

Article 14: The Office of the Ministry

1. What is the difference between authority and power? (stopping traffic example)

Article 14 of the Augsburg Confession: *"It is taught among us that nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the Church without a regular call."*

This article is the answer to the question posed above: Authority. What is Authority? Who has it and what are they authorized to do? And even more important for our discussion: Who authorizes them?



Who authorizes the Office?

God himself. From these brief discussions we learn that Pastors are not optional. It is a God ordained task that God through the Church (pastors and laity), call men into an office. The old German word for this office, that we now call the "Office of the Holy Ministry", was Predigtamt, which meant One who was authorized to Preach.

This office that these men are placed into has specific task and goal. They are to preach, teach, and deliver the goods.

1. Read Acts 6:1-5. What is the problem that arises? What do the Apostles' say in response to the problem? What is their job? What is the answer to the problem?

Priesthood of all Believers and the Preaching Office (Predigtamt)

1. Read 1 Peter 2:9 and Romans 12:1-2. Who is a Priest based on these verses? What does a priest do?
2. Read Acts 20:28-32, Ephesians 4:11-12, 2 Timothy 2:1-2. Paul speaks of men whom God has placed into an office to do what? (Note “The Ministry” is the narrow sense and “ministry” in the wide sense)

“A Priest is not identical with Minister—for one is born to be priest, but one becomes a minister.’ All are priests, not all are ministers. There is a priesthood and there is a ministry. They are not the same, yet both are God-given...”

-Kurt Marquart.

Priests and Ministers

Pastors are not above the flock, in terms of being better in God’s eyes or more spiritual. Like in the Roman Catholic Church or Episcopalians. Rather, Pastors exist as one who serves God’s people, God’s gifts:

1. Read Luke 22:24-30. This is the attitude of the Pastor. All the Pastor has is the Word to convince people. 1 Peter 5:2-4.

Likewise though, The flock are not above the Pastor. This is the view of non-denoms, Presbyterians, etc.

1. Read Hebrews 13:17. Why are the people encouraged to obey their leaders and submit to them?

The Pastor is not a hireling and does not answer to the flock, he answers to Christ. The laity are not slaves to the Pastor and do not answer to the Pastor, they answer to Christ.

We do not have a bottom-top structure or a top-down structure as Lutherans. We have the Priesthood of all the Baptized *and* Ordained Ministers. They exist side by side, each having a different task (just like men and women!). Together they exist as the Church who is answerable to Christ.

Authorized to do what?

The question boils down to this: Christ is Lord and owns the Keys (Word + Sacraments) and he gives these keys to the Church (laity & ordained). (Matthew 9:1-8) When the Church gathers together, every Christian has been given these gifts. Who then becomes responsible for doing the task of preaching and delivering God's gifts? Who has the authority to do it when everyone has been given the keys? No one.

No one can take on this task on their own initiative. When everyone is special, no one is special. God then, through the Church, calls a person into the task to do the work of Preaching, Teaching, Prayer, and Sacraments. It is good for the order of the Church.

Remember also the locatedness of our faith. God gives out his gifts in time and space, not some ideal or platitude floating up in midair to grasp at random times. The man in the office is the guarantee from God to you of the work that God does through Word and Sacrament.

Small Catechism: Table of Duties

Table of Duties

Certain passages of scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities

For Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers.

An overseer must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; not a novice; holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. **1 Tim. 3:2ff ; Titus 1:6.**

What the Hearers Owe to Their Pastors.

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

Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. **Gal. 6:6.** Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and the laborer is worthy of his reward. **1 Tim. 5:17-18.** Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you. **Heb. 13:17.]**

Rite of Ordination Service Example

Further Resources:

Kurt Marquart, "The Church: Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance"

Articles 5 and 28 of the Augsburg Confession and Apology