

Wednesday, March 10

Stewardship Principle

Readings: Psalm 39; Numbers 13:17-27; Luke 13:18-21

Prayer: *O God, we are often slow to respond to the opportunities you place before us. We would rather trust in ourselves than in you. Turn us from seeking to serve our desires to living in ways that are pleasing to you and beneficial for our neighbor. In Jesus name. Amen.*

Focal Verse: "And now, O Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in you. Deliver me from all my transgressions. Do not make me the scorn of the fool." Psalm 30:7-8

Reflection: Ordinary daily work is holy because it is anchored in faith in Christ, even though it is performed by sinful women and men. It does not bring a person to God, but flows from the new life God in Christ has already given her or him.

**9** **Live genuinely**

means putting your faith into action. This is the tangible demonstration of what is sincerely on our hearts and where our treasure is, not simply a verbal expression. The Macadonians set an example that Paul called to the attention of the Corinthians.

**"I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others."**  
2 Corinthians 8:8

Faith stands at the boundary between the two realms – the two ways in which God works in the world, through law and gospel, through society and the church. Faith allows God’s people to be creative in their activities in the world, a world in which God is present and at work. To be faithful in one’s calling is a freeing and fulfilling thing. It blesses not only the neighbor, but also the one who endeavors to be faithful. It assures the Christian that there is meaning and purpose in the ordinary tasks of his or her daily life.

Luther taught that all Christians are called to serve God *in* their occupations and that they respond to this call by loving their neighbors. Martin Luther had warned his readers that faithful Christian living brings with it the cross.

Luther insisted that the true vocation of the Christian, to honor God through service to the neighbor, could take various forms, each one of which would continuously help the Christian grow in faith by driving him or her to God in prayer.

God calls believers to use their gifts and their energies, but these gifts and energies do not establish the worth of persons. Individuals have value because God values them. The meaning of their lives is not imprisoned in their work. Such a reminder is a tremendous source of encouragement for getting through times of job loss and transition, for adjusting to retirement, and for coping when there is little sense of glamour or fulfillment to be found in one’s labors.<sup>39</sup>

What do you hear?

How does it make you feel?

Toward what are you being drawn?

What do you sense you should do?

<sup>39</sup> Listen! God is Calling!: Luther Speaks of Vocation, Faith, and Work, D. Michael Bennethum, Augsburg-Fortress, 2003, p. 50, 54-55, 60