

A Conversation with a Lutheran Preacher

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A Lutheran church had a tent set up outside of a Wal-Mart in Mississippi when my son and I were returning from a camp not long ago. I began talking with "the pastor," and some of the church members were standing nearby listening to us. He said it would be fine for me to ask him some Bible questions.

I asked him if he was familiar with 1 Cor. 1:10-13. He asked me to elaborate, so I did. I also asked if he knew that Martin Luther forbade people to wear his name religiously, and insisted that they call themselves Christians. He said he did know all of that, and agreed that we should just be Christians. I said, "Sir, you have Luther's name on your T-shirt, on your tent, and on all these materials." He said, "Well, we are part of a synod, and if we dropped the name 'Lutheran,' we would lose our support and affiliation with them." (incredible!)

I also asked him where in the Bible is one man called "the pastor" of a church. He said it was in there somewhere, and again I asked, "Where?" He did not know, but gave some strange explanation from the German word *seelsorge*. I then gave him the three Greek words for that office - *episkopos*, *poimano*, and *presbuteros*, and explained that there was always a plurality of men in that office, most commonly referred to as elders (Acts 14:23, etc.).

We also discussed other matters, such as how to be saved. I asked what he would tell a sinner off the street to do to be saved. He said he would say, "There is nothing you can do to be saved. In fact, you are already saved--you just don't know it!" I asked him to explain passages like Acts 2:36-41, which he could not. He said, "Well, there are a lot of people smarter than me." I said, "This is not about me versus you; this is about you versus God. You should be willing to change when you realize the truth contradicts what you are doing. What about all these people you are leading?" I hope they were listening closely. I said loudly enough for them to hear, "Please investigate the church of Christ." I gave him my card, we ended the conversation very cordially, and he said he would contact me for further study. He never did. All glory to God, but friends, this is just one example of many others I could share. I am tired of false teachers taking advantage of people!