

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.
- ◆ We welcome to Emmaus this morning our South Bend Circuit Visitor, the Reverend Galen Drawbaugh. Let us also pray for God's continued blessing upon him, especially in his service to our LCMS district and circuit.
- ◆ There will be a Voters' Meeting this morning, downstairs in the church hall following time for coffee and refreshments. Members of Emmaus are encouraged to stay for the meeting. Bible class will resume next week.

Catechesis class for younger and beginning catechumens meets at the same time as the Voters' Meeting. Older children, especially between the ages of eight and twelve, will meet with Nathaniel Rhein and Nicholai Stuckwisch.
- ◆ **Note that our Monday evening Vespers resumes this week at 6:00 p.m.**
- ◆ We will also be gathered together for the Eucharist this Wednesday evening (22 November), in thanksgiving for God's blessing upon us in Christ Jesus.
- ◆ This Saturday (25 November), Pr. Stuckwisch will be vested and available in the Emmaus Sanctuary for Individual Confession & Absolution from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. This means of grace and forgiveness, by the authority of Christ our Lord, is freely offered to be freely received in repentant faith. Those with questions concerning this Christian practice are encouraged to review the Small Catechism and to visit with Pastor about it anytime.
- ◆ **COLLECTIONS FOR 12 NOVEMBER 2017: \$ 1,898.37**

In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2400 is needed each week.
- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning have been provided by the Juday family to the glory of God, in loving memory of their father, Robert Juday.

- ◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY: (ELDER) Eldon Knepp; (USHERS) Aaron Seyboldt & Nicholai Stuckwisch; (ACOLYTE) Frederick Stuckwisch; (ORGANIST) Dcs. Sandra Rhein; (GREETER) Pat Nering.
- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

On the Epistle to the Galatians

“As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed’ (Gal. 1:9). Paul says the same thing over again, but he shifts the persons. Earlier he had cursed himself, his brethren, and an angel from heaven. Here he says: ‘If there is anyone besides us who preached to you any gospel other than the one you have received from us, let him also be accursed.’ Thus he clearly excommunicates and curses all teachers in general — himself, his brethren, angels, and, in addition, anyone else at all, that is, his opponents, the false teachers. This shows great fervor of spirit in the Apostle, that he has the courage to curse all teachers throughout the earth and heaven. For all men must either yield to that Gospel which Paul had been preaching or be accursed and damned. . . .

“We have not yet come to the main doctrine discussed in this Epistle. For the first two chapters contain almost nothing but defenses and refutations. Nevertheless, we are presented here with an example that enables us to know for a certainty that it is an accursed lie that the pope is the arbiter of Scripture or that the church has authority over Scripture. This is what the canonists and commentators on the ‘Sentences’ have wickedly declared, on the following basis: ‘The church has approved only four Gospels, and therefore there are only four. For if it had approved more, there would have been more. Since the church has the right to accept and approve as many Gospels as it wishes, it follows that the church is superior to the Gospels.’ What a splendid argument! I approve Scripture. Therefore I am superior to Scripture. John the Baptist acknowledges and confesses Christ. He points to Him with his finger. Therefore he is superior to Christ. The church approves Christian faith and doctrine. Therefore the church is superior to them.

“To refute this wicked and blasphemous doctrine of theirs you have here a clear text and a thunderbolt. Here Paul subordinates himself, an angel from heaven, teachers on earth, and any other masters at all to Sacred Scripture. This queen must rule, and everyone must obey, and be subject to, her. The pope, Luther, Augustine, Paul, an angel from heaven — these should not be masters,

judges, or arbiters but only witnesses, disciples, and confessors of Scripture. Nor should any doctrine be taught in the church except the pure Word of God. Otherwise, let the teachers and hearers be accursed along with their doctrine.

“Am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God?” (Galatians 1:10). These words are spoken with the same ardor as the earlier ones; it is as though he were saying: ‘Am I, Paul, so unknown among you after preaching publicly in your churches? Are you still unaware of my bitter controversies and disputes with the Jews? I should think it is evident from my preaching and from the many great afflictions I have endured whether I am serving men or God. Everyone sees that by my preaching I have not only brought persecution upon myself everywhere but have also earned the bitter hatred both of my countrymen and of all others. Thus I make it obvious that by my preaching I am not seeking the favor or praise of men, but that I am seeking the grace and glory of God.’

“We do not seek the favor of men by our teaching either, if we may be permitted to say this without boasting. For we teach that all men are wicked; we condemn the free will of man, his natural powers, wisdom, righteousness, all self-invented religion, and whatever is best in the world. In other words, we say that there is nothing in us that can deserve grace and the forgiveness of sins. But we proclaim that we receive this grace solely and altogether by the free mercy of God. For thus the heavens show forth the glory of God and His works, universally condemning all men for their works (Ps. 19:1). This is not preaching that gains favor from men and from the world. For the world finds nothing more irritating and intolerable than hearing its wisdom, righteousness, religion, and power condemned. To denounce these mighty and glorious gifts of the world is not to curry the world’s favor but to go out looking for, and quickly to find, hatred and misfortune, as it is called. For if we denounce men and all their efforts, it is inevitable that we quickly encounter bitter hatred, persecution, excommunication, condemnation, and execution.

“‘If they see other things,’ Paul says, ‘why do they not see this too, that what I teach is from God and not from men? That is, I do not seek the favor of any man by my teaching; I seek only the favor of God. For if I were seeking the favor of men, I would not condemn all their works.’”

“Christ speaks the same way in John 3:19: ‘This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil’; and in John 7:7: ‘The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.’”

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

