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The Purpose of the Pastoral Office as Taught by the Church Fathers, Augsburg Confession V, and the Contemporary Age

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THE PURPOSE OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE AS TAUGHT BY THE CHURCH FATHERS,
AUGSBURG CONFESSION V, AND THE CONTEMPORARY AGE

A Seminar Paper Presented to the Faculty of
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Master of Sacred Theology

By
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Introduction

Recent generations of Christians have once again been faced with the need to confess what is believed and taught concerning the Pastoral Office. Contemporary pastors and church leaders and church ministries have redefined the work and purpose of the Office in view of cultural pressures from the business realm, the egalitarian and feminist movements, and the desire for continued relevance in our ever-changing world as well as the sincere desire to address pastoral shortages and pastoral care needs.¹ Our own church body, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is confronted by questions concerning the pastoral office as Naomichi Masaki writes. “The changing trends in the American religious scene . . . have affected our church’s theological thinking and practice [concerning the preaching office], especially in the area of seminary education.”²

Reactions to such pressures vary from whole-hearted embracement to outright rejection. Yet, are the reasons to embrace or reject such pressures evaluated in light of the Scriptures and, in our Lutheran circles, the Lutheran Confessions? Does one even consider how the Reformers addressed and defined the purpose of the Pastoral Office? Even more, especially for the purpose of this paper, do we look back without jaded eyes or romantic notions to the Church Fathers and ascertain their understanding of the purpose of the Pastoral Office? Is their understanding and teaching reflected in our Lutheran Confessions or are there points of departure, both of which can provide us some useful points of reference and perhaps reorientation?

This paper will seek to identify the basic understanding of those Church Fathers who spoke most directly to this topic, namely, Ignatius of Antioch, Gregory of Nazianzus, St. John

¹ See “To Establish Specific Ministry Pastor Program”; The 63rd Convention of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, 2007, available from www.csl.edu/img/Res501B.pdf; Internet; accessed March 2008.

² Naomichi Masaki, “Augsburg Confession XIV: Does It Answer Current Questions on the Holy Ministry?”

Chrysostom, and Gregory the Great. The rationale for the selection of these Fathers is twofold. Firstly, their proximity and place in what we identify as the era of the Early Church. Ignatius of Antioch stands closest to the Apostolic Age while Gregory the Great provides the other bookend, standing at the end of what is commonly accepted as the era of the Early Church. Secondly, this will provide a reasonable expectation of development on the teaching of the Pastoral Office and its purpose. Indeed, as expected in this age of orthodoxy and heresy, of persecution and acceptance, development, or at least, explanation of the purpose of the Office occurred in the crucible of challenge as did many of the church's teachings. "[T]he church often came to terms with its ministry in response to errant views and practices, and in the process was forced back to Scripture for clarification, support, or redirection" even as "with its other doctrinal understandings, such as the Trinity, Christology, [and] Soteriology."³ In fact, to ignore this history is considered "the height of foolishness not to consult those of our faith and commitment who have had to deal with situations similar to our own. And church history is the discipline that best permits us to have these conversations with the past."⁴

Once the teaching of these Fathers is determined, then the purpose of the Pastoral Office as taught by these Fathers will be examined in light of Augsburg V (CA V) to identify the Lutheran teaching based on Scripture concerning the reason and role, the *raison être*, for the pastoral office. Points of continuity and departure with the Church Fathers will be noted. Then an examination of present models of the pastoral office will be presented primarily in two categories—those who now view the office as professional and those who seek to retain and

Concordia Theological Quarterly 70 (April 2006): 123.

³ Quentin F. Wesselschmidt, "The Concept and Practice of the Ministry in the Early Church: Structure, Formative Influences, and Scriptural Correspondence," *Concordia Journal* 14 (July 1988): 249.

⁴ Cameron A. MacKenzie, "Church History and Pastoral Formation," *For the Life of the World* 5, no. 2 (April 2001): 9.

even reintroduce the paradigm of pastor as shepherd. Some final implications for the church and our Synod will be noted in brief to provide some application as one seeks to navigate the waters of this topic sighting a steady star by which to steer as our eyes ever remain fixed on Jesus, our Morning Star, Author and Finisher of faith, the Word Incarnate, the final Revelation of the Father, the Faithful and True Witness.

Discovering a systematic treatment of this topic by the Fathers is challenging, for, as Wendy Mayer points out, “there is no accepted definition of pastoral care for this period (late antiquity), particularly in relation to the East.”⁵ Even in St. John *Chrysostom's Six Books on the Priesthood* one looks in vain for a systematic presentation as the contemporary mind desires. Though a sentence or two may emerge, one is constrained to sift through the writings to learn of their teachings on the Pastoral Office. Much like Martin Luther who never really sat down to systematically lay out his teachings based on Holy Scripture, except, perhaps, in the Catechisms, these Fathers did not systematize their teachings as we are accustomed but wrote and preached in response to the issues confronting them whether that issue be the church's unity, the acceptance of the mantle of the Pastoral Office, or the need for an instruction manual for the clergy that they might know and execute their tasks faithfully.

Yet, though a systematic treatment is lacking, one can still glean from their key writings what they viewed as the purpose of the Pastoral Office, the Office of Bishop, and the Priesthood. This is the primary methodology employed for this paper. The key writings were read and examined and then secondary sources were consulted to evaluate and elucidate key points.

⁵Wendy Mayer, “Patronage, Pastoral Care and the Role of the Bishop at Antioch,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 55 (2001): 59.

Chapter 1

The Purpose of the Pastoral Ministry as Understood by the Church Fathers

a. Ignatius of Antioch

The understanding of the role and purpose of the Pastoral Office, or, the office of the bishop, by Ignatius of Antioch is presented in two manners. Firstly, it is presented indirectly by his own approach as he writes to his letters' recipients and, secondly, by direct statements in his epistles, chiefly his epistle to Polycarp, a fellow bishop. The purpose and role of the office is multifaceted but reflects one major point—the bishop represents God in the midst of the congregation. In Ignatius' mind the bishop not only represents God but, along with the presbyters and the deacons, represents the Holy Trinity in the midst of the people. The bishop is the representative of the Father, presiding in His place while the presbyters who are in the place of the apostles, and the deacons model Christ by their service.¹ “Be eager to do everything in godly harmony, the bishop presiding in the place of God (προκαθημένου τοῦ επισκόπου εἰς τόπον Θεοῦ) and the presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles and the deacons, who are most dear to me, having been entrusted with the service of Jesus Christ.”² “Similarly, let everyone respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, just as they should respect the bishop, who is a model (τύπον) of the Father, and the presbyters as God's council and as the band of the apostles.”³ “You must all

¹ Ignatius, Epistle to the Magnesians 6.1; Epistle to the Trallians 3.1; and Epistle to the Smyrnaeans 8.1 in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999). Hereafter, citations of Ignatius will provide epistle title and numeric headings only.

² Magnesians 6.1.

³ Trallians 3.1.

follow the bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and follow the presbytery as you would the apostles; respect the deacons as the commandment of God.”⁴

This representation is necessary, in Ignatius’ thinking, for the unity of the church. For one to do anything apart from the bishop or without his permission is to incite division, the “beginning of all evils.”⁵ Thus, Ignatius directly declares “Let no one do anything that has to do with the church without the bishop. Only that Eucharist which is under the authority of the bishop (or whomever he himself designates) is to be considered valid.”⁶ Violation of this order puts one directly at odds with the triune God Himself and out of the fellowship of the church.

For all those who belong to God and Jesus Christ are with the bishop, and all those who repent and enter into the unity of the church will belong to God, that they may be living in accordance with Jesus Christ. Do not be misled, my brothers: if anyone follows a schismatic, he will not inherit the kingdom of God. If anyone holds to alien views, he disassociates himself from the Passion.⁷

The bishop then is the *locus* of fellowship and unity for the congregation since he is in the place of God. “Let us, therefore, be careful not to oppose the bishop, in order that we may be obedient to God . . . we must regard the bishop as the Lord himself.”⁸

The bishop serves as the *locus* of fellowship and unity in the congregation especially in connection with the Eucharist⁹ for here God gathers His people into unity with Him.¹⁰ In the

⁴ Smyrnaeans 8.1.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Philadelphians 3.2–3.

⁸ Ephesians 5.3; 6.1.

⁹ William Weinrich, “Ecclesial Polity and Governance in the Early Church,” in *Church Polity and Politics: Papers Presented at the Congress on the Lutheran Confessions*, eds. John R. Fehrmann and Daniel Preus (Itasca, Ill.: Luther Academy and Association of Confessional Lutherans, 1997), 95.

¹⁰ William C. Weinrich, “The Concept of the Church in Ignatius of Antioch,” in *Good News in History: Essays in Honor of Bo Reicke*, ed. Edward L. Miller (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 144.

Eucharist victory over Satan's power is received¹¹ and division from God is overcome.¹² Here the bishop "localizes" the passion of Christ since the bishop, in the flesh, officiates at the Eucharist, Christ in the flesh.¹³ "Just as there is no work of Christ without the person of Christ, so also now in the church there is no work of Christ (Eucharist as passion) without the person of Christ (the bishop as the one sent by the Father)."¹⁴ The bishop, then, in his presidency at the Eucharist represents the Father by giving the Son (His body and blood present in the elements) whom the Father has given to defeat Satan and restore fellowship, unity with Him in heaven. This representational or incarnational aspect is important for Ignatius not just for locating God's presence in the midst of God's people, but for determining orthodoxy since the true celebration of the Eucharist is the primary criterion of orthodoxy for Ignatius.¹⁵

Thus, for Ignatius the bishop is God's representative chiefly for the sake of unity with God and orthodoxy. In his exercise of this office Ignatius indirectly states that the bishop is, however, to be humble, setting a godly example even in death.¹⁶ He is, if we may extrapolate, also a "God-bearer" (Θεοφόρος) even as Ignatius is.¹⁷ As such the bishop is God's servant and instrument, His wheat, God's voice to His people.¹⁸ Since he is God's servant, the bishop is to

¹¹ Ephesians 13.1.

¹² Weinrich, "The Concept of the Church," 144.

¹³ Ibid., 147.

¹⁴ Ibid., 148.

¹⁵ Kenneth Paul Wesche, "St. Ignatius of Antioch: The Criterion of Orthodoxy and the Marks of the Church," *Pro Ecclesia: A Journal of Catholic and Evangelical Theology* 3 (Winter 1994): 96.

¹⁶ *Trallians* 3.3; 4.2; *Ephesians* 3.1; *Romans* 2.1; 9.2.

¹⁷ *Ephesians*, Introduction.

¹⁸ *Romans* 2.1; 4.1; *Philadelphians* 7.1.

urge others to honor and respect their own bishops, along with their presbyters and deacons, since they are the Trinity in their midst.¹⁹

Since the bishop is God's servant he is charged with setting forth the truth about Christ as the Incarnate Son of the Father since He is the one who saves us and, at the same time, to warn against false teachers who peddle dangers and heresies.²⁰ The bishop's teaching is to include directions for the Christian life, exhortations to prayer, and encouragement of the people in good works.²¹ Those who have erred and strayed are to be called to repentance by the bishop knowing that Christ is life and healing for all.²² In all his work he is God's shepherd to the people leading them in His light and calling them away from division and false teachers.²³ He is to display forbearance, a godly mind, steadfast character, a lack of anger and godly gentleness as he fulfills his duties and sometimes, with respect to dealing with false teachers, this may involve silence.²⁴

What is meant by this silence has evoked some discussion with Pettersen asserting that the silence mentioned refers to silence towards heretics and those who bring false teaching into the congregation's midst.

That silence was not to be viewed as an excuse for disobedience, but a reason for respect. For this silence is, as we have suggested already, not an absolute silence, but the not speaking with the heretics and the not discussing of their heresy. Through such silence the bishop is to be seen to be withholding himself from contamination by heresy, confirming the church in her purity and unity, and humbly inviting, by not retaliating 'word for word', the repentance of the heretics. Indeed, in being silent

¹⁹ Magnesians 6.1–2; Trallians 12.2; 13.2; Philadelphians 11.1; Smyrnaeans 10.1.

²⁰ *Smyrnaeans* 1.1–3.3; *Trallians* 9.1–11.1, for example.

²¹ *Ephesians* 3.2; 4.1–2; 10.1–3; *Trallians* 12.2; *Ephesians* 9.1–2.

²² Philadelphians 8.1.

²³ *Ibid.*, 2.1.

²⁴ *Ephesians* 6.1; 15.1; Philadelphians 1.1–2.

before the heretics, the bishop was being true to his role as God's emissary, sent to preserve whole God's household.²⁵

This silence spoke volumes then in such a situation and, according to Pettersen's understanding of Ignatius, the bishop was to be even more revered for such wisdom and restraint. "In this particular instance, where there is an unwillingness to corrupt or even to risk the possibility of corrupting the holiness of the local congregation by any communion whatsoever with false teachers and their ideas, silence is to be the more honoured."²⁶ Hans von Campenhausen concurs that silence is an option stating "A bishop who is no orator may even keep silence altogether—for it was out of God's silence that Christ came as the Word."²⁷ It appears that though one reason for silence is predicated on one's oratorical skills, the chief is simply because the bishop once again represents God who for four hundred years kept silent until the sending of His Son in the flesh even as the Son kept silent, save only seven statements, as He suffered the blasphemy of those He was saving on the cross.

In his *Epistle to Polycarp* Ignatius more directly addresses the role and purpose of the bishopric. He is, firstly and foremostly, to exhort all that they may be saved even as the bishop presses on in his own race. "I urge you, by the grace with which you are clothed, to press on in your race and to exhort all people, that they may be saved."²⁸ He is to exhibit and administer constant care for the physical and spiritual concerns focusing on unity, bearing with all, and enduring all things in love.²⁹ He is to administer this spiritual care with discernment, applying the

²⁵ Alwyn Pettersen, "Sending Heretics to Coventry?: Ignatius of Antioch on Reverencing Silent Bishops," *Vigiliae Christianae* 44 (1990): 346.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 347.

²⁷ Hans Von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishing, 1997), 101–102.

²⁸ Polycarp 1.2.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

proper treatment to each member, treating all with gentleness, even the troublesome disciples.³⁰ He is to view himself as a pilot for the people, directing them through the storms to God.³¹ He is to remain sober as any athlete and stand against all teachers of strange doctrines patiently bearing with all even as God bears with us in our weaknesses.³² The bishop is to maintain an eschatological mindset being diligent in his work knowing the times, ever ready like a soldier so that one is not found to be a deserter.³³ He is to pray unceasingly and conduct meetings frequently where he preaches about wicked practices and gives direction for Christian living to wives, husbands, slaves, and all.³⁴ He serves as the guardian of widows and is to train and compete together with the presbyters and deacons displaying unity even as the Godhead is one God yet three Persons.³⁵ “Train together with one another: struggle together, run together, suffer together, rest together, get up together, as God’s managers, assistants, and servants.”³⁶

In summary, Ignatius of Antioch sees the role and purpose of the bishop as representing God in the midst of the congregation, chiefly at the Eucharist but also in preaching and living the Christian life. The bishop is the protector of true doctrine and the pure Eucharist, a spiritual doctor, applying the healing salve that is found in Christ. He serves as an example of godliness, personal devotion and service to his congregation and the other clergy. He is a teacher and a shepherd striving to keep the sheep of God close to their triune God and in unity with Him

³⁰ *Polycarp* 1.2; 2.1–2.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 2.3.

³² *Ibid.*, 2.3; 3.1.

³³ *Ibid.*, 3.2; 6.2.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.3; 4.1; 5.1–2.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.1; 6.1.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.1.

through faith. He is God's representative charged with exhorting all the people in the truth about Christ that they might be saved and have fellowship and union with Him who is

truly of the family of David with respect to human descent, Son of God with respect to the divine will and power, truly born of a virgin, baptized by John in order that all righteousness might be fulfilled by him, truly nailed in the flesh for us under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch (from its fruit we derive our existence, that is, from his divinely blessed suffering), in order that he might raise a banner for the ages through his resurrection for his saints and a faithful people, whether among Jews or Gentiles, in the one body of his church.³⁷

b. Gregory of Nazianzus

It would be two centuries later before another church Father would address the role and purpose of the bishop in some detail. Though others would make occasional statements, none would make it a topic of a sole work until we reach Gregory of Nazianzus. In *Oration 2, "In Defence of His Flight to Pontus,"* we learn of his reasons for abandoning the office into which he was ordained since the very reasons for his flight which were directly a result of the requirements of the office. In *Oration 43, "The Panegyric on St. Basil"* and *Oration 18, "On the Death of His Father,"* Nazianzus relates how these two fulfilled the role and purpose of the priesthood/ bishopric even as he shares what constitutes that role and purpose. Many of Nazianzus' teachings are similar to those of Ignatius of Antioch.

Nazianzus begins his primary presentation on the role and purpose of the pastor/bishop by stating that God has ordained both those who are subject to pastoral care and rule and are to be guided, by word and deed, in the path of duty by such but also those who are pastors and teachers for the perfection of the church so that she might be perfectly knit together in a manner worthy of Christ our Head.³⁸ In this opening statement Nazianzus reveals his concern for unity

³⁷ Smyrnaeans 1.1-2.

³⁸ St. Gregory Nazianzan, "Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen, Sometime Archbishop of

but spends more time in his orations expounding on the pastor's role in ruling the flock and herd for the care of their souls, what Luther would term "Seelsorger."

Pastors have authority over the souls of men but not as a means of livelihood or the obtaining of absolute power. Rather it is a ministry of which the pastor is to give an account since he is to regard the advantage of the sheep as more important than his own pleasure.³⁹ He is "to render the flock as stout and fat as possible; and with this object the neatherd and shepherd will look for well-watered and rich pastures, and will drive his charge from pasture to pasture, and allow them to rest, or arouse, or recall them, sometimes with his staff, most often with his pipe."⁴⁰ In *Oration 18* Nazianzus speaks of his father's skill and power in the exercise of the rod (punishment) and staff (support) and his use of the staff more than the rod as he showed compassion for the sinner and sympathy for those, though having stumbled, were running well.⁴¹ His father exemplified such exercise of God's Word, a task for which he believed himself inadequate.

Nazianzus chiefly describes the role and purpose of the pastoral office as being a physician of the souls of his people, one who is to bring healing to others. The concern for the soul was to be the uppermost of the pastor's cares so that the soul may inherit the glory above even though it had to struggle and wrestle with the things below.⁴² This struggle involved the soul's leading of the "lower nature" to the noble things of heaven, eventually unity with God which occurred as a result of the pastor's soul care.

Constantinople," in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, second series, vol. 7; eds. Philip Shaff and Henry Wace; trans. M. A. Brown, Charles Gordon, and James Edward Swallow (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), 2.3. Hereafter, citations of Nazianzus will provide name, oration, and section.

³⁹ Nazianzus 2.8-9.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 18.22.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 2.17.

This analogy of the pastor being a spiritual physician is a natural one for Nazianzus since his brother, Caesarius, was a doctor. Earthly doctors labor in connection with “bodies, and perishable failing matter” while the “other (i.e., spiritual doctors, pastors) is concerned with the soul which comes from God and is divine, and partakes of heavenly nobility, and presses on to it, even if it be bound to an inferior nature.”⁴³ As such, spiritual care is a higher art since nothing is so difficult as the “diagnosis and cure of our habits, passions, lives, wills, and whatever else is within us, by banishing from our compound nature everything brutal and fierce, and introducing and establishing in their stead what is gentle and dear to God.”⁴⁴ The pastor’s treatment is concerned with the hidden heart of man, his inner self, where warfare occurs against the adversary and foe in us who uses us as a weapon against ourselves.⁴⁵ The pastor’s task then is “to provide the soul with wings to rescue it from the world and give it to God . . . to watch over that which is in His image,” even taking “it by the hand, if it is in danger, or restore it, if ruined, to make Christ dwell in the heart by the Spirit: and, in short, to deify, and bestow heavenly bliss upon, one who belongs to the heavenly host.”⁴⁶

It is for this reason, Nazianzus explains, that Jesus was incarnated into this world. For this reason the pastor is to announce the reason of the Lord’s incarnation so that we receive from God “a healing from our weakness, restoring the old Adam to the place whence he fell, and conducting us to the tree of life.”⁴⁷ As pastors we are set over others to administer this healing Christ came to give; our “charge is to heal.”⁴⁸

⁴³ Ibid., 2.16–17.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 2.18.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 2.21.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 2.22.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 2.25.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 2.26.

The execution of this charge involves proper discernment and dispensation of the treatments, instruction, and encouragement needed by all for, as Nazianzus points out echoing St. Peter, some need milk and some more solid food.⁴⁹ This means the different instruction and guidance is needed.

As then the same medicine and the same food are not in every case administered to men's bodies, but a difference is made according to their degree of health or infirmity; so also are souls treated with varying instruction and guidance. To this treatment witness is borne by those who have had experience of it. Some are led by doctrine, others trained by example; some need the spur, others the curb; some are sluggish and hard to rouse to the good, and must be stirred up by being smitten with the word; others are immoderately fervent in spirit, with impulses difficult to restrain, like thoroughbred colts, who run wide of the turning post, and to improve them the word must have a restraining and checking influence. Some are benefited by praise, others by blame, both being applied in season; while if out of season, or unreasonable, they are injurious; some are set right by encouragement, others by rebuke; some, when taken to task in public, others, when privately corrected.⁵⁰

Such "distribution of the word"⁵¹ is the good pastor's responsibility. He not only is to know his flock's souls but is also to give in due season the properly apportioned word. It is the first of our duties, Nazianzus states, since our purpose is the Scripture's purpose—distribute the word.

In regard to the distribution of the word, to mention last the first of our duties . . . they (i.e., the Scriptures) are concerned with our original constitution, and final restoration, the types of the truth, the covenants, the first and second coming of Christ, His incarnation, sufferings and dissolution, with the resurrection, the last day, the judgment and recompense, whether sad or glorious; I, to crown all, with what we are to think of the original and blessed Trinity.⁵²

⁴⁹ Ibid., 2.45.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 2.30–31.

⁵¹ Ibid., 2.35.

⁵² Ibid., 2.36.

Pastors are also judges of the truth and are to impress the truth on a soul while the soul is still fresh⁵³ while championing God's cause and uniting His people to Him.⁵⁴ The aim of spiritual authority, Nazianzus declares, is the neglect of oneself to the advantage of others, even as St. Paul taught.⁵⁵ "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls" (2 Cor. 12:15). Even as the Lord was St. Paul's and Nazianzus' hope and confidence,⁵⁶ so is He the same for His appointed rulers over the souls of men in any era.

As Nazianzus teaches about the high and noble task of being a pastor, a spiritual physician, minister of God, guide, shepherd, ruler, and caregiver of souls, he also relates that which the bishop is to guard himself against personally since he is not exempt from the same disease he strives to excise from and heal in those entrusted to his care. This is certainly written against those clergy he believed were seeking to profit personally and to advance themselves via the pastoral office. For, "his central thesis is the virtual impossibility of being a churchman, who has not only to meet dizzying standards of personal sanctity, but has also to take responsibility for the sanctity of his flock."⁵⁷

For Nazianzus virtue and the heroic ideal lie near the heart of his reluctance to undertake the office to which he was ordained. Trained in the culture of his day, he was inundated with the understanding of virtue (*ἀρετήν*), the moral excellence of a person which was practiced at all times including the ability to do heroic deeds.⁵⁸ "The man or woman of *areté* is a person of the

⁵³ Ibid., 2.42–43.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 2.53.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 2.54.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 2.113.

⁵⁷ Neil McLynn, "A Self-Made Holy Man: The Case of Gregory Nazianzen," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6 (1998): 468.

⁵⁸ Richard Hooker, "Arete" (1996); available from <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/GLOSSARY/ARETE.HTM>; Internet; accessed 25 July 2007.

highest effectiveness; they use all their faculties: strength, bravery, wit, and deceptiveness, to achieve real results. In the Homeric world, then, *areté* involves all of the abilities and potentialities available to humans.”⁵⁹ Couple this Hellenistic/Homeric ideal with the Biblical instruction concerning those holding the office (resisting temptation while caring for the souls entrusted to the bishop’s care) and one can see the deeper source of his reticence and reluctance to bear the yoke of the office. He, in his mind, was certainly not capable of living out the heroic ideal and virtue in connection with this loftiest of offices.

This lofty expectation for the office is not only his reason for fleeing the office at first, but also the reason not all are suited for the office, even those who already hold the office. “We are not as the many, able to corrupt the word of truth, and mix the wine, which maketh glad the heart of man, with water, mix, that is, our doctrine with what is common and cheap, and debased, and stale, and tasteless, in order to turn the adulteration to our profit, and accommodate ourselves to those who meet us, and curry favor with everyone.”⁶⁰ This high standard Nazianzus sees embodied in his father and his conduct in connection with the consecration of bishops/pastors⁶¹ as well as Basil the Great and his steadfastness against Emperor Valens and his Prefect, Modestus.⁶² By such godly conduct they exemplified that “the theologian must be pure; he must be a man ‘who has been tested and has moved forward in *theoria*, and who before that has purified his soul and body, or who is purifying them.’”⁶³ When pastors/bishops conduct themselves in this way they instruct, by their example, others in virtue⁶⁴ and speak against any

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 2.46.

⁶¹ Ibid., 18.36.

⁶² Ibid., 43.44–53.

⁶³ McLynn, 477.

⁶⁴ Nazianzus 2.14.

vice, falsehood, and attacks of Satan. Pastors should seek such godly examples and imitate them so that they themselves may be examples for their own flocks entrusted to their care.⁶⁵

In Nazianzus' discussion we learn that the role and purpose of the Pastoral Office is one of healing, applying the healing benefits of Christ to souls afflicted with the disease of sin in all its manifestations. This work is accomplished by the right distinction and use of God's Word to each of the sheep according to their need. Though the work of the office is worthy of great respect and honor, it is not to be used for one's personal benefit. The holder of the office is to be an example in word and deed ever advancing in his theological acumen and care of the souls for which he must give an account. Nazianzus' high regard for the office and its work explains his hesitancy in undertaking its responsibilities and should give pause to those contemplating the same. Indeed, the general counsel and advice of letting the office seek the man not the man the office reflects Nazianzus' thought.

Nazianzus' teaching on the role and purpose become the guide and model for others to speak of the office and its duties. Though others may go into greater detail about individual instructions which are to be given to the sheep in the pastor's care, the groundwork is laid by Nazianzus so that they may spend more time contemplating and expounding on how the pastor applies the healing balm of Christ and instructs the sheep that they may walk in their Shepherd's ways.

c. St. John Chrysostom

St. John Chrysostom echoes many of the points Nazianzus made as he defends himself for not taking up the responsibilities of the priesthood as did his friend Basil. His fears mirror Nazianzus' but his understanding of the office remains similar. A priest is to care for the souls of

⁶⁵ Ibid., 2.105.

the sheep entrusted to his care even as the Lord Jesus urged Peter. He is to examine the soul's condition from every angle "with a thousand eyes in every direction."⁶⁶ He is in the office for the care of those under his rule, not for his own vainglory. The priest's vocation is to look after this body which has to contend, not against flesh and blood, but against unseen powers.⁶⁷ This involves mixing with the people that he may know them and their lives better, so that he is better equipped to serve them well looking only to the church's edification and God's glory.⁶⁸ He is to devote himself to the whole community in order to "train it to perfect health and incredible beauty," to make it worthy, as far as lies in human power, of that pure and blessed Head.⁶⁹

The exercise of this soul care is spoken of in mainly two categories—against the savage legions and against the works of the flesh.⁷⁰ For the priest must recognize that the fight is against Satan and use teaching by the word of mouth to meet the attacks of outsiders.⁷¹ Preaching is the main manner for instruction. As he crafts sermons that please God, he is not to be influenced by praise or contempt of the people.⁷² He is "to sound the alarm . . . and give warning when conflict with the devil is approaching."⁷³ He sounds this alarm and warning, instructing and exhorting, "practically every day" since the people are "shackled with worldly cares, and this makes them

⁶⁶ St. John Chrysostom, *Six Books on the Priesthood*. Popular Patristics, series 1, trans. Graham Neville (Crestwood, N.Y.: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1977), 82. Hereafter, citations of Chrysostom will provide name and page number.

⁶⁷ Chrysostom, 114.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 142.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 114.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 128, 133.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 136–7.

more sluggish in the discharge of spiritual duties . . . so that through sheer repetition the word of teaching may be held fast by those who hear.”⁷⁴

The shepherd is to know how to refute every one of the devil’s heresies even as he is to fight with courage and care “the idle speculations of our own people.”⁷⁵ Chrysostom declares that “presidents (pastors/priests) educate and train the pure virgin (i.e., the church)” warding off diseases that attack her and striving to preserve her good health.⁷⁶ He is never to provide an occasion for those under his care to doubt as a result of his own inexperience and inability to thwart any opponents of the faith.⁷⁷ He is to contend for the truth even if it involves the “strategy which John adopts when he introduces hymn-singing processions at night in the streets of Constantinople in order to reinforce the Nicene message and to counter the influence of the Arians.”⁷⁸ Possessing great expertise in Scripture, carefully stating doctrine, and warding off the attacks of the evil one are uppermost as requirements in Chrysostom’s mind for one to be a faithful priest to God.

Yet the care of the souls also includes the individual healing and application of the appropriate remedies for the soul that needs cleansing or redirection. The one who stumbles and wanders is not to be corrected and redirected by force or even fear’s constraint, but rather by persuasion.⁷⁹ He is to treat those whom he rules as a father treats his own young children.⁸⁰ Pastors/Priests are charged with helping people escape Gehenna’s fire and win their appointed

⁷⁴ Ibid., 139.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 117.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 123.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 126.

⁷⁸ Mayer, 64.

⁷⁹ Chrysostom, 56, 58.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 129.

crown⁸¹ and this is done with compassion and the right application of the word and its remedies. Joseph Allen notes that Chrysostom reminds us “that whereas the shepherd of the sheep has ‘full power to compel the sheep to accept the treatment if they do not submit of their own accord,’ it is not this way for the shepherd of the human community.”⁸² Such care for souls involves visitation of the people, even including “pastoral activities such as private confession and counseling.”⁸³

In order to explain this care for souls and the object of that care more thoroughly, the analogy of earthly parents and priests is employed by Chrysostom. He writes the following:

God has given greater power to priests than to natural parents, not only for punishment, but also for help. The difference between the two is as great as between the present and the future life. Parents bring us into this life; priests into the life to come. Parents cannot avert bodily death nor drive away the onset of disease; priests have often saved the soul that is sick and at the point of death, by making the punishment milder for some, and preventing others from ever incurring it, not only through instruction and warning, but also through helping them by prayer. They have authority to remit sins, not only when they make us regenerate, but afterwards too.⁸⁴

In many ways Chrysostom saw the priest as the spiritual father of the congregation, guarding, overseeing, protecting, defending, instructing, correcting, healing, and more. To rule well in his mind meant the priest has to lead disciples in the way of the life Christ has commanded by words and by teaching and not by example alone.⁸⁵

This rule also involved the selection of candidates for the priesthood, the enrollment of widows, the oversight of virgins and care for men and women alike. Continuing to voice his concerns over those selected for the office he maintained that whenever one was selecting another to fill the office they are to look for the spiritual worth of the man and not be influenced

⁸¹ Chrysostom, 73.

⁸² Joseph J. Allen, *The Ministry of the Church: The Image of Pastoral Care* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986), 116.

⁸³ Mayer, 66.

⁸⁴ Chrysostom, 74.

by worldly concerns.⁸⁶ The church's safety, he contends, is the uppermost concern when selecting one for the office—will the one selected give comfort to the flock of Christ or not?⁸⁷ Those who “confer an appointment should make a careful inquiry.”⁸⁸ He states in no uncertain terms that when selecting one for the office this one thing must be in mind: “the edification of the church.”⁸⁹

The enrollment of the widows was understood to be part of the pastoral, priestly duties as well. The widows were to be scrutinized and the priest was to secure the means by which they could be supported.⁹⁰ He is to be the widow's helper and, at the same time, have forbearance to politely handle their “inopportune fussing or their unreasonable complaints.”⁹¹

The priest is to be a father to virgins protecting them and their reputations. In fact, we learn furthermore, that Chrysostom thought it vital that the priest not speak evil about anyone under his care and, in fact, “strangle evil reports at birth,” even anticipating and removing the source whence they spring and eradicate such reports.⁹² His care extends to all without favoritism, helping all to live as the body of Christ.

The priest is also to exercise good stewardship of the church's resources even as he shows hospitality to all, cares for the sick, and provides relief for them from the generous gifts of contributors and benefactors of the church. Wendy Mayer notes how Chrysostom “embraced the patronage of wealthy aristocratic individuals, particularly widows . . . to offer material and

⁸⁵ Ibid., 125.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 89.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 91.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 111.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 93.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 94–95.

⁹¹ Ibid., 95.

personal support for his effort to reinforce Nicene Christianity.”⁹³ Yet, solicitation of support went beyond promotion of orthodoxy; it also included the organization and promotion of

the hospitals and hospices of the city, [with Chrysostom] even going so far as to emulate Basil in his attempt to set up a suburban institution for lepers; he sold church assets, presumably using the money for philanthropic purposes; he organized the destruction of a cluster of pagan temples in a mission territory; and even in exile undertook to ransom captives and to restore them to their families . . . using the donations of wealthy supporters.⁹⁴

Perhaps most telling of Chrysostom’s understanding of the duties and role of the priest comes at the end of his *Six Books on the Priesthood* when his friend Basil asks for comfort and help from John since he, Basil, is now a priest and feeling inadequate to the task. In the end, true to his view on the role of the priest/pastor, he points his friend to look to Christ who called and set Basil over his own sheep.⁹⁵ Even in dealing with his friend, he follows what he explained were the duties of the priest and his role and purpose in the congregation and church—care and comfort for souls—directing him to the Great Shepherd who equips His under-shepherds to serve Him and His sheep. Chrysostom “presents a most complete picture of the difficulty of pastoral care, one which clearly involves the total commitment of the shepherd who shall answer to Christ that indeed he loves Christ’s sheep and will in all ways possible ‘feed them.’”⁹⁶

d. Gregory the Great

The final Father in this examination of the role and purpose of the pastoral office, or priesthood as it developed in the later Early Church, is Gregory the Great. His *Book of Pastoral Rule* sets forth the purpose and duties in a manual for the instruction of priests and the exercise

⁹² Ibid., 83, 149.

⁹³ Mayer, 62.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Chrysostom, 160.

⁹⁶ Allen, 118.

of the office. This becomes the standard for such instruction containing not just basic teaching about the office but also listing the manner with which to handle different individuals in the parish. Though his writing contains more detail in this area, his is still reflective of and building upon the work of Gregory of Nazianzus, picking up the theme that pastors are physicians of the heart.

The Pastor's authority and purpose according to Gregory the Great is governance of the souls entrusted to his care. He is to be a guardian of the soul, a physician of the heart, a post of intercession with God for His people. The Pastor cares for both the inward and outward life of the flock distinguishing for them what is virtue and what is vice.⁹⁷ As he administers the care due his people he is to bear with them in their infirmities and his people ought to "have recourse to their pastor's heart as [little ones] to a mother's breast."⁹⁸ He not only contemplates that which is above but he also commiserates with his people on earth.⁹⁹ It is the "duty of a ruler to shew by the voice of preaching the glory of the supernal country, to disclose what great temptations of the old enemy are lurking in this life's journey, and to correct with great asperity of zeal such evils among those who are under his sway as ought not to be gently borne with; lest, in being too little incensed against faults, of all faults he be himself held guilty."¹⁰⁰ As he exercises his duties and fulfills the purpose of the office, Gregory the Great states, citing the example of Jethro in

⁹⁷ Gregory the Great, "The Book of Pastoral Rule of Saint Gregory the Great, Roman Pontiff, to John, Bishop of Revenna," in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, second series, vol. 12, ed. Phillip Schaff (T&T Clark: Edinburgh, 1989), 365-465; available from <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf212.html>; Internet; accessed July 2007. Hereafter, citations of Gregory the Great will provide name with part and section.

⁹⁸ Gregory the Great 2.5.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.5.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.10.

connection with Moses, that “inferior” matters should be handled by the people so that the pastor may give his full attention to his responsibilities and the souls under his care.¹⁰¹

The pastor’s fulfillment of these duties is not for earthly gain or with an eye to please men or to encourage self-love.¹⁰² Any love of man is to be for the sake of the office and its work, not the person filling the office Gregory the Great states.¹⁰³ His life is not to present an obstacle to the people “journeying to the entrance of the kingdom” but rather his life is to be exemplary wherein he speaks and exhibits the highest things in the eyes of all.¹⁰⁴ In the company of all, as he is among his people, the “companion of good livers” and one who is “rigid against vices of evil doers,” he is to remember who he is—a guardian and ruler of souls.¹⁰⁵ Hence, the ruler of souls is to be “chief in action” since the “flock, which follows the voice and manners of the shepherd” needs the example even more than the words for “to speak” must never be separated from “to exist.”¹⁰⁶

His fulfillment of the office involves primarily one duty in particular. This is the defense of the flock from attacks outside the church, heretics and the like, and defense of the flock from attacks within, from themselves and their sinful weaknesses as exhibited in their many vocations and challenges in life.

The pastor, in order to combat these enemies of the souls of his people, is to teach their hearts observing the people and noting their conditions and at the same time dealing with the heretic giving him no foothold. This defense is to be done without concern of human reaction,

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 2.7.

¹⁰² Ibid., 1.8; 2.8.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 2.8.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 1.9; 2.3.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 2.6.

¹⁰⁶ Allen, 121.

favorable or unfavorable. The pastor, Gregory the Great teaches, is to discern “with subtle scrutiny” between good and evil, speaking about the things that are right and according to the word of truth.¹⁰⁷ Defense of the flock requires speaking up, resisting the evil that contends against the church.¹⁰⁸ The pastor, Gregory the Great contends, holds “the office of a herald announcing the Judge to come.”¹⁰⁹

His defense of his people’s souls from themselves, involves the same distinction of good and evil, of virtue and vice, observing carefully the lives of his people and administering then the proper medicine at the proper time for their souls’ conditions. The pastor is to blend justice and mercy showing himself “to his subjects as a mother in loving-kindness, and as a father in discipline.”¹¹⁰ Like the Good Samaritan “whoever superintends the healing of wounds must needs administer in wine the smart of pain, and in oil the softness of loving-kindness, to the end that through wine what is festering may be purged, and through oil what is curable may be soothed.”¹¹¹ Harkening to another analogy in Scripture, Gregory the Great appeals to Psalm 23 and the use of the rod and staff in connection with the pastor’s duties stating the rod is for striking, for discipline while the staff is for the support of the people’s souls. They both are to be used together, however, declaring “If, then, there is the constraint of the rod for striking, there should be also the comfort of the staff for supporting.”¹¹² In all things, the pastor is to measure carefully how he reprovcs and administers any correction.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 2.2.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 2.4.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 2.6.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

The pastor's primary opportunity for this is in his preaching. All the distinctions that are to be made in connection with the individual needs of his hearers are to be done so that suitable medicine may be applied to the souls of his people. In other words, the sermon preached and proclaimed, whether from the pulpit, in the sick room, in the home, and wherever the pastor finds himself, is to take careful note that spiritual needs vary and ought to be addressed with appropriate actions. Gregory the Great writes the following.

These are the things that a Bishop of souls should observe in the diversity of his preaching, that he may solicitously oppose suitable medicines to the diseases of his several hearers. But, whereas it is a matter of great anxiety, in exhorting individuals, to be of service to them according to their individual needs, since it is a very difficult thing to instruct each person in what concerns himself, dealing out due consideration to each case, it is yet far more difficult to admonish innumerable hearers labouring under various passions at one and the same time with one common exhortation. For in this case the speech is to be tempered with such art that, the vices of the hearers being diverse, it may be found suitable to them severally, and yet be not diverse from itself; that it pass indeed with one stroke through the midst of passions, but, after the manner of a two-edged sword, cut the swellings of carnal thoughts on either side; so that humility be so preached to the proud that yet fear be not increased in the timid; that confidence be so infused into the timid that yet the unbridled licence of the proud grow not; that solicitude in well doing be so preached to the listless and torpid that yet licence of immoderate action be not increased in the unquiet; that bounds be so set on the unquiet that yet careless torpor be not produced in the listless; that wrath be so extinguished in the impatient that yet negligence grow not in the easy and soft-hearted; that the soft-hearted be so inflamed to zeal that yet fire be not added to the wrathful; that liberality in giving be so infused into the niggardly that yet the reins of profusion be in no wise loosened to the prodigal; that frugality be so preached to the prodigal that yet care to keep perishable things be not increased in the niggardly; that marriage be so praised to the incontinent that yet those who are already continent be not called back to voluptuousness; that virginity of body be so praised to the continent that yet fecundity of the flesh come not to be despised by the married. Good things are so to be preached that ill things be not assisted sideways. The highest good is so to be praised that the lowest be not despaired of. The lowest is so to be cherished that there be no cessation of striving for the highest from the lowest being thought sufficient.¹¹³

¹¹³ Ibid., 2.36.

Even more this preaching is to keep an eye to “the hidden affections and motives” of the people “after the manner of the palaestra . . . [turning] himself with skill to either side.”¹¹⁴ There are even times, Gregory the Great holds forth, that the administration of the medicine of exhortation must be to the greater disease in the person even if there is a lesser disease as well.

[W]hen the sickness of two vices attacks a man, one presses upon him more lightly, and the other perchance more heavily, it is undoubtedly right to haste to the succour of that through which there is the more rapid tendency to death. And, if the one cannot be restrained from causing the death which is imminent unless the other which is contrary to it increase, the preacher must be content by skilful management in his exhortation to suffer one to increase, to the end that he may keep the other back from causing the death which is imminent. When he does this, he does not aggravate the disease, but preserves the life of his sufferer to whom he administers the medicine, that he may find a fitting time for searching out means of recovery.¹¹⁵

With these thoughts and concerns in mind the faithful ruler of souls addresses the particular conditions of his people as Gregory the Great catalogs throughout part 3 of his work. Regardless the conditions the pastor finds his people in, Gregory the Great applies the rule that they govern their souls, giving them direction and guidance from God’s Word, even searching out the same Word should the pastor not know what to do or speak.¹¹⁶ The pastor is to guard the souls of his people, directing them to the end prepared for them by their greater Shepherd, Christ our Lord.

The impossibility of fulfilling these labors perfectly, a yoke that both Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom dealt with, is addressed also by Gregory the Great. He holds forth to the pastors who have read his manual the comfort the Lord gives by preserving His pastors and rescuing them from temptations as they serve Him and the souls of those given to his governance.¹¹⁷ In fact, the faithful ruler of souls might even wonder why the Lord just doesn’t

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 2.37.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 2.38.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 2.5.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 2.5.

shield them entirely from temptations and troubles from without and within. Gregory the Great states that God leaves imperfections in those who rule over souls so that they might remain humble and by this design remember over whom they rule and their condition, finding strength in the One who appointed them to this office.

e. Summary

To this point each of the selected Church Fathers has been examined and their understanding of the role and purpose of the Pastoral Office (whether termed priest, bishop, ruler, etc.) set forth. With consistency throughout, each of them, Ignatius of Antioch, Gregory of Nazianzus, St. John Chrysostom, and Gregory the Great, state in their own ways that the pastor is God's representative tending to the care of the souls given them by His appointment. Pastors are portrayed as shepherds, guardians, fathers, spiritual doctors and healers, champions of God, servants of His people and such titles are not empty for they also convey the very purpose of the office in which they have been placed. Even as they bear witness to the Gospel for the healing of the souls of their people, applying the Word of God appropriately as a shepherd does the rod and the staff, or the Samaritan his wine and oil, they do so teaching and exhorting the people addressing their particular needs individually and collectively. Yet, as shown, this teaching of the people is not to be done only by words, it is also to be done by example with the pastor being a model, an exemplar of Christian living to the souls under his care, and, quite honestly, to all. Though the language of some of the Fathers examined is more specific on some of these topics than others, this needs to be understood in light of the context in which they wrote and preached. The historical context and condition of the church at the time of Ignatius certainly differs some from that of the time of Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom and from the more established life of the church by the time of Gregory the Great.

Chapter 2

The Purpose of the Pastoral Office as Understood by Augsburg Confession V (CA V)

This study has been undertaken with the desire to compare the purpose of the Pastoral Office depicted by these Fathers with Augsburg Confession V (CA V) and discover whether there is continuity or a divergence in understanding the scope and purpose of the office.

Augsburg V states in part:

To obtain such faith God instituted the office of preaching, giving the gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when he wills, in those who hear the gospel. It teaches that we have a gracious God, not through our merit but through Christ's merit, when we so believe.¹

This teaches that the Pastoral Office is located in the economy of God's salvific activity and therefore, defines its very purpose. It exists, "not . . . simply by virtue of apostolic precedence or for the sake of good order, but by virtue of Christ's will *and for the sake of the salvation of sinners.*"²

These are the crucial points in Augsburg V—institution and reason: for the purpose of the salvation of sinners. The pastoral office is not a human institution established for mere convenience or to meet a contemporary need of a respective era only to be shaped according to a generation's whims. Rather, as Weinrich asserts "the office of preaching and the sacraments is

¹ Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, vol. 40 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000). Hereafter, citations to the Book of Concord will appear as K-W, CA V; etc.

² Departments of Systematic Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, "The Office of the Holy Ministry," *Concordia Journal* 33 (July 2007): 243; emphasis added to quotation.

prior to the church, just as preaching is prior to hearing, administering is prior to receiving, grace is prior to faith.”³ This is Luther’s argument which undergirds Augsburg V. The Lord “imbeds the ministry of preaching and the sacraments *within* the ‘order of salvation.’ Within this order the pastor is given the tasks to preach and administer; the people are given the tasks to hear and receive (Paul: faith comes through hearing; Augsburg Confession: “in order that we might receive such justifying faith . . .”).”⁴ Thus, for Luther, “the order for which the pastoral office was instituted was the order of redemption, not the order of sergeant-at-arms.”⁵

The Office is not, therefore, for the sake of mere arrangement and decorum for the church. Though it has its place among the orders of creation according to the Order of Creation this is not the sole foundation or argument the Reformers offer for the establishment and the defense of the Office. Although it is distinct from the priesthood of all believers and, since it deals with the redemption of the created order, the pastoral office is given so that its redemption (i.e., the creation’s) may be announced since the creation, like believers, awaits the final redemption. “The pastoral office was a dominical institution through which Christ places his own ministry within the church.”⁶ “Article V on the ministry, the *Predigtamt*, embraces implicitly within itself all that God ordained for the sake of delivering His saving Word to sinners.”⁷

Lutheran thought flows from Augsburg V and provides the basis of confessional discussion concerning the Holy Ministry as Naomichi Masaki’s article, “Augsburg Confession XIV: Does It Answer Current Questions on the Holy Ministry?,” reveals. Masaki begins with

³ William C. Weinrich, “Should a Layman Discharge the Duties of the Holy Ministry?” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 68 (July/October 2004): 211.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 210–11 (bold type in original).

⁵ *Ibid.*, 211.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 212.

⁷ Eugene F. Klug, “Augsburg V: Intent and Meaning of the Confessors on ‘Ministry,’” *Concordia Journal* 17 (July 1991): 30–42.

Augsburg V (CA V) to demonstrate that the ministry is “the divinely instituted office for the distribution of the Gospel in preaching and the sacraments.”⁸ “The Gospel is located concretely in the *externum verbum* of Word and Sacraments” according to CA V.⁹ Therefore, the Gospel is not left to one’s imagination and manipulation. The Confessions declare that it is already defined along with the means by which it is announced and its gifts are offered and given. “It confesses (CA V),” Masaki continues, “that God gives out His gifts through the *externum verbum*, by his use of the *Predigtamt*, which He instituted for the *ministerium docendi evangelii et porrigendi sacramenta*.”¹⁰ The Trinity and the “God-man Christ is the *causa efficiens* of not only the constitution of the ministry but also of the ministry.”¹¹ God instituted both the means of grace and the office of the ministry in order to teach doctrine (Gal 1.8, 9, 12; 2 Tim 3.14-15) and to administer the sacraments.¹²

The emphasis, even as CA V proclaims, is not on the man in the office Masaki concludes. Rather it (CA V) emphasizes “the Holy Spirit as the one who bestows faith and who, according to CA III, is sent by Jesus (CA III, 5).”¹³ Why? Because the “Holy Spirit binds Himself to the *externum verbum*, the means of grace (CA V), in order to deliver the forgiveness won at the cross.”¹⁴

CA V reflects a rich biblical theology of the mandate and institution of the office of the holy ministry: John 20:21-23 (CA XXVIII, 6-7; TR 9, 23, 31); Matthew 28:19-20 (Tr 31); Luke 10:16 (CA XXVIII, 22; Ap VII/VIII, 28, 47); Matthew 16:18-19 (Tr 22, 25); John 21:17 (Tr 30). Through the apostle, Christ himself speaks (Lk 10:16),

⁸ Masaki, 139.

⁹ Ibid., 140.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 141.

¹² Ibid., 142.

¹³ Ibid., 147.

¹⁴ Ibid.

absolves (John 20:21-23; Matt 16:19-20), teaches and baptizes (Matt 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-16). The doer and giver of the ministry is Jesus (Matt 20:28; Luke 22:27). The man put into the *Predigtamt* is an instrument sent by Jesus (2 Cor 5:17-21; cf., Ap VII/VIII, 28: *Christi vice et loco*; Ap XXIV, 79-81). Just as the Holy Spirit is most pleased when he brings Christ while hiding himself; likewise, the Spirit active in the *Predigtamt* (John 20:21-23; cf., John 14:25; 15:26; 16:13-14; Luke 3:16, 22; 4:18; 24:49) is all about Jesus and the means of grace, not about the pastor.¹⁵

Therefore, one is to read and understand the pastoral office as the office of Christ, the Spirit, and the Father given “only [as] an instrument to deliver the forgiveness of sins . . . [he is] an instrumental servant of the Gospel and Sacraments through whom Jesus speaks and gives.”¹⁶ “Pastors participate in Christ’s work, so that their work is His work.”¹⁷ As Arand puts it “the public ministry of the church is inextricably linked with God’s tools for creating faith.”¹⁸

Thus God has given the office to exercise the keys for the salvation of sinners’ souls. It is not derived from the church since it finds its institution in Christ who Himself is prior to the church and who, by the Spirit’s preaching of the Gospel and Sacraments, has called the church into being. In this one can detect Ignatius of Antioch’s Trinitarian understanding of the pastoral office. For, since the office is the office instituted by and representing Christ who gave the same office that the Father gave Him in which the Spirit performs His work, the office represents the Trinity in the midst of the congregation announcing the Trinity’s reign. The office properly and faithfully performed announces “the coming of God’s reign, [is] to forgive sins, and to justify sinners.”¹⁹

¹⁵ Ibid., 147–48.

¹⁶ Ibid., 148.

¹⁷ Nathan Jastram, “Man as Male and Female: Created in the Image of God,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 68 (January 2004): 83

¹⁸ Charles P. Arand, “The Ministry of the Church in Light of the Two Kinds of Righteousness,” *Concordia Journal* 33 (October 2007): 351

¹⁹ Departments of Systematic Theology, 244.

God's revelation of Himself was for a definite purpose—to save, not to satisfy curiosity nor as the result of manipulative arts like meditation or incantation nor to torment mankind and engage in contests, exact revenge, and selfish interests as Greco-Roman gods of mythology are described to have done. No, God's heart is revealed in the pastoral office since it is instituted for the same purpose for which He has revealed Himself in the Incarnate Son. The "office is established for a definite purpose—to save."²⁰ The Lutheran Confessions reveal the saving purpose of the office and that God's saving purpose be accomplished whether confessed in CA V, CA XXVIII, the Treatise, the Large and Small Catechisms.

For instance, Weinrich states that Luther contends on the basis of his discussion on the Third Article that "God has instituted the office of preaching and the sacraments *for the purpose* of faith, that there might be a Christian church, *in order that* (ut) there might be a royal priesthood and that the priesthood might be served with the Gospel with ongoing preaching and administration of the sacraments."²¹ David Scaer notes that Augsburg XIV extends and depends on Augsburg V and that John 20.21-23 is cited in Augsburg XXVIII to demonstrate that bishops (pastors) are authorized to administer the keys proclaiming forgiveness in Christ's place.²² Norman Nagel decries the inattention the Small Catechism receives with its Fifth Chief Part: the Office of the Keys and Confession. He states in part: "When the Office of the Keys has been confessed, what remains to be still confessed of the Holy Ministry? From sixteenth-century Saxony on, the Small Catechism has given us the way of teaching and confessing the Office of the Keys, and along with that, Holy Absolution and Holy Ministry. They go together."²³ He

²⁰ Ibid., 248.

²¹ Weinrich, "Should a Layman," 213–14 (italics in original).

²² David P. Scaer, "The Office of the Holy Ministry according to the Gospels and the Augsburg Confession," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 70 (April 2006): 114, 118.

²³ Norman E. Nagel, "The Office of the Holy Ministry in the Confessions," *Concordia Journal* 14 (July 1988):

continues his point stating that “the definition of a pastor [is] given us there (διδάσκαλος) and his welcoming us to the Lord’s Table and giving into our mouths the body and blood of our Lord (pastor). This is what a pastor is, and what a pastor is for.”²⁴ “A pastor is good for nothing but the delivery of the forgiveness of sins. Attention is not directed to him but to what he is there for, as servant and instrumentality, the Gospel and Sacraments; it is God who does the verbs.”²⁵ Nagel shows that the Fifth Chief Part teaches in concert what Augsburg V and other confessional writings of the Book of Concord teach. He writes,

By way of confessing the Office of the Keys, the Office of the Holy Ministry is confessed. To be put into the Holy Ministry is to be given the Office of the Keys. What goes with the Office of the Keys is ‘to preach the Gospel, to forgive and retain sins, and to give out and administer the Sacraments’ (AC 28, 5). That these things be done flows from (*ut*) Article 4, Justification. What is confessed in Article 4 is confessed as given out by the ministry of preaching (*Predigtamt*). . . . The way, means, instruments He [i.e., the Holy Spirit] uses are the Means of Grace, the preaching/teaching of the Gospel and the giving out of the Sacraments, whose instrumentality is the ministry (*Predigtamt*) instituted by God. Article V is concerned with the gifts and their being delivered. This happens by the means of grace, and so that they might be going on, God instituted the ministry (*Predigtamt*). Where they are going on, there is the church (Article 7). The Church comes in seventh place. So the Confessions give us a doctrine of the Holy Ministry that runs with the Office of the Keys and the means of grace. All three are God’s gifts, mandated and instituted by Him so that there may be believers (“such faith”) that is the church. Believers, the church, confess what has been given them, and what has been given them may not be taken away or usurped!²⁶

He further declares that all this is for the defense of the Gospel. “What is at stake is the preaching of the Gospel. No preaching of the Gospel, no church. No preaching of the Gospel without a preacher.”²⁷ The *Predigtamt* is to gather and to feed a congregation²⁸ with the means of

283.

²⁴ Ibid., 284.

²⁵ Ibid., 288.

²⁶ Ibid., 288–89.

²⁷ Ibid., 284.

grace caring for the souls entrusted in the name of Christ because this is the very purpose for which God has given it in His church.

This was the chief criticism that the Lutheran Reformers leveled against Rome—instead of caring for souls by comforting terror-stricken consciences with the Gospel, the Pope and priests were withholding this comfort prescribing instead works and selling indulgences and pardon. In an unpublished paper I asserted this very claim citing numerous passages from the Apology. “Our opponents have neglected to teach the faith that justifies and consoles godly hearts” (Ap IV, 218.178). Again the Apology notes “by faith alone we obtain the forgiveness of sins on account of Christ and by faith alone we are justified. . . . This alone brings a sure and firm consolation to godly minds. Moreover, there needs to be a teaching in the church from which the faithful may receive the certain hope of salvation.” (Ap IV, 139.117-118). “This is why the Gospel was given, why the Office of the Keys was given—to quiet the terrified soul.”²⁹ “This leads to another accent for Lutheran pastoral care from the Apology. For not only are we enjoined to set forth the message of forgiveness by grace through faith for Christ’s sake when the godly are convicted and contrite over their sins, we are also to speak of the consolations and comforts of the gospel promises to those troubled in their lives.”³⁰ “This means that as pastors we should take seriously the means entrusted to us to give consolation to the convicted conscience and to strengthen them in their faith.”³¹ “Lutheran pastoral care is founded on the article of justification by grace through faith for Christ’s sake only, for only the pure Gospel can console

²⁸ Masaki, 155.

²⁹ D. Lee Cullen, Jr., “Lutheran Pastor Care Accents in Articles IV and XII of the Apology: ‘The Consolation of Christ for the Convicted Conscience’” (paper presented at P-880, Seminar in Practical Theology, Concordia Seminary, June 2001), 2.

³⁰ Ibid., 3.

³¹ Ibid., 4.

the convicted conscience and give it peace before God in heaven. Such care is exercised as the faithful Lutheran pastor exercises the keys and administers the sacraments to those in sorrow over their sin and afflicted by the troubles of this life.”³²

³² Ibid., 5.

Chapter 3

The Church Fathers and Augsburg V: Continuity and Departure

The Office, even as the Fathers taught, is not there, therefore, for the sake of the man who holds it but for the sake of the men, women, and children whom he serves. Its purpose is to convey and apply the healing message of salvation using the Gospel and the sacraments, the means of grace which the Spirit has given and utilizes in His work of enlightening, gathering, and sanctifying the church of Christ. These are the pastor's tools, if you will, and just as a mechanic or farmer or other skilled laborer utilizes his or her tools appropriately for the task at hand, so also is the pastor to discern the use and application of the same in connection with the condition of his hearers.

In this I see a great amount of continuity between Augsburg V and the Fathers in this paper. Though they did not use the exact language as the Lutheran Confessors, there is the same concern with the use of God's Word and sacraments for the health of the people's souls, for their salvation, and for the equipping of their people to live the Christian life. Even though, at first, this author thought there was an overemphasis on sanctification and thought this comparison would show a greater departure regarding the purpose of the Pastoral Office between the Fathers and Augsburg V, I believe that the differences are much less. The strong Gospel language contained in Ignatius of Antioch and Gregory of Nazianzus and the preaching of this for the health of the people's souls cannot be overlooked, for instance. The historical context of the day for the Fathers was one not so much of contention over the content of the Gospel message, though that message was certainly threatened chiefly by the Arian heresy and its attacks upon the person of Christ in the days of Nazianzus and Chrysostom, but the preaching of it to the hearts of

the hurting that they may be soothed with heavenly medicine as they struggled with the pains, sorrows, and heartaches of their lives, as they confessed their sins and shortcomings, as they longed for relief in this wilderness and looked to the pastures of Heaven's rest. Though the historical context of Augsburg V is one of contention over what is the Gospel and how one is justified, one cannot selectively lift this passage from the entire Lutheran Confessions and speak against sanctification since the next article, Augsburg VI speaks of the fruits of faith that justifying faith produces.

It is also taught that such faith should yield good fruit and good works and that a person must do such good works as God has commanded for God's sake but not place trust in them as if thereby to earn grace before God. For we receive forgiveness of sin and righteousness through faith in Christ, as Christ himself says [Luke 17:10]: "When you have done all [things] . . . , say, 'We are worthless slaves.'" The Fathers also teach the same thing. For Ambrose says: "It is determined by God that whoever believes in Christ shall be saved and have forgiveness of sins, not through works but through faith alone, without merit."¹

I believe there is substantial concurrence between CA V and the Fathers for concern for the salvation of the people and this is born out by the great responsibility not only to preach the Word of God but to apply it properly to the lives of the people, that it is preached for repentance unto the remission of sins and that the fruits that follow do follow as justified believers live by faith.

There is a point or two of departure. The understanding of the Pastoral Office as priest does carry with it many of the connotations associated with the priest of Roman Catholicism. Gregory the Great had such a comment as he stated that the pastor is "a post of intercession with God for the people."² He also makes mention of one's own merit making God favorable to the

¹ K-W, CA VI.

² Gregory the Great 1.10.

man.³ Statements like these “smack” of Rome’s errors in connection with the office and with work righteousness. Though a high understanding of the office is maintained and exhorted, such thoughts are to be avoided. The pastor is not the sole intercessor before God for the people, though he certainly can and should make intercession for the people of God. His works, even as a pastor, do not commend him to God since God is no respecter of persons and does not declare us justified based on our merits and works but on Christ’s alone.

There are also some implications and application for today. In light of the ongoing discussions in our own church body on the Pastoral Office and its relationship to the priesthood of all believers, much can be gleaned from the Fathers and deeper study of them and of our Lutheran Fathers. Such an effort is the point of the article submitted by The Departments of Systematic Theology in the July 2007 *Concordia Journal*. There are also implications for the leadership models being examined and sought after (encouraged?) in our church body (and others) so that the people of God may be served effectively. This effective service being sought after, these models being pursued ought to be examined in light of and compared to the purpose of the Pastoral Office as taught in Scripture and affirmed by the Fathers and CA V. The growing sacerdotalism and exodus of Lutheran Pastors to Eastern Orthodoxy for their priesthood can certainly be addressed as well. These issues will be addressed and evaluated at the end of this paper.

³ Gregory the Great 1.10.

Chapter 4

The Purpose of the Pastoral Office in Our Contemporary Age

The teachings of the Fathers studied and Augsburg V both have implications for the modern paradigms of ministry as represented by Rick Warren and television preachers like Joel Osteen. Such preaching would have met and should meet stiff resistance from the Fathers and Lutherans alike for reasons that will be addressed. There are also continuing implications for the question of women and their participation as lay readers as well as other duties of the Pastoral Office if the representational/incarnational aspect of the Pastoral Office is to be upheld and taught.

a. The Changing Paradigm

There is such a need to address the pastoral office in connection with all these topics for three reasons—(1) attempts to undermine or restore the Biblical teachings concerning the pastoral office, (2) the desire to apply the correct teaching to the changing times, and (3) the inexorable movement that Protestantism is wherein it is “constantly reexamining existing readings of the Bible to ensure that these (i.e., its teachings) are faithful.”⁴ McGrath calls this the “Protestant principle” for “at its heart, Protestantism represents a constant return to the Bible to revalidate and where necessary restate its beliefs and values, refusing to allow any one generation or individual to determine what is definitive for Protestantism as a whole.”⁵ This, he

⁴ Alister E. McGrath, *Christianity's Dangerous Idea: The Protestant Revolution—A History from the Sixteenth Century to the Twenty-First* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 205.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 199, 205.

argues, is a result of Luther's teachings and reforms which "insisted that every Christian has the right to interpret the Bible and to raise concerns about any aspect of the church's teaching or practice that appears to be inconsistent with the Bible."⁶ This has become the institutional principle of Protestantism in McGrath's eyes, one that will continue to be exercised since it is an integral aspect of the Protestant movement. As Jean Monnet stated "rien n'est possible sans les hommes, rien n'est durable sans les institutions"⁷ (Nothing is possible without people, nothing is lasting without institutions). Thus the Protestant principle has become an institution among Protestant churches supplying the impetus and justification for the shifting or additional paradigms for pastoral ministry and pastoral care. The Protestant principle may be just as responsible as the other two reasons I noted above for the ongoing inquiry into the purpose of the pastoral office. Protestantism allows for adaptability based on the individual's right to read and interpret Scripture for oneself and the pastoral office has not been exempt from this principle as will be evidenced later in the discussion regarding who may hold the office and the new hermeneutic proffered to support a less historic and Biblical solution.

This I submit is easily seen when one surveys the pastoral office in practice and the literature written seeking to depart from the historic understanding of the office's purpose or to restore it as well as the present discussions of the relationship of the pastoral office to the priesthood of all believers and those topics related to this discussion such as women lay readers, "emergency pastoral care situations," the Specific Ministry Pastor Program and more. McGrath observes that as a result of the "Protestant principle" two models of church have emerged—the church as franchise and the church as small business.⁸ Pastoral models have been directly

⁶ Ibid., 53.

⁷ Ibid., 277.

⁸ Ibid., 471.

influenced as a result as the pastor is recast as entrepreneur and visionary more than *Seelsorger* and shepherd. Much of the literature I studied supports this movement of pastor to professional and visionary while much seeks to reign in any departure from the Biblical paradigm of pastor as shepherd.

b. The Purpose of the Pastoral Office: Professional

In our contemporary era there are two understandings of the pastoral office. The first is the traditional understanding of pastor as shepherd, an understanding I find consistent with the Fathers, CA V, and the Lutheran Confessions. The second is the emerging (already established?) paradigm of pastor as professional, as either a CEO or a coach or equipper. It is this discussion that occupies the next portion of this paper as the paradigm. I would contend that one's understanding of the pastoral ministry is reflective of the believed underlying purpose for the office.

In our society where entertainment quality is valued and pragmatism reigns (a Protestant and American ideal) it is apparent a shift in the paradigm and purpose of the pastoral office has occurred, especially judging by the amount written in the attempt to reclaim the shepherd paradigm for the ministry. Some of this shift is well-intended and those who have participated in the change have done so in order to reach the souls of people and best provide for their perceived spiritual needs. A telling moment which reflects this desire to get through to the people occurs in the movie "Footloose" during a discussion between Ariel and her father, the Rev. Shaw Moore, in the church as he is rehearsing Sunday's sermon. Ariel, a teenager struggling with typical teenage angst who always admired her father, makes the following observation:

Ariel: "I see the stage. I see costumes. It's show business, isn't it?"

Moore (Ariel's father): "Well, it's the only way I know to reach peoples' emotions."⁹ American pragmatism has reached small town America's pews and now reaches even into their homes to their couches and chairs through the visual, audio, and printed media providing a medium to address the spiritual needs of Americans.

The professional paradigm that has come recently to define the pastoral office is represented by those who view the office (or position) as either a CEO or Administrator. David Berger illustrates this with his humorously (and one hopes hyperbolically) article titled "The SP as CEO, CFO, CPO, COO. . . ."¹⁰ In this article Berger notes how "policy based governance" has made inroads into the church. Most troubling about this trend is "the assumption that the senior pastor is the CEO, CFO, etc., of the congregation, with duties, responsibilities, and expectations heavily weighted to the business side of the operation, well outside the office of the ministry."¹¹ Berger is concerned that if the pastor is to be shepherd "a source of spiritual sustenance to his people via word and sacrament, a conveyer of spiritual comfort in times of trouble or illness or death, the perception . . . that he carries with him as the CEO of the congregation surely cannot enhance these central roles."¹² In fact, Berger visualizes one potential scenario where the pastor having acted as CEO is called on to minister to those offended, affected, or hurt by his action at a moment of crisis and being rendered (humanly speaking) ineffective on account of that human weakness, sin, and brokenness. Berger asserts

When on Monday the pastor fires a staff member and on Friday must minister to that staff member's mother in the hospital, one can only wonder how he effects the metamorphosis from employer to shepherd. When the pastor spends his spiritual capital making decisions about money, property, and other church business, he will

⁹ *Footloose* (Paramount Pictures, 1984).

¹⁰ David O. Berger, "The SP as CEO, CFO, CPO, COO . . .," *Concordia Journal* 33 (April 2007): 113-15.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 114.

¹² *Ibid.*, 115.

find that he has traded his pastoral role as caretaker of souls for a mess of corporate pottage.¹³

Others have noted and lamented this paradigm shift. Charles Arand notes that expectations on pastors have greatly expanded in part due to a “renewed emphasis on the importance of mobilizing the priesthood of the baptized” and a greater specialization revealed in a pastor’s job description (church planter, youth pastor, etc.).¹⁴ This has resulted in pastors being viewed less as “curers of souls” or mouthpieces of God and more as counselors, managers, coaches, leaders, administrators, spiritual guides, and the like.¹⁵ Others have decried that many “have read our idea of the contemporary pastor back into the New Testament,” i.e., as main administrator and “the professional” in common worship.¹⁶ Though Barna and Viola certainly do not agree with the historic and confessional understanding of the pastoral office, they too have identified the paradigm of the professional pastor in the contemporary church. Warren and David Wiersbe note that the

. . . loss of the biblical concept of what [churches] really are. In our noble attempt to be ‘relevant’ in a changing world, we’ve thoughtlessly abandoned the pastoral image of the shepherd and sheep, and have blindly adopted the corporate image of the pastor as CEO, the elders as a Board of Directors, and the church family as customers to serve . . . we’ve changed our expectations of what a minister and a church ought to be and do.¹⁷

Of greater concern is that “the ‘CEO approach’ to pastoral leadership [can lead one to] distance ourselves from our people without ever paying the price of compassion, but that

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Arand, 344, 352.

¹⁵ Ibid., 344.

¹⁶ Frank Viola and George Barna, *Pagan Christianity?: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale, 2008), 112.

¹⁷ Warren W. Wiersbe and David W. Wiersbe, *10 Power Principles for Christian Service: Ministry Dynamics for a New Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 33.

approach is very unlike Jesus Christ.”¹⁸ “Most,” they continue, “find it much easier to purchase the latest management best-seller and imitate the experts, or attend a ‘super seminar’ where gurus plagiarize the experts; but Jesus didn’t take that approach.”¹⁹ Blaine Allen states that the pastoral office is not a picture of “a person running one of heaven’s regional offices as vice-president of operations . . .” or “an executive setting the vision and agenda for the Kingdom from corporate headquarters.”²⁰ John Piper leaves no doubts as to his concerns as evidenced by the title of his book *BROTHERS, WE ARE NOT PROFESSIONALS*. Piper writes in response to the “cultural expectations of professionalism” in connection with the pastoral office declaring “professionalism of the ministry is a constant threat to the offense of the Gospel” since its agenda is set by the world not by the Word.²¹ His concerns about the professional paradigm reach directly into the heart of the pastor’s task which is to “live and preach justification by faith” so that souls “flock to Christ as the Savior.”²²

Piper sees pragmatism at the heart of this paradigm saying that it “stresses management and maneuvering as ways to get things done with a token mention of prayer and reliance on the Holy Spirit.”²³ Today’s pastors he laments are pressured to be productive managers according to professional models.²⁴ Such even impacts the pastor’s sermon preparation since, in his opinion, it opposes querying the text and asking hard questions since such wrestling with Scripture

¹⁸ Ibid., 116.

¹⁹ Ibid., 65.

²⁰ Blaine Allen, *When People Throw Stones: A Leader’s Guide to Fielding Personal Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005), 87.

²¹ John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2002), xii, 3.

²² Ibid., 17, 25.

²³ Ibid., 56.

²⁴ Ibid., 66.

consumes much time and energy with results that, pragmatically speaking, are not “cost-effective” or “efficient” enough.²⁵

Blaine Allen concurs noting that culture, more and more “mirrors an anti-biblical value system.”²⁶ He continues “in the name of relevance, demographic research determines our music and the shape of our message so that we can reinvent ourselves to appeal to the greatest number. Though perhaps done from positive motives, the results are staggering: the audience is not just the customer, it has been crowned sovereign king.”²⁷ Today’s paradigm is now defined, Darius Salter says, by the best “system” or technological approach defined by contemporary society and not by the historic church.²⁸ Salter continues, “convinced that only the ministry system most attuned to society’s rapidly rising expectations will survive . . . a word about managing and marketing the ministry system is as important, if not more so, than a word about God.”²⁹

Given this paradigm and model for pastors “want ads” have changed Michael Horton notes.

According to a sampling of some evangelical ads he learned the following:

One church seeks a “dynamic leader with a passion to facilitate growth.” Hence, this person will be given to “relevant, thematic preaching incorporating creative use of drama and contemporary worship.” Nothing is mentioned about a commitment to Scripture, proclamation of God’s saving grace in Jesus Christ, or any specific doctrinal convictions. . . . According to another ad, a member of the pastoral staff should possess “gifting in leadership, shepherding, administration, recruiting, team-building, problem solver [sic], large church experience (1,000+).” In many of the ads, it was expected that the applicant will be a deeply spiritual person: “must have a heart for God,” “a contagious faith,” “a servant leader” who “loves God and truly worships Him” through “choirs, orchestra, drama, handbells, banners, etc.” But most of the qualification had to do with personal abilities that might be sought in any business

²⁵ Ibid., 75.

²⁶ Blaine Allen, 86.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Darius L. Salter, *Prophetic-Priestly Ministry: The Biblical Mandate for the 21st-Century Pastor* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel, 2002), 19.

²⁹ Ibid.

looking for a combination CEO, coach, and entertainer . . . not a single ad, by my count, included anything about subscription to a particular confession of faith. And in virtually none of them was there so much as a mention of doctrinal criteria or ecclesiastical affiliation.³⁰

Perhaps we witness the culmination of this paradigm in two of the more “successful” church leaders in the eyes of Americans today. Rick Warren views himself as a church leader whose responsibility is “to recognize a wave of God’s Spirit and ride it.”³¹ The “wave” (or at least “a” wave) can be the technologies that are available today and he sees himself as one who can teach you to recognize the waves God makes, ride them, and create the system most successful for your particular ministry situation. The task of church leadership according to Warren is to “discover and remove growth-restricting diseases and barriers so that natural, normal growth can occur.”³² He defines the first task of leadership (I am presuming pastoral leadership) as defining the mission which is to “produce disciples of Jesus Christ.”³³ The means, other than riding the “waves” out there, are left undefined purposely.

Warren’s approach and view of the pastoral ministry fits within the pragmatic approach of the professional pastor. The structure of his ministries testifies to this truth where he reserves himself the “role of ‘chief disturbing agent’—providing Saddleback’s vision, value, and voice.”³⁴ Yet, such a ministry is not incarnational or centered on justification. It is pragmatically minded—whatever wave you identify and works best to reach others to produce disciples is the best means for you to use. Such is claimed to be of the Holy Spirit, but as Lutherans we would struggle in

³⁰ Michael Horton, “Wanted: Ministers Who Preach Not Themselves, But Christ,” *Modern Reformation* (November/December 2000): 13–14.

³¹ Rick Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Church* (Grand Rapids; Zondervan, 1995), 14.

³² *Ibid.*, 16.

³³ *Ibid.*, 42.

³⁴ Jeffery L. Sheler, “Preacher with a Purpose,” *U.S. News & World Report* (online version); available from http://usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/051031/31warren_2.htm; Internet; accessed 24 January 2008.

vain to find this supported in Scripture. Warren views himself as a trainer of pastors and believers, but little of the historic and confessional teaching and understanding of the office and the God given purpose of the pastoral ministry seems evident in his view of the pastoral office.

Joel Osteen appears to have eclipsed Warren and seems more of an insidious threat. Though he claims he is and conducts himself as pastor before a televised audience he himself states he is “more [of] a coach . . . a motivator to help them experience the life God has for us . . . I’m a reverend and a pastor.”³⁵ In a later interview Osteen reiterated his view of his ministry saying “I want to motivate. I wanna motivate every person to leave here to be a better father, a better husband, to break addictions to come up higher in their walk with the Lord.”³⁶ He is then questioned “is that being a pastor or is that being Dr. Phil or Oprah?” to which he replies “No, I think we use God’s word.”³⁷

Yet this use of God’s word when used is selective, and the application of the Law and identification of sin is minimal and purposely avoided for, as Osteen says “I don’t have it in my heart to condemn people. . . . I know there is condemnation but I don’t feel that’s my place.”³⁸ At least as one who sees himself as a motivator he is being consistent with that role cheering on that which he says is good and can be better in a person. Later on in the interview as Larry King presses Osteen on abortion and same-sex marriage we witness the following exchange.

Osteen: “I don’t think that a same-sex marriage is the way God intended it to be. I don’t think abortion is the best. I think there are other, you know, a better way to live

³⁵ *CNN Larry King Live*, “Interview with Joel Osteen” (20 June 2005); available from <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0506/20/lkl.01.html>; Internet; accessed 24 January 2008.

³⁶ CBS Interactive, “Joel Osteen Answers His Critics” (2007); available from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/10/11/60minutes/printable3358652.shtml>; Internet; accessed 24 January 2008.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *CNN Larry King Live.*

your life. But I'm not going to condemn those people. I tell them all the time our church is open for everybody."

King: "You don't call them sinners?"

Osteen: "I don't."

King: "Is that a word you don't use?"

Osteen: "I don't use it. I never thought about it. But I probably don't. But most people already know what they're doing wrong. When I get them to church I want to tell them that you can change. There can be a difference in your life. So I don't go down the road of condemning."³⁹

Osteen's ministry and message have been taken to task and his ministry has been criticized on the basis of his message. His reluctance to address and identify sin in the lives of those who hear him certainly is not what the Church Fathers and Lutherans would call good medicine. Michael Horton exposes the "Theology of Glory" that underpins Osteen's message saying that he "is simply the latest in a long line of self-help evangelists who appeal to the native American obsession with pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps. Salvation is not a matter of divine rescue from the judgment that is coming on the world, but a matter of self-improvement in order to have your best life now."⁴⁰ Horton contends that

if Osteen were a herald, ambassador, and a messenger of the gospel, he would humbly yet confidently proclaim the message that we have been given, rather than deciding for himself what kind of ministry for which he wants to be remembered . . . Osteen's commitment to his own message and ministry fail to serve the interests of God's kingdom; they fall far short of truly serving his hearers.⁴¹

The reaction against this paradigm is seen in the rise of publications by authors alarmed at such a pastoral model. Such a rise can be interpreted as the pendulum swinging back. Whether

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Michael Horton, "Joel Osteen and the Glory Story: A Case Study" (Fresno: White Horse Media 2008); available from <http://www.whitehorseinn.org/osteenart01.htm>; Internet; accessed January 2008.

⁴¹ Ibid.

this is historically accurate is yet to be seen. Even the recent efforts by our own seminaries' Systematic Departments and their desire to address the pressing need for pastoral care in our own church body reflects a reaction to the state of the pastoral office in the church today and an effort to maintain if not reclaim the confessional and Biblical foundations of our understanding of the God-given purpose of the office. If a perusal of a recent Christian Book Distributor (CBD) catalog is any indication, the volumes and voices reacting against the professional model are growing.⁴²

The chief criticism against the professional paradigm is that it generally puts the gospel in the back seat if not in the trunk while it serves the most pragmatic and results-oriented approach. In many cases this model or paradigm actually conflicts with the Biblical paradigm as we see reflected in the above Church Fathers and the Lutheran Confessions. In the effort to relate and be more relevant in the ministry the purpose of the ministry has been largely sacrificed on the altar of pragmatism and the pastor has been transformed or converted to an Administrator surveying the congregation from a distance. Salter observes that "bringing people into the presence of God has been replaced by teaching them coping techniques" by those who follow and subscribe to the professional paradigm of pastoral ministry.⁴³ This paradigm shift aptly illustrates McGrath's "Protestant principle" and shows the inherent danger of it as well—one that leads to the obfuscation of the Law and the relegation of the Gospel to a lesser means of producing disciples or, even worst, a therapeutic, self-help motivational message designed to give the adherent success in this life, or, in the words of Osteen's book title *Your Best Life Now*.

⁴² See *Pastors' Resources 2008* (Peabody, Mass.: Christian Book Distributors, 2008) or the website with the catalog: www.christianbook.com.

⁴³ Salter, 17.

In the end, the professional approach relies on a business and pragmatic philosophy of greatest efficiency and result placing the pastor in compromising position of “boss” and “pastor” or a dilution of the Biblical message of sin and salvation in favor of a moral pragmatism and therapy which tells you to change your life to receive God’s favor. Such a message appeals to the ego in both cases—the ego of personal importance which replaces God with “I.” Indeed, Satan’s temptation has come home to roost—“you will be like God.” Only once again, it is a lie.

The question remains—what model, paradigm and purpose is then offered by the critics of the professional paradigm of the pastoral ministry? Is it consistent with the purpose of the pastoral ministry as explained in connection with Ignatius, Nazianzus, Chrysostom, Gregory the Great and Augsburg V? The next portion of this paper will detail an answer to these questions indicating any consistency and divergence that may exist between this contemporary view of the pastoral ministry and its purpose.

c. The Purpose of the Pastoral Office: Shepherd

There are no shortages of books and articles seeking to call Christian pastors back to the Biblical paradigm of shepherd where the care of the souls of God’s people is established on the basis of the Great Shepherd and His ministry to us. Many of these emphasize the important place of God’s Word and the Sacraments in this ministry though not necessarily with a Lutheran understanding of the latter. It is remarkable, however, how consistent their view of the purpose of the pastoral ministry is with the Church Fathers and Augsburg V, although, the latter teaching of justification and its centrality to the ministry and reason for the ministry is not always expressed as forthrightly as might be preferred. However, the care of souls and administering the comfort of the Word of God is a chief feature of those who espouse and would recall pastors and the church to the paradigm of pastor as shepherd.

There is agreement that the ministry is Christ's among those who view the pastor as shepherd. Such identification places the accountability of the office-bearer before Christ and not before those whom he is to serve and shepherd. Joseph Allen announces that the "ministry of the Church is God's" and that the pastor "must inquire what the Trinity has done and continues to do in the life and history of mankind" for it is the responsibility of the office to perform God's ministry which is to reveal His saving and reconciling work.⁴⁴ Christ's ministry is the paradigm and the "the shepherd . . . does nothing by himself . . . he represents Christ; he is 'presenting' Christ who is always there."⁴⁵ Darius Salter concurs stating "the pastor represents not himself . . . but Christ and the local community of believers. They have entrusted the pastor with the 'keys to the Kingdom.'"⁴⁶ Warren and David Wiersbe write, "ministers are servants of God and of God's people" and "aren't manufacturers; they're distributors."⁴⁷ Michael Horton in examining the professional paradigm against the ministry of Paul writes "Ministers are . . . to deliver as ambassadors a particular message from their Sovereign . . . 'For we preach not ourselves, but Christ.'"⁴⁸

Saleska states the same truth in a clever manner by claiming pastors are to "play" God. Though this is often a criticism that is leveled against pastors he says that ministers should play God for then they gain an important "perspective on their ministry in the church and in the world . . . pastors have a servant role."⁴⁹ Pastors who play God are performing God's work which is to

⁴⁴ Joseph Allen, 16–17.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 22, 33.

⁴⁶ Salter, 85.

⁴⁷ Wiersbe and Wiersbe, 28, 94.

⁴⁸ Horton, "Wanted," 18.

⁴⁹ Timothy E. Saleska, "Pastors Who Play God," *Concordia Journal* 31 (January 2005): 13.

kill and to raise God's people and "Christ is God's Word that kills and raises us."⁵⁰ This role of representing God by doing God's work directs the pastor in fulfilling the purpose of the pastoral office. Pastors are to play God through the preaching of the Word killing and raising people "through the promise of God's Word, pastors are to resurrect God's chosen ones out of the deadness of their sin. They bring about the death and resurrection of God's children."⁵¹ Playing God occurs in public worship when pastors proclaim the Word from the pulpit "where pastors aim the Word at the heart to kill and make alive!" and when they proclaim the Word in the Sacraments where they further "play God by administering God's killing and raising Word (Christ) to the baptized ones."⁵² Pastors who play God seek to bring God's people to repentance and furthermore play God as absolver since the pastor is not only to be interested in simply "stirring up people's emotions or feelings through various (manipulative?) techniques. It is the experience of (Christ's) death and resurrection (i.e., repentance) that they try to effect."⁵³ In every life situation, in the public square, at the bedside of hurting people, in the pulpit, at the font, at the altar and more, the pastor is to play God, represent God and do His work for in all these arenas pastors "deliver the only Word that can raise to life, the only Word that offers hope to the hopeless and resurrection in the midst of death."⁵⁴ Such characterization emphasizes the truth that pastors who shepherd are in service to God and "are" God to the sheep entrusted to their spiritual care.

Others rely on more conventional characterizations to teach that the pastor is servant to Christ. Blaine Allen emphasizes in his book that the pastor is "wholly dependent on God" since

⁵⁰ Ibid., 15, 24.

⁵¹ Ibid., 24.

⁵² Ibid., 25.

⁵³ Ibid., 27.

he is God's servant as he holds out Biblical counsel to those dealing with criticism as they exercise their office.⁵⁵ Heaven's perspective of the pastor is that he is a servant of Christ who does not work for anyone but God since he is feeding God's household with the entrusted secret things of God.⁵⁶ John Piper, whose book title *BROTHERS, WE ARE NOT PROFESSIONALS* as noted earlier, makes it clear that "God has ordained that there be pastors-teachers not only for the purpose of edification but also for the purpose of salvation."⁵⁷ As such, the one placed in the office is a true shepherd and not a hireling, Piper contends.

Interestingly enough, Piper reflects a basic understanding of Augsburg V in his treatment and explanation of the pastoral office though it doesn't permeate his presentation entirely. It is refreshing that a Baptist however understands the importance of the teaching in connection with the purpose and responsibilities of the office. He does assert that pastors are to "live and preach justification by faith" for the purpose and the goal that souls "flock to Christ as the Savior."⁵⁸ He explains his understanding of the office in this way having read Luther and his teaching on justification lamenting and quoting Luther's words saying "Oh, that pastors in our pragmatic age would 'meditate day and night' and 'beat importunately upon Paul' until they see the gospel of justification so clearly that they would 'enter paradise itself through open gates.'"⁵⁹ He contends that pastors

would discover why Luther put such a weight on it (i.e., justification): "In it all other articles of our faith are comprehended, and when that is safe the others are safe too.' 'On this article all that we teach and practice is based.' 'It alone can support us in the

⁵⁴ Ibid., 29–30.

⁵⁵ Blaine Allen, 15.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 86, 88–89.

⁵⁷ Piper, 111.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 17, 25.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 21.

face of these countless offenses and can console us in all temptations and persecutions.' 'This doctrine is the head and the cornerstone. It alone begets, nourishes, builds, preserves, and defends the church of God; and without it the church of God cannot exist for one hour.'"⁶⁰

The Departments of Systematic Theology of our seminaries hold forth that Christ is also the paradigm for the office because Christ gave the same office that the Father gave Him.⁶¹ Christ is the "paradigmatic minister" and, therefore, ministers (pastors) then serve as "deputies of Christ."⁶² "Ministers do things in the place of Christ. They forgive and retain sins. They judge doctrine. They administer the signs of God's favor. They warn and admonish against sin and error. They exclude and include particular persons . . . [on the basis of their call and ordination] which assure that they act by divine right and on the authority of Christ."⁶³

This understanding of pastors in the stead of Christ is a consistent theme among Lutherans. Dr. A. L. Barry commenting on the Greek phrase ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ (sic, Χριστοῦ ' οὖν πρεσβεύομεν of 2 Cor. 5.20 says "Literally, 'in the stead of Christ, we therefore are ambassadors.' You are God's ambassador. You are Christ's spokesman . . . you are declaring and proclaiming this marvelous truth, 'God made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God' (v. 21)."⁶⁴

In the stead of Christ and fulfilling His ministry the pastor as shepherd is to lead the sheep. This leadership is not just in word only but also as examples to the flock an emphasis we learned from the Church Fathers studied. Joseph Allen states that the characteristics of Christ's

⁶⁰ Ibid., 21–22, quoting Luther in Ewald M. Plass, *What Luther Says: An Anthology*, vol. 2 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), 703.

⁶¹ Departments of Systematic Theology, 244.

⁶² Ibid., 249, 251.

⁶³ Ibid., 255.

⁶⁴ A. L. Barry, "The Noble Task," *A Letter to the Pastors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* 4, no. 1 (Advent/Christmas 2000): 4.

shepherds include being a man of God (Homo Dei), “salt of the earth, light of the world (Sal Terrae, Lux Mundi),” and soldiers bearing the sword of the Word.⁶⁵ Darius Salter, drawing more closely from the analogy of shepherd, states that “Good shepherds constantly exalt the Good Shepherd and enable the flock to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood. . . . Pastors are undershepherds who oversee the flock, offerings, representing, and modeling the redemption of the Chief Shepherd.”⁶⁶ This shepherding is “more than giving temporal persons what they want; it calls for giving immortal souls what they need.”⁶⁷ “The priestly duty of the pastor is to make this pronouncement [God’s benediction, “his unconditional positive regard”] in tandem with the prophetic condemnation of sin and the call to repentance . . . [for it] counters and supersedes the world’s assessment.”⁶⁸

Though there are some priestly and prophetic aspects to the pastoral office, Charles Jefferson in lectures he delivered in 1912 cautions that “the pastoral idea is deeper than the priest idea or the preacher idea, and it is also wider. Its contents are richer.”⁶⁹ The title, he says, takes us “straight to Christ Himself.”⁷⁰ Pastors are to “shepherd the multitudes who are distressed and scattered, and bring the life and love of God by our Spirit-filled personality into the mind and heart of the individual.”⁷¹ Such shepherding is not done at the expense of the other pastoral duties of being watchman, guard, guide, physician, and rescuer. Jefferson sees all this as part and parcel of the pastoral office as shepherd for the shepherd with earthly four-legged flocks is to be alert

⁶⁵ Joseph Allen, 41–45.

⁶⁶ Salter, 74.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁶⁹ Charles Jefferson, *The Minister as Shepherd: The Privileges and Responsibilities of Pastoral Leadership* (Fort Washington, Penn.: CLC Publications, 2006), 21.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 29.

for any danger whether within or without, protect and defend the sheep, and seeking the sheep when they stray and become lost.⁷² In fact, he emphasizes that the pastor cannot “drive the sheep but lead them” going in advance of his people leading them in thought not only pointing out what needs to be accomplished but also showing the manner in which it may be done best.⁷³

Jefferson is not alone in this understanding. Warren and David Wiersbe concur with his understanding and teaching stating

shepherds serve their sheep. Shepherds know their sheep and can call them by name. They lead their sheep to places where they can find food, water, and shelter. They protect the sheep from enemies, they apply healing oil when the sheep have been cut or bruised, they enable the sheep to be useful in growing wool, providing milk, and reproducing after their kind. When any of the sheep go astray, the shepherd goes after them and seeks to bring them back. It doesn't take much imagination to apply this to the local church and the ministry of the pastor and elders. They lead the sheep into the Word of God for spiritual nourishment and refreshment. They keep alert lest Satan's wolves invade the flock (Acts 20:28-31), and they equip the sheep for being useful in the kingdom of God (Eph. 4:11-12). When the sheep stray, the shepherd lovingly goes after them (James 5:19-20), and when the sheep hurt, the shepherds apply the medicine of God's Word (Ps. 107:20) to promote healing. Shepherding is a personal ministry, a sacrificial ministry, and a demanding ministry.⁷⁴

They echo Jefferson's words saying further “Sheep can be led but not driven, and experienced shepherds know that it requires a great deal of patience to lead the flock. Not all sheep will follow at the same pace or keep as close to the shepherd as they should, and some sheep will carelessly stray and have to be sought by the shepherd and brought back to the safety of the flock.”⁷⁵ Since the pastor is a shepherd he leads the sheep serving not as a hireling who drives the sheep but as one who understands his task as shepherd to the sheep.⁷⁶

⁷² Ibid., 35, 38, 40, 43, 46.

⁷³ Ibid., 40-42.

⁷⁴ Wiersbe and Wiersbe, 34 (italics in original).

⁷⁵ Ibid., 40.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 75.

As shepherds Blaine Allen states that pastors are to be feeding God's household with the entrusted secret things of God (1 Cor. 4:1) and not tinkering with the assigned recipes.⁷⁷ They are not to be negligent and are not to "treat those you serve like last week's leftovers."⁷⁸ This concern that the shepherds administer only the God-prescribed diet is also supported by David Berger. He says "the Biblical understanding of the pastor and congregation [is]: feeding the flock with the Word, administering the Sacraments properly, taking every opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, [and] doing works of Christian charity."⁷⁹ If the pastor is shepherd he is "a source of spiritual sustenance to his people via Word and Sacrament, a conveyer of spiritual comfort in times of trouble or illness or death."⁸⁰

It is this spiritual care that those seeking to reclaim or maintain the paradigm of pastor as shepherd are most concerned about for they believe the paradigm as pastor as professional or motivator leaves God's people sorely empty and lacking the proper nutrition of God's Word and Sacraments. Already we have heard this concern voiced by the Church Fathers and the Reformers in Augsburg V and the other passages cited from the Lutheran Confessions. The pastor and his pastoral care are of paramount concern in our contemporary age as Americans are given the Law and Gospel in a form that the prophets, apostles, evangelists and other holy writers might not recognize.

Joseph Allen exclaims that pastoral "care does not only mean counseling! Pastoral care implies all the shepherding aspect of 'caring' and 'nurturing'"—including the various functions of administering the Word and Sacraments—which can not be restricted to the treatment of

⁷⁷ Blaine Allen, 88.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 31.

⁷⁹ Berger, 114.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 115.

'problems'."⁸¹ Others concur understanding that pastoral care is a "God-anointed role . . . [that manifests] itself in preaching, worship, counseling, visitation, and the various types of crisis intervention that are common to the ministerial task" while warning that there are a "myriad [of] pastoral duties [that] offer escape from the toil of soul-care."⁸²

Many envision or compare this pastoral care of souls with that of the physician, a comparison we have already heard in the Church Fathers and Lutheran Confessions. Pastors are spiritual physicians who administer "spiritual vitamins, health food, and tonic to the spiritually malnourished, the emaciated, crippled, diseased, and oppressed. The temptation is to dilute the dosage or to offer placebos."⁸³ In this role "as the family physician once represented a transformative body of knowledge and expertise, so the pastor represents a body of transcendent truths."⁸⁴ Pastoral training is to include then "the cure of souls, the remedies provided in the Christian pharmacopeia, the application of Christian principles to specific ailments of the individual heart."⁸⁵ Even Frank Viola and George Barna, who criticize the pastoral office and many church practices in their book *Pagan Christianity?: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices* contending that the word "pastor" is a metaphor, not "an office or title," admit that someone in the congregation (in their mind a leader raised up from their own midst) is to be a curer of souls.⁸⁶

The care of souls lies at the heart of the institution of the office as Scaer writes:

⁸¹ Joseph Allen, 216.

⁸² Salter, 22, 26.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁸⁵ Jefferson, 23.

⁸⁶ Viola and Barna, 107.

What God gave Christ, Christ in turn gave to the Church, which is His body. Ministers, in caring for Christ's Church, are living statements to the world that life is more than what our senses tell us or the possessions we accumulate. Jesus appointed the twelve apostles as the first ministers to care for His church. Today He continues to provide ministers. Martin Chemnitz, one of the Lutheran fathers of the Church, described the office of ministers of the church this way: *This office, or ministry has been committed and entrusted to them by God Himself through a legitimate call: 1. To feed the church of God with the true, pure, and salutary doctrine of the divine Word. Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11; Ptr 5:2. To administer and dispense the sacraments of Christ according to His institution. Mt 28:19; 1 Co 11:23 3. To administer rightly the use of the keys of the church, or of the kingdom of heaven, by either remitting or retaining sins (Mt 16:19; Jn 20:23), and to fulfill all these things and the whole ministry (as Paul says, 2 Ti 4:5) on the basis of the prescribed command, which the chief Shepherd Himself has given His ministers in His Word for instruction. Mt. 28:20 (Martin Chemnitz, Enchiridion, p. 26).*⁸⁷

Key themes have emerged from this examination of those extolling the paradigm of pastor as shepherd and definitive of its purpose. In many areas much continuity with the Church Fathers studied and Augsburg V are found which, perhaps after some thought, ought not be surprising since they have sought to gain their understanding from the same Scriptures handed down to the Fathers and Reformers. The representational/incarnational aspect of the office is identified as the pastor as shepherd was explicated in view of Christ the Chief Shepherd. This identification of the pastoral office and its purpose with Christ and His institution of the office was reflected by those holding to the shepherd paradigm for the office. The deeper reflection and identification of the office with the Trinity at the level of Ignatius and the Lutheran Confessions have plumbed was not present in those who were not of the Lutheran tradition. Though each understands the pastor as representing Christ and fulfilling His ministry, the reflection of the Trinity and His work in the office is not yet developed as by Ignatius of Antioch and Lutheran writers. Only Joseph J. Allen, writing from an Eastern Orthodox background touches on this view when he asserts that the

⁸⁷ David P. Scaer, "The Ministry: The Vocation That Matters Forever," *Pilgrimage Admissions Bulletin* 2, no. 5 (September/October 1998): 1 (italics in original).

ministry is charged with relating what “the Trinity has done and continues to do in the life and history of mankind.”⁸⁸ The pastoral ministry serves God’s ministry of revelation and reconciliation.

The purpose of the office is understood to be the proclamation of salvation in Christ Jesus. The shepherd leads the sheep to hear this message by preaching the Gospel. Though a few do identify justification as foundational to understanding this purpose while not using so many words or the word “justification,” this approach seems particular to Lutherans. The few who made reference to justification had read Luther accounting for this more Lutheran sounding understanding. I am not sure they understand fully the degree in which Lutherans insist that justification is the chief article of the church. I do not wish to criticize too much on this point but it is interesting to note how those who read Luther learn this Lutheran teaching of justification and how it undergirds all the other teachings of the Lutheran faith, even the pastoral office and its purpose. This unique teaching and presentation of the office and its purpose in connection with justification in Augsburg V when compared even with the biblically minded paradigms of pastor as shepherd is just that, unique.

Much is made by those adhering and promoting the paradigm of pastor as shepherd on the preaching and teaching of the Word. Few, however, include the preaching of that Word with the other means of grace, that is, the Sacraments. This, I suspect, is reflecting their low view of the Sacraments not as means of grace, as vehicles and channels by which God offers and gives what He says—life, salvation, forgiveness, faith, the Spirit, and many other blessings—but rather their view of the Sacraments as a work of dedication or commitment they present to God. This misunderstanding of the Sacraments is a clear divergence from the understanding that the Church

⁸⁸ Joseph Allen, 17.

Fathers taught and Augsburg V present and teach concerning the means of grace and its place as the instruments of God's justifying work. The emphasis of the pastor as shepherd and his responsibility to use God's appointed means to minister and serve the sheep is present, though in some cases it is weakened given their low view regarding the Sacraments.

A helpful emphasis of leading the sheep and not driving and compelling as one would a herd of cattle was noted by a number of the authors studied though not at the expense of sacrificing the uniqueness of the office in relation to the people of God who are served. Rather than a "Herr Pastor" mentality, part of the purpose of the pastoral ministry is to lead by faithful use of the Word of God and the administration of the Sacraments though some do not understand the Sacraments as Lutheranism does. A regular theme among those holding the shepherd model and paradigm for the pastoral office was identification of where the sheep and people of God were, what their true needs are, and the faithful preaching and teaching of God's Word to the varied life situations both publicly from the pulpit and privately.

The care of souls is viewed by the adherents of this model as the chief purpose of the office. This care involved the defense of the sheep and parishioner as well as the timely application of God's Word. It involves sympathizing with the plight of the sheep who are afflicted and harassed by sin and the sorrows of this age. It involves applying the right medicines from the God's Word and Sacraments and not substituting a generic or a placebo. This emphasis continues the explanation for the purpose of the pastoral office first presented by Nazianzus and St. John Chrysostom and later by the Lutheran Confessions. This physician analogy along with the truth that shepherds who oversee the four-legged sheep in their fields are the on-site physicians of their sheep and flock is the chief metaphor employed to describe the purpose and work of the office. Building on the understanding that the office is Christ's and those who hold the office are representing Christ the Great Physician and Shepherd, the Fathers studied, the

Lutheran Confessions, and those adhering to the shepherd paradigm grasp that this metaphor best explains the purpose of the office. The pastoral office is Christ's institution to announce and bring about the justification of the sinner and this is done when He is preached to the hearts of sinners using His means of grace by which His Spirit operates. This office Christ has given so that every sinner might know the Father's love and heart and receive His mercy and care, mercy and care that is founded on His justification of the sinner for the sake of His Son, the Great Shepherd raised from the dead for the justification of all.

Chapter 5

Implications and Application for the Church Today

The final portion of this paper seeks to relate the purpose of the pastoral ministry to a few of the issues confronting our church body today and identify some implications. The first is the need to retain and continue to teach and preach the purpose of the office on the basis of God's Word and Augsburg V despite the urge to develop more relevant paradigms based on pragmatic, business-oriented views. This seems crucial to me since the salvation of men's souls was of paramount importance to our God, so much so that Christ comes, taking to Himself our form, suffers, dies, and rises for our salvation. There may be some exercise of authority in matters not directly related to the call given the man called to the office and he may do so but only according to human agreement not divine right¹ but it seems best to avoid such for the sake of pastoral care. The proper instruction concerning the purpose of the pastoral office in God's plan to justify sinful men needs to be retained not just for practical purposes but chiefly out of faithfulness to its institution and purpose. If salvation and the conveyance of the justification of the sinner by God is not taught those in the office and aspiring to it, then one is led to wonder what will they teach and preach. Will the sheep, will the sinner hear the Gospel of justification? Teaching this will better ensure that justification remains front and center in the pastor's preaching and teaching since he will see his office, the office into which he has been called and ordained, as a walking witness of Augsburg V.

¹ Departments of Systematic Theology, 252.

Another implication I see is the possibility to maintain and explain the Biblical and confessional relationship (tension?) between the office and the laity. When the office is understood as being rooted in the order of redemption, as within the economy of salvation instituted by God to exercise the keys not to the extinction of the lay exercise of these keys in their daily vocations and the rare emergency, the “both and” genius of Lutheran theology can be maintained and there is no need for the “competition” between pastor and laity that seems to exist. The pastoral office exercises the means of grace, the keys publicly because of Christ’s command and institution, not just for the sake of good order or arrangement.² Since Christ has both instituted the office and given it the power of the keys and given this power to the whole church as well (to call ministers and personally proclaim Christ)³ it is then a matter of distinction not conflict, a place where paradox (“both and”) is maintained with one goal in mind—that Christ and His justifying work may be preached to all. Klug maintains that “those who agitate for either extreme, the elevated view of the pastor’s office or the so-called lower view which makes every lay person a minister, have no leg to stand on when they cite Article V in behalf of their positions. The focus simply lies on the means of grace which God has graciously given and empowered for effecting the salvation of mankind.”⁴ These means are exercised publicly according to Christ’s command by the man occupying the pastoral office and fulfills then its purpose as he preaches that justification and administers the Sacraments. When it is understood that both the office and the laity possess and use the keys in those ways unique to each then the tension is maintained and institution of the keys fulfilled.

² Ibid., 246.

³ Ibid., 250.

⁴ Klug, 36.

Here, too, I see the questions of women lay readers and women “clergy” addressed. It is not a matter of priesthood of all believers versus pastoral office but a confusion of these two teachings. It is a misunderstanding of the two kinds of righteousness. I believe that Arand makes this argument when he asserts “God instituted a specific office for conveying the power of God’s Word into the lives of sinners . . . the pastor who filled that office did so by serving in a specific way: as the agent for releasing God’s forgiving and recreating Word.”⁵ For the well-being of all the priests of God, God created the Office of the Holy Ministry and “the public ministry of the church is inextricably linked with God’s tools for creating faith.”⁶ This means that Augsburg V supports that the proclamation of the justification of the sinner includes the reading of that Word even from a lectern (or wherever the Word is read). For though there is “no distinction *coram deo* when it comes to justification,” there “were distinctions *coram mundo* when it comes to carrying out the work of the church.”⁷ It is a matter of a man fulfilling the office given by God in Christ as he represents Christ in the midst of His church (incarnational/representative aspect of the office). Some would contend that reading is only reading; it is not teaching or having authority. I submit that reading God’s Word is teaching since God’s Word was written “to make us wise unto salvation” (Augsburg V) and this is the work of the Spirit of Christ through the means of grace. It is God in Christ who speaks to us whenever that Word is read and therefore we are being taught the way of salvation and justification by God Himself as the Spirit relays to us the word of Christ given Him by the Father to preach and proclaim to the world. Thus the pastor is reflecting the Trinity in his execution and fulfillment of the office, even in the simplest of tasks such as the reading of the Scriptures, God’s very word. Thus the Word ought to be read

⁵ Arand, 351.

⁶ Ibid., 348, 351.

⁷ Ibid., 346.

in the public worshipping assembly by a man, preferably to avoid confusion, one who is already in the office or one preparing for the office under supervision.

More can be brought to bear on this issue when one examines the implications of Ignatius' understanding of the office as representing the Trinity. When he asserts that the bishop represents the Father before the assembly, there is more than meets the eye in this teaching. This teaching of Ignatius has bearing for the debate concerning who may hold the pastoral office and exercise its responsibilities. Recent discussions have departed from the traditional discussions of the pertinent passages of the Holy Scriptures (1 Tim. 2.8-15 and 1 Cor. 14.33b-40). The debate has shifted since the arrival of a new hermeneutic⁸ which asserts these passages are no longer clear and, therefore, cannot be used to support the traditional understanding that the pastoral office is given only to certain men. We see here the Protestant principle in action. More recent discussions have, by necessity then, centered on a Trinitarian understanding of the Office of the Holy Ministry. The discussion echoes Ignatius' teaching that since the bishop represents the Father who has revealed Himself as Father in the incarnate Son of God, the bishop or pastor must be a male.

There are those who have sought to deconstruct this male language that God uses to speak and reveal Himself to us.⁹ However, more convincing are the arguments that reveal the Pastor does represent the Father in his sacred office. John Kleinig of Luther Seminary, Australia, writes, "Pastors, however, do not merely represent the risen Lord Jesus; Jesus himself maintains in Luke 10:16 that they represent God the Father even as they represent him. . . . Those who

⁸ Norma Koehne, "The Ordination of Women in the LCA—Yes or No?: Post-modernism, Feminist Theology, the Authority of Scripture, and the Issue of the Ordination of Women"; available from www.luthersem.edu.au/publish/publish14.htm; Internet; accessed 15 August 2001; and Mark Worthing, "The Ordination of Women in the LCA—Yes or No?: The Development of Doctrine and the Ordination of Women"; available from www.luthersem.edu.au/publish/publish13.htm; Internet; accessed 15 August 2001.

⁹ Marie Meyer, "God's Order," in *Different Voices/Shared Vision: Male and Female in the Trinitarian*

reject the preachers of the gospel do not just reject Christ; they reject the Father who sent him.”¹⁰

He continues to assert this point citing Ignatius:

This understanding of the pastor as the representative of God the Father was elaborated by Ignatius of Antioch towards the end of the first century. He claimed that the bishop who led a congregation in its worship was “a type of the Father” (Trall 3:1); he presided “in the place of God” the Father (Magn 3:1). Melancthon also alludes to this teaching in the Apology to the Augsburg Confession (XIII 12). In his discussion on whether ordination is a sacrament or not, he asserts that God is present in the ministry. This means that when a pastor publicly exercises the office of the keys, he represents God the Father. He speaks the Father’s word of law or grace, accusation or absolution, disapproval or approval, judgment or blessing.¹¹

Kleinig lastly quotes Luther who said in a sermon on John 14:10:

Furthermore, when Christ commands His apostles to proclaim His Word and to carry on His work, we hear and see Him Himself, and thus also God the Father; for they publish and proclaim no other Word than that which they heard from His lips, and they point solely to Him. Thus the process goes on; the Word is handed down to us through the agency of true bishops, pastors, and preachers, who received it from the apostles . . . thus the apostles and pastors are nothing but channels through which Christ leads and transmits His Gospel from the Father to us.¹²

That this issue of the Trinity, gender, and the pastoral office has become the key discussion, especially in response to the feminist hermeneutic can be seen in the multiplication of papers,¹³ books,¹⁴ and journals¹⁵ addressing the topic the past decade and a half. William

Community Paul R. Hinlicky, ed., (Delhi: Alpb Books, 1992), 31–60.

¹⁰ John W. Kleinig, “The Ordination of Women in the LCA—Yes or No?: The Ordination of Women and the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity” 2; available from www.luthersem.edu.au/publish/publish12.htm; Internet; accessed 15 August 2001.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid. (citing *Luther’s Works* 24, 66, 67).

¹³ See www.luthersem.edu.au/publish for symposium papers on the issue of the Pastoral Office; see also Greg Lockwood’s fine discussion on this debate available from

www.confessionlutherans.org/papers/lockwood.html.

¹⁴ John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1991).

¹⁵ Bruce A. Ware, ed., *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (please provide location of publisher: Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood).

Weinrich delves into this Trinitarian debate in connection with the Office of the Holy Ministry in "*It is not Given to Women to Teach*": *A Lex in Search of a Ratio*. He says the fatherhood of God is central to all Biblical understanding, for instance, in the case of God choosing Abram to be the father of His people Israel.¹⁶ This has bearing on the maleness of Jesus for Weinrich states

. . . fatherhood is proper to God because He eternally generates the divine Son. . . the eternal generation of the Son from the Father involves what is sometimes called a "communication of essence" whereby the Godhead of the Father is imparted to the Son so that the Son is "of one substance with the Father" (Nicene Creed). It is, therefore, in the Son that the Father, so to speak, moves out of Himself and resides in another. It is the Son who bears in Himself the Father.¹⁷

Weinrich then makes this connection with the Office of the Holy Ministry:

The preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments are the means whereby Christ Himself comes, and it is the pastor who preaches and the pastor who administers the sacraments who is representative of Christ and who speaks His voice. But as we have noted, Christ does not come only to bring Himself. He came in the flesh and He comes in the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments as the One who brings the Father. The pastoral office is that office which God has placed in His Church and by which and through which He continues to engender sons of God. For those who hear the preached Gospel in faith and for those who receive in faith the Body and Blood of Christ given and shed for them for the forgiveness of sins, God continues to be "Father" in the Christ who speaks and gives Himself. Just as it is the person of the incarnate Son who in His male humanity communicates to us the Father's grace, so also it is proper and right—and this in terms of the whole salvific economy of God from the beginning—that the human instrument of the Father's grace in Christ, in the concreteness of male humanity, be an image of the incarnate Image of the eternal Father.¹⁸

Weinrich then concludes:

Where the pastor forgives our sins, where the pastor preaches the Gospel, and where the pastor gives to us the Body and Blood of Christ, there the heavenly Father, who wills that we be His children, graciously and alone makes us to be His children, or, as Paul says, children of Abraham by faith (Romans 4). In the context of the pastoral

¹⁶ William Weinrich, "*It Is Not Given to Women to Teach*": *A Lex in Search of a Ratio* (Fort Wayne, Ind.: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1993), 25–26.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 22 (sic, 27).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

office a male pastor remains the apt representative of the Father's grace whereby all, male and female alike, hears the words of Christ and become the Bride of the Groom.¹⁹

Much more could be marshaled on the place of the pastoral representation of the Father that Ignatius set forth some nineteen centuries ago, but the previous discussion can adequately show the teaching of Ignatius has implications and application in the present debates on women, gender, lectors, and the pastoral office.

What then of the most recent development of the Specific Ministry Pastor Program? Does it maintain and support the stated purpose of the office as taught in Augsburg V? Is it consistent with the historic understanding of the office and its purpose? It is clear that the desire to care for people's souls is uppermost in this effort while at the same time the desire to uphold the Office of the Holy Ministry is also of great importance. This SMPP places a man into a specific ministry after a call and ordination to "preach and administer the Sacraments under supervision in a specific locality."²⁰

The program appears to take seriously the desire to uphold the purpose of the office as taught in Augsburg V understanding and to avoid the more contentious debates over regularized "emergency" situations that our church body faces with the pastoral shortage. This seems reflective of our earlier history where the traveling preacher was a regular fixture in the church. Weinrich notes that the traveling preacher arrangement did not allow for administration of the Supper but only preaching and baptizing since there was (1) no Christian congregation and private care of souls and (2) he did not possess knowledge of those admitted to the Supper and thus could not prepare them.²¹ However, the people were to call, as soon as possible, the

¹⁹ Ibid., 29-30.

²⁰ "To Establish Specific Ministry Pastor Program."

²¹ Weinrich, "Should a Layman," 227.

traveling preacher that he may “be made a true preacher and pastor of souls (*zueinem wir Klichen Prediger und Seelsorger*).”²² At first blush, this seems to be the precedent for the Specific Ministry Pastor Program—to regularize with a call a “traveling/specific” preacher while respecting our church body’s usual order. Certainly more debate and discussion will follow in the years to come. Overall, its desire is noble—the care of souls by a man called into the office—and justification of the sinner through the preaching of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments is the goal and thus is consistent with Augsburg V.

In summary, this study of the purpose of the pastoral office or Ministry has found great continuity overall throughout the time from the Church Fathers to our Lutheran Fathers and with those who subscribe to the paradigm of pastor as shepherd. There are some points of departure which one needs to be aware of and guard against especially in connection with the pitfalls and weaknesses of the paradigm of pastor as professional. The contemporary age has witnessed a greater departure from this historic and confessional purpose of the pastoral office with the advent of these models and paradigms advocating a more pragmatic, business, results-oriented view while at the same time the efforts to retain such a Biblical, historical, and confessional understanding are certainly present. Truly as James Bachman notes

Today’s rapidly changing social dynamics are touching every facet of congregational life. . . . The hidden hand of familial and ethnic social dynamics no longer constructively shapes and supports congregational life. Pastors and those who prepare them are scrambling to think through how pastors along with other congregational leaders must today be community creators, builders and sustainers, as well as witnesses to Christ and stewards of Word and Sacrament.²³

The implications for dealing with the changes in society and in our churches, many of which are addressed above, are many not just for addressing the present paradigms and shifts in

²² Ibid., 227.

²³ James Bachman, “The Communion of Saints: The Church’s Unique Contribution to the Changing Moral

understanding the purpose and role of the Pastoral Office, but also for the instruction of men for the Office today. The struggle to maintain, preserve, and promote the incarnational reality of the pastoral office as well as its place in the economy of salvation as the office exercising the means of grace so that sinners may be justified as those who serve in the office seek to serve and shepherd the sheep entrusted to them will ever remain until the return of our Lord Christ. That our own pastors in the Synod feel this was revealed in an article in *LUTHERAN WOMAN'S QUARTERLY* the summer of 2000. Marlys Taege relates how the Rev. Dr. Daniel G. Mueller surveyed 150 pastors' wives randomly selected from *The Lutheran Annual* and learned, among many other issues, how "too much time spent doing administrative tasks that have little to do with pastoring" plagued many.²⁴ This pressure is felt since "a pastor today must compete with TV evangelists, be an executive director, possess knowledge of budget and other administrative issues, set a vision, deal with personnel issues, etc."²⁵ This led to this question which Taege says Pastor Mueller and Ellie Clausen asked as a result of the survey: "What is truly expected of pastors? Do congregations first and foremost expect their pastors to be able theologians, or do they put greater importance on the skills required to manage a congregation?"²⁶ Indeed, what pastor hasn't felt this tension while striving to be faithful to his call, the purpose of the office, and in his service and ministry to the sheep entrusted to his spiritual care. We witnessed misgivings and reservations even on the part of Nazianzus and Chrysostom as they wrestled with perceived personal inadequacies and demands that pulled at them. Yet, from the Fathers studied and Augsburg V the counsel of Scripture and the comfort of our justification by God's grace

Landscape," *Issues in Education* 35 (Fall 2001): 19–20.

²⁴ Marlys Taege, "Life in the Parsonage—There's Nothing Like It!" *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* 58 (Summer 2000): 20.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

through Christ to encourage and strengthen us in the faithful execution of the office as well as to embolden us. Keeping the purpose of the pastoral office in view and commending oneself and his ministry to the Chief Shepherd will provide the parameters and fundamental considerations needed to navigate these waters now and in the future since the tension is as it always has been—applying the unchanging truth of God’s Word to the changing times. May this paper serve to encourage thoughtful discussion and discourse as we who serve and those men who seek the Office ever rest on the Great Shepherd of our souls, Christ our Lord.

+Soli Deo Gloria+

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