

As managers of God's means of grace (1 Cor. 4:1), pastors have nothing of their own to give or withhold. They are not sent to collect payment from sinners, but to relieve their unmanageable burden of debt.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF CONCORD
NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
THE POWER AND PRIMACY OF THE POPE
REFUTATION OF ROMAN ARGUMENTS

24] In addition to this, it is necessary to acknowledge that the keys belong not to the person of one particular man, but to the Church, as many most clear and firm arguments testify. For Christ, speaking concerning the keys adds, Matt. 18:19: If two or three of you shall agree on earth, etc. Therefore he grants the keys principally and immediately to the Church, just as also for this reason the Church has principally the right of calling. [For just as the promise of the Gospel belongs certainly and immediately to the entire Church, so the keys belong immediately to the entire Church, because the keys are nothing else than the office whereby this promise is communicated to every one who desires it, just as it is actually manifest that the Church has the power to ordain ministers of the Church. And Christ speaks in these words: Whatsoever ye shall bind, etc., and indicates to whom He has given the keys, namely, to the Church: Where two or three are gathered together in My name. Likewise Christ gives supreme and final jurisdiction to the Church, when He says: Tell it unto the Church.]

Therefore it is necessary that in these passages Peter is the representative of the entire assembly of the apostles, and for this reason they do not accord to Peter any prerogative or superiority, or lordship . . .

25] However, as to the declaration: Upon this rock I will build My Church, certainly the Church has not been built upon the authority of man, but upon the ministry of the confession which Peter made, in which he proclaims that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He accordingly addresses him as a minister: Upon this rock, i.e., upon this ministry. [Therefore he addresses him as a minister of this office in which this confession and doctrine is to be in operation and says: Upon this rock, i.e., this preaching and ministry.]

26] Furthermore, the ministry of the New Testament is not bound to places and persons . . . but it is dispersed throughout the whole world, and is there where God gives His gifts, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers; neither does this ministry avail on account of the authority of any person, but on account of the Word given by Christ. 27. . . And in this way, not as referring to the person of Peter, . . . Chrysostom says thus: "Upon this rock," not upon Peter. For He built His Church not upon man, but upon the faith of Peter. But what was his faith? "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." . . . 29] Therefore the building of the Church is upon this rock of confession; this faith is the foundation of the Church.

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Luc. XVI.
Villicus iniquus.



Luc. XVI.
Der ungerichte Haushalter rief zu sich,
alle Schuldner seines Herrn, und sprach zu
denen: wieviel bist du meinem Herrn schuldig?

*Parable of the Dishonest Steward,
Biblia Ectypa, Christoph Weigel's engraved pictorial Bible, 1695.*