

Augsburg Confession, Article IV: Of Justification.

1] Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for 2] Christ’s sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. 3] This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4.

Article V: Of the Ministry.

1] That we may obtain this faith, *the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted.* For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, 2] the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith; where and when it pleases God, in them that hear 3] the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ’s sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ’s sake. 4] They condemn the Anabaptists and others who think that the Holy Ghost comes to men without the external Word, through their own preparations and works.

Article VI: Of New Obedience.

1] Also they teach that this *faith is bound to bring forth good fruits*, and that it is necessary to do good works commanded by God, because of God’s will, but that we should not rely on those works to merit justification 2] before God. For remission of sins and justification is apprehended by faith, as also the voice of Christ attests: *When ye shall have done all these things, say: We are unprofitable servants.* Luke 17, 10. The same is also taught by 3] the Fathers. For Ambrose says: *It is ordained of God that he who believes in Christ is saved, freely receiving remission of sins, without works, by faith alone.*

Article VII: Of the Church.

1] Also they teach that *one holy Church* is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered.

2] And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and 3] the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. 4] As Paul says: *One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all,* etc. Eph. 4, 5. 6.

Article VIII: What the Church Is.

1] Although *the Church* properly is the congregation of saints and true believers, nevertheless, since in this life many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled therewith, it is lawful to use Sacraments administered by evil men, according to the saying of Christ: *The Scribes and 2] the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat,* etc. Matt. 23, 2. Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men. 3] They condemn the Donatists, and such like, who denied it to be lawful to use the ministry of evil men in the Church, and who thought the ministry of evil men to be unprofitable and of none effect.

Augsburg Confession, Article XIV: Of Ecclesiastical Order.

Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called. (*rite vocatus*)

Augsburg Confession	
IV.	Gospel/Justification by faith
V.	The means God uses: Ministry=Pastoral Office
VI.	Fruits/Good Works
VII.	Church found where Gospel taught, Sacraments Administered
VIII.	Church made up of believers
XIV.	Man placed into the Office “Rightly Called”
Ap XIV	examined, elected, ordained
Polity	maintain church polity and grades of ministry

Apology, Article XIV: Of Ecclesiastical Order.

24] The Fourteenth Article, in which we say that in the Church the administration of the Sacraments and Word ought to be *allowed no one unless he be rightly called*, they receive, but with the proviso that we employ canonical ordination. **Concerning this subject we have frequently**

testified in this assembly that it is our greatest wish to maintain church-polity and the grades in the Church [old church-regulations and the government of bishops], even though they have been made by human authority [provided the bishops allow our doctrine and receive our priests]. For we know that church discipline was instituted by the Fathers, in the manner laid down in the ancient canons, with a good and useful intention. 25] But the bishops either compel our priests to reject and condemn this kind of doctrine which we have confessed, or, by a new and unheard-of cruelty, they put to death the poor innocent men. These causes hinder our priests from acknowledging such bishops. Thus the cruelty of the bishops is the reason why the canonical government, which we greatly desired to maintain, is in some places dissolved. Let them see to it how they will give an account to God for dispersing **26]** the Church. In this matter our consciences are not in danger, because since we know that our Confession is true, godly, and catholic, we ought not to approve the cruelty of those who persecute this doctrine. **27]** And we know that the Church is among those who teach the Word of God aright, and administer the Sacraments aright, and not with those who not only by their edicts endeavor to efface God’s Word, but also put to death those who teach what is right and true; **28]** towards whom, even though they do something contrary to the canons, yet the very canons are milder. **Furthermore, we wish here again to testify that we will gladly maintain ecclesiastical and canonical government,** provided the bishops only cease to rage against our Churches. This our desire will clear us both before God and among all nations to all posterity from the imputation against us that the authority of the bishops is being undermined, when men read and hear that, although protesting against the unrighteous cruelty of the bishops, we could not obtain justice.

AC: Rightly Called <i>(examined, elected, ordained)</i>	Divine Right
Ap: Church Polity	Human Right

Apology Article XXVIII: Of Ecclesiastical Power.

1] There has been great controversy concerning the *Power of Bishops*, in which **some have awkwardly confounded the power of the Church 2] and the power of the sword.** And from this confusion very great wars and tumults have resulted, while the Pontiffs, emboldened by the power of the Keys, not only have instituted new services and burdened consciences with reservation of cases and ruthless excommunications, but have also undertaken to transfer the kingdoms of this world, **3]** and to take the Empire from the Emperor. These wrongs have long since been rebuked in the Church **4]** by learned and godly men. Therefore our teachers, for the comforting of men’s consciences, were constrained to show **the difference between the power of the Church and the power of the sword, and taught that both of them, because of God’s commandment, are to be held in reverence and honor, as the chief blessings of God on earth.**

Power of the Sword	= Civil Government
Power of the Church	-Preach Word
Power of the Keys	-Forgive/Retain Sins
Power of the Bishops	-Administer Sacraments
The Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments	

5] But this is their opinion, **that the power of the Keys, or the power of the bishops, according to the Gospel, is a power or commandment of God, to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer Sacraments. 6]** For with this commandment Christ sends forth His Apostles, John 20, 21 sqq.: *As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*

Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. 7] Mark 16, 15: *Go preach the Gospel to every creature.*

8] This power is exercised only by teaching or preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments, according to their calling either to many or to individuals. For thereby are granted, not bodily,

This Power is exercised ONLY by... These things cannot come BUT BY...
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but eternal things, as eternal righteousness, the Holy Ghost, eternal life. 9] These things cannot come but by **the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments**, as Paul says, Rom. 1, 16: *The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.* 10] **Therefore, since the power of the Church grants eternal things, and is exercised only by the ministry of the Word, it does not interfere with civil government; no more than the art of singing interferes with civil government.**

11] For civil government deals with other things than does the Gospel. The civil rulers defend not minds, but bodies and bodily things against manifest injuries, and restrain men with the sword and bodily punishments in order to preserve civil justice and peace.

12] Therefore **the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded.** The power of the Church has its own commission to teach the Gospel and 13] to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the Commonwealth. 14] As Christ says, John 18, 36: *My kingdom is not of this world;* 15] also Luke 12, 14: *Who made Me a judge or a divider over you?* 16] Paul also says, Phil. 3, 20: *Our citizenship is in heaven;* 17] 2 Cor. 10, 4: *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations.*

18] After this manner our teachers discriminate between the duties of both these powers, and command that both be honored and acknowledged as gifts and blessings of God.

19] If bishops have any power of the sword, that power they have, not as bishops, by the commission of the Gospel, but by human law having received it of kings and emperors for the civil administration of what is theirs. This, however, is another office than the ministry of the Gospel.

20] When, therefore, the question is concerning the jurisdiction of bishops, civil authority must be distinguished from 21] ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Again, **according to the Gospel or, as they say, by divine right, there belongs to the bishops as bishops, that is, to those to whom has been committed the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, no jurisdiction except to forgive sins, to judge doctrine, to reject doctrines contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the communion of the Church wicked men, whose wickedness is known, and this without human force, 22] simply by the Word. Herein the congregations of necessity and by divine right must obey them,** according to Luke 10, 16: *He that heareth you heareth Me.* 23] But when they teach or ordain anything against the Gospel, then the congregations have a commandment of God **prohibiting obedience**, Matt. 7, 15: *Beware of false prophets;* 24] Gal. 1, 8: *Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed;* 25] 2 Cor. 13, 8: *We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.* 26] Also: *The power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.* 27] So, also, the Canonical Laws command (II. Q. VII. Cap., *Sacerdotes*, and Cap. *Oves*). 28] And Augustine (*Contra Petilianum Epistolam*): *Neither must we submit to Catholic bishops if they chance to err, or hold anything contrary to the Canonical Scriptures of God.*

29] If they have any other power or jurisdiction, in hearing and judging certain cases, as of matrimony or of tithes. etc. they have it by human right. in which matters princes are bound. even against their will, when the ordinaries fail, to dispense justice to their subjects for the maintenance of peace.

Bishops/Pastors have no right to institute anything contrary to the Gospel.

30] Moreover, it is disputed whether bishops or pastors have the right to introduce ceremonies in the Church, and to make laws concerning meats, holy-days and grades, that is, orders of ministers, etc.

31] They that give this right to the bishops refer to this testimony John 16, 12, 13: *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.*

32] They also refer to the example of the Apostles, who commanded to abstain from blood and from things strangled, Acts 15, 29. **33]** They refer to the Sabbath-day as having been changed into the Lord's Day, contrary to the Decalog, as it seems. Neither is there any example whereof they make more than concerning the changing of the Sabbath-day. Great, say they, is the power of the Church, since it has dispensed with one of the Ten Commandments!

34] But concerning this question it is taught on our part (as has been shown above) **that bishops have no power to decree anything against the Gospel.** The Canonical Laws teach the same thing (Dist. IX). **35]** Now, **it is against Scripture to establish or require the observance of any traditions, to the end that by such observance we may make satisfaction for sins, or merit grace and righteousness.** **36]** For the glory of Christ's merit suffers injury when, by such observances, **37]** we undertake to merit justification. But it is manifest that, by such belief, traditions have almost infinitely multiplied in the Church, the doctrine concerning faith and the righteousness of faith being meanwhile suppressed. For gradually more holy-days were made, fasts appointed, new ceremonies and services in honor of saints instituted, because the authors of such things thought that by these works they were meriting **38]** grace. Thus in times past the Penitential Canons increased, whereof we still see some traces in the satisfactions.

39] Again, **the authors of traditions do contrary to the command of God when they find matters of sin in foods, in days, and like things, and burden the Church with bondage of the law,** as if there ought to be among Christians, in order to merit justification a service like the Levitical, the arrangement of which God had committed to the Apostles and bishops. **40]** For thus some of them write; and the Pontiffs in some measure seem to be misled by the example **41]** of the law of Moses. Hence are such burdens, as that they make it mortal sin, even without offense to others, to do manual labor on holy-days, a mortal sin to omit the Canonical Hours, that certain foods defile the conscience that fastings are works which appease God that sin in a reserved case cannot be forgiven but by the authority of him who reserved it; whereas the Canons themselves speak only of the reserving of the ecclesiastical penalty, and not of the reserving of the guilt.

42] Whence have the bishops the right to lay these traditions upon the Church for the ensnaring of consciences, when Peter, Acts 15, 10, forbids to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, and Paul says, 2 Cor. 13, 10, that the power given him was to edification not to destruction? Why, therefore, do they increase sins by these traditions?

43] But there are clear testimonies which **prohibit the making of such traditions, as though they merited grace or were necessary to 44] salvation.** Paul says, Col. 2, 16–23: *Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days.* **45]** *If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not; taste not; handle not, which all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of men! which things have indeed a show of wisdom.* **46]** Also in Titus 1, 14 he openly forbids traditions: *Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth.*

47] And Christ, Matt. 15, 14, 13, says of those who require **traditions:** *Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind;* **48]** and He rejects such services: *Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be plucked up.*

49] If bishops have the right to burden churches with infinite traditions, and to ensnare consciences, why does Scripture so often prohibit to make, and to listen to, traditions? Why does it call them “doctrines of devils”? 1 Tim. 4, 1. Did the Holy Ghost in vain forewarn of these things?

50] Since, therefore, ordinances instituted as things necessary, or with an opinion of meriting grace, are contrary to the Gospel, it follows that it is not lawful for any bishop **51]** to institute or exact such services. For it is necessary that the doctrine of Christian liberty be preserved in the churches, namely, that the bondage of the Law is not necessary to justification, as it is written in the Epistle to the Galatians, 5, 1: *Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* **52]** It is necessary that the chief article of the Gospel be preserved, to wit, that we obtain grace freely by faith in Christ, and not for certain observances or acts of worship devised by men.

53] What, then, are we to think of the Sunday and like rites in the house of God? **To this we answer that it is lawful for bishops or pastors to make ordinances that things be done orderly in the Church, not that thereby we should merit grace or make satisfaction for sins, or that consciences be bound to judge them necessary services, and to think that it is a sin to break them 54] without offense to others. So Paul ordains, 1 Cor. 11, 5, that women should cover their heads in the congregation, 1 Cor. 14, 30, that interpreters be heard in order in the church, etc.**

Bishops/Pastors can make ordinances that things be done orderly in the Church.

--for the sake of love and tranquility

55] It is proper that **the churches should keep such ordinances for the sake of love and tranquility, so far that one do not offend another, that all things be done in the churches in order, and without confusion,** 1 Cor. 14, 40; comp. Phil. 2, 14; 56] but so that consciences be not burdened to think that they are necessary to salvation, or to judge that they sin when they break them without offense to others; as no one will say that a woman sins who goes out in public with her head uncovered provided only that no offense be given.

57] **Of this kind is the observance of the Lord's Day, Easter, Pentecost, and like holy-days and 58] rites.** For those who judge that by the authority of the Church the observance of the Lord's Day instead of the Sabbath-day was ordained as a thing necessary, 59] do greatly err. Scripture has abrogated the Sabbath-day; for it teaches that, since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted. And 60] yet, because it was necessary to appoint a certain day, that the people might know when they ought to come together, it appears that the Church designated the Lord's Day for this purpose; and this day seems to have been chosen all the more for this additional reason, that men might have an example of Christian liberty, and might know that the keeping neither of the Sabbath nor of any other day is necessary.

61] There are monstrous disputations concerning the changing of the law, the ceremonies of the new law, the changing of the Sabbath-day, which all have sprung from the false belief that there must needs be in the Church a service like to the Levitical, and that Christ had given commission to the Apostles and bishops to devise new ceremonies as necessary to 62] salvation. These errors crept into the Church when the righteousness of faith was not taught clearly enough. 63] Some dispute that the keeping of the Lord's Day is not indeed of divine right, but in a manner so. They prescribe concerning holy-days, how far it is lawful to work. What else 64] are such disputations than snares of consciences? For although they endeavor to modify the traditions, yet the mitigation can never be perceived as long as the opinion remains that they are necessary, which must needs remain where the righteousness of faith and Christian liberty are not known.

65] The Apostles commanded Acts 15, 20 *to abstain from blood.* Who does now observe it? And yet they that do it not sin not; for not even the Apostles themselves wanted to burden consciences with such bondage; but they forbade it for a time, to avoid offense. 66] For in this decree we must perpetually consider what the aim of the Gospel is.

67] Scarcely any Canons are kept with exactness, and from day to day many go out of use even among those who are the most zealous advocates of traditions. 68] Neither can due regard be paid to consciences unless this mitigation be observed, that we know that the Canons are kept without holding them to be necessary, and that no harm is done consciences, even though traditions go out of use.

69] **But the bishops might easily retain the lawful obedience of the people if they would not insist upon the observance of such traditions as cannot be kept with a good conscience.** 70] Now they command celibacy; they admit none unless they swear that they will not teach 71] the pure doctrine of the Gospel. The churches do not ask that the bishops should restore concord at the expense of their honor; which, nevertheless, 72] it would be proper for good pastors to do. They ask only that they would release unjust burdens which are new and have been received contrary to the custom of the Church Catholic. 73] It may be that in the beginning there were plausible reasons for some of these ordinances; and yet they are not adapted to later times. 74] It is also evident that some were adopted through erroneous conceptions. Therefore it would be befitting the clemency of the Pontiffs to mitigate them now, because such a modification does not shake the unity of the Church. For many human traditions have been changed in process of time, 75] as the Canons themselves show.

But if it be impossible to obtain a mitigation of such observances as cannot be kept without sin, we are bound to follow the apostolic rule, Acts 5, 29, which commands us *to obey God rather than men*.

76] Peter, 1 Pet. 5, 3, forbids bishops to be lords, and to rule over the churches. **77]** It is not our design now to wrest the government from the bishops, but this one thing is asked, namely, **that they allow the Gospel to be purely taught, and that they relax some few observances which 78] cannot be kept without sin.** But if they make no concession, it is for them to see how they shall give account to God for furnishing, by their obstinacy, a cause for schism.

From the "Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope," paragraphs 59-72

THE POWER AND JURISDICTION OF BISHOPS

In the Confession and in the Apology we have set forth in general terms what we have to say about ecclesiastical power.

⁶⁰ The Gospel requires of those who preside over the churches that they preach the Gospel, remit sins, administer the sacraments, and, in addition, exercise jurisdiction, that is, excommunicate those who are guilty of notorious crimes and absolve those who repent. ⁶¹ By the confession of all, even our adversaries, it is evident that this power belongs by divine right to all who preside over the churches, whether they are called pastors, presbyters, or bishops. ⁶²

Accordingly Jerome teaches clearly that in the apostolic letters all who preside over the churches are both bishops and presbyters. He quotes from Titus, "This is why I left you in Crete, that you might appoint presbyters in every town," and points out that these words are followed by, "A bishop must be married only once" (Titus 1:5-7). Again, Peter and John call themselves presbyters. And Jerome observes: "One man was chosen over the rest to prevent schism, lest several persons, by gathering separate followings around themselves, rend the church of Christ. For in Alexandria, from the time of Mark the Evangelist to the time of Bishops Heracles and Dionysius, the presbyters always chose one of their number, set him in a higher place, and called him bishop. Moreover, in the same way in which an army might select a commander for itself, the deacons may choose from their number one who is known to be active and name him archdeacon. For, apart from ordination, what does a bishop do that a presbyter does not do?"

⁶³ Jerome therefore teaches that the distinction between the grades of bishop and presbyter (or pastor) is by human authority. The fact itself bears witness to this, for the power is the same, as I have already stated. ⁶⁴ Afterwards one thing made a distinction between bishops and pastors, and this was ordination, for it was decided that one bishop should ordain the ministers in a number of churches. ⁶⁵ But since the distinction between bishop and pastor is not by divine right, it is manifest that ordination administered by a pastor in his own church is valid by divine right. ⁶⁶ Consequently, when the regular bishops become enemies of the Gospel and are unwilling to administer ordination, the churches retain the right to ordain for themselves. ⁶⁷ **For wherever the church exists, the right to administer the Gospel also exists. Wherefore it is necessary for the church to retain the right of calling, electing, and ordaining ministers.**

This right is a gift given exclusively to the church, and no human authority can take it away from the church. It is as Paul testifies to the Ephesians when he says, "When he ascended on high he gave gifts to men" (Eph. 4:8, 11, 12). He enumerates pastors and teachers among the gifts belonging exclusively to the church, and he adds that they are given for the work of ministry and for building up

the body of Christ. **Where the true church is, therefore, the right of electing and ordaining ministers must of necessity also be.** So in an emergency even a layman absolves and becomes the minister and pastor of another. It is like the example which Augustine relates of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the other (a catechumen), and the latter, after his Baptism, absolved the former.⁶⁸ Here the words of Christ apply which testify that the keys were given to the church and not merely to certain individuals: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).

⁶⁹ Finally, this is confirmed by the declaration of Peter, “You are a royal priesthood” (1 Pet. 2:9). These words apply to the true church which, since it alone possesses the priesthood, certainly has the right of **electing and ordaining** ministers.⁷⁰ The most common custom of the church also bears witness to this, for there was a time when the people elected pastors and bishops. **Afterwards a bishop, either of that church or of a neighboring church, was brought in to confirm the election with the laying on of hands; nor was ordination anything more than such confirmation.**⁷¹ Later on new ceremonies were added, many of which Dionysius describes; but he is a late and fictitious writer, whoever he may be, just as the writings of Clement are spurious. Still more recent writers added the words, “I give thee the power to sacrifice for the living and the dead.” But not even this is found in Dionysius!

⁷² **From all these facts it is evident that the church retains the right of electing and ordaining ministers. Wherefore, when the bishops are heretics or refuse to administer ordination, the churches are by divine right compelled to ordain pastors and ministers for themselves.** And it is the wickedness and tyranny of the bishops that give occasion to schism and discord, for Paul commands that bishops who teach and defend impious doctrines and impious forms of worship should be regarded as anathema.