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THE IMPACT OF THE CHURCH ON THE STATE IN
LUTHERAN AND CALVINISTIC THEOLOGY

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Systematic Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Sacred Theology

by
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THE IMPACT OF THE CHURCH ON THE STATE IN
LUTHERAN AND CALVINISTIC THEOLOGY

Introduction: The difference in emphasis in Lutheran and Calvinistic theology has naturally resulted in differences in doctrine and practice concerning the relation of Church and State.

- I. There is such an impact through the Church's influence on morals in general.
 - A. This is an indirect and proper influence on the State.
 1. This must be in accord with the Scriptural doctrine of the separation of Church and State.
 - a. This is to be a complete formal, organic separation.
 - aa. This separation is by command of God.
 - bb. There is a difference in origin, organization, characteristics, powers, methods of operation, and aims between the two.
 - cc. Neither is equipped to do the work of the other.
 - dd. Lutheran theology has always held such separation.
 - ee. Calvinistic theology also espouses separation, but really mixes the two.
 - b. There is, however, still a natural overlapping of function and interdependence between the two.
 - aa. Both are agencies of God and deal with the same people.
 - bb. Since God's Word teaches this and this is the instrument with which the Church operates, the two must touch on this subject, as well as on the moral duties of government and of citizens, and on morality in general.

- cc. The two also come into contact on temporal matters concerning the Church and the rights of unmolested religious practice.
 - 2. The two complement each other in the field of morality.
 - a. The State is interested in morality.
 - b. But for real morality the State must depend on the Church.
 - B. What the Church's activity in this sphere is to be.
 - 1. It is to bring the message of God's Word, Law and Gospel, to men independent of the State.
 - 2. This has been and is the true Lutheran position.
 - 3. Calvinism, denying the Means of Grace, seeks to enlist the aid of the State.
 - a. Its emphasis on the sovereignty of God and its doctrine of predestination leads to a denial of the Means of Grace.
 - b. It teaches that the exercise of the Office of the Keys is in the hands of the clergy, not the Church, and that magistrates are subject to them.
- II. There is such an impact through the Church's influence on individuals as to their duties as citizens.
- A. Here, as in all else, the Church is to teach the message of the Bible, no more, no less.
 - B. What the Church's message from Scripture is to be.
 - 1. It is to teach obedience to government.
 - a. This is to be a complete obedience.
 - b. An important exception to this must be made.
 - aa. When government commands something contrary to the clearly expressed will of God, it is not to be obeyed.
 - bb. The problem of revolution must be solved in the light of Scripture.
 - 2. It is to teach honor, respect and fear of government.
 - 3. It is to teach the duty of paying taxes to government.
 - 4. It is to exhort to prayer for State and government.
 - 5. It is to urge service to the State and government.
 - 6. It is to show that Christians are especially fitted for participation in government and that individuals have personal responsibility

before God for the acts of the government.

III. There is such an impact through the Church's influence in the field of politics.

A. What the proper extent of its activity in this sphere is to be.

1. It is to realize that the Bible is the Word of God and the final and obligatory truth in everything on which it speaks.
2. It is the Church's duty to proclaim the whole counsel of God.
3. The Church is not to go beyond Scripture.
 - a. This is the Lutheran position.
 - b. As indicated previously, Calvinism goes beyond Scripture in mixing of Church and State.
 - aa. This is contributed to by its emphasis on the sovereignty of God.
 - bb. It would make the State subservient to the Church, or more specifically the clergy.
 - cc. The Church is then placed in defense of and identified with a particular form of civilization and government, that through it it might advance the Kingdom of God on earth.
 - dd. This has resulted in Calvinistic circles in a following of the modern trends of secularism and scientific naturalism in both State and Church.
 - ee. It is therefore of utmost importance to emphasize anew that the Church must be the Church.

B. What the Church's message from Scripture is to be.

1. The State is responsible to God for its government.
 - a. Though the form of government is human, the idea and principle of government is divine and it receives its power and right from God.
 - b. It must act as the representative of God.
 - c. It must give answer to God.
2. The State is to be the agent of God in the administration of justice.
 - a. It is to punish evil and protect the rights of individuals.
 - aa. It is to do this on the basis of right reason and natural law.

- bb. This reason and natural law God has clarified by His written moral code in the Bible.
- cc. Since government is human, however, it is naturally limited by the limits of human powers.
 - (1.) It is not to punish sin against the first Table of the Law, except to protect the rights of all to live in a proper relationship with God, and insofar as such sins provide obvious hurt to other men.
 - (2.) It is further limited by human frailty to punish only evil in word and deed and not in thought or desire.
- dd. Within these limits it is also to protect the rights of individuals.
- ee. In the dispensing of equal justice it is responsible to God.
- b. It is to praise those that do good.
- 3. The State also has a responsibility to God in its international relations.
 - a. This implies a Scriptural solution of the problem of war.
 - b. The division of the human race into nations and peoples is quite within the original purpose of God.
 - c. God wants peaceful relations between nations.

Conclusion: The world is in need of the truth we have.

THE IMPACT OF THE CHURCH ON THE STATE IN
LUTHERAN AND CALVINISTIC THEOLOGY

In a study and comparison of Lutheran and Calvinistic theology one finds a considerable difference in points of emphasis. Calvinism especially stresses the sovereignty of God, and this special emphasis colors its entire system of theology.¹ In Lutheran theology, on the other hand, one finds the grace of God through Christ striking a more dominant note. This difference in emphasis in these two theological systems has naturally resulted in differences in doctrine and practice also, among other things, concerning the relation of Church and State. This is especially true when one considers the impact the Church has or should have on the State, and the nature and extent of such influence.

1. Th. Engelder, W. Arndt, Th. Graebner, and F. E. Mayer, Popular Symbolics, p. 223.

I. Through the Church's Influence on Morals in General

Just what impact the Church may or should have on the State is determined by Scripture. Of the relation that is to pertain between these two great institutions in the world Christ Himself gave us the true perspective when He said: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things which are God's".² These words of Christ indicate that Church and State are distinct and separate institutions. This again appears from another incident in the life of Christ, of which Luke writes: "And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And He said unto him, Man, who made me to a judge or a divider over you?"³ Christ here says that judging in such a temporal matter does not properly fall within His sphere of activity as the Son of Man. This, being a civil matter, is properly a function of the State, to be dealt with in its judicial capacity through the governmental agency properly appointed for this purpose. Whereas the exercise of authority and power by force is the proper sphere of the State, it is not that of the Church. This becomes evident from the words of Christ directed to His disciples: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are

2. Matthew 22: 21.

3. Luke 12: 13, 14.

called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."⁴ Furthermore, when Jesus was accused of trying to establish Himself as King of the Jews, He told Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence."⁵

We may fairly infer from these words of Christ, spoken on various occasions, that there is to be a complete formal, organic separation existing between Church and State.⁶ The State is of natural origin and rests on a natural basis of common language, location, views, customs, interests, etc.⁷ The Church on the other hand, being composed of believers,⁸ is of divine origin. It is directly the work of God Himself, for faith is worked in a person by God Himself. By the power of His Spirit through the Means of Grace He continually builds and sustains the Church.⁹ The Church and the State are therefore distinct organizations, and each has its own peculiar characteristics, powers, methods of operation and aims.

4. Luke 22: 25, 26.

5. John 18: 36.

6. Cf. W.H. Greever, Human Relationships and the Church, pp. 37f.

7. Cf. Johann Michael Reu and Paul H. Buehring, Christian Ethics, p. 322.

8. Cf. John Theodore Mueller, Christian Dogmatics, pp. 541ff.

9. Cf. Isaiah 55: 10, 11; Romans 10: 17; Acts 2: 44-47; et al.

Buehring therefore correctly states:

The state is an institution of God's providence, having a government that is vested with divine authority to perform its functions, chief of which is to safeguard and protect the inherent personal, social, and religious rights of its citizens and to promote their general well-being. It deals only with the natural life of man, and its jurisdiction extends over its citizens as human beings only. For the maintenance of an orderly social life it has the power to enforce external obedience to its laws and to punish transgressors, but it has no power to control convictions and conscience. The church, on the other hand, is an institution of divine grace, and its purpose is to bring the salvation of Christ to sinners through the administration of the means of grace. It has to do primarily with the spiritual life of man, and with his physical only insofar as it affects the spiritual. Its governing principle is not law but love; it operates not by force but by persuasion; it aims to secure not merely external compliance but inward convictions; its ends are not temporal well-being but eternal salvation.¹⁰

It is furthermore evident that neither is the State equipped to perform the work of the Church, nor the Church that of the State. Our Savior indicated that in the passages quoted above. The Church operates with and through the Word of God. That is the means through which it carries on its work, not force, for Christ not only bade them to serve, not to rule, in the above-mentioned passages, but also clearly said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to

10. Reu-Buehring, op. cit. pp. 342f.

every creature."¹¹ And in Acts we read: "But the Word of God grew and multiplied."¹² The State on the other hand carries on its work by force, as we see from Romans 13: 4: "If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Such a complete separation of Church and State is taught in Lutheran theology. Luther writes:

Und hier muss man die Regenten der Kirchen Christi in Anspruch nehmen, damit sie erkennen, dass sie durch diese Worte ueber ihr Amt unterwiesen werden. Denn die Macht Christi und der Kirche wird hier nicht aus der Welt hergeholt, sie ruft nicht die Huelfe des weltlichen Arms an, sie geht nicht mit Feuer oder Tod um, sie vertraut nicht auf die Waffen der Koenige und Fuersten, sondern sie wird zugerichtet aus dem munde der jungen Kinder, indem der Prophet ohne Zweifel lehrt, dass derjenige, welcher sich bemueht, den Namen des Herrn auf andere Weise auf Erden herrlich zu machen; als durch den Mund der jungen Kinder, vielmehr laestere, und ueberwiesen werde, dass er mehr seinen Namen als den Namen des Herrn herrlich mache. Solche Leute sind diejenigen, welche unsinniger Weise darauf bestehen, dass man die Tuerken und Unglaebigen oder Ketzler heutzutage nicht mit dem Worte Gottes, das sie nicht wissen, sondern mit Krieg und weltlichem Getuemmel oder mit dem Schrecken der Kirchenstrafen (censurarum strepitu) angreifen muesse: naemlich diese Leute vermessen sich, das, was durch den Mund der jungen Kinder ueberwunden ist, durch diese Dinge selbst zu ueberwinden, und verwandeln den freundlichen Mund der jungen Kinder in das fuerchterliche stolze Maul der Giganten (das heisst, das liebliche Wort Gottes in die Tyrannei ihrer Satzungen). Wenn nun jemand da ist, der dies Uebel erkennt und sich daven

11. Mark 16: 15.

12. Acts 12: 24; cf. also 1Peter 1: 23ff.

abwendet, der lerne darnach auch, was und wie er handeln solle, um die Leute recht zu regieren.¹³

Hyma very nicely sums up Luther's position in his treatise, Of Temporal Power, In How far one should Obey it, on this matter thus:

The next question, so continues Luther in what he considers the main part of his treatise, is how far the arm of the temporal power should reach. Unquestionably, the power often is permitted to go too far, or not far enough: here it punishes too much, there, too little. It is argued that it is better to spare a criminal than to kill a pious person. We note again that the two kinds of human beings in the world need two kinds of law and government, for each kingdom must have its own law. The temporal power has a law that extends only to life and property and all outward things upon the earth. For God will not let anyone rule the soul except Him alone. We wish to make this very clear, says the author, in order that the nobles, the bishops, and the princes see what fools they are in commanding that people shall believe this or that. When a law is passed telling people what their religious creed shall be, this is certainly not in accordance with God's Word. God wants our faith to be based entirely upon the Bible, as He says in Matthew XVI, "Upon this rock I will build my church." and in John X, "My sheep hear my voice and know me, but they know not the voice of strangers, but flee from them." It is therefore a foolish thing to command the people that they shall believe the churches, the Fathers, and the councils, as if there were not the Word of God. The devil's apostles command that, and not the Church. For the Church does not command anything of which it is not absolutely certain that it is in accordance with the Bible. They will not be able to prove that the decisions of the councils are the Word of God. Much more foolish is it to say that the kings and princes and the multitude believe this. We have not been baptized in the name of kings, princes, and

13. Martin Luther, Saemmtliche Schriften, Vol. IV, p. 622.

the multitude, but in Christ and God Himself. We are also not named after kings, princes, or multitudes, but are called Christians. No one can command the soul what it shall believe, and say he knows what is the way to heaven. No human being can do that, but God only, and therefore in matters that concern the salvation of the soul, nothing but the Word of God shall be taught. Moreover, the temporal power does not know anything about the condition of one's soul. We would be very foolish to appoint a judge for administering justice who knew nothing about law, and who blindly executed justice. And so you must tell me who can see the heart, and judge a human being fit or unfit for heaven? That is the exclusive province of God, as we read in Psalm VII "God searches the heart and reins".

It might be asked why God permits the temporal powers so to abuse their rights? God wants them to go to perdition, as is also the case with the spiritual lords. The Pope and the bishops should be real bishops and preach the Word of God. But now they have neglected their own duties and have become temporal lords. They should rule the inward man, but they have turned their duty upside down, and now they rule outwardly the towns, castles, land, and people; and they murder the souls. The temporal lords ought to rule material things, so that criminals be punished, taxes collected, etc. But now they want to rule over men's souls.

And as for the texts quoted above from Paul and Peter, these are true and correct. One must indeed obey the temporal power, though only in temporal matters. Paul does not speak here of faith but of temporal power, for the temporal ruler has no authority over the beliefs of subjects. Peter does the same, as he speaks of "Human ordinances". Certainly, religious beliefs are not governed by human ordinances! For had not Christ said plainly that one should give unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is of God? If the imperial power had extended to the kingdom of God, then Christ would not have made this distinction. The soul is not under the power of the emperor. Long ago David perceived this very clearly when he said in Psalm CXIII (CXV), "The heavens are the Lord's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men".

"When your prince or temporal lord commands you to believe as the Pope does, and orders you to

remove this or that book that you have been reading, you should say to him, 'Lucifer has no right to sit next to God. Dear lord, I owe you obedience in all civil matters, and my body and property are subject to your laws and regulations. Whatever you command me to do under this authority of yours, I will do it. But when you command me to believe this or that, or to put away certain books, I will not obey you. For in that respect you are a tyrant, and you reach too highly, and you command things that are beyond your reach'. If he should take your property because of your disobedience, and punishes you for it, thank and bless God that you have been worthy to suffer for God's Word. Let him carry on as he likes, for he will find his judge eventually. For I say unto you that if you do not resist him and let him have his way, so that he takes away your faith or the books, you have truly denied God.¹⁴

Again Luther writes in his Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation:

No temporal matter shall be submitted to Rome. The pope should have no power over the emperor, except to crown him at the altar, as a bishop crowns a king; nor should that devilish pomp be allowed that the emperor should kiss the Pope's feet, or sit at his feet.... The chapter Solite in the Canon Law, in which the papal authority is exalted above the imperial, is not worth a farthing.... It is also absurd and puerile for the Pope to boast for such blind, foolish reasons, in his decretal Pastoralis, that he is the rightful heir to the Empire, if the throne be vacant. Who gave it to him? Did Christ do so when He said, 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, but we shall not do so'? Did St. Peter bequeath it to him? It is disgusting to me to see that we have to read and teach such impudent, clumsy, foolish lies in the Canon Law, and moreover to take them for Christian doctrine.¹⁵

14. Albert Hyma, Christianity and Politics, pp. 105ff.

15. Ibid., p. 96.

Luther further stated that he had done more to separate the temporal sword from the spiritual than any of his predecessors. Very clearly he wrote in a letter of 1525: "The spiritual rule of the Gospel must therefore be separated from the external secular rule and the two must not be mixed with each other".¹⁶

The Augsburg Confession also clearly advocates separation when it says:

Therefore, since the power of the Church grants eternal things, and is exercised only by the ministry of the Word, it does not interfere with civil government, no more than the art of singing interferes with civil government. For civil government deals with other things than does the Gospel. The civil rulers defend not minds, but bodies and bodily things against manifest injuries, and restrain men with the sword and bodily punishments in order to preserve civil justice and peace. Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the Commonwealth. As Christ says, John 18, 36: My kingdom is not of this world, also Luke 12, 14: Who made Me a judge or a divider over you? Paul also says, Phil. 3, 20: Our citizenship is in heaven; 2 Cor. 10, 4: The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations.¹⁷

16. Luther, as quoted by Albert Hyma, *op. cit.*, p. 140, from *Werke, Briefwechsel*, Vol. III pp. 484 - 486.

17. In F. Bente and W.H.T. Dau, Concordia Triglotta, p. 85.

Likewise does the Apology, in recounting the many abuses against the proper spheres of State and Church, speak of

The entire topic concerning the distinction between the kingdom of Christ and a political kingdom has been explained to advantage (to the remarkably great consolation of many consciences) in the literature of our writers, (namely) that the kingdom of Christ is spiritual (inasmuch as Christ governs by the Word and by preaching), to wit, beginning in the heart the knowledge of God, the fear of God and faith, eternal righteousness, and eternal life; meanwhile it permits us outwardly to use legitimate political ordinances of every nation in which we live, just as it permits us to use medicine or the art of building, or food, drink, air.¹⁸

The Smalcald Articles speak likewise:

The second article is still clearer, that Christ gave to the Apostles only spiritual power, i.e., the command to teach the Gospel, to announce the forgiveness of sins, to administer the Sacraments, to excommunicate the godless without bodily force (by the Word), and that He did not give the power of the sword, or the right to establish, occupy, or confer kingdoms of this world (to set up or depose kings). For Christ says, Matt. 28, 19. 20: Go ye, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; also John 20, 21: As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. Now it is manifest that Christ was not sent to bear the sword or possess a worldly kingdom (rule in a worldly fashion), as He Himself says, John 18, 36: My kingdom is not of this world, and Paul says 2 Cor. 1. 24: Not for that we have dominion over your faith; and 2 Cor. 10.⁴: The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, etc.¹⁹

Dr. Mueller sums up the Lutheran doctrine on this point in his Christian Dogmatics with these words:

From this follows that the State (civil government)

18. "Apology of the Augsburg Confession", Art. XVI, 54, in ibid., pp. 330f.

19. "The Smalcald Articles; Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope", 31, in ibid., p. 513.

is not a sort of maid (*ancilla ecclesiae*) that must assist the Church in its divine work of winning souls for Christ. While both the papists and the Calvinists intermingle Church and State in principle and practise, the Lutherans, on the basis of Scripture, oppose every attempt to mingle the two. According to Lutheran doctrine the mingling of the two produces only harm, never good (cp. church conditions in all European state churches). The Church loses nothing of its dignity or power by being independent of the civil government. On the contrary, its freedom from the restrictions of the civil law enables it to attend to its sacred duty of proclaiming the Word the more efficiently.²⁰

Calvinistic theology also espouses separation of Church and State. Of this Calvin himself states "that this spiritual power be entirely separated from the power of the sword,"²¹ and again "that the spiritual kingdom of Christ and civil government are things very different and remote from each other".²² Although Calvin here clearly expresses the doctrine of separation of church and State over against the Roman teaching and practice, yet he himself fell into the same error and mixed Church and State. This will be treated at greater length later. One finds the same situation rather consistently in later Calvinistic writing.

John Knox, for instance, declared for separation of Church and State, and yet it may be said of him that "he went so far as to say that a woman should never be permitted to rule a country, and that the civil government should be placed above

20. Mueller, op. cit., p. 552.

21. John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book IV, Chapter XI, Article V, as translated by John Allen, Vol. III, p. 231.

22. Ibid., IV, XX, I, p. 516.

the Church. 'The reformation of religion in all points, together with the punishment of false teachers, appertains to the power of the civil magistrate.' Knox told the leading nobles and officials of Scotland that they were 'Powers ordained by God', and that therefore they should 'remove from honors and punish with death such as God has condemned by His own mouth'.²³

Hyma further points out, in discussing the Second Book of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, 1578, what were the official

views of the Presbyterians on the relation between Church and State, and between ruler and subjects. These views were very largely a recapitulation of the opinions voiced previously by the Calvinists of France. The Church and State are said to wield authority in two distinct spheres, the Church being fortunate in reigning over the spiritual needs of man, which authority is far superior to the temporal power: 'As the ministers and others of the ecclesiastical estate are subject to the magistrate civilly, so ought the magistrate to be subject to the Church spiritually and in ecclesiastical government....The civil power should command the spiritual to do its office according to the Word of God; the spiritual rulers should require the Christian magistrate to administer justice and punish vice, and to maintain the liberty and quietness of the Church within proper bounds. The civil magistrate must assist, maintain, and fortify the jurisdiction of the Church, and punish them civilly that will not obey her discipline; but he may not execute any censures of the Church, nor yet prescribe any rule how it should be done'.²⁴

This inconsistency in Calvinistic theology, many more examples of which could be given, will be dealt with in greater detail later.

23. Hyma, op. cit., pp. 170f.

24. Ibid., pp. 180f.

Although, as set forth above, there should rightly be a complete formal, organic separation between Church and State, yet there need not, in fact cannot be an absolute separation. By the very nature of the two organizations this would be quite impossible. In any event there would of necessity and unavoidably be an impact of the Church on the State. This is especially true if one considers the State as it is commonly defined today, as the population within a given territory having a government that is sovereign.

The two naturally come into contact at various points. They are both agencies of God, the Church an instrument of God's grace, and the State an instrument of God's providence. Both are there for the welfare of men, the Church for the spiritual and the State for the temporal. Since, however, both operate in the world, they naturally come into contact in various phases of their activity. This is unavoidable since both must deal with the same people, all of whom have a temporal existence, in which they are subject to the State, and in which temporal existence the Church too must operate. Furthermore, the members of the Church and also those who especially carry on its work come under the jurisdiction of the State as its citizens, whereas the citizens of the State and also those who are its agents in its government are the objects of the Church's spiritual ministrations.²⁵

25. Cf. Mark 16: 15.

The Church and State naturally also come into contact with each other in carrying out their proper functions, which do overlap somewhat. The State is interested in the morality of its citizens. So is the Church. Though the State may on the basis of reason and natural law teach a moral code, such a moral code is not true unless it is in harmony with God's Word, the teaching of which is the province of the Church. The State is further interested in the obligations and duties of its citizens over against the State. So is the Church, since these duties are a part of moral living, and as such are defined in Holy Scripture, which it is the Church's duty to proclaim.²⁶ The duties of the State and government are also subjects of God's Word, in which the Church therefore is interested insofar as that Word speaks of them. Furthermore, since true morality is dependent upon the results of the application of those means with which the Church operates this makes the State somewhat dependent on the Church.

Church and State also come into contact of necessity in such temporal matters as concern the Church in the carrying on of its work, the Church's own property, etc., and the use the Church makes of tangible and material things, either private or public. Such natural contact is also established between Church and State in matters concerning the equal rights of unmolested religious practice on the part of individuals

26. Christ's own example, Matthew 22: 15 - 22.

and groups of individuals. This is a matter of vital interest to the Church. But the guaranteeing of such rights falls within the province of the State, who can also limit them to such extent as the exercise thereof may be of tangible detriment to others, or insofar as they infringe upon the equal rights of others or are inconsistent with natural law.²⁷ Luther, in writing on this, says in a letter to the Elector John of Saxony:

We realize that it is not your province to intervene in spiritual affairs, but still it is your solemn duty as temporal ruler to exercise caution and take care that no dispeace shall befall the land. This was also the duty of Emperor Constantine when Arius had caused disorder and dissension among the citizens of the Roman Empire; and for that reason the emperor instructed the bishops assembled at the Council of Nicea that they should not permit this dissension to continue.^{28. 29.}

The first sphere then, in which we find an impact of the Church on the State is that of morality in general. The State should be interested in morality, for Scripture says: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people".³⁰ Of nations, too, it is true: "Ye shall know them by their fruits".³¹ Accordingly God has ordained that the State is there

27. Cf. A. C. Mueller, Bible Readings in the Public School; also his Problems Related to Bible Reading and Teaching of Religion in the Public Schools.

28. As quoted by Hyma, op. cit., pp. 119f. from Werke, Vol. XXVI, pp. 200 - 201.

29. Cf. also Greever, op. cit., p. 38; Reu-Buehring, op. cit., pp. 344-348; and Hartwig Dierks, The Social Teachings of Moses and of Representative Prophets, pp. 138f.

30. Proverbs 14: 34.

31. Matthew 7: 16.

"for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well".³² Force is therefore the means by which the State would curb immorality, and it promises temporal rewards for the encouragement of morality. However no true, real and lasting morality can be brought about by such temporal means. The results can only be of an external and temporary nature. No real and enduring willingness on the part of man for moral living can be accomplished by such means. He may be coerced and compelled from fear of punishment or drawn by promise of reward to a certain external obedience. However, this can be neither from the heart nor of a truly lasting nature. Natural man's "imagination is evil from his youth",³³ "the carnal mind is enmity against God",³⁴ for "how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."³⁵ ³⁶. The ministration of the Law is incapable of bringing about a real change of heart and so a real willingness for good, for "the law worketh wrath",³⁷ it is "the ministration of death"³⁸

32. 1 Peter 2: 14.

33. Genesis 8: 21.

34. Romans 8: 7.

35. Matthew 12: 34f.

36. Cf. also 1 Corinthians 10: 20; Ephesians 4: 18; and Hebrews 11: 4.

37. Romans 4: 15.

38. 2 Corinthians 3: 7.

and "the ministration of condemnation".³⁹

If the State wants its citizens to live a truly moral life, it must look to the Church. Real morality can only come as the result of a changed heart, it comes only as the result of true faith in Christ. "Without faith it is impossible to please God."⁴⁰ But "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature".⁴¹ "Ye were dead in trespasses and sins".⁴² But "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them".⁴³ Since the Church has those means whereby this faith and resultant sanctification is worked, so that unwilling obedience due only to fear of the threat of punishment or promise of reward may be changed to willing obedience out of love to God and fellowman, the State is dependent on the Church for this. In fact without such results of the work of the Church, the State would not be able long to exist.

The Apology therefore teaches:

This special faith, therefore, by which an individual believes that for Christ's sake his sins are remitted unto him, and that for Christ's sake God is reconciled and propitious, obtains remission of sins and justifies us. And because in repentance, i.e., in terrors, it comforts and encourages hearts, it regenerates us, and brings the Holy Ghost, that then we may be able to fulfil God's Law, namely, to love God, truly to fear

39. 2 Corinthians 3: 9.

40. Hebrews 11: 6.

41. 2 Corinthians 5: 17.

42. Ephesians 2: 1.

43. Ephesians 2: 10.

God, truly to be confident that God hears prayer, and to obey God, in all afflictions; it mortifies concupiscence, etc.^{44. 45.}

The Church then is of inestimable service to the State in being the instrument through which true morality, which it desires, is worked in its citizens. And by such influencing of individuals it has an impact on the State, for the State is composed of individuals. The Church, then, is active in this sphere by carrying on its work in its regular manner, as though the State were not even in existence, by continuing to bring the message of God's Law and Gospel, to men independent of the State. Even though the State has a vital interest in the work of the Church for its own good, nevertheless the Church should carry on its work independently of the State, lest its message be corrupted by the vain philosophies of man. It should preach the Law, as found in God's own Word, not only to curb the coarse outbursts of sin by its threats and to show men the true nature and extent of their sins, but also as the true moral code. To citizens and to government officials, to men in all walks of life it should show sin and its dread results, denouncing man-made moral codes and showing what true morality is to be like. The Bible speaks of this in

44. "Apology of the Augsburg Confession", Art. IV, 45, in Bente-Dau, op. cit., p. 133.

45. Cf. also Enzelder et al., op. cit., pp. 67f; Greever, op. cit., p. 38; Reu-Buehring, op. cit., pp. 347f; Dierks, op. cit., pp. 138f.

no uncertain terms, as we see from Ezekiel 3: 17 - 21:

I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die; because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.⁴⁶

And with equal, yes even greater vigor must the Church bring the sweet message of the Gospel of Christ, for only as a result of faith can there be a truly sanctified life, as was pointed out before. Christ Himself summed up the Church's duty when He said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you".⁴⁷

Thus does the Church have an impact on the State through carrying on its work of preaching the Word of God, and so having a mighty influence on morality in general. It is not

46. Cf. Matthew 5:17-19; 18: 17-20; John 20: 22f; 1 Peter 2: 9; 1 Timothy 4: 8; 2 Timothy 3: 14-17; 4: 1-5; etc.
47. Matthew 28: 19f.

a formal, direct influence, but an indirect one. At the same time it is a most proper influence, which the Church must have if it is truly the Church and as such carrying out its God-given duties. This has also been and is the true Lutheran position. Thus we read in the Formula of Concord:

These two doctrines, we believe and confess, should ever and ever be diligently inculcated in the Church of God even to the end of the world, although with the proper distinction of which we have heard, in order that, through the preaching of the Law and its threats in the ministry of the New Testament the hearts of impenitent men may be terrified, and brought to a knowledge of their sins and to repentance; but not in such a way that they lose heart and despair in this process, but that (since the Law is a school-master unto Christ that we might be justified by faith, Gal. 3, 24, and thus points and leads us not from Christ, but to Christ, who is the end of the Law, Rom. 10, 4) they be comforted and strengthened again by the preaching of the Holy Gospel concerning Christ, our Lord, namely, that to those who believe the Gospel, God forgives all their sins through Christ, adopts them as children for His sake, and out of pure grace, saves them, however, not in such a way that they may abuse the grace of God, and sin hoping for grace, as Paul, 2 Cor. 3, 7ff., thoroughly and forcibly shows the distinction between the Law and the Gospel.⁴⁸

However, the Office of the Keys, the ministry of the Word is properly given to the whole Church and every member of it, the office of the ministry being instituted only to act for the Church. Therefore Walther writes:

Es ist Lehre unserer Kirche nach Gottes Wort, dass Christus das Amt und alle von ihm erworbenen Güter und Gewalten ebenso, wie das Evangelium, seiner Kirche unmittelbar als der urspruenglichen, ersten Besitzerin gegeben; dass also die Kirche das Amt usw.

48. "Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration", V. 24ff, in Bente-Dau, op. cit., p. 961.

nicht mittelbar dadurch habe, dass Christus dasselbe gewissen Personen in der Kirche verliehen hat, die es nun fortpflanzen und freilich zum Nutzen der Kirche verwalten muessten.⁴⁹

We therefore also confess: "The Church is above the Ministers",⁵⁰ and "He grants the keys principally and immediately to the Church, just as also for this reason the Church has principally the right of calling",⁵¹ for the Office of the Keys was given⁵² to the Church,⁵³ the "royal priesthood".⁵⁴

Calvinism, on the other hand, emphasizes especially the sovereignty of God. This undue emphasis has led naturally to the teaching of absolute predestination. Since, according to Calvinism, the salvation of some and damnation of others has been absolutely decreed and is carried out by the irresistible and omnipotent will of God, there is no place in their theology for any means of grace. This naturally gives rise to the practice of legalism. Since they furthermore teach that the exercise of the Office of the Keys is in the hands of the clergy not of the entire Church, and that magistrates are to be subject to them as other children of God, they teach that magistrates are to work together with the ministers, or in effect that the government be subservient to the clergy.

49. C.F.W. Walther, Kirche und Amt, I, Thesis IV, p. 32.

50. "Smalcald Articles, of the Power and Primacy of the Pope", 11, in Bente-Dau, op. cit., p. 507.

51. "Smalcald Articles, of the Power and Primacy of the Pope", 24, in ibid., p. 511; cf. also 67, in ibid., p. 523; and

We therefore find Calvin writing: "Those who preside over the government of the Church, according to the institution of Christ, are named by Paul....'pastors'. The whole world is assigned to them to be reduced to obedience to Christ".⁵⁵

To shew what is implied in the profession of those who call themselves pastors: namely, that they preside over the Church in that station....to instruct the people in true piety by the doctrine of Christ, to administer the holy mysteries, to maintain and exercise proper discipline.⁵⁶

We come now to the third branch of the power of the Church, and that which is the principal one in a well regulated state, which we have said consists in jurisdiction. The whole jurisdiction of the Church relates to the discipline of manners, of which we are about to treat....For this end, there were from the beginning judicaries appointed in the Churches, to take cognizance of manners, to pass censures on vices, and to preside over the use of the keys in excommunication.⁵⁷

But as it is the duty of the magistrate, by punishment and corporeal coercion, to purge the church from offences; so it behoves the minister of the word on his part to relieve the magistrate by preventing the multiplication of offenders. Their respective operations ought to be connected as to be an assistance, and not an obstruction to each other....For a pious magistrate will not wish to exempt himself from the common subjection of the children of God, which in no small degree consists in submitting

"Apology of the Augsburg Confession", VII and VIII, 28, op. cit., pp. 235ff.

52. Cf. Matthew 28: 19f. and John 20: 22f.

53. Cf. Matthew 18: 17 - 20.

54. Cf. 1 Peter 2: 9. Also 1 Corinthians 3: 21-23; 2 Corinthians 4: 5; and Engelder et al., op. cit., p. 107.

55. Calvin, op. cit., IV, III, IV, p. 58.

56. Ibid., IV, III, VI, p. 61.

57. Ibid., IV, XI, I, pp. 224f.

to the Church, when it judges by the word of God.⁵⁸

In like manner we also read in the Westminster Confession:

The Lord Jesus, as king and head of his Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed.... For the better attaining of these ends, the officers of the Church are to proceed by admonition, suspension from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season, and by excommunication from the Church, according to the nature of the crime and demerit of the person.⁵⁹

Calvinism here shows itself completely inconsistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture of a complete formal separation of Church and State, and of the Gospel ministry of the Church as set forth above.

58. Ibid., IV, XI, III and IV, p. 230.

59. "The Westminster Confession of Faith" of 1647, Chapter XXX, in Philip Schaff, The Creeds of Christendom, Vol. III, pp. 667f; cf. also Engelder et al., op. cit., p.221.

II. Through the Church's Influence on Individuals as to their Duties as Citizens

The second sphere in which the Church exerts an impact on the State is through the Church's influence on individuals as to their duties as citizens. Here, as in all else, the Church is to teach the message of the Bible, no more, no less. The Church is not a citizen as such and cannot act in that capacity. It's duty is to teach. But it must keep its message pure. It is not to preach man's wisdom, but the Word of God.⁶⁰ Since Scripture speaks also on the subject of the duties of citizens, the Church must bring the Bible message also in this respect.

The Lutheran position has been consonant with this as we have seen above. It has taught that it is the Church's duty to speak where God speaks. Calvinism also subscribes to this, but that it does not follow the proposition through consistently appears as we consider the matter in detail.

Holy Scripture teaches us a number of things in regard to the duties of citizens, which the Church should then teach. The first that comes to our attention is that citizens owe obedience to the State as well as its government, since the government is the agent of the State through which it carries on its business. The Bible describes this as a

60. Cf. 1 Corinthians 2: 4f.

complete obedience. Jesus said: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things which are God's".⁶¹ St. Paul shows that this which is owed the government includes also obedience, and that God expects us to obey this His representative even as we are to obey Him:

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake....Render therefore to all there dues:...fear to whom fear.⁶²

St. Peter also describes this as a complete obedience to government as the representative of God:

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme: Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle,

61. Matthew 22: 21.

62. Romans 13: 1-7.

but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.⁶³

This obedience is then to be rendered even though thereby we are deprived of some of our liberties and it may be hard to bear. Samuel also, at the command of God, told the Israelites when they asked for a king, that they must be obedient to him and can expect that such obedience may become burdensome at times.⁶⁴ God even told the Israelites in their captivity: "Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."⁶⁵ Jesus, Himself was obedient to the Roman government, even though they were oppressive conquerors. When tax money was demanded of Him, He paid it.⁶⁶ In fact He was obedient to this government throughout His life, even though it resulted in unjust suffering and death for Him. Buehring therefore rightly describes this duty of a citizen when he says:

Obedience to law is a matter of course for the Christian citizen. He renders such obedience first of all for 'conscience sake', then too because as a loyal and patriotic citizen he

63. 1 Peter 2: 13-20.

64. Cf. 1 Samuel 8: 11-17.

65. Jeremiah 29: 7.

66. Cf. Matthew 17: 24-27.

knows that the welfare of the state depends upon the sovereignty of the law, and he will want to throw the weight of his personal influence and example on the side of law observance. For that reason he will not withhold his obedience, even though some laws may not meet with his approval or even seem to be unjust...he will obey the law so long as it is on the statute books.⁶⁷

The Lutheran Church consistently teaches such obedience to the government on the part of citizens. The Small Catechism teaches it, as well as other duties of citizens, in its Table of Duties and under the Fourth Commandment. Luther writes on this point:

But you might ask me why Paul told all the Christians to be subject to the temporal powers? And why did Peter do the same thing? Since every Christian lives here upon the earth for the benefit of his neighbor and not of his own, he does that which he does not really need to do out of his own nature. The temporal sword is needed everywhere, and so the Christian willingly submits himself to it, honors the rulers, serves, helps, and does all he can to promote the work of the government....For this reason Christ paid the tax, although He had just said that the 'children are free'.⁶⁸

Calvinism, too, is consistent in teaching this doctrine of Holy Scripture. Calvin says in his Institutes:

Hence follows another duty, that, with minds disposed to honour and reverence magistrates, subjects approve their obedience to them, in submitting to their edicts, in paying taxes, in discharging public duties and bearing burdens which relate to the common defence, and in fulfilling all their other commands.⁶⁹

There is, however, an important exception which Scripture

67. Reu-Buehring, op. cit., pp. 351f.

68. Luther, "Of Temporal Power", as quoted by Hyma, op. cit., pp. 102f.

69. Calvin, op. cit., IV, XX, XXIII, p. 542.

itself makes to such obedience. Whenever the government commands something contrary to the clearly expressed will of God, it is not to be obeyed. The Bible tell us: "We ought to obey God rather than men".⁷⁰ The government is then not to be obeyed when it commands something which God forbids or forbids something which God commands. Lutheran and Calvinistic theology are in full agreement on this point in full accord with Holy Scripture. Luther Says: "It pleases the divine will that we call His officer's gracious lords, fall at their feet, and be unto them humble subjects, as long as they do not overreach themselves, and wish to be shepherds instead of executioners."⁷¹ So also does Calvin speak:

If they command anything against Him, it ought not to have the least attention; nor, in this case, ought we to pay any regard to all the dignity attached to magistrates; to which no injury is done when it is subjected to the unrivalled and supreme power of God.⁷²

The government, then, is not to be obeyed in instances where it commands contrary to God's will. Does this mean, then, that otherwise it is to be obeyed in all things, no matter how cruel, unjust and oppressive it is? Is all possibility of revolution excluded? Government has its divine character by the fact that the State has been ordained by God as an institution of justice. Obedience to government therefore rests

70. Acts 5: 29.

71. Luther, "Of Temporal Power" in Hyma, op. cit., p. 108.

72. Calvin, op. cit., IV, XX, XXXII, p. 551.

on the fact that it is a "minister of God for good" and "a revenger upon him that doeth evil".⁷³ If a government does not fulfill these functions, but becomes consistently and flagrantly unjust, and refuses to change, then it is no longer a true representative of God, but rather the minister of Satan for evil. Such a government may then properly and rightly be resisted and finally deposed. However, violence is to be cautioned against. Jesus said: "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword".⁷⁴ This is spoken particularly of individuals acting on their own initiative. Christians, whose government is not carrying out its God-given duties, are to join with their fellow-citizens and seek by every legitimate means to bring about the necessary change in a peaceable manner.⁷⁵ Naturally before proceeding to do so, the Christian will be certain that it is not merely a case of error due to human fallibility that can and will readily be corrected if proper attention is called to it. The Christian will make certain that action is really warranted and that he is not merely going along with slanderous demagogues, whom one may find at all times agitating for change. In Proverbs we read: "My son, fear thou the Lord and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change".⁷⁶

73. Cf. Romans 13: 4.

74. Matthew 26: 52.

75. Cf. 1 Samuel 24: 6-10; Daniel 3: 6: 22; 1 Kings 13: 1-10.

76. Proverbs 24: 21.

If, however, citizens have previously realized their responsibility, they will have set up a constitutional framework and taken other precautions, so that necessary changes can be brought about easily and with a minimum of disturbance. In some instances, however, it may become the duty of a people to depose its government by force. A State is responsible for its government, and in the final analysis the State is the people. God holds a people responsible for the actions of its government, as we see from the judgment of God on many nations in the Old Testament. He says, for instance: "Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandment".⁷⁷

Luther's position is consonant with this. He cautions against violence, and advises the princes in treating with the king: "For one should not resist the higher powers with force, but rather with the truth. If they listen to the truth, it will be well; if not the prince has done his duty".⁷⁸ In the Peasants War in 1525 he wrote to the princes in his Exhortation to Peace: "It is not so much the peasants that are rising against you as God Himself....The peasants have drawn up twelve articles, among which some are so reasonable and so just that they have deprived you in the sight of God

77. Hosea 5: 11.

78. Luther, "Of Temporal Power", Hyma, op. cit., pp.110f.

of your honor and respect". At the same time he advised the peasants against armed resistance and later denounced it. Again he, in letters to the Elector of Saxony in regard to the dispute of the princes with the emperor writes: "To advance with armed forces is not in keeping with reason or with natural law, and such action should not occur unless hostile forces or dire need require it....It is therefore advisable to utilize the zeal that has been shown thus far in getting ready for armed resistance, by seeking more proper means".⁸⁰

Later in a memorandum for a meeting in Torgau in 1530 he stated that it might be proper from a legal standpoint to take the emperor to task for not abiding by the promises he made at the time of his election, this not being a theological question.⁸¹ Later he made a like reference to people dealing with the government.⁸²

Calvin, on the other hand, would allow revolution under no circumstances. He did not favor democracy and so gave the people no rights except to obey. He says: "Even to submit to government, not only of those princes who discharge their duty to us with becoming integrity and fidelity, but of all who

79. Ibid., pp. 112f.

80. Ibid., pp. 122f.

81. Ibid., p. 124.

82. On this whole question cf. also Reu-Buehring, op. cit., pp. 325 - 328.

possess the sovereignty, even though they perform none of the duties of their function....But if those, to whom the will of God has assigned another form of government, transfer this to themselves so as to be tempted to desire a revolution, the very thought will be not only foolish and useless, but altogether criminal".⁸³ He would allow some right of resistance on the part of some subordinate officials, however. Beza takes much the same position in his pamphlet of 1574, "On the Power of Magistrates over their Subjects".⁸⁴ John Knox went one step further when he said that the officials and nobles of Scotland should "remove from honors and punish with death such as God has condemned by His own mouth", meaning Catholic rulers.⁸⁵ Christopher Goodman went to the extreme in stating: "If subjects find a woman, a Catholic, or an enemy of the Calvinist religion on the throne, they must resist him or her with the sword".⁸⁶ Thus we find Calvinism wavering from one extreme to the other on this point through its history. In general Calvinism, though one would expect it to bolster authoritarianism and nationalism in politics, has usually been found in the position of seeking to justify revolution, although this was not Calvin's position. One would more readily expect

83. Calvin, op. cit., IV, XX, XX & VIII. pp. 544 & 524f.

84. Cf. Hyma, op. cit., p. 161.

85. Cf. Ibid., pp. 170f.

86. Ibid., p. 171

this to be said of Lutheranism; yet the opposite has mostly been the case throughout its history.⁸⁷

The Church is further to teach on the basis of Holy Scripture, that besides obedience, individuals owe the government honor, respect and fear. This is to be shown to all representatives of the government acting in the various phases of its work, from the country's President on down to the Town Constable. Not only did Jesus say: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's",⁸⁸ but St. Paul showed that since they were God's representatives they were entitled to the honor, respect and fear befitting this office, as he said: "For they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour".⁸⁹ So we likewise read in Proverbs: "My son, fear thou the Lord and the king".⁹⁰ This is of course not to be a slavish fear, but an awe and respect for the dignity of the office. St. Peter likewise tells us: "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king".⁹¹ And it is significant that he here adds: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only

87. Cf. George H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory, p. 359 and passim.
 88. Matthew 22: 21.
 89. Romans 13: 6f.
 90. Proverbs 24: 21
 91. 1 Peter 2: 17.

to the good and gentle, but also to the froward".⁹² This applies also in the attitude of individuals toward individual government officials, giving them that respect, honor and fear due them, even though they may personally be most wicked and repugnant. For it is the office they honor, not the person. Even after David was anointed king in place of Saul, he still showed honor and respect for him.⁹³ Daniel showed respect for the king even after he had thrown him into the lion's den.⁹⁴

Since the government is there for our welfare, it must also be supported with taxes in order that it may carry on its work properly. This Holy Scripture also commands. Jesus spoke the words "render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's"⁹⁵ especially in answer to a question as to whether the Jews should pay taxes to the Roman government. He Himself paid such taxes.⁹⁶ Therefore we are told in Romans: "For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour".⁹⁷ By command of God Samuel told the Israelites that they would

92. 1 Peter 2: 18.

93. Cf. 1 Samuel 24: 6-10.

94. Cf. Daniel 6: 21; also Exodus 22: 28; Reu-Buehring, op. cit., pp. 349-351.

95. Matthew 22: 21.

96. Cf. Matthew 17: 24-27.

97. Romans 13: 6f.

have to pay heavy taxes if they wanted a form of government other than a theocracy.⁹⁸

The government is further to be supported by prayer to God, thanking Him for its blessings and asking Him to bestow wisdom and power upon the various officials, that they may properly carry out their functions according to the will of God and for the welfare of men. Such prayers should be made privately and also in public worship. It is significant that we find the command of God for such prayer in St. Paul's letter to the young pastor, Timothy: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty".⁹⁹

Individuals should also assist the government in carrying out its proper functions. To this end they should cooperate with the government and render service, not only when called upon to do so, but also consider themselves an active part of the government at all times and take part in all its affairs. Thus it is also proper and right that citizens give of their time and talents for jury duty, as witnesses in trials, etc., and so aid the government in the carrying out of justice. To

98. Cf. 1 Samuel 8: 11-17.

99. 1 Timothy 2: 1f.

this end they should also be willing to swear proper oaths when called upon to do so in a proper manner and to a proper end.¹⁰⁰ Luther therefore writes: "We are not to swear in support of evil, that is, of falsehood, and where there is no need or use; but for the support of good and the advantage of our neighbor we should swear".¹⁰¹

With unabated interest and activity the Christian must make government business his business. In summing up all these duties of service that a citizen owes his government the Augsburg Confession says:

Of civil affairs they teach that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God, and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to judge matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to make oath when required by the magistrates, to marry a wife, to be given in marriage.¹⁰²

The citizen is furthermore to give military service when called upon by his government to do so, unless he has incontrovertible evidence that it is an unjust war. Soldiers who became Christians were not expected to give up that

100. Cf. Hebrews 6: 16; Deuteronomy 6: 13; Genesis 14: 22; Joshua 14: 9; 2 Samuel 21: 7; Psalm 24: 4; 63: 11; Isaiah 65: 16; Jeremiah 4: 2; Matthew 26: 63f; John 16: 20, 23; Romans 9: 1; 2 Corinthians 11: 31; Philippians 1: 8; "Apology of the Augsburg Confession", XVI, 53, in Bente-Dau, *op. cit.*, p. 329; "Formula of Concord, Epitome", XII, 15, and "Thorough Declaration", XII, 19, in *ibid.*, pp. 841 and 1099.

101. "Large Catechism", I, 66, in *ibid.*, p. 599.

102. "Augsburg Confession", XVI, 1f., in *ibid.*, p. 51; cf. also Engelder *et. al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

profession.¹⁰³ However, let the Christian citizen also determine that a war is truly just and truly inevitable before he permits his government to enter upon it. (cf. later).

The Christian citizen is also to be ready to serve in public office. It is right for him to hold civil office. Those serving the State in such an office were not required to relinquish it on embracing Christianity.¹⁰⁴ In fact Christians above other men are especially fitted for participation in government, for certainly one can expect much more from such who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, are no longer in bondage to sin, and whose wills are guided as a result of faith into ways of love, service and justice, and who have a greater knowledge of the Law of God.¹⁰⁵ Thus Luther also writes in this connection:

Wo kommt aber dem armer, verachteten Haeuflein, der Gemeinde Christi, die vor der Welt verhoehnt und verspottet wird, solche grosse Macht her? Weltliche Obrigkeit gibt ihr die Macht nicht, so hat sie sie auch nicht zu geben, sondern das Wort Gottes richtet eine solche Macht, Reich und Kirche an, die ein solch Volk ist hier auf Erden, durch das heilige Evangelium in der ganzen Christenheit berufen, die da hat das reine Wort, und den rechten Brauch der Sacramente, und ist maechtiger und gewaltiger, denn der Teufel, Tod und Hoelle. Und das nicht an Einem Orte, noch in Einem Volke; sondern in der ganzen Welt, wo die Christen zerstreuet sind.

Ein jeglicher einzelner Christ ist ein solcher Mann, Wie der Herr Christus selbst auf Erden gewest ist, und richtet so gross Ding aus, dass er kann die ganze

103. Cf. Matthew 8: 5f.; Acts 10: 1f.

104. Cf. Acts 13: 7f.; Engelder et al., op. cit., pp. 118f.

105. Cf. 1 Corinthians 3: 21f; Revelation 5: 10.

Welt regieren in goettlichen Sachen, jedermann helfen und nuetzen, und thut die grossten Werke, so auf Erden geschehen. Denn er ist auch vor Gott hoeher geachtet denn die ganze Welt, dass Gott um seinetwillen der Welt alles gibt und erhaelt, was sie hat; dass, wo nicht Christen auf Erden waeren, so haette keine Stadt noch Land Frieden, ja, es wuerde auf Einen Tag, was auf Erden ist, alles durch den Teufel verderbt werden.

Wer mag nun ausdenken die Ehre und Hoehe eines Christenmenschen? Durch sein Koenigreich ist er aller Dinge maechtig; durch sein Priesterthum ist er Gottes maechtig.¹⁰⁶

Through such an active participation in the affairs of government a Christian can be the salt and light that the Savior has commanded him to be when He said in the Sermon on the Mount:

Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.¹⁰⁷

This cannot be emphasized too much. The Christian officeholder should look upon his work as a holy calling, as well-pleasing to God, to be carried out with extreme care according to His will to His glory and the welfare of His fellowmen. If only we had more humble, God-fearing Christians taking

106. Luther, *op. cit.*, V, p. 247; VIII, p. 350; XIX, p. 998.
107. Matthew 5: 13-16.

their duties and responsibilities as citizens seriously and seeking to serve our God in public office! How much less misery, bloodshed and sorrow would there then not be in the world! We therefore are in full accord with Buehring when he writes:

Christian citizenship, however, involves much more than merely an attitude of reverence for the government and obedience to its laws. In modern civilized states the people themselves have a share in the government of their country, and under a democratic form of government it is highly important that the right to vote be intelligently and conscientiously exercised. Through his vote the citizen can effectively express his intelligent, Christian convictions with reference to candidates for public office and measures that are to be decided. If he habitually neglects to cast his ballot, or does so haphazardly without having informed himself as fully as possible concerning candidates, platforms and policies, or if he votes simply in a spirit of blind partisanship, he betrays a sacred trust imposed in him and violates his duty toward God and the state.

In a democracy such as ours, government at least in its larger aspects of state and nation is party government. The question to what extent a Christian should take part in party politics will depend very largely upon his political understanding and ability, as well as upon the duties and limitations of the calling. Certainly the fact that politics are notoriously "rotten," that graft and corruption is so frequently found in political offices high and low, is all the more reason why honest, conscientious Christian citizens should take a more active part in politics, even at the cost of personal discomfort and self-sacrifice. Here is an opportunity, and therefore also an obligation, for Christians who are the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Matt. 5:13, 14) to make the seasoning, preserving and illuminating influence of their Christian religion felt in no uncertain way.

108. Reu-Buehring, op. cit., pp. 353f.

The Christian citizen can indeed do much through his vote and through active participation in politics to correct evils and to make government the divine institution of justice and minister for good that it should be. And God expects it of him. Especially under a democratic form of government dare the Christian never lose sight of his duties, obligations and responsibilities in this respect. Let him remember that God holds him personally responsible for the acts of his government together with his fellow-citizens. There are many such instances in the Old Testament of God punishing an entire people for their share in the wickedness of their rulers, e.g., in the case of Israel: "Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he walked willingly after the commandment".¹⁰⁹ It is therefore the citizen's duty to seek to bring his influence to bear upon his government by every legitimate means within his power to the end that governmental functions may be of a truly God-pleasing character. Especially must the citizen under a democratic form of government recognize his responsibility in this respect, and seize the opportunity for good that the Lord has granted him.

Although Calvin would be in essential agreement with

109. Hosea 5: 11; cf. especially also 1 Chronicles 21: 7-17; 2 Chronicles 28: 19; 2 Samuel 2 & 5. 24: 10-17; Ezekiel 3:17-21; 18; 22; 30; Exodus 23; Amos, especially chapter 9; Acts 5: 29; etc.

what we have said in regard to the previously discussed duties of citizens, he would not assent to this. He would have nothing of democracy. The place of the average citizens is for him one of complete subordination, without any other responsibility over against government or any voice whatever over against it. He has this to say on the matter:

And for private men, who have no authority to deliberate on the regulation of public affairs, it would surely be a vain occupation to dispute which would be the best form of government in the place where they live....I shall by no means deny, that either aristocracy or a mixture of aristocracy and democracy far excels all others....Under this obedience I also include the moderation which private persons ought to prescribe to themselves in relation to public affairs, that they do not, without being called upon, intermeddle with affairs of state....Let us consider that is not our province to remedy these evils.¹¹⁰

110. Calvin, op. cit., IV, XX, Art. VIII, XXIII & XXIX, pp. 523, 524, 543 & 549.

III. Through the Church's Influence in the Field of Politics

There is also a third sphere in which the Church, rightly or wrongly, has had an impact on the State, and that is through its influence in the field of politics. Much controversy has been waged about this point. Is the Church to have any influence in this respect or not? If so, to what extent?

Our answer must be dependent upon Holy Scripture. And the first principle that we here must hold to is that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and so the final and obligatory truth in everything on which it speaks. This also includes its pronouncements in the field of politics. In proof of this we read in II Timothy: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness".¹¹¹ And again we read: "The Scripture cannot be broken",¹¹² and: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth".¹¹³ Luther mightily defended this thesis, as we read:

So wenig nun des Neuen Testaments Grund und Beweisung

111. II Timothy 3: 16.

112. John 10: 35.

113. John 17: 17; cf. John 5: 39; 16: 13; Matthew 4: 4-10; 26: 54; Luke 24: 25-27.

zu verachten ist, so theuer ist auch das Alte Testament zu achten....Denn dies ist die Schrift, die alle Weisen und Klugen zu Narren macht, und allein den Kleinen und Albernern offen steht, wie Christus sagt Matth. 11, 25. Darum lass deinen Duenkel und Fuehlen fahren, und halte von dieser Schrift, als von dem allerhoechsten, edelsten Heiligthum, als von der allerreichsten Fundgrube, die nimmer genug ausgegruendet werden mag, auf dass du die goettliche Weisheit finden moegest, welche Gott hier so alber und schlecht vorlegt, dass er allen Hochmuth daempfe.

Meine Rede sind nicht meine Rede, sondern wer mich hoeret, der hoeret Gott, wer mich verachtet, der verachtet Gott [Luc. 10, 16].

Damit ich auch denen will geantwortet haben, die mir Schuld geben, ich verwerfe alle heilige Lehrer der Kirche. Ich verwerfe sie nicht; aber dieweil jedermann wohl weiss, dass sie zuweilen geirret haben, als Menschen, will ich ihnen nicht weiter Glauben geben, denn sofern sie mir Beweisung ihres Verstands aus der Schrift thun, die noch nie geirret hat....Desselbengleichen schreibt St. Augustin zu St. Hieronymo: Ich habe erlernen, allein denen Buechern, die die heilige Schrift heissen, die Ehre zu thun, dass ich festiglich glaube, keiner derselben Beschreiber habe je geirret; alle andere aber lese ich dermassen dass ich's nicht fuer wahr halte, was sie sagen, sie beweisen mir's denn mit der heiligen Schrift oder oeffentlicher Vernunft.¹¹⁴

The Lutheran Church therefore also confesses in the Formula of Concord:

First, (then, we receive and embrace with our whole heart) the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures of the old and New Testaments as the pure, clear fountain of Israel, which is the only true standard by which all teachers and doctrines are to be judged...The Word of God alone should be and remain the only standard and rule of doctrine, to which the writings of no man should be regarded as equal, but to which everything should be subjected.¹¹⁵

114. Luther, op. cit., XIV, pp. 2ff; III, pp. 21, 1890; XV, p. 1481.

115. "Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Comprehensive Summary", 3, 9, in Bente-Dau, op. cit., pp. 851. 855.

Dr. Mueller writes in his Christian Dogmatics:

Inspiration extends not merely to a part of Scripture, for example, to its important doctrines, or such matters as before were unknown to the holy writers, but the entire Bible (plenary inspiration). This fact is proved by the passage "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God", 2 Tim. 3,16. From this statement we derive the axiom: "Whatever is a part of Holy Scripture is given by divine inspiration". Hence the inspiration includes the whole of Scripture, no matter whether it was specially revealed to the holy writers or whether they knew it before or whether it was ascertained through study and research. For this reason the historical, geographical, archeological, and scientific matters contained in Scripture are as truly inspired as are its foremost doctrines.... Hence, as St. Paul professed: "I believe all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets", Act 24, 14, so also every believing Christian must regard Holy Scripture in its entirety as divinely inspired and therefore absolutely infallible".¹¹⁶

Furthermore we must hold to the principle that it is the Church's duty to proclaim the whole counsel of God. Where Scripture therefore speaks of matters that deal with politics, it is to proclaim this as well as any other, for all of God's Word is needed by man. In proof of this we read in Holy Writ:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.¹¹⁷ Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.¹¹⁸ When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.¹¹⁹ Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in

116. Mueller, op. cit., pp.104.105; cf. Engelder et al., op. cit., pp. 26f.

117. Matthew 28: 20.

118. I Timothy 4: 16.

119. Ezekiel 3: 18.

in the book of the law to do them.¹²⁰ This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.¹²¹

In agreement with this Luther also says:

Denn ich selbst bin um deswillen meinen Buechern feind, und wuensche oft, dass sie moechten untergehen, darum dass ich mich besorge, sie moechten den Leser hindern und abhalten, dass er die Schrift selbst nicht lese, die allein der Brunn und Ausprung ist aller Weisheit....Denn die soll allein Richter in und Meister in bleiben unter allen Buechern. Weil es aber Gott redet, so gebuehrt die nicht, sein Wort aus Frevel zu lenken, wo du hin willst.¹²²

Thus our confessions also say:

In this way the distinction between the Holy Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament and all other writings is preserved, and the Holy Scriptures alone remain the only Judge, rule, and standard, according to which, as the only test-stone, all dogmas shall and must be discerned and judged,¹²³ to whether they are good or evil, right or wrong.

Finally we must hold to the principle that the Church is not to go beyond Scripture. If the Bible speaks on political matters, the Church is to proclaim this, but nothing more and nothing less. This is based on God's own Word:

120. Galatians 3: 10.

121. Titus 3: 8; cf. also Deuteronomy 4: 2; Joshua 1:7. 23: 6; Psalm 19: 7,8; Matthew 4: 4; 5: 17-19; 24:14; Mark 7: 6-13; Luke 16: 17; John 5: 39; 8: 31, 32; Acts 20: 26, 27; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Galatians 1: 8; 6: 16; Ephesians 2: 20; Philippians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3: 15-17; 4:2; Titus 1: 9; Hebrews 1: 1,2; 2 Peter 1: 19-21.

122. Luther, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 1289ff.; III, p. 21.

123. "Formula of Concord, Epitome", 7, Bente-Dau, *op. cit.*, p. 779; cf. also "Large Catechism", 101, *ibid.*, p. 609; Engelder *et al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 23, 24.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.¹²⁴ Every Word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. Add thou not unto His Words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.¹²⁵ Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of man, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.¹²⁶

Luther writes in accord with this:

Man soll in der christlichen Lehre nichts behaupten, was die heilige Schrift nicht hat! Die Schrift gebietet dieses auch sehr oft. Denn alle Artikel der Christen muessen der Art sein, dass sie nicht nur ihnen selbst ganz gewiss sind, sondern auch gegen andere mit so offenbaren und hellen Schriftstellen bekraeftigt, dass sie allen das Maul stopfen koennen, dass sie nichts dawider zu reden vermoegen.¹²⁷

In agreement with Scripture the Lutheran Church teaches therefore that it is to proclaim the whole truth of the Word of God, but not go beyond this in the field of politics or elsewhere, as set forth in the first part of this thesis and as described in detail in the 28th Article of the Augsburg Confession.¹²⁸ and elsewhere in our confessions.¹²⁹

124. Matthew 28: 20.

125. Proverbs 30: 5, 6.

126. Colossians 2: 8; cf. also Deuteronomy 12: 32; Jeremiah 23: 16; Matthew 15: 9; 23: 10; John 17: 20; Romans 16: 17; Ephesians 2: 20; 1 Corinthians 3: 10-14; 1 Timothy 1: 3; 6; 4; 1 Peter 1: 10-12; 4: 11; 2 John: 8-11; Revelation 22: 18, 19.

127. Luther, op. cit., Vol. XIX, p. 592 and Vol. XVIII, p. 1747.

128. Cf. Bente-Dau, op. cit., pp. 83ff.

129. Cf. "Preface to the Christian Book of Concord", ibid. pp. 21-23; "Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration" XII, 40, ibid., p. 1103; also Engelder et al., op. cit., pp. 13, 15.

It is particularly on this point, however, that we find Calvinistic theology deviating widely from Lutheran theology and the Holy Scriptures. As we showed in the early part of this thesis, Calvinism goes beyond Scripture in mixing Church and State. As we also saw before, its undue emphasis on the sovereignty of God contributed especially to this.

This emphasis combined with their doctrine of absolute predestination (cf. previous) has naturally lead to finding little use for the means of grace. This in turn opened the way for the teaching that Scripture is to be interpreted in the light of human reason.

In looking at the divergence of the Reformed teachings from those of the Lutheran Church, we find that rationalism is a striking feature of the Reformed churches. While proclaiming the Bible to be God's Word and the sole authority in religion, they more or less outspokenly hold that the Bible is not the only source of our religious doctrines, but that reason must be granted a voice when questions of religion are being decided. In the Catechism of Geneva, written by Calvin, we read: "Can you prove by means of your reason that nothing strange is contained in this article? Yes, if it is granted that the Lord did not institute anything which is out of harmony with our reason". Niemeyer, p.163. ¹³⁰

Since there is little need in Calvinistic theology for preaching the Word for the propagation of faith, and reason is allowed free reign, and since the natural religion of the human heart is salvation by works, this has naturally

130. Ibid., pp. 210f.

led to legalism.

We criticize, besides, the manifestation of a legalistic spirit in the Reformed confessions when the marks of the Church are discussed. In the Belgian Confession we read: "The marks by which the true Church is distinguished from the false are the following: The pure preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the Sacraments according to the institution of Christ, and the exercise of Church discipline for the punishment of vices". Niemeyer, p. 380. It will be seen that this gives undue importance to a human factor, church discipline, which on account of our frailty is always imperfect.¹³¹

The Office of the Keys belongs not to the Church, but to the clergy in Calvinistic theology.¹³² Government officials are in all matters to be completely subject to the Church like other children of God. Calvin says: "A pious magistrate will not wish to exempt himself from the common subjection of the children of God, which in no small degree consists in submitting to the Church, when it judges by the word of God: so very far is it from being his duty to abolish such a judicature".¹³³ This then would make the State subservient to the Church, or more specifically to the clergy, all contrary to the clear Word of Christ Himself:

The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.¹³⁴

131. Ibid., p. 221.

132. Cf. previous; also Engelder et al., op. cit., pp. 221f.

133. Calvin, op. cit., IV, XI, IV p. 230.

134. Luke 22: 25, 26.

Calvinism then proceeds, contrary to Scripture, to place the Church in defense of and identifies it with a particular form of civilization and government, that through these it might then advance the "Kingdom of God" on earth, building a new order, a Christian civilization, a consolidation of Church, community and State into one corpus Christianum.¹³⁵ How consistently they incorporate this in the program of the Church will be seen from a brief glance at some of the Calvinistic theological and confessional writings. Calvin cared little for monarchy or democracy, but favored an aristocracy, as we saw before. Beza favored a republican form of government.¹³⁶ In Scotland and Holland Calvinism brought about limited monarchies and aristocracies.¹³⁷ Calvin also clearly taught that it was clearly the business of the government to preserve and enforce the doctrine of the Church. On this point we read in his Institutes:

But this civil government is designed, as long as we live in this world, to cherish and support the external worship of God, to preserve the pure doctrine of religion, to defend the constitution of the Church, to regulate our lives in a manner requisite for the society of men, to form our manners to civil justice, to promote our concord with each other, and to establish general peace

135. Cf. T.A. Kantonen, The Message of the Church to the World of Today, passim; and O. Frederick Nolde, Christian World Action, passim.

136. Cf. digest of Beza's "On the Power of Magistrates over their Subjects" in Hyma, op. cit., p. 162.

137. Cf. ibid, pp. 153, 154.

and tranquillity.¹³⁸

We find the same thing in the 39 articles of the Church of England:

Being by God's Ordinance, according to Our just Title, Defender of the Faith, and supreme Governour of the Church, within these Our Dominions, We hold it most agreeable to this Our Kingly Office, and Our own religious Zeal to conserve and maintain the Church committed to Our Charge, in the Unity of true Religion, and in the Bond of Peace; and not to suffer unnecessary Disputations, altercations, or Questions to be raised, which may nourish Faction both in the Church and Commonwealth. We have therefore, upon mature Deliberation, and with the Advice of so many of Our Bishops as might conveniently be called together, thought fit to make this Declaration following: That the Articles of the Church of England....do contain the true Doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's Word, which We do therefore ratify and confirm, requiring all Our loving Subjects to continue in the uniform Profession thereof, and prohibiting the least difference from the said Articles...The Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England now established; from which We will not endure any varying or departing in the least Degree...the Offenders, shall be liable to our displeasure, and the Church's censure in Our Commission Ecclesiastical, as well as any other: And we will see there shall be due Execution upon them....The Queenes Maiestie hath the cheefe power in this Realme of Englande, and other her dominions, onto whom the cheefe gouernment of all estates of this Realme, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Ciuile, in all causes doth appartaine, and is not, nor ought to be subject to any forraigne iurisdiction.. But that only prerogatiue whiche we see to haue ben geuen alwayes to all godly Princes in holy Scriptures by God him selfe, that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiasticall or Temporall, and restraine with the ciuill sworde the stubberne and

138. Calvin, op. cit., IV, XX, IV, p.519.

euyll doers.¹³⁹

We read likewise in the First Scotch Confession:

Maiover, to Kings, Princes, Rulers and Magistrates, wee affirme that chieflie and most principallie the conservation and purgation of the Religioun apperteinis; so that not onlie they are appointed for Civill pblieie, bot also for maintenance of the trew Religioun, and for the suppressing of Idolatrie and Superstitioun whatsoever.¹⁴⁰

So also in the Second Scotch Confession:

And because we perceave that the quyetness and stabilitie of our Religion and Kirk doth depend upon the safety and good behaviour of the Kingis Majestie, as upon ane comfortable instrument, of Godis mercie granted to this countrey, for the mainteining of his Kirk and ministration of justice amongst us; We protest and promeis solemnetlie with our heartis, under the same aith, hand-wreit, and paines, that we sall defend his persone and authoritie with our geare, bodies, and lyves, in the defence of Christis Evangell, libertie of our countrey, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquities, againis all enemies, within this realme or without.¹⁴¹

So also in the Belgic Confession:

And their office is, not only to have regard unto and watch for the welfare of the civil state, but also that they protect the sacred ministry, and thus may remove and prevent all idolatry and false worship; that the kingdom of antichrist may be thus destroyed, and the kingdom of Christ promoted.¹⁴²

139. "The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, 1571, Preface & Royal Declaration & XXXVII", in Schaff, op. cit., pp. 486f., 512f.

140. "The Scotch Confession of Faith", 1560 in ibid., pp. 475f.

141. "The Second Scotch Confession, or the National Covenant", 1580, in ibid., p. 485.

142. "The Belgic Confession", revised 1619, Art. XXXVI, in ibid., p. 432.

The same we also find in the Second Hevetic Confession:

he shall...advance the preaching of the truth, and the pure and sincere faith, and shall root out lies and all superstition, with all impiety and idolatry, and shall defend the Church of God. For indeed we teach that the care of religion does chiefly appertain to the holy magistrate. Let him, therefore, hold the Word of God in his hands, and look that nothing be taught contrary thereunto....Let him suppress stubborn heretics (who are heretics indeed), who cease not to blaspheme the majesty of God, and to trouble the Church, yea, and finally to destroy it.¹⁴³

Calvin furthermore expected the government to enforce both Tables of the Mosaic Moral Law: "If the Scripture did not teach that this office extends to both tables of the law, we might learn it from heathen writers....For some deny that a state is well constituted, which neglects the polity of Moses, and is governed by the common law of nations. The dangerous and seditious nature of this opinion I leave to the examination of others; it will be sufficient for me to have evinced it to be false and foolish".¹⁴⁴ According to Calvin the State is to be Christian in character: "For when David exhorts kings and judges to kiss the Son of God, he does not command them to abdicate their authority and retire to private life, but to submit to Christ the power with which they are invested, that he alone may have the pre-eminence over all".¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³. "The Second Helvetic Confession", 1566, Chap. XXX, in *ibid.*, p. 907.

¹⁴⁴. Calvin, *op. cit.*, IV, XX, IX & XIV, pp. 525, 533.

¹⁴⁵. *Ibid.*, IV, XX, V, pp. 520f.

How this resulted in Calvin's giving his assent to the putting to death of the "heretic" Servetus by the Swiss government as he was travelling through the country is well known.

Of the practice of these doctrines in our early New England Colonies we read:

To all intents and purposes Congregationalism now became a state religion, and the religious intolerance which these people had denounced in England they now practised themselves. Up till 1664 and 1665, in some colonies, only members of Congregational churches could vote, and until after A.D. 1800 there were places where the salaries of pastors were raised by public taxes. If anything touched the general religious life of the community, the civil authorities took the matter in hand.¹⁴⁶

Since such teaching and practice naturally makes for an anthropocentric instead of theo-centric theology, mundane rather than spiritual, it is not surprising that this has resulted in Calvinistic circles in a following of the modern trends of secularism and scientific naturalism in both Church and State.¹⁴⁷

It is therefore of utmost importance to emphasize anew that the Church must be the Church, that it must be God and specifically Christ-centered, that it must have the proper ends in mind as shown in Holy Writ, and must use the proper

146. Engelder et. al., op. cit., p. 251.

147. Cf. Kantonen, op. cit., passim; Nolde, op. cit., passim.

means to these ends. It must not identify itself with any particular civilization or State or form of government, for civilizations come and go, and kingdoms rise and fall, but the Church goes on. On both civilization and State it will and must have an effect, but not through any human philosophy, but solely and alone through the means which God has given it, the Word of God. Let it seek its true unity in being one in God and Christ and His doctrine without distinction of class, nationality or race. Let it seek its true holiness, not by laws, but through the grace of God in Christ alone. Let it seek its true catholicity in a spiritual priesthood overriding all bounds of nations, class and race. Let it seek its true apostolic character in steadfast witness-bearing to the truth, the Word of God.¹⁴⁸

Thus does Dr. Mueller show the true Lutheran position when he says:

With regard to the existing forms of government (absolute monarchies; limited monarchies; republics; Zwingli favored the republic; Calvin the oligarchy) the Augsburg Confession (Art XVI) rightly affirms: "The Gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart. Meanwhile it does not destroy the State or the family, but very much requires that they be preserved as ordinances of God and that charity be practised in such ordinances. Therefore Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin; for then they ought to obey God rather than men, Acts 5, 29".

¹⁴⁸. Cf. Kantonen, op. cit., passim; Reu-Buehring, op. cit., pp. 340f.

The Augsburg Confession does not favor any particular form of government, but teaches that Christians must acknowledge, and be subject to, all "powers that be", Rom. 13, 1-7; Matt. ~~22~~¹⁴⁹ 21; 1 Pet. 2, 13. 17; 1 Tim. 2, 1-3; Jer. 29, 7.

So the Church must here also, in the field of politics, speak insofar as the Bible brings a message on the subject. The Church is to act as the mouthpiece of God.

Holy Scripture teaches first of all that the State is not absolutely sovereign, but that, even as its individual members, human beings, are creatures of God and subject to Him and responsible to Him, so also the State.

Even though the particular form of government is human, the idea and principle of government is divine. God does not prescribe to the State the number of persons in or particular type of government it is to have. However, God does definitely show what the essence and nature of the State is to be. The State did not originate of itself in a process of evolution. It was ordained by God Himself, receives its powers and rights from God Himself, to be exercised in the manner and for purposes determined by God.

That it has its origin, its powers and rights from God is already implied by the words of Jesus: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's",¹⁵⁰ And we are further told: "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are

149. Mueller, op. cit., pp. 552f.

150. Matthew 22: 21.

ordained of God".¹⁵¹ So we also read in 1 Peter: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; Whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of them that do well".¹⁵² Again God says: "By Me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth."¹⁵³

Luther therefore also writes:

In the first place, we must firmly establish the temporal power and sword, so that no one will doubt that it is in the world through God's will and ordinance. The texts which lay the foundation of this power and sword are these: Romans XIII and 1 Peter 2....This temporal sword has been in operation from the beginning of the world, for when Cain had slain his brother Abel, he feared that some one might kill him, and so God issued a commandment and for his sake He lifted the sword, in order that no one should be permitted to kill him. He would not have had this fear, had he not learned from Adam that one should kill the murderers. Therefore God expressly confirmed the power of the temporal sword after the flood, as Genesis IX says, 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed'....On the other hand, Christ says, Matthew V, 'Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil'. And Paul says in Romans XII, 'Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but rather give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will recompense, saith the Lord'. These and other texts seem to imply that the Christians in the New Testament do not have a temporal sword.¹⁵⁴

151. Romans 13: 1.

152. 1 Peter 2: 13f.

153. Proverbs 8: 15f., cf. also 1 Samuel 9: 16, 17; 10: 1; 16: 1, 12, 13; 24: 6; 2 Samuel 2: 5.

154. Luther, "Of Temporal Power", in Hyma, op. cit., pp.99f.;

God has furthermore commanded that the State and its government is to act as the representative of God in certain temporal matters. This follows from the above. Holy Scripture further tells us: "he is the minister of God", and "they are God's ministers"¹⁵⁵ and "that are sent by Him."¹⁵⁶

The State and its government are therefore also responsible to God for their actions. They must give answer to Him. This is implied in the words: "We ought to obey God rather than men".¹⁵⁷ Again we are told: "The kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the governor among nations".¹⁵⁸ Again we read:

O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.¹⁵⁹

The Bible furthermore shows that the State through its government is to be the agent of God for the administration of justice.

In doing so it is to punish evil and protect the rights of individuals. The Bible clearly declares this when it says:

cf. also Reu-Buehring, op. cit., pp. 323f.

- 155. Romans 13: 4, 6.
- 156. 1 Peter 2: 14.
- 157. Acts 5: 29.
- 158. Proverbs 22: 28.
- 159. Daniel 4: 31f.; cf. also 1 Kings 13: 1-10; Hosea 5: 11; 1 Samuel 15: 17, 23; Isaiah 28: 14ff.

"Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.... Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good...he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil".¹⁶⁰ And again: "Submit yourselves to... king...or...governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" (1 Peter 2: 13f.).

The State is to do this on the basis of right reason and natural law. With this God has endowed all men: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves: which show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another".¹⁶¹

However, the natural knowledge of right and wrong has to an extent been obscured in the heart of man due to his sinful nature and life of sin. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened".¹⁶² However, God has also given this moral code in the Bible, by which they may and should test and

160. Romans 13: 3f.

161. Romans 2: 14f.

162. Romans 1: 21.

ratify their decisions made on the basis of right reason and natural law. This may be inferred from the command of God: "We ought to obey God rather than men".¹⁶³ We further read: "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy".¹⁶⁴ If the State is to punish evil it must know what evil is. This the Bible tells it: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law".¹⁶⁵

Since, however, government is human, i.e. it is composed of human beings, it is naturally limited by the natural limits of human powers and abilities.

We therefore conclude that government is not to punish sins against the First Table of the Law of God. These commandments deal with a personal relationship between individuals and God and so do not properly fall under the jurisdiction of human government. Religion is primarily a matter of the heart and "Thou (God) even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men".¹⁶⁶ God is furthermore not in need of governmental protection. The State is, however, to protect the rights of all to live in proper relationship to God and to practice their religion according to the command of God. Sins against the First Table are therefore to be punished by the

163. Acts 5: 29.

164. James 4: 12.

165. 1 John 3: 4.

166. 1 Kings 8: 39.

government only insofar as they provide obvious hurt to other men. This would, however, include such things as blasphemy and atheism, since belief in and respect for God is the very basis of morality and oaths, indeed of government itself!

Here Calvinism would not agree with us. Calvin demands that the government punish sins against all the Mosaic moral law, the First Table as well as the Second. He says:

Civil government is designed, as long as we live in this world, to cherish and support the external worship of God, to preserve the pure doctrine of religion; to defend the constitution of the Church, to regulate our lives in a manner requisite for the society of men, to form our manners requisite to civil justice, to promote our concord with each other, and to establish general peace and tranquillity.¹⁶⁷ Its (government's) objects also are, that idolatry, sacrileges against the name of God, blasphemies against his truth, and other offenses against religion, may not openly appear and be disseminated among the people; that the public tranquillity may not be disturbed; that every person may enjoy his property without molestation; that men may transact their business together without fraud or injustice; that integrity and modesty may be cultivated between them: in short, that there may be a public form of religion among christians, and that humanity may be maintained among men....I approve of civil government, which provides that the true religion which is contained in the law of God, be not violated, and polluted by public blasphemies, with impunity.¹⁶⁸ If the Scripture did not teach that this office extends to both tables of the law, we might learn it from the heathen writers....These things evince the folly of those who would wish magistrates to neglect all thoughts of God, and to confine themselves entirely to the administration of justice among men: as though

167. Calvin, *op. cit.*, IV, XX, II, p. 517.

168. *Ibid.*, IV, XX, III, pp. 518f.

God appointed governors in his name to decide secular controversies, and disregarded that which is of far greater importance, the pure worship of himself according to the rule of his law.¹⁶⁹

Luther, on the other hand says:

When your prince or temporal lord commands you to believe as the Pope does, and orders you to remove this or that book that you have been reading, you should say to him, 'Lucifer has no right to sit next to God. Dear lord, I owe you obedience in all civil matters, and my body and property are subject to your laws and regulations. Whatever you command me to do under this authority of yours, I will do it. But when you command me to believe this or that, or to put away certain books, I will not obey you. For in this respect you are a tyrant, and you reach too highly, and you command things that are beyond your reach'. If he should take your property because of your disobedience, and punishes you for it, thank and bless God that you have been worthy to suffer for God's Word. Let him carry on as he likes, for he will find his judge eventually. For I say unto you that if you do not resist him and let him have his way, so that he takes away your faith or the books, you have truly denied God....But it might be asked what will become of the heretics, if the temporal power has no right to punish them? This is the work of the bishops, for heresy cannot be checked with temporal force. That requires an entirely different course of action from the use of the sword. God's Word shall fight here. Heresy is a spiritual thing, and that cannot be cut off with iron, nor burned up with fire, nor drowned with water. As Paul says in II Cor. X, 'For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.'¹⁷⁰

Thus we also read in the "Preface to the Christian Book of Concord":

169. *Ibid.*, IV, XX, IX, pp. 526f.

170. Luther, "Of Temporal Power", Hyma, *op. cit.*, pp.107,108.

Wherefore, by this writing of ours, we testify in the sight of Almighty God and before the entire Church that it has never been our purpose, by means of this godly formula for union to create trouble or danger to the godly who today are suffering persecution. For, as we have already entered into the fellowship of grief with them, moved by Christian love, so we are shocked at the persecution and most grievous tyranny which with such severity is exercised against these poor men, and sincerely detest it.¹⁷¹

The government is also further limited by human frailty to punish only evil in word and deed and not in thought and desire, for it cannot look into the hearts of men, "for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart".¹⁷²

Within these, its natural limits, government is to protect the rights of individuals and to punish those who transgress against these rights. These rights naturally flow from the commands of God's Law. We may include among these liberty of religious belief and practice, sanctity of marriage and the family, respect of proper authority (including recognition of the divine institutions of Church, State and Family), the right to an education, life, property, free enterprise, and a good name. It is of course understood that these rights are to be protected only insofar as in their exercise there be no invasion into the equal rights of others. That government is thus to protect the rights of individuals

171. Bente-Dau, *op. cit.*, p.21; of also "Augsburg Confession", Art. XXVIII, *ibid.*, pp. 83ff.

172. 1 Samuel 16: 7.

is included in the words: "are sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well"¹⁷³ and "Do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good".¹⁷⁴ There are also many passages in the Bible where rulers are commanded especially to protect the weak, poor, widows, orphans, etc., and in general all against evildoers. It exists for the welfare of its subjects, not they for it.¹⁷⁵

The government is thus to dispense equal justice to all. And in this it is responsible to God. Thus Luther writes:

On you first, princes and lords, devolves the responsibility for these tumults and seditions; on you especially, blind bishops, stupid priests, and monks; you who persist in playing the fool and fighting against the holy Gospel, you know perfectly well that it is right and that you cannot withstand it. You continue to live in splendor and pride, until the poor people can no longer endure it. A terrible catastrophe seems indicated by the ominous signs that have appeared both in heaven and upon the earth, and thorough-going change in Germany. The sword is at your throat, and still you feel secure in your seats. However, this vanity will surely break your necks. I have warned you before that you should heed the statement in Psalm CIV (CVII), 'He poureth contempt upon princes'. It is not so much the peasants that are rising against you as God Himself.¹⁷⁶

There are many instances in Holy Scripture where God has held

173. 1 Peter 2: 14.

174. Romans 13: 3f.

175. Cf. Reu-Buehring, *op. cit.*, pp. 323f.; also Luther, "Address to the Christian Nobility" and "Of Temporal Power" in Hymn, *op. cit.*, pp. 97, 108-110.

176. "Exhortation to Peace", *ibid.*, p. 112.

rulers responsible for unjust government. God says, for instance: "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks, for he saith...I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: and my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth".¹⁷⁷ Again Scripture says: "And said to the judges: Take heed what ye do for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed to do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts".¹⁷⁸ And again: "The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of His people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your house".¹⁷⁹

It is also to praise those that do well. The just and law-abiding it is to honor and reward. This may also very well include opportunity through the agency of government to do such things as are a keeping of the moral code in a collective manner, such as the furthering of education, the maintenance

177. Isaiah 10: 12ff.

178. 2 Chronicles 19: 6f.

179. Isaiah 3: 14; cf also Isaiah 10: 1-19; 1: 22ff.; 5: 23; 45; 47; Amos (especially 9: 8); Deuteronomy 1: 15-17; 16: 18-20; Exodus 23; 2, 6-9; Leviticus 19: 15; Proverbs 17: 15; 24: 23-25; Ecclesiastes 7: 7; Micah 3.

of eleemosynary institutions, the carrying on of charitable enterprises and welfare work, etc. Care should be taken, however, that this does not limit or hinder the individual in his rights to exercise his moral rights and duties personally. He may share in these various enterprises through the taxes he pays, but he must realize that part of his money is going for this purpose and take a lively personal interest in these endeavors. This must also not be done in such a manner as to hinder Churches and groups of individuals in work of this kind.

Not only does Scripture speak of the proper relationship between the State and God, and the State and its subjects, but also between the State and other States.

All too frequently during the course of history has the normal relationship between States been a state of war. This has all too frequently been justified in the eyes of men by the false reasoning that war is a means by which the victor is shown to be right by God. This heathenish philosophy has been espoused by many a Christian. It is, however, not born out factually in history; but the very opposite is often shown to be true. It is furthermore without support in God's Word, in fact contrary to it. Governments are there for the protection and preservation of human life, the sanctity of which God shows throughout Scripture, and not for the destruction of it. Such a relationship is against the very essence of the

State, for it is not a State of government by law but of international anarchy.

War is therefore a costly perversion of the moral order, resulting in untold destruction of morality, life and property and causing untold suffering, whereas its benefits can be described as only negative.

Yet even though war is highly undesirable and a warless world would be the ideal, yet we must realize that due to the perverseness of human nature, the inherent selfishness of the heart, that this ideal is not attainable this side of heaven. Jesus said: "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:...Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake... and then shall the end come".¹⁸⁰

But even though we may expect wars till the end of time, yet Christians will do all in their power to prevent war wherever possible and, where they do not succeed in this, to minimize its dire effects as much as possible. They will seek to have their governments work to this end.

It must be admitted, however, that there are necessary

180. Matthew 24; 6-14.

and just wars. If all efforts of a government have been to no avail, so that vital issues with a foreign power are not settled in a peaceable manner, and such a foreign nation attacks, so that the very life of the State is in jeopardy, there may be no alternative but to engage in war. Such a war may be looked upon as a just war, truly one in defense pro aris et focis. For the government is to be "a minister of God" "that beareth not the sword in vain", but is "a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" and is there "for the praise of them that do well".¹⁸¹ It is therefore the duty of government to punish the evildoer, no matter whether he be a criminal within the State or an aggressor or invader from without.¹⁸²

In such a case it is clearly not only the right but also the duty of the Christian citizen to bear arms and give military service to the State. As we saw previously a soldier can be a good Christian.¹⁸³

Luther writes in this connection:

Now you might ask next whether a Christian may bear and use the sword. He would not need to do that among Christians, but in case he sees that there is a dearth of henchmen, judges, lords, or princes, you will be obliged to offer your services in order that the authority of the government be properly respected and maintained... You ask why then did not Christ make use of the sword? I answer by

181. Romans 13: 4; 1 Peter 2: 4.

182. Cf. Matthew 26: 52; Genesis 9: 6.

183. Cf. also Luke 3: 14; Matthew 8: 5ff; Acts 10.

asking why did He not take a wife, or why did He not become a shoemaker or a tailor? Is a vocation to be condemned just because Christ did not happen to have followed it? From all this follows that the words in Matthew V, 'Resist not evil', must be interpreted to mean that a Christian is obliged to suffer all evil and injustice, seek no revenge for himself, refrain from going to court with a lawsuit, and do without every form of temporal power and law. But for others he may and must seek revenge, right, protection and aid, and in this direction do all he can.¹⁸⁴

He also treated this matter at length with substantially the same conclusions in his treatise, "Whether a Soldier can be a Good Christian".¹⁸⁵

Thus the Lutheran Church also confesses in the Augsburg Confession: "It is right for Christians to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers".¹⁸⁶

As long as there are different nations and peoples, we will have war. We must remember, however, that the division of the human race into nations and peoples was quite within the purpose of God. "The Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people".¹⁸⁷ God also brought this about through the confusion of tongues.¹⁸⁸ The child of God

184. Luther, "Of Temporal Power", Hyma, *op. cit.*, pp. 103, 104.

185. Cf. also Luther, *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, pp. 467ff.

186. Art. XVI, 1, Bente-Dau, *op. cit.*, p. 51; cf. also Art. XXI, 1; Art. XXVIII, 11; "Apology of the Augsburg Confession", XVI; "Large Catechism", I, 181; "Formula of Concord, Epitome", XII, 16, 18 and "Thorough Declaration", XII, 21, *ibid.*, pp. 57, 85, 329-333, 631, 841, 1099; and Engelder *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 119; also Reu-Buehring, *op. cit.*, pp. 335-341.

187. Deuteronomy 32: 8.

188. Cf. Genesis 11.

furthermore sees in the rise and fall of nations evidence of divine providence and government. "For the kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the governor among the nations".¹⁸⁹ "He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: He enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again".

However, such a division of humanity into nations by God and its consequent results would not have taken place if it had not been for the sin of man. God, therefore, wants peaceful relations to exist between nations. He "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation".¹⁹⁰ As we saw before, He "divided to the nations their inheritance" and "He set the bounds of the people". Brute imperialism is therefore condemned.

It is most necessary for States therefore also to recognize God in their international relationships.¹⁹¹ Since States are to be institutions of justice, they should also be governed by justice and right in their relations with each other. We find many instances in the Old Testament, especially in the Prophets, where God punished nations because they transgressed against His will in this respect.¹⁹²

189. Psalm 22: 28.

190. Acts 17: 26.

191. Cf. Psalm 22: 23.

192. Cf. Dierks, op. cit., passim.

Efforts are being made today, more so than ever before, to improve international relationships, especially by setting up a supernational government. Calvinistic Church bodies are expending considerable effort toward this end, but true to form, mixing Church and State, advocating a definite form of government, seeking to establish a corpus Christianum on an international scale, as though by such legalistic measures the Kingdom of God might be established on earth.¹⁹³

The world, however, being the creation of God, should glorify Him.¹⁹⁴ This is especially true of man, the crown of God's creation.¹⁹⁵ A supernational government capable of effectively regulating international relations, at least in approximation of the will of God, would therefore no doubt be God-pleasing. It is, however, not within the province of the Church to say what the specific form of such a government should be, only that it is to conform to the will of God like any other government. And it is certainly the duty of every Christian as a citizen to work for such a God-pleasing world government out of love for God and his fellowmen and for the glory of God and the

193. We have discussed these points previously in various parts of this thesis. Cf. also Nolde, op. cit., passim. The Calvinistic idea of the Kingdom of God is also no doubt influenced to a great extent today by Millennialism, which many adhere to today.

194. Cf. Proverbs 16: 4; 104: 1ff.; Psalm 148; Romans 11:16.

195. Cf. Psalm 60: 7f.; 115: 16; Genesis 2: 7; 1: 28.

welfare of his fellow beings.

The practical aspects involved in the whole question of the impact of the Church on the State have not been fully discussed in this paper. They were not within the proper scope of this thesis. However, we would like to say in conclusion that the world is in need of the truth which by the grace of God the Lutheran Church is in possession of more than any other. This light we are not privileged to hide under a bushel. In keeping with our duty to proclaim the whole counsel of God, we must also let the impact of the Church be felt on the State as God would have it. Well-laid plans to bring this much-needed impact in ever more effective manner are always in order and certainly now more so than ever before.

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