

The Reformation's Doctrine of Pastoral Care  
Thornwell Lectures; First Presbyterian Church  
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Lucas Cranach the Younger, Weinberg Altarpiece

## Introduction

### Part One: Reinventing Pastoral Care

Fourth Lateran Council (1215): “The priest shall be discerning and prudent so that like a skilled doctor he may pour wine and oil over the wounds of the injured person. Let him carefully inquire about the circumstances of both the sinner and the sin, so that he may prudently discern what sort of advice he ought to give him and remedy to apply, using various means to heal the sick person.” (Canon 21)

Martin Bucer: “First, [pastors] lead to Christ and our Lord and into his communion those who are still estranged from him, whether through carnal excess or false worship. Secondly, [pastors] restore those who had once been brought to Christ and into his church but have been drawn away again through the affairs of the flesh or false doctrine. Thirdly, [pastors] assist in the true reformation of those who while remaining in the church of Christ have grievously fallen and sinned. Fourthly, [pastors] reestablish in true Christian strength and health those who, while persevering in the fellowship of Christ and no doing anything ... grossly wrong, have become somewhat feeble and sick in the Christian life. Fifthly, [pastors] protect from all offense and falling away and continually encourage in all good things those who stay with the flock and in Christ's sheep-pen...” (*Concerning the True Care of Souls*, 48)

### Part Two: Protestant Institutions of Pastoral Care

John Calvin: “The office of a true and faithful minister is not only publicly to teach the people over whom he is ordained pastor, but also, as much as he is able, to admonish, exhort, warn, and console each on in particular.” (*La forme des prières et chantz ecclésiastiques* [1542], M3v-Mr4)

- (1) Ministry of Confession
- (2) Ministry of Visitation
- (3) Ministry of Church Discipline

Theodore Beza: The pastor is like a physician of the soul who must “not only discern the illness, but also the situation and disposition of the patient, looking for the best medicine to prescribe, preaching the Law to the hardened, and the gospel of grace to those despairing. In brief, let us always condemn the sin, but try to save the sinner.” (*Sermons sur l’histoire de la résurrection* [1593], 129-130)

### Part Three: Church Discipline as Pastoral Care

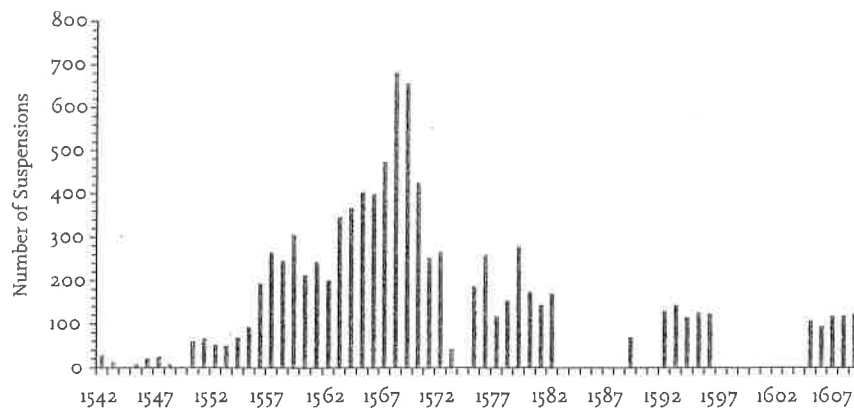
(See attached: “Graph of Total Suspension” and “Table of Suspension Offenses”)

- (1) Concern for People and their Problems
- (2) Concern for Heart Transformation
- (3) Concern for the Poor and Vulnerable
- (4) Concern for Conflict Resolution

### Conclusion

#### For Further Reading:

- Bucer, Martin. *Concerning the True Care of Souls*. Translated by Peter Beale. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009.
- Burnett, Amy Nelson. *Teaching the Reformation. Ministers and their Message in Basel, 1529-1629*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Dixon, Scott C. and Luise Schorn-Schütte, eds. *The Protestant Clergy of Early Modern Europe*. London: Palmgrave, 2003.
- Evans, G. R., ed. *A History of Pastoral Care*. London: Cassell, 2000.
- Karant-Nunn, Susan. *Luther’s Pastors: The Reformation in the Ernestine Countryside*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1980.
- Manetsch, Scott M. *Calvin’s Company of Pastors. Pastoral Care and the Emerging Reformed Church, 1536-1609*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- McKee, Elsie Anne, ed. *John Calvin: Writings on Pastoral Piety*. New York: Paulist Press, 2001.



GRAPH 7.1 Total Annual Suspensions, 1542-1609

Table 8.2 Suspension Offenses 1542 - 1609

Offense	# Male / Female	Total	% of Total
Quarrels/ <i>Mauvais Ménage</i>	1572 / 777	2349	25.4
Fornication/Adultery	636 / 538	1174	12.7
Scandals	447 / 233	680	7.3
Blasphemy	393 / 125	518	5.6
Lying/Slander	265 / 194	459	5.0
Catholic Behavior	298 / 152	450	4.9
Illicit Dances/Songs	171 / 274	445	4.8
Rebellion	308 / 123	431	4.7
Drunkenness	277 / 97	374	4.0
Ignorance	209 / 159	368	4.0
Confessional Infidelity	186 / 169	355	3.8
Petty Theft	159 / 161	320	3.5
Gaming/Gambling	253 / 2	255	2.8
Violation of Lord's Supper	163 / 82	245	2.6
Business Fraud Usury	164 / 29	193	2.1
Folk Religion	63 / 99	162	1.8
Sermon Violations	108 / 34	142	1.5
Clandestine Marriage	61 / 50	111	1.2
Begging/Idleness	80 / 24	104	1.1
Endangerment*	33 / 28	61	.7
Anabaptism/Heresy	25 / 1	26	.3
Unknown	18 / 16	34	.4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5889 / 3367</b>	<b>9256</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* "Endangerment" is the term I have chosen to identify the act of exposing oneself or another person to physical danger (usually the plague) through negligence or ill-will. I have included attempted suicide under this rubric.