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Giving the Gifts

TIMOTHY QUILL



Several years ago I bumped into an exasperated synodical missions recruiter who was returning from an interview with a seminarian. The recruiter was lamenting the theological education at our seminaries. He complained, "I just came from an interview with a student. I asked the student: What is the most important part of the great commission? Do you know what he answered? 'All authority!' What are they teaching these guys? So I asked him to try again. This time he said, 'the name.' The name?! What does he mean, the name? Doesn't he know that the most important word is go! go! go!"

I tried to suggest to the frustrated recruiter a possible explanation in defense of the student, who was obviously ignorant of those things on the cutting edge of today's missiology. "Maybe he was thinking about the fact that 'Where the name is, there is he.' You know, as it says in the introduction to Lutheran Worship, 'Saying back to him what he has said to us, we repeat what is most true and sure. Most true and sure is his name, which he put upon us with the water of Baptism. We are his. . . . Where his name is, there is he.'" No, that didn't seem to register.

So I tried another tack. Maybe he felt "all authority" was the primary part since they were the first words out of Jesus' mouth, that is, if Jesus was speaking English at the time—an assumption that is, cross-culturally speaking, grossly insensitive.

What is the most important word? Maybe the question itself is a trap that will snare us and expose our particular agenda. We must all be careful lest we go and pick out the word that best fits our particular needs or "vision of ministry." All the words are important. To ignore, avoid, or diminish any of our Lord's words is to diminish Christ. To diminish Christ is Luther's definition of heresy.

What is the first word? Not "go." Not even "all authority," but ἐδόθη. It is the passive "has been given." The first word in our Lord's words of institution of the holy ministry is a gift word.

"For there to be a gift there must be two." One cannot give a gift to himself.¹ There is one who gives or delivers the gift and one to whom the gift is given. Jesus is both the gift itself and the giver of gifts. Although he was the eternal Son of God, not even Jesus took it upon himself to do his saving deeds, except

that he was chosen and sent by the Father to do them. This is what God said through his prophet Isaiah. "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight" (Is 42:1). The Father said it again at Jesus' baptism and again on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Jesus frequently designated himself as a servant (e.g., Mk 10:41-45). Both the Old and the New Testaments frequently identify Jesus as the Servant-Messiah.² What is too often lopped off is the word "chosen." He was the chosen Servant. Likewise with his apostles, pastors, and people. Servant talk is popular in the church these days. At times one hears people demanding the right to be a servant. To be a servant is not yet to be living in the freedom of the gospel. For that, one must be a chosen servant. No matter how altruistic or humble one is, to be merely a servant is to live under the law. *Chosen* is the word that frees the servant from the bondage of the law and ushers him into the liberty of the gospel. In the words of institution of the Holy Ministry we hear Jesus saying, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (Jn 20:21). In Matthew 28:18-19, "And Jesus came and said to them [the eleven], 'Having been given to me, all authority in heaven and on earth, therefore, when you get to where you are going, make disciples of all nations . . . [by] baptizing and teaching.'"

Ἐδόθη comes first. Everything about the office of the holy ministry, *das Amt der Predigt*, follows the pattern of gift or grace—that which has been given freely and cannot be earned, deserved, demanded, or taken by coercion.

After ἐδόθη comes ἐξουσία, authority. Authority here is not the power of the law. That is κατεξουσία,³ which is distinguished from ἐξουσία by Jesus in Mark 10:42-45:

And Jesus called them [the disciples who were arguing over who would sit next to his throne] to himself and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them (κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν), and their great men exercise authority over them (κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν). But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

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After ἐδόθη comes πᾶσα ἐξουσία, all authority in heaven and on earth. This is the kind of authority the Son of Man possessed. Jesus applied this title to himself. Daniel was given a vision of the Son of Man "coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. And to him was given authority (ἐξουσία),⁴ glory, and sovereign power. . . . His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away" (Dn 7:13-14).

It is this authority which comes from the very throne of the Ancient of Days that authorizes Jesus to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. Jesus tells us this again in the Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Easter, "No one takes it [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority (ἐξουσίαν) to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father" (Jn 10:18).

Proclamation, not communication, is the solution to the crisis in our pulpits.

This is hardly the notion of authority most people associate with the word. To look at the word "authority" as important is not to have a power "hang-up." The authority of which Jesus is speaking in the words of institution is that which authorizes the pastor/preacher to do what he has been given to do. By what authority does a man stand before the congregation and say, "I forgive you all your sins"? By the highest authority. "I forgive you . . . in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." There is that name thing again. Where the name is, there is he. It is God himself who is present, forgiving sins. These things are also central and essential to anyone who would consider entering the mission field or drawing up a so-called mission strategy.

To claim the power to forgive sins without the authority to do so is not only arrogant and audacious, it is blasphemy. It is equally impious to refuse to forgive the sins of the repentant, which God himself has authorized and sent you to do. "Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations" (Lk 24:47). "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (Jn 20:23). This we do in holy absolution and also in preaching. As Luther said, to preach is none other than to give holy absolution. Again, as the gifts are given out in the Lord's Supper, so are they given out in preaching.

But let us speak of the word *liturgy*. This word does not properly signify a sacrifice, but rather the public ministry, and agrees aptly with our belief, namely, that one minister who consecrates tenders the body and blood of the Lord to the rest of the people, just as one minister who preaches tenders the Gospel to the people, as Paul says, 1 Cor 4:1: "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of

God," i.e., of the Gospel and the Sacraments. And 2 Cor 5:20: "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (Ap XXIV, 80).

What is the effect upon the pastor/liturgist/confessor/preacher who understands that the actual giving out of the gifts is going on when he conducts the liturgy and preaches the sermon? How we choose our words and shape our sentences will be determined by our understanding of the office and calling and by our understanding of authority. We will choose the words with care because we can only be sure of their authority if they are his words. This authority is only sure and effective as we say the things the Lord has authorized us to say. Additives may appear to improve the performance, but to add to God's word is heresy.

"Repentance and forgiveness should be preached to all nations" (Lk 24:47). Two important points should be noted in the words "preached to all nations." The preacher uses words. The doctrine of the efficacy of the word must be properly understood. The prepositional phrase "to all nations" indicates that it works the same way everywhere. Mark's *verba* also include both points, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation." Matthew likewise includes "all nations," and the task is carried out sacramentally and by teaching. The means are the word and sacraments. As the introduction to *Lutheran Worship* states, "His Word bestows what it says." What impact does this realization have on the composing and conducting of the liturgy, or on the writing and preaching of the sermon? It is both terrifying and comforting.

"His Word bestows what it says." As profound as this is, we are not yet at the point of saying the gospel. That his word bestows what it says is true of both the law and the gospel. If it declares you guilty, you are guilty before God. If it declares you righteous, you are accounted righteous before God. Thus the preacher does not merely talk about the forgiveness of sins, he delivers it. He is God's means through whose lips come the Lord's means of grace. No lips, no speaking. No speaking, no words. No words, nothing to hear. Nothing to hear, no faith. No faith, no salvation.

For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? . . . Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ (Rom 10:13-15, 17).

His word does what it says. It gives eternal salvation. It delivers the saving content of faith ("the word of Christ") and gives the faith to receive that gift. It does so because where his word is, there is the Holy Spirit. Jesus "breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any . . .'" (Jn 20:22-23). No breathing, no words. Dead people do not

breathe and consequently do not speak. The Lord Jesus who was in that place was truly present. He was the risen Lord, so he breathed and they received his breath-Spirit and so the words of his breath and Spirit—no hiatus here. Where his word is, there is the Holy Spirit. As long as the minister has the breath to speak the Lord's words of forgiveness and judgment, so will the Holy Spirit be there to bestow faith "when and where he pleases" (AC V). "The Holy Spirit may depart the man, but he will never depart the office."

To step into the pulpit with the understanding that we are to speak his word and that his word bestows what it says is an awesome thing. To say that his word bestows what it says is to say the same thing we learned in dogmatics when studying the efficacy of the Scriptures. Robert Preus's classic text *The Inspiration of Scripture* summarized it well:

Not only is the object or purpose of the *verbum pro-
φορικον* to bring about spiritual effects, but its actual work is to accomplish such works in man: the Word of God is not a mere *signum*, a sign pointing the way to eternal life, but a gracious medium ordained to exert spiritual effects and efficacious to that end. The Gospel does not merely offer us righteousness and salvation, does not only invite us to accept Christ and enter His Kingdom, it actually confers such great blessings on us, quickens us and makes us partakers of Christ's kingdom. "You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God" (1 Peter 1.23).⁵

Our Lord's words, which he has use of your mouth to speak, do all of that from the pulpit. Preus later adds, "Because the power of the Word is real power, its effects are real effects. The power of the Word penetrates to the very heart of man, converts, regenerates and completely changes him *inwardly*" (emphasis mine).⁶ Here we see in sharp contrast how the Lord's word of the gospel differs from man's words and even the Lord's word of the law.

We learned all of this during our seminary days. It is good to dust these things off regularly. We live in a busy world that demands results. The temptation is to leave the theological texts on the shelf and reach for the latest "how-to, seven step, proven methods" paperback because it contains the so-called practical stuff that works "out there in the real world."

But Lutheran theology is the practical stuff, and it works *coram Deo*. To be Lutheran pastors we must keep the doctrine of the efficacy of the word and Scriptures in mind when preparing our sermons, choosing our words, and forming our sentences. When we stand in the pulpit we can speak with authority even if we have never taken a class in theater—even if we do not stand 6'6" and possess the commanding voice and appearance of a Charlton Heston playing the role of Moses. When the smallest, most humble, most insecure, most soft-spoken pastor stands in the pulpit and speaks what the Lord has given him to speak, behind him is an altar and the throne of the Ancient of Days prepared with the body and blood of the Lamb who has promised, "I will be with you always to the very end of the age."

Pastors are not disembodied lips, but whole men. All of our body and talents are involved in the preaching task from our head

down to our beautiful feet that bring the good news (Rm 10:15). Does God use our winsome smile, sincerity, charm, humor, intellect, delivery, and other talents to give out his gifts? He may, and he may not, and yes, thanks be to God, he still manages to get his job done. It is a mystery that God has chosen fragile, weak instruments such as pastors to be the means by which the means of grace are administered. God chooses the weak things, the lowly things, the despised things of the world to shame the strong. It was the foolishness of the gospel of a crucified Christ that was preached by the apostle Paul, who came "in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power" (1 Cor 2:3-5).

For those church bodies that deny the means of grace as actually bestowing God's gifts and Spirit, the communication model is effective at achieving their objectives.

This is not to say that the inspired apostle was careless with words and that he avoided the hard discipline of biblical and theological thinking. The preaching task is not done in a vacuum. "It happens within contexts, several contexts."⁷

Preaching happens within the biblical context (and pericopal context), the theological and confessional context, that is, the context of the doctrine of the Holy Ministry and the Holy Church, the context of law and gospel, and the liturgical context. To sever the sermon from any of these contexts is to invite heresy.

The preaching task is also done within the linguistic context. In an article entitled "Lutheran Preaching: Proclamation, Not Communication," Robert W. Schaibley gives considerable attention to the linguistic context. He concludes:

The communication model is now offered as a better way to deliver *information and move hearers to action*, especially in light of this new age in the life of the pastoral office within our Synod, the age in which the pastor is forced to say, along with the now defunct Frank Borman, "we have to earn our wings every day." The communication model in fact is a concession to this minimalistic point of view concerning the pastoral office, as it legitimizes the synergistic process of "sharing" truth.⁸ (Emphasis added.)

But this is the wrong solution for Lutheran preaching. Proclamation, not communication, is the solution to the crisis in our pulpits. Proclamation delivers a different package than either the propositional approach of the information model or the relational approach of the communication model. The procla-

mation model is perspectival in nature, delivering God's perspective of revelation.⁹

If you believe that delivering information and moving the hearer to action is the purpose of the sermon, then the communication model will appeal to you. What then is to differentiate the sermon from a classroom lecture on Bible and church history, or from an inspirational speech on good citizenship? This is not to say that the sermon should not deliver information and "change lives." It is to say that the Lutheran sermon does more than just deliver information and move the hearer to do more good works. Good works are never finished and never enough. When does one have enough information on the gory details of the crucifixion or have enough information on the who, where, and when of the resurrection appearances of Jesus?

It is helpful to ponder the sermon in its sacramental context and the sacraments as concrete sermons.

For those church bodies that deny the means of grace as actually bestowing God's gifts and Spirit, the communication model is effective at achieving their objectives. For these denominations, preaching does not deliver the forgiveness of sin; at best the word and sacraments offer the assurance of the forgiveness of sins.

For the Lutheran pastor, "His Word bestows what it says." This fact is evident in Baptism, which is rejected by the Baptists. The power of the word to bestow what it says is crystal clear in Holy Absolution, which horrifies the church-shopping "evangelical" who stumbles into a Lutheran church. The visitor may still attempt to come to the Lord's Supper by doing theology the modern way—"It is whatever you want it to be or believe it to be." But if he gets past a careless communion policy he may still be startled by the pastor's words, "Take drink, this is the very blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins." But what about the sermon? That too is a means of grace. It is helpful to ponder the sermon in its sacramental context and the sacraments as concrete sermons.

Models that are geared primarily to "provide information" and "move to action" will always be attractive to the preacher and hearer, for by their nature, these two models lend themselves to measurements. The gospel, however, cannot be measured. It is always immeasurable. The gospel always delivers more than we need or desire. The law always accuses. In linguistic theory there is great interest in how language works. Language makes things happen. Language is performative. The president says, "Send in the fighter planes." On his authority the word is spoken down through the ranks. The end result is that armies and cities feel the power and wrath of messing with America. Bombs fall, people are killed and maimed. His word makes things happen. A president's word can deliver free aid to starving tribes in Africa. Does the word of a president have

power to do what he says? Yes. One need merely look at the results and then work backward up a chain of command that may not be rejected. His power and wrath cannot be rejected. His free aid may be rejected.

Some of God's words are unrejectable, as when he created the heavens and the earth. The stars could not say no to being created. That is the way of God's powerful law. Some of God's words are rejectable. The words of his gifting gospel are rejectable. If we reject the gift of the gospel, then he will deal with us in the way of the law—the way of his wrath cannot be rejected. The Lutheran preaching does not talk about surrendering to Jesus. One only surrenders to the law, which works in the way of coercion and is not rejectable. One does not surrender to Jesus and his gospel. He can only be received as a gift.

Linguistic theory offers insight into the way in which language operates. Performative language theory, however, is unable to explain what happens when our Lord's words are used among us. His word bestows what it says. It works in the way of a gift, that is, in the way of faith. Man is declared righteous. What the gospel bestows is believed and received. Faith comes by hearing the word of Christ, not by examining the results. Thus proclamation avoids the temptation to use additives that give the false impression one can work back from the observable results and conclude that God's word works. Rationalistic additives build Easter sermons on the "five proofs of the resurrection"—Josh McDowell and company. Contemporary pietists use emotional additives—poignant, touching faith experiences in which the hearer is led to work backward from the subjective experience to the word. "Ah, yes, 'the word bestows what it says,' I feel it in my heart, I see it in my faith life." "Effective" Lenten sermons graphically describe the details of our Lord's crucifixion and people respond, "Oh, pastor, I felt just like I was there." The Maundy Thursday Divine Service liturgy and sermon get the additive of Last Supper dinner theater. But the efficacy of Holy Scripture is an article of faith, not sight. We do not think or feel our way back in time to find comfort, strength, and forgiveness of sins by visiting Calvary. Our Lord does not distribute forgiveness there. That he does in the present tense through the means of grace.

CONCLUSION

As pastors we write and preach law and gospel sermons because we are called and ordained ministers of Jesus Christ in a divinely instituted office ("To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the Holy Ministry," AC V).

We begin with the Lord's words of institution of the Holy Ministry. There one has the foundational things, the certain things, the central things—the *what* and *where* of the church and the ministry. From the dominical mandate, the *verba Domini*, we move to the *doctrina apostolorum* for further instruction.

Gifts are given out to the church by our Lord's chosen men. Gift-men give gifts. Both the office and the man in the office are given shape and method by the gospel/gift.

After gift comes the word *authority*, and this authority is in accord with the way of gifts. This authority is not like the authority of the world (kingdom of the left hand)—theology of the cross, not a theology of glory. No one takes it upon himself to

give out the holy things unless he has been given authorization to do so by the Lord. To do so is arrogance, not humility. The called and ordained pastor proceeds with his task of teaching and preaching with the complete confidence that the authority by which he speaks comes from the One above whom there is no higher authority. We are not authorized to speak our own words and ideas, but the Lord's words—"teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

We are servants of the word. "His Word bestows what it says." When we preach God's word, we are certain that God is present, the Holy Spirit is present, and his power is present to do that of which the word speaks—to kill and give life, to cause repentance and faith, to deliver the gifts of forgiveness, life, holiness, victory over sin and death, and eternal life—all of which are received by Spirit-wrought faith.

The work of the Holy Spirit and the work of the Word of God are not two works, nor merely a union of two distinct operations, but are one work. . . . The Holy Spirit does not do one thing and the Word another in working out God's saving purpose in man. . . . It is only by virtue of the fact that God is in the Word that this Word has the power to accomplish anything spiritual. The Word is powerless if God is not present in it. Any Word which proceeds from God brings God with it. All this is very important. If the Spirit is separate from the Word of God, it is no longer the Word of God. And because God is always with His Word, the power of the Word is the power of God. Finally, the Word is powerful simply because it is the Word of the very God, because its author is God and not men, because it is inspired by Him. Because it is God's Word, God cannot be separated from it.¹⁰

The Author of the Word authorizes, that is, gives authority to the preacher to preach his words. How the preacher chooses his words and forms his sentences will be quickened by his understanding of the gospel/gift, authority, the office/*Amt*, and how the word works (divine efficacy).

In Bishop Bo Giertz's novel *The Hammer of God*, pietism ultimately led Pastor Linder to despair over his own spiritual state and that of his congregation. Through correspondence with a thoroughly confessional Lutheran pastor, Linder was finally led to discover the true freedom of the gospel. Pastor Linder then visited the brash, young Pastor Henrik Savonius, who had also been devastated by the uncertainty and hypocrisy of the way of pietism. All the wrinkles of Linder's swarthy face registered delight as he explained:

Before, I was in despair over my people . . . and at their impenitence. I see now that this was because I kept thinking that everything depended on what we should do, for when I saw so little of true repentance and victory over sin, helplessness crept into my heart. I counted and summed up all that they did, and not the smallest percentage of the debt was paid. But now I see that which is done, and I see that the whole debt is paid. Now, therefore, I go about my duties as might a prison warden who carries in his pocket a letter of pardon for all his criminals. Do you wonder that I am happy?¹¹

We go about our duties with a letter of pardon as well as the keys to the prison cell. The task given to those in the Holy Ministry is articulated by our Lord in John 20:23, "If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." Like a prison warden we bind and loose (Mt 16:19). Such is the awesome nature of the means of grace. Such is the awesome task of preaching law and gospel: delivering the gifts. **LOGIA**

NOTES

1. In confession and absolution we pray to God for forgiveness of sins, but we do not pronounce forgiveness upon ourselves. That has been given to the pastor to do. When praying individually, we may and should ask for forgiveness, but again, we do not then forgive ourselves. Note in Martin Luther's evening prayer how the Christian ends each day by going to the throne of God and asking for forgiveness. But again, the gift of forgiveness is not self-administered.

2. See Isaiah's four Suffering Servant songs (42:1-9; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12). Matthew quotes both the first and the fourth song (8:17, 12:18-21); John the fourth song (12:38). A prominent name for Jesus in Peter's early sermons was Servant (Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30). Many other examples can be found.

3. Werner Foerster, "Κατεξουσιάζω," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), vol. 2, p. 575.

4. The Greek Theodotion text of Daniel has ἀρχή, beginning, first, what I told you from the very beginning, origin, first cause, ruling power, authority, ruler. Interestingly, the LXX text of Daniel employed ἐξουσία.

5. Robert Preus, *The Inspiration of Scripture: A Study of the Theology of the Seventeenth Century Lutheran Dogmaticians* (Mankato, MN: Lutheran Synod Book Company, 1955), p. 172. Preus notes many passages in Scripture that speak of the effects of the word of God and prove that this word has the power to work and actually does work spiritual effects. To the word is attributed the power to *convert* and *regenerate* (Ps 19:8-9; Jer 23:29; 2 Tim 2:25; 1 Pt 1:23; Jas 1:18; 1 Cor 4:15; Gal 4:19), to *bestow faith* (Jn 1:17; 17:20; Rom 10:17; 1 Cor 3:5; Col 1:5-6; 2 Pt 1:19), to *purify* (Jn 15:3), to *quicken* (2 Cor 3:6; Eph 2:5; Phil 2:16; Acts 5:20), to *justify* (Rom 3:27-28), to *sanctify* (1 Pt 1:22), to *renew* (Eph 4:23), to *preserve in grace and faith* (1 Pt 5:10), and to *save* (Jn 5:24, 39; 6:68; 1 Cor 1:21; Acts 11:14)—p. 174.

6. Preus, p. 173.

7. Robert W. Schaibley, "Lutheran Preaching: Proclamation, Not Communication," *Concordia Journal* 18 (January 1992), pp. 6-27.

8. Schaibley, p. 15.

9. Schaibley also notes: "What precisely is the difference between 'communication' and 'proclamation'? Both activities

deal with people; both involve a connection between speaker and hearer, both put forth a message; yet the difference between the two activities are great. . . .

"Communication works within what might be called a "synergistic" framework. Communication requires the cooperation of the hearer; without that cooperation there is no communication. Communication appeals to reflective reason for consent. Thus to strive for communication is to set up a dualism that *enfranchises the hearer with epistemological power*. The hearer becomes part of the litigation of which communication is the result. (The hearer becomes "Judge Wapner" in the communication model.) The hearer is empowered to say, "What I know and see to be true, this I affirm; what I do not know or see to be true, this I deny." Obviously, a hearer always has that "move," if you will, but in the framework of the communication model, where the hearer's verdict is "this I deny," communication has failed.

"Proclamation requires the presence (obviously), but not necessarily the cooperation of the hearer; even without that cooperation, proclamation occurs (assuming that the Gospel has been voiced). Proclamation does not appeal to reflective reason for consent. Proclamation is revelation, and as von Loewenich aptly notes, 'revelation addresses itself to faith, not to sight, not to reflective reason.' Because proclamation does not appeal to reflective reason, it does not operate on the dualistic level, and it does not empower the hearer to become the final arbiter of the communication of truth. The hearer yet may say, 'this I deny.' But proclamation still has occurred where the Word of the Gospel has been proclaimed, and there, as we publicly confess, 'the Holy Spirit is given, who works faith where and when it pleases God'" (pp. 13, 14).

10. Preus, pp. 184-185.

11. Bo Giertz, *The Hammer of God*, trans. Clifford A. Nelson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1960), p. 123.



THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

This illustration is from the *Deudsch Catechismus* (Wittenberg: Georg Rhaw, 1530). The commandments, articles, and petitions in this edition of the *German Catechism* were illustrated with woodcuts. This scene accompanied the "Third Commandment" and calls to mind Luther's explanation in the *Small Catechism*, "we should not despise his Word and the preaching of the same, but deem it holy and gladly hear and learn it."

Taken from the Walter A. Maier rare book collection of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Used with permission.

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