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39. Then too, this people in whose midst the bishop stands and works, is—or at any rate ought to be—itself a body of disciples of “the way.” Hence a significant part of the bishop’s leadership role is summed up in a responsibility for *proclaiming* and *teaching*—for reaching out and for bringing the community along in the understanding and practice of its calling to follow Christ.

40. This picture presents neither an impossible role nor a farfetched ideal. To actualize it in some significant degree in our society would, however, require much practical thought and effort; for the very style of authority classically associated with pastoral office is in many respects foreign to contemporary habits of mind. It would, in fact, require deliberate institutional changes calculated to change people’s perception of the nature of leadership and authority in the Church and hence the way in which that leadership and authority function in practice. On the other hand, it is also true that to rethink episcopacy in this manner would indeed be to re-form the life of the church—and hopefully to bring it closer to its calling under God. The question which these explorations raises in our minds is whether—and how—the Episcopal Church could undertake such a rethinking for the sake of its own faithfulness in mission and life.