

# ***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, as previously requested, Family Bible Class will provide opportunity for a Q&A discussion of the presentations that Bishop Rhoades and Pastor Stuckwisch recently gave at Trinity in Elkhart and St. Pius X in Granger, respectively, on the present-day significance of the Reformation for Lutherans and Roman Catholics.

Catechesis class for the younger and beginning catechumens meets with Dcs. Rhein at the same time. Nathaniel Rhein and Nicholai Stuckwisch are teaching the catechesis class for children of approximately eight through twelve years of age. And Dave Smith is resuming his class on various Old Testament figures for teenagers and others who may be interested.

◆ Please remember Steve & Bridgit Kronewitter in your prayers this week, as we look forward to Bridgit's Holy Baptism and welcome the two of them into the fellowship of our Emmaus congregation on Saturday (2 December).

◆ Looking ahead, we will be gathering for Advent Evening Prayer services on each of the first three Wednesdays in December: the 6th, 13th, and 20th, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

◆ **COLLECTIONS FOR 19 NOVEMBER 2017: \$ 4,526.10**

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 Sharon Makowski to the glory of God, in loving memory of her sister, Linda.

◆ **IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY:**

(ELDER) Robert Rhein; (USHERS) Matthew Horner & Tobias Tribble;  
(ACOLYTE) Stefan Horner; (ORGANIST) Deaconess Sandra Rhein;  
(GREETERS) Lois Veen & Marilyn Dulmatch.

◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor

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## **On the Epistle to the Galatians**

*“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’ [Galatians 1:10].*

*“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.’*

*“Thus,’ [continues St. Paul, as it were,] ‘I condemn the works of men; that is, I show God’s judgment upon all men from His Word, of which I am a minister and an apostle, saying that they are sinners, unrighteous men, children of wrath (Eph. 2:3), captives of Satan, and condemned. I declare that they do not become righteous by works or by circumcision but solely by grace and by faith in Christ. Because this is what I preach, I earn the bitter hatred of men. For they find nothing more intolerable than to be told that this is how they are; instead, they want to be praised as wise, righteous, and holy. Thus this is clear testimony that I am not teaching a human doctrine.*

*“That I teach divine things is evident enough also from my preaching the grace, mercy, work, and glory of God alone. As Christ says, he who speaks what his Lord and Master has commanded, and who glorifies, not himself but Him whose messenger he is — he brings and teaches the sure Word of God (John 8:28, 50). But I teach only what has been divinely commanded. And I do not glorify myself; I glorify Him who sent me. In addition, I bring upon myself the enmity and indignation both of the Jews and of the Gentiles. Therefore my doctrine is true, pure, sure, and divine. Nor can there be any doctrine that is different from mine, much less better. Therefore any doctrine at all that does not teach as mine does—that all men are sinners and are justified solely by faith in Christ—must be false, uncertain, evil, blasphemous, accursed, and demonic. And so are those who either teach or accept such a doctrine.’ With Paul, therefore, we boldly and confidently pronounce a curse upon any doctrine that does not agree with ours. We, too, seek by our preaching, not the praise of men or the favor of princes or of bishops but only the favor of God. We preach His grace and gift alone, treading underfoot and condemning whatever is our own. Therefore anyone who teaches something different or something contrary—we confidently declare that he was sent from the devil and is anathema.*

“‘Or am I trying to please men?’ That is, ‘Do I serve men or God?’ Paul is always looking obliquely at the false apostles. These, he says, always have to try to please and flatter men; for thus they seek to be able to glory in the flesh again. In addition — because they cannot bear the hatred and persecution of men — they teach circumcision, simply to escape the persecution of the cross of Christ, as follows in the eleventh verse of the fifth chapter. Thus today you will find many who try to please men. In order to live in peace and in the smugness of the flesh, they teach human doctrines, that is, impious ones. Or they approve of the blasphemies and wicked judgments of our opponents, contrary to the Word of God and their own consciences, just to be able to retain the favor of princes and bishops and not to lose their property. On the other hand — because we try to please God and not men — we bring upon ourselves the envy of the devil and of hell itself. We bear the slanders and curses of the world, death, and every evil.

“Thus Paul says here: ‘I do not try to please men so that they will praise my doctrine and call me an outstanding teacher. I want to please only God. Whoever tries to please God will have men as his bitter enemies. I experience this too; for they repay me with shame, slander, prison, the sword, etc. By contrast the false apostles teach human doctrine, that is, what is pleasant and reasonable. And they do this so that they can live a life of ease and earn the favor and plaudits of the people. Those who look for this find it, for they are praised and exalted by everyone.’ Thus Christ says in Matt. 6:2 that hypocrites do everything ‘that they may be praised by men.’ And in John 5:44 He severely indicts such men: ‘How can you believe, who receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?’ What Paul has been saying so far is almost all examples. Yet he is vigorously urging throughout that his doctrine is true and correct. Therefore he exhorts the Galatians not to forsake it and accept another.

“‘If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.’ All this should be referred to the entire office and ministry of Paul, so that there is an antithesis between his attitude when he was still in Judaism and his present attitude. It is as though he were saying: ‘Do you think I am still pleasing men?’ Thus he says later on in the eleventh verse of the fifth chapter: ‘If I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted?’ It is as though he were saying: ‘Do you not see and hear of my daily battles, great persecutions, and afflictions? After I was converted and called to the apostolate, I never sought the favor of men. I did not try to please men; I tried to please God alone. That is, by my ministry and doctrine I seek the glory and favor of God, not of men.’”

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

