



**Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men...**

*Colossians 3:23*



## Who do you work for? What is your vocation?

The Lutheran teaching on work and vocation is unique in the Christian world. It comes from Dr. Martin Luther's view of the two Rules of God and the Christian's place within each.

For Luther, God governs his church with the grace of the Holy Gospel. He gives her the gifts needed to be blessed daily and preserved until Christ's return. Yet, through the law He also rules the non-Christian world, since He established all authority (Rom. 13:1). That is why Paul (Rom. 13:1-3) and Peter (1 Peter 2:13-17) could entreat Christians to pray for the same authorities which were oppressing them so that peace and order may be maintained in the world.

Governance is therefore related to divine order. Into this order are placed stations and vocations (Luther uses the terms interchangeably). Your station in life is given by the God who orders the affairs of the world and the church. The vocation to which you may be called comes from one of three sources: the holy ministry (and everything which supports it), marriage (including everything related to family, business and the economy), and secular authority (the government and its institutions).

Luther saw all vocations as mandated, ordered, and blessed by God. This understanding follows naturally from the Reformation doctrine of salvation by grace through faith alone. If justification is a gift from God, and good works contribute nothing toward our salvation, then everything we do falls within the category of loving our neighbour. We carry this out in the context of the station in life in which God has placed us. Thus, whether prime minister or pig farmer, we do what God has ordained for the benefit of our neighbour.

The major difference between the Christian working faithfully and the equally diligent unbeliever is that we know God has called us to serve our neighbour and is pleased, for the sake of Christ, with what we do. In this way we are proclaiming His faithfulness every day!

*From an article by Dr. Gerald Krispin published in The Canadian Lutheran, January/February 2001*



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