

Augsburg Confession

Fall 2025

Week 7 – Article V “The Ministry”

Review

- ❖ On the topic of justification, Lutherans believe and teach the following;
 - "People cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, works"
 - "People are freely justified for Christ's sake"
 - "Through faith"
 - "When they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake"
 - "By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins"
 - "God counts this faith for righteousness"
- ❖ Pious Lutheran Church thinks they have come up with the perfect solution for their pastoral needs. They have figured out a way to no longer pay for a pastor's salary, housing, health care, and mileage. Not only this-they will no longer have an outsider come in and tell them what to do and what to believe. They've decided that each member of the congregation will take his or her turn in being pastor of the month.

Question 1 - *What problems do you see with this scenario at first glance?*

Read Eph. 4:11. - *Who instituted the Office of the Holy Ministry?*

Question 2 - *What does it mean that God calls the pastor to be an overseer of His flock (Act 20:28)?*

Question 3 - *Two words are used in I Cor 4:1 to describe the pastor: What does each word mean as it pertains to the office of pastor?*

- ❖ Review the qualifications for a Pastor in I Tim 3:1-7

Question 4 - *A pastor must be qualified to teach. What makes for a good pastoral teacher? (II Tim 2:2)*

Question 5 – *God charges Pastors to minister. What obstacles does a pastor experience? What are the crosses a pastor experiences in their ministry? (II Tim 4:1-8)*

Read John 20:22-23.

- ❖ Here Christ gives the Office of the Keys (to forgive and retain sin) to the Church. The Church publicly entrusts these Keys to pastors.

“Luther defines the issue of confession and absolution as the exclusive authority Christ has given His church on earth to forgive the sins of those who recognize and confess their sins, who are truly sorry for them, and who rely on Christ’s

promise of forgiveness for those who believe in Him as their Savior.

The section of Scripture cited to support this authority given by Christ to the church is John 20:22- 23. Here, having been raised from the dead, Jesus speaks these words to His disciples, whom He commissioned to carry His message of forgiveness to the world: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone their sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Although the power to forgive sins (or not forgive them) always belongs to and remains with the church, Luther explains that when pastors called and ordained by the church to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments on behalf of the church declare to penitent sinners that their sins are forgiven, they do this by the command of Christ, who granted this power to the church.

The pastors do this not by their own authority but rather by the command and authority of Christ on the basis of their call from the church to carry out this function. Consequently, their word of forgiveness is as valid as if Christ Himself, who has given the church that authority, were assuring the penitent sinners of their forgiveness." (Lutheran Witness, May 2007)

Scenario Time

Pastor Kleinberg baptized John Peterson. John's parents had him in church and in Sunday School regularly. When John was in grade school, Pastor Kleinberg heard that some older kids were bullying him. Pastor Kleinberg sat down with John and talked to him about how Jesus was bullied and died for our sins. Pastor Kleinberg prayed with John and asked him every so often how he was doing.

When John was in high school, John went on some mission trips and some youth gatherings led by Pastor Kleinberg. Once on the bus to a youth gathering, John admitted to Pastor Kleinberg that he had doubts about God, creation, forgiveness, and the Christian faith. Pastor talked through the night with John about these doubts. Years later, Pastor Kleinberg was there when John and his wife had some marriage problems.

Question 6 - *How does Pastor Kleinberg understand his role as pastor?*

How would you evaluate Pastor Kleinberg's relationship to John?

Question 7 - *Pastor Kleinberg worked hard at faithfully preaching and teaching the Word of God. What is significant about this for John's life?*

Question 8 - *John encountered many faith issues in his life. What is significant about your Lutheran pastor being trained in the Word of God, rightly dividing Law and Gospel?*

Question 9 - *It is God who calls the pastor through the congregation. Why is this important to the pastor? the whole congregation? John Peterson?*

Question 10 - *There was a time when Pastor Kleinberg spoke some harsh words to John. There was a time he failed to visit John in the hospital when John's daughter had surgery. Pastors sin. They are not always the perfect pastor. What is the pastor's role when he sins against one of his sheep?*

Question 11 - *What role do you play in strengthening your shepherd-sheep relationship to your pastor? to his people?*

Final Review

- ❖ Every Lutheran pastor pledges to God, his flock, and the entire Church that the Augsburg Confession (and the entire Book of Concord) is a true exposition of Holy Scripture and a correct exhibition of the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. He makes the Lutheran Confessions his own because they are in accord with the Word of God. He is willing to suffer even death rather than fall away from this confession of faith.

References

"What gives the Pastor the Power to Absolve?" <https://witness.lcms.org/2007/what-gives-the-pastor-the-power-to-absolve-5-2007/>

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The Augsburg Confession, <https://www.lutheranchurchcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Augsburg-Confession-Study-Guide.pdf>

Book of Concord Online, The Original Home of the Book of Concord, <https://bookofconcord.org/augsburg-confession/>