**The Orders of Creation and the Order of the Church**

John W. Kleinig

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1. The apostolic teaching on ‘subordination’ presupposes the existence of certain divinely instituted ‘orders’ for communal life on earth.
2. There is no one single order of creation in which all women are subordinate to all men. But the New Testament speaks about four different kinds of subordination in **four different orders**.

* The order of marriage with the respectful subordination of wives to husbands
* The order of the family with obedient subordination of children to parents and servants to masters
* The order of government with the law-abiding subordination of citizens to rulers
* The order of the church with the attentive subordination of members to pastors as to Christ and his word

1. The Lutheran confessions teach that there are **two** such orders in the realm of creation. They are **family** with marriage at its heart and **civil government** (*CA* XVI. 4; *Apol* XVI. 5, 13). The family is the primary order, since the office of rulers is an extension of the parental office (*LC* 1. 141, 142).

* Since these orders have been ‘instituted and ordained by God’ (*CA* XVI. 1), they are ‘God’s good creatures’ (*Apol* XVI, 1) and ‘a true order of God’ (*Apol* XVI, 1). They have a ‘mandate from God’ (*Apol* XVI, 13; cf. *Apol* XXVII. 58). This divine mandate gives a good conscience to those who live and work in them, since they know that their work pleases God (*Apol* XVI. 5).
* By virtue of their office both parents and rulers stand ‘in God’s place’ and ‘represent’ him in their respective orders (*LC* I. 108, 126, 150, 182).
* All people have their ‘stations,’ their given social location, in these orders where they exercise the God-given ‘vocation’ (*CA* XVI. 5; XX. 2; XXVII. 13).
* God ‘subjects us to them, just as we are necessarily subjected to the laws of the seasons and the change of summer and winter as ordinances of God’ (*Apol* XVI. 6).

1. The order of the church has not been derived from the order of the family or the order of the state, but has been established by Christ to represent the order of the Holy Trinity with the headship of the Father and the obedient fellowship (subordination?) of the Son with the Father (Matt 10:40; Luke 10:16; John 13:20; 20:21-23; 1 Cor 11:3).

* Leaders in the church are not to behave as human fathers (Matt 23:9) or human rulers (Mark 10:42-45; 1 Pet 5:1-3).
* The unquestioning ‘silent’ subordination of women to male pastors differs from questioning ‘speaking’ subordination of Christian wives to Christian husbands (1 Cor 14: 34, 35).

1. Even though the orders of creation cannot be identified with the order of redemption in the church, the New Testament shows that they are related to each other typologically in terms of God’s original mandate and its redemptive fulfillment in Christ.

* Christ declares that he has not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matt 5:17-18). In his teaching on divorce he therefore seeks to restore marriage as God’s creation and so fulfill God’s purpose for it (Matt 19:3-12).
* Paul argues that the subordination of wives to their husbands prefigures the subordination of the church to Christ as its head (Eph 5:22-33), just as God’s law teaches that women are to be silently subordinate to those who speak God’s word in the church (1 Cor 14:34).
* Paul argues that the creation of Eve from Adam establishes the principle of male headship in marriage with the consequent appointment of men as teachers in the church (1 Tim 2:11-13).
* On the basis of 1 Cor 4:15 where Paul speaks about himself as the father of the congregation in Corinth Luther connects the office of pastors as ‘spiritual fathers’ with the office of ‘temporal fathers’ in the realm of creation (*LC* 1. 158-160).

1. This raises the following questions for consideration in exploring the connection between the so-called orders of creation and the ordination of women.

* Does Christ abolish the so-called orders of creation in the church?
* Is Paul’s teaching on the subordination of women to male pastors in the church based on the subordination of wives to husbands in the realm of creation and so intended to promote it?
* Does God’s creation of Eve from Adam as well as His appointment of Adam and all husbands as heads of their wives prefigure the headship of Christ and of male pastors in the church?
* Is there any ‘official’ and symbolic correlation between the male gender of pastors and their representation of God the Father as spiritual fathers?