



**Campaign #SiebenFragen: Seven Questions to the Catholic Church in Germany
on Freedom and Autonomy**

This is not the gospel

That Pope Leo X once dismissed the theses of Martin Luther as an irrelevant "monks' bickering" was perhaps the most momentous mistake in church history. Exactly 500 years later, the Roman Catholic Church is once again about to play down a theological debate in a not-too-distant country, ignore it and consider it a German problem.

The next schism in Christendom is just around the corner. And it will come again from Germany. This time it will infect all local churches with the spirit of rebellion and betrayal of the Gospel, if the universal Church does not reaffirm the foundations of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic faith, and present them anew to the faithful in Germany. The "Seven Questions to the Catholic Church in Germany on Freedom and Autonomy" are the warning and wake-up call of theologians, philosophers, and anthropologists from Germany to the universal Church.

"Thy will be done"?

Behind the Synodal Way is a fundamental shift in the theological central axis; it explains the multitude of radical demands of this body, which are already causing scandal worldwide. Step by step, the axis around which everything revolves shifted from God and his revelation to man and his needs, away from theocentrism to naked anthropocentrism. The focus is no longer on the Lord - his word and will - but on man - his will, his interests, his identity, his desires, his freedom is to determine what is the matter in the church, what still seems plausible before the tribunal of modernity (in the shape of an unauthorized universal church assembly of more or less knowledgeable delegates), what may be taught and lived and what not.



"First of all, no God may be accepted," says Magnus Striet, the most influential thought leader of the Synodal Way, "who does not respect man's freedom and thus the right to free self-determination that he claims."¹ With Striet, "autonomy" becomes the all-determining criterion. Quite a few bishops, such as Bishop Overbeck of Essen, agree with him: "How people are to live can no longer be generally authoritatively decreed without trampling on God's gift of autonomy."² Translated, this means: There must literally be nothing that determines human beings in their self-realization from the outside, not even God and his commandments.

You don't have to be told anything

That is not the gospel. This is bad German subject philosophy that seeks an unlimited "you may" and demands absolution up front for every act of free and considered self-determination - as if there were no difference between conscience and conscientiousness, or between truth and truthfulness. Man - as Magnus Striet, Stephan Goertz, Saskia Wendel and other protagonists of a radical modernization declare - no longer has to be told anything he could not tell himself. God is now only a postulate of practical reason, a hypothesis, a "humanly standardized"³ concept; and this hypothesis has left no legible traces in creation.

"Related to the question of what might be morally commanded, one does not need the God of this faith"⁴, and "that God created human beings as male and female or that he instituted marriage is simply an interpretation by human beings"⁵, - also the assumption that there is "a binary biological nature of human beings that can claim normative validity on its own".⁶

¹ Magnus Striet, Naturrecht und Geschlechterverhältnisse. Ein fundamental-theologischer Beitrag. In: Kirche und Schule. Hg. Bischöfliches Generalvikariat Münster, 12/2021 | NR. 195, p. 11 [Natural Law and gender relations. A contribution by Fundamental Theology. In: Church and School. Ed. By Episcopal Ordinate].

² Franz-Josef Overbeck, Vorurteile überwinden, in: Gräve u.a., Katholisch und queer, Paderborn 2021, p. 215 [Overcoming Prejudices, in: Catholic and queer].

³ Magnus Striet, Ernstfall Freiheit. Arbeiten an der Schleifung der Bastionen, Freiburg 2018, p. 81 [Case of Emergency: Freedom. Working at the Demolition Of The Bastions].

⁴ Magnus Striet, *ibid.*, p. 26

⁵ Magnus Striet, Naturrecht und Geschlechterverhältnisse. Ein fundamental-theologischer Beitrag. In: Kirche und Schule. Hg. Bischöfliches Generalvikariat Münster, 12/2021 | NR. 195, p. 8 [Natural Law, see above.]

⁶ Magnus Striet, *ibid.*, p. 9.



All doors about gender are open, and any sexual self-realization is to be met with "appreciation". There is no longer any talk of sin in the context of sexuality anyway.

What Christian anthropology is as defined by Holy Scripture, and what has been worked out in 2000 years of high reflection on divine revelation, can be dismissed, if it disturbs one's way of life in the age of individual self-determination and if it interrupts the routines of the normal human. Where there is no truth given to man, the God imagined, hoped for, and trimmed in authority may only applaud our freedom and "rejoice in a culture that values the success of relationships regardless of sexual preference."⁷

The "Seven Questions to the Catholic Church in Germany on Freedom and Autonomy" were written to expose the theoretical background on which the Synodal Way wishes to make decisions. For the sake of precision, these are questions on a rather high theological and philosophical level of abstraction. However, they are precisely those questions which a church that teaches bindingly must ask itself today if it does not want to abandon itself to a dull pluralism and a cynical equality of validity in the question of truth.

⁷ Magnus Striet, *ibid.*, p. 11.