

Announcements

- ◆ A warm welcome to all our visitors and guests, friends both old and new. We pray that God has blessed your time among us with His Word and Holy Spirit. We cordially invite you to join us this morning for coffee and other refreshments downstairs following the Divine Service; and we ask that you please sign the guest book at the back of the church.
- ◆ Following coffee & refreshments this morning, our Family Bible Class will continue our study of Genesis, following Dr. Luther's Lectures on that book. Catechesis class for younger and beginning catechumens meets at the same time. Also, Mike Jindra and Ian Walsh are teaching a catechesis class for children of approximately eight through twelve years of age. And Dave Smith is teaching a class for teenagers and others who may be interested.
- ◆ This Saturday (24 June) Pr. Stuckwisch will be vested and available in the Emmaus Sanctuary for Individual Confession and Absolution from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. This means of grace and forgiveness is freely offered to be freely received in repentant faith. Those with questions concerning this Christian practice are encouraged to visit with Pastor about it.
- ◆ Looking ahead, Emmaus will be gathered on Wednesday the 28th of June for the Eve of the Feast of St. Peter & St. Paul, the Apostles, at 6:00 p.m.
- ◆ The Emmaus Youth will be having a meeting on Friday the 30th of June. Along with other business, activities, and plans, Mr. Michael Jindra will also be leading a discussion on the dangers of digital distractions, a topic that he has studied and addressed in various venues in the past. Youth and young adults from 12 to 22 are strongly encouraged to attend. Whether you or someone you know have struggled with the balance of electronics and the other important activities of life, come to hear what Mr. Jindra has to say and contribute to the conversation. Interested parents should please talk to Mike before planning to attend. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.
- ◆ **COLLECTIONS FOR 4 JUNE 2017: \$ 1,582.00**
In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2400 is needed each week.
- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning are provided by Annalise Harrison to the glory of God, in celebration of her birthday.

- ◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS EASTER DAY: (ELDER) Dave Smith; (USHERS) Caleb Smith & Nathan Jindra; (ACOLYTE) Stefan Horner; (ORGANIST) Dcs. Sandra Rhein; (GREETER) Pat Nering.
- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

On the Epistle to the Galatians

“In these first two chapters [of the Epistle to the Galatians], St. Paul does almost nothing else but set forth his calling, his ministry, and his Gospel. He affirms that it was not from men; that he had not received it from men but from the revelation of Jesus Christ; and that if he or an angel from heaven were to bring any gospel other than that which he had preached, he should be accursed.

“But what does Paul intend by this bragging? I reply: This doctrine has its purpose that every minister of the Word of God should be sure of his calling. In the sight of both God and man he should boldly glory that he preaches the Gospel as one who has been called and sent. Thus the king's emissary boasts and glories that he does not come as a private person but as the emissary of the king. Because of this dignity as the king's emissary he is honored and given the position of highest honor, which he would never receive if he were to come as a private person. Therefore let the preacher of the Gospel be sure that his calling is from God. It is perfectly proper that he should follow Paul's example and exalt this calling of his, so that he may gain credence and authority among the people. In the same way the king's emissary elevates his office and calling. To glory this way is not vain but necessary; for he does not glory in himself but in the king who has sent him and whose authority he seeks to have honored and elevated. When, in the name of the king, he wants something to be done by his subjects, he does not say, ‘We request,’ but ‘We command, we want this to be done.’ But as a private person he says, ‘We request.’

“In the same way, when Paul commends his calling so highly, he is not arrogantly seeking his own praise, as some people suppose; he is elevating his ministry with a necessary and a holy pride. Thus he says also to the Romans (11:13): ‘Inasmuch as I am an Apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry.’ That is to say: ‘I want men to receive me, not as Paul of Tarsus but as Paul the Apostle or ambassador of Jesus Christ.’ He has to do this to maintain his authority, so that those who hear this may be more attentive and more willing to listen to him. For they are not listening to Paul; but in Paul they are listening to Christ Himself and to God the Father, who sends him forth. Just as men should devoutly honor the authority and majesty of God, so they should reverently receive and listen to His messengers, who bring His Word.

“Accordingly, this is a noteworthy passage; for here Paul makes such a boast of his calling that he despises all the others. If someone were to follow the normal human pattern and despise all others on his own behalf and attribute everything to himself alone, this would be the height of awkwardness, foolishness, and sin. But this style of boasting is necessary. It has to do, not with the glory of Paul or with our glory but with the glory of God; and by it the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving is offered up to Him. For by such boasting the name of God is disclosed to the world. Therefore he opens his Epistle to the Galatians as follows: ‘Paul an Apostle—not from men, etc.’ (Galatians 1:1)

“At the very outset Paul deals with those false teachers. They claimed to be the pupils of the Apostles, sent by them; and they despised Paul as one who was neither the pupil of the Apostles nor sent by them to preach the Gospel but had entered in some other way and had intruded himself upon the ministry on his own initiative. Against them Paul defends his calling and says: ‘Your preachers look down on my calling. But whoever it is that has come to you, he is sent either from men or through man; that is, he has either entered on his own, without a call, or has been called by someone else. But my calling is not from men or through man; it is superior to any calling that can come after the Apostles. For it is ‘through Jesus Christ and God the Father.’

“When Paul says ‘from men,’ I take this to refer to those who call and intrude themselves, when neither God nor man calls or sends them, but who run and speak on their own. Today the sectarians do this. Either they lurk in corners, look for some place to spew forth their venom, and do not come into public churches; or they go where the Gospel has already been planted. These I call ‘from men.’ But when he says ‘through man,’ I take this to refer to those who have a divine calling, but one that has come through man.

“God calls in two ways, either by means or without means. Today He calls men into the ministry of the Word by a mediated call, that is, one that comes through means, namely, through man. But the Apostles were called immediately by Christ Himself, as the Prophets in the Old Testament had been called by God Himself. Afterwards the Apostles called their disciples, as Paul called Timothy, Titus, etc. These men called bishops, as in Titus 1:5ff.; and the bishops called their successors down to our own time, and so on to the end of the world. This is a mediated calling, since it is done by man. Nevertheless, it is divine. Thus when someone is called by a prince or a magistrate or me, he has his calling through man. Since the time of the Apostles this has been the usual method of calling in the world. It should not be changed; it should be exalted. . . .”

(From Dr. Martin Luther’s Lectures on Galatians, A.D. 1535)

