it follows that where a true church is, there also is the power to choose and ordain church servants. Likewise, in an emergency a simple layman can absolve another man and become his pastor. For example, St. Augustine recorded a story of two Christians who were together in a ship; one baptized the other, who then in turn absolved the baptizer. Here belong the statements of Christ which testify that the keys were given to the whole church and not to a few special persons, as the text says: 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am in the midst of them' etc. Lastly, the statement of Peter confirms this, where he says: 'You are a royal priesthood.' These words certainly apply to the true church which must also have the power to choose and ordain church servants because they all have the priesthood. The common custom of the church also proves this." ("Tract on the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops," *Triglotta* p. 523, para. 66-69)

SMALCALD ARTICLES: "Concerning this [Matt 18:18, Jn 20:23] one must indeed confess that the keys do not belong and were not given to one man alone, but to the *whole church*, as then can be sufficiently

proved with clear and certain grounds. For *just as the promise of the gospel is sure and belongs to the whole church without means, thus the keys belong to the whole church without means*, because the keys are nothing other than the office through which the promise is imparted to everyone who longs for it. Thus it is at work before our eyes that the church has the power to ordain church servants. And Christ spoke these words: ‘Whatever you bind etc.’ and explained to whom he had given the keys, namely to the church, ‘Where two or three are gathered in my name etc.’ Likewise Christ gives the highest and final judgment to the church when he said, ‘Tell it to the church.’” (“Tract on the Power and Primacy of the Pope,” *Triglotta* p.511, 24). “Therefore, he gave the keys chiefly and immediately to the church, and now the church chiefly for the same reason has the right to call.” (loc. cit.)

LUTHER: “The keys do not belong to the pope (as he falsely claims), but to the church. That is, they belong to the people of Christ, the people of God, or the holy Christian people throughout the whole world or wherever Christians are. Because they cannot all be in Rome—the whole world would first have to be in Rome, which is still far from happening. Even as Baptism, the Sacrament, and God’s Word do not belong to the pope, but to the people of Christ, so they are called the ‘keys of the church’ not the ‘keys of the pope.’” (“Writing on Councils and Churches,” Book XVI, p. 2791) [LW 41:154]

LUTHER: “The keys belong to the whole community of all Christians and to every individual, who is a member of the same community. This is the same not only according to power, but also according to use and any way there could possibly be, so that we add no power to the words of Christ who directly and usually speaks to all: ‘He should be to you’ etc. [Matt 18:17] Likewise: ‘Whatever you bind’ etc. [Matt 18:18]. I would treat also the phrase, which Christ had spoken to St. Peter alone, here as a confirmation, ‘To you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’ Likewise, Matthew 18:19, ‘Where two become one on earth,’ and verse 20, ‘Where two are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.’ In this saying the all-perfect right and use is appropriated and affirmed on the most thorough [basis] that they are permitted to bind and loose. It would then follow that we were promised the right and the use of the keys by Christ himself, when he dwells in the midst of two people.” (“Open Letter to the Council and Congregation of the City of Prague,” Book X, p. 1847) [LW 40:27] [Editor’s Note: The keys are given to every Christian not only for delegation but for use.]

LUTHER: “However, something else is said to us in Matthew 23:8, ‘You have one master, Christ, but you are all *brothers*.’ *Therefore we all have equal value and we all have only one right*. It will not be permitted that those, who are called brothers and all have everything in common, might be over one another, might receive a greater inheritance and a better right than another, or might have an advantage over the others in spiritual things, of which we are now speaking... Yet, we have this all solely by the common right and authority spoken to all Christians. For as long as everything should be common to all Christians, which till now we have related and also established and proved, thus it would not be lawful for anyone to distinguish himself and take for himself the possession which belongs to all of us. Venture upon this right and make use of it only where there is no one else who also has received such a right. The right of the community requires, however, that the congregation chose and receive one or as many as are pleasing, who will discharge this office publicly in the place of and in the name of all those who have exactly the same right. This is required so that an abominable disorder does not occur among the people of God and a Babylon grow out of the church, in which all things should take place respectably and in an orderly way as the Apostle has taught (1 Cor 14:40). These are two very different things: that one would execute the common right through the command of the community or that one would make use of the same right in an emergency. In a congregation where the right is free to everyone, no one should take it up without the consent and decision of the whole congregation. But in a case of emergency anyone who wants may make use of it.” (“Open Letter to the Council and Congregation of the City of Prague,” 1523. X, p. 1857)

LUTHER: “The keys are given to him, who stands upon this rock by faith, to whom the Father has given it. Now no one can know who will remain standing upon the rock, for one falls today and another tomorrow as St. Peter also fell. Therefore no one person is established to whom the keys belong except the church, that is, to those who stand upon the rock. The Christian church alone holds the keys and no one else, although they can make use of the bishop and the Pope, as those to whom they are entrusted by the congregation. A pastor undertakes the use of the keys, baptizes, preaches, administers the Sacrament, and does other duties so that he serves the congregation, not for his sake, but for the sake of the congregation” (that is, for the sake of the fellowship). “Then he is the servant of the whole congregation, to whom the keys were given, although he might be a scoundrel. For if he carries it out in the place of the congregation, thus the church does it. Because the church does it, thus God does it, since one must have a servant. For if the whole congregation wanted to come in and baptize, they would likely drown the child because a thousand hands would go at it! That would be worthless. Therefore one must have a servant who undertakes such things in the place of the congregation. Now the keys, to bind and loose, is the power to teach and not only to absolve. For *the keys are applied to all with which I can help my neighbor*, to the comfort which one can give to another, to the public and private confession, to the absolution, and whatever else there is; *but still above all, to preaching.*” (*Church Postil*, XI, p. 3070ff.)

LUTHER: “But what happen here first of all: Christ, before he gives the command to forgive and to bind sins, breathes on them and says: ‘Receive the Holy Spirit, for whom you shall forgive sins, for them they are forgiven’ (Jn 20:22,23). Here it is determined that no one can forgive sins, unless he has the Holy Spirit... Where now are the keys of the pope? I think, they must slip from him whether he likes it or not, and it must become known that he only bears [the keys] with all sacrilege on his coat of arms, since it stands clearly here: one does not have the keys, unless he has the Holy Spirit. Therefore, someone should have painted for the pope on his coat of arms (I know well what!) and torn out the keys. The coat of arms belongs to another man than the pope. Yet on the contrary, should I now not previously have the forgiveness of my sins, unless the father-confessor had the Holy Spirit (and no one may be certain concerning whether the other might have the Spirit)? When would I be certain about my absolution and take hold of a peaceful conscience? Thus it would be as previously [it used to be under the papacy]. Answer: I have cited this, so that one would have a correct foundation for this matter. There is no doubt that no one binds or looses sins, except alone the one who so surely has the Holy Spirit; this you and I know, as these words of Christ here prove. However, that means no one except the Christian Church, that is, the gathering of all believers in Christ, alone has these keys and you should not doubt this. Whoever claims the keys for himself over [that gathering], he is a true, cunning *Sacrilegus* (‘church-pirate’), if he would happen to be the Pope or whoever wants it. Concerning the same churches everyone is certain that they have the Holy Spirit, as Paul richly proves according to Christ and all the Scriptures, and is composed very briefly in the Creed: ‘I believe, that there is a holy Christian Church.’” (“Little Book on Confession,” XIX, p. 1051ff.)

LUTHER: “This is and must be our foundation and sure rock: Where the gospel is preached, there must be a holy Christian church. And whoever doubts this may as well also doubt whether the gospel is God’s Word. But where a holy Christian church is, there must be all the sacraments, Christ himself and his Holy Spirit. If we are supposed to be a holy Christian church and have the most necessary parts, such as, God’s Word, Christ, the Spirit, faith, prayer, Baptism, the Sacrament, the use of the keys, and so on, and should not also have the humblest parts, namely, the power and right to call several persons to the office, who administer for us and there within serve the Word, Baptism, the Sacrament, forgiveness (so ready they all are), what kind of church would that be? Where would Christ’s Word remain, which he speaks in Matt 18:20, ‘Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them’?

And again in verse 19, 'When two among you become one on earth about what they want to ask, it shall be done by my Father in heaven.' If two or three have such power, how much more an entire church?" ("Writing on the Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests," 1533. Book XIX, p.1565ff.) [LW 38:211-212]

LUTHER: "(Matt 18:19,20) In this passage we hear that also two or three, gathered in the name of Christ, have a power completely equal to Peter and the Apostles. For the Lord himself is there, as he also says in John 14:23, 'Who loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make a home with him.' Hence it has happened that often one man, who believes in Christ, has stood against an entire crowd, [Editor's Note: Luther modestly fails to mention himself at Worms.] as Paphnutius at the Council of Nicaea, and the prophets stood against the kings, priests, and all the people of Israel. In short, God will not be bound by numbers, greatness, importance, power, or whatever is personal in people, but wants only to be with those who love and keep his Word, even if they should be mere stable boys. What does he care about high, great, powerful lords? He alone is the greatest, highest and most powerful... We have here the Lord himself over all angels and creatures who says, *they shall all have the same power, keys and office, even two simple Christians gathered in his name.* The pope and all devils shall not make this Lord into a fool, liar, and a drunkard. On the contrary, we will trample the pope under foot and say he is a desperate liar, blasphemer, and idolatrous devil, who has snatched the keys for himself in the name of St. Peter, though Christ has given them to all equally in common." ("Against the Roman Papacy, an Institution of the Devil," 1545. XVII, p. 1346ff.) [LW 41:317-318]

LUTHER: It "is proved, therefore, that only some from the crowd carry out and occupy the office, which they all have, in the place of the congregation." ("Commentary on 1 Pet 2:5." IX, p. 703) [LW 30:55]

CHEMNITZ: "Canon X of the Council of Trent: If anyone says that all Christians have the power to administer all the sacraments and the Word, let him be anathema. Examen: The words, which they condemn in this canon, they have extracted from Luther's booklet 'Concerning the Babylonian Captivity.' But they have both mutilated the words and distorted the meaning, in order that they may make Luther's teaching hated by the inexperienced, as if it were the disturber of all divine and human order in the church. But Luther never meant that any Christian at all either could or should haphazardly, without a legitimate call, arrogate to himself or usurp the ministry of the Word and the administration of the sacraments in the church... Against these tyrannical opinions Luther taught from the Word of God that Christ has given and entrusted the keys, that is, the ministry of the Word and sacraments, to the whole church... in such a way that the highest power of the Word and sacraments belongs to God; then, the ministry belongs to the church, so that God calls, chooses, and sends ministers mediately through her. Thirdly, then, it belongs to those who have been legitimately chosen and called by God through the church, so that it belongs to the ministers to whom the use or administration of the ministry of the Word and sacraments has been committed. With this distinction, which is true and plain, Luther wanted to restrain the arrogance of the priests who were puffed up by the opinion that they alone possessed all pure and combined power in the Word and sacraments, so that the sacraments were valid on account of the imprinting on them of some kind of character from ordination. And lest the rest of the church should dare to ask with so much as a silent sigh, 'What are you doing?' they pretended that the rest of the church clearly had no power in the Word and sacraments. The fact that Luther touched this sore spot and applied the knife on the basis of the Word of God is truly what sits badly and gives the papalists burning pain still today after so many years." (*Examination of the Council of Trent*, Geneva Edition p. 222ff.) [CPH Kramer vol. 2, p. 96-97]

LYSER: "When the power of binding and loosing was promised to Peter in Matthew 16:19 and entrusted to all the apostles in John 20:23, in this way Christ gave it to the church, which ordinarily is able to grant

this power to individuals legitimately called for this purpose. However, any and every true member of the church has the same right and is able to use that power to the glory of God and the salvation of his neighbor outside of the ordinary way and in cases of necessity.” (*Harmony of the Gospels* on Matt 18:18. I, p.1748)

LYSER: “Christ left to the church the keys of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 18:18. In this particular matter we do not worry about the sneers and ridicules of the Jesuits who claim: ‘Therefore, among you Evangelicals every shoemaker, farmer, cook and common laborer has and exercises the right of the keys. Thus you have erected Babylon itself and introduced a confusion of all matters.’ We respond: Who will deny that in a case of necessity any one of the believers is able to baptize another believer, teach, absolve from sin, and thus to reveal heavenly citizenship to that person? The church has always made an exception out of this case of necessity, as Jerome testified against the Luciferians and Augustine to Fortunatus. But outside the case of necessity none of these is permitted for anyone, unless he is the legitimately called and established minister of the church. For this militates against the divine rule: ‘How will they preach, unless they have been sent?’ (Rom 10:15). Likewise in Jeremiah 23:21: ‘They are running, but I did not send them.’ But nevertheless in the meantime *for the individual believer, even the least*, his right, which he has in the keys on the basis of Christ’s gift, remains complete. For just as all free citizens of any city, no matter how many live in that city, have a common right and equal freedom because they belong to the republic and still elect senators for the sake of order and place in authority over the senators a consul, to whom they hand over the keys of the city and laws, whereby, he takes care of the common cause of all and according to it administers the republic, so also the citizens of the city of God act in the same way. These, in fact, make up the communion of saints and all things are theirs, whether Paul or Peter, whether life or death, whether the present or the future (1 Cor 3:21). They possess all things under one head, Christ, who acquired by the merit of his blood all things necessary for the salvation of his church and her every single member, even the least. And still for the sake of order they choose certain persons, to whom *they entrust* the administration of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, such as those among us: deacons, pastors, teachers, bishops or superintendents and the like, in order that all things among us are done decently and in an orderly way, according to the teaching of Paul, (εὐσχημόνῳ καὶ κατὰ τάξιν 1 Cor 14:40).” (Loc. cit. p. 1620ff.)

LUTHER: “Since the pope is elected, does he bring the keys with him or not? If he brings them with him, then he was the pope before he was elected. If he does not bring them, from whom does he receive them? From an angel from heaven? From the church, right? Likewise, when the pope dies, to whom does he leave the keys? Does he take them away with him? If he does not take them with him, to whom does he leave them, except to the church from which he received them? What can be said against this clearest proof? This is the best interpretation of the gospel, namely, that the priest will use the keys which were not given to Peter or his successor, but to the church alone from which the minister receives them. Where now is that which is thought to be spoken to Peter alone: ‘To you I will give the keys’? No rather, where is the fact that the keys were given to the Roman Church alone? It is necessary that the keys are in any and every church.” (Luther’s Resolutions on proposition XIII: the power of the pope, 1519. See the Erlangen Edition, Latin works, various arguments, Vol.III, p. 310)

GERHARD: “Question: To whom were the keys of the kingdom of heaven entrusted? –How hostile against the church the Roman pontiff is! Certainly from this point onward the basis is clear to all that he sacrilegiously snatched this illustrious dignity for himself alone and for his bishops (I do not know on account of what character impressed upon them at their ordination). He snatched it from all the others, whom they call ‘the laity’ as if they were pigs. They scornfully excluded the laity, who would not even have been heard muttering anything against the clergy in this affair. He snatched the power so far away that they now are permitted to pass judgment against the laity in any way they wish. We oppose our

understanding to the their pride and teach with Dr. Luther, the sainted Chemnitz, and other orthodox theologians that this privilege was given by Christ to the whole church, his most beloved bride, who is the steward of heavenly goods (Ps. 68:13). She is the one to whom, even before Matthew 18:18, the promise was made most fully concerning this matter. Although every opposing party chatters, it is by no means gathered obscurely from this very passage (Jn 20) that this power belongs to all those who are anointed with the Holy Spirit. And so, since all Christians truly have the Holy Spirit, it follows that all are equipped with this authority. Dr. Brenz understands it this way in his *Exegesis on John*, chapter 20. Nevertheless, this defense does not agree with the raging of the Anabaptists, who among themselves most wickedly mix together the estates which God wanted to be distinct. So, they bring them into a most disgraceful confusion. Johann Baptista Ficklerus strives to accuse us [Lutherans] as the perpetrators of such an error, when he writes in his *Reply against Heilbr.* (p. 87): ‘There is no requirement there (namely among our Lutheran churches) other than that it is said without distinction to everyone: You, John, go and be the preacher; you, Michael, take the bread and wine and administer the Supper to the neighborhood; you, Barthold, go and forgive the peasants.’ Yet, a genuine explanation of our understanding and observance of distinctions, which our theologians present in this question, will easily free us from such a suspicion. For those theologians have established a *threefold* power, so to speak.

They teach the *highest and ἀποκρατορικὴν* [most absolute] *power* of the Word and sacraments belongs to God alone. Secondly, they teach that the *ministry* belongs to the *church*, when God immediately calls, chooses, and sends ministers through her. Thirdly and lastly, they teach that the *execution* belongs to those who have been legitimately chosen and called by God through the church. For example, it belongs to *ministers* for whom the use and administration of the ministry of Word and sacraments has been commanded. Thus the *whole church* has the same common *power*, but the *use* and exercise is not permitted except to those, who are appointed by the church to this office through a legitimate call and who occupy the same by name. This is so because every confusion in the church, in which all things need to be done *εὐσχημόνως* [fittingly], is rejected by the apostle’s admonition 1 Cor 14:40. That is, it is permitted to the church’s legitimate *ministers*, who dispense in the name of the church those heavenly good portions gained by Christ’s bloody battle. Accordingly they are called by the apostle in 1 Corinthians 4:1, *ὑπηρέται τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ οἰκονόμοι τῶν μυστηρίων τοῦ θεοῦ* [servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God]. Since these distinctions, I say, have been observed from both sides, I am proceeding on the most prudent middle road. We do not have anything in common with the arrogance of the papal clergy and we also do not promote in any way the confusion of the Anabaptists, but we hold reverently their honor for the church. See Luther’s book concerning the abuse of the Mass.” (*Exposition ἐλεγχτικὴ of the Sunday Gospels*, p. 732ff.)

BALDUIN: “The church is the bride of Christ (Jn 3:29) and his wife (Ps 45:10) and the matron in his house (Ps 68:13). Therefore, just as the keys of the house are given by the master to the matron, thus also Christ the Master of his house, the church, gave the keys to his bride, who *gives them over*<sup>2</sup> to her ministers who are called stewards or managers of the mysteries of God.” (*Treatise on Cases of Conscience*, p. 1104)

#### ANTITHESIS

QUENSTEDT: “*Antithesis*: 1) Of the *Papalists*, who bestow the power of calling on the ecclesiastical estate alone, since every magistrate has been placed under the ministry. Some call this caesaropapist or Caesaropapism. Thus the Council of Trent decreed concerning the sacrament of ordination (chapter 4):

<sup>2</sup>Baier-Walther reads *omittit*, an obvious misprint for *committit* (cf. the first edition of Friedrich Balduin, *Tractus luculentus... casibus nimirum conscientiae*, Wittenberg: Paul Helwig, 1628, p. 1104).

‘The most holy synod teaches that in the ordination of bishops, priests and other orders, the consent, call, or authority of the people, and of any secular power and magistrate is not required in such a way that without them ordination is invalid.’ Bellarmine in Book 1, *Concerning Clerics*, chapter 2 the last paragraph in Tome 2 says: ‘The catholic teachers teach with the highest consensus that the right of ordaining bishops and calling cannot belong to the common people in any way, but only by the concession of the bishops or by connivance, not by divine law.’ Cornelius a Lapidus commenting on the words ‘called apostle’ in Romans 1: ‘Ordaining sacred things and holy bishops does not belong to the magistrate, and the calling does not belong to the laity.’ 2) Of the *Donatists, Socinians, and Anabaptists*. They suppose to drive the magistrates from every republic and admit only the inexperienced and ignorant public to all the rights. Therefore, they also lavish the right of calling on this group alone. 3) Of the *Arminians*, who assign the power of calling solely to the secular magistrate, which some call Caesaropapism.” (*Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, part IV, chapter 12, section 2, question 2, folio 1509ff.)

**d)** But this is not done by *their* authority. For the matter *belongs to God* and aims towards the *salvation* of souls. And so we have not only renewed the practice of *prayers* with the act of calling, which were at one time joined with it (cf. Acts 6:6; 14:23), but also the more recent *practice* teaches that a formula is accustomed to be inserted into call letters: *In the name of the most holy Trinity*.

KROMAYER: “This office is certainly not conferred with the impression of indelible character, as the papalists wish. Nevertheless, ordinarily it is *permanent*, because freely and rightfully outside a case of necessity the one called cannot set it aside. And [in the first place] this office cannot be conferred by calling through a contract for a certain number years or [in the second place] issued with a reservation about declining ability. The first is not possible 1) on account of the general admonition concerning perseverance. For ‘each one should remain in that calling in which he was called’ (1 Cor 7:20; cf. also Lk 9:62); and 2) on account of the special commands in 1 Timothy 4:15: ‘Practice these things, persevere in them’ (cf. 2 Tim 4:5); and 3) from the reasoning that because of the lower good, the higher good is not to be neglected once chosen, of what a kind the church’s ministry is in respect to the good of this age. The second is not possible, because the ability of thus making a contract for the calling is nowhere undertaken or permitted by God. *Accordingly neither the one calling nor the one being called can regard as divine a calling and dismissing of this kind.*” (*Theologia Positivo-Polemica*. II, 530)

#### § 4. *The Power to Set Up Ministers*

This right or power to establish ministers also belongs to **a)** *individual* churches separated from the community of other churches, including those separated **b)** by an unjust *excommunication*. [Editor’s Note: The right to establish ministers is not given exclusively to local congregations. It is *also* given to local congregations, as it belongs to the whole church.]

**a)** For those things are conceded in an orderly way to the *universal* church according to the *common goal*, which is spiritual edification. *Individual* churches, through which the universal church should be built up and as far as they belong to the universal church, correctly lay claim to those things for themselves. Confer the sainted Musaeus Part II, “On the Church,” Disputation III, §. 7ff., p. 166ff.

**b)** For churches *do not cease being true churches* through the unjust excommunication they suffer. Therefore, they do not lose the rights which are appropriate for all true churches of Christ. Confer Musaeus, loc.cit., Disp. IV, §. 35, p. 318-319.

LUTHER: “We also confess that there is much Christian good under the papacy. Indeed, all Christian good exists there and has come to us from there. For instance, we confess that in the papacy there are the true Holy Scriptures, the true baptism, the true sacrament of the altar, the true keys for the forgiveness of sins, the true preaching office, the true catechism, such as the Ten Commandments, the articles of the creed, and Lord’s Prayer. Likewise, the pope in turn admits that we (though he condemns us as heretics) and all heretics, have the Holy Scriptures, baptism, the keys, the catechism, and so on. ‘O pope, how you put on a show!’ How then can I put on a show? I speak of what the pope has in common with us. So he in turn puts on just as much of a show to us and the heretics, and he describes what we have in common with him. I will put on even more of a show, though it doesn’t help me. I contend that in the papacy there is true Christianity, the true pattern of Christianity and many great and pious saints! Shall I cease to put on this show? Hear for yourselves what St. Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2:4: ‘The Antichrist takes his seat in the temple of God.’ If the pope is the true Antichrist (how could I believe otherwise), he will not sit or reign in the devil’s stable, but in God’s temple... If Christendom is now under the pope, it is truly the body of Christ and a member of the body. If it is his body, then it has the true spirit, gospel, faith, baptism, Sacrament, keys, *the office of the ministry*, prayer, holy Scripture, and everything that Christendom should have... Therefore, the talk of the Anabaptists and enthusiasts is nothing when they say, ‘Whatever the pope does is wrong,’ or, ‘Because this or that happened in the papacy, we want something different.’ With this they want to prove themselves as the foremost enemy of Antichrist. But they don’t see that with this they strengthen him the most, weaken Christendom in the highest sense, and deceive themselves. Rather, they should help us to reject misuse and addition; but they would not get much glory from this, because they realize they would not be the first to do this. For this reason, they attack what no one has yet attacked, so that here perchance they might be the first and gain the honor. But the honor must turn to disgrace, for they attack the temple of God and miss the Antichrist who sits therein, just as the blind, who grope after water and reach into the fire. Yes, they even act as one brother did to another in the Thüringen forest: they were going through the woods with each other when a bear came after them. The bear threw one of them underneath him. The other wanting to help his brother, struck at the bear, but missed him and sadly wounded his brother under the bear. These enthusiasts are about to do this very thing. They should help poor Christendom, which Antichrist has in his grip and tortures, and take a severe stand against the pope. But they miss him and much more pitifully slay Christendom under the pope. For if they would correctly permit baptism and the Sacrament, the Christians under the pope might yet escape with their souls and be saved, as has been the case so far. But if now the sacraments are taken from them, they must become quite lost, because Christ himself is also thereby taken away. Dear friend, this is not the way to blast the papacy as long as Christian saints are in his keeping. To deal with this situation you need a more cautious, discreet spirit, which would allow God’s temple to remain but would attack the pope’s addition, by which he destroys God’s temple.” (“Letter on Rebaptism,” 1528. XVII, p. 1647-1648ff.) [LW 40:231-234]

LUTHER: “But what do you think of *Gregory’s* saying mentioned above: ‘Our ban is to be feared even if it is an *unjust* one’? This would be my answer: Whether the saying is Gregory’s or his mother’s, thus the devil has spoken it. I would gladly come face to face with the doctor who would teach that I should fear injustice and lies. Even if it were from an angel from heaven I would take his horrible ban, and, after having used it as toilet paper, wipe his nose. What is the purpose of such vile blasphemy which shamelessly dares to command us Christians to fear public injustice and well known lies and to worship them as a god? If St. Gregory had said and maintained such a thing without properly repenting of the same, his place would have to be in the abyss of hell—no question about it. However, I do not want to condemn St. Gregory.” (“Writing on the Keys,” 1530. XIX, p. 1170) [LW 40:362-363]

BALDUIN: “Wherever there is a certain church which has baptism complete in its essential parts, some part of the divine word, such as the gospels and Sunday epistles, the Passion history, and the Apostle’s



Creed, there also the true ordination to the ministry can exist, even if it has been corrupted as far as the external rites are concerned, provided that it is left complete in its essential parts. That is, the power of teaching the Word may be entrusted to someone through the prayers of the church. We are not able to deny that this is done in the papistic church, although the ministry is sufficiently impure. These are the reasons of our assertion: 1) because ordination is not part of a corrupt ministry, but an action of the whole church, which even a corrupt ministry is able to carry out... By this understanding we are able to defend more firmly the ordination of Luther and others, who were ordained in the papacy, against the false accusations of the Romans, who immediately shout that we do not have legitimately ordained ministers. For unwilling as they are, they are reluctantly constrained to admit that those men received a true ordination under the papacy... Yet those who imagine the opposite bring up 1) the ordaining person, who was not a shepherd of the church, but a wolf, and was not able to entrust feeding the sheep to others; 2) the corrupt doctrine, which he was ordained to propagate, certainly to say mass, to commune under one kind, to anoint the dying and to practice other acts of idol madness. We respond that here we must distinguish between the functions of those who ordained others in the papacy. For as wolves and slaves of the pope, such as they are, they did certain things which include what they mentioned above and all the rest, which were commanded by the pope as pope and are true inventions of man. Other things they did as ordinary ministers of the church, in so far as they agreed with the divine commands, for example, when they baptized infants, ordained other ministers, married couples, buried the dead, etc. In these functions we must distinguish the works *of God* from the works *of men*. The *latter* are done by the servants of the Antichrist because they are done without the command of God. The *former* should be ascribed to God himself, who is accustomed to bring out his works through a corrupt ministry, as in the Jewish church when idolatrous priests were producing sons and daughters for God himself (Eze 16:20). God also cut through the most corrupt ministry of the Pharisees. He was ordaining priests and doing similar things, although the Pharisees themselves, when described properly, were a brood of vipers and removed the commands of God with their traditions (Matt 3:7; 15:3). Thus that Luther was ordained in the papacy came from an ordinary ministry [of the church]. But that he was ordained to masses and other abominations, [this aspect of] his ordination was from a corrupt ministry, which was alongside the ordinary one. Therefore, when Luther in the end scorned the impurity of doctrine and the papal abominations, he left them behind as the scum of an impure ministry. But ordination he retained as a function of the ordinary ministry. In truth he was ordained not only to present the mass and other papal abominations, but also to preach the word of God. While he distinguished the valuable from the vile and taught the word of God correctly when the papal abominations were abandoned, he did not see a need for a new ordination. But when he accepted ordination performed in the papacy, then at last the *use* was correct.” (*Tract on Cases of Conscience*, p. 1040, 1041, 1042ff.)

### § 5. *The Components of the Call*

*Three things* come together for the ministers’ *call*, which is done mediately by the church: First, there is **a**) the *election* or judgment concerning the worthiness of the person applying to the holy ministry, with an evaluation of the learning and the gifts necessary to correctly perform the acts of the office and of the person’s disposition to the ministry. Second, there is **b**) the *ordination* or the elected person’s solemn installation to the holy office, done through certain rites. Third, there is **c**) the *call* (so mentioned in a special way) or the concession of the power and the entrusting of the function to teach the word of God in public gatherings and administer the sacraments.

**a)** Just as the *apostles* spoke to the *crowd of disciples* or believers: *Brothers, seek men from among you who are known to be upright, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, to whom we will delegate this matter* (Acts 6:3, add v.

5). Paul in 1 Timothy 3:2ff. and Titus 1:6ff. reviews more comprehensively the requirements of a bishop which ought to be observed in election.

**b)** This is most correctly accomplished through *prayers* and the imposition of hands, as the apostles did (Acts 6:6; cf. also 1 Tim 4:14; 5:22).

SMALCALD ARTICLES: “In former times the people chose pastors and bishops. Then the bishop, who was located in the same place or in the vicinity, came and confirmed the elected bishop through the laying on of hands. At that time *ordination was nothing other than such a confirmation.*” (“Tract on the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops,” *Triglotta*, p. 525, para. 70)

LUTHER: “The issue is whether the church and bishop are of one mind, and whether the church wants to listen to the bishop, and the bishop wants to teach the church. If all of this is the case, the ordination has taken place. The laying on of hands (which does bless) confirms and testifies to this, just as a notary and witnesses testify in a secular case, and just as the pastor, who blesses the bride and bridegroom, confirms their marriage or testifies that they have previously gotten married and makes it publicly known. The pastor may be an angel or a devil, but because the office is there, the bride is still blessed.” (“An example for ordaining a true Christian bishop,” 1542. XVII, p. 156)

J. FECHT: “Ordination is an ecclesiastical rite which is valued with the greatest merit because of its goals, which chiefly are three: 1) it is a public testimony that this candidate for the ministry has been found capable and worthy, as one to whom the souls of men can be entrusted; 2) this rite publicly makes the candidate himself more certain that he has been legitimately called, and therefore, he is bound to the holy ministry of the church; 3) the prayers of the whole church are poured upon him, in order that his gifts, necessary for the church, may be strengthened, and his spirit given to constantly serving God and attending to the salvation of souls. From this point we must determine, what should we hold concerning the necessity of this rite? Without a doubt we ought to guard against two extremes. First, let us be on guard that an absolute necessity is not invented for it as with the *papalists*, according to whom this rite imposes on the man a character, so that from unholy he becomes holy, from the laity he becomes clergy, that is, that he can administer holy things, especially bring about the sacraments. Accordingly they do not ordain those who have been called, so that those called can at once engage in their duties. Secondly, let us be on guard that it is not regarded lightly as it is with the *Calvinists*, so that too little would be placed on it... From this two observations follow: 1) if a case of necessity urges or he is not able to be ordained at once because of an impediment, the called individual can enter into the office of preaching publicly and administering the sacraments. In this case the church should also be informed that such things as these do not depend on the ordination, as if it were an instrument of imprinting a holy character without which the minister could not perform sacred acts. 2) Outside a case of necessity one who has not been ordained, although called, should not rashly perform such acts—not because they are not valid once done, but so that we do not furnish material for offense to others. As if in a matter so sacred and of so much importance we do not need the *prayers* of others and can fly into the offices, as animals fly at their food! This is also the reason why that custom was abolished, which persisted formerly at Strasbourg, when pastors were ordained often after administering the office for several years.” (*Pastoral Instructions*, Ed. 2, c. 5, p.47ff.)

HUELSEMANN: “The Catholics recognize the imposition of hands as a sacred rite used by the apostles in the ordination of all sorts of sacred ministers, and thus they retain it in their churches. They do not doubt that God bestows the grace of the Holy Spirit on the person being ordained, because he is moved by their prayers which they attach to the imposition of hands as the apostles did. However, they neither believe nor has anyone thus far proved from a rite of the apostles that on account of the utterance of

certain words or numbered gestures a certain grace embraces those being ordained.” (*Manual on the Augsburg Confession*, p. 487)

HUELSEMANN: “What we have said concerning the ordination of papistic priests, namely that it is marred but not rendered useless through the added command of sacrificing for the living and the dead, is always to be understood with the condition put forth in the text: ‘provided that the power of teaching the Word of God and of administering the sacraments is chiefly granted to the ordained.’ For when this condition is lacking, ordination is not only marred but also *useless*. In this way the teachers of our country can reconcile apparent contradictions. One group of them asserts that those ordained under the papacy must be ordained again or rather, truly ordained. But another group asserts that there is no need for a second ordination. This can be seen from the *Consilii Dedekenni*, appendix 1, the chapter concerning calls and the order of church ministers. For they differ not only in Italy, but even in the church at Rome and Milan, even in France and Germany and other kingdoms under papistic governance.” (“Preface to the Epitome,” c. 19, p. 1224ff.)

c) This is customarily done today through *call letters* as they say.

### § 6. *The Church and Secular Arrangement*

For these things to happen, **a)** two institutions must work together in different ways. They are **b)** *the ecclesiastical order* and **c)** *the secular order*. **d)** *The former* must examine the learning and the other necessary gifts of the person being chosen and pass judgment on them; then **e)** they ordain the designated or elected person in a customary rite. **f)** The ecclesiastical order does both things in the name of the church. *The secular order* usually is content with the judgment of the ecclesiastical order concerning the ability of a person. But if, **g)** upon hearing a preacher, the secular order correctly points out something about his outward gifts and **h)** purity of doctrine and **i)** the way he lives, those comments deserve attention. The secular, *acting jointly* with the ecclesiastical order, designates or elects a person to the ministry, and thus with unanimous consent **k)** confers on the chosen person the power of teaching the Word and administering the sacraments.

**a)** For although the arrangement of ministers belongs to the *whole church per se* and *by its nature*, yet since the *parts* which make up the church are diverse, thus what belongs to each ought to be left to *that one* as far as things required for the arrangement of the ministry.

KROMAYER: “Through the term “church” clergy and laymen are understood together. The papalists and the hierarchical Anglicans agree with us concerning the clergy, although the former distribute church power from the pope into the remaining members of the church, the latter from the bishops alone. On behalf of the laymen we thus prove: from whom a judgment is required for setting up a deacon (who is distinguished from the shepherd of souls in the expression of the ancient church), from those a judgment is much more required to call a pastor. But now the judgment of the laymen [is required to set up deacons, and therefore, also pastors.] See 1 Corinthians 16:2. Also see the sainted Huelsemann Brev. chapter 19, thesis 5, *Because of this right no one is able to withhold [anything] from these estates*. For whoever cannot give up the discernment of doctrine in general to the pastor or leader is much less able to transfer to them the discerning judgment concerning his future pastor. But now the laymen [cannot give up the discernment]. See Matthew 7:15 and 1 John 4:1.” (*Theologia Positivo-Polemica*, II, 531)

**b)** This they commonly call *the clergy*, but not so much by the power of the words of Scripture, (which denotes the church or the assembly of believers by this term) as by ecclesiastical custom.

**c)** Or *political*, which certainly includes within its definition both magistrate and people.

d) To the degree that the examinations of those who are to be ordained are conducted in this matter and are rightly permitted by the calling body, to that degree they succeed.

e) It happens in a similar manner whether he who carries out the rite of ordination is a *bishop* or a *priest*. For bishop and priest *do not differ* according to *divine right*, as is clear from Acts 20:17,28 and 1 Peter 5:1,2. Ordination could also be carried out when a minister of some church in which there are not many other ministers, or possibly because of other reasons, is ordained at *other* places (e.g. in schools and colleges of ministers of another church). There it is enough when the church, which he is ready to serve, has investigated the *ικανότης* [capability] and shown the clear testimonies for ordination.

SMALCALD ARTICLES: “Therefore, Jerome also says with clear words that there is no difference between bishops and priests, but that all pastors are at the same time bishops and priests.” (“Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope,” *Triglotta* p.521, para. 62)

HUELSEMANN: “In a case of necessity not only a priest, but also elders of any particular church can ordain others, because the power of ordaining does not belong to one member of the church, e.g. to the bishop, because of a measure of *quality* or permanent character, but because of a measure of *commission and transitory power*, such as an agent or manager of businessmen receives from his overseer. This is most clear from every word in 2 Timothy 2:2, “What you have heard from me, *ταῦτα παράθου*, entrust these things, commit these things to others, that they also may teach others.” (*Lectures on the Book of Concord*, p. 838)

GRAUER: “The papalists will press that a church can not exist if orthodox bishops do not follow in the same ordinary, continual, and uninterrupted *succession* one after another. But truly this is most false, as is shown more broadly in the locus concerning the church. For the church can be preserved by the Holy Spirit through a corrupt ministry. This was not only done in the Old Testament at the time of Aaron, Elijah, and John the Baptist, but also in the New Testament, chiefly at the time when the church was forced to flee into the desert because of the persecution of tyrants. Therefore, the papalists themselves are not able to demonstrate that kind of succession in their church. Indeed you see that I am not pressing this matter because the papalists differ greatly in numbering Roman popes and cannot show with certainty who was the second or third or fourth pope. Thus Bartholomaeus Garanza, a papal writer, leaves a judgment to the will of the reader in this very perplexing matter. The papalists are never able to prove that all those popes and bishops whom they number from the apostles’ time up to this day always and in all things believed and taught the same as the apostles believed and taught. Therefore, if the papalists were able to set forth a personal and local succession chiefly among their bishops, yet they would never be able to demonstrate a continual and uninterrupted succession. (The Greeks today could prove more definitively their succession than the papalists, because the evangelist John taught in Asia.) Therefore, as we conclude this argument, let us say that the succession of the faith or doctrine is enough in the legitimate and true calling of the church’s ministers. The continual, personal succession cannot be proved, however, nor can any other kind in which there always have been orthodox teachers.” (*Lectures on the Augsburg Confession*, Ed. 4, p. 765ff.)

BALDUIN: “Is someone able to be admitted to ordination who has not yet been called to some particular ecclesiastical office? I respond: No. For ordination is the confirmation of the call. Therefore, when the call is lacking, ordination cannot have a place. Accordingly the custom of the Geneva church justly incurs blame, when those instructed in theology are sent into France and placed in charge of churches, although no church called them. For no church has the power to send ministers to another which does

not give consent in its calling, lest someone is sent to those who don't want him." (*Tract on Cases of Conscience*, p. 1045ff.)

**f)** Certainly this is done by the power conceded from the church itself. Accordingly ordination is also customarily carried out in an assembly of the church with the crowd of believers adding their prayers.

BALDUIN: "The ordination of ministers of the Word is in the possession of the *church*, but she *executes* this right through her ministry. The management of its performance is exercised through the bishop or the inspector of the church not with a regard for some superiority, which he does not have by divine right, but with a regard for order and εὐσχημοσυνῆ [decorum], just as the church arranges according to her freedom." ("Disputation concerning chapter 1 of Philippians," B. 3)

**g)** Which they therefore call δοκιμαστικήν [for examination].

**h)** For they are not only able to distinguish suitable speech and action from unsuitable, but also to test the *spirits, whether they are from God*, even whether other human beings are from God, in addition to ecclesiastical men. See *1 John 4:1*.

**i)** Sometimes the morals and actions of those, who strive for the ministry, become known to the common people rather than to the leaders in the church.

**k)** Thus in the churches of the *Protestants* it is received with more frequent use that the right of electing, or *nominating* and *presenting* belongs to the *patron* of the church (or to him, who once *founded* and *endowed* the church, or who *followed* in his place). The right of *examining* the one specifically designated and of judging whether he is fit for the ministry is granted to the *bishop* and is exercised through the *consistory* or the *theological school*. When a dignity has been recognized or aptitude has been examined, that one is presented to the whole church, so that it is heard *publicly* and thus *he is called either* by the church *or* by the patron with the church consenting. Then, *he is ordained* by the bishop's command or by the bishop himself, in whose possession are the episcopal rights through the church's ministers, and finally, *he is confirmed*.

### § 7. *The Essence of the Ministry*

The church's ministry brings with it **a)** the *power* and *office* 1. of **b)** publicly *teaching* and regularly **c)** administering the *sacraments*; and 2. the **d)** power and duty of *loosing* and *binding* sins.

**a)** Generally, this power is separated into power of *order* and of *jurisdiction*, and the things we have discussed in this thesis are sometimes summarized in this way, although the differentiation of the terms is explained differently in the *papacy*.

GERHARD: "They call the former (the power of preaching the Word and administering the sacraments) the power of the *order*, but the latter (the power of the keys) they call the power of *jurisdiction*. Although this nomenclature leaves something to be desired, nevertheless, since it has been received by the use of the church, we therefore retain it *with the proper sense*." ("Locus on the Church's Ministry," §. 192)

GERHARD: "If respect is held for the power *granted by the church* to a certain grade of ministers, then the power of *order* is able to be distinguished from the power of *the ministry* in the following manner: the power of the *ministry* is no doubt called that which belongs equally to all ministers, since it consists

in the preaching of the Word and administering the sacraments. But the power of *order*, which is fitting for certain people because of the prominence of a position in the church's ministry, is not however by some kind of divine right but by the arrangement of the church. Thus bishops have a greater power than the priests, of course not for the ministry, but with respect to order. From this we easily see that the power of order is treated in a different way... Certain people refer to that (the power of *order*) as the νομοθετικὴν [legislative] power, which sanctions the useful and helpful arrangements agreeing with the Word of God, having in view propriety and order (1 Cor 14:40), of which some think about rites and ceremonies; others however have in view discipline and the correct standard of living. But because the sanction of these arrangements belongs not only to the ministry, but also to the Christian magistrate, guardian of both (?)<sup>3</sup> tables of the Decalogue, and because the sanction ought to be made with the consent of the church, therefore, it cannot adequately be applied to the power of order appropriate to the ministry. Others divide the *power of order* into two categories, namely into δογματικὴν [didactic] and διατακτικὴν [capable to arrange]. The first, didactic is the ability of the church in respect to doctrine and dogmas of the faith, namely the power of guarding the Scriptures as a notary, reading them diligently, judging teachings according to Scripture, discerning genuine and true writings from false and counterfeit as a protector, establishing doctrine from Scripture and rejecting false doctrine. The second is the διατακτικὴν or constitutive power. It is the power of the church in external and indifferent matters to set up not only norms and rules for order and propriety, but also definite rites. It includes the power to establish or even to abolish them, as need or advantage in the church requires, in order to foster agreement in external worship on the part of the members of the church. *But these powers belong to the whole church*; they are not peculiar to an ecclesiastical order, although we easily concede that the most important parts of it belong to the church's ministry." (Loc. cit., §. 192, 193)

**b)** For undoubtedly here we have to distinguish between *public* and *private* teaching (or the *presentation of the faith*, as they say). Outside the public assemblies believers are able to inform anyone else in Christian doctrine according to Acts 18:26, where *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, his wife, are said to have explained the way of God more accurately (ακριβέστερον). However, Paul teaches that the duty of teaching the children what things pertain to piety belongs to parents by right (Eph 6:4). The same Paul commends to believers the mutual information through conversations and united prayers and hymns (Col 3:16). "May the Word of Christ," he says, "dwell in you richly (πλουσίως) in all wisdom. Teach and admonish one another (διδάσκοντες καὶ νοουθετοῦντες ἑαυτοῦ)." Concerning these words the sainted Balduin says (p.m.1090.b.): "We use the divine Word for our mutual instruction and admonition. For this reason God bestows the Word and his saving understanding, so that we might be devoted to mutual edification not only for ourselves, but also for others; whereby, in this matter no one ought to be lacking a neighbor." In addition, the public office of teaching is not appropriate for women (whom rather it is fitting to keep silent and in silence to learn in the church according to 1 Cor 14:34 and 1 Tim 2:12ff.), nor for any believing man who wishes (because not all are teachers, διδάσκαλοι 1 Cor 12:29), but those specially chosen for this office. Confer the sainted Musaeus on the Church, Part I, Disp. VII. §. 17, 18, 19. p. 391, 392.

MIESLER: Should the one who preaches for the sake of practice be said to have a call to preach? The goal is the same, namely the conversion of man. And such preachers are sent from those, to whom the inspection of the church was entrusted. We must surely not mention a public calling, but a private sending. Luther distinguished between the calling of faith and of love. He called it the calling of faith, when someone from those who have the right of calling is called to the ordinary ministry of teaching. He

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<sup>3</sup> This question mark was inserted by Walther, presumably questioning the validity of Gerhard's statement.

called it the calling of love, when someone for the sake of practice is called and sent to hold an assembly on behalf of others.” (*New Work on Questions of Practical Theology*, f.474.b.)

## ANTITHESIS

QUENSTEDT: “The *Antithesis*: 1) of the *Anabaptists*, who give power in the church to anyone at all without any call to teach. Dr. Chemnitz in part 3 of his *Loci* concerning the church says: ‘The Anabaptists say, If anyone understands the doctrine of the gospel, whether he might be a shoemaker, or tailor, or craftsman, he ought to teach and to preach.’ But among the modern Anabaptists a schism has occurred: for some declare that a call to the office of teaching is necessary with a presupposed fitness of the individual to be called; others deny this, as it is possible to see on the basis of the writing, the Amsterdam Edition (1638 A.D.), which they call the “Friedenschrift” [Peace Writing] p. 95-96. 2) of the *Socinians*, who deny that a special calling is required as necessary to undertake the ministry. On the contrary they assert that a mediate call is not given through men, and thus they also deny the existence and truth of the mediate call, and at the same time the urgency of the same and its necessity to the holy ministry. Thus the Racovian Catechism states in chapter 2 concerning the church page 344. Socinus states in his tract concerning the church (f.10 T.1 Op.f.325): ‘To any Christian man it is permitted to practice charity towards his neighbor, even without any special office legitimately entrusted to him in this matter.’ ... Volkelius says (*Response to the empty refutation of the book called A Dissolution of the Gordian knot by Smigelicus*, c. 17 f. 171.): ‘Ministers certainly administer the Lord’s Supper and baptism in the established churches, as also Paul and perhaps others did, for the sake of preserving order and decorum, not however because of necessity, and these alone should be done.’ 3) of the *Arminians*, who almost commit the same blunder as the Anabaptists and Socinians in respect to the necessity of calling ministers of the Word. Their *Apologia pro Confessione* says (c. 21 f. 225), ‘The sending forth is either immediate, such as the sending of the apostles was, or mediate, as we say, such as the ordination of bishops through the apostles or their successors was. This sending forth ought not to be reckoned precisely as necessary to appoint a gospel minister or for the purpose that someone by right legitimately preaches to other people in the future the gospel, which was preached through the apostles.’ In fact they distinguish between the ‘established’ assembly and the ‘establishing or restoring’ assembly. In the former they recognize that the mediate sending forth has a place. Indeed they avow that it is necessary, but because of the necessity of order and decorum, not because of the necessity of divine command... 4) of the *Weigelians*, who have rejected the mediate call. See Weigelius (P. 1 of his Postil, p. 44; P.2 p. 31; and P.3 p. 60) where he says: ‘The sending of the servants should not happen by men, but by God himself.’ Confer also the “Sermon on Christianity” (p. 71ff.), where he says: ‘You are a teacher, but this was not conferred by the Holy Spirit.’ But Weigelius confuses ‘teacher’ with ‘minister of the Word.’ For the one who has acquired the highest degree of theology and is distinguished with the title of Doctor has not always been permitted to exercise the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. 5) of the *Puritans*, in England and of the *Brunists*, who also deny that a call is necessary for ministers of the Word. 6) of the *Tremblers* or *Quakers*, who directly reject the church’s ministry. See the *Quaker Abomination* from the Hamburg Ministerium c. 6, p. 215.” (Loc. cit., question 1., folio 1502ff.)

c) Indeed a layman or a woman can also administer *Baptism* in a case of emergency. See chapter 10, thesis 4, notes c) and d). But this is *extraordinary*. Accordingly no one other than the ordinary minister is permitted to administer the *holy Supper*, which does not have the same necessity. See chapter 11, thesis 4, note c).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Baier-Walther directs the reader to this note: “c) [The Lord’s Supper is] *not* ever on the same plane as in baptism [which] also a *layman* or a *female* [could administer]. For the same necessity does not exist for both sacraments. However, when an ordinary minister is lacking and a believing person anxiously desires this sacrament, *nevertheless* it is preferable to convince that person in every possible way of the sufficiency of spiritual eating and to show the dangers of other temptations, which can spring forth if the sacrament is administered by someone without a legitimate call, and therefore, with a dubious spirit and occurrence. / “Z. GRAPIUS:

MIESLER: “Is a *wanderer* able to administer baptism and the holy Supper and other parts of the ministry in another place? – In a church where he is not ordinarily called, he is unable to administer the sacraments, although elsewhere he had been a pastor and ordained to the ministry. Thus a wanderer is not able to administer baptism and the holy Supper and other parts of the ministry. For to a certain church he was called and ordained, which calling ceases when the virtue of ordination also expires, unless he obtains the care of a new church through a new and equally legitimate call. Ordination to the ministry is not sufficient, unless the call to a certain church is present. The sickle should not be put to a harvest that is not one’s own. But he is not even permitted to mount the holy pulpit in a church to which he has not been called because of an ignorant or unwilling pastor at that location. For the Spirit of God orders ‘that each one shepherd the flock entrusted to him,’ (1 Pet 5:2). Whoever wants to care for another’s flock, goes against the admonition of God in 1 Peter 4:15 ἀλλοτριεπίσκοπος. Thus Walther and Brochmand.” (Loc. cit., fol. 476. b.)

d) It is elsewhere called the *power of the keys, of binding and loosing*. See Matt 16:19; Jn 20:23.

LUTHER: “As the office of the Word is given to one individual, thus all offices are also given to him – all offices which are performed through the Word in the church.” (“Open Letter to the Council and Congregation of the City of Prague,” 1523. X, p. 1862)

LUTHER: “Upon whom the preaching office is placed, upon him the highest office in Christianity is placed. The same man may accordingly baptize, hold Mass and carry out every care for souls. Or if he does not want to do these, he may focus solely on preaching, leaving baptizing and different lower functions to another, as Christ and Paul and all the apostles did (Acts 6).” (“The Foundation and Basis from the Scriptures that a Christian Gathering or Congregation has the Right and Power to Judge All Teachers and to Call Teachers, to Install and Depose,” 1523. X, p. 1806)

CHEMNITZ: “Because many duties belong to the ministry of the church – duties which neither a single person nor even a few could completely accomplish among the great crowd of believers – those duties of the ministry are divided into certain *grades* of ministers, which afterward they called τάξεις [orders] or τάγματα [ranks], in order that therefore all duties are performed and undertaken properly, orderly, and for edification by the enlarged assembly of the church and in order that each one might have a certain designated station, as it were, in which he might be devoted to certain duties of the church’s ministry. Thus the apostles in the beginning took care of the ministry of the Word and sacraments and at the same time also distribution and management of alms. But afterward, when the number of disciples increased, they commended that part of the ministry, which pertained to alms, to others whom they called deacons... But those grades, concerning which we have spoken of up to this point, have not been something beyond or outside of the ministry of the Word and sacraments, but they have been the true duties of the ministry itself distributed among those grades because of the reasons already explained.” (*Examination of the Council of Trent*, Geneva Edition p. 574, 578) [CPH Kramer vol. 2, p. 682-683, 685]

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Priests are laymen, but only with an internal ικανότητι [sufficiency] for all sorts of offices of the church and thus also for the administration of the Eucharist. Let us not think that the sacrament is less valid because a layman induced perhaps by necessity or error shall have given [it]. See Justus Schomer in his tract concerning gatherings, dissertation I, thesis 34. (*Systema novissimarum controversiarum*, Book IV, p. 89. Cf. the above notations at Part III, chapter 8, thesis 6, p. 408ff.)”



CALOV: “There are *grades* in the holy office in respect to order, but not in respect to jurisdiction. Nevertheless, in this matter a difference is detected between the Old and New Testaments. For formerly there had been a certain ecclesiastical jurisdiction, for example Aaron’s jurisdiction over the priests and Levites and gatekeepers. Yet, we leave that in its place. But in the New Testament we admit no church jurisdiction which comes from divine right, except a general one, that all is to be done in an orderly and proper way in the church. Still by agreed-upon human right the lord of a territory exercises jurisdiction either through the consistory alone or also through superintendents (such as perhaps Titus was in Crete) or by whatever method he pleases, provided that the propriety of order is not violated.” (*Systema Locorum Theologicorum*, Book VIII, p. 288)

GERHARD: “We say that the *duties* of the ministry are most correctly appraised on the basis of the *goal*, because of which the church’s ministry has been divinely instituted and to this time is preserved... Therefore in general the duties of the church’s ministers are *seven*, to which the rest can generally be related: 1. the divine preaching of the Word, 2. the dispensing of the Sacraments, 3. prayer on behalf of the flock entrusted to him, 4. honest management of life and morals, 5. the administration of church discipline, 6. the preservation of church rites, 7. the care for the poor and the visiting of the sick.” (Locus on the Church’s Ministry, §. 265)

LUTHER: “In this history (Acts 6:1ff.) you see first, how a Christian congregation should be fashioned. In addition you see a correct picture of a spiritual government, which the apostles here rule. They look after souls, going around with preaching and with praying, yet provide also that the body is taken care of, raising up several men who distribute the goods as you have heard. Thus the Christian government supplies the people both in body and soul, that no one has any need, as Luke says, and all were fed richly and supplied well both in body and soul.” (*Church Postil*, XI, p. 2754ff.)

LUTHER: “When a true shepherd or caretaker of souls has supplied his people with the preaching of the gospel before all things, after that he should bestow care so diligently upon no other thing than that the poor might also be fed and supported. For it never fails that where a church or congregation of God is, in that very place there must certainly also be poor people, who are generally only the upright students or disciples of the gospel.” (*Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, VIII, p. 1762) [LW 26:105]

## § 8. *The Duties in Teaching*

**a)** These things belong to the office of teaching: that the **b)** *teachings* of the faith, **c)** which are divinely revealed, **d)** and taught according to the capacity of the hearers; **e)** are clearly set forth and **f)** firmly established; **g)** that the opposing *errors*, concerning which we must fear lest from some other place they worm their way in to souls, are distinctly denounced and **h)** are proved to be evil, in so far as they wage war with the Word of God; that the things, which ought to be **i)** *done* according to the law and duties of Christians in whatever their station, are clearly taught and men are stirred on and moved to the preferred things with firm direct arguments and **k)** convinced at appropriate points; that *sins* and *vices* to avoid and to consider are shown, as far as guilt and culpability of punishment are concerned and after that the souls of men are diverted and **l)** are corrected. Finally, it belongs to the office of teaching that the minds of the afflicted and anxious are encouraged and strengthened **m)** with solace in their proper condition conferred from heaven.

**a)** According to the words of 2 Timothy 3:15, 16, where *good works of the man of God* or of the minister of the church are numbered. Cf. Prolegomena, chapter 2, §.11.

**b)** To which the word *διδασκαλίας* refers. (cf. loc. cit.)

c) For they should *not* form *new* teachings, *but* they should show that they have clearly been derived from the Scriptures, the only source of knowing. Thus the minister is ordered to be *tenacious for that which accords with sound teaching and is a faithful saying*, or for that which belongs to the sure and established faith and was produced by divine inspiration. (Confer the sainted Musaeus' preface to the *Introduction to Theology*, close to the beginning.)

d) It is necessary, namely, that he is *διδασκτικόν*, *able to teach* (1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 2:24). Thus in general one method of teaching ought to be applied to the common group of believers in the church's gatherings around the pulpit. Still another method should be used for those youths, who are free to attend to [the development of] good skills and to the study of theology and to be taught in the doctrine of faith and morals in the theological schools from the academic chair. (See the more extended section of the sainted Musaeus in the locus cited.)

e) This is sometimes called *παραφράζειν* to *explain* the ambiguities which develop surrounding words, if they occur. At other times it is called *ὀρθοτομεῖν*, to *rightly divide the word of truth* (2 Tim 2:15).

f) Lest the hearers *allow themselves to be carried about as children being driven by every wind of teaching* (Eph 4:14). But rather *they should grow in the name of Christ* (2 Pet 3:18; Col 1:9). Confer the sainted Musaeus, loc. cit. p. 9, 10. At the same time it stands that *a part of teaching which is not taken from the Scriptures* must not be set forth *as though it were necessary to believe it for salvation* (or to do it *for moral purity of life*), *nor should anything which does not agree with Scripture be attached to its interpretation or verification*. (Ibid. p. 5)

g) Nor should any errors, however shabby and obsolete, be examined in an unwholesome way, much less in such a way that they appear to be taught or recommended.

h) Here is where *ἔλεγχος* [correction] belongs, which Paul mentions in 2 Timothy 3:16 and Titus 1:9. We must defend the sacred doctrine against enemies of the truth, and therefore, against their objections and exceptions. They must be compelled to be silent, as those who do not know the things they oppose under the appearance of truth should be compelled to be silent. And this is *ἐπιστομίξειν τοῦ ματαιολόγου καὶ φρεναπάτας*, to *close the mouth to idle talks and deceivers of minds* (Tit 1:10, 11). Confer Musaeus loc. cit.

i) Accordingly, among the works of a minister Paul includes *ἡ παιδεία ἢ ἐν τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ*, the *instruction* (for someone, just as for a *child*) *in righteousness* or moral purity of life (2 Tim 3:16).

k) For the intellect must be taught in such a way that the will at the same time is moved to action.

l) Here this *ἐπανόρθωσις*, or *correction of morals* (2 Tim 3:16), considers how it happens that those things, which have for instance fallen down or been distorted, are restored to their upright state. That is to say, they are set back up or brought back.

m) See 2 Corinthians 1:4. However, the *consolation* itself must be directed to *παιδείαν* or to *διδασκαλίαν*, just as *Gerhard* teaches in his commentary on Romans 15:4. Confer the things we have said in the *Compendium of Homiletical Theology*, Part I, chapter VII, §. 3, p. 128.

## § 9. *The Duties in Administering the Sacraments*

In the administration of the *sacraments* ministers should pay attention not only that they accurately observe the **a)** sense of the *institution* of each sacrament, but also that they administer those means of grace **b)** at the right time to those who have need and are *not unworthy*. Likewise they are equally *not* to admit the **c)** *unworthy*.

**a)** Accordingly Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:23 writes concerning the Eucharist: *I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you.*

**b)** Therefore lest by their own fault they allow an *infant* to die without baptism or an *adult* human being, contrite and longing for it, to die without the gift of the Eucharist.

**c)** Lest *holy things are tossed to the dogs or pearls to swine* (Matt 7:6). So we speak concerning those people, who are *clearly* recognized to be unworthy and *can* be held back. In this manner it is taught more thoroughly in Moral Theology.

### § 10. *The Duties in Loosing Sins*

As far as the office of the *loosing* and *binding* of sins, we have to note that **a)** the *forgiveness* of sins should be announced not only **b)** *universally* and impartially to all penitent believers in Christ, but also specifically and **c)** *individually* to those, who have given **d)** by means of a *confession* **e)** plausible signs of repentance and faith and seek to be absolved from sin. And that is not a mere declaration, but serves as **f)** an *effective confirmation* of the forgiveness of sins accomplished by God.

**a)** It is certain that the very *authority* and power [to forgive sins] do not *essentially* belong to any person who forgives sins, but only to God. (See Is 43:25; Mk 2:7) But God and Christ, *θεάνθρωπος*, exercise that forgiveness *through the ministry* by announcing it to men with an audible voice. Nevertheless, this announcement is not ineffective, as we shall soon discuss.

LUTHER: “They (the keys) are the executors, *performers* and drivers of the gospel, which preach simply these two parts: repentance and the forgiveness of sins (Lk 24:47).” (“Writing on the Keys,” 1530. XIX, p. 1184) [LW 40:373]

**b)** Just as in our churches on individual *Sundays* a formula of confession is read *in general*, so also absolution generally understood is applied.

**c)** This they call *private absolution*. Article XI of the Augsburg Confession teaches that the same should be *retained in churches*.

AUGSBURG CONFESSION: “Thus also the gloss in the decretals teaches (On Repentance, distinction 5, chapter ‘*Consideret*’) that confession is *not* commanded *by the Scriptures* but has been established *by the church*. Nevertheless it is diligently taught by pastors that confession should be preserved on account of absolution, which is the chief and most eminent part of it, for the comfort of terrified consciences and for the sake of other reasons as well.” (*Triglotta*, p. 71. Art. XXV, para. 12, 13)

**d)** Certainly [this confession is given] in the presence of a minister of the church. *Either* a person confesses sins in the assembly *or* he confesses specific sins face to face, especially if his sins are distressing him. Indeed sins are to be confessed elsewhere both in the presence of God, according to Psalms 32:5 and 51:5,6, and in the presence of *a neighbor*, if he has been hurt by us (see James 5:16). *Here* we must especially consider what is meant by “in the presence of *a minister*” and whether that is required to obtain absolution or remission of sins from the office of the keys. Cf. Matthew 3:6 and these words of *Gerhard*: *They call the private confession in*

*the presence of a minister of the church auricular confession. Although it does not have an express and special mandate and therefore, is not of absolute necessity, private confession should, nevertheless, by no means be rashly neglected or abrogated, since it offers many advantages and is not the last part of ecclesiastical instruction, and since it has been received by public consensus of the church. Rather, it should be used devoutly and in true reverence for God, especially by those who come to the holy assembly (Vol. III, Locus on Repentance, §. 99).*

B. MEISNER: “Our adversaries distinguish between that which is necessary for the essence and that which is necessary for the benefit. The rite of private confession is useful for the remission of sins and for the use and fruit of the Supper, not absolutely as if those things could not be obtained without that rite, but with the view of drawing things out for the advantage of the individual. For 1) the person who makes use of it can more firmly believe the word of absolution, because that absolution is announced and applied to him as an individual by the minister who acts in the place and name of Christ himself; and 2) he can prepare himself better to partake worthily of the holy Supper, since he listens attentively and learns diligently in private conversation as his method of preparation. None of our teachers has either censured or condemned *general absolution* as impious. Rather, it is used not only among the Reformed (those formerly called Calvinists) but also in certain Lutheran churches. And by the grace of God we know that the word of absolution, which a minister announces generally by the name and command of Christ to those who confess, is that very same word which in our churches the minister applies not to all in a general way, but to each person individually as true and efficacious. This absolution is not only true and efficacious, but it is also advantageous, as we said above for the reasons stated.” (*Disputation concerning the Adiaphoristic School*, VII. E. 2. b.)

LUTHER: “For this reason, if they desire our counsel in this matter, they should understand us in this way, that there are two parts in confession: first, to recount sins. In this part, before the enthusiasts were able to dream up something else, we by God’s grace have released and set free consciences from an unbearable burden and impossible obedience to papal law, in which [the pope] commands a recounting of all sins and with that produces such anxiety and distress for poor consciences that they must despair... It is only reasonable that we content ourselves with such great, glorious freedom and thank God without ceasing for it, as a great, inexpressible, comforting gift... Next to this freedom we maintain the custom that a penitent person recount some of the sins which weigh down on him the most. And we do this not for the sake of those who understand. For we demand nothing from our pastor, chaplain, Master Philipp and such people who know what sin is. But because our dear youth are growing daily, and because the common man understands little, for their sakes we maintain such a custom, so that they may be educated in Christian discipline and understanding. For such confessions occur not only so that sins may be recounted, but also so that one may examine the people to see if they understand the Lord’s Prayer, the Creeds, the Ten Commandments, and whatever else is in the Catechism. We have well experienced how the common people and youth learn little from the sermon if they aren’t specifically questioned and examined. What would a pastor want, but to do what is better? And what could be more important, than that the people go to the Sacrament? Indeed it is true, when the preachers administer mere bread and wine for the Sacrament, there isn’t much concern about to whom they administer it, or what those who receive it understand and believe. There a sow gorges with others, and the preachers are justly left with such troubles. For they want to have wild, senseless saints; they don’t intend to train any Christians. But what they want they have so done, so that over the past three years all has been destroyed—neither God, nor Christ, nor the Sacrament, nor Christians remain any more. But because we plan on training Christians and leaving them behind after we’re gone, and because we intend to administer the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament, we will not and cannot administer that Sacrament to anyone, if someone does not first examine him to see what he has learned from the Catechism and to see whether he wants to renounce the sins he has committed. For we don’t want to

make a pigsty out of Christ's church by letting each and every unexamined person run to the Sacrament like pigs to the trough. We leave such churches to the enthusiasts... Since, then, this custom [that is, confession] is such an old, laudable, Christian, necessary discipline with which one trains and prepares Christians to live rightly, to learn Christ, and to confess him before the world, we can indeed observe from that how unlearned and inept the teachers are who condemn confession as something not commanded by God—as if they would actually know so admirably well what the command of God is. It is without a doubt God's command that one should teach and learn his Word, both publicly and individually, and that one should do that as best as he can. Although God does not mention or fix specific places, persons, customs and times in which one should teach and learn his Word, nevertheless such clumsy teachers ought to have corrected their misunderstanding by noting that God wants to have his Word promoted every day, in every possible way, in every place. As he also commanded in [the Book of] Moses (Deut 6:5, 6ff.), they should think on his commands when they walk, when they stand and when they sit, and they should write them in every place. If a pastor, realizing that he cannot bring God's Word to every person at all times and places would make use of the opportunity he has in confession to speak to this person at this time in this place, the enthusiasts would cry, 'Oh devil! How wrong that is—that pastor is acting completely without and contrary to God's Word and command!' And how very holy the enthusiasts are who prevent such a thing, so that one doesn't teach God's Word at *this* time and place, though we are obligated to teach it at *all* times and places (where we can)! ... *If thousand upon thousand worlds were mine, still I would rather lose it all than let the most insignificant tidbit of someone's confession come out of the church...* The other part of confession is absolution, which the pastor speaks in God's stead. For this reason it is nothing other than God's Word, with which he comforts our heart and strengthens it against the angry conscience. We should believe and trust it as much as we trust God himself... And this part is for not only the youth and the common people, but it is profitable and necessary for everyone. No one should despise it, if he is as learned and holy as he claims. For who has come so far that he is not in need of God's Word or may despise it? For the sake of absolution I need confession most of all. I will not and cannot do without it, for it often daily gives me great comfort when I am troubled and afflicted. But because the enthusiasts are secure and know nothing of grief and affliction, they easily despise the medicine and comfort. They also want to take it away from and prohibit it from those who make use of it and must have it... Thus we make use of confession as a Christian exercise. In the first part we exercise ourselves in the law, in the second part the gospel. For in the first part we learn how to correctly use the law (as St. Paul speaks), namely to recognize and hate sin. In the second part we exercise ourselves in the gospel, we learn of God's promise and rightly lay hold of comfort, and thus we bring in the work which one does in the pulpit. For if a preacher teaches law and gospel well in the pulpit, nevertheless he must leave it at that. He does not question, drill, or ask anyone whether he understands it. He also cannot see if there's something missing, or whom he should comfort or rebuke further, because he doesn't have any individual before him whom he may examine. And although the listener hears both law and gospel in the sermon, nevertheless he grasps it much more strongly and is more certain of it when it is spoken to him personally as a separate individual." ("Letter of Warning to Those at Frankfurt am Main to Beware of Zwinglian Teaching," 1533. XVII, p. 2448-54.)

e) For sins need to be confessed by reason of the *liability to guilt and punishment* and even as *displeasing things*, which trouble us and from which we desire *to be freed* through Christ.

f) For that which is signified by the word of the minister is really that same thing which is presented and exhibited, actually confirmed from heaven, to those contrite believers. This is done as surely as if Christ himself would personally speak to the penitent what he said to the paralytic in Matthew 9:2, "Take heart, your sins are forgiven." For this reason he observes in John 20:23, "If you forgive anyone, they are forgiven."

AUGSBURG CONFESSION: “By this the people are taught how comforting the word of absolution is; they are taught how highly and dearly to esteem absolution. For it is not the voice or word of some common man, but rather *God’s word* which forgives sins. For it is spoken in the place of God and by God’s command. It is taught with great diligence concerning this command and power of the keys how comforting and how necessary it is for terrified consciences. In addition to this, as God demands, we ought to believe this absolution no less than if God’s voice would ring out from heaven. We should take comfort and know that through faith we obtain the forgiveness of sins.” (*Triglotta*, p. 69, Art. XXV)

CHRISTIAN CHEMNITZ: “One must know concerning the form (of absolution) whether it has to be *categorical* or *conditional* and hypothetical? For Tarnovius writes thus in locus 2, chapter 23, p. 829: ‘Moreover the form and mode is always conditional...’ Either these words speak of the *salutary fruit* of absolution and the application of such on the part of the person who confesses (in which case it is true that the forgiveness of sins is conferred to the penitent alone), or they speak of the form of absolution considered on the part of God who offers grace and the remission of sins to all men. How great is his desire to do this! Whichever way these words are understood, they nevertheless do not prove that the *form* of absolution must be conditional and understood in this way: If you repent of your sins and believe in Jesus Christ, I absolve you. But the form ought to be categorical or understood in a way that recognizes the true cause: And I absolve you, etc. Or: When you repent of your sins and believe that your Savior has made satisfaction for them, then I absolve you in the place of God and by the authority of my office. For it has been entrusted to ministers of the church to administer the sacraments and announce absolution according to the external signs, observing what people say with their mouths or body language. The internal things, however, they leave to God. For although, as it is sometimes able to be done, someone might be a hypocrite and fake repentance, nevertheless absolution on the part of God who offers it remains authoritative and then begins to be efficacious for salvation, when that fiction has been withdrawn by a truthful confession. St. Paul wrote: Ἀμεταμέλητα γὰρ τᾶ χαρίσματα καὶ ἡ κλήσις τοῦ θεοῦ [For the gifts and call of God are irrevocable.] (Rom 11:29; Rom 3:4). Thus it appears that the opinion of Tarnovius, which teaches that the form and mode of absolution must always be conditional, is not able to be proved. Rather, it must be categorical, or at least it must be causal, syllogistic, or inferential. For otherwise 1) even the baptism of adults and the holy Supper would have to be administered conditionally; and 2) the certainty of absolution and the forgiveness of sins would somehow be endangered. These things depend not so much on the contrition and faith of the one receiving and confessing as on God, who makes the offer and promise. For the person, who confesses and who appears penitent, either is a hypocrite or not, as outward things go. Nevertheless, absolution is always fixed, firm, and certain on God’s part. And because the confessor sits in the place of God, not as an omniscient scrutinizer of hearts, but as a servant, and since he is bound to external words and body language and to loving judgment and is not commanded to absolve conditionally, therefore he ought to absolve categorically, not conditionally. 3) This question is not concerned with the fruit and efficacy of absolution, but with its form and essence, which the hypocrites also receive in whole... We may pass silently over 4) that it is very easy to give the person confessing the opportunity to doubt the truthfulness of absolution and forgiveness. For if the person’s contrition has not been severe enough or his faith too weak or if he has been uncertain about the words of confession, the frightened person would very easily begin to doubt, and surely his sins would not be forgiven him through the absolution, would they? 5) Moreover if the confessor knew that the confessing person was not willing to confess or believe or change his life, then he would command him to return at a better time when his heart is truly penitent, rather than absolve him conditionally. For we require diligent attention to that and reject a conditional absolution along with many other people.” (*Instruction for the Future Minister*, 1660. p. 286-292)

LUTHER: “Truly absolution is certain and eternal, even if you don’t believe in it. Just as the sun truly shines and beams in heaven and is the true sun, even if you don’t see it or are crawling around in the cellar so that you aren’t able to see it, which isn’t the sun’s fault, but yours... Thus God knows nothing about the selling of the keys which the pope sponsors. Rather, absolution is entirely certain. If then you don’t believe the absolution, it is not their fault, but yours. Why don’t you accept it? If I hand out gold and silver and you accept it, then you have it. But if instead you despise and refuse my gift, then it nevertheless remains gold and silver in its nature and worth. In the same way, God does not fail. We do. We often receive absolution without faith, but for that reason it does not become ashes and filth. Rather, it is God’s gift.” (“Sermon on the last chapter of Matthew,” Erlangen Ed., XLIV, p. 167ff.)

Compare the words of Luther written above on this matter to those written in Part III, ch. 5, p. 263ff.

#### ANTITHESIS

QUENSTEDT: “*Antithesis*: 1) *of the Calvinists*, who declare that ministers of the word do not forgive sins, not even in an instrumental way, but only in a sacramental and metonymical way of speaking. They say that the remission of sins occurs for the elect *with* the minister, but not *through* the minister. Thus Zwingli in volume 2 in his “Response to the Lutheran Confession” says (p. 430): ‘Christ’s words referred to in John 20:23: If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven them etc., in no way have the sense that Christ, by saying this, wanted to yield to his disciples the power to forgive sins, for there is no creature so outstanding and excellent that it would be able to forgive sins.’ Thus also Beza in part 1 of his “Response to the Colloquy at Mompelgard” (p. 31) says: ‘God does not truly and effectively forgive sins through men, but out of himself and through himself, that is, immediately.’ Grynaeus in his “Heidelberg Disputation,” thesis 6, statement 4 says: ‘By the use of a sacramental manner of speaking, the effect of the internal ministry is ascribed to the external ministry as a way of honoring it.’ Fischer teaches the same in his comments on the passages cited from Matthew. 2) *of the Enthusiasts, Schwenkfeldians, Weigelians, and Anabaptists*, who deny in general that the external ministry of the word and sacraments are a means of conferring faith and salvation. Instead, they direct people to the internal word and the inner working of the Holy Spirit... 3) *of the Socinians*, who state that the ministers of the church do not actually (even instrumentally) forgive the sins of penitent men, but they do so only in a manner that symbolizes and talks about God’s forgiveness. Wolzogenius’ commentary on Matthew 16:19 says (vol. 1, Oper. f. 317): ‘The apostles do not have any successors in their power and authority to forgive sins, but this power returned to God and Christ when they departed from this world.’ Volkelius teaches the same where he affirms that even the remission of sins given by the apostles was in no way their own nor effective, but only a declaration and announcement (*On True Religion*, loc. 6, c. 4, f. 639ff. and in *Dissolution of an entwined Gordian knot by Smiglecius*, f. 72). What is more, they deny the power to forgive sins to Christ himself while he lived on earth, for thus Volkelius says: ‘Christ, while he was mortal, did not truly and completely have the power to forgive sins.’ This same thing was judged to be blasphemy by the Jesuit Smiglecius. 4) *of the Arminians*, who teach the same as the Socinians. See their Confession and Apology, chapters 21 and 23.” (Loc. cit., q. 5, f. 1522ff.)

#### § 11. *The Duties in Binding Sins*

Likewise, regarding the *binding* of sins by the church’s minister, it stands that he announces **a)** *universally* not only **b)** the wrath of God and punishments to all the unbelieving and impenitent people, but he also withholds the remission of sins in particular or **c)** *individually* from **d)** gross and **e)** widely known sinners and **f)** by the consensus of the church keeps them *either* **g)** from the use of the holy Supper alone *or* directly expels them **h)** from the company of the church and hands them over to Satan. This in turn is not a mere declaration, but an **i)** *effective* **k)** judgment.

- a)** Accordingly Paul pronounces *anathema* on all who assert false doctrine (Gal 1:8-9) and on all *not loving Jesus Christ* (1 Cor 16:22). And for this reason in our churches a *general* formula of the retention of sins is appended to the general absolution read in the public gatherings.
- b)** For just as absolution from sins conveys an announcement of grace, so the retention of sins conveys an announcement of divine wrath. And the minister should not bind the sins of humans by his own authority, but by the authority and name of Christ and of the church.
- c)** By identifying a specific person, just as Paul identifies an *incestuous man* (1 Cor 5:2) and *Hymenaeus and Alexander* (1 Tim 1:20).
- d)** “For a mild admonition, along with an encouragement to watch out for lapses in the future, suffices for someone who has sinned due to ignorance or weakness,” says the sainted Gerhard in his “Locus on the Church’s Ministry,” §. 286.
- e)** It is widely known when a public offense arises from a fall into sin. For such people “are to be rebuked in the presence of everyone, that the others also may be afraid,” as the apostle teaches (1 Tim 5:20).
- f)** Where this is considered (Matt 18:17): “Tell it to the church (i.e. to the presbytery, the assembly of elders, who represent the church). If he will not listen to the church, (then finally) let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector.” For although this passage deals with the causes of *private* offenses and of seeking reconciliation according to law, nevertheless we are rightly commanded to observe the administration of church discipline with any sinner, keeping in mind certain steps of admonition and a final decision. See the blessed Johann Major in the preface of his *Apologetic against Valerius, the Great Capuchin*.

SMALCALD ARTICLES: “Christ gives the highest and final judgment to the church when he says, ‘Tell it the church.’” (“Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope,” *Triglotta*, p. 511)

GERHARD: “In the apostolic and primitive church, there were two kinds of *presbyters*, whom you will have called *seniores* [*elders*] in Latin, as is understood from 1 Timothy 5:17. For some people were performing the duty of teaching or as the apostle says in that passage, ‘they were laboring in word and doctrine.’ They were called bishops, pastors, etc. But certain others took the lead as far as the judgment of morals and the preserving of church discipline were concerned, since the magistrate was still a heathen and somewhat left teaching alone in this church. These were being called *κυβερνήται*, governors, as is gathered from 1 Corinthians 12:28, and *προϊστάμενοι* [leaders] from Romans 12:8. Ambrose on 1 Timothy 5 at the beginning: ‘Both the synagogue and, later, the *church* had elders, without whose counsel nothing was carried out in the church. I do not know what carelessness caused that to become obsolete, except perhaps it was the idleness of the teachers or great pride, until they alone would be seen as something [special].’ And both were commonly called *προεστώτες* [ruling ones] (1 Tim 5:17) and *ἡγούμενοι* [leading ones] (Acts 15:22; Heb 13:7, 17, 24). When both groups were united at the same time, Paul calls that holy assembled group *the body of elders* (1 Tim 4:14): ‘Do not neglect the gift which is in you, which was given to you through a prophecy together with the laying on of hands by the body of elders.’” (Locus on the Church’s Ministry, §. 232) [Editor’s Note: Note the further reference to different forms of ministry.]

GERHARD: “It happens that the name ‘church’ is ascribed through a figure of synecdoche 1) to the body of elders or church council (Matt 18:17): ‘If he will not listen to them, tell it to the church.’ Although it



is not absurd to understand by the name 'church' the entire congregation of believers also in this passage, since Doctor Paul seems to explain it in this way (1 Tim 5:20): 'Rebuke sinners before everyone, so that the others may have fear.' And this latter meaning is to be preferred to the first because of the tricks of the papalists, who on the basis of this passage assign authority to the prelates to establish anything whatsoever, and they claim the name 'church' for them alone, which is called the representative church, just as Aristotle says (*Ethics* bk. 9, ch. 9): 'The state is especially that which is principal in it.'" (Locus on the Church, §. 14)

LUTHER: "Here (in Matt 18) you hear that there are going to be certain public sins, committed by certain known persons, when one brother sees the other sinning. You also hear that these are such who are first rebuked in a brotherly manner and finally convicted publicly before the congregation. Therefore the bulls and bans which read: 'We excommunicate *ipso facto*, the sentence having been pronounced, a three-fold warning nevertheless having been issued first' and 'from the fullness of our power' – such a bull and ban is called a sh\*\*\*-ban in German. I call it the devil's ban and not God's ban, since the people are banned with maliciousness before they are publicly convicted before the congregation. This goes against Christ's command. Into this category fall all the bans which the officials and spiritual courthouses juggle, and when people 10, 20, or 30 miles away are put under the ban before the congregation with a slip of paper, even though they are never rebuked, accused, or convicted in that congregation and before her pastor. Instead, here comes a bat flying out of one official's corner without witnesses and without God's command. You need not fear such a sh\*\*\*-ban. If a bishop or official wants to put someone under the ban, let him go to the congregation and the pastor where the person under question is to be put under the ban. And let the bishop or official act upon that person as is right according to these words of Christ. I say all this because the congregation that should ban such a person should know and be certain how that person has merited and come under the ban, as the text of Christ says here. Otherwise the congregation might be deceived and accept a false ban and do injustice to her neighbor. The keys would then be abused, God would be dishonored, and love for one's neighbor would be damaged, all of which a Christian congregation should not tolerate. For the congregation is also involved when someone in her midst should be banned, as Christ says here. And she is not required to believe the official's paper slip or the bishop's letters. Indeed, here she is required not to believe them. For one should not believe men in the affairs of God. Thus a Christian congregation is not the official's servant girl, or the bishop's jailer, that he may say to her, 'Here, Greta, here, Hans, hold so-and-so or such-and-such under the ban for me.' 'Yes, sir, at your service, dear official.' In secular authority such a correspondence might make sense, but here, where souls are concerned, the congregation should also be right alongside as judge and mistress. St. Paul was an apostle, yet he did not want to put under the ban the man who had taken his stepmother. He wanted the congregation also to be involved (1 Cor 5:1, 5)." ("Writing on the Keys," 1530. XIX, p. 1181ff.) [LW 40:370-372]

CALOV: If you consider the material cause (of excommunication), it must not be carried out either by ministers of the Word alone or by the church alone, but by the ministry and assembly of the church at the same time. In just the same way, the apostle calls himself certainly absent in body, but present in spirit, and he calls the church gathered in the name of Jesus Christ one with his spirit. When Grotius understands that the assembly does not consist of all the Christians, but only the best ones, he does so thoughtlessly, for it would have been unknown who should be gathered in this way or who should be deemed the best. ... Although the apostle unites himself to the church assembly in this action, he is not regarded as an apostle here, but as a servant of the church (1 Cor 4:1)... The church not only pours out prayers to God, but it reports a judiciary sentence passed in heaven." (*Biblia Illustrata* on 1 Cor 5:5)

**g)** Certainly *lest holy things be thrown to the dogs, etc.* according to Matthew 7:6. They call this the *lesser excommunication* and they teach that a church's minister should not undertake it alone without the consent of the church council or consistory.

ECKHARD: "If they happen to be unworthy in the matter of the Lord's body and blood and eat and drink judgment on themselves, it follows that the minister who knowingly admits such people is a cause of this sin, makes himself a partaker of it, and gravely offends God, yes, makes himself a liar judged by the Word of God. For he promises the grace of God to someone upon whom he knows God's wrath remains (Jn 3:36). He offers eternal life to someone to whom, according to his conscience, death, the wages of sin, is owed (Rom 6:23). For that reason it is not without cause that the "Cynos. Arrangement of the church of Württemberg" says (p.40): 'In the examination ministers may advise against Holy Communion, forbid it, or suspend it by request, but no minister should exercise the public ban on his own authority.'" (*The Conscientious Pastor*, p. 177)

**h)** They call this the *greater excommunication*. With this they have in view 1 Corinthians 5:3ff. where Paul gives the command that an incestuous man, in a solemn act, in a gathering of the entire church, from which he is *absent in body but present in spirit, in the name and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ*, should be expelled from the fellowship of the church and *handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus*. For we should certainly not seek the damnation of the excommunicated, but their eternal salvation.

J. MEISNER: "As far as the reality of the promise is concerned, the power of binding and loosing at one point was granted to Peter alone (Matt 16:19) and elsewhere to all the apostles at the same time (Jn 20:23). Although this is true, nevertheless the exercise of it is here particularly granted for the sake of a more certain judgment to the church, as opposed to one or even to many ministers. This exercise entails that someone is declared worthy of being regarded as a heathen (which we call the greater excommunication). The church elsewhere will indeed take possession of the universal rights of her bridegroom, but she conducts the act of the assembly through the ministry." (*Exercises of Theology in the Gospel of Matthew*, Wittenberg 1664, chapter 18)

LUTHER: "The apostle orders the guilty man to be handed over for the destruction of his *flesh*, so that his spirit may be saved. Therefore, those who think that through excommunication *souls* are handed over to the devil judge poorly. The destruction of the flesh in repentance and through a change of mind is useful for the growth of the spirit and the renewal of man's inner being." ("Disputation Concerning Excommunication," 1521. Latin Works pertaining to Reformation History, Erlangen Edition, Vol. IV, p. 343ff.)

**i)** For the very application of legal threats puts a heavy weight on the accused persons. However, sinners, who *have sinned* not only against God but also *against the church*, surely can also be bound by the church. They will not obtain grace before God, unless they have returned into favor with the church and been absolved by her. But there is another understanding for those unjustly excommunicated.

**k)** Ministers of the church alone are not sufficient to restore church discipline once it has collapsed. They require the help of those who hold the *episcopal rights*, which they are not able to assume for themselves. Meanwhile, there is no lack of work for the church's ministers, because it is possible to work toward the conversion of sinners or that they are shown to be without excuse. See the sainted Musaeus, his preface to the "Tract concerning Repentance against Stenger" as far as d. 3. a. b.

LUTHER: “The laws rightly say that doing and *conspiring* must be punished with equal punishments. Thus if a bishop sees errors, heresies, wicked morals in the church, and does not reprove and does not excommunicate the impenitent, he has made himself a party to all of those sinners.” (See the exegetical works on Gen 19:15, Erlangen Edition, Vol. IV, 295ff.) [LW 3:279-280]

LUTHER: “At present we have no other ban in place than this: Those who live in public vices and who will not desist are not admitted to the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. This practice can be maintained, if none of us is offered the holy Sacrament unless he is first examined by a pastor or deacon. We also cannot imagine how another ban could be put in place at this time, for many cases come up that first require a *Cognitio* [inquiry or trial]. Now we cannot see how arranging and organizing the *Cognitio* could be done at present, since secular authorities do not want to have anything to do with this *Cognitio*. Therefore let the matter remain as it stands, namely that those who still remain in public vices are not offered the holy Sacrament.” (“To the Regents and Councilors,” 1532 de Wette IV, 388ff.) [LW 50:64]

GERHARD: “All those things” (order, the law of a diocese, jurisdiction, estate) “are said to belong to the *episcopal right*, not because they pertain by divine right to only the bishops at the exclusion of the Christian magistrate and people. But they are said to belong because they appropriated them long ago and still claim them for themselves in the papal kingdom according to the arrangement of canon law and the most current practice of the bishop... Even after it is introduced into the church canons, neither episcopal nor the right of a patron is able to assume the power belonging to the whole church by divine right for the choosing of ministers.” (Locus on the Church’s Ministry §.112, 114) Confer the notes in Part III, chapter 15, §. 8, i.

WALCH: “If a church finds herself in a natural situation where she is made up of such persons who live outside of a civil society, then the entire congregation has the power of government. The congregation can govern herself by collecting votes or charge a few with oversight or appoint some church officials.” (Lexicon Article on Church Government, p. 1556) [Editor’s Note: In these two statements, Walch recognizes that state involvement in the affairs of the church was not the norm for the early church. This existence of the church independent of the state, was, of course, exactly the situation Walther had to deal with in America.]

WALCH: “From what has already explicitly been said, what the method of governing was in the apostolic church must be easily decided. It was nothing other than the power of establishing in the external parts of religion those things, which sought to preserve an appropriate order and to maintain more easily the goal of the church. The power had been arranged in such a way that it belonged to the teachers and hearers of the community and was removed from every dominion. In the books of the New Testament we read that not only the apostles and ministers of the church were endowed with this power, although these had influence before others because of their authority, but also the listeners were endowed. From those things we recognize that if something had to be deliberated and decided, the people also gave their votes.” (*Church History*, p. 431)

GERHARD: “(The papalists teach): ‘Paul writes (1 Cor 11:34), when I come, I will arrange others, without a doubt given by power from heaven (2 Cor 10:8). Therefore the apostle appropriated for himself the absolute power to arrange in the church at will.’ We respond: the apostle did not arrange that very thing by a certain *αὐτοκρατορικῆ* [absolute] power, but with the assenting consensus of the church (2 Cor 8:8, οὐ κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν λέγω I speak not as if I am commanding this).” (Locus on the Church’s Ministry, §. 201)

FECHT: “The entire edifice of Christ’s church rests upon two pillars, so to speak: the proclamation of sound doctrine and the administration of church discipline. As the former maintains the internal life of the church, so the latter rules and governs the external... The more rigid the ancients were in this, the more negligent we have become in this world’s final age. This failure to discipline is the chief cause for our corrupt churches.” (*Pastoral Instruction*, Ed. 2, p. 164)

## § 12. *The Duties in External Ceremonies*

Finally, ministers of the church also occupy themselves with the **a)** *external* things, or **b)** rites and *ceremonies*, which in and of themselves **c)** certainly are *adiaphora*, but nevertheless are established **d)** to edify the church **e)** by the public authority of the church. These, however, are not to be **i)** instituted or observed for the reason of giving **f)** *worship* or **g)** *merit* to God, but **h)** for external *education*. They are not to be changed or **l)** abrogated unless such a thing is done **k)** wisely and by the practice of the church.

**a)** From this also the term “*external jurisdiction*” originates. Nevertheless, some assign to that term *excommunication*, *suspension* from participating in the sacred things, and even ordinances of ecclesiastical *law* and *constitution*, church *visitations*, etc., which ought to be assigned to the *bishop’s duties*. We will see more concerning these things in the locus concerning the Magistracy.

**b)** To this belong certain standards for *singing*, the use of musical *instruments*, certain *festivals*, *fasting days*, *the wedding rite*, *baptismal rites* (among which is *exorcism*), *the holy Supper*, *funeral rites*, etc.

**c)** Because, of course, they are not asserted in the Scriptures, but are eventually sanctioned by an *agreed upon* human law.

**d)** For example, because they are useful for good *order*, for arousing *attention* and *devotion* in holy matters, and certainly for *representing spiritual* things. However, the useless, unprofitable, and offensive ceremonies do not even deserve the term “the church’s things.”

B. MEISNER: “In the schools of theologians *adiaphora* are sometimes described *generally* as those things which are neither good nor evil in their nature, but which someone can use in a good or evil way. *Specifically* *adiaphora* are defined as those matters, whose use partly in the public administration of holy things, partly in the private exercise of divine worship is neither good nor evil, since they are not part of divine worship *per se* and do not advance or impede the eternal salvation of human beings. But because they were established for the sake of good order and decorum, they bring a certain beauty to religion and the church’s teaching in respect to human beings. *Generally* so called, they are those things which are observed in everyday life, such as food, drink, marriage, celibacy, clothing, civil contracts, travels, and in all these whatever almost completely pertains to a consideration of places, times, and persons. In these things, as Paul says (1 Cor 7:15), ὁ ἀδελφος ἢ ἡ ἀδελφή οὐ δεδούλωται, neither sister nor brother is subject and obligated to perform a necessary servitude and worship to God. People do not express more or less thanks by observing or not observing them for God. But whether someone does them or omits them, he does not sin unless some circumstance is added which renders the action wicked; for example, if their practices support errors, if they exhibit an opinion of worship, merit, and necessity. You see, because of the Word to live celibate or to enter into marriage is something ἀδιάφορον (1 Cor 7). But it is wicked if someone remains celibate, in order that he may avoid children or domestic affairs, or that he may merit eternal life and please God with this kind of life compared to others. On the other hand, it is wicked when someone enters marriage, in order that he can associate more safely with prostitutes. In the same way to eat or abstain from meats or wine is something μέσον [in the middle]. For let no one

judge you in food or drink (Col 2:16; Rom 14:1,2ff.; 1 Cor 6:13; 8:8; 10:25ff.; 1 Tim 4:1,2ff.). If both eating and drinking are done to care for the body, this is good. But if you drink wine to the point of intoxication or consume meats with a stumbling-block for your brother, then the one becomes evil because of inebriation (Eph 5:18) and the other because of [the effect on] the person of your neighbor (Rom 14:20; 1 Cor 8:11ff.). The same reasoning exists if he abstains from a certain food or drink for a set number of days under the opinion of necessity or merit, and meanwhile does not avoid extravagance in other things. This does not separate the sound fasting from non-fasting. Just as once Augustine determined the matter in his writing against the Manicheans, book 2 concerning church customs, so today it is detected by law in the papal fasts. But some adiaphora (*more specifically* so called), whose use exists in orthodox churches removed from the papal leaven, are partly objects, partly ceremonies and church traditions which are neither good nor evil. These were neither commanded nor forbidden with an express word of God, but were legitimately instituted from a free will by the church for the sake of order, propriety, and edification. As long as such are and remain, one can use them or not use them freely and without injury to conscience or loss of religion. Such are statues, shrines, festivals, feasts, elaborately decorated and instrumental music, and the instrument itself. Likewise in baptism there are such adiaphora, namely, the triple immersion and sprinkling, βαπτιστήριον [baptismal font], γυναικοβαπτισμος [baptism by a woman], the sign of the cross, the renunciation of the devil, exorcism, etc. In the administration of the Supper, such adiaphora are unleavened or leavened bread, the material and shape of the vessels or table, the color of the wine, the breaking of bread, etc. There are also such adiaphora in the ministry. They are the distinction of order, the difference of apparel, auricular confession, etc. We have called these rites and ceremonies ἀδιάφορα, by which word the internal quality of those things is signified and indicated. For since they correspond to the sign and term for their name, [the principle] ‘let them be adiaphora’ is indispensable. That is, they are free and middle things and nothing has been put under obligation (namely, expressed or commanded or prohibited) by a law in sacred things. For the affairs or ceremonies which are commanded or prohibited by a particular word of God cannot attain the name ἀδιαφορῶν, since they have not been placed in the free will of any man. Likewise, those things commanded can never be forbidden or abrogated and those things prohibited can never be established or commanded.” (*Disputation concerning the Adiaphoristic School*, I. B. 1. 2.)

e) For these things do not *absolutely* belong to the ministry *as much as* the office of teaching and administering the sacraments, but rather they belong *per se* to the *whole church* or to those who hold the church’s *rights* (which they call *episcopal* rights). Accordingly, in our churches they have been granted to the *civil magistrate* through the Passau Agreement and Religious Peace. [Editor’s Note: Here again the political ecclesiastical arrangements of Baier’s day are recognized as human arrangements, somewhat reluctantly followed by the church.] Nevertheless, they are granted in such way that the *church’s ministers* themselves ought to take part in their care, to carry them out in some way, or to regulate them in practice. The ministers also ought to inform the people concerning the reasoning and practice of them.

AUGSBURG CONFESSION: “What then should one think about Sunday and other church orders and ceremonies of this kind? Our teachers reply that the bishops or pastors may make arrangement so that things in the church take place in an orderly way... It is fitting for the Christian assembly to keep such arrangements *for the sake of love and peace* and to obey the bishops and pastors in these cases.” (*Triglotta*, p. 91. Art. XXVIII, para. 55) In order to explain these words CARPZOV adds: “When the Augsburg Confession in this place concedes the right of arranging ceremonies to bishops, we must observe that it is done 1) *with consideration for that particular time*, when it is also proper for the bishops *on the basis of human right*, just as §. ‘If they have anything’ had related (cf. p.64, §.29). We must also watch that 2) nothing is taken away from the *right of the whole church*, just as the Augsburg Confession clearly declares at the same time. Finally, we observe that 3) this is done with no other

thinking than under the *moderation* owed to method and purpose §. ‘Such Arrangements’ (p. 67, §. 55,56).” (*Isagogics on the Symbolical Books*, p. 750)

APOLOGY OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION: “So it is also certain that this word of the Lord Christ, ‘He who listens to you listens to me’ (Lk 10:16), does not speak of human regulations, but is directly contrary to them. For the apostles do not receive here a *mandatum cum libera*, i.e., an entirely free, boundless command and authority. No, they have a limited command, namely, not to preach their own word but God’s Word and the gospel. And the Lord Christ wants to strengthen all the world in these words, ‘He who listens to you listens to me,’ as it was also necessary for us to be completely certain that the preached Word is God’s power and that no one needs to search for or expect another word from heaven. Therefore this word, ‘He who listens to you listens to me,’ cannot be understood of human regulations. For Christ here wants them to teach in such a way that one might hear Christ himself through their mouths. So they certainly must not proclaim their own word, but his Word, his voice and gospel, should be heard. These clumsy jackasses take this comforting word, which most powerfully confirms our doctrine and constitutes much needed teaching and comfort for the Christian conscience, and they apply it to their foolish regulations, to their food, drink, clothing and similar childishness. They also quote this passage: ‘Obey those who show the way for you, etc.’ (Heb 13:17). This passage requires people to be obedient to the gospel. For he does not give the bishops a special dominion or imperial authority apart from the gospel. So also the bishops should not make a regulation contrary to the gospel, nor explain their regulations in a manner contrary to the gospel. For when they do that, then the gospel forbids us to be obedient to them, as Paul says to the Galatians, ‘If anyone would preach to you another gospel, let him be accursed’ (1:8). We also give the exact same answer in response to the passage, ‘The scribes, etc., sit on Moses’ seat. So keep and do everything that they tell you to keep’ (Matt 23:2,3). Certainly in this passage Jesus is not giving us a universal or general command to keep everything they command, even if it is contrary to God’s command and Word. For in another place Scripture says, ‘One must obey God rather than men’ (Acts 5:29). Therefore one should not listen to them when they teach in an unchristian manner and contrary to Scripture. So this passage also does not set up a government [in the Church] apart from the gospel. Therefore they cannot prove with the gospel their authority which they have established apart from the gospel. For the gospel does not tell us to teach *de traditionibus* [from traditions], but from God’s Word.” (*Triglotta*, p. 449. Art. XXVIII, para. 17-21)

LUTHER: “A bishop as such has no power to impose any regulation or ceremony on his church, unless that church gives its consent in clear words or in a silent way. For the church is a free lady and the bishops dare not lord it over the faith of the church or burden and trouble her against her will. For the bishops are but servants and caretakers of the church, not her lords. However, if the church as a body agrees with her bishop, then they can impose whatever regulation or ceremony they jointly want, as long as godliness does not suffer under it. They can also dispose of it again as they please. But the bishops are not seeking this kind of authority; they only want to domineer and have the liberty to do anything. We must not allow this or take any part in this wrongful suppression of the church and of the truth... Therefore we cannot, either through ecclesiastical or secular right, grant to the bishops the power to demand anything of the church, no matter how fitting and godly it may be. For one should never do anything evil in order that good may result. Even if they try to act with force and compel us to do it, we should sooner die than obey or give in to it, in order that we preserve the distinction between these two governments. For the sake of God’s will and law, and against all godlessness and sacrilege, we must not consent to such a demand.” (Reply to Melanchthon in Augsburg to the questions about human regulations that Melanchthon sent to him, from 1530. XVI, p.1207-9.) [LW 49:384-385, 386-387]

LUTHER: “The spiritual government is aimed only at sin. Where sin begins to take root, there this government should also take root, and not otherwise... But here we are talking about sins that are really

and truly sins. We are not talking about sins that any person has invented, but about those into which we are born, which are contrary to the command of God and against which the command of God testifies, not just the command of men.” (*House Postil*, XIII, p. 1186, 1188)

LUTHER: “Therefore I say that neither the pope, nor a bishop, nor any man has the power to place one syllable over a Christian, unless he does so with that Christian’s consent. Whatever takes place in any other way comes from a tyrannical spirit.” (Pamphlet on the Babylonian Captivity, 1520. XIX, p. 83) [LW 36:70]

LUTHER: “We have one Lord, and he is Christ, who rules our souls. The bishops should do nothing other than tend them. Here then St. Peter has overthrown and condemned with one word (1 Pet 5:5) all power of government that the pope now holds. He clearly concludes that popes do not have power to command one word, but that they should only be servants and say, ‘This is what your Lord Christ says, and for *that* reason you should do it.’ Christ also says this in Luke 22:25,26.” (Interpretation of the First Epistle of Peter, 1523. IX, p. 821) [LW 30:137]

LUTHER: “Among *Christians* there can and should be no authority, but each one is at the same time subject to the other. Paul says as much in Romans 12:10,16, ‘Each one should consider the other to be his master.’ Peter also says in 1 Peter 5:5, ‘All of you together, be subject to each other.’ Christ also means to say this in Luke 14:8, ‘When you are invited to the wedding, sit down at the lowest place.’ Among Christians there is no master except Christ himself and Christ alone. And what kind of authority can exist, when they are all equal and have one kind of right, power, wealth, and honor, and moreover no one desires to be the other’s master, but each one wants to be the other’s subject? Where such people exist, one could not establish any authority no matter how much he wanted. For the nature and manner of things does not permit the existence of a master where no one wants to be or can be a master. And where such people do not exist, there true Christians do not exist. What then are the priests and bishops? Answer: Their government is not an authority or power, but a service and office. For they are no better or higher than other Christians. Therefore they should also not lay down any law or command over others without their consent and permission. Rather their rule is nothing other than the promoting of God’s Word, in order that they may convey Christ and subdue heresy. For, as was already mentioned, one cannot rule Christians with anything other than God’s Word alone.” (“Writing concerning Secular Authorities,” 1523. X, p. 465f.) [LW 45:117]

CHEMNITZ: “If someone had wanted to attribute this to the apostles while they were living in the flesh—namely, that they had the divine authority to require laws concerning which they had no command or testimony of the divine Word, yes, that they could reinstitute things Christ had annulled or annul things he had instituted—without a doubt they would have shown with a loud cry and torn clothes that they did not acknowledge or approve that.” (*Examination of the Council of Trent*, Concerning Good Works, p. 179) [CPH Kramer vol. 1, p. 633]

f) For it is necessary that those things belonging *per se* to the worship of God are commanded by God, if not expressly, at least through a necessary consequence. From this we must watch out lest consciences are burdened, according to the warning of the Augsburg Confession, article XV. And thus they guard the *fourth* step of our *Christian liberty*, certainly, *from human traditions in the church, because they do not consider these things as worship or absolutely necessary, but outside a case of scandal they can be neglected or omitted without sin.*

**g)** They are either merit *de condigo* [full merit, an act deserving God's grace] or *de congruo* [half merit or an act not truly deserving of grace, but nevertheless receiving grace from the divine generosity<sup>5</sup>].

**h)** According to those which we have mentioned in note d).

**i)** Namely, *where, when, and as long as* the church's use endures.

**k)** Therefore, *without* fickleness or offense, *without* commotion and carelessness, and *not except* on account of serious causes, and *so that* at the same time the people are sufficiently informed about the reasons for the change and about the very change of ceremonies.

**l)** In particular we must watch out, *lest we yield at the wrong time* in the cause of religion *to adversaries*, who demand the changing of rites. For in a case of confession *adiaphora* change their nature, so to speak, and from indifferent things they become necessary. See the Formula of Concord, article X.

### **§ 13. The Beneficiary of the Ministry**

The **a)** correlate of the church's ministers, and also **b)** the *beneficiary* for which the ministry exists, is the **c)** assembly. This gathering consists of those who **d)** hear the ministers' teaching and are rendered as sharers in their ministry and the dispensing **e)** of the sacraments.

**a)** For the term "minister" is *relative* and considers any whom the minister serves.

**b)** [This is to say] in whose good or advantage the ministry was instituted.

**c)** Scripture calls it *the flock* with regard held for the term *pastor*, which ministers of the church are called (Acts 20:28,29; 1 Pet 5:2,3). Otherwise it is called *the church* (Acts 20:28), although the church *strictly* speaking includes in its concept *both* teachers *and* hearers. See Musaeus on the Church, part 2, disputation 1, sections 36-37, p. 16-17.

LUTHER: "The apostles first went into strangers' houses and preached. This was something which they received the command to do and they were ordained, called and sent to preach in all places, as Christ spoke in Mark 16:15: 'Go into all the world and preach to every creature.' But since then, no one any longer has such a general apostolic command. Rather, every bishop or pastor has his distinct parish or pastorate, whom St. Peter in 1 Pet 5:3 for that reason also calls *cleros* [κλήρους], that is, parts. One part of the people is entrusted to each, as St. Paul also writes to Titus when he says that no other stranger should be so bold as to teach his parishioners either privately or in public without his knowledge and consent. And no one should listen to that preacher wholeheartedly but should bring word of it to the pastor or authorities. This man should also keep it firmly in mind that no preacher should dare to preach or teach among the flock of the papists or heretical preachers without the knowledge and consent of their pastor, because that command has not been given to him. If something has not been commanded, a person should let it be. We have enough to do in carrying out the commands given to us. It also doesn't help that they advance the idea that all Christians are priests. It is true that all Christians are *priests*, but they are not all *pastors*. For in addition to the fact that he is a Christian and a priest, he would have to have an office and a specific call assigned to him. The call and command makes pastors and preachers." (Explanation of Psalm 82, 1530. V, p. 1060ff.) [LW 13:65-66]

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Richard Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), p.191.



WITTENBERG THEOLOGIANS: “The call is not only restricted to a certain number of *parishioners*, but also to certain *places*, Eph 5:2.” (Response, 1638. *Wittenberg Counsels*, II, 57)

**d)** From this the assembly is sometimes called the *audience*, certainly in reference to the obligation to listen.

**e)** And the administering of absolution itself, as it is fitting when confession is given. Germans use the words “penitent” and “parishioners.”

#### § 14. *The Intended Outcome of the Ministry*

The *intermediate goal a)* of this ministry of the church is **b)** the reconciliation of human beings with God through faith in Christ and the increase in faith and **c)** other Christian virtues. The *ultimate goal* is the **d)** eternal salvation of the same persons.

**a)** What the Author of this sacred ministry intends can only be obtained through the carrying out of this office and can only be produced by his divine power. From this it is also rightly called an *effect*. Compare 1 Corinthians 3:5 where the Corinthians are said to have believed through ministers (consider also v.6 and following). Nevertheless, the efficacy of the Word does not depend on the legitimate *sending* of the person who preaches or teaches it. See Musaeus “On the Church,” part I, disputation VII, p. 383ff.

Compare the notes of § 1, *a*.

DANNHAUER: “That which is given to the office of the ministry does not have *power* to effect anything supernatural unless it is *instrumental* (*not as a second principal cause*, which of course *depends* on the first; but nevertheless has its own, native, innate, active power which flows through itself by its own power into proportionate effects; in the same way fire burns by its own power).” (*Open Book of Conscience*, I, p. 856)

GERHARD: “Ministers of the church who, devoid of a legitimate calling, throw themselves into the ministry by their own daring, are not sent by God nor are they ordained (Jer 23:21). At the same time, the ministry itself does not cease to be a divine institution.” (Locus on Magistrates, §. 34)

WITTENBERG THEOLOGIANS: “The power of the means of salvation, of the word and sacraments, does not depend on the person but on God the Lord, who is powerful through his word and sacraments, so long as they are taught and interpreted correctly, whether or not things go on correctly in the ministry from there. Also the person, life, and calling of a servant to the church contribute nothing to the power of the means and the sacraments. For that reason Paul rejoiced when the gospel and Christ were preached in various ways, whether it happened by accident or in proper ways (Phil 1:18). And if someone should desire to be assured of the legitimate calling of his preachers, how could he be able to be assured or comforted by their ministry? For soon he might lack the latter, and soon after he might lack the former. Indeed listeners would have to bear the burden of that, and so the common people would become misled and worried. Parents would be concerned that their children might not have been baptized by a legitimately called pastor, or that the baptism might not have been performed correctly. Everyone would wonder the same about their own baptism whenever they awoke. They would be troubled in their conscience, and no one would be able to be steadfastly comforted by the power of the word and sacraments, nor would anyone be certain of their salvation. The Lord Christ himself made use of Israel’s ecclesiastical office even though he knew that the appointments of high priests didn’t always happen correctly. He knew how some would sell or exchange such offices against God’s arrangement,

as it is known from the New Testament and from the Jewish historian, Josephus. He also rebuked others in the Levitical priesthood and those who seated themselves in Moses' seat. And what can one say of the Christians who dwell under the patriarch at Constantinople, and moreover, who live in the East? [Do we say that] they have neither God's Word nor holy baptism, because the patriarchs are confirmed in their office by the Turks themselves? That is why Luther is so zealous in his book concerning the private Mass (6<sup>th</sup> Jena Part f.101): 'Take heed that he (the pastor) has within him not his own office, but Christ's office. Don't be led astray, whether he was called in an orderly way or bought or forced into it. However he came into the office, on good or bad terms, whether he is Judas or St. Peter, let nothing concern you. Separate the office from the person and that which is holy from that which is abominable.'" (*Wittenberg Counsels*, II, f. 195)

CHEMNITZ: "There is no doubt that God is effective through the word which is proclaimed, by whomever it is proclaimed. Why then does this chapter from Trent cause such a great tumult over this question? I answer: because they have decided that the integrity, truth and efficacy of the sacraments is not simply and completely in the words of Christ, but partly also in the character which they imagine to be impressed on the priests at their ordination. In this way, then, they desire to have the consolation of absolution depend not so much on the word of the gospel as on the person doing the absolving." (*Examination of the Council of Trent*, Geneva Edition, p.395) [CPH Kramer vol. 2, p. 621]

- b)** Just as it is called the ministry of reconciliation, because reconciliation depends on it and reconciliation proceeds from it (2 Cor 5:18). Compare with verses 19 and 20.
- c)** See Ephesians 4:12ff. where it says that *ministers of the church are given for the joining* (καταρτισμόν or arranged as in a determined proportion, or συμμετρία organized) *of the saints in the building up of the body of Christ*, in which *individual members who agree with one another attain growth of the body through love*.
- d)** Thus when Paul commands Timothy to pay attention to himself and to doctrine, adds at the end of 1 Timothy 4: *For if you do, you will save* (σώσεις) *both yourself and those who hear you*.

### § 15. A Definition of the Church's Ministry

The church's ministry is defined in this way: **a)** it is a public office, **b)** arranged by God, in which certain persons who are legitimately called and ordained **c)** teach the Word of God, administer the sacraments, bind and loose sins, and attend and direct other things which pertain to the church **d)** for the conversion, sanctification, and eternal life of human beings.

- a)** This is common to it with the office of the magistrate, and it rightly suggests a locus of the same kind.
- b)** Thus the efficient cause is designated. See § 2.
- c)** In what the office itself essentially consists. See § 7.
- d)** The *beneficiary* and *intended outcome* of the ministry are stated. See § 13, 14.