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THE DAVIDSMEYER MEMORIAL LECTURES

II. What I Expect of My Pastor Outside the Pulpit

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I FIND it hard to conceive of anything that should concern a seminary student body less than what I expect of my pastor outside the pulpit. I am not sure that even my own pastors should be more than politely interested in my expectations—and I might add that they have never consulted me on the matter. What should matter—indeed, must matter—to you, now and in days to come, is what your Lord expects of you outside the pulpit. If this happens to accord with what your members expect, well and good. If it does not, so much the worse for your members' expectations.

And yet, if only by way of warning, there may be some value in examining the demands which are made upon the parish pastor by the typical American Protestant congregation in the middle of the twentieth century. You are probably better acquainted with the interesting sociological literature which has appeared on this subject in recent years than I am. But I have been honored with the confidences of a fairly large number of Lutheran pastors in a wide variety of situations over quite a number of years, and I think I can summarize, without too much over-generalization, what they seem to feel their members expect of them outside the pulpit.

It may comfort you to know that most of our pastors, with the occasional exception of a cry-baby, do not feel that the demands that are made upon them are unreasonable. They went into the ministry knowing that it would involve long hours, relatively modest pay, a goldfish-bowl kind of life, a struggle to stay alive intellectually and spiritually under the pressure of constant demands upon their time, an intimate and sometimes wearying involvement in other people's problems. And indeed it would be unseemly for a pastor, of all people, to feel that these are unreasonable demands,

for they are not essentially different from those which are made upon many other professional people. The man who is looking for a forty-hour-a-week job that pays well and demands nothing from him after the whistle blows belongs on an assembly line, not in a professional office or a study.

But while few of the pastors I have known actually complain about the demands that are made upon them, it is not unusual for them to express concern about the nature of these demands—concern not for the time involved but for what they accomplish, or rather fail to accomplish, by all of their busyness. Late at night, when weariness gets the better of discretion, the truth comes blurt-ing out: "I'm not a pastor, I'm nothing but the executive secretary of a religious society"; "I spend so much time listening to my people's troubles that I have no time left over to find out what my own children are thinking"; "they told me when I took this call that they wanted a pastor, but what they really wanted was a business manager"; "I know I should be reading more but I actually feel guilty when I do take time out to read"; "I keep telling my people that they ought to spend more time in prayer and meditation, but my own prayer life consists of a few routine petitions at bed time."

There is, I think, no need to multiply examples. The best pastors I know find themselves confronted and distressed by the same spectre that troubles their more thoughtful laymen, the wearying and chilling spectre of meaninglessness. In an age of the breaking of nations, they are expected to sit, with some indication of interest, through a business meeting of the Men's Club at which the main order of business is a discussion of next month's fish fry. In an age when men's hearts are failing them for fear, the pastor is expected to referee a dispute within the building committee on the best location of shower stalls in the new parish hall. In an age of rampant heresy and widespread apostasy, the pastor is expected to do a good public relations job for his congregation by making bright little inspirational talks to Rotary, the City Women's Club, the Hi-Teens, and the county Association of Home Demonstration Clubs. In an age which President Kennedy has called a "time of maximum peril," the pastor is expected to listen sympathetically, hour upon hour, to recitals of teen-age love problems, family disputes over inheritances, and indignant complaints about the musical taste of the organist and choir.

And the hardest part of it is that, through it all, the pastor is supposed to maintain the image of the *Herr Pastor*. If he is tired, he is not supposed to show it. If he is troubled by doubts of his own, he must nevertheless give the impression that he has all the answers. If there is sorrow or tragedy in his own life, he is still expected to be a fount of consolation and good cheer to his parishioners.

I have said that most pastors I know do not consider these demands unreasonable. Nor are they. It is both the privilege and the duty of anyone who has been called to a position of special responsibility to be, at least in a measure, what other people need him to be. This is one way in which a leader responds to the command to "bear one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ." In more profoundly theological terms, it is a part of the crucifixion of the self. The pastor, or any other leader, who is not willing to take upon himself the lowliest duties of his office, to humble himself to the needs of his people, can not, in the long run, lead them. And yet he must keep somewhere in the back of his mind a sharp image of himself and his office if he is to prevent the demands that are made upon him from twisting and distorting both his own person and his office into caricatures that would be useless either to God or to man.

I should therefore like to offer for your consideration an outline of what I believe I, as a Christian layman, am entitled to expect of you, as Christian pastors, outside the pulpit. To avoid the danger of smuggling a great deal of subjective opinion into this outline, I shall organize it under two headings: 1. What I Expect of My Pastor as the Servant of the Triune God; and 2. What I Expect of My Pastor in His Role as Prophet, Priest, and King.

The Pastor as the Servant of the Triune God

I am indebted to Professor H. Richard Niebuhr for a phrase which defines a prevalent modern Protestant heresy which has, as I hope to show, had the practical effect of distorting the person and the office of the American Protestant clergyman—less, I think, in Lutheranism than in most other Protestant denominations. Professor Niebuhr accuses American Protestantism of having succumbed to a "Unitarianism of the Second Person." He means, by this, that we have tended to neglect, almost to the point of ignor-

ing, the creative and preservational work of the Father and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. I would like to suggest, as a corollary to this thesis, that as a result of this "Unitarianism of the Second Person" we have done violence to the full Scriptural view of the holy ministry.

St. Paul describes his office as that of a minister of Christ—and a steward of the mysteries of God. The implications of this description are spelled out in that well-known passage in I Timothy 3 where St. Paul sets down the qualifications for the holy ministry. If you re-examine this passage, you will note that a surprisingly large number of these qualifications lie within the compass of the First Article; that is, they have to do with the pastor as a man in God's order of creation and preservation. Thus it is required that a bishop be "the husband of one wife . . . given to hospitality . . . apt to teach . . . not given to wine . . . one that ruleth well his own house . . . having a good report of them which are without."

I take it that St. Paul is saying here that I have the right, and even the duty, to expect my pastor to be a good husband and father, a sociable person, a man who can communicate effectively with other people, a man of moderation and good community reputation. From this it follows that the pastor must be given the time, or must take the time, to fulfill these demands of his ministry. He must do so because he is not only a minister of Christ, but also a steward of the mysteries of God the Father.

It was my good fortune to grow up under the pastoral care of a man of God who was a good and faithful steward of the mysteries of God the Father. He was not a scholar. He was not even—and he knew it—a very good preacher. But he was a man—and what a man! None of his parishioners had to look any farther than the parsonage for the model of a Christian home. There was dignity, there was graciousness, there was the willing deference of a wife to her husband, the kindliness and chivalry of husband toward wife, the warmth and happiness of a closely-knit family. There was a hospitable glass of wine and a good cigar for the visitor, and a great deal of hearty laughter. I suppose that the pastor was a busy man, but he never seemed to be. I know that he accepted and guided himself by the church's polity respecting union-

istic practices, and yet he was well-known and well-liked in the community.

The old pastor came to us in his late thirties. After several years of honorable retirement, he was buried among his people last year. For a span of three decades, therefore, he went in and out among his people, rejoicing with those who rejoiced, weeping with those who wept, encouraging the faint-hearted, rebuking the proud, visiting the sick and the aged, going after the strays, instructing the youth, and burying the dead. Put it all into psychological terms if you like: he *was* a father-figure. And because he was, many of his people know better than most men do what our Lord was trying to tell us about God when He called Him "Father."

Times change, and what was good yesterday is not necessarily best for today. But I think I am no different from most laymen in hoping that the present high mobility of pastors will prove a temporary thing, and not the beginning of a new pattern. Let the Methodists have their itinerant ministry, if that is what they prefer. Most Lutherans, I am sure, still want a pastor who will send down roots among his people and become their reverend father in God, who will go with them through God's cycle of creation and preservation in birth and marriage and death, who will share with them God's gifts of food and drink and laughter and tears, who will be at home in their homes, involved in the daily rounds of their lives, and capable of being touched by their infirmities.

I would expect my pastor also to exhibit those qualities which should be found in a minister of that Christ Whose person and work are confessed in the Second Article. It is no detraction from the finality, the once-for-allness of the Cross to expect that the servant of the Redeemer will be, in some sense of the term, himself a redemptive person. "I am come that they might have life," our Lord could say to a generation dead in sin, and His ministers must be able to convey this life, in some measure and in some way, from Him Who is its source to those who must remain dead without it. I am not now speaking of the formal proclamation of this Life in the sermon. Perhaps, in our generation which has been deafened by an endless torrent of words, the sermon is no longer even the most effective means of proclaiming this Life which our Lord came to bring. I am speaking rather of a quality of living, a

cast of personality, a style and a manner which testify to the presence of this Life in the man who proclaims it.

I am talking in abstractions here and you know it as well as I. You probably also suspect that I am talking in abstractions because I do not really know what I am trying to say, and your suspicions are justified. I do not know what I am trying to say because what I am talking about is a quality as readily-recognized but as hard to define as love or beauty or manliness. It is that strange combination of gentleness and fierceness which was possessed in a pre-eminent degree by our Lord Himself Who, on the one hand, could draw little children unto Himself and, on the other hand, rout a band of soldiers simply by saying, "I am He." It is a blending of the kind of moral earnestness which disquiets the comfortable sinner with the evangelical warmth that invites the penitent. Put most simply, it is a wholeness, a unity, of life which makes a pastor worthy of the greatest obituary which any man has ever received, St. John's comment on Lazarus: "By reason of him, many . . . went away and believed on Jesus."

Is this expecting too much of the flesh-and-blood sinner who is my pastor? Yes, of course, it is. You have every right to demand that I be reasonable, that I realize that you are only the ambassador of Christ and not Christ Himself. But you also have the privilege of growing, as did our Lord, in wisdom and stature, in favor with God and man until someday your people discover that you are beginning to live up to these unreasonable expectations; that when they come and ask you, "Sir, we would see Jesus," they actually do see Him—heavily veiled and somewhat distorted, perhaps, but still recognizable, in yourself.

And what will it be, then, that they see? It will be a man of sorrows—the sorrow of one who has felt the sad weight of a world gone wrong, of his own sheep who have strayed into the dead deserts of unbelief. It will be a man who is acquainted with grief—the grief of his people, which he has shared; his own grief which he has borne patiently. It will be a man of humility—the humility of one who has truly been a servant of the servants of God. It will be a man of prayer—prayer at the bedside of the sick, at the graveside of the dead, at the blessing of bread, in the early hours of the morning, in the heat of a busy day, in the quiet hours of the night. It will be a man of righteous anger—the anger

of one who will not permit his Father's house to be made a house of merchandise. It will be a man of compassion and forgiveness—the kind of man to whom penitent prostitutes and outcasts can come in full assurance that they will not be rebuffed or made a public example.

I would expect to be often uncomfortable in the presence of a man such as this. For I am an active layman, a Bible-class teacher, a regular and fairly generous contributor, a student of theology—in other words, a reasonable facsimile of a Pharisee. And it was the Pharisees, you know, who provoked our Lord to His harshest language. But it was love that prompted even these harsh words, and for the sake of my very soul I would expect my pastor to treat me with the same loving severity if he should find me walking the road to hell, as did the Pharisees, with a psalm on my lips and my eyes lifted up to heaven.

But can a pastor get away with this sort of thing in the world of 1961? Can he denounce the wrath of God upon his "best" members and go out looking for converts among the dregs of the community? He can, yes, if he is willing to accept what must inevitably follow—Gethsemane, the wrath of the high priests, the cynical unconcern of Caesar's representatives, and Golgotha. For the servant is not greater than his Lord, and if he once sets his foot to follow in the Master's footsteps he must know that at the end of the road there is a cross.

Does all of this seem to contradict what I said earlier about the pastor as a father and friend to his people? If so, the contradiction is no more real than it was in our Lord Himself. For the same Lord Who made wine to gladden the hearts of men at a wedding made a whip to chase the money-changers from the temple. The same Lord Whose love of life gained Him a reputation as a glutton and a wine-bibber set His face steadfastly toward Jerusalem. The same Lord Who sent away a woman taken in adultery with a "Neither do I condemn thee" routinely described the pillars of the Jewish religion as hypocrites. There is no trace of a two-dimensional Christ in the New Testament and I have no right to expect His ministers to be two-dimensional either.

Finally, I would expect my pastor, as the servant of the Triune God, to be filled with those graces which the New Testament de-

scribes as the fruits of the Holy Spirit working in men's hearts. And what are these fruits? St. Paul enumerates them in Galatians 5: "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance."

Now, of course, hardly anyone takes the Holy Spirit seriously nowadays, and therefore it is hard to take His work seriously, particularly because at a time such as this His gifts seem to be the very endowments that we need least. At a time when the most basic truths of the Christian faith are under heavy attack, what we seem to need most is exegetical skill and the courage to stand our ground in controversy. At a time when even the bare forms of a once-Christian culture are threatened by a new barbarism from the East, what we seem to need most is resoluteness and sheer power. At a time when the individual is more and more getting lost in constantly swelling groups, what we seem to need is assertiveness and the ability to make ourselves heard above the noise of the masses. At a time when the seven deadly sins threaten to displace the seven cardinal virtues as the norms of society, what we seem to need most is a special gift for polemics and a revival of legalism.

But the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. And it is these fruits which I expect to find in my pastor. Needless to say, I do not always find them. There are pastors who find fear more effective than love for getting things done. There are pastors whose preoccupation with the doubtful doom of lost mankind seems to have wrung the last drop of joy from their hearts and their faces. There are pastors who, for fear of crying Peace! Peace! when there is no peace cry War! War! at the slightest provocation. There are pastors who, in their eagerness to prove their masculinity, exalt what they call decisiveness above long-suffering, toughness above goodness, and a kind of bar-room crudeness above gentleness. There are pastors who have reduced the faith to a set of intellectual propositions designed chiefly or primarily to convict others of false doctrine. There are pastors who are more interested in furthering their careers than they are in cultivating the grace of meekness. There are pastors who pride themselves on being able to drink any of their laymen under the table.

I say this not uncharitably or in any spirit of condemnation. For the pastor, too, is a man, and not a god. He lives, as I must

live, in the forgiveness of sins. And so, at the same time that I expect to find in him the fruits of the spirit, I expect also to find sin reigning in his mortal body. At the same time that I expect to receive at his hands, as the called and ordained servant of the Lord, the forgiveness of my sins, I expect him to find the assurance of his own forgiveness in the fellowship of God's forgiven people, the Church.

There is hardly any scandal that the world finds more delicious than a pastor's falling into some sin which violates a social taboo. An alcoholic lawyer may win a considerable amount of sympathy from his fellow-citizens and fellow saints; an alcoholic pastor finds little or no sympathy. When a businessman runs off with his secretary, there are always some who will find it possible to excuse or at least explain his behavior; when a pastor runs off with the church organist, there are few to excuse and fewer still who are willing even to try to understand his behavior. And I am not saying that it should be otherwise, for among men also it is true that to whom much is given, of him much is required. At the same time, you will not be misunderstood if, from time to time, you remind your people of the special temptations to which you are subjected by reason of your office, of the special fury which Satan directs toward those who officially represent his Arch-Enemy, and if you then ask their special prayers for grace to withstand these temptations. I expect my pastor to be tempted in ways, and to degrees, that I am not tempted. But being, like all sinners, absorbed chiefly in my own interests and concerns, I expect my pastor to remind me now and then of his need for my prayers, and of his special need for my understanding and help and forgiveness if, in his battle with principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world, he should falter and fall.

These, then, are my expectations of my pastor as the servant of the Triune God. In the discharge of these responsibilities I expect my pastor to make full proof of his ministry as a prophet, priest, and king.

The Pastor as Prophet, Priest, and King

There is a tension in the pastoral office, at least as we Lutherans conceive it, which can trap the pastor in a set of conflicting claims and demands which he must resolve as best he can, often

without any assurance that the way in which he has resolved them is the best way. On the one hand, he is the called servant of his congregation—a man under the authority not merely of an organization but of a community of his fellow saints whose hearts, like his, have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Obviously, he can not easily or glibly dismiss such advice and counsel as these fellow-saints of his may choose to give him. At the same time, he is the called and ordained servant of God, to Whose will and purpose he has direct access in the Holy Scriptures.

Ideally, of course, pastor and people, both having direct access to the Word of God, should have no disagreement on what it says. In practice, it does not always work out that way. For we all see in a glass darkly, and both pastor and people are tempted to search the Scriptures more for justification of a position which they have already taken than for instruction and illumination by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, even in a Christian congregation not everyone who says Lord! Lord! is a member of the Body of Christ.

I expect my pastor, therefore, to distinguish between the voices of his people and the voice of God. On the one hand, this means that I expect him to recognize that God does speak through his saints, and that therefore there will be times when the congregation is right and the pastor is wrong. On the other hand, I expect him at times to say, in opposition to the voices of his people, "Thus saith the Lord."

And I expect him from time to time to raise this same prophetic voice, this "Thus saith the Lord," outside the confines of the Church, in the community. We are required to seek the peace of the city whither we have been led away captive, and this peace consists in obeying those laws of God which are the indispensable supports of man's life as a social being. We have, in our tradition, a quietistic strain which looks with honest trepidation upon any mixing of church and state, upon any involvement of the church in politics. And certainly few Lutherans would want to convert the church into any kind of political action pressure group. But neither would we want our pastors to become priests and Levites who pass by on the other side when they come upon cases of rank social injustice. The Old Testament prophets did not hesitate to speak their "Thus saith the Lord" to the social injustices of their day, and the Epistle of St. James carries this same prophetic strain into the

New Testament. To stifle our witness in these matters because they involve political decisions is to teach something less than all of those things which our Lord has commanded us.

Thus, to take a very controversial and very contemporary problem, I expect my pastor to speak a clear and forceful "Thus saith the Lord" on the question of racial justice, especially when local customs or attitudes would deny to one of God's redeemed his right and duty to participate fully in the fellowship of the church. I think that some of our pastors have erred in asking their members whether they would be willing to receive a fellow saint whom the Holy Spirit has led into their fellowship. The church is not a voluntary association which can claim the right to make social acceptability a criterion of membership. It is God's family, in which everyone who has been born of water and the spirit has his place by right of sonship. And I expect my pastor to defend that right, whatever the prejudices or preferences of his congregation may be.

But how can the pastor know when it is truly the voice of the Lord that has spoken and not merely his own strong beliefs or hunches? The easy, and not wholly satisfactory, answer is that he has God's own word in the Holy Scriptures. The inadequacy of this answer you already know from your study of the Scriptures here at the seminary. It is true that God has said all that we need to know, or indeed can know, of His will in the Scriptures. But it is true also that good and honest men have disagreed on what it is that He says in the Scriptures. I am not prepared to say that a southern Baptist minister who defends segregation on the basis of his understanding of the Scriptures is willingly and consciously contradicting the Word of God. And yet I know that his stand is a contradiction of God's Word and a denial of everything that the New Testament has to say about the nature of the Church.

So, then, how can I expect my pastor to speak with a prophetic voice when he can never be absolutely sure that the word which he speaks is truly the word of God, and not his own? The answer is that I expect him to speak in the only way it is given to God's children to speak on this side of eternity: in faith. And this answer has some corollaries. It requires me to expect that my pastor will take the time to search out the will of God in the study of the Scriptures, in prayer, in meditation, in reading what other men of God have thought and said on such matters, in conversations

with his brethren in the ministry. It requires me to expect that there will be times when he must neglect such matters of secondary importance as the budget, the annual meeting of the local A. A. L. chapter, and the Young People's Society's beach party. It may even require me to expect that he will periodically go away, as did our Lord, for periods of uninterrupted prayer and meditation. For it is a fearful thing to say "Thus saith the Lord" unless one can be sure, in the full assurance of faith, that the word truly is the Lord's, and not one's own.

I expect my pastor also to exercise, publicly and on behalf of that royal priesthood which is the church, the office of a priest. To this office he is already called by virtue of the fact that he is a Christian. But to it he also has a special call by virtue of the fact that he has been entrusted with its public exercise by his fellow-priests in his congregation.

It is a function of a priest to stand before God making intercessions for all men, for kings and for all who are in authority. In our day we are tempted by certain notions which have been imported from popular psychology to reduce prayer to a mere device for resolving personal conflicts and for bolstering one's own self-confidence in the face of fears and anxieties and frustrations. In the process, we have neglected intercessory prayer, and I suspect that many of the terrors which afflict the modern world are a result of the fact that the church and its members have forgotten that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

We who are Abraham's children by faith might well follow the example of Abraham who, you will recall, earnestly besought the Lord to spare the rotten, vice-ridden cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is not for us to call down the wrath of God upon men and their cultures, however much they may deserve it. Nor can we be satisfied merely to stand by while the inexorable justice of God works its vengeance upon those who have defied Him. Ours is a ministry of reconciliation, and we stand before God as men interceding for our fellow-men, as sinners interceding for our fellow-sinners.

I expect my pastor, therefore, to lay the intercessions of the church upon the altar of God, both privately and publicly. The world outside the church must know that the same voice which is

denouncing its sins is interceding on its behalf before the throne of its Judge. The world must know that the church cares when it is threatened by the danger of war, by famine, by pestilence, by economic depression, by natural catastrophe, by social unrest. The world must know that the church is not in the world to condemn it, but to save it.

And surely if the world is entitled to the intercession of the church, God's own people are entitled to it. I, therefore, expect my pastor to intercede, in the name of the whole community of God's people, for those who are, as the Prayer Book puts it, in any way afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate—for its widows and orphans, for its children, for its own pastors and teachers, for women in the perils of childbirth, for the sick and for the dying. We are members one of another, and if indeed we all do suffer when one member suffers we ought to seek relief in the name and for the sake of the whole body.

I expect my pastor, therefore, to be a man of effectual, fervent prayer, an Israel wrestling with the angel of God and perhaps bearing in his body the marks of the encounter. This means that I must expect him to know, or to find out, what the needs of his people, of his church, and of his world really are. And so I must expect him to take the time that he needs to keep abreast of these needs. And I must be ready to support his arms in prayer.

But it is not the whole function of a priest to stand before God as an intercessor for his people. He has also the function of speaking God's benediction upon man. I hope that I have made it abundantly clear that, in his function as God's prophet, the pastor must denounce the full severity of God's wrath upon sinners. But if he does no more than this—and some popular evangelists are apparently content to do no more than this—he has not said all that God has to say to man. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and this word of reconciliation He has committed to His Church. I expect my pastor, therefore, to bring this word of reconciliation to the world, not merely in the closed fellowship of the church on a Sunday morning but in the needful world on Monday through Saturday. I, therefore, do not expect him to feel so obligated to visit every home in the parish at least once a year that he has no time to move beyond the boundaries of the parish into the community. The ninety and nine who are safe

in the fold ought to rejoice, rather than complain, when the shepherd goes out to seek the one who is lost. And if they do complain, the shepherd has every right to ignore their complaints and go about his Master's business.

Finally, I expect my pastor, in the discharge of his office, to take upon himself the burden and responsibility of kingship. I suppose that a statement of this sort must fall almost menacingly upon the ears of an audience which has been schooled in philosophies of political democracy, social egalitarianism, and congregational supremacy. It may seem to smack of Romanism, or at least of some kind of clericalism which is foreign to both our political and ecclesiastical traditions. And yet it must be said, for while pastors are forbidden to act as though they were lords over God's heritage, they are, in St. Paul's words, those who have the rule over us and we are commanded to obey them. And so it would be proper, although certainly not appropriate, for Pastor Schmidt to style himself "William G. Schmidt, by the Grace of God pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Elmvile, Illinois."

And there may be times when Pastor Schmidt needs to remind himself and his people that he is not merely a seminary graduate who was elected on the tenth ballot to the pastorate of St. John's Church; that within the sphere which has been allotted to him by the Lord of the Church he is answerable to no man but God and his conscience. The Church is not a democracy. It is an absolute monarchy whose Head bears the grand old feudal title of "Lord," and its pastors are to be received, as were Charlemagne's representatives, as "missi Domini," messengers of the Lord. It is as messengers of the Lord that I expect to receive them, and if they are unable or unwilling to bear the glory and the burden of that title they should abdicate their high office.

The glory of kingship resides not in titles or in special dress, but in service. In the great days of kingship, the king went ahead of his armies into battle. From his own purse he provided for the relief of the needy, and in his courts he gave redress to injustice. He was, at the same time, lord of his people and their chief servant. And the obedience which he demanded in the name of God he claimed as his due because he was the minister of God. No medieval king claimed the right to rule capriciously or arbitrarily, and

those who attempted to do so were dethroned by their Christian subjects.

Christian people still accord to their pastors the respect which their fathers once accorded to the old kings. And I, for one, expect my pastor to accept the respect which I offer to his office. Whatever his age or his I. Q. or the social background of his family, I do not want to call him by his first name and I do not expect him to encourage any of his members to do so. I do not want him to dress like a beatnik or a college freshman or to live in an unpainted shack. I do not want him to come running to the church council or the Voters' Assembly on matters which lie within his area of decision. I expect him to maintain that social distance which must always separate those who have been set apart for special responsibility from those for whom they are responsible.

And this is the burden of kingship—that one must stand alone, removed at least in some measure from wife and family, from friends and associates, because only by so doing can one fully possess his own soul, hear clearly the promptings of his own conscience, and maintain the larger perspective which he must maintain if he is to serve those whom he has been called to serve. It is interesting that the New Testament speaks of the Holy Spirit "setting men apart" for the ministry. This is no mere figure of speech. It is a fact of life for anyone who must bear the burden of leadership.

And make no doubt about it: your people do expect you to lead them. If you are fortunate, you will find good and willing and consecrated lay leadership in your congregation. But even this leadership is severely limited. It can, of necessity, give only spare time to the affairs of the congregation, it is usually not so situated as to be able to get a full and balanced overview of the total program of the congregation, it changes from year to year, and for fear of intruding into the pastor's area of responsibility it will seek his views on whatever questions may arise, whether he wants to be consulted or not. Perhaps in the ideal situation it would not be so, but no pastor in my circle of acquaintances serves in an ideal congregation.

These then are my expectations of my pastor as a servant of the Triune God whose office is that of a prophet, a priest, and a king. They are, I am sure you will agree, high expectations, higher

perhaps than you feel now that you could ever hope to meet. But they are no more than your Lord demands of you and no more than the long line of your predecessors back to the days of the Apostles have met with the strength and wisdom and courage and faith that God provides in special measure to those whom He has called to special responsibility in His Church. Your laymen know that a few years at a seminary and a rite of ordination do not make Pauls or Chrysostoms or Luthers of ordinary young men. They know that few of you, no matter how faithful your labors, can ever hope for more than a few lines of obituary in the *Lutheran Witness* when your Lord finally gives you rest from your labors. God raises up His giants when the Church has special need of them, but He has not made the progress of the Gospel dependent upon giants. All that He finally requires of any of His stewards, whether they be a Luther or a Pastor Schmidt or a Grandma Schultz, is that they be found faithful. And that is all that your people really require of you, too.

The Davidsmeyer brothers, Rudolph H. and Paul J., were consecrated and active laymen in Salem Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, Illinois. The cost of these lectures has been underwritten by their sons, Paul, Junior R., Dr. James R.; and William J.