

# MARTIN LUTHER ON GENDER AND THE MINISTRY

So faith is necessary everywhere. You receive as much as you believe. And this is what I understand it to mean when our teachers say that the sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, not because of the mere fact that the sacrament is performed but because it is believed, as St. Augustine contends and as I have said previously. So also here. Absolution is efficacious, not by the mere fact that it takes place, no matter who finally does it and whether he errs or does not err, but because it is believed. ... Therefore contrition is not as necessary as faith. In this respect faith in absolution receives incomparably more benefit than does zeal in penitence. ... According to the prophet we ought to place our hope in Christ's word, not in our penitence. The Psalmist did not say, "Remember my contrition to thy servant, in which thou hast made me hope," but "Remember thy word...in which thou hast made me hope" [Ps. 119:49]. Again he says, "In thy word [certainly not in our own work] have I placed great hope" [Cf. Ps. 119:81]. In another psalm he says, "My soul is sustained by his word," etc. [Cf. Ps. 130:5]. And according to the Hebrew he says in Psalm 51[:4], "Against thee, only, have I sinned, ...wherefore thou wilt justify me by thy word." Therefore it is neither the sacrament nor the priest, but faith in the word of Christ spoken through the priest and his office which justifies you. What difference does it make to you, if the Lord should speak through an ass, either male or female, as long as you hear that word by which you may hope and believe? ... Formerly, in the time of Saul, the word of the Lord was considered precious [I Sam. 3:1]. Now his word comes to you even through most irresponsible, wretched, and unlearned men. Pay attention to the word and dismiss the outward appearance of the person. Whether the person errs or does not err, you shall not err if you believe God's word. (Martin Luther, "Explanations of the Ninety-five Theses" [1518], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 31 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957], pp. 193-95)

*Thou shalt honor thy father and mother* From this commandment we teach that after the excellent works of the first three commandments there are no better works than to obey and serve all those who are set in authority over us. ...what is said and commanded of parents must also be understood of those who, when the parents are dead or not there, take their place, such as friends, relatives, godparents, temporal lords, and spiritual fathers. For everybody must be ruled and subject to other men. ... The second work of this commandment is to honor and obey our spiritual mother, the holy Christian church, and [its] spiritual authorities. We must conform to what they command, forbid, appoint, ordain, bind, and loose. We must honor, fear, and love the spiritual authorities as we do our natural parents, and yield to them in all things that are not contrary to the first three commandments. ... The spiritual authorities should punish sin with the ban and with laws, and constrain their spiritual children to be pious, motivate them to do this work, to practice obedience, and to honor the authorities. You do not see this kind of zeal today. They [the spiritual authorities] behave toward their responsibilities like those mothers who forsake their children and run after their lovers, as Hosea 2[:5] says. They do not preach, they do not teach, they do not restrain, they do not punish, and no spiritual government at all remains in Christendom. ... But spiritual authorities should see to it that adultery, unchastity, usury, gluttony, worldly show, excessive adornment, and other such blatant sin and shame are most severely punished and rectified. And further, the endowments, monastic houses, parishes, and schools should be properly managed and real worship maintained within them. The spiritual authorities should take care of the young people, both boys and girls, in schools and cloisters, and provide them with learned and pious men for teachers that they may all be well brought up. The older people should provide a good example, and Christendom would be filled and adorned with fine young people. St. Paul enjoins his disciple Titus that he should properly instruct and govern all classes, young and old, men and women [Titus 2:1-10]. ... If this state of affairs prevailed one could say how honor and obedience ought to be paid to the spiritual authorities. But now the situation is much the same as it is with those natural parents who let their children do as they like. Today the spiritual authorities issue decrees, make dispensations, and take money. They pardon beyond what they have power to pardon. ... If a bishop would devotedly take care of all these demands, see to them, make visitations, and fulfil all his responsibilities in the way that he should, then even one single city would be too much for him. For in the days of the apostles, when Christendom was at its best, each city had a bishop, even though Christians constituted the smallest part of the population. ... It is time we prayed to God for mercy. We have plenty of spiritual authorities, but little or no spiritual government. In the meantime, may he who is able give what help he can, so that institutions, monasteries, parishes, and schools may be well ordered and governed. It should also be one of the tasks of the spiritual authorities to reduce the

[number of] institutions, monasteries, and schools where they cannot be properly cared for. It is much better to have no monastery or institution than one in which an evil system rules and provokes God to anger all the more. ...the spiritual authorities...are just like parents who give a command which is contrary to God. In a state of affairs like this we have to be sensible. The Apostle has said that those times in which such authorities rule shall be perilous (I Tim. 4:1 ff., II Tim. 3:1 ff.). ...our first task is to take a firm hold of the first three commandments and the First Table, and be quite certain that no man, neither bishop, pope, nor even angel, may command or prescribe anything contrary to these three commandments and their works, whether it is contrary to them or does not further them. And if they attempt to impose such demands, we must consider their demands unauthorized and worthless. (Martin Luther, "Treatise on Good Works" [1520], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 44 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966], pp. 80, 82, 87-89)

*In the sacrament of penance and in the remission of guilt, pope and bishop do no more than the humblest priest. Indeed, if a priest is not available, any Christian could do just as much, even a woman or a child. ...it is not the work of the priest but the faith of the penitent which effects the forgiveness of sins. For if the pope and all the priests together were to give absolution to a sinner it would not be valid, nor would it help him at all unless the sinner believed it. The word stands firm, "He who does not believe will be condemned" [Mark 16:16]. ... If even Christ and God himself were to pronounce the absolution, without faith it would be of no avail. ... If, then, forgiveness depends entirely upon faith and not on the office or power of the priest; and if the pope can do as little toward the bestowal of faith as the humblest priest, and the priest as little as a woman or a child, I should like the pope to explain to me what he does in this matter that is more than an ordinary priest does? ...the heretical Donatists, who were overcome by St. Augustine, and who tried to make all the sacraments dependent upon the sanctity of the priests and not the faith of the penitents, were nevertheless more tolerable and better than the pope and his bishops who want to bind the sacraments to rank and power. For if a holy priest does no more in the sacrament than a sinful priest, how can a great high priest do any more than a lowly and insignificant priest, since holiness is far more important than power? ... For the keys are given only for the sake of the sacrament of penance, which is the common property of all Christians. No one has a greater or smaller part in it, save in proportion to his faith. I would like to ask another question, most holy father pope: Do you also have a sacrament of baptism that is different from what all priests and Christians have? By virtue of your exalted rank, do you do more when you baptize than does a priest, a layman, a woman, or a child? Speak up! Have you lost your voice? If you have another baptism, then St. Paul condemns you in Eph. 4[:5], when he says, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," etc. But if the sacrament of baptism is the same among all Christians, so that in an emergency a layman, a woman, or a child may administer it – which happens every day – why should not the sacrament of the keys, i.e., penance or absolution, also be common property? Is it not also a sacrament just like baptism? And is your mass any different from that of all other priests? Can you give more of the body of Christ than our chaplain? Why, then, do you make an exception of the sacrament of the keys with your claim to do more in this sacrament than all the rest of Christendom? (Martin Luther, "Defense and Explanation of All the Articles" [1521], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 32 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958], pp. 50-52)*

...in all my writings I never wanted more than that all Christians should be priests; yet not all should be consecrated by bishops, not all should preach, celebrate mass, and exercise the priestly office unless they have been appointed and called to do so. ...no man can deny that St. Peter's saying is addressed to all Christians, be they young or old, men or women. Clearly, therefore, everything that is comprehended in [the physical priesthood] must be understood as given to all these Christians. For since all Christians are called priests when he says, "You are a royal priesthood" [I Pet. 2:9], and since it is also to be understood in the sense of the physical priesthood, which is consecrated and tonsured, as swordsman [Jerome] Emser teaches and constructs, we have to confess that all Christians are undoubtedly such physical priests. Otherwise, we are heretics and the devil's property, as Emser threatens. Perhaps this is why women wear veils and young maidens wear braids – so that no one can see that they are consecrated and tonsured. Well then, this is finished. But it still has one major fault. I shall be glad to humble myself and hear women and children preach. But how do we convince Emser, the cuirassier-eater, to do the same? He will not want to be in the common priesthood. Besides, he will not permit women to teach him – even if they were only pretty, smooth young maids – because he is too chaste. But I wish he could be persuaded to make his confession to such a confessor at a secret place and to wait most humbly for his absolution! ...

So that everyone may know that St. Peter's saying is addressed to all Christians...we shall include the text

according to its order and logical arrangement. It is I Peter 2[:1-5] and reads as follows: "Put away all malice and all guile and all insincerity and hatred and all slander. Like newborn babes, seek the reasonable pure milk, that by it you may grow up; for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. You came to him as to the living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight precious and chosen; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, into a holy priesthood, and offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ," etc. What man is so dumb he does not see that these words are addressed to all people in common? Who are the people who should put away the enumerated vices and seek the reasonable pure milk? Indeed, can this be understood in terms of tonsure-bearers? He [Peter] speaks of seeking milk the way women customarily speak about their babies. A baby "seeks" when it desires its mother and milk. This is the way all Christians should seek their reasonable milk, namely, the evangelical teaching which is unadulterated by human teaching, which is pure and clean and comes from the true mother, the bride of Christ, the holy church. Now he [Peter] tells them they should themselves be built upon Christ into a holy priesthood. ...

St. Peter continues [I Pet. 2:6-10] "For it stands in Scripture, 'Behold, I am laying in Zion an extraordinary cornerstone, chosen and precious, and he who believes in him will not be put to shame.' To you who believe, therefore, he is precious, but for those who do not believe, 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become a principal cornerstone,' and 'a stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall'; they are offended by the word and do not believe him upon whom they are to be built. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were no people but now you are a people," etc. Tell me, can anyone be so crude as not to understand to whom St. Peter speaks here? ... He [Peter] names the people and the congregation very clearly, and he calls them all together a royal priesthood and commands them to preach the deeds of God who has called them. Now if this is also said of the Emserian priesthood, as our Emser teaches, all of us are certainly such priests. He may interpret "priests" as he pleases, but all Christians are nevertheless such priests through this passage. If all of us should preach, then the tonsure-bearers must keep silent, since they have a different, special priesthood above all Christians.

The two following passages are also to be understood in the same way. The first one is, "You did ransom us by your blood, and have made us a kingdom of God and priests," Revelation 5[:9-10], and the other one is Revelation 20[:6], "Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of his Christ." Both are said of the whole congregation and are to be understood in that sense as the words demand, without the aid of glosses. Moreover, these three passages are the only ones about priests in the New Testament. All the others call Emser's priests not priests but servants, guardians, and elders. Thereby the Holy Spirit teaches us that ointments, consecrations, tonsures, chasubles, albs, chalices, masses, sermons, etc., do not make priests or give power. Rather, priesthood and power have to be there first, brought from baptism and common to all Christians through the faith which builds them upon Christ the true high priest, as St. Peter says here. But to exercise such power and to put it to work is not every man's business. Only he who is called by the common assembly, or the man representing the assembly's order and will, does this work in the stead of and as the representative of the common assembly and power. It is therefore not true that there is more than one simple priesthood in the church; and the tonsure-bearers are not called priests in accordance with Scripture, as Emser lies. The name "priest" belongs to all of us, with all its power, rights, and the respect these robbers and thieves of God would like to tear away from us and claim only for themselves. But just as they called themselves "church" and we have taken away from them what they stole, so too did they make themselves priests. But this is now also taken away from them. (Martin Luther, "Dr. Luther's Retraction of the Error Forced Upon Him by the Most Highly Learned Priest of God, Sir Jerome Emser, Vicar in Meissen" [1521], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 39 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970], pp. 233-37)

Now, however, the papists quote to us the saying of Paul (I Cor. 14[:34]): "The women should keep silence in the church; it is not becoming for a woman to preach. A woman is not permitted to preach, but she should be subordinate and obedient." They argue from this that preaching cannot be common to all Christians because women are excluded. My answer to this is that one also does not permit the dumb to preach, or those who are otherwise handicapped or incompetent. Although everyone has the right to preach, one should not use any person for this task, nor should anyone undertake it, unless he is better fitted than the others. To him the rest should yield and give place, so that the proper respect, discipline, and order may be maintained. Thus Paul charges Timothy to entrust the preaching of the Word of God to those who are fitted for it and who will be able to teach and instruct others [II Tim. 2:2]. The person who wishes to preach needs to have a good voice, good eloquence, a good memory and other natural gifts; whoever does not have

these should properly keep still and let somebody else speak. Thus Paul forbids women to preach in the congregation where men are present who are skilled in speaking, so that respect and discipline may be maintained; because it is much more fitting and proper for a man to speak, a man is also more skilled at it. Paul did not forbid this out of his own devices, but appealed to the law, which says that women are to be subject [Gen. 3:16]. From the law Paul was certain that the Spirit was not contradicting Himself by now elevating the women above the men after He had formerly subjected them to the men; but rather, being mindful of His former institution, He was arousing the men to preach, as long as there is no lack of men. How could Paul otherwise have singlehandedly resisted the Holy Spirit, who promised in Joel [2:28]: “And your daughters shall prophesy.” Moreover, we read in Acts 4 [21:8-9]: “Philip had four unmarried daughters, who all prophesied.” “And Miriam the sister of Moses was also a prophetess” [Exod. 15:20]. And Huldah the prophetess gave advice to pious King Josiah [II Kings 22:14-20], and Deborah did the same to Duke Barak [Judg. 4:4-7]; and finally, the song of the Virgin Mary [Luke 1:46-55] is praised throughout the world. Paul himself in I Cor. 11[:5] instructs the women to pray and prophesy with covered heads. Therefore order, discipline, and respect demand that women keep silent when men speak; but if no man were to preach, then it would be necessary for the women to preach. For this reason we are firmly convinced on the basis of the Holy Scriptures that there is not 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. (Martin Luther, “The Misuse of the Mass” [1521], *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 36 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959], pp. 151-52)

Paul says to his disciple Titus: “This is why I left you in Candia, that you might complete what I left unfinished, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you, men who are blameless, the husband of one wife, whose children are believers and not open to the charge of being profligate. For a bishop, as God’s steward, must be blameless,” etc. [Titus 1:5-7] Whoever believes that here in Paul the Spirit of Christ is speaking and commanding will be sure to recognize this as a divine institution and ordinance, that in each city there should be several bishops, or at least one. It is also evident that Paul considers elders and bishops to be one and the same thing, for he says: Elders are to be appointed and installed in all cities, and that a bishop shall be blameless. Paul does not give the name “elder,” however, to the tonsured and anointed idols [the papal bishops], but to the honest pious citizens in a city, men of good conduct and repute; they are to become bishops, and several of them in every city, as the Greek text clearly states here, and in Phil. 1[:1]: “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with their bishops and deacons: grace and peace, etc.” Philippi was a single city and had many bishops, whom Paul greets here. Similarly in Acts 20[:28] Paul sent a message to the single city of Ephesus and summoned the elders of the congregation to him, saying to them among other things: “Take heed to yourselves and to the people over whom the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to feed his sheep, which he obtained with his blood.” Now Ephesus was one city; and Paul calls the elders in their congregation bishops, and says that the Holy Spirit has appointed many of them. ... I implore you, Christian friend, for God’s sake, do not let yourself be moved one whit by the golden crowns and pearl mitres, red hats and cloaks, gold, silver, precious stones, mules, horses and retinue, with all the glory, ornament and splendor of the popes, cardinals and bishops, those lost sheep; but believe Paul in the Holy Spirit: these are not bishops, but idols, puppets, camouflages and wonders of the wrath of God. You have heard that Paul’s bishops are honorable married men, as many of them in a city as are needed to care for the people. These words [of St. Paul] are not words of the church, nor of the councils, nor of the fathers, ...but words of the Holy Spirit and of Jesus Christ, indeed, of the divine majesty. ... For this reason we recognize and assert on behalf of God the Holy Spirit that Christian bishops are honorable, married, mature, good men, learned in the word of truth [II Tim. 2:15], many in a single city, who are chosen by the neighboring bishops or by their own people. They might be the very ones whom we now call parish priests, and their chaplains and deacons, if only they were not – to please their superior idols – misusing the mass, being forced to keep silent concerning the gospel, and perishing in false vows of celibacy, till no episcopal function is left for them to carry out. This is a divine decision and the Holy Spirit’s method and manner of appointing bishops, such as SS. Spiridion, Augustine, and Ambrose. (Martin Luther, “The Misuse of the Mass” [1521], *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 36 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959], pp. 155-56, 158)

If you want to fast and pray with Anna, that is all right. But first of all, emulate her character and then her works. First be like Anna. But let us see how Luke treats her works and her character [2:36-38], in order that we correctly understand her example. In the first place Luke says [v. 36] that she was a prophetess, without a doubt a saintly, pious prophetess. Assuredly the Holy Spirit was in her, and so she was good and justified without any work; her subsequent works were

also good and justified. You see that St. Luke does not wish to say that she became pious and a prophetess through works, but that she was, first of all, a pious prophetess and that good works came into being through her. ... Now let us see what Anna signifies, if we look at her allegorically. Simeon, as mentioned above [Luke 2:25-35], signifies the holy prophets who speak of Christ in Holy Scripture; thus Anna must signify those who stand by and hear and confess the message and apply it to themselves, as Anna did, standing there as Simeon spoke of Christ. Accordingly, Anna is nothing else but the holy synagogue, the people of Israel, whose life and history are written in the Bible. For Anna is found in the temple, that is, in Holy Scripture. Just as Mary signifies Christendom, the people of God after the birth of Christ, so Anna signifies the people of God before the birth of Christ. Anna is old and over a hundred years of age, close to her death, while Mary is young and in the prime of life; the synagogue at the time of Christ was at its end and the church at its beginning. Thus the saints living before the birth of Christ understood the prophets and believed them and were all preserved in Christ and his faith, as indicated by Christ himself in John 8[:56] where he says of Abraham: "Abraham, your father, desired to see my day. He saw it, too, and rejoiced"; and again Luke 10[:24]: "Many prophets and kings desired to see what you see and to hear what you hear"; again St. Paul writes in Hebrews 13[:8]: "Christ is the same today and yesterday and forever"; and a lot clearer yet in I Corinthians 10[:1-4]: "You must know, dear brethren, that our fathers were under the cloud and that all went through the Red Sea; and all were baptized under Moses in the cloud and the sea, and ate this spiritual food and drank this spiritual drink; for they drank from the rock which followed them: and this rock is Christ." St. Luke used the word *epistasa* here [v. 37], that is, Anna "stood over," or "next to," or "at," such happenings as took place with Christ in the temple. ... She "stood over" what happened; this means the same as that she placed herself at the spot; with great effort she pressed herself to the spot, in order to see him... ...God has redeemed the fathers of old through his word and their faith, preserving them from sin and the power of the devil, as they looked toward the Christ to come; they are represented by saintly Anna. For this reason Anna does not take the child into her arms, as did Simeon [v. 28], neither does she say anything concerning him, as did Simeon [vv. 29-32], but she stands close by and speaks about him to others. For the dear fathers of old and the saints did not prophesy concerning Christ as did the prophets, nor did they say anything concerning him. But they watched and stood by with strong faith, when the prophets made their announcements, and they carried the message to other people and to their children's children, as Luke says here [v. 38] of Anna. All her characteristic traits agree with Luke's account. In the first place, she is a prophetess, that is, she has the understanding of the prophets. Thus all the saints of old understood Christ to be in the passages of Scripture, and consequently they were all prophets. In the second place, her name is Anna, which in Latin is *gratia*, meaning "favor" or "grace." ... Anna means gracious or she who is favorably and graciously inclined. This signifies that the fathers and saints of old did not have such faith and promise of God by their own merit, but by the favor and grace of God, in whose sight they were "gracious" because of his mercy. In the same fashion all men are acceptable and lovely, not on account of their worthiness, but only by God's mercy. (Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Gospel for the Sunday after Christmas, Luke 2[:33-40]" [1521], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 52 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974], pp. 123, 125-29)

Old Anna made the testimony of her prophecy known to the listeners in the synagogue [cf. Luke 2:38]. She was old at the time of Christ's birth, but Mary was young, for she refers to [symbolizes] the new church. Anna means "God's grace and compassion." She knew nothing except to praise the God of her husband. (Martin Luther, Table Talk #5840; quoted in *Luther on Women* [edited by Susan C. Karant-Nunn and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks] [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003], p. 77)

This [first] epistle [to Timothy] St. Paul writes in order to provide a model to all bishops of what they are to teach and how they are to rule Christendom in the various stations of life, so that it may not be necessary for them to rule Christians according to their own human opinions. In chapter 1 he charges that a bishop keep true faith and love and resist the false preachers of the law who, beside Christ and the gospel, would also insist on the works of the law. ... In chapter 2 he charges that prayer be made for all stations of life. He also commands that women are not to preach or wear costly adornment, but are to be obedient to men. In chapter 3 he describes the kind of persons that bishops, or priests, and their wives ought to be, and also the deacons and their wives. He praises those who desire to be bishops of this kind. In chapter 4 he prophesies of false bishops and the spiritual estate which is opposed to that spoken of above, who will not be persons of that kind, but instead will forbid marriage and foods, and with their doctrines of men inculcate the very opposite of the things Paul has described. In chapter 5 he gives orders as to how widows and young women should be

looked after, and which widows are to be supported from the common funds; also how godly bishops or priests are to be held in honor, and blameworthy ones punished. In chapter 6 he exhorts the bishops to hold fast to the pure gospel and to promulgate it by their preaching and living. They are to avoid senseless and meddlesome controversies which are only raised for gaining worldly reputation and riches. (Martin Luther, "Preface to the First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy" [1546 (1522)], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 35 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1960], p. 388)

...the bishops who now rule over many territories are not Christian bishops according to divine order. They are bishops according to the order of the devil and of human abomination. ...St. Paul writes, Titus 1[:5-7], "Appoint an elder in every town, a blameless man, the husband of one wife. For a bishop must be blameless since he is God's steward." Here, I think, no one can deny that bishop and elder are one and the same for St. Paul, since he says Titus should appoint an elder in every town, a blameless man because a bishop must be blameless. He calls this same elder "bishop." Thus it is clear from this text that Paul means this man to be a bishop, a brave, old, and honest man who has a chaste wife and devout children. He should provide the church with preaching and sacraments. That is why he must be learned and completely blameless. ... Furthermore, I ask whether or not St. Paul's word and order are derived from God's word and order? I think that the pope himself...cannot deny that St. Paul's word is God's word and that his order is the order of the Holy Spirit. ... If, then, everything Paul says and institutes is God's word and the order of the Holy Spirit, we conclude, first, that everything contrary to his word and order is certainly contrary to God and the Holy Spirit. If it is contrary to God and his Spirit, it is certainly of the devil. ...it follows that all Christians must on pain of God's disfavor and for the salvation of their souls, keep God's word and order as taught and instituted by St. Paul. On the other hand, they must tear down and destroy and eradicate all of the devil's order, which is established contrary to God's word and order, even if they should lose body, life, property, honor, friends, and everything else. And if they cannot destroy it, they must still avoid it and flee from it as though it were the devil himself. (Martin Luther, "Against the Spiritual Estate of the Pope and the Bishops Falsely So Called" [1522], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 39 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970], pp. 276-77)

True, we all have authority to preach, yea, we must preach God's name; we are commanded to do so. Peter says in his first Epistle, 2, 9-10: "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." Nevertheless, Paul establishes order in 1 Cor 14, 40 and says: "In whatever you do among yourselves, let everything be done decently and in order." In a family there must be order. If all the heirs strive for lordship, anarchy will reign in the family. If, however, by common consent, one of the number is selected for the heirship, the others withdrawing, harmony will obtain. Likewise, in the matter of preaching we must make selection that order may be preserved. But since all who are Christians have authority to preach, what will be the outcome? for women will also want to preach. Not so. St. Paul forbids women to put themselves forward as preachers in a congregation of men, and says: "They should be subject to their husbands." For when a woman will not submit to being led and governed, the result will be anything but good. These are, however, the words of Paul in 1 Tim 2, 11-12: "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness." If it happened, however, that no man could be secured for the office, then a woman might step up and preach to others as best she could; but in no other instance. (Martin Luther, "Sermon for Pentecost Tuesday" [1522], *Complete Sermons of Martin Luther* [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2000], Vol. 2.1, pp. 374-75)

We, the members of this parish and our posterity, therefore solemnly purpose and promise henceforth to provide food, sustenance, and support through our ten elected directors out of our common chest, to the limit of our resources as God grants us grace, and as occasion demands to make the following disbursements, namely: *Disbursements for the pastoral office*: To the pastor or priest called and elected by our congregation, and to a preacher similarly called by us and appointed to assist the pastor (though the pastor himself should be able and qualified to preach God's word and perform the other duties of his pastoral office), and also to a chaplain if the need for one arises, the ten directors, on the unified resolution of the entire assembly, are to furnish annually each year a specified sum of money, together with certain consumable stores and lands and properties subject to usufruct, to support them and adequately meet their needs, one-fourth to be paid each quarter at the Ember fast out of the common chest, in return for a proper receipt. ... In this respect and in the administration of the pastoral office of the congregation, their conduct shall be in accordance with the

ordinance and instructions of the men learned in the divine Scriptures, which ordinance shall be kept in our common chest, and be considered and implemented by the ten directors every Sunday, so that no harm may come to the pastoral office. ... *Disbursements for the schools*: The ten designated directors, in the name of our general parish assembly, shall have the authority and duty, with the advice and approval of our elected pastor and preacher and others learned in the divine Scriptures, to call, appoint and dismiss a schoolmaster for young boys, whereby a pious, irreproachable, and learned man may be made responsible for the honorable and upright Christian training and instruction of the youth, a most essential function. This schoolmaster shall be required to train, teach, govern, and live at all times in conformity with and hold unswervingly to the mandate of the aforementioned ordinance for the pastoral office of our congregation which is deposited in the coffers of our common chest. In accordance with a determination of the general assembly, the ten directors shall give the schoolmaster as compensation for his services a specified annual salary plus certain stores in quarterly instalments out of the common chest. ... Our pastor, preacher, and the ten directors shall maintain a constant and faithful supervision over this office of teaching school and governing the youth; every Sunday as need may arise they shall consider this matter, take action, and implement it with the utmost seriousness. Likewise the ten directors shall grant to an upright, fully seasoned, irreproachable woman an annual stipend and certain stores out of our common chest for instructing young girls under twelve in true Christian discipline, honor, and virtue and, in accordance with the ordinance for our pastoral office, teaching them to read and write German, this teaching to be done during certain specified hours by the clear light of day and in a respectable place that is above suspicion. ... The ten directors shall also diligently supervise the training and governing of such German schools and young girls, so that Christian discipline, honor, and virtue may be maintained inviolate. (“Fraternal Agreement on the Common Chest of the Entire Assembly of Leisnig” [1523], *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 45 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1962], pp. 186-89) (*Luther is not the author of this document, but it was written under his influence, and was later endorsed and recommended by him. In his Preface to the printed edition of this “Fraternal Agreement,” which he addresses to “all Christians in the congregation of Leisnig,” Luther writes: “Since the Father of all mercies has called you as well as others to the fellowship of the gospel, and has caused his Son Jesus Christ to shine into your hearts; and since this richness of the knowledge of Christ is so active and powerful among you that you have set up a new order of service, and a common fund after the example of the apostles [Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35], I have seen fit to have this ordinance of yours printed, in the hope that God will so add his gracious blessing that it may become a public example to be followed by many other congregations, so that we, too, may boast of you, as St. Paul boasted of the Corinthians that their effort stirred up many others [II Cor. 9:2]. ... We cherish the hope that this example of yours will come to be generally followed...” [Luther’s Works, Vol. 45, p. 169]*)

But let us go on and show from the priestly offices (as they [the papists] call them) that all Christians are priests in equal degree. For such passages as, “You are a royal priesthood” (1 Pet. 2[:9]) and, “Thou has made them a kingdom and priests” (Rev. 5[:10]), I have sufficiently treated in other books. Mostly the functions of a priest are these: to teach, to preach and proclaim the Word of God, to baptize, to consecrate or administer the Eucharist, to bind and loose sins, to pray for others, to sacrifice, and to judge of all doctrine and spirits. Certainly these are splendid and royal duties. But the first and foremost of all on which everything else depends, is the teaching of the Word of God. For we teach with the Word, we consecrate with the Word, we bind and absolve sins by the Word, we baptize with the Word, we sacrifice with the Word, we judge all things by the Word. Therefore when we grant the Word to anyone, we cannot deny anything to him pertaining to the exercise of his priesthood. This Word is the same for all, as Isaiah says, “All your sons shall be taught by the Lord” [Isa. 54:13]. They are taught by the Lord, who hear and learn from the Father, as Christ explains in John 6[:45]. And hearing is through the Word of Christ (Rom. 10[:17]) in order that the praise of Ps. 149[:9] may be realized: “This is glory for all his faithful ones.” For whom? “Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands, to wreak vengeance on the nations and chastisement on the peoples, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute on them the judgment written” [Ps. 149:6f.]. The first office, that of the ministry of the Word, therefore, is common to all Christians. This is clear, from what I have already said, and from 1 Pet. 2[:9], “You are a royal priesthood that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” ... The second function, to baptize, they [the papists] themselves have by usage allowed in cases of necessity even to ordinary women, so that it is hardly regarded any more as a sacramental function. Whether they wish or not we deduce from their own logic that all Christians, and they alone, even women, are priests, without tonsure and episcopal “character.” For in baptizing we proffer the life-giving Word of God, which renews souls and redeems from death and sins. To baptize is incomparably greater than to consecrate bread and wine, for it is the greatest

office in the church – the proclamation of the Word of God. So when women baptize, they exercise the function of priesthood legitimately, and do it not as a private act, but as a part of the public ministry of the church which belongs only to the priesthood. ... Yet I ask you, what is this splendid power of consecration, compared to the power of baptizing and of proclaiming the Word? A woman can baptize and administer the Word of life, by which sin is taken away, eternal death abolished, the prince of the world cast out, heaven bestowed; in short by which the divine majesty pours itself forth through all the soul. Meanwhile this miracle-working priest changes the nature of the bread, but by no other or greater word or power, and it has no other effect than that it increases his awe and admiration before his own dignity and power. ... It is of the common rights of Christians that we have been speaking. For since we have proved all of these things to be the common property of all Christians, no one individual can arise by his own authority and arrogate to himself alone what belongs to all. Lay hold then of this right and exercise it, where there is no one else who has the same rights. But the community rights demand that one, or as many as the community chooses, shall be chosen or approved who, in the name of all with these rights, shall perform these functions publicly. Otherwise, there might be shameful confusion among the people of God, and a kind of Babylon in the church, where everything should be done in order, as the Apostle teaches [1 Cor. 14:40]. For it is one thing to exercise a right publicly; another to use it in time of emergency. Publicly one may not exercise a right without consent of the whole body or of the church. In time of emergency each may use it as he deems best. (Martin Luther, "Concerning the Ministry" [1523], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 40 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958], pp. 21,23,25,34)

Now you might say: "What kind of situation will arise if it is true that we are all priests and should all preach [1 Peter 2:5]? Should no distinction be made among the people, and should the women, too, be priests?" Answer: In the New Testament no priest has to be tonsured. Not that this is evil in itself, for one surely has the right to have the head shaved clean. But one should not make a distinction between those who do so and the common Christian. Faith cannot tolerate this. Thus those who are now called priests would all be laymen like the others, and only a few officiants would be elected by the congregation to do the preaching. Thus there is only an external difference because of the office to which one is called by the congregation. Before God, however, there is no distinction, and only a few are selected from the whole group to administer the office in the stead of the congregation. They all have the office, but nobody has any more authority than the other person has. Therefore nobody should come forward of his own accord and preach in the congregation. No, one person must be chosen from the whole group and appointed. If desired, he may be deposed. Now those people [the papists] have created a special estate and say that it was established by God. They have acquired such freedom that almost in the midst of Christendom there is a greater distinction than there is between us and Turks. As St. Paul says in Gal. 3:28, you must pay no attention to distinctions when you want to look at Christians. You must not say: "This is a man or a woman; this is a servant or a master; this person is old or young." They are all alike and only a spiritual people. Therefore they are all priests. All may proclaim God's Word, except that, as St. Paul teaches in 1 Cor. 14:34, women should not speak in the congregation. They should let the men preach, because God commands them to be obedient to their husbands. God does not interfere with the arrangement. But he makes no distinction in the matter of authority. If, however, only women were present and no men, as in nunneries, then one of the women might be authorized to preach. (Martin Luther, "Sermons on the First Epistle of St. Peter" [1523], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 30 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967], pp. 54-55)

[1 Peter 5:]1. *So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed.* 2. *Tend the flock of God that is your charge...* Here St. Peter tells how those who are to govern in the spiritual realm should conduct themselves. Now in the previous chapter (1 Peter 4:11) he stated that no one should teach or preach anything unless he is sure that it is God's Word, in order that our conscience may rest on solid rock. For it is impressed on us Christians that we must know with certainty what is pleasing to God and what displeases Him. Where this is not the case, there are no Christians. Then the apostle also stated that everyone must regard whatever office or work he has as being performed for God. This verse, however, is really addressed to the bishops or pastors, to inform them what qualifications they should have and how they should conduct themselves. ... These are the men whom Christ called His officials and council. They administer the spiritual rule; that is, they preach, and they care for a Christian congregation. ...when St. Peter and other apostles came into a city in which there were believers or Christians, they selected an elderly man or two who were upright, were married and had children, and were versed in Scripture. These men were called *πρεσβυτεροι*. Later Paul and Peter also called them *επισκοποι*, that is,



bishops. Therefore the words “bishop” and “priest” had one and the same meaning. ... These elders, says St. Peter, who are to take care of and provide for the people, I exhort. I am one of them. Accordingly, you see clearly that he calls those men elders who have had an office and have preached. For this reason he also calls himself an elder. ... Now what should the elders do? We read: *Tend the flock of Christ that is your charge*. Christ is the chief Shepherd, and under Him He has many shepherds as well as many flocks of sheep. These sheep He has assigned to His shepherds here and there in many lands, as St. Peter writes here. What are these shepherds to do? They are to lead Christ’s flock to pasture. ... It is well known what leading to pasture means. It means that the shepherds give the sheep pasture and provide them with fodder to make them fruitful, likewise that they take care that wolves do not come and tear the sheep to pieces. ... Now St. Peter is speaking in particular of the flock of Christ, as though he were saying: “Do not think that the flock belongs to you. You are only servants.” ... The bishops are servants of Christ. It is their duty to tend His sheep and give them pasture. Therefore to give pasture is nothing else than to preach the Gospel, by which souls are fed and made fat and fruitful, and that the sheep are nourished with the Gospel and God’s Word. This alone is the office of a bishop. Thus Christ also says to Peter (John 21:16): “Tend My sheep,” which is to say: “The sheep you are to tend are not yours; they are Mine.” ... To be sure, among all Christians one finds many, both men and women, who can preach as well as the one who preaches at a particular place. But in the whole group there are always many who are not strong. Therefore someone must be selected to strengthen them, lest wolves come and tear the sheep to pieces. For a pastor must not only lead to pasture by teaching the sheep how to be true Christians: but, in addition to this, he must also repel the wolves, lest they attack the sheep and lead them astray with false doctrine and error. For the devil does not rest. (Martin Luther, “Sermons on the First Epistle of St. Peter” [1523], *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 30 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967], pp. 132-35)

Since it becomes Christians then to make good use of the Holy Scriptures as their one and only book and it is a sin and a shame not to know our own book or to understand the speech and words of our God, it is a still greater sin and loss that we do not study languages, especially in these days when God is offering and giving us men and books and every facility and inducement to this study, and desires his Bible to be an open book. ... Here belongs also what St. Paul calls for in I Corinthians 14[:27,29], namely, that in the Christian church all teachings must be judged. For this a knowledge of the language is needful above all else. The preacher or teacher can expound the Bible from beginning to end as he pleases, accurately or inaccurately, if there is no one there to judge whether he is doing it right or wrong. But in order to judge, one must have a knowledge of the languages... Therefore, although faith and the gospel may indeed be proclaimed by simple preachers without a knowledge of languages, such preaching is flat and tame; people finally become weary and bored with it, and it falls to the ground. But where the preacher is versed in the languages, there is a freshness and vigor in his preaching, Scripture is treated in its entirety, and faith finds itself constantly renewed by a continual variety of words and illustrations. ... To this point we have been speaking about the necessity and value of languages and Christian schools for the spiritual realm and the salvation of souls. Now let us consider also the body. Let us suppose...that we were to consider solely the temporal government from the standpoint of its worldly functions. Does it not need good schools and educated persons even more than the spiritual realm? ... Now if...there were no souls, and there were no need at all of schools and languages for the sake of the Scriptures and of God, this one consideration alone would be sufficient to justify the establishment everywhere of the very best schools for both boys and girls, namely, that in order to maintain its temporal estate outwardly the world must have good and capable men and women, men able to rule well over land and people, women able to manage the household and train children and servants aright. Now such men must come from our boys, and such women from our girls. Therefore, it is a matter of properly educating and training our boys and girls to that end. ...the common man is doing nothing about it; he is incapable of it, unwilling, and ignorant of what to do. Princes and lords ought to be doing it, but they must needs be sleigh riding, drinking, and parading about in masquerades. ... Therefore, dear [city] councilmen, it rests with you alone; you have a better authority and occasion to do it than princes and lords. ...if children were instructed and trained in schools, or wherever learned and well-trained schoolmasters and schoolmistresses were available to teach the languages, the other arts, and history, they would then hear of the doings and sayings of the entire world, and how things went with various cities, kingdoms, princes, men, and women. ... For my part, if I had children and could manage it, I would have them study not only languages and history, but also singing and music together with the whole of mathematics. ... My idea is to have the boys attend such a school for one or two hours during the day... In like manner, a girl can surely find time enough to attend school for an hour a day... The exceptional pupils, who give promise of becoming skilled teachers, preachers, or holders

of other ecclesiastical positions, should be allowed to continue in school longer, or even be dedicated to a life of study, as we read of [those who trained] the holy martyrs SS. Agnes, Agatha, Lucy, and others. That is how the monasteries and foundations originated; they have since been wholly perverted to a different and damnable use. There is great need of such advanced study, for the tonsured crowd is fast dwindling. ... We must certainly have men to administer God's word and sacraments and to be shepherds of souls. But where shall we get them if we let our schools go by the board, and fail to replace them with others that are Christian? (Martin Luther, "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools" [1524], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 45 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1962], pp. 364-71)

...in my opinion, the Holy Spirit has shown that God orders the man to carry out the offices of governing, teaching, and preaching. For when Adam is called forward [Gen. 3:9], it is nothing other than a sermon before the Law, by means of which he recognizes what he has done and what he owes to God. Preaching is entrusted to the man and not to the woman, as Paul also teaches, insofar as this has to do with Christian matters. Otherwise, it can occasionally happen that a woman gives better advice, as one reads in Scripture. But apart from that, the offices of leading, preaching, and teaching God's word are commanded to the man. (Martin Luther, "Sermons on Genesis" [1527]; quoted in *Luther on Women* [edited by Susan C. Karant-Nunn and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks] [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003], pp. 24-25)

[Zechariah 5:]7-8. *And behold, the leaden weight was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the ephah! And he [the angel] said: This is Wickedness. ...the false teachers are not only greedy but also wicked and...they mislead the people. Therefore the woman is here sitting in the ephah and has the name *Impietas*, that is, godless teaching. For the sitting refers to the office of teaching, Ps. 1:1; Matt. 23:2: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat." But she is sitting in the ephah, that is, she is ruling among the greedy hypocrites; they are listening to her and clinging to her wicked teaching. ... And it is a woman. Why not a man? Because her teaching teaches what is neither human nor godly – for "man is the image of God," says St. Paul (1 Cor. 11:7) – but teaches according to fine tender reason: how that thinks and judges, so the teaching must be; let God's Word stay where it will! Now reason is indeed fine to look at, even as a woman is when compared with a man; but it is not good for teaching or having authority, even as a woman is forbidden to teach or have authority, 1 Tim. 2:12. Yet it teaches and has authority here in a hypocrite's life. For the woman is sitting in the ephah and is a fine doll to look at when compared with pure teaching, which offers the serious face of a man – one that is shaggy about its mouth and has a bristling beard; for it is not hypocritical but serious. Women, however, have smooth mouths, and the hypocritical preachers do, too. 8. *And he thrust her back into the ephah...* The angel thrusts the woman into the ephah... This means: through the Gospel hypocrisy is dethroned and brought to shame – for the angel represents Christ and all the teachers of the Gospel... 9. *Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming forward!* ... The wicked are indeed separated from the people of God, so that their ephah and their woman, that is, their teaching and life, no longer are tolerated among the godly, as Ps. 1:5 says: "The wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." Nevertheless, they do not stop their teaching but at all times find teachers and students to further and carry on their error and deceit. ... The two women represent the office of preaching, or office of teaching, or all teachers and preachers, even as the two cherubim on the ark of Moses represent that also (Ex. 25:18). The fact, however, that there are two cherubim and two women, means that in all preaching or teaching, be it right or wrong, these two parts are regularly to be found, *mine et promissio*, "threat and promise," which we call Law and Gospel. For even the wicked could not maintain their teaching if they did not present a false law, that is, if they did not compel and incite the consciences with false terror and threats; and again, if they did not present a false gospel, that is, did not attract and occupy the hearts with false comfort and promises. For every teaching must be so constituted that it frightens and comforts the consciences by pretending that God commands and demands this or that and that He promises His grace and reward as a comfort to those who act in accordance with this teaching. Now in the true office of teaching and over the ark there are two cherubim in the image of men; but here in the false office of teaching there are images of two women on the ephah. For as I have said above, reason is a beautiful woman, but she is not to teach; she may indeed make a fine appearance, but she is not fit to preach. Man's image, however, is God's image and teaches properly, that is, God's Word is to do the teaching. There is, then, in the false office of teaching nothing but reason and whatever is in keeping with reason: it is the master and doctor and applies God's Word in accordance with its own conceit and pleasure. The two women, however, are they who teach nothing but reason or a law and a gospel of the*

flesh and not the law of the Spirit or of God and the true Gospel. ...this vision of the ephah is completely formed and fashioned after the vision of Moses which he saw on Mount Sinai, when he was to fashion the ark after this vision (Ex. 25:9), even as godless hypocrisy at all times tries to imitate pure teaching and truth and be like them. There we find the golden ark, here an ephah; on that we find a mercy seat, on this a leaden weight; there God is sitting on the ark and mercy seat, here a woman is sitting in the ephah, and she is wicked; there we find two angels with wings, here we find two women with wings; there the ark is standing at Jerusalem, here the ephah is moving to Babel. Everything is imitated and yet is different in the extreme. For the wicked wish to appear holy and also do have that appearance. But it is only an accursed and condemned thing; for they have no ark with the bread from heaven and the tables of Moses; in their consciences they have neither the true Law nor the true Gospel but only their own inventions – for the sake of their bellies. Again, not Christ is sitting there with His mercy, but the wicked woman; nor is the true office of preaching there, the golden cherubim, but rather a self-chosen office and way of teaching. (Martin Luther, “Lectures on Zechariah” [1527], *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 20 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1973], pp. 242-44, 246)

The first chapter [of Titus] has set forth the antithesis between pious and impious ministers of the Word. This second chapter contains the duties of all the estates of society. It says: “Conduct yourself according to the model, and pay no attention to questionings and to Jewish myths. Remain in the right and *sound doctrine*, and thus instruct others.” Sound doctrine is pure doctrine, to which all things are pure, which teaches how to have a pure mind and conscience, which makes men good, faithful, and charitable. *Bid the older men*, as well as other orders of society. ... Then he [Paul] continues: *sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness*, that is, those who are upright, not false, counterfeit, or lazy in faith. A good gold piece is an honest coin; the same quality pertains to an honest wine, one which has not been adulterated. That is, they have a pure and sure faith, because they are under obligation to teach morality. ... [Titus 2:]3. *[Bid] the older women*. He instructs the men how they ought to live, and by the word “sound” he indicates that he wants them to be set apart from profane things. He wants their wives, the older women, to be adorned *with holy and decent deportment*, that is, deportment that is fitting for saints or for holy things. ... *[They are to be] good teachers*. “Good teachers” are those who are instructed, apt, and skillful at teaching, filled with good doctrines and exhortations, because he will appoint older women as the instructors of younger women. To what end? [Titus 2:]4. *And so train the young women*. They should train by example and by word and should make them modest; that is, they should train them in modesty, so that they are sensible, not noisy and raucous but quiet and gentle. Any of them who is not modest should be taught and instructed by [an older] woman, so that the young women love their husbands and are devoted to their children. They should see to it that they take care of their husbands and children. ... Thus he instructs matrons to be good teachers and to train younger women to love their husbands and children. (Martin Luther, “Lectures on Titus” [1527], *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 29 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968], pp. 53-54)

[1 Tim. 2:]11. *Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness*. I believe that Paul is still speaking about public matters. I also want it to refer to the public ministry, which occurs in the public assembly of the church. There a woman must be completely quiet, because she should remain a hearer and not become a teacher. She is not to be the spokesman among the people. She should refrain from teaching, from praying [i.e., leading in prayer] in public. She has the command to speak at home. This passage makes a woman subject. It takes from her all public office and authority. On the other side is the passage in Acts (8:27) about Queen Candace. We read many such examples in sacred literature – that women have been very good at management: Huldah, Deborah, Jael, the wife of the Kenite, who killed Sisera [cf. 2 Kings 22:14; Judges 4:14,17]. Why, then, does Paul say here that he deprives them of the administration of the Word as well as of work? You should solve that argument in this way. Here we properly take “woman” to mean wife, as he reveals from his correlative phrase (v. 12) “to have authority over man,” that is, over her husband. As he calls the husband “man,” so he calls the wife “woman.” Where men and women have been joined together, there the men, not the women, ought to have authority. An exceptional example is the case where they are without husbands, like Huldah and Deborah who had no authority over husbands. Another lived in Abela [cf. 2 Sam. 20:14-21]. The evangelist Philip had four unmarried daughters, etc. (cf. Acts 21:9). He [Paul] forbids teaching contrary to a man or to the authority of a man. Where there is a man, there no woman should teach or have authority. Where there is no man, Paul has allowed that they can do this, because it happens by a man’s command. He wants to save the order preserved by the world – that a man be the head of the woman, as 1 Cor. 11:3 tells us. Where there are men, she should neither teach nor rule. She rules in the home and says: “Be quiet,” but she is not the master. This maxim was spoken against Greek women,

who have been and now are more ingenious and clever than those in other countries. The Jews and Arabs do not honor their women in this way. The Turk considers women as beasts. Not so with the Greeks and us. Miriam seemed wise to herself; she rose up against her brother and her "man" (cf. Num. 12). They should be with all submissiveness. Then comes the teaching, and Paul does not entrust the ministry of the Word to her. He considers this the greatest thing that goes on in the church. You must always understand this with the condition that men are present. Paul says this that there may be peace and harmony in the churches when the Word is taught and people pray. There would be a disturbance if some woman wished to argue against the doctrine that is being taught by a man. The method of 1 Cor. 14 has now perished. I could wish it were still in effect, but it causes great strife. Where a man teaches, there is a well-rounded argument against a man. If she wishes to be wise, let her argue with her husband at home. [1 Tim. 2:]12. *To have authority.* That is, she ought not take over for herself the heritage which belongs to a man so that a man says to her: "My lord." She wants her own wisdom to have priority, that whatever she has said should prevail and whatever the man says should not. We say: Paul is saying with power what is to be said. He is not speaking about real physical domination, but about the authority of the word, that she should be right and have the last word, that in the church her word ought to appear wiser and more learned and thus of greater authority than that of her husband. So also in the home. [1 Tim. 2:]13. *For Adam.* Paul skillfully arranges this example of his that he may not appear to be speaking off the top of his head. This is the way God has ordained it. The principal role belongs to the man. Adam was first, etc. Therefore the greater authority lies in the man rather than in the woman. (Martin Luther, "Lectures on 1 Timothy" [1528], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 28 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1973], pp. 276-77)

[1 Timothy 3:]8. *Deacons likewise must be serious.* Deacons were men who also preached occasionally. We read in Acts 6:1-6 that they chose seven men in the church to be in charge of providing for the poor and the widows. Those deacons also at times preached, as did Stephen, and they were admitted to other duties of the church, although their principal responsibility was to care for the poor and the widows. That custom has long ceased to exist. In the papist church the man who reads the Gospel is a subdeacon. The distribution of goods and the care of the poor have been relegated to the hospices. The truth of the matter is that there ought to be chaplains and common funds. ... There ought to be deacons for the church – men who should be of service to the bishop and at his recommendations have control in the church in external matters. ... [1 Timothy 3:]10. *Let them be tested first.* ... First the deacons should be tested. All the more should bishops and professors be tested. How should they be tested, and with what test? According to what they are, can do, and actually do. Earlier we said that the bishops should be tested... The acid test is that a recommendation be required from those who know them. You see, the deacon takes care of the people and is the bishop's steward. He should be tested first. But how do I know that they are blameless? How do I know which are not of bad reputation or which only care for useless things? So one may be able to gather from the testimony of his neighboring brethren who is a good and faithful man. We must not call a deacon because of his appearance or because he is friendly. We do not test him in this way. If, however, we try to find out from testimony whether he is good, serious, diligent, and the kind of man who gladly pursues piety and is happy to listen to preaching, then we are testing him. One will be able to determine this from the testimony of his brothers and neighbors. We must not take people into the ministry unless they have this testimony. When the apostles were sending out the brethren, they did not send them out without letters of recommendation, as we do in the case of our monks and bishops. This is an apostolic ritual. *Then let them serve as deacons.* He imposes neither the office of teaching nor the qualifications of the bishop on deacons. Instead he gives them the responsibilities for supplies or financing. They should be serious, not double-tongued. They should not sow disharmony within the church. They should have a talent for bringing harmony, for increasing concord, peace, and the reputation of the bishop. They should not be drinkers but be attentive to their business. [1 Timothy 3:]11. *Their wives likewise must be serious.* The natural function of women, to have something flighty about them, they have by nature. After all, they are the weaker sex. All their members have by nature been afflicted with weaknesses. Therefore there is a greater need for them to learn to be serious, to have the sort of clothing and behavior that befits the honor of the wife of an elder and that is proper for the wife of a deacon. They should be examples for other wives. *Not slanderers.* This is where women are strong. Wherever two women are together, this most natural fault is also present. They like to talk about other people and about bad people. Here we must watch for the singular discipline that they be settled women. If they are unwilling to speak good about those who are absent, they should keep quiet altogether. Here you see what *diabolus* [slanderer] means. When they come to visit a woman in childbed, they gossip about a third person. ... *Not given to wine.* They should not be lazy or sleepy, drunk with both sleep and drink. Rather, they should be temperate in their

food and drink. They should rise early in the morning, not for the sake of dancing, merrymaking, eating, drinking, and dressing up, as if they were still young girls, but to cook and to serve their husbands. This is what we read in Titus (Titus 2:3-5). *Faithful in all things*. In German, *treu*. He tells us what this means. Whenever they have been established as the wives of deacons and have the duty of doling out something to the poor, they have the opportunity and situation for faithlessness and treachery to be able to use their mouths or hands for deceit. A man can do something for his own convenience, and his wife can help him in this. Also women are clever in swiftly bestowing favors on those they like and in slandering others, that is, both in word and deed. Paul is speaking about outward loyalty, which ought to be trustworthy in an office. They should speak evil of no one. They should not take away alms but increase them. Thus such a person receives the same treatment as widows do. She settles the younger women. Thus Paul is referring to greedy, deceiving, wicked women, who have piled up things to their own profit and have neglected other people. (Martin Luther, "Lectures on 1 Timothy" [1528], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 28 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1973], pp. 295-991)

These portions...were called by the ancient fathers the catechism, that is, an instruction for children, which the children and all who want to be Christians should know. And one who does not know them should not be counted among the number of Christians. For when a person does not know this, it is a sign that he has no regard for God and Christ. Therefore I have admonished you adults to hold your children and servants and yourselves to this; otherwise we shall not admit you to holy communion. For if you parents and masters do not help, we shall accomplish little with our preaching, and if I preach all year long and the crowd only comes in and looks at the walls and windows of the church, it is of no use. A person who wants to be a good citizen owes it to his family to urge them to learn these portions of the catechism, and if they will not, do not give them any bread to eat. If the servants grumble, then throw them out of the house. If you have children, train them to learn the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. If you urge them diligently to do this, they will learn much in a year's time. But when they have learned this, there are many excellent passages scattered throughout the Scriptures; these they should learn afterwards; if not all, at least some of them. God has appointed you a master and a wife in order that you should hold your family to this. And you can do this easily enough by praying in the morning when you rise, in the evening when you go to bed, and before and after meals. Thus they will be brought up in the fear of the Lord. I am not saying this for nothing; I am determined that you shall not cast it to the winds. I should never have believed that you were such ignorant people if I did not learn it every day. Every father of a family is a bishop in his house and the wife a bishopess. Therefore remember that you in your homes are to help us carry on the ministry [*Predigtamt*] as we do in the church. If we do this we shall have a gracious God, who will defend us from all evil and in all evil. In the Ps. [78:5-8] it is written: "He appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and that they should not be like their fathers." Note that well – that they learn to fear God and not become like their fathers! ... We probably think that the Ten Commandments are there only to be preached from the pulpit, but they need rather to be applied to use. For God has commanded you to fear and trust him. So the young can be well brought up in the discipline of the Lord [Eph. 6:4]. For they must fear God if they are to cease from doing evil for his sake and [they must trust God if they are to do the good for his sake]. It is small wages when I give you three or four guldens, but God gives you a happy life here and, after that, eternal life. The fault lies with us householders. Necessity has forced us to engage teachers because the parents have not assumed this responsibility. But every master and mistress should remember that they are bishops and bishopesses for Gretel and Hans. (Martin Luther, "Ten Sermons on the Catechism" [1528], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 51 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959], pp. 137-38, 140)

So we have introduced three kinds of fathers in this [fourth] commandment: fathers by blood, fathers of a household, and fathers of the nation [fathers in blood, and fathers in office to whom belong the care of the household and the country]. In addition, there are also spiritual fathers – not like those in the papacy who have had themselves called "father" but have not performed a fatherly function [office]. For the name of spiritual father belongs only to those who govern and guide us by the Word of God. St. Paul boasts that he is such a father in 1 Corinthians 4[:15], where he says, "In Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel." Because they are fathers, they are entitled to honor, even above all others. But they very seldom receive it, for the world's way of honoring them is to chase them out of the country and to begrudge them even a piece of bread. In short, as St. Paul says [1 Cor. 4:13], they must be "the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things." Yet it is necessary to impress upon the common people that they who would bear the

name of Christian owe it to God to show “double honor” [1 Timothy 5:17] to those who watch over their souls and to treat them well and make provision for them. If you do, God will also give you what you need and not let you suffer want. But here everyone resists and rebels; all are afraid that their bellies will suffer, and therefore they cannot now support one good preacher, although in the past they filled ten fat paunches. For this we deserve to have God deprive us of his Word and blessing and once again allow preachers of lies to arise who lead us to the devil – and wring sweat and blood out of us besides. (Martin Luther, Large Catechism 1:158-63, *The Book of Concord* [edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert] [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000], p. 408)

*The Household Chart [Table of Duties] of Some Bible Passages for all kinds of holy orders and walks of life, through which they may be admonished, as through lessons particularly pertinent to their office and duty.* For Bishops, Pastors [Parish Rectors], and Preachers: “A bishop is to be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, virtuous, moderate, hospitable, an apt teacher, not a drunkard, not vicious, not involved in dishonorable work, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not stingy, one who manages his own household well, who has obedient and honest children, not a recent convert, who holds to the Word that is certain and can teach, so that he may be strong enough to admonish with saving teaching and to refute those who contradict it.” From 1 Timothy 3[:2-4,6a; Titus 1:9]. (Martin Luther, Small Catechism, Table of Duties: 1-2, *The Book of Concord* [edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert] [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000], p. 365)

[Joel 2:28: *I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...*] Joel says here “flesh”; this means all types of people without discrimination. The Holy Spirit will be poured out in heaven, and all will prophesy. Therefore the law of Leviticus about the priesthood is repealed and a new one is given, that reads: “Your sons,” daughters, young men, old women. That means all types of flesh, that is, [all types of] people. I accept women, maidens, and will teach them all how they will prophesy. Servants will come into the [priestly] office, like Hannah, or maidservants. Therefore the description of the priesthood is no longer valid. Against this it is not possible for the Jews to respond that their priests must be correct and not deformed, as with Aaron, etc. But Peter was not from a priestly family, nor were the apostles nor was Christ. None of them took on a priestly office, and they were from other tribes. None of them was from the tribe of Levi or Aaron. But Joel says, all types of people are the same as bishops, priests, popes and cardinals. This is a powerful text that knocks priesthood onto its back. It is not valid to hold onto the office of the priesthood, because this was not endowed. And it will also be that priests will come out of all tribes. Today there are the sons of peasants; it is fit and proper that they have the gift of prophecy, about which we can use the phrase “is poured out.” No one is discriminated against, neither city residents nor peasants. Therefore this text truly sets up a new priesthood, that does not depend so much on the person. The four daughters of Philip were prophetesses. A woman can do this. Not preach in public, but console people and teach. A woman can do this just as much as a man. There are certainly women and girls who are able to comfort others and teach true words, that is, who can explain Scripture and teach or console other people so that they will be well. This all counts as prophesying, not preaching. In the same way, a mother should teach her children and family, because she has been given the true words of the Holy Spirit and understands... (Martin Luther, “Sermon on Joel 2:28” [1531]; quoted in *Luther on Women* [edited by Susan C. Karant-Nunn and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks] [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003], p. 61)

The second thing in this Gospel [Luke 1:39-56] is the Magnificat which Mary sings. By this she manifests the prowess of a doctor or master of theology and teaches us how we should comport ourselves toward God ...she teaches us how to comport ourselves before God, with praise and thanksgiving. ... “My soul,” says she, “doth magnify the Lord,” that is, I praise and extol God, not just with my mouth but with my heart and my life, with all my strength and members; and with all my soul I want to sing and praise God. ... “My spirit,” she says further, “hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.” My “spirit,” that is, my innermost being, all the faculties with which I perceive God rejoice not in the temporal things but in God. ... Therefore, let all the learned on earth come together and try their hand at composing even a single verse equal to this verse, and then they will see the extent of their skill. Mary sets high her focus, and yet is humble, so humble, that she, a great doctor and prophetess, who is more learned than all the apostles and prophets, becomes governess and handmaiden for Elisabeth. (Martin Luther, “[First] Sermon for the Day of Mary’s Visitation” [1532], *Complete Sermons of Martin Luther* [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2000], Vol. 7, pp. 347, 350-51)

So we say, either demand proof of a call and commission to preach, or immediately enjoin silence and forbid to preach, for an office is involved – the office of the ministry. One cannot hold an office without a commission or a call. ... I have often said and still say, I would not exchange my doctor's degree for all the world's gold. For I would surely in the long run lose courage and fall into despair if, as these infiltrators, I had undertaken these great and serious matters without call or commission. But God and the whole world bears me testimony that I entered into this work publicly and by virtue of my office as teacher and preacher, and have carried it on hitherto by the grace and help of God. Undoubtedly some maintain that in I Cor. 14, St. Paul gave anyone liberty to preach in the congregation, even to bark against the established preacher. For he says, "If a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first be silent" [I Cor. 14:30]. The interlopers take this to mean that to whatever church they come they have the right and power to judge the preacher and to proclaim otherwise. But this is far wide of the mark. The interlopers do not rightly regard the text, but read out of it – rather, smuggle into it – what they wish. In this passage Paul is speaking of the prophets, who are to teach, not of the people, who are to listen. For prophets are teachers who have the office of preaching in the churches. Otherwise why should they be called prophets? ... What a fine model I imagine that would be, for anyone to have the right to interrupt the preacher and begin to argue with him! Soon another would join in and tell the other two to hush up. Perchance a drunk from the tavern would come in and join the trio calling on the third to be silent. At last the women too would claim the right of "sitting by," telling the men to be silent [I Cor. 14:34]. Then one woman silencing the other – oh, what a beautiful holiday, auction, and carnival that would be! What pig sties could compare in goings-on with such churches? There the devil may have my place as preacher. ... Whoever reads the entire chapter will see clearly that St. Paul is concerned about speaking with tongues, about teaching and preaching in the churches or congregations. He is not commanding the congregation to preach, but is dealing with those who are preachers in the congregations or assemblies. Otherwise he would not be forbidding women to preach since they also are a part of the Christian congregation [I Cor. 14:34 f.]. ... But I am astonished that in their spiritual wisdom they [the interlopers] haven't learned to adduce examples of how women have prophesied and thereby attained rule over men, land, and people. There was Deborah (Judg. 4:1 f.), who caused the death of King Jabin and Sisera and ruled Israel. There was the wise woman in Abel, in David's days of whom we read in II Sam. 20:13 ff., and the prophetess Huldah, in the days of Josiah (II Kings 22:14 ff.). Long before, there was Sarah, who directed her husband and lord, Abraham, to cast out Ishmael and his mother Hagar, and God commanded Abraham to obey her [Gen. 21:10-12]. Furthermore, the widow Hannah (Luke 2:36 ff.), and the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:46 ff.). Here they might deck themselves out and find authority for women to preach in the churches. How much greater the reason for men to preach, where and when they please. We shall for the present not be concerned about the right of these women of the Old Testament to teach and to rule. But surely they did not act as the infiltrators do, unauthorized, and out of superior piety and wisdom. For then God would not have confirmed their ministry and worked by miracles and great deeds. But in the New Testament the Holy Spirit, speaking through St. Paul, ordained that women should be silent in the churches and assemblies [I Cor. 14:34], and said that this is the Lord's commandment. Yet he knew that previously Joel [2:28 f.] had proclaimed that God would pour out his Spirit also on handmaidens. Furthermore, the four daughters of Philip prophesied (Acts 21:9). But in the congregations or churches where there is a ministry women are to be silent and not preach [I Tim. 2:12]. Otherwise they may pray, sing, praise, and say "Amen," and read at home, teach one another, exhort, comfort, and interpret the Scriptures as best they can. (Martin Luther, "Infiltrating and Clandestine Preachers" [1532], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 40 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958], pp. 386-91)

For we must believe and be sure of this, that baptism does not belong to us but to Christ, that the gospel does not belong to us but to Christ, that the office of preaching does not belong to us but to Christ, that the sacrament [of the Lord's Supper] does not belong to us but to Christ, that the keys, or forgiveness and retention of sins, do not belong to us but to Christ. In summary, the offices and sacraments do not belong to us but to Christ, for he has ordained all this and left it behind as a legacy in the church to be exercised and used to the end of the world; and he does not lie or deceive us. Therefore, we cannot make anything else out of it but must act according to his command and hold to it. However, if we alter it or improve on it, then it is invalid and Christ is no longer present, nor is his ordinance. I do not want to say, as the papists do, that neither an angel nor Mary could effect conversion, etc.; but I do say that even if the devil himself came (if he would be so pious that he wanted to or could do so), and let us suppose that I found out afterward that the devil had inveigled his way into the office by stealth or, having assumed the form of a man, let himself be called to the office of the ministry, and publicly preached the gospel in the church, baptized, celebrated mass, absolved, and exercised and

administered such offices and sacraments, as a pastor would, according to the command of Christ – then we would for all that have to admit that the sacraments were valid, that we had received a valid baptism, had heard the true gospel, obtained true absolution, and had participated in the true sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. For our faith and the sacrament must not be based on the person, whether he is godly or evil, consecrated or unconsecrated, called or an impostor, whether he is the devil or his mother, but upon Christ, upon his word, upon his office, upon his command and ordinance; where these are in force, there everything will be carried out properly, no matter who or what the person might happen to be. If we would consider the person, then the preaching, baptism, and Lord's Supper which Judas and all his descendants have performed and administered and would still be performing and administering according to Christ's command, would be nothing but the devil's preaching, baptism, and Lord's Supper, for it would then be administered and given to us by the devil's members. But because the office, word, and sacrament are the ordinance of Christ and not of Judas or the devil, we permit Judas and the devil to remain Judas and the devil, and yet accept through them the blessings of Christ. For when Judas went to the devil he did not take his apostolic office along with him but left it behind, and Matthias received it in his stead. Offices and sacraments always remain in the church; persons are daily subject to change. As long as we call and induct into the offices persons who can administer them, then the offices will surely continue to be exercised. (Martin Luther, "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" [1533], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 38 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971], pp. 200-01)

...we should and must insist that God does not want to deal with us human beings, except by means of his external Word and sacrament. Everything that boasts of being from the Spirit apart from such a Word and sacrament is of the devil. For God even desired to appear to Moses first in the burning bush and by means of the spoken word [Exodus 3:2ff.]; no prophet – not even Elijah or Elisha – received the Spirit outside of or without the Ten Commandments; John the Baptist was not conceived without Gabriel's preceding Word [Luke 1:13-20], nor did he leap in his mother's womb without Mary's voice [Luke 1:41-44]; and St. Peter says: the prophets did not prophesy "by human will" but "by the Holy Spirit," indeed, as "holy people of God" [2 Peter 1:21]. However, without the external Word, they were not holy – much less would the Holy Spirit have moved them to speak while they were still unholy. Peter says they were holy because the Holy Spirit speaks through them. (Martin Luther, Smalcald Articles III, VIII:10-13, *The Book of Concord* [edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert] [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000], p. 323)

The keys are the pope's as little as Baptism, the Sacrament [of the Altar], and the Word of God are, for they belong to the people of Christ and are called "the church's keys" not "the pope's keys." Fifth, the church is recognized externally by the fact that it consecrates or calls ministers, or has offices that it is to administer [*Zum fünfften kennet man die Kirche eusserlich da bey, das sie Kirchen diener weihet oder berufft oder empter hat, die sie bestellen sol*]. There must be bishops, pastors [*Pfarther*], or preachers, who publicly and privately give, administer, and use the aforementioned four things [*Stücke*] or holy possessions in behalf of and in the name of the church, or rather by reason of their institution by Christ, as St. Paul states in Ephesians 4[:8], "He received gifts among men..." – his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some teachers and governors, etc. The people as a whole cannot do these things, but must entrust or have them entrusted to one person. Otherwise, what would happen if everyone wanted to speak or administer, and no one wanted to give way to the other? It must be entrusted to one person, and he alone should be allowed to preach, to baptize, to absolve, and to administer the sacraments. The others should be content with this arrangement and agree to it. Wherever you see this done, be assured that God's people, the holy Christian people, are present. It is, however, true that the Holy Spirit has excepted women, children, and incompetent people from this function, but chooses (except in emergencies) only competent males to fill this office [*Wahr ist's aber, daß in diesem Stück der Heilige Geist ausgenommen hat Weiber, Kinder und untüchtige Leute, sondern allein tüchtige Mannspersonen heizu erwählet (ausgenommen die Noth)*], as one reads here and there in the epistles of St. Paul [I Tim. 3:2, Tit. 1:6] that a bishop must be pious, able to teach, and the husband of one wife – and in I Corinthians 14[:34] he says, "The women should keep silence in the churches." In summary, it must be a competent and chosen man. Children, women, and other persons are not qualified for this office, even though they are able to hear God's Word, to receive Baptism, the Sacrament, absolution, and are also true, holy Christians, as St. Peter says [I Pet. 3:7]. Even nature and God's creation makes this distinction, implying that women (much less children or fools) cannot and shall not occupy positions of sovereignty, as experience also suggests and as Moses says in Genesis 3[:16], "You shall be subject to man." The Gospel, however, does not abrogate this natural law, but confirms it as the ordinance and creation of God. ... Now, if the



apostles, evangelists, and prophets are no longer living, others must have replaced them and will replace them until the end of the world, for the church shall last until the end of the world [Matt. 28:20]. Apostles, evangelists, and prophets must therefore remain, no matter what their name, to promote God's word and work. ... Just as was said earlier about the other four parts of the great, divine, holy possession by which the holy church is sanctified, that you need not care who or how those from whom you receive it are, so again you should not ask who and how he is who gives it to you or has the office. For all of it is given, not to him who has the office, but to him who is to receive it through this office, except that he can receive it together with you if he so desires. Let him be what he will. Because he is in office and is tolerated by the assembly, you put up with him too. His person will make God's word and sacraments neither worse nor better for you. What he says or does is not his, but Christ, your Lord, and the Holy Spirit say and do everything, in so far as he adheres to correct doctrine and practice. The church, of course, cannot and should not tolerate open vices; but you yourself be content and tolerant, since you, an individual, cannot be the whole assembly or the Christian holy people. ... Now wherever you find these offices or officers, you may be assured that the holy Christian people are there; for the church cannot be without these bishops, pastors, preachers, priests; and conversely, they cannot be without the church. Both must be together. ... Therefore the *ecclesia*, "the holy Christian people," does not have mere external words, sacraments, or offices, like God's ape Satan has, and in far greater numbers, but it has these as commanded, instituted, and ordained by God, so that he himself and not any angel will work through them with the Holy Spirit. They are called word, baptism, sacrament, and office of forgiveness, not of angels, men, or any other creature, but of God; only he does not choose to do it through his unveiled, brilliant, and glorious majesty, out of consideration for us poor, weak, and timid mortals and for our comfort, for who could bear such majesty for an instant in this poor and sinful flesh? ... No, he wants to work through tolerable, kind, and pleasant means, which we ourselves could not have chosen better. He has, for instance, a godly and kind man speak to us, preach, lay his hands on us, remit sin, baptize, give us bread and wine to eat and to drink. (Martin Luther, "On the Councils and the Church" [1539], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 41 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966], pp. 154-56, 164, 171)

[Genesis 31:]34. *Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them under the camels litter and sat upon them. Laban felt all about the tent but did not find them. 35. And she said to her father: Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me. So he searched but did not find the household gods. ... She pretends that she is suffering from menstruation, according to the custom of her sex. ... In her extreme need and danger, she suddenly finds a helpful strategy, and experience bears witness that women have great ability to devise strategy on the spur of the moment. Therefore Rachel is assisted by nature, or by the character and industry of women with which this sex has been endowed. Although it [the female sex] has not been destined by God for government of the state or church, where the greatest strength of character and wisdom is required, they [women] have nevertheless been ordained for the care of the home. For the longer they deliberate about important and difficult matters, the more they complicate and obstruct the business. But the first impulse of their nature in sudden dangers is usually excellent and very successful.* (Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis" [1542-44], *Luther's Works*, Vol. 6 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970], pp. 59-60)

The wives of the greatest lords, such as kings and princes, take part in no governance, but alone the husbands. For God said to the woman, "You shall be subject to your husband, etc." The husband has the governance in the house, unless he is...a fool, or unless out of love and to please his wife he lets her rule, as sometimes the lord follows the servant's advice. Otherwise and aside from that, the wife should put on a veil, just as a pious wife is duty-bound to help bear her husband's accident, illness, and misfortune on account of the evil flesh. The Law withholds from women wisdom and governance. St. Paul saw this in 1 Corinthians 7[:10], when he says, "I charge you – but not I; rather the Lord," and in 1 Timothy 2[:12]: "I do not permit a woman to teach, etc." (Martin Luther, Table Talk #6567; quoted in *Luther on Women* [edited by Susan C. Karant-Nunn and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks] [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003], p. 31)

Because a Christian's place is in the pulpit, whatever Christian pastors like me do in office, they do in the name of all. Therefore, we are the kind of kings that rule over sin, death, and everything else. We do it, however, in a spiritual manner... But I am such a lord for your sake when, (acting in your stead,) I place my hands on the head of a poor sinner and say, "I absolve you from your sins." I thus pronounce a judgment that makes the devil shake and tremble. Similarly, with my sinful hand I baptize an infant in the name [of the Trinity,] etc. With these words, the child is set free from death,

sin, and the devil. Likewise, when I administer the Sacrament (to you and say), “This is My body,” etc. Likewise, again, when I ordain a priest and say, “You shall be a priest,” etc. That is right, and the devil cannot prevent it, for we have Christ, the Word, and the Gospel. ... Oh, how grateful we should be, for God gives me the power that He Himself has, so that when I lay my hands [on a sinner and pronounce Absolution], it is the same as if God Himself had done it – likewise, when a boy or a woman pronounces Absolution, because both are members of Christ and have His power. We are not on this account to disparage the public office [of the ministry], which God wants to be free of contempt. But in an emergency, when no one else is available, a boy speaks (the Absolution and lays his hand on my I lead, and it is just as powerful). So richly has our Lord God bestowed His great favor on us, saying that whatever we do at His command He wishes (to have done Himself). Thus He pours Himself out, so that our hands and mouths are the instruments of His will. ...He wants to bestow Himself and His power [on human beings]. Such is the glory of Christians, if we believe. We condemn the devil by virtue of our spiritual authority... (Martin Luther, “Sermon for the First Sunday after Epiphany” [1544], *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 58 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2010], pp. 74-75)

The material and substance of Baptism is water together with God’s Word. I do not say that it is mere water, but the Word of God is in and with the water, as when a priest, or a woman in an emergency, takes water and pours it over the one to be baptized with these words: “I baptize you in the name [of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit],” etc., not [in the name] of the pastor (or baptizer). (Martin Luther, “Sermon for the Second Sunday after the Epiphany” [1545], *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 58 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2010], p. 222)

... I indeed, whenever I make a comparison of these things, am angry with myself and am ashamed of my life and full of regrets, because after Christ has been revealed, we have such a cold attitude toward our gifts and believe the Word so weakly, whereas the [Old Testament] fathers believed with such great steadfastness and lived in faith in the promises. In this way they overcame great dangers and difficulties. ... For they clung so firmly to the promises about the Shiloh who was to come that in comparison with them we, in the midst of the abundance and great glory of Christ’s revelation, are plainly cold and snoring. If it were not sinful, one should punish oneself for paying so little attention to the great majesty of God’s works. For is it not a great gift and great glory that in case of necessity even a woman can baptize and say: “I deliver you from death, the devil, sin, and all evils, and I give you the gift of eternal life; I make a son of God out of a son of the devil”? But by daily use that abundance of the Spirit has become commonplace. Yet it is true that a minister of the Gospel who teaches and baptizes is a greater prophet than Jacob or Moses. The clarity of our prophecy is immeasurably superior to the clarity they had. To be sure, they had the same spiritual food, drink, and faith; but the richness of our blessings is so great that even a child can absolve and can transfer from the kingdom of the devil into the kingdom of God by no other means than the Word, as Is. 11:6,8, says: “A little child shall lead the wolf, the lion, and the leopard, etc. The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adders den.” Therefore Peter says: “We have the prophetic Word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this.” (2 Peter 1:19) ... But these things should be repeated and discussed frequently, in order that we may glorify the ministry of the Word and give thanks to God because we are better prophets than the fathers and prophets in the Old Testament were. For today even a child or a woman can say to me: “Have confidence, my son. I announce to you the remission of sins. I absolve you, etc.” Or does one who hears this and believes not have forgiveness of sins and eternal life? Or is it not madness and insanity to teach that there should be doubt about this, and to deny that all this has been set forth in Holy Scripture, yes, to contend that Holy Scripture opposes this doctrine? O how horrible and full of danger are the times on which we wretched men have fallen! Surely there is no doubt at all that he who offers and administers the sacraments is a prophet and that he who takes them and believes is also a prophet. For “This is My body; this is My blood” (Matt. 26:26,28) are the words of a Prophet. Christ is the Prophet promised in Deut. 18:18-19: “I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And whoever will not give heed to My words which He shall speak in My name, I myself will require it of him.” ... Therefore it is necessary for us to magnify the ministry of the church, that is, our glory; for our faith rests not only on the promises but also on the fulfillment of what was promised. We have the Lord Himself speaking with us and setting forth far more illustrious promises than those that were given to the fathers. In Baptism Christ says: “I set you free, rescue you from the power of the devil, and hand you over to My heavenly Father.” Here I must conclude with certainty that Christ is not lying; and the more firmly I believe, the saintlier and more blessed I am. And surely there is no cause for doubting, since Christ promises the remission of sins and eternal life. (Martin Luther, “Lectures on Genesis” [1545],

*Luther's Works*, Vol. 8 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966], pp. 308-11)