



Our Calling

A Bible study for the WELS National Broadcast by the Rev. Jonathan E. Schroeder

Leader's Guide

Preparation

The class will begin at 7:30pm Eastern, and will run again at 9:30pm Eastern. The channel will go live fifteen minutes before the class begins. When you open the channel during that fifteen minutes, you will see an opening slide and hear some music playing. This will help you adjust video and audio settings before the beginning of class.

Print copies of the student guide in advance of the class.

Class procedure

The class will be taught with two lecture sections, two discussion sessions, and one wrap-up segment. A estimated schedule will be:

1. Intro and lecture (15 minutes)
2. Discussion (10 minutes)
3. Lecture (15 minutes)
4. Discussion (10 minutes)
5. Wrap-up (10 minutes)

The schedule may be modified to meet the lesson needs.

Congregations meeting as groups with their pastor or lay leader will use the discussion sections as time to explore and expand on the questions.

Participants who are not part of a larger group will use the discussion sections as time for reflection and study. Questions can be directed to Pastor Schroeder by means of the chat tool.

Questions

Questions can be submitted using the chat tool. Try and enter your questions before the ending of your discussion period, so the presenter has a moment to read and prioritize them.

The student guide is on the following page.

Looking forward to it--JES



Our Calling

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Our calling to be the mask of God

Rev. Jonathan E. Schroeder, Faith, Sharpsburg, Georgia.

As children of God we also have a calling in the world. But it is far more than our occupation. Our calling is to live as God's children in the world where he placed us. God's calling always has a purpose—and his purpose in our calling is simple: he wants to wear us as a mask. Come and explore this distinctly Lutheran teaching of vocation and learn that God would use you and even the smallest things you do to care for his world.

Presentation Notes

Discuss



Two minute drill: Talk to the people nearest to you and find out who has traveled the furthest from home. Tell the whole group what you've learned. (Did you know that after the Diet of Worms, Luther could never leave Saxony again?) You have two minutes.

1. The Church of the middle ages had mistakenly considered monastic service to be more God-pleasing than secular work. How are we tempted to think and act similarly? Can you give modern, Lutheran examples?
2. Did God put you into your roles or stations in life, or did you choose them? Why do you think that?
3. Explain the radical nature of this thought: You don't have to leave your life to find a vocation. God calls you to live your life as your vocation.

Presentation Notes

Discuss

1. Explain. God reveals himself to us by hiding himself. What are the implications of this for our vocation?
2. Explain. Through our vocation, God takes our acts of righteousness that are worth nothing for salvation and gives them infinite worth here on earth.
3. God wears you as a mask when you fulfill the positions and roles you have in life. How does that change your attitude or understanding about your job? Your career? Your task list for tomorrow?
4. In the Small Catechism, Luther said that the Table of Duties was for various Holy Orders. Find one or two of the Holy Orders in which God has called you. Why would Luther call these “holy orders,” the name that used to mean monks and nuns? What implications do you see regarding how you fulfill those roles or stations?

Wrap-up

The gospel calls us to be the sons of God. That is the call. But the gospel also invites us to be the sons of God wherever we are and wherever God places us. That is our calling.

Life has no purpose without God. But with God, all of life has purpose, from the most noble estates to the most insignificant duties. They all have the high dignity of being part of our calling as God’s mask.

Questions can be submitted for Pastor Schroeder via chat.

Next page: The Table of Duties

Next Week -- Our Calling to be the Church of God (7:30pm and 9:30pm Eastern)

Table of Duties from the Small Catechism

*Certain passages from Scripture for Various **Holy Orders** and Positions, by which these people are to be admonished, as a special lesson, about their office and service.*

PASTORS

A pastor must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to much wine, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. He must not be a recent convert. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

WHAT WE OWE TO OUR PASTORS AND TEACHERS

Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "The worker deserves his wages." Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

GOVERNMENT

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

HUSBANDS

Husbands, be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

WIVES

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

PARENTS

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

CHILDREN

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise-- "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

EMPLOYEES

Obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing

the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does.

EMPLOYERS

Treat your employees in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Young men, be submissive to those who are older. Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

WIDOWS

The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.

A WORD FOR ALL

Love your neighbor as yourself. This is the sum of all the commandments. And continue praying for everyone.

***Let each his lesson learn with care,
And all the household well shall fare.***