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AN INTEGRATING THEOLOGY
OF PARISH ADMINISTRATION

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Practical Theology

Short title: THEOLOGY OF PARISH ADMINISTRATION

Bachelor of Divinity

by
Michael Keyne

June 1959

Approved by:

Harvey L. Lockett
Director

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in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
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CHAPTER I

OBJECTIVES

The Problem

From the period beginning with the latter part of World War II to the present, the churches in America have experienced a record breaking expansion. Coupled with this resurging vitality, has come a renewed interest in the practical aspects of church work. Psychological and sociological studies, emphasis by some on the "togetherness" aspect of human relations, advertising and propoganda "depth studies," have all stimulated church workers to re-evaluate their methods of parish administration.

As the social sciences codify the principles of mass behavior, those who are engaged in the parish ministry find themselves contending with antagonistic movements, or else competing with religious organizations, both of which use advanced methods of communication and organization. Such diversified religious organizations as Catholic Action, the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Billy Graham crusades, are making use of high powered administrative techniques which are proving quite effective.

Within the Lutheran Church there has been a corresponding interest in newly developed techniques. However, while the techniques have proved their worth, they have forced an evaluation, not only of the techniques themselves, but also of the

role of the Church and the ministry.

What is the role of the Church? Some feel that it should serve as a psychological haven. Others consider the role of the Church fulfilled when it serves as a social club. And still others consider the Church to be a separatistic fellowship. In order to find an authoritative definition of the role of the Church, it will be necessary to make an exegetical study of the New Testament concept of the Church, since only Scripture can provide an incontrovertible definition of the Church's role.

What is the pastor? Does he have any authority? If so, what is its scope? What is the difference between the service which the pastor renders as minister, and that which all Christians render as ministers? These are a few of the questions which must be answered if the role and function of the ministry is to be determined.

The Aims

The purpose of this thesis is to determine the task of the Church, the role of the ministry, and their interacting functions. The first step is to determine the nature and function of the Church. The conclusion is reached that the Church is the body of Christ. By means of the Holy Ghost's work, its task is to build itself in the faith and to expand its outreach. To carry out this dual task, the Church uses its God given implements, the gifts of the Spirit.

One of the gifts of the Spirit to the Church is the minis-

try. The term, "ministry," is a substantive way of describing the functional nature of the Church. In analyzing the Church's ministry, this thesis first determines the extent of this ministry, which is seen to be universal. The next step is to determine the various aspects of the New Testament ministry. It is concluded that Christians are to function according to the extent of their talents and abilities in the carrying out of their ministerial tasks.

The one ministerial office which emerges in clear-cut and definitive form is the office of the bishop-presbyter. The bishop-presbyter is the overseer of the congregation, the administrator and co-ordinator of the congregational ministry.

The Lutheran pastor has a variety of roles and tasks, all of which are included under the concept of "oversight." As overseer, he functions as the public administrator of the Word.

Finally, it is determined how the pastor functions as overseer. As overseer of the congregation, he strives to develop mature Christians. In order to carry out this task, he makes use of the administrative principles which will prove most conducive to the implementation of his function. He avoids duplication of effort by means of a structured parish program. By the use of such a program, he is assured that various necessary aspects of the congregational life will not be neglected. By this means also, the ministerial capacities of the congregation are assured implementation.

CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH

The Nature of the Church

A definition of the nature of the Church is a description of its essence, or being. Precedent to an understanding of the essential nature of the Church, is a Scripturally guided insight into God's purpose in the creation of man. For this is directly antecedent to the Biblical concept of "Church."

Throughout history, as recorded in Scripture, God's ultimate purpose in the creation of man as the crown of His work is evident, the drawing to Himself of a sanctified nation, a communion of those dedicated wholly to Himself.¹ Equally evident is the rebellious self-will of man, which rejects the yearning love of God, repudiates the Creator, and glorifies the creation.²

Repeatedly God re-established His covenant of communion with mankind. And repeatedly the autonomous will of man rejected and perverted God's overtures. Created in God's image and promised eternal communion, Adam preferred the essence of godhood and autonomy.³ Given the status of a nation set apart for God, given the law as a means of drawing them

¹Jeremiah 31:33

²Romans 8:7

³Genesis 3:5

into a closer communion with God, given the promise of a Messiah, the people of Israel rejected God's gifts and perverted their use into exclusive and self-willed channels, utterly foreign to God's merciful intent of drawing to Himself a holy community.⁴

When the promised Messiah did come, certainly it was not because Israel merited Him. It was after all other methods and means of establishing contact with mankind had failed. Repeatedly God had sent His messengers, the prophets; and repeatedly the faithless workers in the vineyard had spurned the message and killed the messengers. Finally, God, in His mercy, sent His beloved Son with the message of forgiveness and the promise of a new covenant. But, He, too, was repudiated and killed.⁵

Though utterly rejected, God yet extended His hand of mercy to mankind. Through God's gracious will, the rejection which resulted in the death of the Christ, resulted also in the establishment of a new covenant relationship between God and mankind. He Who fulfilled the law, brought the believer in Him beyond the power of this same accusing law.⁶

Here is God's last and final offer. He will bind men to him not by a law but by a person. He will reveal his love through the act of suffering. Surely if the law concealed God's love, the suffering of a chosen one will make it irresistibly and clairvoyantly apparent. Surely

⁴George Hunt, Rediscovering the Church (New York: Association Press, c.1956), pp. 19-33.

⁵Matthew 21:33-39

⁶Romans 8:1-3

the sight of another one bearing men's sins will lead men to obedience and faithfulness as nothing else could. With this act, real community--unbreakable, unshakable community--will be created.⁷

Accepting the divine atonement, the disciple of Christ is infused with the power of the Spirit, becomes a new creature who is justified by faith, not by works, is cleansed by the blood of Christ, not by the sweat of his own work-righteousness, or by the tears of his own self-pity.⁸

The Church is the fulfillment of God's divine plan, instituted at the creation of man, thwarted by man's self-will, brought to fruition by means of the atonement blood of Christ. The Church is the community of autonomous individuals, remade into the God-willed body of Christ.⁹

The Function of the Church

When Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus' commentary on Peter's confession of faith constitutes the sedes doctrina for the establishment of the Church: "Upon this rock I will build my Church."¹⁰ That is, the Church is built upon faith in Christ as the Son of God.¹¹

⁷Hunt, op. cit., p. 34.

⁸Romans 8:32

⁹Ephesians 1:19-23

¹⁰Matthew 16:13-18

¹¹Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1953), III, 413.

It becomes evident that the Church is not merely an organization. As the "body of Christ,"¹² the Church is a living, acting, functioning organism.

Inevitably connected with the personal Spirit-wrought faith in the remission of sins is, as its fruit and effect, the unio mystica, sanctification, "moral conduct," "the recasting of life in its God-pleasing form."¹³

The Church is always described in its relationship to God. Moreover, the Church acts for and through God, as an instrument to accomplish His divine purpose for mankind.

As Article II of the Formula of Concord points out, after conversion, after the Holy Spirit has transformed rebellious man, then "the new will of man is an instrument and organ of God the Holy Ghost, so that He not only accepts grace, but also cooperates with the Holy Ghost in the works which follow."¹⁴

The Church, the communion of those made holy through the atonement, becomes an instrument of God, the Holy Spirit. Luther, in his commentary on the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed, brings this out most vividly.

Thus, until the last day, the Holy Ghost abides with the holy congregation or Christendom, by means of which He fetches us to Christ and which He employs to teach and preach to us the Word, whereby He works and promotes

¹²1 Corinthians 12:12

¹³Pieper, op. cit., p. 398.

¹⁴"Formula of Concord," Concordia Triglot: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 791. Hereafter the Concordia Triglot will be referred to as CT.

sanctification, causing it daily to grow and become strong in the faith and its fruits which He produces.¹⁵

The Church, in its primary, functional aspect, is the willing instrument of the Holy Ghost. As the body of Christ, it subserves the will of Christ, its head. The faith of the Church expresses itself in Christian worship, witness, education, and service.¹⁶

The Christian community is inescapable. It is both the ultimate instrument of God's purpose and the immediate sphere for Christian action. Paul prayed that his far-flung constituency of readers should come to know the grandeur and significance of "God's inheritance in the Saints" (Eph. 1:18). It was only when they came "with all the Saints" that they could "have power to comprehend" the true dimension of the knowledge-surpassing "love of Christ" (3:18,19). For that community was really a "dwelling-place of God" in the Spirit (2:22). No wonder therefore that the chief sphere of the Christian's action should be with and for other Christians, members with him of the Body of Christ.¹⁷

The Implements of the Church

If it were possible, in this life, to remove the reality of sin, the Church would be in a state of complete sanctification. Thus, the will of the Church would be completely synonymous with the will of God. The communion of saints would be a full and perfect communion of God with His people. There would be no need of God's law, since the Church would be natu-

¹⁵CT, "The Large Catechism," p. 691.

¹⁶James 1:22

¹⁷J. A. Mackay, God's Order (New York: The MacMillan Co., c.1953), p. 117.

rally functioning within the context of the law.¹⁸ However, Christians are not perfectly renewed in this life, and retain within themselves the taint of sin.¹⁹ As a result, the temporal Church functions imperfectly. However, the fact that the Church functions at all, is a direct result of God's mercy. Left to itself, the Church would cease to exist. It would have no motive power and nothing to sustain it.²⁰

The sustaining mercy of God is manifested by the fact that He is a gracious God. That is, He is a giving God. Grace, the charis of the New Testament, is the concept which is embodied in the person of Christ. Speaking of Himself, Christ says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."²¹ So then, the greatest of all of the gifts which God has bestowed upon mankind is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. His work of atonement became the means of reconciling God with man. This is the one point which is basic to Christian theology, that God gave to man the means of reconciliation as a free gift, a gift which was completely undeserved.²²

¹⁸ CT, "The Large Catechism," p. 965.

¹⁹ Romans 7:18

²⁰ Romans 8:3

²¹ John 3:16

²² 1 Corinthians 2:2

God's gracious benefaction did not end with the giving of His most precious gift, His own Son. In addition to this primary saving gift, God gives many more, for the preservation and extension of His Church. Recognizing the inherent sinfulness of mankind, the ever emerging tendency toward autonomy, God has given His communion of saints special gifts which sustain, which draw men into a closer communion with Himself, which protect from the wiles of Satan.²³ St. Paul admonishes the Church, "Put on the whole armour of God."²⁴ This armour consists of the gifts which God has bestowed upon the Church. They are the implements of the Church in its God-willed action.

The one preserving gift, from which all other secondary gifts are derived, is the gift of the Holy Ghost. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."²⁵ Thus, God gives Himself, not only in the person of His Son, as the atonement, but also in the person of the Holy Ghost, as the preserver in the faith. Again and again this fact is brought out in Scripture, that the Holy Ghost works in Christians the power to believe, the strength to remain in the faith. Reliance on self leads to destruction. It is only as Christians look to the power of God working in them, that they are able to persevere in the faith.

²³1 Corinthians 12:7

²⁴Ephesians 5:11

²⁵Romans 5:5

It is only as they refer themselves to the new covenant of Christ that they gain the victory.²⁶

One of the gifts which God gives to His Church, through the Holy Ghost, is the written Word, the Scriptures. The King James Version, translates the Second Epistle to Timothy, chapter three, verse sixteen, in this way: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Literally, it translates, "All Scripture is God-breathed." Or, as St. Peter elaborates, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."²⁷ The Holy Ghost has given the written Word to His Church, and the Holy Ghost inspired the writing of Scripture. For this Word is "God-breathed." That is, God is the actor, the One Who has given the written Word, and the One Who has empowered its writing.²⁸

It is conceivable that God might have chosen not to give the Church His Word in written form. He might have relied upon oral tradition exclusively, or upon a direct conversion experience, without any tangible means. The fact that God did choose to present the Church with a tangible record of His will for mankind, constitutes a manifestation of His gracious mercy. For God has chosen to work through His written Word, making it a means of grace through which God reveals to man His good news of salvation. Thus, Scripture is an undeserved

²⁶1 John 5:4,5

²⁷2 Peter 1:21

²⁸2 Timothy 3:16

gift of God. This gift is a manifestation of God's overflowing mercy, which recognizes man's tendency to pervert the will of God, and forestalls this tendency by means of the written authority of Scripture; an authority which is unerring and infallible, the one perfect norm of truth for the world.²⁹

The two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are gifts of God to His Church, whereby the Holy Ghost draws Christians into a deeper spiritual communion.³⁰ A distinctive feature of the Sacraments is that visible, tangible elements are connected with their administration. Thus, through the water of regeneration, the Holy Ghost draws the convert into the communion of saints. Thus also, through the bread and wine, visible spiritual manifestations of Christ's body and blood, the Holy Ghost works reassurance of the forgiveness of sins won on the cross, and draws Christians into the communion of the body of Christ.³¹

The Sacraments are both spiritual and sensory means of grace. That is, the Holy Ghost uses these means to firmly implant, in the hearts of Christians, the conviction that the atonement brings the faithful into an undeserved communion

²⁹John 5:39

³⁰E. W. Pieplow, "The Means of Grace," The Abiding Word, edited by T. Laetsch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), II, 332,33.

³¹Regin Prenter, "Luther on Word and Sacrament," More about Luther (Decorah: Luther College Press, c.1958), passim.

as the body of Christ.³² The tangible elements in the Sacraments both personalize and vivify the promises of the Gospel. Through these means of grace, the Holy Ghost authenticates, to each individual believer, the gifts of forgiveness and life, and draws the Christian into the divine communion.³³

In addition to the catholic gifts of the Spirit, the Word and the Sacraments, the Holy Ghost gives specifically focalized gifts to individual Christians. In one passage, St. Paul speaks of the gifts of prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling, and showing mercy.³⁴ In another passage, he speaks of the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking with tongues, and interpretation of tongues.³⁵ These various gifts St. Paul calls the charismata. In contra-distinction to the one great gift of grace, or charis, these are the "little gifts."³⁶ Some of these gifts were only of a temporary nature, evidently for a specific purpose of limited duration, and others, such as the gift of the ministry, were of an enduring nature.³⁷

³²Pieper, op. cit., p. 264.

³³CT, "Apology of the Augsburg Confession," p. 313.

³⁴Romans 12:6-8

³⁵1 Corinthians 12:8-10

³⁶W. Barclay, A New Testament Wordbook (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), pp. 28, 29.

³⁷R. F. Weidner, The Doctrine of the Ministry (New York: F. H. Revell Co., 1907), p. 34.

Paul points out that the abundance of gifts reveals the riches of divine grace. For all of these gifts are from the same Spirit. The value of these gifts varied according to their usefulness in strengthening the communion of saints. These were always gifts which were in no way independent or self-sustaining. They were always intended to be used for the edification of the body of Christ.³⁸

All of the gifts which the Holy Ghost has bestowed upon the Church are to implement the central purpose of building up and maintaining the Church. While Scripture clearly delineates the gift of saving grace, the gifts of the sacraments, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, it is remarkable that the charisma are not clearly defined. The principle which guided the early Church in their use seems to have been that of utility. Those gifts which furthered the strengthening of the Church were encouraged. Those gifts which were perverted into a detrimental usage were discouraged.³⁹ Any talent which was employed by Christians toward the edification or strengthening of the Church was considered a gift of God.⁴⁰

³⁸1 Corinthians 12-14

³⁹1 Corinthians 14:19

⁴⁰T. A. Kantonen, A Theology for Christian Stewardship (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1956), p. 48.

The Parish Church

"The Church is invisible (ecclesia invisibilis est) because the constitutive factor of the Church, faith in the heart, is invisible for men and known only to God."⁴¹ But although the Church is invisible, perceptible churches are referred to in the New Testament.⁴² However, "When we speak of a Christian congregation, or local church, we always mean only the Christians or believers in the visible communion."⁴³ So the parish church is a part of the Church Universal, but only true Christians are members of the parish church.

Obviously, unbelievers may claim a place in the Christian congregation. And because they profess faith in Christ, they are accepted as Christians. But the fact, that the congregation accepts their profession of faith at face value, does not infer that God overlooks their unbelief. They are the chaff which Christ condemned to an eschatological "unquenchable fire."⁴⁴

If it is understood that the local church is composed of "saints,"⁴⁵ the conclusion may be drawn that:

The local parish church is a "cell" planted by God Himself in human society so that the surrounding community

⁴¹ Pieper, op. cit., p. 408.

⁴² 1 Corinthians 16:19

⁴³ Pieper, op. cit., p. 419.

⁴⁴ Matthew 3:12

⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 1:2

can be affected by its life in the way yeast affects the surrounding dough. This is the illustration Jesus Himself used. It applies, however, more to the way Christian groups can affect their social settings than it does to the way individuals can go about it. The God-planted "cell" fulfills its purpose because parish life is the normal place for the redeemed life of individuals and families to be nourished and for the redeeming power of Christian life to be stimulated and strengthened. Parishes may not often react consciously to this fact, but the truth is that they exist because God has called together a group of people in a particular locality. He has called them together to accept, through their shared experience, the responsibility to become a primary agency for His redemptive work.⁴⁶

The individual can never truly regard himself as simply a "world," or "universal" Christian. He has been placed by God within a specific environment. He is a member of a particular race, culture, nation, and neighborhood. The Christian has been placed within his environment by the will of God, to carry out the will of God. He seeks out, and joins himself to the local parish so that he may be better able to carry out his God-appointed tasks. Within the setting of the Christian parish, he devotes himself to the furtherance of the four tasks of worship, witness, education, and service. In this way, his own faith is fortified, he acts as an instrument of the Holy Ghost to strengthen the faith of his fellow saints, and he gains increased opportunity to put his faith into action.⁴⁷

The parish church is the Christian's proving ground.

⁴⁶C. D. Kean, The Christian Gospel and the Parish Church (Greenwich: Seabury Press, c.1953), pp. 43,44.

⁴⁷Kantonen, op. cit., pp. 98-112.

Here, through the power of the Holy Ghost, he tests, structures, channels, fortifys, and purifys his faith.⁴⁸ The local church is his ammunition depot, where he obtains weapons of the Spirit, where he refills his cartridge belt with God's ammunition. For the Christian, his parish church is his base of operations. He fortifies it by checking its foundation of Scripture, and its structure of Christian love. In turn, it becomes his fortress and protector from the forces of evil. The parish church is the training ground for the Christian army. Here, Christians are trained in the use of their weapons. They learn to function together, to complement one another in their God appointed tasks.⁴⁹

⁴⁸Hunt, op. cit., pp. 147-52.

⁴⁹1 Corinthians 12:11-27

CHAPTER III

THE MINISTRY IN SCRIPTURE

"Ministry"

The New Testament Koine words which describe the concept of "ministry" are: diakoneoo, diakonia, and diakonos.

Diakoneoo is the verb form, and describes the action of the minister. Its most general meaning is that of serving someone in some capacity. However, it may describe the more specific actions of: (a) Waiting on someone at table; (b) Caring for, or looking after someone; (c) Helping, or supporting someone; (d) Serving in the specific ecclesiastical office of the diaconate.¹

Diakonia is a noun, describing the office of the ministry. In addition to the general office of servant, it may refer to: (a) An aid, support, or distribution; (b) The service necessary for the preparation of a meal; (c) Some type of ecclesiastical office; (d) The office of a deacon.²

Diakonos is a noun, and describes the person of a minister. In its masculine form, it refers to: (a) A servant; (b) Helper; (c) Deacon. In its feminine form, it may refer

¹W. Arndt and F. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), p. 183.

²Ibid.

to: (d) An agent; (e) A deaconess.³

Basically, a minister is "one who executes the commands of another, especially of a master; (hence) a servant, attendant."⁴ In the secular sense, a minister serves his employer, or master, in some capacity. In the more specific sense of the Christian ministry, the minister serves Christ, his Master, in some capacity.

The Universal Ministry

God's original plan for His people was that they all be ministers, be commissioned by Him, function in His will, carry out His tasks. In describing His relation to Israel, His chosen nation, God says: "And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."⁵ Isaiah proclaimed to the children of Israel, "But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God."⁶ In the widest sense of the term, those who were placed under the covenant of the Old Testament were ministers of God. They were not merely to accept the covenant of communion. Because of this communion, they were to be active functionaries of God. They were to live lives of service.

³Ibid., pp. 183, 84.

⁴J. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1889), p. 138.

⁵Exodus 19:6

⁶Isaiah 61:6

The New Testament carries out and expands the theme of the universal ministry. As St. Peter sums up,

Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people: that ye should shew forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.⁷

The people of God are a nation set apart, called into the covenant of communion, with the specific duty of functioning in the service of the One Who has called them.

The terms, "people of God," "chosen nation," "Church," "disciples,"⁸ etc., describe the Scriptural concept of God's relation to His people. The term, "ministry," describes the functional aspect of this relation. The two concepts cannot be equated, as being one and the same. Rather, it is a cause and effect relationship. That is, because the followers of Christ are the people of God, therefore they are ministers. It is the relation of faith and works. Because God-inspired faith has made the elect the communion of saints, it follows as a natural and inevitable corollary that they are ministers, working toward the implementation of the divine will. The whole thrust of the Epistle of James is to the effect that faith must be put into action.⁹ Turning the proposition around, St. James points out that the criterion of judgement

⁷1 Peter 2:9

⁸K. H. Rengstorf, "Apostleship," Bible Key Words, translated by J. R. Coates from Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by G. Kittel (New York: Harper & Bros., 1958), II, 45.

⁹James 2:20

for faith is the works which follow.¹⁰ By its very nature, the communion of Saints cannot be a passive organization, but must be a ministering fellowship.¹¹

To the communion of saints, God has entrusted the carrying out of His divine will. And in its ministerial capacity, the Church does this. Thus, the Church has the tasks of preaching, teaching, baptizing, administering the Lord's Supper, judging doctrine, admonishing those in error, comforting and strengthening the brethren, witnessing to Christ, etc. In brief, it can be said that the Church has the tasks of worship, witness, education, and service. Or, as St. Peter defines the ministerial function of the Church, "That ye should shew forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."¹²

The Gifts of the Ministerial Offices

"And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die."¹³ Recognizing their own unworthiness and imperfection, the children of Israel were afraid of the righteous God and asked for a mediator. In His gracious providence, God not only gave them a mediator, in the person of Moses, but He gave them a

¹⁰James 1:22

¹¹2 Corinthians 5:18

¹²1 Peter 2:9

¹³Exodus 20:19

whole system of mediation, the Levitical priesthood. "And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the Lord."¹⁴ Thus, Israel, which was to be in its entirety a royal priesthood, was given a specific priesthood. This priesthood was to function in the name of the people, by the command of God. It was not to supplant the universal priesthood of God's people, but was an additional aid which would bring the people into a closer communion with God. The sacrificial system, over which the priests presided, and at which they officiated, was not an ex opere operato atonement for the sins of the people, but was a type, a forecasting, of the once-for-all atonement of Christ, the "great high priest."¹⁵

Because the people were afraid to hear the direct Word of the Lord, He sent His prophets; who proclaimed His message and will for His people. Thus, the office of the prophet was also a direct gift of God to His people. The prophets, too, were types of the coming Messiah. For their prophecies, proclaiming the will of God for His people, pointed to the One who would make possible the fulfillment of God's plan for communion with man.¹⁶

¹⁴Numbers 18:6

¹⁵"Apology of the Augsburg Confession," Concordia Triglot: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 405. Hereafter the Concordia Triglot will be referred to as CT.

¹⁶R. F. Weidner, The Doctrine of the Ministry (New York: F. H. Revell Co., 1907), pp. 15, 16.

It is quite evident that the New Testament writers considered the specific offices of the ministry to be gifts of God to His Church. "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."¹⁷ Referring to the Church's authority to call ministers, the Tractate declares:

For wherever the Church is, there is the authority to administer the Gospel. Therefore it is necessary for the Church to retain the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers. And this authority is a gift which in reality is given to the Church, which no human power can wrest from the Church, as Paul also testifies to the Ephesians, 4,8, when he says: He ascended, He gave gifts to men. And he enumerates among the gifts specially belonging to the Church pastors and teachers, and adds that such are given for the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.¹⁸

As the Lutheran Confessions clearly point out, the offices of the ministry are gifts of God to His Church; gifts which are intended to function for the welfare of the Church.

The Ministerial Offices in the New Testament

The apostolate was the first New Testament ministerial office established.¹⁹ But "the Apostolate is limited to the first generation and does not become a permanent office in the Church."²⁰ Therefore, this office is now of only historical interest. However, there is no doubt that the apostolate

¹⁷Ephesians 4:11

¹⁸CT, "Formula of Concord," p. 523.

¹⁹Matthew 28:18-20

²⁰Rengstorf, op. cit., p. 45.

did serve an important function in the early Church. As those most closely associated with Christ in His earthly ministry, the apostles were in a position to serve as guardians of the pure doctrine, and as custodians of the infant Church.

In secular Greek usage, the "bishop," or episkopos, was "an overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian, or superintendent."²¹ Within the New Testament frame of reference, the bishop was "the superintendent, head or overseer of any Christian church."²²

"Elder," or presbyteros, is derived from Jewish ecclesiastical usage. Originally referring to members of the Sanhedrin, the term came to refer to "those who presided over the assemblies or churches,"²³ among the Christians of New Testament times.

It is generally agreed among non-episcopal New Testament scholars, that the two terms, "bishop," and "presbyter," refer to the same ministerial office. In post-apostolic times, a distinction came to be made between the two, and the presbyter came to be subordinate to the bishop.

Though these two names, bishop and presbyter, are entirely co-ordinate in the usage of the N.T., and are only different designations of one and the same pastoral office, including oversight, teaching, and pastoral care in general, nevertheless we can draw this distinction,

²¹Thayer, op. cit., p. 243.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 536.

that the title bishop or overseer denotes the function of the office as one of oversight, while the title presbyter (elder) designates the dignity of the office.²⁴

St. Paul twice lists qualifications for the bishop-presbyter.²⁵ Both lists are similar, though not identical, in content, and refer primarily to the spiritual qualifications necessary. The officiant must be qualified for leadership, thoroughly grounded in sound doctrine, spiritually minded, articulate, empathic, and free of all cause for offence.

The specific function of the bishop-presbyter was oversight of the congregation. In his capacity as overseer, the functionary had a variety of tasks, chief of which were:

- (a) Teaching of doctrine and preaching of the Word;²⁶
- (b) Pastoral care;²⁷ (c) The exercise of discipline.²⁸

The fact that the apostles could not be everywhere necessitated the establishment of the office of bishop-presbyter. In the absence of the apostles, it was necessary that someone co-ordinate the functions within each local congregation. As the Church grew, and the apostles found it physically impossible to themselves administer the affairs of all of the individual congregations, they ordained elders to carry out this task.²⁹ By the time of the writing of the Pastoral

²⁴Weidner, op. cit., p. 46.

²⁵1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9

²⁶1 Timothy 5:17; James 5:14

²⁷Acts 20:28

²⁸Hebrews 13:17

²⁹Acts 14:23

Epistles, apostolic delegates were appointing elders.³⁰ After, and probably contemporary to apostolic times, individual congregations appointed their own bishop-presbyters. "For the Church has the command to appoint ministers."³¹ The specific office of overseer arose purely out of necessity. There was a job to be done; one for which not everyone was qualified. Those who were qualified, were appointed to carry out this task in the name of the congregation.

While it has been shown, both etymologically and functionally, that the intrinsic task of the bishop-presbyter was oversight, the Scripturally Christocentric concept of oversight must be retained as being equally essential to the nature of the office. The writer to the Hebrews admonishes, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves."³² Taken by itself, this statement would seem to advance the claims of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, that "the pope possesses both swords, the spiritual and the secular."³³ But the same verse goes on to say, "for they watch over your souls as they that must give account."³⁴ Taken as a whole,

³⁰Titus 1:5

³¹CT, "Apology of the Augsburg Confession," p. 311.

³²Hebrews 13:17

³³J. L. Neve, A History of Christian Thought (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1946), I, 207.

³⁴Hebrews 13:17

the verse points up the Scriptural concept of oversight, in a most precise manner. The office is not an autonomous one. The overseer is responsible to the One in Whose service he works. As a minister to the body of Christ, he is responsible to Christ Himself. As overseer, he is responsible to Christ for the preservation of the souls of those placed under his charge. In other words, the bishop-presbyter has the primary task of spiritual oversight. As the Augsburg Confession points out, "If they (bishops) have any other power or jurisdiction, in hearing and judging certain cases, as of matrimony or of tithes, etc., they have it by human right."³⁵

St. Peter, in his first Epistle, sets down a job description for the office of bishop-presbyter, which clarifies the relation between the overseer and the congregation.

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.³⁶

The ministrant is to willingly take the oversight of the congregation to which he has been appointed. He is not to let such a mundane consideration as salary determine his acceptance of the office. Rather, he is to devote himself wholly to the task of spiritual oversight, which is governed by the universal ministry of the Word.³⁷

³⁵GT, "Augsburg Confession," p. 87.

³⁶1 Peter 5:2,3

³⁷1 Peter 2:2

The overseer is not to "lord it over," katakryiayontes,³⁸ the congregation. He is not to consider himself the master, nor to consider the congregation the subjects. Rather, he is the curator, the guardian, the superintendent.³⁹ He is not an autonomous, self-determining "lord," but a caretaker, responsible to his Lord.

Overseers are to be "ensamples to the flock."⁴⁰ The overseer is to be the mold, the print, the typos, after which the congregation patterns itself. As such, he must pattern himself after the One Who has appointed him overseer. Thus, he is totally dependent upon Christ in all phases of his office.

In summary definition of the New Testament concept of the office of the bishop-presbyter, the following may be said. He is the spiritual overseer of the congregation, with no inherent secular authority. He is in no way autonomous, but is subject to Christ. His office does not place him "above" the congregation, in a hierarchical sense. He is a part of the congregation, assigned the task of spiritual oversight. He is to function solely within the context of the Word.

The office of the diaconate appears to have had a developing function within the New Testament. First instituted as an auxiliary office, with the primary task of seeing to

³⁸1 Peter 5:3

³⁹Thayer, op. cit., p. 243.

⁴⁰1 Peter 5:3

the needs of the poor and the sick,⁴¹ it became in time an office which required qualifications similar to those of the office of bishop-presbyter, and presumably had somewhat similar functions.⁴²

Beyond mere mention of the office,⁴³ virtually nothing is known of the office of the deaconess. It could be assumed that this was the female counterpart of the deacon's office. However, the leadership function of the deaconess would have to have been sharply defined.⁴⁴

The word, "evangelist," occurs only three times in the New Testament, and little is therefore known of this office. Philip, one of the original seven deacons, is known to have become an evangelist.⁴⁵ However, a study of Philip's ministry would not necessarily lead to an understanding of the office of the evangelist; as Philip's ministry might well have had marks which were superlative to the regular office of evangelist. The most that can be said is that the evangelist was a minister of the Word, not assigned to a specific congregation, probably ministering to the heathen.⁴⁶

⁴¹Acts 6:2

⁴²1 Timothy 3:8-13

⁴³Romans 16:1

⁴⁴Weidner, op. cit., p. 37.

⁴⁵Acts 21:8

⁴⁶Weidner, op. cit., p. 31.

Beyond mere listing of the term, nothing is known of the office of "teacher." Since the term is contained in the listing of various ministers,⁴⁷ teachers must have been engaged in teaching the Word and doctrine.⁴⁸ It is possible that the office was of Jewish derivation, and was analogous to that of the rabbi.

Various other offices of the ministry are mentioned in the New Testament, such as those of prophecy, speaking in tongues, interpretation, healing, working miracles, etc.⁴⁹ However, little is known of them, and since they do not seem to recur in post-apostolic times,⁵⁰ it is reasonable to suppose that these offices, like that of the apostolate, were extant only in the first generation of the Church.

The one common denominator of all of the specific offices of the ministry, mentioned in the New Testament, is the fact that they were all to function toward the edification of the body of Christ. The criterion seems to have been that each function according to the gifts bestowed and heightened by the Spirit.⁵¹ Therefore, many of the offices overlap in function and in qualifications.

⁴⁷1 Corinthians 12:28

⁴⁸J. A. Mackay, God's Order (New York: The MacMillan Co., c.1953), p. 149.

⁴⁹1 Corinthians 12:28

⁵⁰Weidner, op. cit., p. 32.

⁵¹W. Barclay, A New Testament Wordbook (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), pp. 28,29.

CHAPTER IV

THE LUTHERAN PASTOR

Role Conceptions of the Pastor

As Dr. H. Richard Niebuhr points out, many of the contemporary American church bodies do not have a clear cut conception of the office and task of the pastoral ministry.

Many reasons have been given for the prevalence of this uncertainty and many remedies have been suggested. Some men believe that it is due to a loss of Christian conviction on the part of young men and women entering the schools and applying for ordination or to the weakness of their sense of call to the ministry. Others, who also see the situation only as a result of human failure, believe that ministers and schools have been deflected from their purpose and have lost their sense of mission because they have succumbed to the temptation to improve their personal and professional status by doing anything that might make them pleasing to the greatest number of people. The voluntaristic system of the free churches in North America, it has been said, has tended to transform their officials into merchants who offer all sorts of wares so that as many customers as possible may be attracted to their ecclesiastical emporiums. Those who approach the subject sociologically have sometimes maintained that the difficulty arises out of the fact that many functions the ministry once discharged have been taken over by new agencies.¹

The major reason for the lack of uniform definition regarding the function of the pastoral office seems to be the fact that many American churchmen are defining the pastoral role in the light of their own subjective value judgements. That is, they have no objective norm by which to standardize

¹H. R. Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1956), p. 55.

their concepts. As a result, the role of the pastor becomes limited only by the imagination of the individual. To cite an extreme example, one writer states that the pastor must be an accomplished educator, director of social activities, accountant, psychologist, "trouble adjuster," parliamentarian, editor and publisher, advertising and publicity agent, traveler, linguist, caterer, production manager, priest, and missionary.²

Some church bodies with a hierarchical system of government seem to go to the opposite extreme of limiting the pastoral role to a focalization upon a legalistic mediatorship. For example, the Roman Catholic priest holds the consciences of his parishoners subject to his absolution, and, in practice, becomes a semi-autonomous mediator.³

Although the role concept of the pastor is vastly more coherent within the Missouri Synod than it is within Protestantism in general, and is not based upon a legalistic mediatorship, it is nevertheless true that the essentially integrating role of the pastor has not been clearly defined. For example, in defining the educational goals of ministerial education within the Missouri Synod, Dr. Coates declares:

For one thing, he (the student) must have the knowledge of the correct doctrine, that he may teach it to others.

²R. Cashman, The Business Administration of a Church (Chicago: Willett, Clark & Co., c.1937), pp. 145-47.

³Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, translated by H. J. Schroeder (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., c.1941), p. 92.

Moreover, he must attain to a status of genuine spirituality and adhere conscientiously to the highest standards of Christian morality and ethics, that he might set the right pattern to those whom he is to shepherd.

Beyond this, he must have a thorough understanding of human nature ("psychology"). He must be reasonably familiar with the heritage and polity of his Church. He must possess those personal traits---intellectual, social, cultural, and physical---which men have a right to expect in the incumbent of the ministerial office.⁴

While the above certainly sets forth key educational goals for the ministerial candidate, no central role conception is defined. The Missouri Synod pastor has a definition of the various tasks assigned to him, but there is no norm by which these tasks are integrated into one centralized concept.

A survey of the role conceptions of a group of Missouri Synod pastors reaches the conclusion:

Considering the professional training of the minister, and also the recognized supernatural frame of reference within which he preaches, the Lutheran minister emerges as superordinate to the members of the congregation. This superordinate position is readily accepted by the members.⁵

If the above judgement is to be taken at face value, it would appear that the concept which emerges is that of the pastor as some sort of a "super Christian." Such a faulty concept points up the obvious need of re-evaluating the pastoral role, and arriving at an integrating concept of the pastoral function.

⁴T. Coates, The Making of a Minister (Portland: Concordia College Mimeo., n.d.), p. 97.

⁵R. E. Sommerfeld, "Role Conceptions of Lutheran Ministers in the St. Louis Area" (unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Washington University, St. Louis, 1957), p. 200.

The Role of the Pastor in the Lutheran Confessions

The Augsburg Confession, using the term, "bishop," gives the following definition of the pastoral role:

There belongs to the bishops as bishops, that is, to those to whom has been committed the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, no jurisdiction except to forgive sins, to judge doctrine, to reject doctrines contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the communion of the Church wicked men, whose wickedness is known, and this without human force, simply by the Word.

The pastor is, first, a preacher of the Word. His preaching is directed toward the congregation which called him, and consists of preaching the Word of reconciliation. Thus, the pastor teaches, admonishes, comforts and exhorts, all within the context of the Word.

Though the congregation assigns to the pastor the specific duty of preaching, this does not relieve each Christian of this responsibility. The congregation confers this duty, but it does not give it up. To the pastor is entrusted the spiritual oversight of the group. But each Christian is to edify his fellow Christians by the speaking forth of his faith.⁷ Similarly, all Christians, pastor and parishoners alike, are enjoined to speak this Word of reconciliation to the world. Each and every Christian is a minister of the Word.

⁶"Augsburg Confession," Concordia Triglot: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 87. Hereafter the Concordia Triglot will be referred to as CT.

⁷Ephesians 5:19

The second duty of the pastor is to administer the Sacraments. Administration of the Sacraments is a form of the administration of the dynamic Word. The physical act is effective only with and in the Word. The pastor, in administering the Sacraments, is declaring the Gospel Word.⁸

For the sake of decency and order, the pastor has been assigned this duty. However, in time of emergency, any Christian may perform the administration.⁹ In doing so, he is not acting as the deputy of the pastor, but is performing a function given to the Church as a whole.

The third duty of the pastor is to judge doctrine, rejecting that which is contrary to Scripture. The pastor has as his duty the distinguishing of truth from error, protecting the congregation from false doctrine and teaching.¹⁰ Implicit also is the duty of the pastor to teach correct doctrine. This again is nothing but the ministry of the Word.

While the Church confers this duty upon its pastor, it does not, at the same time, relinquish it. Each Christian has the obligation both to teach the Word, and to himself learn to distinguish truth from error.¹¹

The final duty of the pastor is to "exclude from the com-

⁸GT, "Apology of the Augsburg Confession," p. 309.

⁹F. R. Zucker, "The Lord's Supper," The Abiding Word, edited by T. Laetsch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), II, 442.

¹⁰Titus 1:9

¹¹Acts 17:11

munion of the Church wicked men, whose wickedness is known, and this simply without force, simply by the Word."¹² The pastor must exclude from the communion of the Church those who are manifestly impenitent, who would, if allowed to remain, attempt to seduce believers from their faith. But the pastor is to function only within the context of the Word.

The duty of reproving those in error is not relinquished by the individual Christian.¹³ For how can Christians edify one another in the faith, if they allow error to remain in their midst? If the Christian in the unity of faith, is to strive toward the perfect man,¹⁴ he must separate himself and his church from the hardened unbeliever.

In summary, it can be said that the Lutheran Confessions describe the various tasks of the pastor, but do not appear to specifically spell out an integrating, intrinsic principle. That is, the pastor is appointed to carry out certain tasks. But these are tasks which, to a greater or lesser degree, devolve upon all Christians. The only differentiation which can be legitimately made, is that the pastor functions as a public leader; whereas the congregation is not specifically called upon to do so.¹⁵

¹²CT, "Augsburg Confession," p. 87.

¹³Ephesians 5:11

¹⁴Ephesians 4:12

¹⁵J. H. C. Fritz, Pastoral Theology (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1945), p. 35.

The Intrinsic Role of the Lutheran Pastor

As has been pointed out, the Lutheran Confessions do not describe the unique role of the pastor in specific, integrated terminology. However, it has also been pointed out that the Confessions do substitute the term, "bishop" for "pastor." This terminology becomes highly significant in the light of the Scriptural concept of the bishop's office.

In view of the fact that the Confessions use Scripture passages as proofs to describe the various functions of the bishop's office, it may be assumed that the writers of the Confessions understood the New Testament office to be identical in function to the office of pastor, or bishop, in their time.¹⁶ All that has been said of the New Testament bishop-presbyter, should therefore be applicable to the Lutheran pastor.

The central role of the pastor now becomes apparent. He is the overseer of the congregation. As overseer, he functions in the manner described in the Confessions.¹⁷ His oversight is spiritual in nature. He is the spiritual administrator of the congregation. His central task is to build up the congregation in its Christian faith, by means of the Word. He feeds the flock under his care with the Word, makes it aware of its own ministerial duties, and exhorts and encourages it to

¹⁶CT, loc. cit.

¹⁷Loc. cit.

the performance of these duties.¹⁸

The pastor, as overseer, is responsible to God for the development and maturation of those placed in his spiritual care. To this end, he preaches the Word, teaches sound doctrine, administers the Sacraments, reprovés and disciplines when necessary; "and this without human force, simply by the Word."¹⁹

As overseer, the pastor trains church leaders to a more functional ministration. In so doing, he is not only multiplying his own ministry, but also carrying out his task of developing Christian growth within his congregation. He is acting as a typos²⁰ of Christ as he develops disciples.

In his central role, the pastor is administrator, supervisor, co-ordinator of the congregational life. He is not the "lord,"²¹ but is a member of the congregation, carrying out the task of oversight, for which he was qualified, to which he was trained, to which he was called.²²

¹⁸Hebrews 13:17

¹⁹CT, loc. cit.

²⁰1 Peter 5:3

²¹1 Peter 5:2

²²Fritz, loc. cit.

CHAPTER V

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

The Foundation of Parish Administration

Basic to the concept of parish administration, is the fact that the parish is indivisible from the body of Christ, and is composed of the communion of saints.¹

Implicit in the concept of the communion of saints is the functional aspect of that body; namely, the implementation of God's will for people. The power for this function derives from God. Christians are ministers, responsible to God, and motivated by Him.²

To aid His Church in the implementation of His will, God has given the saints various gifts and talents. Because there is a diversity of gifts, some Christians are better fitted to administer various aspects of God's tasks than are others.³

The pastor has and cultivates the gift of oversight. In his functional capacity, he co-ordinates the administration

¹Herman Preus, "The Christian and the Church," More about Luther (Decorah: Luther College Press, c.1958), p. 175.

²George Hunt, Rediscovering the Church (New York: Association Press, c.1956), p. 140.

³J. A. Mackay, God's Order (New York: The MacMillan Co., c. 1953), pp. 145-49.

of the tasks which are necessary to the fulfilling of God's will. He is the shepherd of the flock; who leads to the green pastures of the Word.⁴ Exercising the ministry of spiritual oversight, he channels the congregational ministry into the pattern most conducive toward the implementation of a growing, evangelical faith and life.

Men whom Christ has specially gifted and who become His gift to the Church, have one great task in common. They must exercise their ministry in such a way that the "saints" shall be "perfected" or "equipped," in order that they too, in a non-professional but effective sense, may become "ministers." In this way and only in this way shall the whole Body of Christ be built up.⁵

Scriptural Precedents for Parish Administration

Chapter six of the Acts of the Apostles describes the establishment of the office of deacon in the early Church. As Weidner points out, a careful study of the whole passage teaches us:

- 1) That after the Apostolate the first office established in the Church is the diaconate.
- 2) That the Apostles, as the leaders and administrators of the Church, call the congregation together and propose measures to meet the difficulties which had arisen.
- 3) They state the reasons for the creation of the new office, give instructions for the choice of suitable persons, making an exact statement of the requisite qualifications.
- 4) They submit the whole matter for the approval of the Church.

⁴John 21:15-17

⁵Mackay, op. cit., p. 149.

- 5) The Church exercises the right of approval.
- 6) The persons chosen were elected in accordance with Apostolic instructions.
- 7) The congregation submits their selection to the approval of the Apostles.
- 8) The Seven were then ordained by the Apostles with the laying on of hands.
- 9) They were chosen as aids to the Apostles, and their duties were not lay duties, but official duties belonging to the ministry which had at first been performed by the Apostles.⁶

The appointment of the deacons arose out of a situation in which the apostles found themselves unable to perform certain tasks. They submitted an account of the situation to the whole congregation, explaining their difficulties. The principle which the apostles followed was one of need. They needed help in their ministry, and therefore asked the church to appoint qualified Christians to aid them.⁷

One fact, which must especially be noted, is that the apostles, when submitting the problem to the congregation, did have a solution in mind. They had planned an organized solution, over which they would have adequate control. This is the clearest New Testament account of the inauguration of an effective plan of parish administration.⁸

⁶R. F. Weidner, The Doctrine of the Ministry (New York: F. H. Revell Co., 1907), p. 35.

⁷1 Corinthians 12:25-31

⁸J. E. Herrmann, The Chief Steward (St. Louis: Issued by The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, 1951), pp. 27,28.

Definition of Parish Administration

Briefly stated, parish administration is the structured implementation of the tasks which God has entrusted to His Church.⁹ In order for parish administration to function effectively, the needs of the parish must be defined and cataloged. Plans must be made for the satisfaction of those needs. These plans must be put into effect. Each congregation is in a unique situation. Each situation will have needs which are peculiar to that local group. Therefore, the planning must be tailored to the situation.¹⁰

Administration is an activity. It is something which is done by qualified individuals. This activity is carried out in a certain way, by means of definite principles.

The distinction must here be made between principle and practice. As has been stated, the methods used in the practical situation may vary with the need. However, the principles used in the governance of the application of these methods do not vary. Thus, administration consists of the three basic steps of planning, organizing and controlling.¹¹ Any steps

⁹R. R. Caemmerer, The Church in the World (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1949), p. 93.

¹⁰C. D. Kean, The Christian Gospel and the Parish Church (Greenwich: Seabury Press, c.1953), pp. 36,37.

¹¹W. F. Gast, Principles of Business Management (St. Louis: Saint Louis University, 1953), p. 43.

which do not come under these three basic concepts, do not constitute a part of administrative procedure.

Administrative Leadership

To the pastor is given the specific task of administration, or oversight. He co-ordinates the life of the congregation into a smoothly functioning unit of the body of Christ.

Like all administrative leaders, the pastor must beware of misinterpreting, or misusing his office. The pastor who finds himself working an eighteen hour day in a normal size parish, is misinterpreting his role. As co-ordinator, he has the responsibility to see that the work is done. But this does not mean that he does it all himself. The pastor who attempts to do everything is depriving his parishoners of opportunities for evangelical maturation, as well as proving a poor steward of his time, health, and abilities.¹² On the other hand, the pastor who is determined not to work himself to death, but to concentrate upon one particular aspect of parish activity, is equally guilty of misinterpreting his role. As co-ordinator, the pastor has a highly specialized role. If he neglects this role, in favor of some other area of Christian work, he is no longer functioning as pastor. His work may be useful, but it is not the work to which he was called.¹³

¹²Ordway Tead, The Art of Leadership (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1935), pp. 214, 15.

¹³Ibid., pp. 225-29.

It may sometimes happen that a pastor tends to over-organize his congregation. There may be a well-structured organization, with leaders, boards, committees, subcommittees, etc., but with no purpose in view. In such a situation, everyone has a job to do, but no progress is evident. The pastor and people can have a feeling of satisfaction, but their accomplishments are virtually nil. The pastor who allows such a situation to exist is mistaking non-directive action for directed functioning. He is forgetting the basic principle of the ministry; that Christians, as ministers, are to serve one another as the body of Christ.¹⁴ Their action is divinely directed, and not purposeless.

The various extremes within the pastoral ministry can be directly attributed to lack of administrative understanding and application of administrative principles. And the chief blame lies at the doorstep of the pastor who does not fully realize his central function. As overseer, he is entrusted with the over-all, spiritual welfare of the members of the congregation. In order to be effective in his office, the pastor must continually examine and evaluate his own position and function within the congregation. To be an efficient overseer, he must have a primary concern for the faith and life of the whole congregation.¹⁵

¹⁴Tead, op. cit., p. 217.

¹⁵Gast, op. cit., p. 50.

As administrator, the pastor must soon realize that he, alone, could never hope to serve all of the needs of his parish. And, according to the Scriptural concept of the ministry, he is not expected to do so. The ministry of all Christians plays a dominant role in the practical situation. While the pastor, as minister, serves his congregation, this does not mean that the congregation passively waits to be served. For they are ministers too. Their ministry is to be performed according to the particular gifts with which each Christian is endowed.¹⁶

As with the pastor, members of the congregation may tend to over or under-estimate their gifts and abilities. They may feel that they cannot help in any way, or they may feel themselves qualified for positions beyond their capacities. An objective standard of evaluation is needed, or else anarchy, and duplication of effort is likely to result. The pastor, as co-ordinator, plays a major role here. It is his job to see that there is no wasteful effort; that those who carry out a specific task are qualified for their work; that they know what they are doing, and why they are doing it.¹⁷

It must be understood that the pastor is operating in the context of the communion of saints. That is, he is working in an atmosphere of Christian love and forbearance. His

¹⁶1 Corinthians 12:29

¹⁷Tead, op. cit., p. 61.

attitude is one of empathy. By attitude and action, he conveys to his congregation his concern for them as individuals.¹⁸

While an authoritarian role is sometimes demanded of the pastor, his authority is not self-willed, but God-willed. Generally, he will be striving for a democratic type of leadership, in which he acts as leader and guide, but strives to bring out the capabilities of the congregation members. As a democratic leader, he draws upon the ministry of his fellow Christians, recognizing that he is not the sole "well of wisdom," but that his fellow ministers can contribute much, and often, even more than he can, to the total program of the congregation.¹⁹

The pastor should be on the lookout for talented leaders within the congregation, people upon whom various tasks and authorities can be delegated. He is going to encourage these people to exercise their ministry, to grow in the application of their God given gifts. The pastor will want to aid the recognized leaders of the congregation to develop their Christian skills, so that they can become even more proficient in carrying out their ministry.²⁰

A manual on business administration makes the following point, which is equally valid for parish administration:

¹⁸Philippians 1:3-5

¹⁹1 Corinthians 12:5

²⁰Gast, op. cit., p. 166.

At this point, a curious and often troublesome fact should again be mentioned and briefly explained. In a large business, for example, the work of management - that is, the work of planning, organizing, and controlling - requires a large staff of persons. Such a large staff of managerial personnel must itself be managed - that is, its work also must be planned, organized, and controlled. This means that managers must not only manage persons and things which are not themselves engaged in managing, but must also plan, organize, and control the planners, organizers and controllers. In some degree, that process must occur in even a very small business. The purpose of the management of managers is, however, only to make possible the effective management of other functions.²¹

This aspect of the pastor's role is essential; that he serves as a manager of managers, a teacher of teachers, a minister to ministers. By means of teaching, example, encouragement, and admonition, he strives to develop the latent capabilities of those who are leaders in the congregation. He helps them to define their own capabilities, guides in the placement of their ministries, helps them to define their specific tasks, and clarifies for them the relation of their focalized ministries to the ministry of the total communion of saints.²²

It must always be emphasized that the pastor, in delegating authority, is not relinquishing responsibility. He is the co-ordinator of the joint ministry of the congregation, but he is not outside of that ministry. The pastor can never forget that he is overseer, nor can he shirk the responsibility involved.²³

²¹Ibid., p. 44.

²²1 Corinthians 12:14-31

²³1 Peter 5:2

Administrative Procedure

The three functions of administration may be defined as follows:

Planning is the definitive function of management which consists in formulating objectives and in deciding upon the means, methods, and techniques by which the objectives are to be reached.

Organizing is the implementing function of management which consists in providing suitable personnel and capital for the execution of plans and incorporating these means in a structure of relationships through which their functioning can be effectively controlled.

Controlling is the regulative function of management which consists in causing the organization to function according to plan, and in measuring the performance of the organization.²⁴

Planning, the foundation of the administrative procedure, is perhaps the most universally overlooked aspect of parish administration. The necessity of planning arises out of need. Any parish has a multitude of needs, but only a fraction of them are perceived. This is due to the fact that needs usually rise only gradually, with little noticeable impact. A parish will often unconsciously accommodate itself to imperfections, never even realizing that a need is present. In any parish, penetrating insights into the deficiencies of that parish are necessary. In planning objectives, it is necessary that they are not built upon the defective foundation of an unfelt need.

When formulating objectives, their validity must be

²⁴Gast, op. cit., p. 55.

determined. That is, the objectives must be in agreement with the purpose of the organization as a whole. While the administrator will exercise a certain amount of directive guidance in the determination of objectives, this should never take the form of an autocratic "decision making."²⁵

In deciding upon the techniques to be used in the attainment of the stated objectives, the administrators of the congregation must decide upon their validity in the light of their Christian knowledge. For example, to raise money by questionable means is hardly compatible with the integrity of the body of Christ.²⁶

Organizing is the delegation of authority to qualified persons, and the assignment of any necessary physical properties to the functionaries. Basic to the concept of organization is an understanding of the "line of authority." Each functioning member of the organization must not only know what he is to do, but to whom he is responsible. In this way, organization avoids duplication of effort and malfunction.²⁷

Within a congregation, some permanent system of organization is a virtual necessity. Usually, a formal organization of some type exists. But very often there is no organizational unity. Various subsidiary organizations may exist

²⁵Tead, op. cit., pp. 55,56.

²⁶Romans 16:17

²⁷Gast, op. cit., p. 126.

within a congregation, without being an integral part of the congregation. Such a situation is not conducive toward the welfare of the congregation as a whole, since the functions of the various organizations may overlap. The result is duplication of effort in some areas, and neglect in other areas. From the administrative point of view, the ideal situation would be one in which each organization formulates its objectives in the light of the central objectives of the base organization, and the related objectives of the other subsidiary organizations. In this way, the whole group becomes functional.²⁸

The control of an organization rests with the governing body. In the case of a parish, the control originates with Christ, which is delegated to the congregation. The congregation appoints its administrators, who are then responsible for the planned functioning of the congregation. Christian controlling, while regulative in nature, is not autocratic.²⁹

A regulative agency is imperative to the smooth functioning of the plan. Control acts as the lubricant, which oils the wheels of the organization. The controller is the one who straightens out the snarls in the organizational functioning. He takes new factors into account. If conditions warrent, he may call for a re-evaluation.. He measures the actual performance of the operation against its estimated

²⁸Herrmann, op. cit., p. 37.

²⁹₁ Peter 5:2

performance.³⁰

All three of the functions of administration are absolutely indispensable to the implementation of a task. Lack of adequate planning leads to a busy church, but an aimless one. Lack of organization makes the attainment of the goal a matter of chance. Lack of control leads to sidetracking, in which the original goal is lost.

Evaluation of Parish Administration

Members of the communion of saints are ministers. They are stewards, responsible to God, and to each other. As stewards, Christians must evaluate the programs which they put into action. Every parish program has as its basic aim the purpose of serving the people within the communion of saints. A program which becomes an end in itself, which becomes a machine in which Christians are cogs, and nothing more, is an invalid program. For this reason, when evaluating, a program must be understood in the light of the needs of the people it is to serve. It must meet their needs, first and foremost. The object of the communion of saints is to implement this communion. Every valid parish program must subserve this major function. Any other function is irrelevant to Christian parish administration.³¹

³⁰Tead, op. cit., p. 117.

³¹Caemmerer, op. cit., p. 93.

CHAPTER VI

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

A Peculiar People

God's original plan, in the creation of the world, was the establishment of His peculiar people. The fact that man sinned necessitated the sending of a Redeemer. For God, in His justice, must see justice done. Yet, in His mercy, God sent His Son as an atonement.

Those who accept the Christ as their atonement, are reconciled to God, free of all guilt.

Nevertheless, man is still imperfect. The Christian still suffers temptation, and, if left to himself, would succumb. But God, in His mercy, strengthens the Christian in the faith.

The Church is the communion of the peculiar people of God; a communion which is divinely motivated. As the communion of saints, Christians strengthen each other in the faith. Theirs is a life of action. For the Church, by its nature, functions in the context of God's will. And God's will for His Church is that the communion of saints draws into an ever closer relation to Him and to its individual members.

A Ministering People

The functional aspect of the communion of saints is

the ministry. Christians have the task of ministering to whoever will accept their ministry. By means of worship, witness, education and service, the communion of saints fulfills its ministerial function, and thus carries out its task.

An Organized People

To fulfill their task of ministry, Christians organize into the most effective structures. Though God has seen fit to give a rich diversity of gifts to His people, Christians are not all suited to fulfill the same tasks. Therefore, Christian administration makes the best use of the talents of individual Christians, assigns to these individuals the tasks most suited to their capabilities.

At the same time, the communion of saints develops the capabilities which it has, so that each Christian becomes a worthy steward, wholly dedicating himself to the fulfilling of God's will for mankind.

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