

The Call and Communion Casuistry

ACELC Conference

I. What the errors are and their consequences.

A. Heterodox sheep communing at Orthodox Altars (I Cor. 10:14-22)

1. confuses the confession of the Altar (SD VII 85)
2. confuses the confession of the confessor
3. Sheep eating and drinking to their judgment (I Cor. 11:27-32) EP VII 16-17

B. Sheep communing without awareness of their Shepherd

1. The Call places the Pastor as Steward of the Mysteries (I Cor. 4:1-2) AC V, XIV
2. The Pastor is Called by God to keep watch over the flock (Acts 20:28)
3. The Pastor is to know the wool of his sheep and the sheep know the voice of their shepherd (Jn. 10:14) "Private Confession and Absolution"

II. Why they are errors.

A. Pastors communing other shepherds sheep is outside of his "portion"

1. "kleeros" (I Pet. 5:3) "those entrusted to you". "those in your charge" confer Luke 1:8-10
2. (Acts 1:17, 26) "portion of the ministry", "allotment". A specific responsibility to a specific people in a specific place. confer Numbers 33:54

B. Pastors communing other shepherds sheep may be "meddling"

1. "allotiepiscope" (I Pet. 4:15) an act of oversight which is foreign to the doer
2. Walther, *The Proper Form of a Christian Congregation* (166) "Every congregation shall agree with its neighboring sister congregations on their mutual local boundaries. It shall not receive into its parish those who live in the area of other congregations."
3. Deyling (1677-1755) "No pastor or minister of the church should administer the most blessed sacrament to anyone not belonging to his parish without the permission of the superintendent, except to sick persons who are traveling. No one is permitted to roam about as he chooses and to frivolously change his pastor,

which commonly stems from hatred or animosity... nor can one who turns his back on his pastor and leaves him with malicious intent be regarded as a penitent and be admitted to the use of the Holy Super."

C. Exceptions- while they do exist, let the exceptions be governed by a better understanding of the relationship between shepherd and sheep via the Divine Call

III. How to correct the errors.

A. Confession and Absolution as the ordinary means of pastoral care for the sheep. LC VI

1. Luther- "If you are a Christian, you should be glad to run more than a hundred miles for confession, not under compulsion but rather coming and compelling us to offer it" (30)

2. Luther- "Therefore, when I urge you to go to confession, I am simply urging you to be a Christian" (32)

3. Luther- "In this way, you see, confession would be rightly taught, and such a desire and love for it would be aroused that people would come running after us to get it, more than we would like" (34)

B. Pastors need a Father Confessor

1. Walther- "Every preacher should rather choose his own father confessor, confess to him regularly, and receive absolution from him. The preacher also needs this important means, How can he expect his listeners to respect the holy preaching office if he himself gives the appearance of despising it [by not having a pastor of his own]?" (Pastoral 129)

2. The pastor must honor the "confessional seal." Walther- "The preachers must not reveal what has been confessed to him" (Pastoral 126). They are Christ's sheep. He can reveal the confession if He wants to.

C. Honor the relationship the Call creates

1. When traveling, notify your pastor and allow him to contact the pastor where you are going. (The old Letters of Fellowship)

2. When a visitor arrives at your congregation, ask them "who is your pastor"? Then ask "do I have your pastor's permission to commune you?"

3. TEACH! The only skill mentioned in the qualifications for a pastor in I Timothy 3 is "apt to teach." This takes much time and many patience

IV. Casuistry questions and discussion.