

*Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*

This document is also part of the *Book of Concord: the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*

64 – 67 ...it was arranged that one Bishop would ordain the ministers in a number of churches. However, since the distinction of rank between bishop and pastor is not by divine right, it is clear that an ordination performed by a pastor in his own church is valid by divine right.

As a result, when the regular bishops become enemies of the gospel or are unwilling to ordain, the churches retain the right to do so. For wherever the church exists, there also is the right to administer the gospel. Therefore it is necessary for the church to retain the right to call, choose and ordain ministers.

This right is a gift bestowed exclusively on the church, and no human authority can take it away from the church ...

69 – 70 ...this is also confirmed by Peter's declaration [1 Peter 2:9]: "You are a ... royal priesthood." These words apply to the true church, which, since it alone possesses the priesthood, certainly has the right of choosing and ordaining ministers. The most common practice of the church also testifies to this, for in times past the people chose pastors and bishops. Then the bishop of either that church or a neighboring one came and confirmed the candidate by the laying on of hands. Ordination was nothing other than such confirmation.

72 All this evidence makes clear that the church retains the right to choose and ordain ministers. ...