

The Office of the Keys vis a vis Congregational and Synodical Polity (Governance)

June 21, 2015

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I. The Essence of the Church; Christ's Office of the Keys and his Institutions and It's New Creation

A. How do we know? Sufficiency/Application of all Scriptures to all/ or Gospel reductionism? (Continued)

Why do we require the Confirmation vows we discussed last week?? Is Confirmation mandated in Scripture? What is?

See: Mt. 28.19f; 1 Thessalonians 2.13; 2 Tim. 2.13; 3.16; So what's the nature of these vows?

Now does subscription, submission to the Bible and the catechism apply to faith only (only the Gospel), or also to life (God's ordering society and his moral law); What's authoritative in Scripture Gospel only or Law and Gospel? What do "progressive Churches" say?

See: 1 Cor. 14.26f

Does the Reformation come from rebellion against Papal Authority or submission to Biblical authority? What is faith's relationship to God's Word? Can faith ever say no to God? If it doesn't say "no" to God when he speaks, what DOES faith say? What can we say about a "Christian" who will not heed or submit to the Word of God? Why must we say this?

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B. Salvation totally earned; Gift given through the Means of Grace.

1. Institution; command and promise; Violations: occasions for Confession; separation.

The nature of the Church is the nature of the Gospel. As Christ's saving institution on the earth, it points sinners who are perishing to the Savior, not in order to enlist them to do something for Christ, but to give them what Christ alone could win for them, salvation. Thus the Gospel is Christ's perfect and complete salvation that we grasp by faith. It is for the sake of this salvation that Christ, as the captain of salvation, gives orders to his believers that no one has the right to overturn. He claims all authority and then commands his church, with the promise of his saving presence as they are consigned to bring this gift to the world (Mt. 28.19f).

Baptism: Command and Promise (Mt. 28; Mk 16); fruit is a life of repentance

Preaching/teaching the Gospel (Mk. 16; Rom. 10); fruit is planting the seed of faith in other; growing in faith.

Absolution (John 21); Christian freedom of conscience from sin.

Holy Communion (Mt. 21; 1 Cor. 10,11); A Life of Service Sanctified in Christ's.

Catholicism: Insufficient Gospel – Christian's Works of the law required in addition to Christ's Work. (Sect)

Reformed: Commands of Christ retained with the miraculous promises removed. (Sect)

What do Lutherans do? Contend for the truth in the Church through Confession and lines of fellowship; never equating the truth with the lie (modern Evangelicalism/Non-Denominationalism), not being a sect, but the Church of Christ.