

Christians and Vocations

“Luther’s attempts to reform the church led, among other things, to the development of a robust doctrine of vocation. He pushed back against the notion that certain callings, like his earlier monastic calling, were somehow more holy than working outside the church.”

tifwe.org/martin-luthers-contributions-to-the-churchs-view-of-vocation/

Segment I

The following quotes are all attributable to Martin Luther...

“A cobbler, a smith, a farmer, each has the work and office of his trade, and yet they are all alike consecrated priests and bishops, and every one by means of his own work or office must benefit and serve every other, that in this way many kinds of work may be done for the bodily and spiritual welfare of the community, even as all the members of the body serve one another...”

“What you do in your house is worth as much as if you did it up in heaven for our Lord God...We should accustom ourselves to think of our position and work as sacred and well-pleasing to God, not on account of the position and work, but on account of the word and faith from which the obedience and the work flow.”

“Monastic vows rest on the false assumption that there is a special calling, a vocation, to which superior Christians are invited to observe the counsels of perfection while ordinary Christians fulfill only the commands; but there simply is no special religious vocation since the call of God comes to each at the common tasks.”

“The idea that the service to God should have only to do with a church altar, singing, reading, sacrifice, and the like is without doubt but the worst trick of the devil. How could the devil have led us more effectively astray than by the narrow conception that service to God takes place only in a church and by the works done therein...The whole world could abound with the services to the Lord, Gottesdienste – not only in churches but also in the home, kitchen, workshop, field.”

gospelcenteredwork.org/2010/07/04/luther-on-vocation/

1 Peter 2:9-10

1 Corinthians 12

Romans 13:1-7

Segment II

“One of the main troubles with the pre-Reformation view of vocation was the blending of personal identity with vocation. Thus a priest engaged in distributing the sacraments was considered holier than the worker in the field. Luther pushed back directly against this distinction:

“We must distinguish between an occupation and the man who holds it, between a work and the man who does it. An occupation or a work can be good or right in itself and yet be bad and wrong if the man who does the work is evil or wrong or does not do his work properly.

“Luther’s message was that value is found in the quality of the work and the attitudes of the individual rather than the nature of the work itself. One of the purposes of vocation was for men to serve one another and bring order to the world. This requires people to do different jobs in society, and maintains that work outside the church has value in God’s economy.”

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Ephesians 6:5-8

Colossians 3:22-24

Hebrews 11:5-6

Segment III

Look at Luther’s Small Catechism Table of duties – “What the hearers owe their pastors”

This is important not because he is more holy, but because he represents God when he delivers the Word and Sacraments as commanded.