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## The Doctrine of the Ministry in Salomon Glassius

Armin H. Wenz

“Am I supposed to know this fellow?” This was the response of a fellow pastor and friend when I described my present research on Salomon Glassius’ figurative hermeneutic. Glassius was born in the town of Sondershausen in Thuringia in 1593, went to school in Gotha, and studied philosophy at the University of Jena from 1612 to 1615. In 1615 he went to the University of Wittenberg and had the chance to hear Leonhard Hütter, Friedrich Balduin, Wolfgang Franz, and Balthasar Meisner. A severe fever forced him to return to Jena, where he very soon had the privilege of becoming a student, table fellow, and close friend of Johann Gerhard, who had just recently become a professor at that university. From 1621 to 1625, Glassius served as professor of Hebrew at his alma mater. Thereafter, in 1625, he accepted a call to become superintendent at the town of his birth, Sondershausen. In 1638, he was called to become Johann Gerhard’s successor as professor of theology at the University of Jena, as Gerhard himself earnestly desired. But only two years later Glassius returned to the episcopal office, when Duke Ernest the Pious (Ernst der Fromme, 1601–1675) of Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg called him to be *Generalsuperintendent* at Gotha in order to restore the churchly life in his duchy after the turmoils of the Thirty Years’ War. Glassius remained in this office until his death on July 27, 1656.

### I. Salomon Glassius—Lutheran Theologian: Forgotten and Recently Rediscovered

For too long a time, Salomon Glassius has belonged to the forgotten theologians of the age of Lutheran Orthodoxy. Perhaps this is because he never wrote a complete dogmatics such as Hütter, König, Gerhard, Quenstedt, or Hollaz. The familiarity of their names, compared to Glassius,

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might be another indication of the fact that friends and foes of the age of Lutheran Orthodoxy tend to identify this era with dogmatic or systematic theology. But there are many more areas in which theologians of that time made significant and sophisticated contributions. This is especially true for the art of Lutheran hermeneutics, rhetoric, and homiletics. And this is the field to which Glassius contributed most of his written works.

Glassius' *Philologia Sacra*, published between 1623 and 1634, makes him one of the most prominent Lutheran interpreters, standing together with Matthias Flacius (1520–1575),<sup>1</sup> Johann Gerhard (1582–1637),<sup>2</sup> Wolfgang Franzius (1564–1628),<sup>3</sup> and Johann Konrad Dannhauer (1603–1666).<sup>4</sup> Johann Anselm Steiger, church historian at the University of Hamburg, makes the claim that Luther's hermeneutic, which he applied in his biblical exegesis practically, but never had time to expound systematically, "was brought to completion" in the sophisticated "hermeneutica sacra" of Lutheran Orthodoxy in the work of Glassius, Dannhauer, and others.<sup>5</sup> Glassius was not only an undisputed expert in the biblical languages and a profound exegetical researcher and hermeneutical thinker, but he also was engaged in the important task of transferring his results of his endeavors and those of fellow theologians' to the laity, most of whom were not able to read the academic literature written in Latin, which was the language used for most hermeneutical works.

The publication of the so-called *Weimar Electors' Bible* provided occasion for Glassius to transfer such knowledge to the laity. This huge edition of the Luther Bible included verse-by-verse commentaries between the lines, along with content outlines and summaries expounding the theological and practical use of each chapter of the Bible. The driving force behind the edition was Duke Ernst. The commentaries were written by almost thirty Lutheran theologians, including professors from Jena and Erfurt, as well as other theologians serving in the pastoral office. The most

<sup>1</sup> *Clavis Scripturae*, 1576.

<sup>2</sup> *Tractatus de legitima scripturae sacrae interpretatione*, 1610. See my review in *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* 18, no. 1 (2009), 52–54.

<sup>3</sup> *Tractatus novus*, 1619.

<sup>4</sup> *Hermeneutica sacra*, 1654.

<sup>5</sup> Johann Anselm Steiger, *Philologia Sacra. Zur Exegese der Heiligen Schrift im Protestantismus des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*, *Biblich-Theologische Studien*, vol. 117 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2011), 15. See also Steiger's comments in "The Development of the Reformation Legacy: Hermeneutics and Interpretation of Sacred Scripture in the Age of Orthodoxy," *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation*, ed., Magne Saebø, 5 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 2:702.

prominent and leading coworkers in this project were the Jena professors Johann Himmel (1582–1642), Johann Major (1564–1654), and Johann Gerhard, the so-called *johannitica theologorum tria*. They not only served as commentators but also had the task of examining and revising all collected contributions. Johann Gerhard wrote the notes for Genesis, Daniel, and Revelation. Glassius belonged to the narrow circle of this team, co-operating closely with his friend Gerhard.

When Gerhard died before the completion of this monumental work, Glassius succeeded him also in the task of coordinating, revising, and editing, even as he continued to write the commentaries on the poetical books of the Old Testament and the Gospel of John. In his new position, Glassius wrote the extensive German preface to the *Weimar Electors' Bible*, dated on the 110th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, June 25, 1640. Steiger counts this Bible, including Glassius' introduction, as a prominent example of "the Orthodox efforts to open up the textual worlds of the Holy Scriptures for educational purposes."<sup>6</sup> The *Weimar Electors' Bible* saw fourteen editions between 1641 and 1768. Its influence reached well beyond Thuringia, as German emigrants carried it with them to distant lands. Thus, this edition of the Bible was influential in German-speaking Lutheran churches for centuries, evidenced, for example, by a more or less unaltered edition printed jointly in 1877 by the German-American publisher F. Dette from St. Louis and a German printer from Leipzig. C. F. W. Walther, president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, crowned this edition with his own foreword, in which he especially recommended Glassius' introduction, which also was reprinted in the new edition. It comes as no surprise to discover that Christopher Mitchell, editor of the current Concordia Commentary Series, makes broad use of Glassius' hermeneutical and exegetical insights in his outstanding commentary on the Song of Songs. A glance at Mitchell's index proves the very important role Glassius plays in his commentary.<sup>7</sup>

Mitchell's commentary brings us directly to our topic when he writes concerning Song of Songs 8:11–12 that

Luther's exposition of 8:11–12 considers it to be among those biblical passages in which the kingdom and people of God are metaphorically depicted as a vineyard: "Solomon is looking forward . . . to the king-

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<sup>6</sup> Steiger, "The Development of the Reformation Legacy," 746. Also note the reference to the *Kurfürsten-Bibel* on p. 747.

<sup>7</sup> With thanks to Walther and Mitchell, I can now tell my friend who asked me whether he was supposed to know Glassius that Missouri Synod theologians are well acquainted with that champion of orthodoxy, Lutheran hermeneutics, and exegetics.

dom of Christ, in which the Word of grace would be spread abroad throughout the whole wide world . . . . However tiny their (Solomon's and Israel's) kingdom is in comparison with other gentile realms, it is the seedbed of the future kingdom of Christ. This vineyard . . . will have its own husbandmen—*apostles and other ministers of the Word*. Through them the Holy Spirit will adorn the churches with various gifts.”

Glassius follows in Luther's train but adds more detail and Scripture references. The vineyard is God's (OT and NT) church, upon whom God has lavished much work, expecting to receive from it the fruit of the true, living faith (Is 5:2; Jn 15:2, 5, 8). The Christian church will be the spiritual seed of Abraham, gathered from all peoples (Gen 17:5; Rom 4:16–17). *The caretakers are those whom God stationed to watch over souls* (Ezek 3:17; Heb 13:17; Is 61:5), *his apostles and ministers of the holy Gospel, who labor in unadulterated doctrine and holy lives* (2 Tim 2:15; 1 Tim 4:12). The fruit brought forth by the divine Word they proclaim includes the grace of God, heavenly wisdom, peace in the heart and conscience (2 Cor 1:12), and the hope of eternal glory (1 Thess 2:19). The thousand silver shekels represent praise and thanks rendered to the heavenly Solomon. Those workers who remain faithful and true in the spiritual work of the vineyard to the end will receive the commendation from the mouth of their Lord (1 Cor 4:5; Mt 25, 21, 23) and a hundredfold reward (Mt 19:29).<sup>8</sup>

This paraphrase of Glassius' commentary already intimates his doctrine of the ministry. Like Luther, Glassius is able to name “apostles and other ministers of the Word” in one breath, differentiating between them without separating them one from another. It is also clear that there is no church or vineyard without the ministers as workers. Their task is depicted by the expressions “caretakers,” “watchers,” and “ministers of the Gospel.” The faithfulness demanded of them in the fulfillment of these tasks covers both their doctrine and life. They are not only to serve as teachers and preachers but also as examples for the faithful. Their faithfulness brings about many fruits, both in this earthly and in the heavenly life. In Glassius' German text, we also find a hint of the cross and the temptations the ministers are exposed to in their service, but which nevertheless cannot take away the aforementioned benefits.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Christopher W. Mitchell, *The Song of Songs*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003), 1273; emphasis added.

<sup>9</sup> Glassius comments on the “fruits” received by the ministers (Song 8:12) reminding the reader that these fruits are received from God's mild hand only under many experiences of cross and persecutions (Mark 10:30; 2 Cor 4:1, 4:8–10).

## II. The Theologian and Minister of the Word as a Sacred "Philologist"

Gottlieb Theophil Spitzel (1639–1691) in his *Templum Honoris*, a collection of biographies and bibliographies of about fifty prominent theologians and philologists from the age of Orthodoxy, calls Glassius a *sacer philologus*, that is, a holy philologist.<sup>10</sup> This very nicely summarizes Glassius' theological approach and also hints at one aspect of his understanding of the ministry, namely, how for theological reasons every pastor as a minister of the gospel of Christ necessarily has to be a philologist, someone who is in love with the Word of God (*ein Liebhaber des Wortes Gottes*),<sup>11</sup> both in its written form, which is the foundation of his ministry, as well as in its oral form, which is the very focus of his ministry.

The foundations and implications of this philological approach are put forth by Glassius himself in the third chapter of his edifying work *Arbor Vitae* (Tree of Life) of 1629. Here, Glassius calls God a *bonum sui communicativum*, that is, a "good that communicates itself."<sup>12</sup> God's very essence and will are hidden from sinful natural man. Knowledge of God, therefore, is only possible if God reveals himself. God, however, not only reveals himself, but in Christ and through the Holy Spirit saves humans from sin and damnation by communicating himself to them. Holy Writ in this context is the very means, ordained by God,<sup>13</sup> in which God reveals and communicates himself. The Bible, as a means of God's revelation and self-communication, thus reflects and represents Christ himself, who is called the "Book of Life" in whom all faithful children of God are inscribed from eternity and ordained (*verordnet*) to eternal life.<sup>14</sup> This Book of Life,

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<sup>10</sup> Gottlieb Theophil Spitzel, *Templum Honoris* (Augsburg: Gottlieb Goebel, 1673), 218.

<sup>11</sup> Salomon Glassius, *Prophetischer Spruch-Postill*, 4 vols. (Nuremberg: Wolfgang Endter, 1642–1654). 1:132, 158, 605ff; 2:234ff, 376 (*Liebhaber der himmlischen Weisheit*), 608, 623, 686, 734, 853; 3: Preface, *passim*, 54, 189 194; 4: Preface, *passim*, 194, 734, 765. To be a *Liebhaber des Wortes*, that is, "a lover of the Word," is an equivalent expression of being a *Liebhaber Gottes* ("a lover of God") and the opposite of being a *Liebhaber der Welt* ("a lover of the world") in Glassius' works. Note that the prefaces in these volumes are without page numbers. Hereafter abbreviated PSP.

<sup>12</sup> Salomon Glassius, *Arbor Vitae: Der Baum des Lebens, Jesus Christus, aus göttlicher Schrift durch die Gnade des heiligen Geistes vorgestellt, und zu tröstlicher Betrachtung, unnd nöthiger Lebenserbawung in fünf Büchlein verfasst* (Jena: Tobias Steinmann, 1629), Book 2, ch. 17, 136. Glassius here refers to 2 Peter 1:3–4.

<sup>13</sup> The oft repeated expression *verordnet* (ordained) in the following quotes refers to the eternal election of the faithful as well as to God's self-revelation and the Spirit's saving work through the means of grace, which are "ordained" by God himself.

<sup>14</sup> *Arbor Vitae*, Book 3, ch. 1, 200.

according to Glassius, is—as can be clearly seen in the unanimous testimony of the Holy Scriptures—not an unmethodical book, but a very methodical one (*nicht LIBER AMETHODUS, SED METHODICUS MAXIME*), since it is written with a specific divine order.<sup>15</sup> God has ordained his elect to eternal life through given means that he himself has chosen in order that those should have eternal life who through the power of the Holy Spirit are drawn to the Son of God, receive true faith from his very word, and remain in it to the end.<sup>16</sup> The biblical “method” displayed here includes the office of the ministry, since this office also is ordained (*verordnet*) by God himself. This is true not only generally speaking but also specifically for each ordained servant of the word, and thus reveals Glassius’ self-understanding as a holy philologist when he writes:

Regarding what has just been expounded about the true, blessed use and study of Holy Scripture and about the saving knowledge of Christ, which flows from the same, I have up to now, in the teaching office in which the dear Lord has put and ordained me (*gesetzt und verordnet hat*), found myself obliged to attend to this study and use of Scripture with diligence and faithfulness. And on this basis, I, by the aid of God’s good Spirit, have earnestly tried to find Jesus Christ in his revealed word and Holy Scripture through diligent (re-)search, not just for my own soul (which is a great gift of grace and also a most holy example of life), but also in order to present and inculcate him for others, whom I am obliged to edify and to guide to eternal life.<sup>17</sup>

As a lover (*Liebhaber*) of the word, the minister of the word has a two-fold task in the context of the divine *methodus*, a task that is identical with the method of legitimate biblical interpretation: when reading, examining, and interpreting the Bible, he has to search for Christ who is the central scope of the Scriptures. According to the main use (*Nutzen*) or function of the Scriptures as means of the Holy Spirit, the biblical texts, which preach Christ clearly and dearly (*klar und lieblich*), must be proclaimed to the present hearers in a correspondingly clear and dear or edifying manner in order to create and sustain saving faith in Christ. The *Logos* and the Book of Life, which is Christ, shall as the main topic of the Scriptures turn into a *logos emphytos*, the implanted word (Jas 1:21) in the heart of the faithful through the service of the philological theologian, and thus the Book of Life shall be written again in the living hearts of the believers.

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<sup>15</sup> *Arbor Vitae*, Book 3, ch. 2, 205, 207.

<sup>16</sup> *Arbor Vitae*, Book 3, ch. 3, 207.

<sup>17</sup> *Arbor Vitae*, Preface (6–7, no page numbers in the print). English translation is this author’s.

Glassius in his writings was most eagerly engaged in both pillars of this *methodus biblica*, this biblical method. In his *Philologia Sacra* he examined the very multitude of rhetorical means the Spirit uses to proclaim Christ in the Bible. In his homiletical writings, he himself showed in an exemplary manner how the biblical riches can and should be applied to the hearers of his and of other ages by the minister of the word.

The *methodus* of the Book of Life as discovered and presented by Glassius stands on two pillars, both of which are ordained by God. The first pillar is Scripture as the ordained means of God's revelation and self-communication as source and foundation of sacred philology. The second pillar is the office of the ministry, or, as Glassius calls it in passages we shall soon expound, the "ministry of the Holy Spirit." This ministry is the goal and purpose of sacred philology, since it is the divinely ordained means for the proclamation and distribution of God's biblical self-revelation. Revelation and communication of man's salvation are as inseparably intertwined as are Scripture and the office of the ministry. As the Bible is called God's book of comfort and doctrine (*Trost= vnd Lehrbuch Gottes*) by Glassius,<sup>18</sup> so the office of the apostles and the ministers of the church as their successors, can be labeled as an office of comfort and teaching (*Trost= vnd Lehr=Ampt*).<sup>19</sup> The divinely ordained eternal election of the faithful, as it is generally proclaimed in the Scriptures, is specifically distributed through the office of the ministry. It is quite obvious that the biblical *methodus* expounded by Glassius in his work *Arbor Vitae* can be read as an extensive explication of Article V of the Augsburg Confession.

### III. The Office of the Ministry in Glassius' *Prophetische Spruch-Postill*

Between 1642 and 1654, Glassius published his *Prophetische Spruch-Postill* in four volumes (hereafter abbreviated as *PSP*).<sup>20</sup> This massive homiletical work is based on sermons that Glassius preached in Gotha. Motivated by the surfeit of New Testament passages that speak about the importance of the prophets in the Old Testament, Glassius interrupted the customary practice of preaching on the Gospels in order to preach on prophetic texts. To highlight the unity of the Scriptures, Glassius does not ignore the Gospels of the respective holy days, but rather compares both

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<sup>18</sup> *PSP* 1:830.

<sup>19</sup> *PSP* 2:81.

<sup>20</sup> Volumes 1, 2, and 4 of the *PSP* are accessible in the Rare Book Room of the library of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.



texts for the benefit of the Christian hearers.<sup>21</sup> For most of the appointed gospels of the Sundays or holy days, Glassius presents two sermons on two different prophetic texts (see Appendix). In each case, the first sermon is based on a text from the book of Isaiah, followed by a second sermon from another prophetic book of the Old Testament. The consistent use of Isaiah for each Sunday and festival demonstrates that also for Glassius Isaiah truly is a gospel book in which one can find the totality of Christian doctrine.

The first volume of Glassius' sermons covers the festive holidays of the church year, including all of the apostles' days and other days such as the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. The second and third volumes cover all the other Sundays of the church year. The fourth volume presents sermons on prophetic texts not yet covered in the first three volumes, here without special reference to specific days of the church year. Since Glassius speaks in his prefaces about the listeners of his sermons who asked him to publish them, we can assume that the sermons presented in the books correspond to sermons preached by Glassius. But given that the printed versions include extensive Latin quotations from all eras of church history, it is hardly plausible that they were delivered exactly as printed. Therefore, it is likely that Glassius published these sermons primarily for his fellow pastors, whom he wanted to encourage to dig more deeply and extensively into the Old Testament in their proclamation as guided by the New Testament itself.<sup>22</sup>

This is confirmed by the observation that Glassius points to important sections from Paul's pastoral letters in prominent passages of his introductions to his *Spruch-Postill*. Toward the end of the preface to the first volume, he refers to 2 Timothy 1:6, where Paul encourages Timothy to "stir up the gift of God," which is a reminder of his ordination.<sup>23</sup> Glassius points out that those called and ordained into the ministry are to stir up this gift by constantly using and exercising the divine, saving word entrusted to them.<sup>24</sup> In the preface to the fourth volume, Glassius takes up 1 Timothy 4:13-16 and 2 Timothy 1:13-14 in order to admonish his fellow "teachers of the church" to keep faithfully the "manna" of the divine Word and to pass it on to succeeding generations. Glassius then discusses the ministry extensively in the volumes of his *Spruch-Postill* that provide sermons for the apostles' days and for Sundays like third Advent, Septuagesima, Laetare,

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<sup>21</sup> *PSP* 1: Preface.

<sup>22</sup> *PSP* 1: Preface.

<sup>23</sup> *PSP* 4:722.

<sup>24</sup> *PSP* 1: Preface.

Quasimodogeniti, Misericordias Domini, Exaudi, and the fifth, eighth, and sixteenth Sundays after Trinity. Glassius' understanding of the ministry on the basis of these sermons shall now be examined.

*The Divine Preaching Office of Christ*

The holy Trinity is the source and origin of the office of the ministry. Throughout salvation history, God presents himself as a preacher, communicating through the means of his revealed word, asking mankind to listen to him and teaching them the way of salvation.<sup>25</sup> God speaks, preaches, and invites mankind to listen to him not only through David, but through all the patriarchs, prophets, priests, teachers, and ministers of the word in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament, in which beautiful words of divine promises can be read.<sup>26</sup>

In this context, Jesus Christ as the Son—sent by God as the anointed one, the Messiah—is the foremost incumbent of that very office. When discussing the authority of the office of the ministry in his sermon for Quasimodogeniti on Isaiah 52:7–10 in combination with the Holy Gospel from John 20:19–31, Glassius points out that only the certainty of its divine institution guarantees the dignity and majesty of the ministry. This divine institution can be perceived biblically in both the prophetic predictions of the ministry in the Old Testament and in the divine sending of the messengers. Both aspects refer to the ministry of Christ himself, of the apostles sent by him, and of the later preachers of the church as the apostles' successors.<sup>27</sup>

Christ connects and even unites his own sending with that of his apostles' (John 20:21).<sup>28</sup> Only for Christ, however, is it true that he had preached also in the Old Testament. On the basis of the doctrine of Christ's eternal pre-existence and of the ubiquity of the divine *Logos*, it was most plausible for Glassius to perceive Christ as speaking and preaching already

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<sup>25</sup> Referring to the ways the Lord guides his people (according to Psalm 25:4–5), Glassius writes that he does so not without means (*nicht ohne Mittel*), "but through his holy revealed word and its proclamation. Thus he presents himself as preacher and calls human beings, including all of us, to himself, in order to listen to him in his Psalms and to learn from them as from the other divine writings the way of God that leads to eternal life." PSP 4:556.

<sup>26</sup> PSP 4:556.

<sup>27</sup> PSP 2:682–683.

<sup>28</sup> PSP 2:683: Glassius writes concerning this verse that Christ here closely associates his and his apostles' sending.

in Old Testament passages.<sup>29</sup> In a sermon for Laetare, Glassius calls Christ the teacher of the church who speaks in Isaiah 50:4.<sup>30</sup> In the sermon on Isaiah 52:7-10, Glassius makes the point that Christ himself announces in v. 6 that he will arrive in due time as the promised Messiah and talk to the people.<sup>31</sup> The fulfillment of this promise is reported in Hebrews 1:1-2 and John 1:18. Immediately after the promise made in Isaiah 52:6 that Christ himself will come and speak, there follows the promise of the messengers who bring good tidings on the mountains (Isa 52:7). From this it can be clearly seen that when Christ would complete his own visible preaching office on earth, his beloved apostles should follow him according to his command in the very same teaching office. Through this chosen band, he would proclaim the gospel to the whole world, thereby calling men to the heavenly kingdom, whose word and office (as pertains to teaching and distributing the sacraments) would last until the end of the world on earth as is indicated Isaiah 52:10.<sup>32</sup>

When the divine command to preach is heard in Isaiah 40:1-11, this also concerns all the ministers of the divine word,<sup>33</sup> the priests and prophets in the Old Testament, the apostles, evangelists, bishops, shepherds, and teachers in the New Testament, all of whom are called and installed by God to preach and to comfort. The most prominent among these ministers, though, is Christ himself, whose Spirit was in the prophets (1 Pet 1:11) and who in the days of his flesh faithfully fulfilled his preaching office, as he himself announced in Isaiah 61:1<sup>34</sup> and 63:1.<sup>35</sup> When Christ says: "I have come in my Father's name" (John 5:43), he makes it clear that he was called

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Steiger, *Philologia Sacra*, 59-60 (John 1:1; Hebr 1:1, 2; 1 Cor 10:4).

<sup>30</sup> *PSP* 2:592. Isaiah has: "The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught" (50:4).

<sup>31</sup> "Therefore my people shall know my name. Therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here I am" (Isa 52:6).

<sup>32</sup> *PSP* 2:684, with reference to Isaiah 52:10: "The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our GOD."

<sup>33</sup> *PSP* 3:183.

<sup>34</sup> "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound."

<sup>35</sup> "Who is this who comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he who is splendid in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? 'It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save.'"

and sent into the world by the Father.<sup>36</sup> The difference between Christ and all other incumbents of the preaching office can also be highlighted by the contrast Glassius draws between the angel in Isaiah 6 who brings forgiveness to Isaiah as a servant and tool of God (*diakonikoos*), and Christ, who has the power and authority to forgive sins *autokratorikoos*, that is as the very Lord himself.<sup>37</sup>

Some of the aforementioned quotations already indicate that for Glassius Christ's preaching office goes far beyond his earthly ministry as the incarnate Son of God. It includes the prophets preceding him and the apostles and ministers succeeding him. This is confirmed in another sermon, where Glassius, commenting on Isaiah 63:1b ("It is I, speaking in righteousness"), writes,

He spoke and taught both in his own person, when he walked on earth in the state of his humiliation, as well as later on through his beloved apostles, whom he sent out into the world to preach to all nations, who served as Christ's mouth, so to speak, and through whose word he brought about people's salvation, as it thereafter and at all times is the case with all faithful ministers of his Word.<sup>38</sup>

In a sermon on the call of Isaiah (Isaiah 6), combined with the parable of the royal wedding feast (Matt 22:1-14), Glassius writes that Isaiah was one of the servants sent out by the king in the parable. According to St. Paul (Acts 28:25), it was the Holy Spirit who called Isaiah to preach in Isaiah 6:9-10. This is the very same Spirit who, according to Acts 20:28, installed teachers and preachers to be bishops in order to shepherd the church. Therefore, according to the Glassius, when God speaks of himself in the plural (*in pluralis numero*) in Isaiah 6:8, as in Genesis 1:26, we see the three persons of the Trinity in conversation. This is also the case in the parable that ascribes to the Father the preparation of a wedding feast for his Son. Since the Holy Spirit, who spoke through the prophets (1 Pet 1:11) is the Spirit of Christ, Christ was the one who called the prophets—among them Isaiah—as well as the apostles later on and sent them into the world, equipping them with the gift of the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel to the nations.<sup>39</sup>

Glassius draws the conclusion that thus we get to know the Lord himself as the very holder of the office of the ministry, who truly is the

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<sup>36</sup> PSP 3:217.

<sup>37</sup> PSP 3:506.

<sup>38</sup> PSP 2:592.

<sup>39</sup> PSP 3:524.

highly honored Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To all those who despise this ministry and its incumbents, Glassius issues the warning that they should ponder whom they despise and what their reward will be.<sup>40</sup> In another sermon, the Gotha Superintendent writes, “The highest president and ruler of the office of the ministry is the Spirit of God, indeed, the Trinity,”<sup>41</sup> as can be seen when all three persons of the Trinity are mentioned in John 15:26–27, where Christ also speaks about the calling of the apostles to be his witnesses.

### *The Office of the Holy Spirit*

The foundation of the office of the ministry in the New Testament is the calling of the apostles by Christ himself (Matt 4:18–22; John 1:35–51),<sup>42</sup> his sending them into the world (Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46–47),<sup>43</sup> and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, as promised by Christ. The apostles refer to this very calling, through Christ himself, when they preach the gospel.<sup>44</sup> Because Christ does not call his ministers without equipping them with his Holy Spirit, and because this very Spirit himself is promised to work and speak through these ministers, Glassius frequently speaks of the ministry of the New Testament, which unlike the ministry of the Old Testament in a narrow sense is no longer local, but universal,<sup>45</sup> as the *ministry or office of the Holy Spirit*.

The calling by Christ himself and the sending and equipping of his called ones with the Holy Spirit thus is the foundation both of the inspiration and canonization of the New Testament. Likewise included is the oral proclamation of his servants that continues after the death of the apostles until the end of the days.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> PSP 3:524.

<sup>41</sup> PSP 2:862.

<sup>42</sup> PSP 1:577–578.

<sup>43</sup> PSP 1:580.

<sup>44</sup> See the quotation of Acts 10:42 in 1:580, “And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.”

<sup>45</sup> PSP 2:815 (concerning Jer 31:34: “And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”) For Glassius, this passage indicates the universality and permanence of the evangelical preaching office (*des Evangelischen Predig-Ampts*), both in its local and in its temporal dimension.

<sup>46</sup> PSP 2:105. Christ, as the angel of the covenant, reveals God’s counsel and will (John 1:18), and sends his disciples (John 20:21) as he is sent by the Father in order to

Since the command to preach continues also in the church, the “office of the Spirit,” that is, the office of the New Testament, comprises not only the apostles but also the pastors and bishops as their successors in the Christian church (*der Amptsfolgern in der Christlichen Kirchen*).<sup>47</sup> In a sermon on Isaiah 40:6–8 for the day of St. Andrew, Glassius asks whether the commandment to preach, issued in Isaiah 40:6 and fulfilled by Christ in the New Testament, is not heard any longer after the death of the apostles? The answer is that also in the Christian church the divine voice speaks: “Preach.” The same person who gave the apostles the command to teach all nations added his promise to be with them to the end of the world. From this promise follows that Christ is also with us and that he builds his kingdom of grace also among us who live at the end times of the world and teach and hear his word. Christ is present among us as the one who sends shepherds and teachers who proclaim and spread his holy word for the salvation of men (Eph 4:11–12; 2 Cor 5:20). All servants of the divine word who are properly called and installed are incumbents of the office of the Spirit, which is explicitly mentioned in 2 Corinthians 3:6. They are installed by the Spirit through a proper call in the orthodox church to be bishops and shepherds of the church of God (Acts 20:28), and to be Christ’s servants and stewards of the divine mysteries (1 Cor 4:2).<sup>48</sup>

In a sermon on Malachi 3:1 for the Third Sunday in Advent,<sup>49</sup> Glassius refers to the biblical motif in both the Old and New Testaments that God’s messengers and servants in the preaching office are called מַלְאָכִים (angels). Angels of the church are the Old Testament prophets (Mal 2:7; Hag 1:13)

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proclaim God’s counsel (Acts 20:28). This sending includes the writing of the apostles (1 John 1:3, 4) because through their word faith should be received and preserved (John 17:20; Rom 1:16). Thus Christ, who on account of his ascension fills all things, continues until the Last Day to send and install pastors and teachers in his church for the edifying of his spiritual body, that is, the church (Eph 4:10–11; 2 Cor 5:20).

<sup>47</sup> PSP 2:682.

<sup>48</sup> PSP 2:81. The command to preach in Isaiah 40:6 concerns all faithful servants in the Christian church who are the apostles’ successors in the preaching office; PSP 1:580–581. Glassius here demonstrates that according to Christ’s own promises he still sends shepherds, preachers, and teachers through whom he continually preaches his gospel and rules his kingdom of grace until the end of the world (Isa 40:8, Matt 28:18.20, Eph 4:11–12, 2 Cor 5:20, 3:6, Acts 20:28, 1 Cor 4:2). These preachers are installed as bishops by the Holy Spirit by means of an orderly call issued in the orthodox church (*vermittels des ordentlichen Berufs in der rechtgläubigen Kirchen*). See the end of the very long paragraph on PSP 1:581 with references to 2 Cor 3:6, Acts 20:28, and 1 Cor 4:2.

<sup>49</sup> “Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming,” says the LORD of hosts.”

and the New Testament bishops and preachers (Rev 1:20; 2:1, 8, 12).<sup>50</sup> The difference between the church angels in the first group, which includes prophets and apostles, and the second group, which comprises bishops and pastors, is the way they received their callings. Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles were called without external means immediately by Christ or the Trinity. Pastors and bishops, however, receive their calling intermediately (*mittelbarer weise*).<sup>51</sup>

Since both groups can be called “angels,” Glassius takes this as a clear indication of God’s grace and mercy in that he not only wanted to save mankind through his Son but also wanted to have this high work of our salvation proclaimed by humans as mediating persons (*Mittels-Personen*).<sup>52</sup> In a group of sermons on Ezekiel 33 added to the first volume of the *Spruch-Postill*, Glassius points out that it is not without reason that God does not want to use angels or other creatures in the ministry, since those who are to be saved are humans themselves. Therefore, God points us to humans, through whom, according to his intention, he wants the way to eternal salvation to be proclaimed.<sup>53</sup> Thus, the Lord of hosts rules not only the host of the heavenly angels but also the host of the church angels, which is the church and primarily the servants of the word,<sup>54</sup> as can be seen in Psalm 68:11.<sup>55</sup> In these passages Glassius takes up the anti-enthusiast principles of the Lutheran Confessions by pointing to the written word of God, as well as to the office of teaching and preaching, as an expression of the very same divine will to bring salvation through means that shall not be despised.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>50</sup> PSP 2:93–94.

<sup>51</sup> Glassius points out concerning John the Baptist (John 1:6) that he was not called intermediately as the preachers in the Christian church, but without means through a special and miraculous inspiration of the Holy Trinity; PSP 2:97–98.

<sup>52</sup> PSP 2:99.

<sup>53</sup> PSP 1:1024–1025. Glassius here writes concerning God’s naming his servant Ezekiel as “Son of man”: “This is not without reason, since it indicates that the Lord God in this holy office and task wanted to use not the service of angels or other creatures, but of humans” (2 Cor 4:7). Glassius here also refers to Luke 16:19–31, where the rich man in the furnace of hell is not satisfied with the human messengers of the Old Testament.

<sup>54</sup> PSP 1:1025.

<sup>55</sup> Luther translated: “The Lord gave the word with great droves of evangelists” (*mit großen Scharen Evangelisten*).

<sup>56</sup> PSP 2:104–105: “Not in an enthusiastic manner does he come to us and illumine us—without means—as it happened before through visions and dreams, but through given means, to which he has bound us and without which he does not bestow our eternal salvation on us.” See also PSP 2:810.

Another biblical concept or motif that denotes the office of the Spirit, besides the “church angel,” is the office of the prophet. “Prophet” in the Bible can mean two things. First, it can mean persons, immediately called by God himself to proclaim his will in law and gospel and to proclaim things to come, especially concerning the promised Messiah and his church. This office can still be found in the New Testament (e.g., Acts 11:18; 21:9). Second, it indicates the office that we have in the present age, namely, the prophets whose task it is to interpret Scripture and to teach the church, since they have received the divine gift of explaining it.<sup>57</sup>

More passages that discuss the “office of the Spirit” in the same context can be found in Romans 10:14, combined with John 20 and Isaiah 52:7–10.<sup>58</sup> In a sermon for *Misericordias Domini* on Isaiah 40:9–11 and John 10, Glassius expounds on the divine order of grace (*die Gnaden Ordnung Gottes*)<sup>59</sup> in which Christ’s saving work is the primary cause of our salvation (*causa principalis & meritoria*); the forgiveness of sins for Christ’s sake is the formal cause of our salvation (*causa formalis justificationis*); and the word of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:19) is the effective tool (*causa organica*) through which God justifies humans. Finally, the ambassadors or messengers (2 Cor 5:20) are the persons through whom God himself proclaims his word (*causa ministerialis*) and creates saving faith in the hearers (*causa organica ex parte hominis*, the receiving “organ” in man).<sup>60</sup>

#### *Criteria for the Authenticity of the New Testament Office of the Ministry*

Already in the Bible it can be observed that there are also false prophets and ministers of the word.<sup>61</sup> It is, therefore, of utmost importance to shape the ministry of the church in accordance with the Scriptures, that is, in conformity with the true prophets and apostles of whom the ministers of the church are to be successors.

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<sup>57</sup> PSP 3:216. For the second meaning, Glassius refers to Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:28–29, 14:29, 32, 37; Ephesians 3:5, 4:11.

<sup>58</sup> PSP 2:682.

<sup>59</sup> PSP 2:812.

<sup>60</sup> PSP 2:811–812.

<sup>61</sup> Glassius discusses the false prophets or ministers broadly in his sermon on the Eighth Sunday after Trinity on Jeremiah 23:19–22 and the Gospel text from Matthew 7:12–23 (PSP 3:216–220).



*The Preparation of the Ministers*

Since the immediate calling of ministers, prophets, and apostles has come to the end,<sup>62</sup> and since a true minister cannot be without an external divine call, this calling of ministers in the post-apostolic age must be issued by the church-at-large. Citing Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 2:2, and Titus 1:5, Glassius recognizes such calls, externally and intermediately issued in the church (*der äußerliche Beruff . . . durch Mittel in der Kirchen*), to be divine and valid (*ein Göttlicher Beruff*).<sup>63</sup>

This external calling begins with the prayer of the church, asking God as the Lord of the church and the Lord of the ministry for workers in the harvest (Matt 9:37–38).<sup>64</sup> Even the apostles did not begin from scratch but were called into a field where others had labored before, as Jesus himself spoke: “I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor” (John 4:38). For Glassius, this implies that there was the highest conformity in doctrine between Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles,<sup>65</sup> only that the former taught and preached the Messiah who was to come and the latter the Messiah who had been manifested in the flesh.<sup>66</sup>

Such conformity also is demanded concerning the ministers of the church who therefore are to be instructed in the true understanding of Holy Scripture and in the salutary doctrine of faith and Christian life.<sup>67</sup> No one should be admitted to the ministry on the basis of money, relationships, popularity, or other devious ways of intrusion, but only those who prove their diligence in searching the Scriptures (John 5:39; 1 Tim 4:13–16).<sup>68</sup>

This conformity not only extends to conformity in doctrine, but also to observance of the model that was handed down by the holy apostles in their writings. This model prescribes that only those are to be considered true prophets, that is, teachers of the divine word, who through the cooperation of the church’s three estates were properly called in the name of the Holy Trinity and ordained and consecrated into the preaching

<sup>62</sup> PSP 3:219.

<sup>63</sup> PSP 4:533.

<sup>64</sup> PSP 4:533.

<sup>65</sup> PSP 4:533 (Acts 26:22; 1 Pet 1:10–12).

<sup>66</sup> PSP 4:534.

<sup>67</sup> PSP 3:219.

<sup>68</sup> PSP 4:722.

office.<sup>69</sup> Anyone asserting himself into the ministry without a public and valid call of the church, feigning an inner call only, is to be considered a false prophet.<sup>70</sup> Glassius, quoting Luther's tract "*Von Schleichern und Winckelpredigern*," points out that the Holy Spirit does not creep as the snakes do, but publicly flies down from heaven like a dove.<sup>71</sup> He adds more thoughts of the reformer, such as Luther's musings on Jesus' words, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me" (John 7:16). Here Glassius concludes that all misfortune (in the church) can be traced back to disobedience toward two things, the office and the word, namely, the properly ordered call to teach and purity of doctrine, noting that such disobedience is the case among the enthusiasts.<sup>72</sup> Glassius concludes that this should serve as an admonition to all those who intend to serve the Lord and his church in the holy office. Even if they are prepared, they should not initiate anything without a legitimate call, but wait for a definite call, so that they might not run without being called in an orderly way and thus imitate the false prophets.<sup>73</sup> The promise to bring forth fruit is valid only when there is a legitimate call, since our Lord Jesus Christ is only one, who himself teaches and creates fruit through his servants. But the one who teaches without a proper call teaches both to his own and to his hearers' disadvantage, since Christ is not with him.<sup>74</sup> Where there is no heavenly call, the feet of the messengers are not beautiful (Isa 52:7); they are to be considered an abomination before God (Jer 23:14, 21).<sup>75</sup>

#### *The Tasks of the Ministers and the Benefits of Their Ministry*

The ministers of the word are to stir up the gift they received in their calling (1 Tim 4:14) by diligently observing the prophetic word (2 Pet 1:16, 19) and by observing the salutary words of Christ himself and the doctrine

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<sup>69</sup> PSP 3:219; 1:581.

<sup>70</sup> PSP 3:219.

<sup>71</sup> PSP 3:220.

<sup>72</sup> PSP 3:221. Glassius quotes from a sermon by Luther on John 7:16 (cf. WA 33:359, 18ff).

<sup>73</sup> PSP 3:526; 3:221; 1:685.

<sup>74</sup> PSP 3:222. Glassius here refers to Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* (1519, WA 2:454ff), cf. AE 27:167: "Nobody produces fruit by means of the Word unless he is called to teach without wishing for it. For One is our Teacher, Jesus Christ (Matt. 23:10). He alone, through His called servants, teaches and produces fruit. But the man who teaches without being called does so to his own harm and that of his hearers, because Christ is not with him."

<sup>75</sup> PSP 2:685.

of the true faith (1 Tim 6:3-4).<sup>76</sup> Thus they are obliged to follow the example of the apostles by teaching and passing on only what they themselves have received from Christ and from his Spirit.<sup>77</sup> This takes place when they observe the *sola scriptura* principle and draw their thoughts and words from Scripture alone.<sup>78</sup> Glassius describes this process of receiving and passing on the word with the image of miners' work, an image many teachers of the church find implicit in John 5:39. As miners use all their strength and knowledge to bring to light treasures hidden in the depths of the earth and make them usable for mankind, so does the minister handle the Scriptures.<sup>79</sup>

Ministers are not to engage in useless fighting (*Wortkriege*). Their preaching not only takes place in word but also in deed, which is a daily proclamation that takes on the shape of an exemplary life and a faithful lifestyle.<sup>80</sup> As can be seen in Jonah and other biblical preachers, however, ministers of the word are also sinners in need of repentance and forgiveness. Inclusion of these figures in the biblical witness is not that present-day ministers would imitate them but that they would flee from sin (*non ad imitationem, sed cautelam*),<sup>81</sup> and thus give no cause for God's enemies to blaspheme, as happened in the case of David.<sup>82</sup> Glassius calls his fellow ministers to research and meditate on Scripture more diligently, to pray more intensively and eagerly, and to live a more God-pleasing life so that they may serve as stars of the churches (Rev 1:16, 20), as well as keep the order as defined by Paul (1 Tim 3:2-5).<sup>83</sup> Thus, they shall have as permanent symbol and memorial (*Symbolum vnd stetiges Gedenckwort*)<sup>84</sup> what is said in Isaiah 21:8 and Habakkuk 2:1. To be an "ambassador for Christ" (2 Cor 5:20) is not only a name of honor (*nomen honoris*), but also a name of duty (*nomen laboris*).<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> PSP 1:582.

<sup>77</sup> Glassius quotes Romans 15:18: "For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed."

<sup>78</sup> PSP 1:588 (cf. 2 Tim 1:13-14).

<sup>79</sup> PSP 2:383. Glassius here combines John 5:39 with a reference to Job 39:32.

<sup>80</sup> PSP 1:583 (cf. 1 Pet 5:2-3; 1 Tim 4:12-16).

<sup>81</sup> PSP 2:398.

<sup>82</sup> PSP 2:575.

<sup>83</sup> PSP 1:631.

<sup>84</sup> PSP 1:631.

<sup>85</sup> PSP 2:94.

In his sermon for Quasimodogeniti on Isaiah 52:7–10 and John 20:19–31, Glassius systematically displays the use (*Nutzen*) and effect of the ministry. Concerning their duties, Glassius applies the prophetic text by naming teaching, praising, and watching. The ministers are to teach the word by comforting the repentant and by terrifying the unrepentant. They are to praise God with word and life, as Paul does in Romans 15:5–6, and they are to watch over believers and unbelievers.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, he talks about the character or manner with which ministers are to conduct these duties: universally (*universaliter*), fervently (*ferventer*), visibly (*luculenter*), humbly (*humiliter*), and unanimously (*concorditer*). With all these qualities they follow the example of the apostles. First, they must be aware that their ministry, as part of the general mission of the church, implies both a public and universal horizon. Second, their zeal and seriousness in the conduct of their office must be visible to everyone.<sup>87</sup> Third, just as the gospel is clear, so also their proclamation must be clear, distinct, and comprehensible.<sup>88</sup> Fourth, they shall conduct their ministry not for the sake of earthly honor and advantage, but in humility, as servants according to the example of the apostles. Fifth, true, heartfelt love, peacefulness, and harmony shall shape the community of the ministers as they walk in one Spirit and in the same steps (2 Cor 12:18).<sup>89</sup> Concerning the *objectum* of the ministry, that which the ministers are to deal with, Glassius makes the distinction between the *objectum reale sive personale* and the *objectum verbale*. The first is Christ, whom alone the ministers shall preach (1 Cor 1:23; 2:2). The second is the gospel, which they are to preach according to its very character as a beautiful, loving, and graceful word that brings divine goods and eternal peace of the heart.<sup>90</sup>

In this regard, it is the task of the ministers to divide (*teilen*) correctly the Scriptures by preaching law and gospel, to preach and administer the sacraments,<sup>91</sup> that is, to distribute the bread of life, which is Christ and his merit, and the water of life, which is the word of God,<sup>92</sup> and thus to call and bring their hearers to repentance and to faith in Christ by applying the word in all its aspects, in doctrine, reproof, comfort, improvement, and correction (Rom 15:4; 2 Tim 3:16).<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> PSP 2:687–690.

<sup>87</sup> PSP 2:692.

<sup>88</sup> PSP 2:693.

<sup>89</sup> PSP 2:693–695.

<sup>90</sup> PSP 2:695–698.

<sup>91</sup> PSP 3:150.

<sup>92</sup> PSP 3:153.

<sup>93</sup> PSP 3:441.

Not only Scripture and doctrine must be their focus but also the hearers over whom the ministers—like the prophets and apostles—serve as ordained watchers (*verordneter Wächter*),<sup>94</sup> helping them to remain in the true faith and live a corresponding life, and protecting them from errors both in life and in doctrine.<sup>95</sup> Because they are ordained watchers, the servants of the church are also called “bishops,” those who shall oversee and watch over the church by taking care of salutary doctrine, by conducting their office without fear and without partiality or respect of persons, and by observing the times, especially the times of danger for the church and the souls.<sup>96</sup> Scripture compares the office of the Spirit with the voice of the trumpet. As spiritual trumpets, the ministers call people into the assembly of the church, they call the faithful to spiritual war against the devil, and they announce times of worship and praise of God.<sup>97</sup> At all times, they must issue warnings to those going astray,<sup>98</sup> and they must comfort those who repent of their sins and errors.<sup>99</sup>

As the heavenly angels guide and keep the faithful, so too is this the duty of the ministers as the church’s angels, as Glassius points out by quoting a gloss from Luther.<sup>100</sup> Concerning the usefulness of the ministry of the word, the Bible very often uses the imagery of rain and thaw, indicating that through his servants God creates faith and makes it grow in his people, prepares them for good works, and comforts them in times of famine, temptation, and need in order, finally, to grant them eternal life in his heavenly glory, which is the very best and most valuable fruit of the word of Christ and of the office of the Spirit.<sup>101</sup> The angel who brings God’s absolution to Isaiah (Isa 6:6–7) serves as an image for the benefit of God’s ambassadors, who, according to the divine command, bring burning coals to us in that they preach Christ crucified, and thus the way to salvation, absolving, comforting, edifying us for life eternal, which is God’s order that must not be overthrown by the dreams of the enthusiasts.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> PSP 1:629.

<sup>95</sup> PSP 1:630 (cf. Ezek 3:17 and Heb 13:17).

<sup>96</sup> PSP 4:560–563.

<sup>97</sup> PSP 4:563–564.

<sup>98</sup> PSP 1:630–631; Glassius often and broadly applies Ezekiel 3 and 33 in these passages.

<sup>99</sup> PSP 3:527; 1:1013–1069 (here are several sermons on Ezekiel 3).

<sup>100</sup> PSP 2:576 (the gloss is from Zechariah 3:7 in Luther’s Bible of 1545).

<sup>101</sup> PSP 2:871; 3:441 (with references to Hag 1:13; Mal 2:7; Rev 1:20).

<sup>102</sup> PSP 3:504–505.

*The Cross and Temptation of the Ministers*

If the ministers of the church have the same task as the prophets and apostles in preaching God's word to the world, they—as long as they remain lovers of the word and do not become lovers of the world—share in the very same fate that the prophets and apostles shared. People who respond to the word with unbelief and doubt over against God's promises and threats will mock the bringers of the message and give them reason to lament (Ps 31:14 and Jer 20:8).<sup>103</sup> Glassius knows from Scripture, as well as from experience, that nothing in the world is more despised than the word and its servants who are faithful in their office.<sup>104</sup> Since Christ himself was not welcomed by many of his hearers, so also preachers today should not be surprised if the outcome of their ministry is not as they desire.<sup>105</sup> Since Christ inseparably connects himself with his ministers (John 15:18–19),<sup>106</sup> it is undoubtedly a sign of true teachers when they share the same fate as their Lord and Master.<sup>107</sup> Thus, they may share in the lamentations of the prophets, the apostles, and Christ himself (Isa 49:4; 53:1; Rom 10:16). At the same time, however, in this very fellowship they should not become negligent and tired, but prevail in what they are commanded to do.<sup>108</sup> Glassius advises the teachers and confessors of the word to take Psalm 116:10 as their *symbolum*: "I believed, therefore I spoke, 'I am greatly afflicted,'" because Christ himself made the prediction that his servants would have to suffer much.<sup>109</sup>

*The Comfort of Ministers*

Since the ministers share the same office and the same cross as the prophets and apostles before them, they also share the same comfort, which is presented repeatedly in the Scriptures.

They are told that even though their work might appear in vain in the eyes of the world, it is not so before God,<sup>110</sup> as they hear St. Paul's

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<sup>103</sup> PSP 1:633.

<sup>104</sup> PSP 2:697–698; 4:559.

<sup>105</sup> PSP 1:825.

<sup>106</sup> "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

<sup>107</sup> PSP 1:825.

<sup>108</sup> PSP 2:686.

<sup>109</sup> PSP 2:861.

<sup>110</sup> PSP 1:827.

comforting words: "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (1 Cor 15:58) and as will be made public on the day of judgment (Matt 25:21 and Dan 12:3).<sup>111</sup> Glassius also encourages ministers to take comfort in the certainty of their divine calling to be ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor 5:20),<sup>112</sup> which is a title of honor (*nomen honoris*).<sup>113</sup> Such certainty about their office in God's service brings already temporal blessings in that God promises his servants the guidance of his heavenly angels.<sup>114</sup> Glassius opens the narrow, sad, and fearful minds and eyes of the servants suffering under the people's ingratitude by speaking about the universal and eschatological relevance of the ministers' work (*Amtsarbeit*),<sup>115</sup> which has the promise that it does not end before the end of the world and that it is never in vain in God's sight.<sup>116</sup> Similarly, he reminds preachers of the holy seed of God that will be found at all places, even if despisers are in the majority.<sup>117</sup> Glassius encourages preachers to be patient, never ceasing to proclaim repentance, because they shall give birth to the spiritual children of God through the word and the sacraments; they shall not abort them or bring them to birth in an untimely fashion.<sup>118</sup> From the example of fishermen, spiritual fishermen can learn that even though not every day is a day of catching, every day has to be a day of fishing.<sup>119</sup> Only when fishermen cast out their nets is there a chance that they will catch some fish, which only seldom are big ones. God will, nevertheless, give little ones all the more.<sup>120</sup> Elijah wanted to catch Ahab and got 7,000 instead; Christ wanted to catch the Pharisees, but caught publicans and sinners; Paul wanted to catch Felix and Agrippa, but God gave him other fish. So each faithful teacher casts out his net and lets God decide who will

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<sup>111</sup> PSP 1:828.

<sup>112</sup> PSP 2:685.

<sup>113</sup> PSP 2:94.

<sup>114</sup> PSP 2:99 (cf. Zech 3:7).

<sup>115</sup> PSP 4:559 (cf. John 12:26)

<sup>116</sup> PSP 2:379.

<sup>117</sup> PSP 2:379–380.

<sup>118</sup> PSP 2:381.

<sup>119</sup> PSP 3:150.

<sup>120</sup> PSP 3:151: "Geschicht das / gewislich / es gehet ohne Nutz nicht ab / werden nicht alle Fisch gefangen / so werden doch etliche gefangen / gib'ts nicht grosse Hechte oder Karen / ey so gib'ts doch kleine Schmerlin vnd Elritzen. Manchmal wolt man gern einen grossen gewaltigen Fisch fahen / der entwischt / vnd GOtt bescheret doch andere kleine Fischlein / in grosser Menge / als man gedacht."

be caught; his work will never be in vain.<sup>121</sup> Thus, it is not the successful but the faithful minister to whom eternal reward is promised by his Lord, so that he will be able to end his life and fulfill his walk with the same words as St. Paul: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing" (2 Tim 4:7–8).<sup>122</sup>

#### IV. Conclusion

One aspect that can be highlighted when reading Glassius' postils is what I would like to call the theological "equiprimordiality" (*Gleichursprünglichkeit*) of the office of the ministry and of the canonization of both the Old and New Testaments. Both Scripture and the preaching office, or office of the ministry, are institutions that have their foundation and origin in the explicit will of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. He, as divine subject, rules his church through the word and sacraments instituted by him according to the Scriptures and distributed by him through his ministers, those who preceded his sending in the Old Testament and those who succeeded his sending in the New Testament. The preaching office (*Predigtamt*) in both Testaments flows forth christologically (according to the fathers ever since Genesis 2 and 3) from Christ's own office as the most solemn prophet and apostle (John 20:21; Heb 3:1).

This insight is relevant in many aspects. For example, the hermeneutical circle in theology is not one between an ancient text and abstract modern hearers or readers, but one between a most effective biblical word, through which Christ's Spirit kills sinners and makes them alive, and the very execution of this work of the Spirit through the distribution of the means of grace—a most solemn task and the very essence of the office of the ministry. For those who at first glance would think that this gives the ministry "too much dignity," the antidote is Glassius' constant reminder concerning what it means to "stir up" the gift entrusted to the ministers in their ordination. This stirring up, according to Glassius, can be nothing else than the obligation of the ministers to prove themselves as most diligent and earnest philologists, lovers of the word, who let themselves thoroughly be shaped by the biblical message. So again, Glassius does not talk about a lofty delight in some special superiority that exalts the ministers above everyone else; rather, following the biblical norm of the

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<sup>121</sup> PSP 3:151.

<sup>122</sup> PSP 3:443; 4:534.



pastoral letters, he speaks of ministers' special obligation that at same time has divine promises and brings salutary benefits to the church and to all believers.

Of course, Glassius does not exhibit in his sermons an extensive or even complete doctrine of the ministry. His sermons, however, show that in seventeenth-century Lutheranism, the biblical doctrine of the ministry could be preached extensively in a most edifying way. In my opinion, these sermons show that a Lutheran theology of the ministry, if it follows the Lutheran Confessions, is not deficient at all. Of course, when we ask for completeness, we must turn, for example, to the *Theological Commonplaces* of Johann Gerhard, Glassius' fatherly friend and teacher.<sup>123</sup> When we ask for concrete historical facts, we have to turn to the church orders and the ordination practice of the Lutheran church of those days that has only recently been thoroughly researched, showing that the early ordination practice in the Lutheran territories was catholic in the best sense of the word.<sup>124</sup>

If we broaden our perspective in these directions, we will stumble especially across one aspect of Glassius' as well as in Gerhard's doctrine of the ministry. Both champions of Lutheran Orthodoxy hold that the ministers are to be properly called and ordained into the office "through the cooperation of the church's three estates,"<sup>125</sup> which includes the cooperation of the political authorities next to the parochial households and the churchly authorities. But even here, Glassius and Gerhard follow the Confessions, that is, Melancthon's conception of the political rulers as *praecipua membra ecclesiae* (most eminent members of the church).<sup>126</sup> On the one hand, this cooperation is valid only as long as the rulers are members of the church and abide by biblical authority. On the other hand, even in politically secularized regions of the world the church has to relate to the political authorities and must depend—even for the education and work of

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<sup>123</sup> Cf. Johann Gerhard, *Theological Commonplaces* XXVI/1. On the Ministry, Part One, trans. Richard J. Dinda, ed. with annotations by Benjamin G. Mayes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2011). See § IV: The mediate call, 111ff.

<sup>124</sup> This is especially the case for the theology of the ministry and of ordination in the work and life of Luther's friend, Georg III of Anhalt, whose writings Glassius refers to, for example, in his Preface to the *Weimar Elector's Bible*. See Achim Detmers, ed., *Georg III. von Anhalt (1507–1553). Reichsfürst, Reformator und Bischof* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2007); Reinhard Sander, *Ordinatio Apostolica. Studien zu Ordinationstheologie im Luthertum des 16. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1: *Gregor III. von Anhalt (1507–1553)* (Innsbruck, Vienna: Tyrolia, 2004).

<sup>125</sup> *PSP* 3:219; 1:581.

<sup>126</sup> Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, 54.

her ministers—on the infrastructure and legal framework supported and guaranteed by the state (cf. 1 Tim 2:1–4).

Nevertheless, even a “reduced” form of the Reformation doctrine of the estates would enable the church in our day to resolve the harmful antagonism between the priesthood of believers and the ordained ministry. The doctrine of the three estates, after all, helps to differentiate the criteria by which these estates work in a God-pleasing way. In politics (and economics!), the chief criterion is the law; in the church, that is, for the royal priests as well as for the serving ministers, it is the gospel. It is most touching to observe how Glassius in his postils approaches the ministers’ temptations caused by an apparent lack of success of their preaching, especially in our post-Constantinian age. We could conclude that it poses not only a danger for the church when her institutional separation from the state is imperfect, but that it is at least as harmful for the well-being of the church and her ministers when criteria taken from society, like popularity, or others taken from the realm of economics, like countable and even predictable success, turn the church into a hire-and-fire corporation, run by royal priests who in reality act as self-proclaimed chief executive officers.

Thus, Glassius’ reminder that the church does not need successful but faithful incumbents of the ministry is most beneficial also for the church in our day. His postils, in any case, serve as a wonderful pattern for faithful biblical preaching as well as for admonishing and consoling both hearers and preachers of the gospel, that is, the royal priests and the serving ministers, to embrace their divine calling.

## Appendix

### *Salomon Glassius’ Old Testament Texts for the One-year Lectionary*

<b>Sunday/Festival</b>	<b>Holy Gospel</b>	<b>First OT Text</b>	<b>Second OT Text</b>
Advent 1 (Ad te levavi)	Matt 21:1–9	Isa 62:10–12	Zech 9:9
Advent 2 (Populus Zion)	Luke 21:25–36	Isa 51:6	Dan 12:1–3
Advent 3 (Gaudete)	Matt 11:2–10	Isa 35:3–4	Mal 3:1
Advent 4 (Rorate coeli)	John 1:19–28	Isa 40:3–5	Mal 3:23–24 (4:5–6)

<b>Sunday/Festival</b>	<b>Holy Gospel</b>	<b>First OT Text</b>	<b>Second OT Text</b>
Christmas	Luke 2:1-14	Isa 9:6-7	Jer 23:5-6
Christmas 1	Luke 2:33-40	Isa 4:2-5	Ezek 17:22-24
Christmas 2	Matt 2:13-23	Isa 61:1-3	Ezek 17:23-24
Epiphany	Matt 2:1-12	Isa 61:10-11	Micah 5:2
Epiphany 1	Luke 2:41-52	Isa 50:4-6	Jer 30:21-22
Epiphany 2	John 2:1-11	Isa 62:5	Hos 2:21-24
Epiphany 3	Matt 8:1-13	Isa 2:2-3	Jer 17:13-14
Epiphany 4	Matt 8:23-27	Isa 51:9-11	Jer 31:25-26
Epiphany 5	Matt 13:24-30	Isa 55:10-11	Mal 3:19-21 (4:1-3)
Septuagesima	Matt 20:1-16	Isa 65:21-23	Jonah 1-4
Sexagesima	Luke 8:4-15	Isa 2:3	Micah 6:8
Quinquagesima	Luke 18:31-43	Isa 42:5-7	Zech 13:7
Lent 1 (Invocabit)	Matt 4:1-11	Isa 27:1	Jer 23:28
Lent 2 (Reminiscere)	Matt 15:21-28	Isa 65:24	Jer 31:20
Lent 3 (Oculi)	Luke 11:14-28	Isa 49:24-26	Zech 3:1-7
Lent 4 (Laetare)	John 6:1-15	Isa 30:18-21	Jer 15:16
Lent 5 (Judica)	John 8:46-59	Isa 41:10-12	Daniel 6
Palm Sunday (Palmarum)	Matt 21:1-9	Isa 63:1-6	Zech 9:10-12
Holy (Maundy) Thursday	John 13:1-15	Isa 55:1-3	Zech 9:16-17
Good Friday	<i>John 19:16-30</i>	Isa 43:24	Zech 3:8-10
Easter Day	Mark 16:1-8	Isa 49:8-13	Jonah 1-4
Easter Evening/Monday	Luke 24:13-35	Isa 49:8	Jonah 1-4
Easter Tuesday	Luke 24:36-48	Isa 49:9-13	Jonah 1-4

<b>Sunday/Festival</b>	<b>Holy Gospel</b>	<b>First OT Text</b>	<b>Second OT Text</b>
Easter 1 (Quasimodo geniti)	John 20:19-31	Isa 52:7-10	Zech 12:10
Easter 2 (Misericordias Domini)	John 10:11-16	Is 40:9-11	Ezek 34:23-24
Easter 3 (Jubilate)	John 16:16-22	Isa 54:7-8	Mic 7:7-9
Easter 4 (Cantate)	John 16:5-15	Isa 32:15-18	Jer 31:33-34
Easter 5 (Rogate)	John 16:23-30	Isa 1:15	Dan 9:17-19
Ascension	Mark 16:14-20	Isa 45:22-24	Zech 14:4-5
Easter 6 (Exaudi)	John 15:26-16:4	Isa 57:19-21	Micah 5:7
Pentecost Day	John 14:23-31	Isa 11:1-4	Joel 2:23-3:1
Pentecost Evening/Monday	John 3:16-21	Isa 11:3-5	Zeph 3:9
Pentecost Tuesday	John 10:1-10	Isa 11:6-7	Mic 2:12-13
Trinity Sunday	John 3:1-15	Isa 12:3	Ezek 36:25-27
Trinity 1	Luke 16:19-31	Isa 51:10-11	Jer. 12:1-3
Trinity 2	Luke 14:15-24	Isa 25:6	Mic 4:1-2
Trinity 3	Luke 15:1-10	Isa 55:6-7	Ezek 34:15-16
Trinity 4	Luke 6:36-42	Isa 32:5-7	Zech 7:8-14
Trinity 5	Luke 5:1-11	Isa 9:1-4	Ezek 47:8-10
Trinity 6	Matt 5:20-26	Isa 33:15-17	Dan 9:24
Trinity 7	Mark 8:1-9	Isa 3:10	Amos 8:11-13
Trinity 8	Matt 7:15-23	Isa 29:13-14	Jer 23:19-22
Trinity 9	Luke 16:1-9	Isa 58:7-9	Dan 4:24
Trinity 10	Luke 19:41-48	Isa 29:1-6	Jer 9:10-16
Trinity 11	Luke 18:9-14	Isa 38:14-15	Jer 14:19-22
Trinity 12	Mark 7:31-37	Isa 22:22	Ezek 37:1-14

<b>Sunday/Festival</b>	<b>Holy Gospel</b>	<b>First OT Text</b>	<b>Second OT Text</b>
Trinity 13	Luke 10:23-37	Isa 57:15-16	Hos 6:4-6
Trinity 14	Luke 17:11-19	Isa 24:13-18	Mal 1:6
Trinity 15	Matt 6:24-34	Isa 30:15	Ezek 7:19
Trinity 16	Luke 7:11-17	Isa 26:1-4	Ezek 37
Trinity 17	Luke 14:1-11	Isa 58:13-14	Ezek 21:26
Trinity 18	Matt 22:34-46	Isa 33:22	Jer 33:14-16
Trinity 19	Matt 9:1-8	Isa 6:5-7	Mic 7:18-20
Trinity 20	Matt 22:1-14	Isa 6:8-13	Hos 13:9
Trinity 21	John 4:46-54	Isa 38:16-17	Jer 5:3
Trinity 22	Matt 18:21-35	Is 44:21-23	Jer 8:7
Trinity 23	Matt 22:15-22	Isa 8:13-15	Jer 17:9-10
Trinity 24	Matt 9:18-26	Isa 42:1-4	Ezek 37
Trinity 25	Matt 24:15-28	Isa 26:21	Dan 9:26-27
Trinity 26	Matt 25:31-46	Isa 30:33	Hab 2:3-4
Trinity 27 (Last Sunday)	<i>Matt 17:1-9</i>	Isa 65:17-19	Hos 2:19-20

*Salomon Glassius' Old Testament Texts  
for Holy Days*

<b>Feast/Festival</b>	<b>Holy Gospel</b>	<b>First OT Text</b>	<b>Second OT Text</b>
<b>November 30</b> St. Andrew	Matt 4:18-22	Isa 40:6-8	Ezek 47:1-12
<b>December 21</b> St. Thomas	John 20:24-29	Isa 40:1-2	Hab 2:1-4

<b>Feast/Festival</b>	<b>Holy Gospel</b>	<b>First OT Text</b>	<b>Second OT Text</b>
<b>January 1</b> Circumcision and Name of Jesus	Luke 2:21	Isa 45:8	Ezek 17:22-23
<b>January 25</b> Conversion of St. Paul	Matt 19:27-30	Isa 60:1-3	Mal 1:11
<b>February 2</b> The Purification and Presentation	Luke 2:22-32	Isa 49:6	Hag 2:7-10 (6-9)
<b>February 24</b> St. Matthias	Matt 11:25-30	Isa 66:13-14	Zeph 3:16-17
<b>March 25</b> The Annunciation of Our Lord	Luke 1:26-38	Isa 11:1	Dan 2:44-45
<b>May 1</b> St. Philip and St. James	John 14:1-14	Isa 35:8-9	Mal 3:16-18
<b>May 31</b> The Visitation	Luke 1:39-56	Isa 12:1-6	Jer 9:23-24
<b>June 24</b> The Nativity of John the Baptizer	Luke 1:57-80	Isa 32:1-4	Mal 4:2
<b>June 29</b> St. Peter and St. Paul	Matt 16:13-19	Isa 28:16	Zech 6:12-13
<b>July 25</b> St. James the Elder	Matt 20:20-23	Isa 45:15-17	Zech 12:10
<b>August 24</b> St. Bartholomew	Luke 22:24-30	Isa 8:16	Hos 13:14
<b>September 21</b> St. Matthew	Matt 9:9-13	Isa 49:1-2	Hos 5:15-6:1
<b>September 29</b> St. Michael and All Angels	Matt 18:1-11	Isa 6:1-4	Dan 7:9-10
<b>October 28</b> St. Simon and St. Jude	John 15:17-21	Isa 49:3-4	Zeph 3:7-8