

POPE, PRIESTS, AND PASTORS

ISSUES IN LUTHER'S 95 THESES - PART III

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."

~ Colossians 1:18

1. Popes

- a. Apparent in Luther's 95 theses is his deference to the Pope; later he called the devil
- b. When 2/3 are in disagreement – who is the arbiter? Who is the judge? The head?
- c. CCC says the Pope has full, supreme, and universal power over the Church – 882
- d. Infallibility – Not fallible, not capable of erring, exempt from liability to mistake
 - i. The Pope's infallibility declared/defined in 1870
 - ii. Popes have been excommunicated; there were three Popes at one point.
 - iii. True infallibility is only found in God → therefore, His words – the Bible.
- e. The Pope is given the titles reserved for Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
 - i. He is called "Holy Father" contrary to John 17:11, Matt 23:9
 - ii. He is called "Head of the Church" contrary to Col 1:18, Eph 5:23
 - iii. He is called the "Vicar of Christ" contrary to the Spirit's role Joh 14:26, Eph 2:18
- f. Catholic verses for papal authority → John 21:25-17, Luke 22:32, Matt 16:13-20
 - i. St. Peter's basilica in Rome is presumably where Peter died – 'Tu es Petrus'
 - ii. Matt 16:18 being the key passage – "upon this rock" – Peter or Christ? 1Pe 2:25
 - iii. There can only be one foundation – Acts 2:36, 10:38-43; 1 Cor 3:11, 10:4
 - iv. Matt 16:16-20 being the chief passage, but what about Matt 16:21?
 - v. Peter as "pope" – Matt 8:14, 16:23, Acts 10:25-26, Gal 2:4-6, 2:11
- g. The real problem is failure to acknowledge Paul's apostleship
 - i. The power of Christ does not come from putting on flesh, but in resurrection
 - ii. It is not the birth of Jesus or the title of the Pope, it is his death/resurrection
 - iii. The Pope is not qualified to hold the office of the Head having never died

2. Priests

- a. You don't have to be Catholic to have "popes", many people have celebrities/popes
- b. A priest presents you to God, a prophet presents God to you.
- c. Nowhere does Paul use the word 'priest' in his writings – one mediator – 1 Tim 2:5
- d. Israel will be made a kingdom of priests – Exo 19:6, Isa 61:6, 1 Pet 2:9, Heb 13:17
- e. There is no such thing as the priesthood of all believers – we do not perform the duty.

3. Pastors (Bishop/elder)

- a. 9x in scripture – only once in Paul's writings – the rest in Jeremiah 2:8, 3:15, 12:10
- b. They were a gift to the church - Eph 4:11; they are no longer a gift...
- c. What should pastors tell you? They have equal standing in the body as you – 1 Cor 12:13
- d. There is none righteous – none with a "gift" of holiness, a special "calling", anointed
- e. If a man *desires* the office of a bishop – 1 Tim 3:1; he must first be proved – 1 Tim 3:10
- f. We need teachers, elders, leaders, but you are the temple of the Holy Ghost; you are a member of the body of Christ; you have all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ