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Michigan District
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
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Theses on Papers
On the Doctrine of the Ministry
Delivered to the Southeastern Conference
of the Michigan District WELS

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Introduction

The assignment given to this panel committee by the steering committee of the Southeastern Conference, MI Dist., WELS, was to review recent papers presented to the conference and formulate theses regarding them. A list of those papers is as follows ...

- 2/95 "We Have This Treasure In Jars Of Clay," Rev. Peter Berg
- 2/95 "The Gimbels of the Gospel -- The Doctrine of Church and Ministry in the WELS." Rev. Edward G. Zell
- 9/95 "Regarding the Use of the Various Forms of the Word 'MINISTRY' In the Old Testament Scriptures." Rev. Allen R. Tetzlaff (reissued 2/96)
- 9/95 "The Use of the Words 'MINISTER' or 'MINISTRY' in the New Testament Greek." Rev. William F. Natsis II
- 4/96 "Current Debate Concerning the Doctrine of the Ministry," Prof. John F. Brug
- 9/96 "Ministry -- Means and Call -- The Fifth and Fourteenth Articles of the Augsburg Confession and Their Context." Rev. Paul C. Stratman
- 9/96 "Ministry In Historical Wisconsin Synod Usage," Rev. George Tiefel, Jr.

This ministry panel committee has attempted to deal with the doctrinal issues raised in the conference's ministry papers. The committee has not dealt with all of the practical issues and concerns expressed by the various essayists, many of which will probably remain until the return of our Lord Jesus.

The outline of this presentation is as follows: The theses are first listed. Then each thesis is presented with proof texts from Scripture; supporting statements from the confessions; references, if any, to specific papers delivered to the conference; and comments by the panel committee. Where applicable, references to Luther's writings are also cited.

Our committee was assigned the task of conceiving a beautiful horse. Recognizing that a camel is a horse put together by a committee, after nine months of travail, herewith are the nine camels to which we have given birth.

Theses for Discussion & Debate

- 1) **The terms translated as "ministry" in popular versions of the Bible and the Confessions (Tappert edition) are used for public gospel ministry, gospel ministry in general, and for any service of love rendered by Christians. Since we have an obligation to be so clear so as not to be misunderstood, the following theses use the term "gospel ministry" or "ministry of the gospel" to refer to the preaching and teaching of the gospel by any Christian, and these theses use the term "public gospel ministry" or "public ministry of the gospel" to refer to the work of those called by Christ through the church to preach and teach the gospel as representatives of those who have called them.**
- 2) **The Ministry of the Gospel is the office, in the sense of authority and function, to proclaim the Gospel in Word and Sacrament given by Christ to his church, that is to all believers in him, individually and collectively. This ministry is not to be equated with any one person or any one office, in the sense of position, in the church.**
- 3) **Every believer in Christ has the responsibility and the authority to proclaim the Gospel as well as the Law in his or her personal life, including the forgiving of sins and the retaining of sins according to Christ's command. As believers carry out this Ministry of the Gospel, they are speaking by the command and authority of Christ.**
- 4) **Christ calls people into the public ministry of the Gospel through a group of Christians.**
- 5) **The Gospel in Word and Sacrament is the Means of Grace through which God works to convey his grace to people, giving them his forgiveness and peace.**
- 6) **While God often connects his Gospel with earthly elements such as in the New Testament sacraments and Old Testament sacrifices, the Ark of the Covenant, ritual, etc., these earthly elements are not the means of grace in themselves.**

- 7) While the Gospel is always connected to the ministry of that Gospel, that ministry, whether public or private, is not the Gospel itself.
- 8) As God did not tolerate unauthorized prophets in Israel, so also today we dare not tolerate those who take upon themselves the public ministry of the gospel without a legitimate call. When today we speak of "a legitimate call," we are not referring to an inner call by which some claim Christ has called them to preach or teach the gospel, but a call extended by a group of Christians to carry out the public ministry of the gospel.
- 9) While any minister of the gospel (public or private) can legitimately be said to be speaking for and on behalf of Christ, and those who hear him (or her) hear Christ, there is no Scriptural basis to say that that person is Christ incarnate for the people who hear him. The incarnational nature of Lutheran theology lies in the incarnation of the Son of God, where God himself took on human flesh to redeem sinful mankind.

Theses with expanded comments

[Unless otherwise noted, underlining is added by panel.]

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| <p>1) The terms translated as "ministry" in popular versions of the Bible and the Confessions (Tappert edition) are used for public gospel ministry, gospel ministry in general, and for any service of love rendered by Christians. Since we have an obligation to be so clear so as not to be misunderstood, the following theses use the term "gospel ministry" or "ministry of the gospel" to refer to the preaching and teaching of the gospel by any Christian, and these theses use the term "public gospel ministry" or "public ministry of the gospel" to refer to the work of those called by Christ through the church to preach and teach the gospel as representatives of those who have called them.</p> |
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1 Corinthians 14:6-11. ⁶ Now, brothers, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction? ⁷ Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? ⁸ Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? ⁹ So it is with you. Unless you speak

intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. ¹⁰ Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. ¹¹ If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me.

Of Isaiah 36. In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. ² Then the king of Assyria sent his field commander with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. When the commander stopped at the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman's Field, ³ Eliakim son of Hilkiah the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder went out to him.

⁴ The field commander said to them, "Tell Hezekiah,
"This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says:"

¹¹ Then Eliakim, Shebna and Joah said to the field commander, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, since we understand it. Don't speak to us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people on the wall."

¹² But the commander replied, "Was it only to your master and you that my master sent me to say these things, and not to the men sitting on the wall—who, like you, will have to eat their own filth and drink their own urine?"

¹³ Then the commander stood and called out in Hebrew, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria!"

Pastor William F. Natsis II, "The Use of the Words 'MINISTER' or 'MINISTRY' in the New Testament Greek," WELS Michigan District, Southeastern Pastor-Delegate Conference, Salem Lutheran Church, Ann Arbor, MI (hereafter referred, Natsis, "Use of the Words ..."), p. 3, bottom two pars.

Despite this variance between the two translations [KJV & NIV], however, there is no doubt that the original Greek words diakoneo, diakonia, and diakonos *can* refer to both Gospel ministry and Christian service, and even to service on behalf of the church by non-Christians, as shown by Romans 13:4. This is the passage in which the government is twice referred to as a "minister of God" in the KJV. Context is therefore so important in determining the best translation for each specific passage.

If diakoneo, diakonia, and diakonos, with all their appearances in the New Testament, do not give us a clear distinction between "ministry" and "service" without the use of context, then the rest of the passages are even more unhelpful. In fact, much of the time the word "minister," "ministry," etc ... is a poor translation of the original Greek. This is especially true of apostole in Galatians 2:8, didomi in Ephesians 4:29, ergazomai in 1 Corinthians 9:13, hierourgeo in Romans 15:16, latreia in Hebrews 9:6, latreuo in Hebrews 13:10, logos in Acts 8:21, and parecho in 1 Timothy

1:4. The NIV even uses the translation "ministry" three times when *no* Greek equivalent is found, just to make a better sense out of the sentence. (For example, Luke 3:23: "Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began [his ministry.]")

Natsis, "Use of the Words ...," p. 4, last full par.

But let's not stop just yet. Having noted all the Greek words and considered the passages in which they can be found, there does seem to be some unanimity among them. They all deal with service: service to God, service to the word, service to the church, service to the saints, service to the community at large, but always service. To say that all service is equal in the sense of importance or necessity is not implied in this; only that each Greek word and passage speaks of some form of service.

Natsis, "Use of the Words ...," p. 5, par. 3&4a .

In conclusion, I feel compelled to say that Scriptural usage and context shows that all the Greek words, which can legitimately be translated with a form of "minister" or "ministry," are too broad in definition for us to say they must *always* refer to the "ministry of the word," although they *sometimes* do, and we therefore do not receive a final answer in the debate over the use of the words "minister" or "ministry" in our synod from the Greek vocables alone.

What we should learn from this word study though, is that our use of the term "minister" or "ministry" needs to be more consistent throughout our Synod so that our people are not confused.

Rev. Paul C. Stratman, "Ministry -- Means and Call -- The Fifth and Fourteenth Articles of the Augsburg Confession and Their Context," WELS MI Dist, SE Conference, September 1996 (hereafter referred, Stratman, "Means & Call"), p. 16f, pars. 7f, "Some personal observations,

Our concern with the terms "ministry," "public ministry," and "gospel ministry" is not unfounded. Our people commonly refer to pastors as "ministers," and the use of the term to describe other called workers is confusing. Granted, previous words studies show that "ministry" has a general meaning of service."

Our chief concern should be that in ecclesiastical circles we establish consistency and clarity in our terminology both to avoid confusion and for the sake of love for our people. Also, the ordination of teachers is not wrong, but it may be confusing. (LCMS has "ordained" ministers and

"commissioned" ministers {teachers, administrators, and parish counselors}. I wonder if this terminology was for the sake of clarity {and conformity to the IRS code}, or because of the LCMS doctrine/view of ministry.

Comment: The following diagram concerning "ministry" may be helpful:

Ministry		
	Wide Sense (Any kind of Christian service)	Narrow Sense (The proclamation of the Gospel)
Public (Called or Hired Representational) ministry	Ministry of valet parking Ministry of bldg & grounds Ministry of waiting tables Synod Treasurer, Executive Director of Support Services, (Administrators), (Staff Ministers)	Pastors, Teachers, Professors, (Administrators), (Staff Ministers), Elders, Synod & District Praesidia, Sunday School Teachers, LES Teachers, LHS Teachers, Prep School Teachers, Called Lay Workers (proclaiming the Gospel),
Private ministry	Christian service Good works	Personal witnessing Personal evangelism (not part of a congregation's or synod's evangelism committee), (one Christian forgiving or retaining the sins of another)

A person can be "called" or "hired" to public representational Christian service. (The "deacons" of Acts 6 were called to their ministry of waiting on tables.)

2) The Ministry of the Gospel is the office, in the sense of authority and function, to proclaim the Gospel in Word and Sacrament given by Christ to his church, that is to all believers in him, individually and collectively. This ministry is not to be equated with any one person or any one office, in the sense of position, in the church.

Matthew 16:19. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. [καὶ ὁ ἐὰν δήσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ὁ ἐὰν λύσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.]

Matthew 18:15-18. ¹⁵ “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

¹⁸ “I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. [Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν· ὅσα ἐὰν δήσητε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένα ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ὅσα ἐὰν λύσητε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένα ἐν οὐρανῷ.]

¹⁹ “Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

John 20:21-23. ²¹ Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” [λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον· ²³ ἂν τινῶν ἀφήτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἀφέωνται αὐτοῖς, ἂν τινῶν κρατῆτε κεκράτηνται.]

Mark 16:15. ¹⁵ He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

Acts 1:8. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Joel 2:28-32 (& Acts 2:17,18).

²⁸ ‘And afterward,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your old men will dream dreams,

your young men will see visions.

²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

- 30 I will show wonders in the heavens
and on the earth,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.
- 31 The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.
- 32 And everyone who calls
on the name of the LORD will be saved;
for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
there will be deliverance,
as the LORD has said,
among the survivors
whom the LORD calls.

Isaiah 61:6a.

- 6 And you will be called priests of the LORD,
you will be named ministers of our God.

Jeremiah 33:22. ²² I will make the descendants of David my servant and the Levites who minister before me as countless as the stars of the sky and as measureless as the sand on the seashore.”

Exodus 19:6. ⁶ “‘you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”

AC. Article V: Of the Ministry.

1] That we may obtain this faith, *the Ministry of Teaching [das Predigtamt] the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted.* For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, 2] the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith; where and when it pleases God, in them that hear 3] the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ's sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake.

4] They condemn the Anabaptists and others who think that the Holy Ghost comes to men without the external Word, through their own preparations and works.

Smalcald Articles. Power & Primacy, P. 511:24

24] In addition to this, it is necessary to acknowledge that the keys belong not to the person of one particular man, but to the Church, as many most clear and firm arguments testify. For Christ, speaking concerning the keys adds, Matt. 18, 19: *If two or three of you shall agree on earth*, etc. Therefore he grants the keys principally and immediately to the Church, just as also for this reason the Church has principally the right of calling. [For just as the promise of the Gospel belongs certainly and immediately to the entire Church, so the keys belong immediately to the entire Church, because the keys are nothing else than the office whereby this promise is communicated to every one who desires it, just as it is actually manifest that the Church has the power to ordain

ministers of the Church. And Christ speaks in these words: *Whatsoever ye shall bind*, etc., and indicates to whom He has given the keys, namely, to the Church: *Where two or three are gathered together in My name*. Likewise Christ gives supreme and final jurisdiction to the Church, when He says: *Tell it unto the Church*.]

Therefore it is necessary that in these passages Peter is the representative of the entire assembly of the apostles, and for this reason they do not accord to Peter any prerogative or superiority, or lordship [which he had, or was to have had, in preference to the other apostles].

Pastor George Tiefel Jr., "Ministry in Historical Wisconsin Synod Usage," WELS MI Dist., Southeastern Pastoral Conference, Darlington Lutheran Church, Ann Arbor, MI, September 1996 (hereafter referred to as Tiefel, "Ministry ... Historical ... Usage,"), p. 7, #37:

John Schaller became perhaps the most daring exponent of the new "Wauwatosa Theology," at least as it dealt with "ministry." In 1912 he wrote a magnificent, yes, breathtakingly bold article on the New Testament ministry. He strides up and down Biblical history. It is quite "Lutheresque" in this and probably is to be compared to the "integrating" style of the Erlangen School. Special Ministry, according to Schaller, never exists in the abstract, as though it had been Gods' Institution that we are to have called Ministers. (449) The only ministry that is given is that which is implied already in the Protevangel. It springs from faith. Whoever has faith will do ministry. God supplies gifted persons, such as Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Pastors, etc., only *in concreto*. He gives them to the Church so they are there. They are not filling an Office abstractly instituted. The "Predigtamt" is not the Pastoral Office (451). Even children are appointed for "public preaching" at Christmas! (453) The form of preaching never was ordained by God but takes its form from circumstances. (453-454) Schaller repeats a common theme of the Erlangen School when he asserts that the Pastorate as we know it was totally unknown in apostolic times. [The numbers in parentheses refer to WELS Ministry Compendium, Vol. 2.]

Cf. Stratman, "Means & Call," p.7, par. 5. Stratman refers to August Pieper as quoted in Our Great Heritage, III, 335, as follows:

Thus not only these forms of the ministry which have proceeded essentially from the life of the local congregation and which serve it, but also those which have been created by the synod or the church at large (several congregations in common), as the office of a missionary, a circuit-rider, a professor, a visitor, a president, or whatever greater or lesser offices the church may require for its internal edification or its external extension, be they offices involving doctrine, correction, instruction or

supervision. For example: as far as divine institution is concerned, there is no difference between the parish ministry in a local congregation and the synodical office of a professor of theology in the church at large -- which some affirmed, others contested

Stratman, "Means & Call," p. 8, pars. 1&2. Stratman confers Hedkvist of the Lutheran Confessional Church of Sweden and Norway:

The public ministry is a ministry separate from the priesthood of all believers, but not in the sense that the public ministry should have other duties or more rights than the priesthood of all believers, but only in the sense that it is a *specific*, by God ordained way of carrying out the common rights of all Christians. The public ministry should publicly preach God's word in the name of other Christians and by their call and their commission.

Instead of speaking of two separate ministries it is then better to speak of only one ministry-- that is the ministry of preaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments. This ministry has been given to the Church, that is to all believers individually and collectively. Henceforth we will therefore speak of only one ministry-- the ministry of the Word and administering the sacraments, but of the two separate ways of practicing this ministry; on the one hand privately by virtue of the universal priesthood, on the other hand publicly by virtue of the public ministry which has been entrusted to an individual by the call of a congregation....

Stratman, "Means & Call," p. 16, par. 1,2&6, conclusion:

Luther and the confessors understood *Predigtamt* as synonymous with the Means of Grace. *Predigtamt* is better understood as "the work or responsibility of preaching" that God has given us rather than "preaching office". *Amt* is a very elastic word. In the Confessions, *Amt* is sometimes used in a way that means "function" rather than "office." ("The Law alone ... exercises this office (*Amt*)," that is carries out this function, Smalcald Articles, Trig. p. 481, #7).

To say "the ministry is an office" is about like saying "an automobile is a car." "Ministry" and "office" are synonyms. (See glossary at the beginning of this paper.) "Office" does not necessarily define or clarify the meaning of "ministry." Both words need to be understood in a verbal way, that is, as an action, a work, a service, rather than in a nominal way, as an established position or an institution.

.....

There is a distinction between *Predigtamt* (Gospel-ministry), and *Pfarramt* (Parish ministry or pastoral ministry). *Predigtamt* covers a wide variety of ministries of the means of grace. *Pfarramt* is the Pastor's

ministry of the means of grace. They are closely related, yet the two terms are not synonyms.

Contra Pastor Peter Berg, "We Have This Treasure In Clay Jars," WELS Michigan District, Southeastern Pastor-Teacher Delegate Conference, St. Stephen Ev. Lutheran Church, Adrian, MI (hereafter referred, Berg, "Treasure"), p. 1, par. 3: "Therefore God would repeat his Gospel again and again in Old Testament Times. He would localize it in visible means (e.g. the sacrifices, the Ark, the rainbow, etc.). He would also institute a priesthood, or ministry, to proclaim this promise (e.g. the patriarchs and later the Levites)."

Comment: Up to the examples cited, the "priesthood or ministry" can be understood as applying to all believers. The underlined examples tend to see the ministry of the Gospel as being concentrated within a select group ("patriarchs" and "Levites"). This ignores the fact that believers of all times and all places have been called to the ministry of the Gospel. However, not all have been called to the "public" ministry of the Gospel.

3) Every believer in Christ has the responsibility and the authority to proclaim the Gospel as well as the Law in his or her personal life, including the forgiving of sins and the retaining of sins according to Christ's command. As believers carry out this Ministry of the Gospel, they are speaking by the command and authority of Christ.

Matthew 16:19. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." [καὶ ὃ ἐὰν δήσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν λύσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.]

Matthew 18:15-18. ¹⁵ "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

¹⁸ "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. [Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν· ὅσα ἐὰν δήσητε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένα ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ὅσα ἐὰν λύσητε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένα ἐν οὐρανῷ.]

19 "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

John 20:21-23. 21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." [λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον· 23 ἂν τινῶν ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἀφέωνται αὐτοῖς, ἂν τινῶν κρατῆτε κεκράτηνται.]

Joel 2:28,29 (& Acts 2:17,18).

28 'And afterward,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your old men will dream dreams,

your young men will see visions.

29 Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

30 I will show wonders in the heavens

and on the earth,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

31 The sun will be turned to darkness

and the moon to blood

before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

32 And everyone who calls

on the name of the LORD will be saved;

for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem

there will be deliverance,

as the LORD has said,

among the survivors

whom the LORD calls.

Acts 2:16-21. 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 "In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

your old men will dream dreams.

18 Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,

and they will prophesy.

19 I will show wonders in the heaven above

and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

- ²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.
- ²¹ And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

Acts 18:24-26. ²⁴ Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

Acts 21:8&9. ⁸ Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. ⁹ He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

Mark 16:15,16. ¹⁵ He [Jesus] said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Ephesians 6:4. ⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Proverbs 31:10,26

A wife of noble character who can find?
She is worth far more than rubies.

.....
She speaks with wisdom,
and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14,15

⁵ I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Smalcald Articles. Part III. IV. Of the Gospel. (P. 491)

We will now return to the Gospel, which not merely in one way gives us counsel and aid against sin; for God is superabundantly rich [and liberal] in His grace [and goodness]. First, through the spoken Word by which the forgiveness of sins is preached [He commands to be preached] in the whole world; which is the peculiar office of the Gospel [das eigentliche Amt des

Evangelii; proprium officium evangelii]. Secondly, through Baptism. Thirdly, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar. Fourthly, through the power of the keys, and also through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren. Matt. 18, 20: *Where two or three are gathered together*, etc. [Cf. Stratman, "Means & Call," p. 6, par. 2.]

Smalcald Articles. Part III. VII. Of the Keys. (P. 493.)

1] The keys are an office [Amt] and power given by Christ to the Church for binding and loosing sin, not only the gross and well-known sins, but also the subtle, hidden, which are known only to God, as it is written in Ps. 19, 13: *Who can understand his errors?* And in Rom. 7, 25 St. Paul himself complains *that with the flesh he serves the law of sin*. 2] For it is not in our power, but belongs to God alone, to judge which, how great, and how many the sins are, as it is written in Ps. 143, 2: *Enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified*. 3] And Paul says, 1 Cor. 4, 4: *For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified*.

Smalcald Articles. Of the Power & Jurisdiction of Bishops. (P. 523.)

67] For wherever the Church is, there is the authority [command] 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 when he says, Eph 4, 8: *He ascended, He gave gifts to men*. And he enumerates among the gifts specially belonging to the Church *pastors and teachers* ["Pfarrherren und Lehrer," *pastores et doctores*] and adds that such are given for the ministry, *for the edifying of the body of Christ*. Hence, wherever there is a true church, the right to elect and ordain ministers necessarily exists. Just as in a case of necessity even a layman absolves, and becomes the minister and pastor of another; as Augustine narrates the story of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the catechumen, who after Baptism then absolved the baptizer.

68] Here belong the statements of Christ which testify that the keys have been given to the Church, and not merely to certain persons, Matt. 18, 20: *Where two or three are gathered together in My name*, etc.

69] Lastly, the statement of Peter also confirms this, 1 Pet. 2, 9: *Ye are a royal priesthood*. These words pertain to the true Church, which certainly has the right to elect and ordain ministers since it alone has the priesthood.

70] And this also a most common custom of the Church testifies. For formerly the people elected pastors and bishops. Then came a bishop, either of that church or a neighboring one, who confirmed the one elected by the laying on of hands; and ordination was nothing else than such a ratification. [Quoted also in Stratman, "Means & Call," p. 13, pars. 3ff.]

Stratman, "Means & Call," p. 1, par. 4. Stratman quotes Luther "Before Augsburg," on "The Misuse of the Mass (1521)," as follows:

For this reason we are firmly convinced on the basis of the Holy Scriptures that there is no more than one office of preaching God's Word, and that this office is common to all Christians; so that each person may speak, preach, and judge, and all the rest are obliged to listen. Since the Scriptures know of no other office of the Word of God we ask the Pope's idols, whence and from whom they have that office which is incumbent upon them alone and is not to be common to all. Go ahead, you delicate papists, you noble priests of Baal, and show us one iota in the Scriptures concerning your office and priesthood (LW 36:152).

Stratman, "Means & Call," p. 7, par. 3, confers Strobel (and F. Pieper) as follows:

Strobel: "Our Church's teaching of the ministerial office is, in short, this: To tell his neighbor the Word of God, to apply the Sacraments to him, to forgive his sins, to lay our hands upon him, these things are every baptized Christian's divine right as a spiritual priest (in case of need, his preemptory duty)" (Quoted by F. Pieper in *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. III, p. 448)

Tiefel, "Ministry ... Historical ... Usage," p. 2, #4:

Furthermore, all his life Luther held together and taught both the common ministry of all believers and the special Ministry of those who are called by the Church, even though he may have emphasized one or the other at different times.

Paul McCain responds to an essay by Douglas Fusselman titled, "It's Jesus: The Minister as Embodiment of Christ," published in Logia 6, no 1 (Epiphany 1997): 28-32. In his essay, McCain quotes Fusselman as stating, "The minister is really nothing more or less than the ecclesiastical embodiment of the Father's only begotten Son." In McCain's response, he quotes the following section from Luther's "Sermon for the Nineteenth Sunday After Trinity" (1533), in Sermons of Martin Luther: The House Postils, 3 vols., trans. and ed. Eugene Klug et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker book House, 1996), 3:80. McCain prefaces his remarks by quoting Luther as follows,

From today's Gospel [Matthew 9:1-8] we learn about the wondrously gracious ministry of the word which God has given to mankind here on earth, a word we can speak to one another, namely, Your sins are forgiven unto you! Wonder of wonders to every God-fearing person and something for which to thank God from the bottom of our hearts, because he has given

such power unto people! It is truly a mighty power when on[e] Christian can say to another, Dear Brother, be unafraid, God is gracious to you; only believe what he promises, as I declare it to you in Jesus' name, for it is as valid as if God himself were saying to you, Your sins are forgiven (79).

McCain then continues with sections of Luther's House Postils quoted from pages 84-86, as follows.

Every Christian has the command, not only that he can, but should, say to you when you are troubled by your sin: Why are you troubled? As your fellow Christian, I say to you, you are not fair to yourself, for God is not ungracious toward you; you ought to trust these words just as surely as though Christ were speaking to you personally from heaven, never questioning them because of the person of the one from whom you hear them.

[W]hen you go to the parish pastor, who has been given his office or to some other Christian, asking that he comfort you and absolve you from your sin, and he says to you, In the stead of God, I declare to you the forgiveness of all your sins through Christ, then you may be certain that through the external word your sins are really and truly forgiven.

We must not despise baptism, absolution, preaching, and the Sacrament, but seek and receive forgiveness of sins in this way. That is why God has ordained that there be pastors, fathers and mothers, and fellow Christians, and he places his word in their mouths, that we might seek comfort and forgiveness of sins through them. Even though it is just people who speak, nevertheless, it is not just they who speak but it is God's word. Therefore, trust it implicitly and do not despise it.

God has placed the forgiveness of sins in baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the word; in fact, he has placed it in the mouth of every Christian, to comfort and pronounce to you God's grace for the sake of Christ's vicarious satisfaction. You can receive it nowhere else, for this is tantamount to Christ himself speaking it with His own mouth.

4) Christ calls people into the public ministry of the Gospel through a group of Christians.

Matthew 18:19,20. ¹⁹ “Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

Acts 14:23. ²³ Paul and Barnabas appointed elders^a for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. [^aNIV footnote, “Or *Barnabas ordained elders; or Barnabas had elders elected.*”]

²³ χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς κατ’ ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους, προσευξάμενοι μετὰ νηστειῶν παρέθεντο αὐτοὺς τῷ κυρίῳ εἰς ὃν πεπιστεύκεισαν.

-- χειροτονήσαντες -- χειροτονέω; aor act ptc, to choose, elect by a show of hands, to appoint.

2 Corinthians 8:19. ¹⁹ What is more, he [Titus] was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help.

¹⁹ οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ χειροτονηθεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν συνέκδημος ἡμῶν σὺν τῇ χάριτι ταύτῃ τῇ διακονουμένη ὑφ’ ἡμῶν πρὸς τὴν [αὐτοῦ] τοῦ κυρίου δόξαν καὶ προθυμίαν ἡμῶν.

-- χειροτονηθεῖς -- χειροτονέω; Aor pass ptc, To be chosen, elected by the raising of hands, installed, appointed.

Titus 1:5. ⁵ The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint^a elders in every town, as I directed you. [^aNIV footnote, Or *ordain.*]

⁵ Τούτου χάριν ἀπέλιπον σε ἐν Κρήτῃ, ἵνα τὰ λείποντα ἐπιδιορθώσῃ καὶ καταστήσης κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγὼ σοι διαταξάμην,

-- καταστήσης -- καθίστημι; 2nd sg, aor act subj in a ἵνα purpose clause; appoint, put in charge, ordain.

Comment: The above passages all indicate the human element in the appointing, electing, ordaining, choosing of elders and others in the church -- in the case of 2 Corinthians 8:19, Titus was chosen, elected, as one of those to supervise the carrying of the offering to the saints in Jerusalem.

The passages below indicate that God works through the agency of this selection, election, choosing process, so that those chosen are appointed by God.

Acts 14:23. ²³ Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. [²NIV footnote, "Or Barnabas ordained elders; or Baranabas had elders elected.]

²³ χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς κατ' ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους, προσευξάμενοι μετὰ νηστειῶν παρέθεντο αὐτοὺς τῷ κυρίῳ εἰς ὃν πεπιστεύκεισαν.

-- χειροτονήσαντες -- χειροτονέω; aor act ptc, to choose, elect by a show of hands, to appoint.

Acts 20:28. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Ephesians 4:11. And He [Christ] gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers,

AC. Article XIV: Of Ecclesiastical Order.

Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called.

Smalcald Articles. Of the Power & Jurisdiction of Bishops. (P. 523.)

67] For wherever the Church is, there is the authority [command] 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 when he says, Eph 4, 8: *He ascended, He gave gifts to men.* And he enumerates among the gifts specially belonging to the Church *pastors and teachers* ["Pfarrherren und Lehrer," *pasciores et doctores*] and adds that such are given for the ministry, *for the edifying of the body of Christ.* Hence, wherever there is a true church, the right to elect and ordain ministers necessarily exists. Just as in a case of necessity even a layman absolves, and becomes the minister and pastor of another; as Augustine narrates the story of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the catechumen, who after Baptism then absolved the baptizer.

5) The Gospel in Word and Sacrament is the Means of Grace through which God works to convey his grace to people, giving them his forgiveness and peace.

Romans 1:16. ¹⁶ I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes

Romans 10:17. ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

John 20:21-23. ²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." [λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον. ²³ ἂν τινων ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἀφέωνται αὐτοῖς, ἂν τινων κρατῆτε κεκράτηνται.]

Titus 3:4-7. ⁴ But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

1 Peter 3:21. ²¹ ... baptism ... now saves you also

Matthew 26:26,28. ²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."
²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25. ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

AC. Article XIII: Of the Use of the Sacraments.

1] *Of the Use of the Sacraments* they teach that the Sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God 2] toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the Sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the Sacraments.

3] They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify by the outward act, and who do not teach that, in the use of the Sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven, is required.

6) While God often connects his Gospel with earthly elements such as in the New Testament sacraments and Old Testament sacrifices, the Ark of the Covenant, ritual, etc., these earthly elements are not the means of grace in themselves.

Contra Berg, "Treasure," p. 1, pars. 3. "[God] would localize [the Gospel] in visible means (e.g. the sacrifices, the Ark, the rainbow, etc.). He would also institute a priesthood, or ministry, to proclaim this promise (e.g. the patriarchs and later the Levites)."

Comment: While the patriarchs and the Levites did proclaim the Gospel, they did not do so to the exclusion of other believers -- men, women, children -- who also proclaimed the Gospel and were thus in the ministry of the Gospel -- though perhaps not always "public."

Isaiah 61:6a.

⁶ And you will be called priests of the LORD,
you will be named ministers of our God.

Jeremiah 33:22. ²² I will make the descendants of David my servant and the Levites who minister before me as countless as the stars of the sky and as measureless as the sand on the seashore."

Exodus 19:6. ⁶ "you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

Small Catechism

IV. THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM,

Thirdly.

9] *How can water do such great things?*—10] Answer.

It is not the water indeed that does them, but the word of God which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts such word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is simple water and no baptism. But with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus, chapter three: *By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying.*

Small Catechism

VI. THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR,

7] *How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?*—8] Answer.

It is not the eating and drinking, indeed, that does them, but the words which stand here, namely: *Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins.* Which words are, beside the bodily eating and drinking, as the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

7) While the Gospel is always connected to the ministry of that Gospel, that ministry, whether public or private, is not the Gospel itself.

2 Corinthians 4:1,7. Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

FCTD, Article XI, 1073

29] And this call of God, which is made through the preaching of the Word, we should not regard as jugglery, but know that thereby God reveals His will, that in those whom He thus calls He will work through the Word, that they may be enlightened, converted, and saved. For the Word,

whereby we are called, is a ministration of the Spirit, that gives the Spirit, or whereby the Spirit is given, 2 Cor. 3, 8, and a power of God unto salvation, Rom. 1, 16. And since the Holy Ghost wishes to be efficacious through the Word, and to strengthen and give power and ability, it is God's will that we should receive the Word, believe and obey it.

FCTD, Article XII, 1101
Erroneous Articles of the Schwenckfeldians.

28] Likewise, when the Schwenckfeldians assert:

.....
30] 2. That the ministry of the Church, the Word preached and heard, is not a means whereby God the Holy Ghost teaches men, and works in them saving knowledge of Christ, conversion, repentance, faith, and new obedience.

31] 3. That the water of Baptism is not a means by which God the Lord seals adoption and works regeneration.

32] 4. That bread and wine in the Holy Supper are not means by which Christ distributes His body and blood.

Stratman, "Means & Call," p. 5, n. 1, confers C. F. W. Walther, Church and Ministry (Kirche und Amt) -- Witnesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church on the Question of the Church and the Ministry, trans. J. T. Mueller (St. Louis, CPH, 1987 - original 1875), p. 179, par. 3, as follows:

It is important to understand this because of those who desire to make the pastoral office a means of grace and coordinate it with the Word and sacraments, as they assert that it is absolutely necessary for anyone to obtain salvation, so that on one without the service of an ordained minister can either come to faith or obtain absolution of his sins. But our church teaches this [necessity] only of the oral or outward Word in opposition to the alleged inner word and every [other] form of enthusiasm. Nevertheless, the Augsburg Confession in Art. V. no doubt intends to attest also the divine institution of the pastoral office, even if only indirectly, as all commentaries of our orthodox theologians in their comments on this article clearly show. (Cf. Mylius, Carpzov, Menzer, Frank, and others)

Contra Berg, "Treasure," p. 1, par. 3&4.

Therefore God would repeat his Gospel again and again in Old Testament times. He would localize it in visible means (e.g. the sacrifices, The Ark, the rainbow, etc.). He would also institute a priesthood, or ministry, to proclaim this promise (e.g. the patriarchs and later the Levites).

The three things just mentioned: Gospel, Means, and Ministry have been woven into one fabric. These three are the Church's hope and salvation. Satan hates the Gospel of salvation, and since the Means and the Ministry serve the Gospel (indeed, are Gospel!), he hates them also.

Comment: There is a confusion between the means and the messenger, cf. Berg, "Treasure," p. 3, par. 1, "Where the Gospel is, so are the Means and the Ministry, they are inseparable." The statement is true; however, means and ministry are not Gospel. The ministry serves the Gospel for it proclaims the Gospel. But the ministry is not in and of itself the Gospel as the parenthetical phrase above suggests. There is a confusion between material cause and efficient cause.

Walther's comment above that Article V of the Augsburg Confession applies also to the divine institution of the pastoral office is debatable, in spite of the commentators to whom he refers. While the pastoral office has been divinely instituted, that institution is not the only "form" of the public Gospel ministry, and this article is not directly referring to the institution of "forms."

8) As God did not tolerate unauthorized prophets in Israel, so also today we dare not tolerate those who take upon themselves the public ministry of the gospel without a legitimate call. When today we speak of "a legitimate call," we are not referring to an inner call by which some claim Christ has called them to preach or teach the gospel, but a call extended by a group of Christians to carry out the public ministry of the gospel.

Jeremiah 23:32. "Indeed, I am against those who prophesy false dreams," declares the LORD. "They tell them and lead my people astray with their reckless lies, yet I did not send or appoint them. They do not benefit these people in the least," declares the LORD.

Romans 10:15. And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Matthew 18:19,20. ¹⁹ "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Acts 13:1-3. In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

AC. Article XIV: Of Ecclesiastical Order.

Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called.

Cf Berg, "Treasure," p. 2, par. 3.

Your conference essay committee has asked, 'Is there a specific institution of gospel ministry in the Bible.' To answer yes would be true enough, but it would not do justice to all that the Bible reveals about the ministry of the Gospel. Patriarchal altars, priests, priestly vestments, tabernacle, temple, sacrifices, ceremonies, church year, and prophets were all mandated by God. An authorized, personified ministry of salvation was God's gift to his people. [God] would place his Word in the trust of men whether they stood before a portable tabernacle or a temple on a holy hill. God gave his people spiritual shepherds. ~~As it is today~~, people were called into this ministry, either directly by God (e.g. Isaiah) or by appointment of the Church (e.g. the Levitical succession). There was no tolerance for unauthorized prophets in Israel.

Comment: There is a confusion in the above quoted section between the Ministry of the Gospel and the Public Ministry of the Gospel to which a believer is called by a Christian congregation (synod, group, etc.).

Comment: The following passage is sometimes misapplied as a proof for different forms of the public ministry of the Gospel --

Acts 6:1-6. In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶ They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

Comment: The events of Acts 6:1-6 do not refer to a calling into the public gospel ministry but rather to representational Christian service. This reference should not be used as an example of the call into the public gospel ministry. These deacons were called in order that the apostles, who had been called into the public gospel ministry, might devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word -- i.e. the public ministry of the gospel. Scripture is silent as to whether or not any public ministry of the gospel accompanied this deaconate -- the ministry of waiting on tables -- providing food for the poor and widows.

The argument here is not that there are not different forms of the same public ministry of the gospel, but that this passage does not support that thesis.

An example of the misapplication of Acts 6:1-6 is as follows:

Doctrinal Statements of the WELS, Prepared by the Commission on Inter-Church Relations of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran synod, 1997, "Theses on the Church and Ministry," II. C & D 6, pp. 49,50:

- C. *From the beginning of the Church there were men especially appointed to discharge publicly (in behalf of a group of Christians) the duties of this one ministry. Ac 13:1-3; 6:1-6.*
- D6. There is, however, *no direct word of institution for any particular form of the public ministry.* The one public ministry of the Gospel may assume various forms, as circumstances demand. *Ac 6:1-6.* The specific forms in which Christians establish the public ministry have not been prescribed by the Lord to His New Testament Church. it is the Holy Spirit who through the gift of their common faith leads the believers to establish the adequate and wholesome forms which fit every circumstance, situation, and need. Various functions are mentioned in Scripture: 1 Ti 4:13; Eph 4:11; 1 Co 12:28; Ro 12:6-8; Ti 2:2; Jn 21:15-17 (feeding); Ac 20:28 (watching); 1 Ti 3:2; 4:11; 6:2 (teaching; 1 Ti 3:5; 5:17 (ruling). In spite of the great diversity in external forms of the ministerial work the ministry is essentially one. The various offices for the public preaching of the gospel, not only those enumerated above, e.g., in Eph 4:11 and 1 Co 12:28, but also those developed in our day, are all gifts of the exalted Christ to His Church which the Church receives gratefully and with due regard for love and order employs under the guides and direction of the Holy Spirit for the upbuilding of the spiritual body of Christ; and all of them are comprehended under the general commission to preach the Gospel given to all believers.

Antithesis:

We hold it to be untenable to say that the pastorate of the local congregation (*Pfarramt*) as a specific form of the public ministry is specifically instituted by the Lord in contrast to other forms of the public ministry.

Another example of the misapplication of Acts 6:1-6 is as follows:

Senior Dogmatics, 5. The Ministerial Office, II. 3. b) -1 -a (p. 168):

3. Ministers of the Gospel today are called by the Christians themselves (*vocatio mediata*).
- 3.b) No mode of election and calling is prescribed in Holy Writ.
- 3.b)-1) Historically.
 - a) One election is fully described. cf Acts 6:1-6.

9) While any minister of the gospel (public or private) can legitimately be said to be speaking for and on behalf of Christ, and those who hear him (or her) hear Christ, there is no Scriptural basis to say that that person is Christ incarnate for the people who hear him. The incarnational nature of Lutheran theology lies in the incarnation of the Son of God, where God himself took on human flesh to redeem sinful mankind.

Luke 17:10. ⁷ “Suppose one of you had a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’? ⁸ Would he not rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’? ⁹ Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? ¹⁰ So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’”

John 3:25-34. ²⁵ An argument developed between some of John’s disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. ²⁶ They came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.”

²⁷ To this John replied, “A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.’ ²⁹ The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ³⁰ He must become greater; I must become less.”

³¹ “The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. ³³ The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. ³⁴ For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.

2 Corinthians 2:4-6. ⁴ Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. ⁵ Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. ⁶ He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Corinthians 4:7. ⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

2 Thessalonians 2:3,4. the man of lawlessness ... will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Exodus 4:10-16 (NIV). ¹⁰ Moses said to the LORD, “O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.”

¹¹ The LORD said to him, “Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹² Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

¹³ But Moses said, “O Lord, please send someone else to do it.”

¹⁴ Then the LORD’s anger burned against Moses and he said, “What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. ¹⁵ You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. ¹⁶ He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him. ¹⁷ But take this staff in your hand so you can perform miraculous signs with it.”

Exodus 4:14-16 (NASB). ¹⁴ Then the anger of the Lord burned against Moses, and He said, “Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently. And moreover, behold, he is coming out to meet you; when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. ¹⁵ “And you are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I, even I, will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you are to do. ¹⁶ “Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and it shall come about that he shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be as God to him. ¹⁷ “And you shall take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs.”

Exodus 4:14-16 (KJV). ¹⁴ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.* ¹⁵ And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. ¹⁶ And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

Exodus 4:14-16 (Hebrew).

14 וַיִּסְרֹאֶף יְהוָה בְּמֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא אֶהְיֶה אִתְּךָ הָ
 לֹוֹי יִדְעֹתִי כִּי־דָבָר יִדְבַּר הוּא וְגַם הֵנָּה הוּא יֵצֵא לְקִרְאֹתְךָ
 וְרָאֶךָ וְשָׂמַח בְּלִבּוֹ:
 15 וְדִבַּרְתָּ אֵלָיו וְשָׂמַתָּ אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים בְּפִיו וְאָנֹכִי
 יִהְיֶה־לְךָ לְפָנָה אֲהִיָּה עִם־פִּיךָ וְעִם־פִּיהוּ וְהוֹרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּן
 16 וְדִבַּר־הוּא לְךָ אֶל־הָעָם וְהָיָה הוּא
 וְאַתָּה תִּהְיֶה־לוֹ לֵאלֹהִים:

The Interlinear Literal Translation of the Hebrew Old Testament ..., by George Ricker Berry (Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 1970), p. 232, notes the following interlinear translation for וְאַתָּה תִּהְיֶה־לוֹ לֵאלֹהִים, "and thou shalt become for him (for) a God." This was the only translation found that used an article before Elohim. The Jerusalem Bible comes close by the small case "god", "you will be as the god inspiring him."

Apology, Art. VII. VIII., par. 28 (toward the end), p. 237. Neither does the fact that the Sacraments are administered by the unworthy detract from their efficacy, because, on account of the call of the Church, they represent the person of Christ, and do not represent their own persons, as Christ testifies, Luke 10, 16: *He that heareth you heareth Me*. [Thus even Judas was sent to preach.] When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the Sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ. Those words of Christ teach us not to be offended by the unworthiness of the ministers.

Apology, Art. VII. VIII., par. 28 (toward the end), p. 237 (Latin). Nec adimit sacramentis efficaciam, quod per indignos tractantur, quia repraesentant Christi personam propter vocationem ecclesiae, non repraesentant proprias personas, ut testatur Christus Luc. 10, 16: *Qui vos audit, me audit*. Quum Verbum Christi, quum sacramenta porrigunt, Christi vice et loco porrigunt. Id docet nos illa vox Christi, ne indignitate ministrorum offendamur.

Apology, Art. VII. VIII., par. 28 (toward the end), p. 237 (German). Und die Sakramente, Taufe, usw., sind darum nicht ohne Wirkung oder Kraft, daß sie durch Unwürdige und Gottlose gereicht werden. Denn um des Berufs willen der Kirche sind solche da, nicht für ihre eigene Person, sondern als Christus, wie Christus zeugt: "Wer euch höret, der höret mich." Also ist auch Judas zu predigen gesendet. Wenn nun gleich Gottlose predigen und die Sakramente reichen, so reichen sie dieselben an Christus' Statt. Und das lehrt uns das Wort Christi, daß wir in solchem Fall die Unwürdigkeit der Diener uns nicht sollen irren [irremachen] lassen.

Large Catechism, "Fourth Commandment," par. 105-108, p. 611. 105] To this estate of fatherhood and motherhood God has given the special distinction above all estates that are beneath it that He not simply commands us to love our parents, but to honor them. For with respect to brothers, sisters, and our neighbors in general He commands nothing higher than that we love them, so that He separates and distinguishes father and mother above all other persons upon earth, and places them at His side. 106] For it is a far higher thing to honor than to love one, inasmuch as it comprehends not only love, but also modesty, humility, and deference as to a majesty there hidden, 107] and requires not only that they be addressed kindly and with reverence, but, most of all, that both in heart and with the body we so act as to show that we esteem them very highly, and that, next to God, we regard them as the very highest. For one whom we are to honor from the heart we must truly regard as high and great.

108] We must, therefore, impress it upon the young that they should regard their parents as in God's stead, and remember that however lowly, poor, frail, and queer they may be, nevertheless they are father and mother given them by God. They are not to be deprived of their honor because of their conduct or their failings.

Large Catechism, "Fourth Commandment," par. 141,142, p. 621. 141] In this commandment belongs a further statement regarding all kinds of obedience to persons in authority who have to command and to govern. For all authority flows and is propagated from the authority of parents. For where a father is unable alone to educate his [rebellious and irritable] child, he employs a schoolmaster to instruct him; if he be too weak, he enlists the aid of his friends and neighbors; if he departs this life, he delegates and confers his authority and government upon others who are appointed for the purpose. 142] Likewise, he must have domestics, man-servants and maid-servants, under himself for the management of the household, so that all whom we call masters are in the place of parents and must derive their power and authority to govern from them. Hence also they are all called fathers in the Scriptures, as those who in their government perform the functions of a father, and should have a paternal heart toward their subordinates.

Large Catechism, "Fourth Commandment," pars. 158-161, p. 627. 158] Thus we have two kinds of fathers presented in this commandment, fathers in blood and fathers in office, or those to whom belongs the care of the family, and those to whom belongs the care of the country. Besides these there are yet spiritual fathers; not like those in the Papacy, who have indeed had themselves called thus, but have performed no function of the paternal office. For those only are called spiritual fathers who govern and guide us by the Word of God; 159] as St. Paul boasts his fatherhood 1 Cor. 4, 15, where he says: *In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.* Now, 160] since they are fathers they are entitled to their honor, even above all others. But here it is bestowed least; for the way which the world knows for honoring them is to drive them out of the country and to grudge them a piece of bread, and, in short, they must be (as says St. Paul, 1 Cor. 4, 13) as the filth of the world and everybody's refuse and footrag.

161] Yet there is need that this also be urged upon the populace, that those who would be Christians are under obligation in the sight Of God to esteem them worthy of double honor who minister to their souls, that they deal well with them and provide for them. For that, God is willing to add to you sufficient blessing and will not let you come to want.

Stratman, "Means & Call," p. 11, par. 4; from Luther (LW 37:367):

Next, I believe that there is one holy Christian Church on earth, i.e. the community or number or assembly of all Christians in all the world, the one bride of Christ and his spiritual body of which he is the only head. The bishops or priests are not her heads or lords or bridegrooms, but servants, friends, and--as the word "bishop" implies--superintendents, guardians, or stewards.

Cf Berg, "Treasure," p. 7, pars. 3-5:

The Ministry is the Incarnation of Christ

The Lord comforted fearful Moses by telling him, *(Aaron will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if you were God to him. (Ex 4:16)* Moses would not only be God for Aaron, but also for Israel and a haughty Pharaoh. *Therefore, say to the Israelites: "I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians." ((Ex 6:6)* God's ministers are God for friend and foe alike. *He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me...(Lk 10:16; Jn 13:20)* God's ministers have been placed into an office, or we might say, into a role. It is common among us to speak about public or representative ministry, meaning "in the name of the congregation." More important than this is that the minister is in the role of Christ. He is in the stead of Christ (TLH p 16) or by his authority (CW p 26). Luther notes this in his commentary on John's Gospel:

Therefore whenever you hear the Gospel properly taught or see a person baptized, wherever you see someone administer or receive the Sacrament, or wherever you witness someone absolving another, there you may say without hesitation: "Today I beheld God's Word and work. Yes, I saw and heard God Himself preaching and baptizing." (AE 24:67; see also LC IV:10)

The "someone of this quote is not just anyone. Luther was death on "clandestine preachers," as he called them, and he was certainly the inspiration of the confessional principle: "...no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called." (AC IV) Although the priests of God will show forth his praises in word and deed, we speak here of the office of the Ministry. Of that ministry Luther goes on to say in the previously quoted section, "Thus here we do not separate, or differentiate between, God and His Word or ministry..." (AE 24:67/see also Tr24)

NB the wider context of the above referred citation from Luther:

Luther's Works, vol. XXIV, "Sermons on the Gospel of St. John, Chapters 14-16," Ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961.

Regarding John 14:10. (P. 64.) "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? the words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does His works."

(Pp. 66-68.) Furthermore, when Christ commands His apostles to proclaim His Word and to carry on His work, we hear and see Him Himself, and thus also God the Father; for they publish and proclaim no other Word than that which they heard from His lips, and they point solely to Him. Thus the process goes on; the Word is handed down to us through the agency of true bishops, pastors, and preachers, who received it from the apostles. In this way all sermons delivered in Christendom must proceed from this one Christ; and the clergy must prove that the words and works of their ministry in Christendom -- regardless of whether their own person is good or evil -- are those of Christ. They must declare: "You are not to look to me or to follow me. No, heed only that which the Lord Christ says to you or shows to you through me; for this is not my word; it is Christ's Word. The Baptism and Sacrament I administer is not mine; it is His Baptism and Sacrament. The office I fill is not mine; it is the Lord's office. But since it is Christ's Word and Baptism, it is also the Father's Word and Sacrament, because He says: 'Whatever I say and do, I do not say or do on My own authority, but on the authority of the Father, who dwells in me.'"

Thus it is all blended into one. [German: *jnn einen kuchen geschlagen.*] All that issues from Christ's lips emanates from the Father; for Christ declares: "what I say, not I, but the Father says." Likewise St. Paul and the other apostles and preachers affirm: "It is not I who baptizes and absolves you; it is Christ. It is not we who are speaking; it is Christ and God Himself. Hence when you hear this sermon, you are hearing God Himself. On the other hand, if you despise this sermon, you are despising, not us but God Himself." For it is all from God, who condescends to enter the mouth of each Christian or preacher and says: "If you want to see Me or My work, look to Christ; if you want to hear Me, hear this Word." Christ transmits this command to the apostles; these pass it on to their successors, bishops and preachers; these, in turn, deliver it to all the world. Thus the apostles and pastors are nothing but channels through which Christ leads and transmits His Gospel from the Father to us. Therefore wherever you hear the Gospel properly taught or see a person baptized, where you see someone administer or receive the Sacrament, or wherever you witness someone absolving another, there you may say without hesitation: "Today I beheld God's Word and work. Yes, I saw and heard God Himself preaching and baptizing." To be sure, the tongue, the voice the hands, etc., are those of a human being; but the Word and the ministry are really those of the Divine Majesty Himself. Hence it must be viewed and believed as though God's own voice were resounding from heaven and

as through we were seeing Him administering Baptism or the Sacrament with His own hands. Thus here we do not separate, or differentiate between, God and His Word or ministry, given to us through Christ; nor do we seek God in another way or view Him in a different light.

When we get to heaven, we shall see God differently; then no clouds and no darkness will obscure our view. But here on earth we shall not perceive Him with our senses and our thoughts. No, here we see Him, as St. Paul states (1 Cor. 13:12), "in a mirror dimly," enveloped in an image, namely, in the Word and the sacraments. These are His masks or His garments, as it were, in which He conceals Himself. But He is certainly present in these, Himself working miracles, preaching, administering the sacraments, consoling, strengthening, and helping. We see Him as we see the sun through a cloud. For now we cannot bear to see and look at His brilliant Majesty. Therefore He must cover and veil Himself, so to speak, behind a heavy cloud. Thus it has been ordained that he who wants to see and apprehend both the Father and the Son glorified and enthroned in majesty, must apprehend Him through the Word and through the works He performs in Christendom by means of the ministry and other offices.

By no means should we become so foolish as to sever and separate God, Christ, and His Word from one another and to debate about God as the heathen, the Turks, the sophists, or others do, with only His majesty in mind. Such men will indeed let God speak to the rest of us down here on earth and work in us through the clergy, through father, mother, etc.; meanwhile they themselves ascend into the cloud and are concerned about what God does and thinks up there. Not a good spirit, but the devil bids them ask about and reflect on that! But if you really want to know on what terms you are with God and whether your way of living finds favor in His eyes, then give ear to His Word recorded here, and you will soon learn: "He who sees and hears Me sees and hears the Father also." Therefore ask yourself if you delight wholeheartedly in what Christ proclaims and does for you through His Christians, such as preachers, father, mother, and other pious people. If you sincerely listen and adhere to this, then you can rest assured. You need not entertain any further doubts; indeed, you must not. For wherever these people tell you, God truly tells you Himself.

But if you go your way like a reckless man, refuse to heed this, and still insist on exploring and fathoming your relationship to God in heaven with your own reason, you are lost. And it serves you right; for you reject God's own offer to you, and instead seek something else. For it is the express purpose of His presence here on earth to communicate His will to you, so that you may know assuredly how He is disposed toward you. He ordered and ordained all the offices and estates in Christendom for the purpose of filling the entire world with the works of God; and you ignore all this as though it were of no account. You think to yourself: "God dwells up in heaven among the angels and is occupied with other matters. How can a preacher or a father or a mother help me? If only I could hear and see God Himself!" That is severing and separating God from His work, Christ from his Word; and these two should be joined and kept together most firmly.

Comment. The quotation in Berg's paper does not go far enough into the context as is illustrated in the longer quotation following the section quoted by Berg. Luther, the confessions and the Scriptures are speaking of the Ministry of the Gospel in the sense that whenever a Christian forgives or retains sins, that Christian is functioning in the stead of Christ and in the place of Christ and with the authority and by the command of Christ. If one were going to state that "The Ministry is the Incarnation of Christ" -- which this thesis challenges -- then one would have to speak of every Christian as the "Incarnation of Christ" whenever he is speaking God's Word to another. NB, Luther places special emphasis on parents -- Fourth Commandment, Large Catechism -- as being in the stead of Christ. But he also speaks this way of government as well as preachers and teachers.

Obviously Luther holds the public ministry of the Gospel in high regard as preachers and teachers proclaim that Word. As they do that, those who hear are to regard the words and the hearing as if Christ spoke to them himself. However, Luther also mentions others who proclaim that word, specifically father and mother as well as other Christians. This reflects our confession that the office of the ministry of the gospel [das Predigtamt] has been given to the church and not merely to a select few who have been called into the public ministry of the gospel.

Comment: Confusion between "causes" (Aristotelian).

Formal cause: The preacher, proclaimer, Christian proclaiming God's Word in truth and purity, rightly dividing and applying Law & Gospel.

Material cause: That which is proclaimed, the Word, again rightly divided.

Efficient cause: Christ and the Holy Spirit who command and work through the Word rightly proclaimed and applied. The Word too is efficacious.

Final cause: Faith, forgiveness, eternal life; godliness in this world; or,
The denial of forgiveness to the impenitent as long as they do not repent.

We must not confuse the formal and material. The preacher or teacher is not the Word. The preacher or teacher is not Christ. If preacher and teacher are faithful, they merely proclaim the Word; the Holy Spirit does the rest, whether that be his alien work -- contrition -- or his friendly work -- repentance and faith.