

The Pastor: God's Servant for God's People

Intro – background of Walther's Church & Ministry Theses.

1. The Priesthood of all believers.

a. LCMS teaching and emphasis.

- 1 Pet. 2:4-5, 9-10 (Ex. 19:4-6); Is. 61:1-6.; 1 Cor. 3:16-23; Rev. 1:5-6; John 3:28-29 & Eph. 5:25-30.
- Theses IV & VII (Church), Theses VI & VII (Ministry).
- Luther (LW 30:63-65):

“... Some can be selected from the congregation who are officeholders and servants and are appointed to preach in the congregation and to administer the sacraments. But we are all priests before God if we are Christians. For since we have been laid on the Stone who is the Chief Priest before God, we also have everything He has...

“The same thing is true with regard to the fact that we are all kings. “Priests” and “kings” are all spiritual names just as “Christians,” “saints,” and “church” are. And just as you are not called a Christian because you have a great deal of money and property but because you have been built on the Stone and believe in Christ, so you are not called a priest because you are tonsured or wear a long coat but because you may approach God. In like manner, you are not a king because you wear a golden crown and have many lands and people under you, but because you are a lord over all things, death, sin, and hell. If you believe in Christ you are a king just as He is a King... He is a Lord, so I, too, am a lord. For what He has, that I, too, have...

“A priest must be God's messenger and must have a command from God to proclaim His Word. You must, says Peter, exercise the chief function of a priest, that is, to proclaim the wonderful deed God has performed for you to bring you out of darkness into the light. And your preaching should be done in such a way that one brother proclaims the mighty deed of God to the other, how you have been delivered through Him from sin, death, and all misfortune, and have been called to eternal life. Thus you should also teach other people how they, too, come into such light. For you must bend every effort to realize what God has done for you. then let it be your chief work to proclaim this publicly and to call everyone into the light into which you have been called. Where you find people who do not know this, you should instruct and also teach them as you have learned, namely, how one must be saved through the power and strength of God and come out of darkness into the light.”

- Book of Concord, Treatise, par. 67-69.

[67] Wherever the Church is, there is the authority to administer the Gospel. Therefore, it is necessary for the Church to retain the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers. This authority is a gift that in reality is given to the Church. No human power can take this gift away from the Church. As Paul testifies to the Ephesians, when “He ascended ... He gave gifts to men” (Ephesians [4:8]). He lists among the gifts specifically belonging to the Church “pastors and teachers” [4:11], and adds that they are given for the ministry, “for building up the body of Christ” [4:12]. So wherever there is a True Church, the right to elect and ordain ministers

necessarily exists. In the same way, in a case of necessity even a layman absolves and becomes the minister and pastor of another. Augustine tells the story of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the catechumen, who after Baptism then absolved the baptizer.

[68] Here belong the statements of Christ that testify that the Keys have been given to the Church, and not merely to certain persons, “Where two or three are gathered in My name ...” [Matthew 18:20].

[69] Finally, Peter’s statement also confirms this, “You are ... a royal priesthood” [1 Peter 2:9]. These words apply to the True Church, which certainly has the right to elect and ordain ministers, since it alone has the priesthood.

(Source: <https://bookofconcord.cph.org/en/power-and-primacy-of-the-pope/>)

b. Obedience to Pastors – Thesis IX of Ten Theses Concerning the Holy Preaching Office.

2. Christ as the pattern for the Pastor. Matt. 20:25-28; John 13:1-17.

LCMS teaching, based on Walther’s Theses: the Ministry is established by God and is conferred through the congregation, the priesthood of all believers.

➤ Theses 1-3, 4, 7-9.

3. The Pastor as God’s servant.

a. Called by God, thru the congregation, to do what God has called him to do.

Luther:

For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.
John 3:34

John is speaking here about calling or sending, particularly about the sending of Christ. I have decided to discourse on this topic at some length. There are two ways of sending. First, God sent His messengers, the prophets and apostles, like Moses and St. Paul, directly and without the help of an intermediary. These men were called by God’s word of mouth and without human agency. Such sending was done only when God wanted to inaugurate something new, as was the case when He sent Moses and the prophets. This exalted method came to an end in the New testament with the apostles, who were the last to be called directly by God.

The other way of sending is indeed also one by God, but it is done through the instrumentality of man. It has been employed ever since God established the ministry with its preaching and its exercise of the Office of the Keys. This ministry will endure and is not to be replaced by any other. But the incumbents of the ministry do not remain; they die. This necessitates an ever-new supply of preachers, which calls for the employment of certain means. The ministry, that is, the Word of God, Baptism, and Holy Communion, came directly from Christ; but later Christ departed from this earth. Now a new way of sending was instituted, which works through man but is not of man. We were sent according to this method; according to it, we elect and send others, and we install them in their ministry to preach and to administer the Sacraments. This type of sending is also of God and commanded by God. Even though God resorts to our aid and to human agency, it is He Himself who sends laborers into His vineyard.

Therefore everyone must realize that he has to be sent. That is, he must know that he has been called; he dare not venture to sneak into the office furtively and without authorization. It must be done in the open. The sending is done through man, for example, when a city, a prince, or a congregation calls someone into office. But at the same time this person is sent by God. (LW 22:482)

- See call document, Supplement.
- b. Teaching God's Word is his primary work.
 - 1 Cor. 3:21 – 4:5; Acts 20:17-28; Jer. 23:16-18, 21-22, 28.
- c. Serving God's people is serving Christ. Matt. 25:31-40; Acts 9:1-5.
 - Serving as a shepherd – John 21:15-17.

Apology, IV, 232-234:

In all families and communities harmony should be nurtured by mutual aid, for it is not possible to preserve tranquility unless men cover and forgive certain mistakes in their midst. In the same way Paul commands that there be love in the church to preserve harmony, to bear, if need be, with the crude behavior of the brethren, to cover up minor mistakes, lest the church disintegrate into various factions, and heresies that arise from such schisms.

For harmony will inevitably disintegrate if bishops impose heavy burdens on the people or have no regard for their weakness. Dissensions also arise when the people judge their clergy's behavior too strictly or despise them because of some minor fault and then seek after some other kinds of doctrine and other clergy. On the other hand, perfection (that is, the integrity of the church) is preserved when the strong bear with the weak, when the people put the best construction on the faults of their clergy, when the bishops take into account the weakness of the people.