

# Church and Ministry

Week 6: Walther and Ministry



Warm up question

You're talking to a Buddhist. The subject of pastors comes up. How do you explain what a pastor is?



# Proper vs Improper

Last week we got into a discussion about Walther's use of the words "proper" and "improper".

Walther uses "proper" here to indicate the "pure" sense of the church - that is, the invisible church, the church unstained by those who may be hypocrites or simply playing Christian for some reason.

By "improper," Walther indicates the visible church which may include those who do not believe for whatever reason.

Walther's use of this language comes from the Confessions, specifically the Augsburg Confession Article III "the Christian Church properly is nothing less than the assembly of all believers and saints," and the Apology Article III.



# Part Two

Today we're looking at the second part of Walther's "Church and Ministry," the part entitled "Concerning the Holy Ministry or the Pastoral Office".

As we look at this, we continue to keep in mind that Walther was writing this out a discussion on if a pastor was ordained by a church or by other pastors. However, the applications of Walther's writing go beyond the original scope of that argument.



# Ministry - Theses 1-3

The holy ministry or pastoral office is an office distinct from the priesthood of all believers.

The ministry of the Word or the pastoral office is not a human institution but an office that God Himself has established.

The ministry is not an arbitrary office but one whose establishment has been commanded to the church and to which the church is ordinarily bound till the end of time.



# Ministry Theses 4 & 5

The ministry is not a special, or in opposition to that of ordinary Christians, a more holy state as was the Levitical priesthood, but it is a ministry of service.

The public ministry [Predigtamt] has the power to preach the Gospel and administer the holy sacraments as well as the power of spiritual judgment.



# Ministry Thesis 6

- A. The ministry of the Word [Predigtamt] is conferred by God through the congregation as the possessor of all ecclesiastical power, or the power of the keys, by means of its call, which God Himself has prescribed.
- B. The ordination of the called [persons] with the laying on of hands is not a divine institution but merely an ecclesiastical rite [Ordnung] established by the apostles; it is no more than a solemn public confirmation of the call.



# Ministry Thesis 7

The holy ministry [Predigamt] is the power, conferred by God through the congregation as the possessor of the priesthood and all church power, to exercise the rights of spiritual priesthood in public office in the name of the congregation.





# Ministry Thesis 8 & 9

The pastoral ministry is the highest office in the church and from it stem all other offices in the church.

(9)

- A. To the ministry there is due respect as well as unconditional obedience when the pastor uses God's Word.
- B. The minister must not tyrannize the church. He has no authority to introduce new laws or arbitrarily to establish adiaphora or ceremonies.
- C. The minister has no right to inflict and carry out excommunication without his having first informed the whole congregation.



# Ministry Thesis 10

To the ministry of the Word, according to divine right, belongs also the duty [Amt] to judge doctrine, but laymen also possess this right. Therefore, in ecclesiastical courts (consistories) and councils they are accorded both a seat and vote together with the clergy.



# Next Time - Stump the Pastor

We're at the end of our study of Church and Ministry.

Next time we will play "Stump the Pastor" which is our traditional cap to any study that we do.

We will also choose our next study.

