THEOLOGICAL COMMONPLACES

ON THE
ECCLESIASTICAL MINISTRY
PART ONE

JOHANN GERHARD

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Commonplace XXVI/1: On the Ecclesiastical Ministry, Part One

The preface shows the connection of this commonplace with the preceding commonplace, § 1, and explains the three estates in the church, § 2, as well as the necessity of the ecclesiastical ministry, § 3, and its usefulness and dignity, § 4.

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Editor’s Preface

The sixth volume of Gerhard’s *Loci Theologici*, containing the commonplaces *On the Ecclesiastical Ministry* and *On Political Magistracy*, first appeared in print in 1619.1 The years leading up to 1619 were Gerhard’s first years as a professor of theology at Jena, yet he had been active in the pastoral ministry for ten years before he came to Jena in 1616. On June 5, 1606, he was called to be pastor and superintendent of Heldburg by Duke Johann Casimir of Coburg.2 Four years later, in December 1610, Gerhard had made his report of an inspection of the churches and schools of Heldburg and had come to conclusions about how they needed to be improved.3 Having successfully carried out this task, he was given the duty of conducting a general inspection of all of Johann Casimir’s lands in Thuringia and Franconia in 1613.4 By 1615, Gerhard had become general superintendent (the functional equivalent of a bishop) in Coburg and had written a church order, the “Church Order of Johann Casimir,” which was later published in 1626.5 This church order included chapters on many of the same topics that appeared in Gerhard’s commonplace *On the Ecclesiastical Ministry*, such as the call, examination, ordination, investiture, and pastoral duties. Of course, during his ministry he had already begun writing his *Theological Commonplaces*. A new volume of this grand work was published every few years, beginning in 1610.


3 His report of the visitation is printed in Berbig, *D. Johann Gerhards Visitationswerk*, 32–36.


Aside from his pastoral work, Gerhard had dealt with the doctrine of the ministry in various disputations and shorter books prior to the appearance of his commonplace on the ministry. The centennial of the Reformation gave Gerhard the opportunity to reflect on the call and ministry of Martin Luther in several writings, just as he included a chapter on Luther’s call in his commonplace On the Ecclesiastical Ministry (§§ 118–26).

The first part of Gerhard’s commonplace On the Ecclesiastical Ministry (§§ 1–189) deals especially with the ministers: their necessity, call, ordination, transfer, removal, etc. The second part (§§ 190–375) deals especially with the work of the ministry: differing duties and rankings within the office, preaching, administering the Sacraments, administering church discipline, caring for the poor, as well as the payment and marriage of ministers.

Just as Gerhard usually begins his commonplaces with a discussion of terminology, so also here a few of his terms require explanation for the English-speaking reader. For Gerhard, “public ministry” is a general term not just for churchly service but also for political office. It is called “public” because it benefits the people or the public. Gerhard does not use “public ministry” as a synonym for the “ecclesiastical ministry” (§ 8). “Pastor” in Latin is usually the head minister of a congregation or cluster of congregations. Sometimes the word means “bishop.” But assistant ministers often had other names. Among German-speaking Lutherans, the terms used were often Pfarrer (literally, “parson”) for the head minister, and Prediger (“preacher”) or Diakonos (“deacon”) for an assistant minister. Another common word for a minister of the church is “presbyter,” which is often translated “elder” in English translations of the Bible. Gerhard uses the term to mean a minister who has pastoral care over a congregation but is not a supervisor of other ministers and congregations. An “elder” (Latin, senior) is a lay leader.

Two of Gerhard’s terms, however, are laden with ambiguity. Sometimes he uses the word “presbytery” (presbyterium) to mean the ministerium of the church, or a gathering

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6 Disputatio Theologica. De Ministerio Ecclesiastico (Coburg: Bertsch, 1610); Aphorismi Succincti Et Selecti, In Viginti Tribus Capitibus, totius Theologiae nucleus continentes: Ad Usum Disputationum Scholasticarum (Jena: Steinmann, 1611); and Disputationum Bellarmino oppositarum Secunda Continens Controversiam De variis sacrorum librorum editionibus (Jena: Steinmann, 1618), a mistakenly titled collection of disputations that included one on the ministers of the church.


8 An excellent overview of Gerhard’s position on these issues is given by Martti Vaahtoranta, Restauratio Imaginis Divinae: Die Vereinigung von Gott und Mensch, ihre Voraussetzungen und Implikationen bei Johann Gerhard (Helsinki: Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft, 1998), 189–90, 193–99.
of the church’s clergy (§ 156). But sometimes he uses it to mean a regional council consisting of ministers and lay leaders, a “consistory” (§ 87). The reader must be careful to see how Gerhard uses the term in each context.

The term *doctor* (“teacher”) is also somewhat ambiguous. In modern English the word “teacher” usually connotes a schoolteacher, especially at the pre-collegiate level. Gerhard does not deal with such teachers in this commonplace, and the term *doctor* does not refer specifically to them. He does speak about schools and schoolteachers in his church order, however, and there the main terms for a schoolteacher are *praecceptor* [“preceptor”] or *docens* [“docent”]; *doctor* is not used.9 Usually Gerhard uses the term *doctor* to mean simply “one who teaches,” and in the context of this commonplace it is usually the same as a “presbyter” (that is, a minister of the church). However, in chapter III, section XI, it means a “doctor,” one who has the academic degree of doctor of theology. The distinction is seen in § 138 (4), where Gerhard distinguishes the promotion of doctors, which includes the power to teach anywhere, from the call of pastors and “teachers” [doctores], whose call is to a certain place.

An important chapter of this commonplace deals with the call to the ecclesiastical ministry. Gerhard argues against the Anabaptists and Photinians that, according to Scripture, a legitimate call is necessary before one may carry out the pastoral functions of preaching and administering Sacraments (§§ 54ff.). The “Photinians” were seventeenth-century Unitarians, sometimes called “Socinians” after their leader Fausto Sozinni (1539–1604). By calling them “Photinians,” Gerhard and others were drawing attention to the similarity of their teaching with that of the ancient heretic Photinus (d. 376), who viewed Christ as a mere man and denied the personality of the Holy Spirit.

Two aspects of Gerhard’s doctrine of the call have drawn criticism and caution. First, Gerhard emphasizes that the call to the ministry is a call restricted to a certain place. By emphasizing the uniqueness of the apostolic office, he does not seem to make room for any office of missionary or evangelist in the present church (§ 220).10

Second, Gerhard redefines the doctrine of the three estates (church, state, and household) in a way that led to secular state control of the church (the so-called *landesherrliche Kirchenregiment*). The differences between Gerhard and the first generation of reformers are subtle. When Luther speaks of the “three estates” or “three hierarchies,” he means the three divinely established areas of human responsibility.11 One of these estates is the church, in which one is either a preacher or a hearer, or assists the preachers in some way. The other two are the state and the household, where there are different positions. People can belong to multiple estates at the same time. For example, a man could be a husband and hold church office as well. Thus Luther’s doctrine of the three estates is a

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10 See Klaus Detlev Schulz, Mission from the Cross: The Lutheran Theology of Mission (St. Louis: Concordia, 2009), 264–68.

11 Confession Concerning Christ’s Supper (1528), AE 37:364–65; On the Councils and the Church (1539), AE 41:176–77; Circular Disputation on the Right of Resistance Against the Emperor (1539), WA 39/2:42; cf. FC SD XII 9.
doctrine of social ethics. But sometimes Luther names more than three estates, and when
he does so, he speaks of offices or positions of responsibility held by individuals, for
example, the “estate of priests.” So for Luther “estate” sometimes means the institution
or area of responsibility (e.g., the church) and sometimes it means the office or officials
within that area of responsibility (e.g., the pastors). What remained true for Luther and
the other reformers is that the church itself is made up, in essence, of hearers and preachers
of God’s Word.

Gerhard, on the other hand, takes the three estates and uses them not just as areas
of social ethics, but as parts of the church. Instead of dividing the church simply into
preachers and hearers, Gerhard adds rulers (§§ 2, 85). Gerhard’s argument is based on
the Old Testament, where kings were established by God to guard the people and protect
the temple and true worship of God. Despite the fact that kings and rulers played no
role in the call process in the New Testament, the secular magistrate was due a role now
that he had become Christian (§ 86). This mixing of church and state had tragic conse-
quences after Gerhard’s time. Princes converted to other confessions and forced their
churches to come along. When pastors preached against the vices of rulers, they could be
dismissed from their church and sent into exile.

But is Gerhard to blame? Gerhard’s position on church governance is usually
described as Protestant “episcopality,” a manner of church government in which the
secular ruler takes the place of the bishop and so governs the church. Yet this descrip-
tion is a simplification. Although his modification of the doctrine of the three estates
did legitimize the authority of the secular ruler within the church, Gerhard intended
to argue instead for a church governance balanced between the Christian magistrate,
the clergy, and the laity. He argues for a consistorial church government, in which the
clergy and lay representatives or “elders” exercised church discipline, served as a court of
appeals, made call assignments, etc., on a regional basis (§ 87). Yet in reality, the secular
ruler often appointed both the lay and the pastoral representatives to such consistories,
and thus the laity’s voice in particular was suppressed by the voice of the secular rulers.

Is Gerhard to blame? Actually, Gerhard’s position on church government was
an attempt to limit the influence of the secular rulers. Gerhard faced politicians who
claimed the right to rule the church and remove ministers who displeased them at will.
This claim was based on the legal transferal of episcopal rights from Roman Catholic

12 SA III XI 1; SC Table of Duties; Paul Althaus, The Ethics of Martin Luther, trans. Robert C.
13 SA III XII 2; Philip Melanchthon, The Chief Theological Topics: Loci Praecipui Theologi 1559,
14 Honecker, Cura religionis, 76–78.
15 Honecker, Cura religionis, 137–38, 150.
16 Honecker, Cura religionis, 74–75, 141.
17 Martin Honecker, “Theologie unter der obrigkeitlichen Cura Religionis Christianae,” in
Wissenschaftliche Theologie und Kirchenleitung: Beiträge zur Geschichte einer spannungsreichen
Beziehung für Rolf Schäfer zum 70. Geburtstag, ed. Ulrich Köpf (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck,
2001), 85–120, here at 103.
bishops to the princes of the Augsburg Confession in the Treaty of Passau in 1552 (see below, § 108). Lutheran rulers had become emergency bishops. Against absolutist claims, Gerhard emphasizes the rights of the whole church, since the church is more than just the secular ruler (§§ 174, 369).

Along with the call, Gerhard also deals at length with ordination in this commonplace. Here he sometimes distinguishes ordination from the ceremony of the imposition of hands, but not always. On one side, Gerhard states that ordination was used by the Lord Jesus to put the apostles into office, though without the imposition of hands (§ 141), and it was used by Paul to put Timothy into the ministry (§ 62). In fact, Gerhard says that the imposition of hands bestows gifts of the Holy Spirit (§ 143) and commits the ministry to a man (§§ 62, 68). In these statements, Gerhard is considering ordination as part of the call process. On the other side, Gerhard denies that there is any divine command to use ordination, denies that the spiritual gifts given through the imposition of hands are necessary for the performance of pastoral functions, and denies that ordination is a sacrament in the strict sense (§ 140). In these statements, Gerhard is considering ordination as distinct from the call and emphasizing that it does not bestow a power to perform the ministry, as was claimed by his main opponent, the Jesuit Robert Bellarmine.

This first part of Gerhard’s commonplace On the Ecclesiastical Ministry ends, fittingly, with a consideration of the people affected by the ministry, or the object of the ministry: “the Lord’s flock, entrusted to the care and protection of shepherds” (§ 189). This consideration of God’s people will lead Gerhard in the second part of this commonplace to discuss the means by which the sheep are fed and guarded.

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Editions of the Theological Commonplaces

There are four main editions of Gerhard’s Theological Commonplaces: the Jena edition of 1610 (the edition printed during Gerhard’s lifetime), the Frankfurt/Hamburg edition of 1657 (edited by Johann Ernst Gerhard, the author’s son), the Tübingen edition of 1762 (edited by Johann Friedrich Cotta), and the Berlin/Leipzig edition of 1863 (edited by Edward Preuss). Dr. Richard Dinda made his translation from the Preuss edition, and I have edited the text with an eye not only on Preuss but also on the Cotta edition, which was employed to correct the many typographical errors of Preuss’s edition (some of which were carried forward from the Frankfurt/Hamburg edition). On the top of each page of the Concordia edition, references are given to both the Cotta and Preuss editions. Thus “C3:44” means “Cotta edition, volume 3, page 44,” and “P1:143” means “Preuss edition, volume 1, page 143.”

(4) Princes call to themselves people to whom they entrust a certain office and whose effort they have decided to employ in conducting their business. So also the calling of ministers of the church includes this: that God has committed to them, as His ambassadors, an office that they must bear and perform.

Whether it is necessary.

§ 54. This call to the ministry is utterly necessary for those who desire to be engaged in this office according to the will of God, with a good conscience, and to the benefit of their hearers. The Augsburg Confession, art. XIV, speaks as follows about this point: “Concerning the ecclesiastical order, (our churches) teach that no one in the church should publicly teach or administer Sacraments unless he is rightly called [rite vocatus].” These words of the Confession are opposed: (1) To the false accusations of the Papists who were charging that in our churches everything is done confusedly and without order, that we allow everyone the right [potestas] to teach in our church, and even that we turn everything upside down, according to Luther’s preface to the Smalcald Articles.¹ Andreas Fabricius Leodium (Harm. August. Confess., art. 14) makes the bold reproach that “the subscribers to the Augsburg Confession in no area work harder than they do to remove ecclesiastical order; to confuse and overthrow Christendom [res Christiana] as they erect altar against altar” (1 Kings 13) “and pulpit against pulpit; and to create and make all the baptized, whether men or women, into priests.” Laurentius Arturus Posnaniensis, Assertion. de vocat. ministr., assertion 2: “As the ministers of the Protestants have been made from bricklayers, butchers, cooks, and sausage-makers, so also they return to their old duties whenever it pleases and become both laity and bishops for themselves.” Johann Baptist Fickler, Replica contra Heilbrunn., p. 87, writes: “Among the Lutherans, shepherd and sheep are no different.” Very recently the Jesuit Becanus, in his Disp. inaugural. de vocatione ministrorum, held in Vienna in 1616, th. 52, said: “What I shall say is shameful” (Shameful indeed! For it is a lie of which every good man should be ashamed!), “but I cannot hide it. There is so little of the old custom and piety among the Lutherans” (to whom, as an honor, he adds the Calvinists) “in the ecclesiastical ministry that laborers, schoolmasters, and lawyers at the nod of some count or baron—and not rarely at the command of some woman—do not blush to go up to the pulpit and not rarely to usurp[,] the ministry.” And again: “If, on the other hand, it seemed best to their masters, they are forced to abandon the ministry and return to their labors.”

(2) The words of the Augsburg Confession are opposed to the confusings of the Anabaptists, who seize for themselves the functions of the ecclesiastical ministry without a call and give the office of teaching to all indiscriminately. In this way they introduce a barbaric disorder into the church. The Photinians today are in agreement with them, denying that a divine sending is required for the ecclesiastical office, as will become clear later [§§ 64–74].

1 Cf. SA Preface 8–9.
2 Read non raro usurpare haud erubescant with Cotta instead of non raro usurpare erubescant.
Its necessity is proved from statements of Scripture: First, Jeremiah 23:21: “I did not send the prophets, and they ran.”

§ 55. That necessity of calling and sending is proved: (1) From explicit testimonies of Scripture. (2) From approved examples that contain the practice of the whole church in the Old and New Testaments. (3) From rational arguments based on Scripture.

These are the stronger statements of Scripture: (1) Jer. 23:21: “I did not send the prophets, and they ran. I did not speak to them, and they prophesied.” From this passage we draw the following conclusion: Future ministers of the church by all means should beware of what God disapproves and detests and what He complains about most seriously. But God disapproves of running and prophesying before the divine sending and commanding is added. Therefore that is what future ministers of the church should beware of.

Also, true prophets and teachers of the church should flee whatever is characteristic of false prophets. But it is characteristic of false prophets to run and prophesy before the divine sending is added. Therefore.

See also v. 32: “Behold, I am against the prophets who dream a lie,’ says the Lord, ‘who lead My people astray with their lying, though I did not send them nor command them.’” From this we draw conclusions as follows: We should rightly flee whatever God severely punishes. But God severely punishes seizing and usurping the ministry of teaching with private rashness and without a legitimate call. Therefore. The minor premise is confirmed not only from this statement of the prophet but also from examples of “intruding on someone else’s office” [ἀλλοτριοεπισκοπη, 1 Pet. 4:15], which was severely punished, as in the case of Uzzah, son of Abinadab, who rashly put his hand on God’s ark and died next to the ark because of God’s wrath (2 Sam. 6:6−7). It was punished in the case of Uzziah, king of Judah, who unlawfully seized the priesthood and burned incense. He was stricken with leprosy because of this (2 Chron. 26:19). It was punished in the case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who strove after the high priesthood and were swallowed up by the opening of the earth because of this (Num. 16:32).

Ostorodus (Institutiones, ch. 42, p. 437) objects, saying that that prophetic passage has nothing at all to do with the matter at hand, because it is dealing with those “who were boasting that they were prophets sent by God so that they could declare something new and strange to the people. But since in this our time nothing new is being presented, but rather the ancient teaching of the Gospel is being set forth,” he says, “there is no need for a special calling or sending.” Socinus aims at the same thing when he writes (in his treatise De eccles., published in Racovia in 1611, p. 13):

No one can find fault regarding their ministry with the ministers of the Word of God who do not agree with the Roman or Greek churches, nor demand from them

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3 Luther’s 1545 edition of the German Bible translated ἀλλοτριοεπισκοπης as der in ein frembd Ampt greiffet (“one who intrudes on someone else’s office”). Luther’s marginal note explains: “This vice is what the devil urges most of all in false Christians, who always want to have much to do and to rule where nothing has been commanded them, just as the bishops and clerics do, ruling the world; likewise, the rebellious and presumptuous preachers, harmful and dangerous people” (WA DB 7:311).
that they show a legitimate authority for their calling or office. After all, they are not conducting themselves as any new apostles of Christ or divine prophets, nor are they professing to be announcing a previously unheard-of teaching or religion to the world, nor are they teaching anything on the basis of new principles or previously unknown witnesses, but only on the basis of those principles and those testimonies that are utterly sure among all who are of the name “Christian,” namely, from the very writings of the evangelists and apostles.

Schmaltzius, *Refut. thesium D. Frantzii*, ch. *De ordine ecclesiastico*, p. 378: “Frantzius admits that the discussion in the words of Jeremiah is principally about a unique situation, and this is what we want: Not only should he have affirmed, but he also should have proved that these words can be applied to any calling at all.”

We respond. We do not deny that Jeremiah is speaking specifically about the false prophets of Israel, whom God had neither sent nor called and who were prophesying “the delusions of their own hearts.” From this, however, it is correct to deduce a general rule that should be set against the “self-called”: that no one except him whom God has sent should usurp the office of teaching in the church, which office is likewise called “prophecy” in the Scriptures (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 14:1ff.). This is because a diversity assigned from diverse things depends on the false hypothesis that those who do not offer or propose new doctrine do not need a special calling or sending. This is evident from the following foundations:

1. All ministers of the church are “God’s ambassadors” (2 Cor. 5:20). But now, no one assumes for himself the functions of an ambassador unless the person sending him gives him such duties. Therefore ministers, too, should not run before they are sent.

2. The gathering of the church as well as the institution and preservation of the ministry is ascribed to God as the principal cause, as is evident from the preceding, and so it is also called “the ministry of the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:6). Ministers are the instrumental cause “through whom” people are led to faith (1 Cor. 3:5) and are saved (1 Tim. 4:16). But now, an instrumental cause never acts or works without being moved and driven by the principal cause and being taken up by it for cooperation. Therefore ministers, too, should wait for a call from God. Those whom God has not sent cannot be considered His ministers.

3. The priests of the Old Testament were not supposed to offer new doctrine, yet they did not teach, nor were they supposed to teach, without a call (2 Chron. 29:11).

4. In the New Testament those who “had been established as presbyters in every church” (Acts 14:23) were not offering new doctrine, yet neither were they teaching without having been called and sent. The apostle writes (Titus 1:5) very clearly to Titus that “he left him in Crete” for this purpose: “so that he would appoint presbyters in every town”; and he commands Timothy (1 Tim. 5:22) “not to lay hands suddenly on anyone.”

5. All who teach in the church without having been called and sent by God are called “thieves and robbers” (John 10:8). They are said to come “in their own name,” not in Christ’s name (John 5:43). They upset the divinely established order (1 Cor. 14:23, 40). Therefore it is correct to apply this to all who want to teach in the church: that they should not prophesy before they are sent.
Second, Jeremiah 27:9: “I did not send them.”

§ 56. (II) Jer. 27:9, 14–15: “Do not listen to the words of your prophets, who are saying to you: ‘You shall not serve the king of Babylon,’ for they are speaking a lie to you, for ‘I have not sent them,’ says the Lord, ‘and they are prophesying falsely in My name.’”

From this passage we infer as follows: Whomever we are forbidden to hear, he is not a true minister of God nor a teacher of the church. But now, we are forbidden to hear whoever has not been sent by God. Therefore whoever has not been sent by God is not a true minister of God nor a teacher of the church. We prove the major premise. Whoever has no hearers is not a true teacher, by virtue of the mutual relation. But now, whomever we are forbidden to hear, by divine right and command, has no hearers. Therefore whomever we are forbidden to hear is not a true teacher.

The Photinians repeat their limitation: “Only he who offers new doctrine is not to be heard, not having been sent nor called by God.” The precept, however, is general: no one is to be heard unless he can prove his call, as is evident from the preceding foundations.

Here we place those passages of the New Testament that establish the characteristic of false prophets and teachers: that they come “in their own name,” neither sent nor called by God, because of which there is also the command to avoid them. Matt. 7:15: “Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing.” Matt. 24:24: (Noncalled) “false christs and false prophets will arise” (ἐγερθήσονται, “will be stirred up,” namely, by the impulse of Satan), etc. John 5:43: “I have come in My Father’s name” (sent by Him and bringing sound doctrine) “and you do not receive Me; if another one comes in his own name, him you will receive.” John 10:8: “All who came before Me are thieves and robbers.”

(On these words the pious ancients comment as follows. Jerome, commentary on the preface of Matthew: “In those who come there is a presumption of rashness; in those who have been sent there is the obedience of servitude.” Augustine, Contra Faustum, bk. 16, ch. 12: “He wants ‘have come’ to mean those who were not sent. Those who were sent, such as Moses and the prophets, came not before Him but with Him. They did not want to go ahead of Him in pride; rather, they carried Him humbly as He spoke through them.” Theophylact, commentary on this passage: “Notice also with exact reading: He says, ‘Those who came,’ that is, the false prophets, but not ‘those who were sent,’ such as prophets.”)

Acts 20:30: “From among your own selves will arise (ἀναστήσονται) men speaking wrong things.” 2 John 10: “If anyone comes to you” (of his own will, not sent nor called) “and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house nor give him any greeting.” In these and similar passages two characteristics of false prophets are connected: they come though they are not called nor sent, and they bring false doctrine. Yet here we must note that sometimes those, too, are false prophets who are in the ordinary succession and legitimate call. Hence we must look not only at their call but also and especially at their doctrine if we want to distinguish true teachers from false ones.
Third, John 3:27: “No man can receive anything.”

§ 57. (III) John 3:27: “No man can receive anything except what is given him from heaven.” John’s disciples were upset because Christ was baptizing through His disciples. They said, [John 3:26]: “Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you bore witness, here He is, baptizing, and all are going to Him.” However, John answered them in exactly these words: “No man can receive anything except what is given him from heaven,” where he refers to his own and Christ’s call. In regard to his own call he adds, v. 28: “You yourselves bear me witness that I said, ‘I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him,’” namely, to prepare the way for Him. Regarding Christ’s call he says, vv. 29–30: “He who has the bride is the Bridegroom; the friend of the Bridegroom, who stands and hears Him, rejoices greatly at the Bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now full. He must increase, but I must decrease.” That is, here the Baptist intends to say: “My calling is completely different from Christ’s calling. I am the friend of the Bridegroom; He is the Bridegroom. I was sent ahead of Him to prepare the way for Him. He, however, is the Angel of the covenant. Therefore it would be sacrilege if I wanted to arrogate to myself the office of the Messiah without a call. Hence I am content with my call, which God assigned to me, and I rejoice on this account: that I am the Bridegroom’s friend and that I see Him increase,” etc. You see: “’No man can receive anything except what is given him from heaven,’ that is, by God” (James 1:17). On the basis of this it is correct to establish the general rule that no one should receive the duties of an office nor arrogate to himself an official honor unless the divine calling and sending is added. You see, on those whom He calls and sends God also bestows success; He equips them with the necessary gifts. On the other hand, those who take on great things without a call and thrust themselves into public offices with private temerity will in the end experience unhappy results, as was made clear with many examples [§ 55].

Fourth, Romans 10:15: “How shall they preach unless they are sent?”

§ 58. (IV) Rom. 10:15: “How shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Gospel of peace, who preach good things!’” The apostle uses a very beautiful gradation: “How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? But how shall they preach unless they are sent?” [vv. 14–15]. What this says is that just as calling on Him has the prerequisite of faith, faith has the prerequisite of hearing the Word, and hearing has the prerequisite of the preaching of the Gospel, so also preaching has the prerequisite of a divine sending, since no one can preach—that is, rightfully, salutarily, and with a good conscience—unless he is sent by God.

So, then, we draw the conclusion: In a relation there is no terminus without a foundation.4 The ecclesiastical ministry is like a relation; its foundation is the divine sending

4 “Relations” are the ways in which two things associate or interact with each other, whether by comparison (relatio aequiparantiae or disquiparantiae), cause and effect, substance and accident (relatio praedicamentalis), or authority (relatio superpositionis or suppositionis), as well as various transcendental relations (such as actuality and potentiality, matter and form,
and calling, and its terminus is preaching itself. Therefore there is no preaching (as the terminus)—that is, salutary and God-approved preaching—without divine sending and calling (as the foundation).

Ostorodus (Inst. Germ., ch. 42, p. 437) makes the following objection: “Paul is speaking just about his own time, because the doctrine of the Gospel was still new and unheard-of. Consequently, the situation demanded that those who were going to announce it should also be able to show their own sending. On the other hand, because nothing new is being taught in this our day, but rather the ancient doctrine of the Gospel is being set forth, there no longer is any need for a special call.” Theophilus Nicolaides repeats the same thing in his Defensio tractatus Sociniani de ecclesia et missione ministrorum adversus Miedzibozium, ch. 1, p. 140: “The passage” (Romans 10: “How shall they preach unless they are sent?”) “has nothing at all to do with the matter at hand, for Paul is speaking about preaching or, rather, about announcing. That word in this passage does not include every kind of teaching but only that which brings something new and unheard-of into the world. This is clear from the fact that Paul in this passage is speaking about what simply cannot be done, not about what is impermissible to be done,” etc. “For in his preceding words he asks: ‘How shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe what they have not heard?’ These words do not mean that no one is permitted to call upon someone unless he believes in him and that no one is permitted to believe unless he hears. Rather, their sense is that no one can in any way call upon someone unless he believes in him and that no one can in any way believe unless he hears.” Andreas Radeccius, in his notes on Smigliecius’s book that he calls Refutatio dissolutionis nodi Gordii, p. 5: “The context itself shows that the talk here concerns the apostles alone.” Schmaltzius, Refut. thesium D. Frantzii, part 2, disp. 4, p. 379: “The talk here is about the apostles. But things that were said in regard to the apostles do not necessarily pertain to all who teach others.”

** Pisiecii, Resp. ad rat. Camp., p. 107: “What are you boiling out of this apostolic passage? Do you still desire ambassadors and interpreters of the greatest felicity to be sent out to preach the Gospel, which has been declared now for fifteen hundred years? No sending of ambassadors or apostles, no preaching of the Gospel through ambassadors, is necessary. Rather, the statement of the Gospel, which ambassadors once preached, must be repeated, recalled to mind, and explained to the people. By this they will be led to the true cultivation of piety and to an understanding of the mysteries. For this duty of office, worthy people in the church are selected.” **

We respond. (1) In this objection the Photinians contradict themselves. You see, they bring up the examples of Philip, Apollos, and others from Acts, and they claim that

power and object). A common example in philosophical dictionaries was the relation of father and son. In the relation of “fatherhood,” the terminus (or “goal” or “object”) of the relation is a “son.” The foundation of the relation (the cause of what makes the two things related) might be “fathering” or “the power to beget.” In the example Gerhard gives here, it is clear that he has in mind a relation of cause and effect or a relation of authority. “In a relation there is no terminus without a foundation” means “in a relation, there is nothing related (a terminus) unless there is something that causes it to be related (a foundation).” (See Scherzer, part 1, s.v. Relatio; Micraelius, s.v. Relatio.)
these preached the Gospel without a particular call, as will become evident later [§§ 68, 79]. How, then, can they take this statement of the apostle in the sense that a sending was necessary for those who, at the time of the apostles, had to teach the doctrine of the Gospel, which had not been heard before? Surely the preaching of Philip and Apollos preceded the time of the Epistle to the Romans.

(2) The apostle's statement is general, as is obvious from the foundations we noted earlier. The context of the apostle's statement proves this very thing. Indeed, if his preceding statements are general and pertain to every time of the church—both in the New Testament and the Old, both to the times that follow and to the first time when the Gospel was preached—then surely this statement, too, about the necessity of sending for preaching is a general one that must be taken without any restriction and limitation about all times of the church. But now, no one doubts that his preceding statements are general. For as there was no invocation at the time of the apostles without faith, and as there was no faith without hearing the Word (in adults, that is, about whom the apostle is speaking here), and as there was no hearing of the Word without preaching, so also these things hold true in the church today. Thus we shall not allow anyone to take a link or loop from this apostolic chain.

(3) One cannot seek a subterfuge in the word “preach,” as if it applied only to the apostles who were proclaiming a new and previously unheard-of doctrine of the Gospel. After all, in other places it is taken generally for any preaching of the Word made even to those who already before knew something about this doctrine (Matt. 26:13; Mark 14:9; Acts 8:5; 15:21; Rom. 2:21; 2 Pet. 2:5).

(4) The apostle denies that anyone can preach without being sent in the same sense in which he denies in 1 Cor. 10:21 that anyone “can drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons.” That is, he is denying that anyone can legitimately, lawfully [jure], salutarily, with a good conscience, and according to the will of God preach without being sent. Meanwhile, some people can in fact [de facto] arrogate the office of preaching to themselves without a sending. This interpretation does not at all conflict but agrees very well with the preceding [statements of the apostle]. No one can call upon Him in whom he does not believe. That is, there is no true, God-pleasing, salutary invocation without faith. Of course, it can happen that someone, contrary to the will of God, would direct his invocation to Him in whom he does not believe, and without faith in his heart, he would babble and mutter the formulas of his miserable prayers with his lips alone. However, this is not the true, God-pleasing, salutary invocation about which the apostle is speaking here, for he says in the verse directly preceding: “Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” Also, no one can believe in Him of whom he has not heard. That is, true, saving faith has a perpetual relation to the Word, beyond whose boundaries it does not go. Of course, it can happen that someone would conceive an opinion of faith above and beyond—and, in fact, even contrary to—the Word. However, this is not true, saving faith, which springs only from the Word and is made to correspond with the Word. Furthermore, no one can hear without preaching, for the word of the Gospel is not known by nature. Rather, it becomes known to human beings by divine revelation and by preaching, and whatever of it is evident in the church all comes down from divine revelation and preaching. Therefore what the apostle adds in the last place
must be taken in the same sense: that no one can preach unless he is sent. Of course, it can happen that someone would arrogate the duties of preaching and teaching without a call. However, that is not legitimate, God-pleasing, salutary preaching. If all these points are observed correctly, the clouds of sophistry that cover up the light of this apostolic statement go up in smoke.

Fifth, Hebrews 5:4: “No one takes the honor to himself.”

§ 59. (V) Heb. 5:4–5: “No one takes the honor to himself, but he who is called by God just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to be made a high priest, but He who said to Him: ‘You are My Son,’ ” etc. The author of the Epistle is comparing Aaron, the high priest of the Old Testament, and Christ, the only “high Priest” of the New Testament. Just as Aaron did not undertake the priestly function with private authority but waited for the divine call, so also Christ did not undertake His office without the divine sending and calling, but the heavenly Father first solemnly declared Him a teacher of the church in His Baptism and transfiguration. The apostle states the first part of the comparison with a general axiom: “No one takes” (that is, “ought to take”) “to himself the honor” of any office, but rather he ought to receive it when offered and imposed by God.

Theophilus Nicolaides makes the objection (Defens. tract. Socin. de eccles., ch. 1, p. 138): “This passage speaks only about the priestly honor, such as that which belonged to Aaron.” He says, “This is obvious from the text itself. But the duty of teaching others is different. In this there is always more labor than honor. But now, to take on a labor has always been considered praiseworthy.” Then he adds: “Regarding him who is apt to teach others and whose life is blameless, it cannot lawfully be said that he is taking to himself the teaching duty or the honor that is in the teaching duty, since one ‘takes’ something when he arrogates to himself that which is not owed to him. But he who is apt to teach and has a blameless life is owed that dignity or duty so much that, if anyone is such a person but refuses to teach others, he would be sinning very gravely.” Andreas Radecclius makes an objection in the same way (notes on Smiglecius’s book that he titled Refutatio vanae dissolutionis nodi sui Gordii, p. 5: “The beginning of the chapter, on which the words of v. 4 depend, speak only about the high priest's office and the high priest under the Law. The [definite] article added in the Greek to the word ‘honor’ bears witness to the same thing, so that it is evident that the discussion is about a particular honor,” etc.

We respond. The apostle does list here the conditions of the high priests of the Old Testament, among which conditions is also the divine call. Because of the equality of definition, however, between the high priests of the Old Testament and the ministers of the New Testament (as regards the teaching duty and the administration of public office), it is correct to take the apostle's declaration as general in this sense: that no one by his own authority ought to take upon himself any honor in engaging in the ecclesiastical office, unless he is called by God. The added specific example of Aaron does not restrict or limit, but illustrates and explains that general rule to which it is appended.
Nor is there any strength in the Photinians’ objections. (1) Labor and honor in the teaching office are not opposites but subordinates, as is evident from the apostle’s clear statement, 1 Tim. 5:17: “Let the presbyters who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word and teaching.” Aaron’s priestly office was not only honored but also laborious. The office of the other teachers of the church is—or at least ought to be—not only laborious but also honored. It happens as an accident that there is more labor than honor in the teaching duty because of contempt for the Word and the world’s ingratitude. From this, however, one cannot and should not infer that the teaching office is not an honor. Hence the apostolic rule pertains also to the teaching office: “No one takes the honor to himself, but he who is called by God.”

(2) Taking up a labor has always been considered praiseworthy, but one must distinguish between private labors common to all people and the labors that must be borne in public office. No one should take up the latter labors without a preceding legitimate call. Bearing the duties of an ambassador in earthly government includes many labors; yet it is not praiseworthy to take those labors upon oneself without the authority and call of the one who sends the ambassador. All the less should one take to himself the duties of a heavenly ambassador in the church, which is the kingdom of heaven, without a divine call. No one would deny that the administration of a magistrate’s office is laborious; yet no one should arrogate those labors to himself without a call.

(3) It is ambiguous to say that the teaching office is owed to him who is apt to teach and leads a blameless life. Either it is understood in this sense: that such a person should be selected for the ecclesiastical ministry ahead of the others; or it means that he should arrogate those functions to himself without a call. We concede that assertion in the first sense, but we deny it in the latter. You see, it is not just “aptitude and integrity of life” but also the legitimate call that are required in the ministry of the church. The former are required for the person; the latter, for the office of the minister.

Sixth, Ecclesiasticus 7:4: “Do not seek authority from man.”

§ 60. Those are the stronger statements of Scripture, from which we confirm our position. To them the following can be added in a secondary position: (VI) The precept of Sirach 7:4: μὴ ζήτει παρὰ κυρίου ήγεμονίαν, μηδὲ παρὰ βασιλέως καθέδραν δόξης. The Vulgate has translated this as: Noli quaerere ab homine ducatum, neque a rege cathedram honoris [“Do not seek authority from man, nor a seat of honor from the king”]. However, since the Greek has the word κυρίου [“Lord”], which befits God preeminently, and the word ήγεμονίαν [“authority, rule”], which is assigned to teachers of the church specifically (Acts 15:22; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24), therefore it is correct to take this as a general forewarning that no one should thrust himself into public offices with his own rashness either παρὰ κυρίου (“with the Lord,” “before the Lord”), that is, in the church, or παρὰ

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5 Noncontradictory things or propositions of which one is contained under the other. For example, Gerhard says that the Holy Spirit and the water of Baptism are related to each other as subordinates in the giving of salvation, not as opposites. The water of Baptism is a means by which the Holy Spirit gives salvation, and thus the one does not rule out the other in the giving of salvation (Commonplace XXIII, On Holy Baptism, § 104). See also Commonplace XXX, On the Resurrection of the Dead, § 101.
βασιλέως (“with the king”), that is, in the state. “Do not seek a position of command or authority with the Lord, nor a seat of honor with the king.” That is, do not thrust yourself into public duties, whether ecclesiastical or political; rather, you should first await a legitimate call.

[Its necessity is proved] from approved examples.

§ 61. The second class of arguments contains approved examples. Here we set forth the general rule that no one—either in the Old or the New Testament—has rightly administered the public teaching office in the church unless he was divinely called to it. We do not think that a contrary example can be supplied. (I) God appeared to the patriarchs in human form and called them immediately to the duty of teaching and sacrificing. Gen. 14:18: “Melchizedek was priest of the Most High.” But how could he have been priest of the Most High if the Most High had not called him to that office? In Gen. 20:7 the Lord tells Abimelech about Abraham: “He will pray for you, for he is a prophet, and you will live.” With these words Abraham is established as a prophet and teacher of Abimelech and of his subjects and, in fact, the teacher of others too; and he is supposed to preach and pray or sacrifice. And so it is also mentioned that Abraham “built an altar for the Lord,” who had appeared to him, and called on His name (Gen. 12:7; 13:18; 21:33). The same judgment is made about Noah, “the herald of righteousness” (2 Pet. 2:5), and the other patriarchs.

(II) No one can doubt that the Levitical priests had been divinely called to the ministry. The solemn calling of Aaron is described in Exod. 28:1: “Bring near to you Aaron, your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister to Me in the priesthood—Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.” Regarding the other Levites there is the command, Num. 1:[50]: “You shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the testimony, and over all its furnishings and whatever belongs to it.” Considering this, good King Hezekiah says to the priests and Levites, 2 Chron. 29:11: “The Lord has chosen you to stand in His presence and to minister to Him.” Nor can our adversaries deny that Heb. 5:4 was said in general concerning the priestly honor: “No one takes that honor to himself, unless he is called by God, just as Aaron also was.”

(III) The prophets everywhere appeal to their divine sending. Isa. 6:8–9: “I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ Then I said: ‘Here am I! Send me!’ And He said, ‘Go and say to this people . . . ’” Jer. 1:4–5: “Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I hallowed you and gave you as a prophet among the nations.” Hosea 1:1: “The word of the Lord came to me.” The same judgment is made about the rest of the prophets. Thus in Luke 1:70 Zechariah says, “The Lord spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old”; and the apostle, Heb. 1:1: “In many and various ways God spoke of old to the fathers by the prophets.”

(IV) In regard to John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, it says, John 1:6: “There was a man sent from God.” Luke 3:2: “The word of the Lord came upon John.”

(V) Christ, the Son of God, wished to undertake neither the duty of teaching nor the work of redeeming without a call. For this reason He so often appeals to His sending by the Father (Matt. 10:40; 15:24; John 3:17; 5:36; etc.). In fact, there are Old Testament
prophecies about his sending. Isa. 48:16: “Now the Lord God, and His Spirit, has sent Me.” This passage is to be taken as referring to Christ, as is concluded from John 18:20. Isa. 61:1: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me because the Lord has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the afflicted,” etc. From Luke 4:18 we conclude that this passage speaks of Christ. Accordingly, the Epistle to the Hebrews 5:5, too, commends the fact that Christ “did not glorify Himself that He might be made a high priest,” etc.

(VI) The apostles at first were called by Christ Himself immediately; later He instructed them in His own school, and then sent them out into all the world to preach the Gospel. Matt. 10:1: “Having called to Himself His twelve disciples, He gave them power over unclean spirits.” Verses 5–7: “Jesus sent out these twelve, saying to them: ‘Go and preach,’ ” etc. John 20:21: “As the Father has sent Me, even so send I you.” Matt. 28:19 and Mark 16:15: “Go and teach all nations.” As the apostles were about to write to the churches, they diligently and carefully emphasized their calling in the introductions to their Epistles to prove that God had sent them and that they were to be considered as legitimate ministers of the church. Hence we have: “Paul, a called apostle” (Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1; etc.); “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:1).

(VII) By a solemn call, those who succeeded the apostles in the teaching office were placed in charge of the churches that they governed. Acts 14:23: “When Paul and Barnabas had established presbyters for the people of Antioch in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord.” 1 Tim. 4:14: “Do not neglect the grace that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the imposition of the hands of the presbytery.” 2 Tim. 1:6: “I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you through the imposition of my hands.” 1 Cor. 4:17: “I sent Timothy to you to remind you of my ways, which are in Christ.” 1 Thess. 3:2: “We sent Timothy, our brother and God’s minister in the Gospel of Christ, to strengthen you,” etc.

(VIII) The next successors of the apostles in the teaching office again committed the ecclesiastical ministry, with the consent of the church, to certain men who were indeed suitable. No one was allowed to leap into it by his own authority. 1 Tim. 5:22: “Do not lay hands on anyone quickly, nor participate in the sins of others.” 2 Tim. 2:2: “What you have heard from me before many witnesses commit to faithful men who are fit to teach others.” Titus 1:5: “This is why I left you in Crete, that you might establish presbyters in every town.”

(IX) Christ, placed at the right hand of the heavenly Father, not only formerly gave His church apostles, prophets, and evangelists but also today still gives it “shepherds and teachers” (Eph. 4:11). This He no longer does immediately but through a legitimate, mediate call, which must be acknowledged as divine no less than an immediate call. We shall give proof of this later [§§ 83–84].

§ 62. Schmaltzius makes the objection, Refut. D. Frantz., p. 376: “Instead of the observed and considered custom of the Old and New Testament churches being able to remind us that one by no means teaches, [and] that no one is able to take upon himself the duties of teaching others without a sending, much rather it can assure someone that it is not necessary for that to be observed perpetually, since custom and necessity are all but contrary.”
We respond. That perpetual practice of the church depends on divine ordinance and institution, as is obvious from the previously cited passages. Hence it should not be set against necessity. Therefore Augustine’s statement holds true here (De bapt. contra Donat., bk. 4, ch. 4): “Reason and truth must be preferred to custom; but if the truth supports custom, nothing should be retained more firmly.” One cannot say without great absurdity that custom and the necessity of a commandment are perpetually opposed to each other. Luke 2:42 says that Christ’s parents went up to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover “according to custom.” Yet they were doing this very thing under the necessity of a commandment (Exod. 23:17; Deut. 16:16).

Theophilus Nicolaides (Defens. tract. Socin. de ecclesia et missione minister., ch. 1, p. 143) makes some specific objections to those passages. (1) He claims that “1 Tim. 4:14 speaks not about the teaching duty but about the grace of God that was in Timothy, that is, about the spiritual gifts which had come to him miraculously.”

We respond. We do not deny that χάρισμα properly means “spiritual gifts.” However, from this one cannot infer that the sending and ordination of Timothy cannot be deduced from this text, because those spiritual gifts had come to Timothy in the very call and ordination, which was being accomplished through the imposition of the hands of Paul and of the presbyters.

Nicolaides is forced to acknowledge this, now that the lightning of truth has convicted him. Therefore he adds: “The teaching office had come to Timothy through prophecy, that is, through the votes of the chief men in the church of Christ, with the imposition of the hands of the presbytery.” Therefore he makes a different objection and adds: “Even if it were conceded that Paul sent Timothy by the imposition of hands, what will he” (Miedzebozius) “make of this, responding that each and every one who enters the teaching office is sent by someone else? Yet an affirming conclusion from species to genus is not valid. At that time, Timothy could have been sent by Paul or even by other elders of the church, not because this was necessary for that office of teaching and because without a sending Timothy could not have taught others, but because at that time order and decency in the church required it.”

We respond. (a) The Photinians’ theorem is that those who are not bringing out a new and previously unheard-of doctrine have no need for a particular sending. It is correct to set the example of Timothy against this. He did not propose new doctrine in the church at Ephesus, of which he had been established as bishop, and yet he in particular had been sent and ordained to the ministry. In fact, Paul says explicitly about Titus: “This is why I left you in Crete, that you might appoint presbyters in every town” (Titus 1:5).

(b) Indeed, it is not always permissible to argue from species to genus. Yet one may proceed from an enumeration of all species to the genus, from a sufficient induction of all examples to a general rule, and from those things that are constituted in the same way and do not allow a contrary objection to a universal declaration. This is how Paul, in Romans 4, proves the free justification of faith from the examples of Abraham and David, because all the devout are justified in the same way as Abraham and David were justified, and no one can give a contrary example of people who were justified differently. The matter is constituted the same way in this question about the calling of ministers. As
Timothy did not preach without a sending, so none of the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and other teachers of the church preached without a sending. Consequently, from the example of Timothy it is correct to infer the general rule that no one should preach without a sending.

(c) Whatever sort of order and decency of the church once required Timothy’s sending, the same sort of order and decency of the church also today requires the sending of ministers. But now, that order was not arbitrary and indifferent \(\text{ἀδιάφορος}\) but was necessary by virtue of divine command, apostolic example, and the salvation of the church. Therefore such order still today requires the sending of ministers.

Nicolaides acknowledges this in part as he immediately adds: “It would have been excessively disgraceful in an already well-established commonwealth for there to be so great a confusion (\(\text{ἀταξία}\)) and for those things to be neglected that had to do with adorning it. So also today it would be indecent for those who are going to teach others to be established without a certain order and decency, because the assemblies have been established and there are elders in them.” What he adds in regard to the lack of a necessary and general regulation in this matter can be judged from the preceding.

(2) He says that 1 Tim. 5:22 “deals not with the ordination of ministers but with receiving a fallen sinner” (Defens., ch. 2, p. 177).

We respond. On the contrary, wherever in the history [Acts] and Epistles of the apostles there is mention of the imposition of hands, there is expressed there, for the most part, the ceremony that was usually used in the ordination and sending of ministers (Acts 6:6; 13:3; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). This ceremony was also used in conferring the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17) and in miracles (Acts 9:12; 19:6; 28:8). But nowhere do we read that the apostles used this ceremony in receiving fallen sinners. Therefore it is groundless for him to assert that this apostolic statement must be taken to mean such a reception. The words that follow, “Do not participate in the sins of others,” do not oppose our interpretation. These words, you see, either contain a particular command distinct from the previous one, or they give the cause why the ministry should be committed to no one quickly, namely, lest such a neophyte, without careful judgment and consideration, having been selected, should stir up disturbances in the church, the cause of which could be attributed partly to us. See Ambrose and all the ancients on this passage.

[Its necessity is proved] from rational arguments.

§ 63. The third class of arguments includes the various rational arguments deduced from Scripture: (I) From the importance of the causes. Whatever depends on very serious causes—concerning the honor of God, the salvation of the church, and peace of conscience—cannot and should not be omitted in the church. But the calling of ministers depends on causes of this sort. Therefore. The minor premise is proved because causes can be cited\(^6\) for why those who teach publicly in the church must have a legitimate call, causes that are the most serious by far. They are such that some refer to God, some to hearers, and some to the ministers of the Word themselves. Indeed, the cause concerning

\(^6\) Read \textit{adduci} with Cotta instead of \textit{adduc}. 
God is that His institution, will, and ordinance [ordinatio] be satisfied (Rom. 10:15; Heb. 5:4). He does not want to speak with us immediately nor send teachers immediately; rather, He puts teachers in charge of His church through the legitimate and ordinary call. Therefore whoever holds that call in contempt is resisting a divine ordinance. The cause concerning the hearers is that they be made certain about the legitimate calling of the ministers, that God wants to use these very persons, who were legitimately called, in the work of converting and saving people; and also that God wants to be present with them in the ministry carried out in His name, with His grace and the efficacy of the Holy Spirit; that He wants to equip them with the necessary gifts, bless their labors, protect them against their foes, etc. Such consideration stirs up reverence and obedience toward the ministry in the minds of hearers. And it is not merely useful but also necessary that the hearers be certain about the doctrine of their future minister, as to what sort of doctrine it is and from what sources he has learned it. Hence examination, ordination, and testimonies are also needed. The cause concerning the minister himself is that on the basis of his call he may be able to be sure that God wants to use his work in the ministry; that from this he may take firm confidence that through his ministry God wants to be effectual for the conversion and salvation of his hearers. Without this confidence he will be unable to pray for the success of his ministry and the salvation of his hearers nor lift himself up with firm consolation against the great hatreds and perils of this world. Consequently, the call and defense in the ministry are connected. Isa. 49:1–2: “The Lord called me from the womb. He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand He protected me; He made me like a polished arrow; in His quiver He hid me away.” Jer. 1:7–8: “To all to which I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.” Consequently, the call and success in the ministry are also connected. Isa. 51:16: “I will put My words in your mouth, and I will protect you in the shadow of My hand, to plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth.” Isa. 59:21: “My Spirit, which is in you, and My words, which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth,” etc. In 2 Cor. 3:3 God wants to “write the Law in hearts” through our ministry. “But who is fit for this” [2 Cor. 2:16]? Verses 5–6: “Our sufficiency is from God, who has also made us fit to be ministers of the new testament.” 2 Cor. 2:12: “A door was opened for me,” namely, because the Holy Spirit was the doorkeeper who opened it through a legitimate call (John 10:3). By all means, see Dr. Chemnitz, in his Locus de ecclesia, ch. 4, part 1, p. 316, where he lists in greater detail the causes for which it is so important that a minister have a legitimate call.

(II) From comparisons. No ambassador takes up the duties of his office without a call and particular mandate. But now, all ministers of the church are ambassadors of God (2 Cor. 5:20). Therefore no minister of the church should take up the duties of his office without a call.

No one claims for himself the governance of a household and the administration of its stewardship, nor does a household receive and listen to anyone, unless the householder himself puts him in charge of his household and commends him to his household.

Read ministri with Cotta instead of ministr.
members as one who should be heard. But now, the church is “the household of God” (1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:6). Ministers of the church are the “stewards” in this household (1 Cor. 4:1). Therefore they should not undertake the administration of this household nor should the household of Christ listen to them unless God Himself place them in charge of this stewardship through a call.

No one should be considered a soldier unless he has been recruited into the number of soldiers by his captain and has been bound by his military oath [sacramento militiae]. But ministers of the church, in some regard, are called “soldiers” who, ahead of the other devout Christians (who also themselves fight under the banners of Christ and thus are called “soldiers” in a general way), fight against Satan and his scales with their preaching of the Word, very serious prayers, confutation of heresies, etc. 2 Tim. 2:3–4: “Endure adversities as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No soldier in service entangles himself in secular pursuits.” Therefore ministers of the church should not enter into that particular military service unless Christ their heavenly captain admits them into it.

No one should administer the office of a magistrate without a call. Whoever enters it with his own daring becomes guilty of tyranny or at least sedition. Therefore one should also not claim the ecclesiastical ministry for himself without a call.

(III) From detriments. Whoever in the church arrogates to himself the public teaching office without a call invades the possession of another. He is not an ambassador and minister of God but a thief and a robber, because he does not enter through the door. He is not a minister of the church, because she has not called him. He disturbs the order established by God and introduces “disorder” [ἀκαταστάσια], of which God is not the author (1 Cor. 14:33). He conflicts with the example of Christ, the prophets, and the apostles, none of whom preached unless they were sent and called. He cheapens the dignity of this most venerable office, deprives himself of necessary consolation, and invites to himself outcomes that are, for the most part, calamitous, etc. Both Holy Writ and the history of the church bear witness that each and every one of these generally stems from the lack of a call. Thus Dr. Luther writes very seriously (Jena Latin, vol. 4, f. 9): “God does not prosper the labors of those who have not been called. Even though they may provide some salutary things, yet they do not edify.”

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8 Lectures on Galatians (1531/1535), AE 26:20; WA 40/1:62.
10 Gerhard’s reference is apparently incorrect. The quotation is from Luther, [First] Lectures on Galatians (1519), AE 27:167; WA 2:454–55.
The antithesis: First, of the Anabaptists.

§ 64. This position of ours is opposed by: (I) The Anabaptists. They give the power to teach in the church to anyone without any calling. In this regard their church is set up as an indiscriminate assembly in which there is no regard for gifts nor for labors nor for callings. Dr. Chemnitz, *Loci*, part 3, ch. *De ecclesia*, p. 314: “The Anabaptists say that if anyone understands the doctrine of the Gospel, whether he be a cobbler or tailor or carpenter, he should teach and preach.” Gastius, *De Catabaptist. erroribus*, bk. 1, p. 35: “All the Catabaptists assume for themselves the preaching office. They ask about others, who have been put in office legitimately by the Christian churches: ‘Who selected you?’ though those [Catabaptists] have not been sent even by their own heretical church [cacoecclesia].”

Second, of the Photinians.

(ii) Akin to the Anabaptists are the Photinians, who in the same way deny the necessity of the call in ministers of the church. Socinus, *Tract. de eccles.*, p. 14: “Why is it that they require our ministers to show a legitimate authority for their office? Is not any Christian allowed to practice love toward his neighbor without any specific office of this matter commissioned to him legitimately? Or is it not completely a work of love to exhort others to embrace and keep the apostles’ doctrine and the Gospel of Christ, that is, to enter the way of eternal salvation, and to explain to them the divine oracles that have been set forth for all?” Page 16: “Even if there is that established order” (in the church), “even though someone does not wish to depart from the doctrine he has received, nevertheless Christ’s faithful can voluntarily enter the office of the preaching of the Word of God outside of the order with regard to place and time.” Theophilus Nicolaides, *Defens. tractat. Socin. de eccles. et missione*, ch. 1, p. 146: “Luther erred in demanding a legitimate function from Münzer” (an Anabaptist). “The question is not what Luther did, but what he should have done in this situation.” Chapter 2, p. 177: “We acknowledge no sending; how, then, can we say that anything is required for it?” The German *Catech. Racoviensis*, major title *De eccles.*, ch. 2, p. 344, poses the question: “Is it not necessary that those who teach others and maintain order in the congregation of the Lord be sent in a special way?” To this it responds negatively and adds two reasons: “They are not bringing a new doctrine but the apostolic doctrine that was received long ago; and, in the description of the requirements for a bishop, there is no mention of sending.” Ostorodus, *Instit. German.*, ch. 42, p. 438: “Everyone can teach even if he has not been sent, since this is not forbidden, nor is there any danger in it.” And later: “Therefore one need not think that a person acts wrongly if he takes upon himself—that is, without a sending—the teaching office, for such a work comes from true Christian love.” Page 440: “Therefore it is not necessary for someone now to be sent in order to preach the Gospel, especially if he does not understand it thoroughly (like Apollos at first). Much less is it necessary that he should have to prove his sending.” A. R. (perhaps Andreas Radecchi) in *Notae ad libr. Smilgecii, quem vocat Refutatio vanae dissolutionis nodi sui Gordii*, published in Racovia in 1614, p. 3: “We confess both that ministers of the church formerly could have been called—and, in fact, were called—and that even now they can be called. However,
is what was formerly done and can be done today required to establish the office of ministers? This is truly and perpetually the question, and Smiglicius cannot prove it.”

Schmaltzius, Refut. thes. D. Frantzii, part 2, disp. 4, p. 377:

We do not deny that from that custom of the early apostolic church it follows that what formerly was done can also be done lawfully today. If the church had always remained uncorrupted, we do not doubt that it would have been very just for that method of ordaining ministers to be observed. Likewise, also now, wherever a Christian commonwealth has been established, we think it very proper that this be observed. However, this is not especially the question. For this is in question: whether a regulation of this sort is utterly necessary to establish a minister of God’s Word. For our part, we deny this. You see, we read no such thing—which is the point of the subject—in the description of those things that are required to establish a bishop, etc. Nor do we see elsewhere any indication, however small, that someone should later call and send him who is this sort of person. In fact, we read it very clearly written that anyone can desire or strive for such an office by himself.

The arguments of the Photinians

§ 65. They try to confirm this opinion of theirs: (1) With passages of Scripture. (2) With examples. (3) With rational arguments.

From passages of Scripture. First, 1 Corinthians 14:29: “Let two or three prophets speak.”

To the first class they quote these passages: (1) “1 Cor. 14:29–30: ‘let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if something is revealed to another sitting by, let the first be silent.’ Therefore all can perform the public preaching office without a particular calling.”

We respond. It is certain that the apostle here is not speaking about an indiscriminate assembly of the devout. (This is concluded clearly from the preceding words of this Epistle, [1 Cor.] 12:29: “Are all prophets?”) Rather, he is speaking about a certain order of some of the devout. As to what that order was, opinions vary. Most of our people understand the word “prophets” to mean the ordinary teachers of the church, who are equipped with the gift of prophecy, that is, the gift of interpreting scripture. From Acts 13:15 one can conclude that the early church formerly used a method of teaching such that, after the hymns were sung, a passage of scripture would be selected; then one of the teachers of the church would get up to explain that passage and draw out teachings from it. When he had finished speaking, another would rise who himself had the gift of prophecy or of interpreting Scripture. In this way, there was not just one preacher, but two or even three, and they would speak in turn. They think that the apostle is referring to this with these words when he commands that those among the Corinthians who were equipped with the gift of interpreting Scripture should teach publicly, that is, in turn. But they think that one can by no means infer from this that all should be allowed to teach publicly in the church without any call, because the apostle immediately adds, v. [33]: “God is not a God of confusion but of peace and order.”

But Socinus, in his explanation of Matthew 16 that he adds to his Tractatus de ecclesia, claims that “prophets” in this apostolic passage means those “who disclosed more
obscure things that pertain to the Christian religion.” From this we draw a conclusion in this way: The office of those prophets was either distinct from the office of the ordinary teachers of the church or completely the same as it. If the former is the case (which Socinus seems to claim, and which is in greater harmony with the passages of the apostle in Eph. 4:11 and 1 Cor. 12:28, where prophets are distinguished from teachers and shepherds), the argument is foreign to the question, for the question between the Photinians and us here is not about the extraordinary office of such prophets, which belonged only to the early church, but about the ordinary teachers of the church, namely, whether a particular call is required for their office. If the latter is the case, then one must by all means claim that those prophets were not without a call because of the arguments brought out earlier [§§ 55–63], even though their calling is not described specifically. In historical matters one may not argue negatively from the Scriptures.11

Second, 1 Timothy 3:1: “If anyone desires the office of a bishop,” etc.

§ 66. (II) “1 Tim. 3:1: ‘the saying is faithful: if anyone desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work.’ If someone is permitted to desire the duty of teaching others, it is false that this should necessarily be waited for until someone is sent by someone else.” This is how Theophilus Nicolaides (Defens. tract. de eccles. et miss. ministr., ch. 1, p. 141) draws his conclusion.

We respond. By no means should ὀρέγεσθαι [“aspire”] and ἐπιθυμεῖν [“desire”] in this passage be taken to mean taking up the administration of the ecclesiastical ministry by one’s private choice without a sending and calling, nor to mean a violent intrusion into this office, nor an illegitimate calling obtained by evil tricks (for all of these are opposed to the divine will expressed in the Scriptures and to ecclesiastical canons. Jer. 23:21: “i did not send the prophets, and they ran”). Instead, it should be taken to mean the ordered and pious desire by which someone modestly offers his work to the church, entrusts judgment of himself to others, awaits a legitimate call, and is prepared along with the prophet Isaiah to follow God when He does call, Isa. 6:8: “i said: ‘here am i. send me!’ ” Yet if this prayer and desire of his is not granted, he reverently submits to God’s will, does not become indignant at seeing others chosen before himself, and says with David: “If God would say to me, ‘you do not please me,’ here I am. Let Him do with me what is good in His sight” (2 Sam. 15:26). In the same place the apostle prescribes a certain norm and form to which the church ought to look in selecting and establishing ministers. By no means, therefore, should it support the inordinate desire of those who run without a call. Ambrose, commentary on this passage, writes the following: “Because a bishop must have a good life, he who aspires to the office of a bishop desires a good work. For, as he desires this, he seems to hunger for the good life, yet [only] if he does not turn away from those things that are contained in what follows, lest he seem to have done this because of ambition and the desire for money.”

11 That is, one cannot make an argument from silence in historical matters. Just because Scripture is silent about a historical event, one may not conclude that it did not occur.
Third, 1 Peter 2:9: “You are a royal priesthood.”

§ 67. (III) “1 Pet. 2:9: ‘You are a royal priesthood . . . that you may declare the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.’ Rev. 1:6: ‘Christ has made us kings and priests to God and His Father.’ Rev. 5:9–10: ‘You have ransomed us for God and made us kings and priests to our God.’ Therefore all can teach without a particular calling.”

We respond. (1) Just as one can by no means conclude that just because believers are called “kings” any of them can perform the office of a magistrate without a call—since the apostles are speaking about spiritual kings—so also one cannot conclude that just because believers are called “priests” any of them can perform the ecclesiastical ministry without a call, since these words are likewise about spiritual priests.

(2) They are called “spiritual priests” not with respect to ecclesiastical office, since Theophilus Nicolaides (Defens. tract. de miss. Minist., ch. 1, p. 139) himself acknowledges that “whenever the word ‘priest’ is read in regard to Christian people, it belongs to both hearers and teachers.” He adds that this can be proved to be seen from the actual circumstances of each passage.

(3) Instead, they are called “spiritual priests” with respect to the spiritual sacrifices they should offer to God, as Peter himself explains, [1 Pet. 2:5]: “You are a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” Such sacrifices are: praying (Ps. 141:2; Rev. 5:8; 8:4); thanksgiving (Heb. 13:15); doing good to the poor (Phil. 4:18; Heb. 13:16); mortifying the old man (Rom. 12:1); martyrdom received for Christ’s sake (Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6; etc.). All the devout can offer such sacrifices as spiritual priests. Augustine, on Psalm 94: “If we are God’s temple, God’s altar is our soul. What is God’s sacrifice? We place a sacrifice on the altar when we praise God.” Augustine, De civ. Dei, bk. 20, ch. 10: “We are called ‘priests’ because we are members of the one Priest.”

(4) Although the preaching of the Gospel also pertains to spiritual sacrifices (Mal. 1:11; Rom. 15:16), nevertheless from the title “spiritual priests” as it is attributed to all the devout one cannot infer that this spiritual sacrifice—namely, the preaching of the Gospel undertaken in the public assembly of the church—pertains to all. Indeed, the title is taken from the other spiritual sacrifices, which all can offer, but not from this one, which is by no means common to all.

(5) The same thing is concluded clearly from the words of the apostle, 1 Cor. 12:29: “Are all prophets? Are all teachers?” All believers are spiritual priests; yet they are not all straightway teachers or prophets since not all have been equipped with the gift of prophecy, nor have they been called to the ministry of the church. Eph. 4:11–12: “He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as teachers and shepherds for the work of the ministry.” Therefore just as not all are prophets or apostles, so also not all are shepherds and teachers.

(6) Nor is there any strength in their objection that Peter adds that the devout are “a royal priesthood, to declare the virtues of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.” You see, a distinction must be made: There is the general mandate and call that all the devout receive in their investiture of Christianity, by which they are required to render due praises to God, by whom they were called into the fellowship of
the church; to confess Him by word and deed; to instruct their own households privately in true devotion (Deut. 6:20); to make sure that “the word of Christ dwells richly among them as they teach and remind each other with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16); to comfort one another with the Word of God (1 Thess. 4:18); etc. And then there is the specific call by which the ministry of Word and Sacraments—which is to be administered in the public assembly of the church—is entrusted to certain persons who are fit for it, by the public consent of the church. This call is not common to all Christians, as is clear from 1 Cor. 12:29; Eph. 4:11; James 3:1.

(7) The administration of the Sacraments belongs to this specific call, as we gather from 1 Cor. 4:1. But now, nowhere is the mutual administration of the Sacraments either commanded or permitted to all the faithful. Therefore neither does the public ministry of the Word pertain to all. Of course, Socinus and his protector, Theophilus Nicolaides, deny that the administration of the Sacraments ordinarily pertains to certain persons, namely, to the ministers of the church. But we have confirmed this very thing in detail in its own place [On Holy Baptism (Commonplace XXIII), §§ 20–43; On the Holy Supper (Commonplace XXIV), §§ 16–18].

[The arguments of the Photinians] from various examples: First, of those who were scattered in different directions after the death of Stephen.

§ 68. To the second class of arguments belong: (1) The examples of those who were scattered in different directions by the death of Stephen and who preached the Gospel (Acts 8:4; 11:19), such as Philip (Acts 8:5) and Apollos (Acts 18:24ff.). “Because those preached despite not being sent by the apostles—for they would never have left their home city had the persecution not occurred—the consequence of this is that someone who is not sent can preach the Gospel even at a time when order is being preserved and people are not departing from the doctrine they have received.” Socinus, Tract. de eccles., p. 17; Ostorodus, Instit., ch. 42, p. 437; Theophilus Nicolaides, near the end of his Defensio Sociniana, p. 183.

We respond. (1) Gratianus Prosper (Instrumentum doctrinarum Aristotelicum, p. 36), the Photinian, contradicts all the other Photinians when he claims: “The apostles had sent the evangelist Philip.”

(2) All the Photinians take the apostle’s statement in Rom. 10:15: “How shall they preach unless they are sent?” as referring to the time when the Gospel was first preached, when that doctrine was still new and hitherto unheard, as is clear from Socinus, Ostorodus, and Theophilus Nicolaides in the passages just cited and from the Catech. Racov., p. 346, which says: “In these very words the apostle speaks not of every proclamation, but only of the proclamation of new and as yet unheard-of things, such as the sort of proclamation as the apostles and others of their fellow workers” (Note well!) “at that time had, which by all means” (Note well!) “required a sending.” But now, Philip and Apollos preached at that time when the doctrine of the Gospel was new and as yet unheard-of. Therefore according to the hypothesis of the Photinians and the interpretation of the apostle’s statement that they accept, a particular calling was by all means necessary for them.
(3) Even if Luke, with his concern for brevity, had not made known their particular calling in his account of the Acts [of the Apostles] and had left nothing written about it, one still could not conclude from this that they preached without a calling, because in historical matters one cannot infer negatively from Scripture.

(4) The apostles elected Philip along with six others as deacons and laid their hands on them (Acts 6:5–6). Although the office of deacon was especially “to minister to the tables” (v. 2)—that is, to provide the faithful with the necessary sustenance in that community of goods—nevertheless the office of teaching was not completely removed and kept apart from them, as is concluded from what is noted about Stephen, who belonged to the same order of deacons: “Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people,” and he debated with the opponents of truth, and they “could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit who was speaking through him” (vv. 8–10). If, along with serving the tables, the office of teaching had not been committed to the deacons at the same time, what need would there have been, in the election of deacons, to look for men “filled with the Holy Spirit and with wisdom” (v. 3)? Surely such great gifts of the Holy Spirit and such wisdom—that is, so thorough a knowledge of heavenly doctrine—would not have been required for a mere ministry to the table.

(5) The same conclusion is drawn from the fact that Philip is expressly called an “evangelist” (Acts 21:8), that is, from his office of the preached Gospel; accordingly, “evangelists” are joined to the prophets, apostles, shepherds and teachers (Eph. 4:11).

(6) Acts 18:24–25 says that Apollos was “an eloquent man, powerful in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he diligently taught the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the Baptism of John.” That is, he had been instructed in the school of John the Baptist and had enjoyed no close acquaintance with the apostles. Later, Aquila and Priscilla instructed him “more accurately” about the way of the Lord [v. 26], and he made such progress that he brought much to those who had believed by grace (v. 27). Consequently, Paul recommends him in such a way that he establishes him as a colleague in the ministry or teaching office. 1 Cor. 3:6: “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.” But if Apollos had preached without a call, how could he have reached such a peak of authority among the Corinthians so that some named themselves after him no less than others named themselves after Paul and Peter (1 Cor. 1:12)? One cannot deny, therefore, that Philip and Apollos had a divine call to teach.

(7) In Acts 13:3, though Paul and Barnabas had been set apart to teach by a particular oracle of the Holy Spirit, still the rest of the prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch laid their hands upon them before sending them out. Therefore who could believe that Philip and Apollos preached without any call and that the apostles did not first lay their hands on them and in this way commit the ministry of teaching to them?

Second, from the example of those who were of the household of Stephanas.

§ 69. (II) “In 1 Cor. 16:15 those who are of the household of Stephanas are said to have ordained themselves into the ministry.”

We respond. There are some who take διακονία [“ministry, service”] to mean a ministry of carrying the collection to the poor brethren in Jerusalem, because the entire
context here reveals that this is the subject under discussion. Because the office of teaching, however, was connected with that διακονία in the case of Stephanas’s household—as is concluded from the fact that the apostle adds, v. 16: “be subject to them and to every fellow worker and laborer,” that is, in the Word—it is more fitting to respond that the expression ἔταξαν ἑαυτοὺς must be taken correctly. The sense of it is not that they took up the ministry of teaching without any calling, but that they offered their efforts to the apostles, by whom they were sent, and to the church, by whom they were called. You see, in the early church many people shrank away from ecclesiastical functions because of vehement persecutions and many perils and hardships, according to Augustine, Letter 204 ad Donatum. This is also concluded from Christ’s words (Matt. 9:38), who commanded to “ask the Lord of the harvest to thrust out (ἐκβάλῃ) laborers into His vineyard.” Therefore those who were of the household of Stephanas had no regard for the perils and hardships, offered themselves voluntarily, and selected this difficult kind of life; yet they first waited for a legitimate call to it. The apostle teaches that this is permitted to a devout man who is equipped with the gifts necessary for the ministry (1 Tim. 3:1).

Also, the very word τάξις [“order”] shows that they had done nothing ἀτάκτως, “rashly or precipitously,” against the divinely established order. In Xenophon [Memorabilia 2.1] we read: ἐμαυτὸν τάττω εἰς τοὺς βουλομένους, which Budaeus translates: “I adopt myself into that class.” The calling of others, however, is not excluded here. In Demosthenes we read: ὃς γὰρ ἑαυτὸν τάξας τῶν ἀπιστούντων εἶναι Φιλίππω ηὐτομόλησε, “who wanted themselves to be counted and considered among them.” This meaning, too, can be applied to this passage. The grammarians also note that τάττειν means especially the manner of arranging by which soldiers are arranged when the battle line is drawn up. Just as the placing of soldiers in the battle line, therefore, does not exclude the ordering [ordinatio] of others, so also the τάξις of Stephanas’s household to the ministry does not exclude the calling of others. See also Acts 13:48.

[The arguments of the Photinians] from rational arguments, which are: First, the omission of this requirement in the apostolic canons.

§ 70. To the third class of arguments belong the following rational arguments: (1) “In the canons of the apostles, which describe all things related to the establishing of bishops and teachers, there is no mention of sending or calling. From this we conclude that it is in no way required for the substance and nature of the episcopal office” (Theophilus Nicolaides, Def. miss. ministr., ch. 1, p. 144). “It is false to say that the apostles always required ordination in a minister. Paul, who had a great concern for brevity, describes in detail the characteristics and requirements of a bishop but does not mention it. He could by no means have omitted it, nor would he have omitted it, however, if it was necessary for the nature and substance of the apostolic office” (op. cit., ch. 2, p. 175).

We respond. (1) In that place it is Paul’s intent to discuss not the efficient cause of the ministry—the call—but the adjuncts12 or requirements of the ministers who are to

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12 An “adjunct” is anything added to something else that is not part of its essence. An adjunct is really distinguished from its subject, even if it is proper to the subject. While adjuncts are often accidents (like wisdom in a man), they can also be substances (like wine in a bottle).
be selected. That is, he wants to lay out the norm and rule according to which one must measure the selection of ministers and according to which one must examine the qualifications of those persons who are to be put in charge of the ministry. It is not strange, then, that he makes no explicit and express mention of the call in those words.

(2) If one could make a correct inference from the omitted mention of the call to the conclusion that a minister of the church does not require a call, he could in the same way draw this conclusion: The apostle (Rom. 13:1ff.) describes in detail the office of magistrate, yet he makes no mention of a particular election or calling. Anyone, then, may take up a magistracy, even without election or calling.

(3) Therefore we invert the argument. Because the apostle prescribes the norm and form according to which the persons ought to be examined who are to be put in charge of the ecclesiastical ministry, therefore a call is required, certain and legitimate, before anyone takes up the duties of the ministry.

No one either ought or is able to pass judgment about himself that he has been equipped sufficiently with those gifts and requirements that the apostle lists. Let no one by private authority, therefore, arrogate to himself the duty of teaching publicly. Instead, let him subject himself to the judgment of others and first wait for a legitimate call.

(4) The same apostle commands Timothy, 1 Tim. 5:22: “Do not lay hands on anyone quickly,” that is, before carefully examining the qualities and conditions of the person who is to be selected for the ministry, lest he “participate in the sins of others.” He also writes (Titus 1:5) that he left Titus in Crete for the purpose of “establishing presbyters in every town.” Therefore he certainly requires a call for presbyters or bishops.

Second, the Keys of the church have been given to all her members.

§ 71. (ii) “The Keys of the church have not been given to one or the other, but to the whole church. Matt. 16:19: ‘I will give thee the Keys to the kingdom of heaven.’ Augustine (on John, tractate 124) interprets this: ‘This was said to Peter since he represented the church [ut is gerebat personam ecclesiae].’ Therefore a particular calling is not required for the teaching office.”

We respond. From Christ’s statement it is indeed right to draw a conclusion against the Papists that the right [jus] to call ministers belongs to the entire church, to which Christ gave the Keys. But one cannot infer from this that all who are in the church can teach publicly even without a call. The Keys have been given to the entire church, that is, for the use and advantage of the whole church and in order that a right in the calling of ministers would belong to all the orders of the church. Meanwhile, the administration of those Keys is entrusted by the church—and should be entrusted even by virtue of divine institution—to certain persons, namely, to those whom God has made stewards in His household (1 Cor. 4:1) and to whom He has given the power to close and open, that is, to bind and loose. But if anyone, outside a case of necessity, arrogates to himself the administration and use of the Keys, he intrudes on someone else’s office [1 Pet. 4:15].

Third, the impulse of love.

§ 72. (iii) “Anyone in the church can exercise a work of Christian love. But the office of teaching is a work of Christian love—in fact, among all good works, it is the
best (James 5:19–20). Therefore anyone can exercise it in the church, even without a particular call.”

We respond. (1) A distinction must be made between works of love. Some are common to all, but some belong only to certain persons established in public office. Regarding the former it is correct to say that a particular calling is not required to exercise them, since all Christians are responsible for making their faith manifest through good works. But for the latter a particular call is required, as we have proved earlier [§§ 51–63].

(2) Yes, holding the office of a magistrate is a good work because “the magistrate is God’s minister for good” (Rom. 13:4). Yet no one should thrust himself upon this office and exercise its duties without a call. Being an ambassador is a good work, if one has the welfare of the commonwealth as his intent. Yet no one should assume the name “ambassador” and the duties of an ambassador unless they are imposed on him by the one who commissions him.

(3) Christian love must be exercised in such a way that the divinely established order is not violated, that we do not become guilty of “intruding on someone else’s office” [1 Pet. 4:13], that we do not confuse distinct offices and distinct kinds of life. “To convert a man” (writes Dr. Mentzer in his Exeg. August. conf., art. XIV, p. 662) “is by far the most worthy work of Christian love, but it should not overthrow the order established by God.” And since a man cannot be said to convert anyone except instrumentally [organice seu tanquam instrumentum], and because God is the principal cause of conversion, it becomes plain that unless God calls and sends him he cannot achieve so divine a result.

(4) A distinction must also be made between the private instruction of a family or neighbor, on the one hand, and the public preaching of the Word and administration of the Sacraments, on the other. Both are indeed good works, but both are not exactly the same. Anyone can perform the former without a particular calling and should also do so according to his ability. The latter does not belong absolutely and simply to all, but rather it belongs to those to whom that duty has been committed by a legitimate call.

(5) Therefore the major premise must be limited if it is applied to the office of teaching publicly, since not everyone is apt for the ministry, since the public office of teaching and administering the Sacraments is distinct from private instruction and common works of love, since no necessity demands anyone to teach without a call, since the divinely constituted order and the church’s “good order” [εὐταξία] would be violated if anyone at all wanted to teach publicly without a call.

(6) We draw the argument of our opponents to the absurd. If anyone in the church, even without a call, can exercise any work of Christian love, the consequence would be that even women could teach publicly in the church. The reason for the connection is obvious, because women, too, are members of the church. Gal. 3:28: “There is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ.” 1 Pet. 3:7: “Women . . . are co-heirs of the grace of life.” The apostle teaches the absurdity of the consequent in explicit words, 1 Cor. 14:34–35: “Let the women keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak but should be subject, as the Law also says. If they want to learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in
church.” 1 Tim. 2:12: “I do not permit a woman to teach.” Ambrose, commentary on 1 Corinthians 14: “It is shameful for a woman to speak in the church because it is contrary to discipline that they should presume to speak about the Law in the house of God, who commanded them to be subject to their husbands. They should know that the men have primacy there and that it rather pertains to themselves that they devote themselves to prayers in the house of God. Holding their tongues, let them open their ears,” etc. In the early church the Pepuzians were condemned as heretics because they entrusted the ministry of the Word and Sacraments to women.

Fourth, the burial of a talent is forbidden.

§ 73. (IV) “Whoever buries a talent is censured by Christ (Matt. 25:26). But if someone is not permitted to teach in the church without a call, it can easily happen that his talent is buried.”

We respond. Luther has explained this entire argument thoroughly and clearly in his commentary on Psalm 8, Jena Latin, vol. 2, p. 96:

Here belong also those who, conscious of their own great teaching, dream that it is a peril far greater for them if they do not teach others, that they are burying in the ground the talent given them, and that they are awaiting, along with the servant of the master, a harsh sentence from the Lord. With such ridiculous trifles the devil makes sport of the fantasies of those who, instructed by this verse, ought to know that we are not the ones who teach, nor is it our word that must be taught. Rather, they must learn that our mouth can only serve His Word if He wills and calls. He says, “You have perfected praise,” not “they,” not “we.” So also in the Gospel, the Lord did give talents to his servants, but only to those he called. Therefore you, too, wait until you have been called. Do not canvass for votes. Do not thrust yourself into it. Your knowledge will not burst you apart. “They ran,” the Lord says in the prophet, “and I did not speak to them.” This temptation disturbs many sorely, so that they loathe and regret their mode of life. The devil does this to upset those who have begun well; but, finally, he consumes them with disgust. Whoever is called, therefore, should offer his mouth and receive the Word. Let him be the instrument, not the author. Whoever is not called should pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers and to perfect virtue out of the mouth of infants.13

Those are Luther’s words. It is not worth the effort for us to add a single word to his.

Fifth, the free bestowal of divine gifts.

§ 74. (V) “God is not bound to order and means. Therefore anyone can perform the duties of the ecclesiastical ministry in a case of necessity.”

We respond. Ordinarily the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments according to divine institution belong to the ministers of the church, who have been legitimately called to that office, as we have shown [§§ 51–63]. Against this divinely established order one cannot and should not set forth extraordinary examples of extreme necessity, which are indeed exempted from the common law but which do

not at all overturn the general rule. Thus in the case of extreme necessity when either a
man must die without Baptism or a private person must confer Baptism, it is better for
a private person to administer Baptism than that the man die without being baptized.
Nonetheless the administration of Baptism ordinarily belongs to the ministers of the
church, as is gathered from Matt. 28:19 and Mark 16:15, where the duty both of preach-
ing and of baptizing is committed to the apostles.

The statements of the ancients and the examples of the early church are to be
understood as referring to this case of necessity when they say that, at the time when
the Gospel was first preached, even some private persons proclaimed the Word of God.
Origen, on Numbers 18, homily 11: “Just as perhaps in some city where Christians have
not yet been born, if someone should come and begin to teach, should work, instruct,
bring to faith, and afterward should become the prince and bishop for those whom he
has taught,” etc. Ambrose, commentary on Ephesians 4:

In order that the people might increase and multiply, everyone in the beginning was
allowed to preach the Gospel and baptize and explain the Scriptures in the church.
But when the church encompassed all places, assemblies were established, and
rectors and the other offices were ordered [ordinata] in the churches. This was so
that none of the lot [clerus] who was not ordained would dare assume an office that
he knew was not entrusted nor granted to him. It began to be governed by another
order and providence. You see, if all people could do the same things, it would be
irrational and would appear to be something common and very cheap. This is why
today deacons also do not preach among the people, nor do the clerici or laymen
baptize, nor are the believers anointed on any day except when they are sick.

Theodoret (Hist. eccles., bk. 1, ch. 23) tells the story about the brothers Aedesius and
Frumentius. He says: “They were captured by barbarians and were taken before the king
of the Indians. Finally, after examining their faithfulness and ability, they were placed in
charge of the royal household. The king’s son and successor held them in high esteem
and honor. Using this as an opportunity, they called Christians together and entered
upon the divine ministries. They were laymen who had performed no ecclesiastical
office. Finally, many years later, Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria imparted the office of
bishop to Frumentius and sent him to instruct the minds of the Indians in the doctrine
of piety.” In the same book, ch. 24, Theodoret relates this incident: “At the same time
a woman who had been captured in war brought the Iberians over to the truth of the
Christian religion. She taught the queen of the Iberians the holy Commandments to the
extent that she could. She encouraged the queen to build a sacred temple in honor of
Christ, who had cured her of sickness. Finally, too, the king was converted, the temple
was built for Christ, and they asked for or received a bishop from Emperor Constantine.”

Regarding these and similar specific deeds we must note: (1) Extraordinary examples
do not overturn the general rule and the divinely established order. (2) A distinction
must be made between the church already planted and established, on the one hand, and
the church that is to be planted and established, on the other. (3) A distinction must also
be made between call and ordination, since the necessity of each is not the same. (4) A

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14 Read extraordinaria with Cotta instead of ordinaria.
distinction must be made between a call that is mediate and immediate, ordinary and extraordinary, all of which will become clearer from the following [§§ 75–78].

Here belong also Luther's words in his book entitled Foundation and Reason That a Christian Congregation Has the Right and Power to Call Teachers (Jena German, vol. 2, f. 244):

Here you ask: “How? If a Christian is not called, then he may not preach?” Answer: Here you should put a Christian in two different places. First, if he is in a place where there are no Christians, he needs no other call than that he is a Christian, called and anointed by God internally. There he is obligated to preach to the erring heathen or to the non-Christians, and to teach the Gospel, due to his responsibility of brotherly love, even though no man has called him to do so, etc. For necessity breaks all laws and has no law. Second, if he, on the other hand, is in a place where there are Christians who have equal might and right with him, there he should not put himself forward but let others call and prefer him, so that he may preach and teach in the stead and at the command of others.15

From this, some people limit the necessity of the call in such a way that they concede that a person not called is able to teach: (a) When a Christian dwells among people who are ignorant of the Christian faith, for then everyone is obligated to seek and promote the glory of Christ as much as he can. (b) In the church when ecclesiastical order has not yet been fully established, for since the call of teachers is part of that order, when it is lacking one cannot pay strict heed to the call. (c) When the ordinary teachers degenerate into wolves and are totally neglecting their office. Cf. Dr. Hunnius, Assert. minist. Lutheran. contra Pontif.