

Called to Milk Cows and Govern Kingdoms Martin Luther's Teaching on the Christian's Vocations

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The thoroughly Trinitarian nature of Martin Luther's theology reveals itself at many points in his teaching and preaching. With his colleagues he viewed biblical teaching in its entirety as a body (*corpus doctrinae*), and the members of that body, the individual doctrines of creation, sin, law, the person of Christ, redemption, and all the rest, were for him woven together in God's revelation of himself and his will for his human creatures. His concept of the Christian's callings in everyday life—in home, occupation, society, and congregation—exhibits this characteristic of his teaching. The callings of the believer arise out of the structure which God built into the essence of humanity in creation. God enacts his providential care for his creation and his presence in it through his human agents living out their callings. Christ's redemptive work and the Holy Spirit's creation of trust in God move believers to seek to do the will of God. The Holy Spirit uses that trust to bring believers to live sanctified lives within the structure of their callings according to God's commands.

Luther's concept of the God-ordained structure for the exercise of our humanity arose within the anthropology which he developed in the midst of his "evangelical maturation," around 1518/1519. By 1531, he could label his view of what it means to be human, his distinction of two kinds of human righteousness, as "our theology."² This anthropological formulation played a key role in his hermeneutic. He distinguished what he later called "passive" righteousness, which God bestows in establishing the identity of human creatures as his own children—the "righteousness from outside the self" (*iustitia aliena*)—from what he called "active" righteousness, which God ordains that his human creatures practice in their own performance of his commands—the "righteousness which belongs to the one who is acting" (*iustitia propria*).³ Luther further described human life with his distinction of two realms⁴ or two dimensions of human living, the vertical relationship with God, and the horizontal relationship with all of God's creatures, above all, other human beings.

Luther's analysis of the form or structure of God's design for daily living arose out of medieval social theory. All Western European societies in the Middle Ages presumed a division of labor among the church (*ecclesia*), which consisted of priests, monks, and nuns; the leadership of society (*politia*); and the household, in which fam-

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ily and economic life took place (*oeconomia*). The great mass of the population fell into this third category. These “estates”—the usual translation of the German *Stand* and the Latin *status*—embraced all people in their individual metaphorical locales in which life unfolds each day. This social theory also posited that in each of these situations or walks of life (as we might better translate the term) individuals have “offices”—*Amt* in German, *officium* in Latin—that define the roles and the functions which are imposed upon each person in their respective *Stände* or walks of life. A better translation for *Amt* might be, if you will pardon the misspelling, “response-ability,” for these “offices” give human beings the ability and obligation to respond to the needs of others for the smooth functioning of the community and its individual members. The German *Amt* means both the formal societal position one holds and the functions which that position entails. The Creator employs the people functioning in these positions to provide for the human tapestry which he weaves together from the situations and response-abilities that constitute human life, individually and collectively.

Luther assumed this theory of social structure and adapted it to his insights into the nature of God’s dealing with the world. This adaptation involved, first, his overturning the spiritualizing worldview of medieval Christianity, which preserved elements of pre-Christian pagan thinking in distinguishing and even separating the “sacred” from the “profane.” “Sacred” activities, largely ritualistic in nature (whether in formal liturgies or in the practice of routines in daily life), were presumed to insure the proper running of the world and one’s own life; they were regarded as more God-pleasing and “holy” than “profane” activities, the common, ordinary, “regular” tasks of the every day, oriented toward earthly life. Citing Romans 14:23, “Everything that does not come from faith is sin,” Luther contended that human performance of any activity, including “sacred” rituals, did not determine the core identity of the human being. Instead, God’s bestowal of passive righteousness, which comes through the Holy Spirit’s pronouncement of forgiveness and the resulting faith in Christ, determines the core identity of those whom the Spirit turns to Jesus through the re-creative word of life and salvation on the basis of Christ’s death and resurrection. Faith in false gods bestows a false identity upon those who hold such a faith. All activities performed by the faithful people of God as a result of their trust in him are equally holy, and equally without influence in determining that his people are his people.

Luther’s discarding of the traditional distinction of the sacred and profane rested on three observations. First, the sacred activities of the medieval church were often (though, not always) human teachings, taught as if they were divine commands (Mt 15:9). Second, these activities often distracted and diverted people from carrying out their God-given response-abilities in their families, occupations, societies, and congregations. Third, they also were performed within the medieval system not to honor God but to insure the salvation of the person performing them. On all three counts Luther found the medieval view of reality false and inimical to a biblical understanding of God’s way of accomplishing his will in society.

Medieval European Christianity had defined what it means to be a faithful Christian largely in terms of human performance of sacred ritual and obedience to the sacred persons of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. When the Christian faith swept over much

of Western Europe, both Mediterranean and realms north of the Alps, the church had insufficient personnel to catechize effectively. Therefore, elements of the previous pagan religions mixed with the message of Scripture to form the structure and ways of exercising the new Christian faith in vital ways.⁵ Luther and his colleagues in Wittenberg redefined Christianity as a religion based not on a human approach to God through ritual but on God's approach through his word to sinners in revolt against him. Luther viewed God as a God of conversation and community; when he speaks his promise of life and salvation through Christ, the Holy Spirit engenders faith in those who are his chosen children. With lives formed by and filled with trust in God, his children respond, in the conversation of prayer and praise that continues as he answers in his word as it comes through Scripture into Christians' speaking and preaching and absolving, into the sacraments, and into other written or electronic media. Conversation creates community, not only with the heavenly Father but also with the siblings whom he has brought together in his family, the body of Christ. In congregations and in larger communities within society these siblings live together with each other and with other human creatures outside the faith.

The medieval church had used the biblical term "calling"—*vocatio* in Latin, *Beruf* in German—in several ways, but medieval theology added a special definition: God called certain persons into the sacred service rendered by priests, monks, and nuns. They were the "called" of the medieval church; these sacred responsibilities were defined as "vocations" or "callings." Luther had tried to use the vocation of monk and priest as a more direct—even if steeper—path to God, and he had found that the path led only back to his own performance of the monastic way of life. It assumed the burden of being the object of his saving faith, which brought in fact only the stench of damnation to this super-conscientious monastic brother. In finding the gospel in Christ, especially through lecturing on Psalms and Romans, Luther was impelled to abandon the theory that sacred or religious activities were more godly and God-pleasing than other activities. He repudiated this theory, on which monasticism, pilgrimages, veneration of the saints, and their relics, as well as many other pious practices were based, replacing it with a biblical view, which recognized God as the Lord of all creation and every part of the human life he fashioned as a place of service to him. God, Luther believed, exercises his providential care through human agents performing his will in all the situations or walks of life which the Creator had fashioned for the smooth running of daily life.⁶

Luther transformed the use of the word "calling" or "vocation" by assigning it to all Christians.⁷ Believers recognize that God has placed them in the structures of human life created by God and has called them to the tasks of caring for other creatures, human and otherwise, as agents of God's providential presence and care. Luther called people in the exercise of their response-abilities "masks of God," through whom God, for example, milks cows so that his human creatures may be nourished.⁸

He made this concept of the callings of believers a basic element in his Small Catechism, his instructional program for beginning Christians. This handbook for Christian living sets forth five (six) chief parts of biblical teaching in order to lay the foundation for two concluding sections, the first modeling family or individual devotions ("How the Head of the Household is to Teach the Members of the Household

to say Morning and Evening Blessings”⁹ and the second charting biblical directions on how believers carry out vocations received from God in home and occupation, in society and congregation.¹⁰ This “household chart” (*Haustafel*) is not so much about “duties,” if “duties” are thought of as obligations inherent in the order of things apart from reference to God. Instead, it sketches images of the callings which the Christian receives from God, as Luther drew instructions from Scripture for various “situations” of daily life, the believer’s personal commissions or callings that God bestows. Luther took terms limited previously to monasticism, “orders” and “walks of life,” and redefined them to describe how God had shaped every aspect of human life. According to Luther, each person has response-abilities in each situation, and every Christian is called by God to these response-abilities in all three walks of life defined by medieval social theory. In late-medieval German society this message empowered rising artisan and merchant families to recognize their own worth as reborn children of God through his grace and as his loving and serving children in their daily activities, as the Holy Spirit empowered them to live according to their Creator’s commands and callings.

Luther actually already recognized in his “Table of Christian Callings” that, even in his late-medieval society, in which households often performed economic functions as familial units, the situation of the household (*oeconomia*) contained two distinct areas of response-ability, familial and economic. Therefore, he spoke of the callings of “husbands,” “wives,” “parents,” and “children,” and those of “male and female servants, day laborers, workers, etc.” and of “masters and mistresses,” two distinct groups, familial and economic, within the typical sixteenth-century household.

In the Small Catechism’s instruction on confession and absolution, Luther’s approach to teaching Christian living intertwined God’s callings with his commands, interconnecting vocation with the virtues that flow from God’s commands. There the reformer wrote, “Here reflect on your walk of life (*Stand*)”—the callings provide the structure for daily living —“in light of the Ten Commandments”—the commands describe virtuous behavior. New obedience takes place within the calling—“whether you are father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant”—and according to the commands (expressed negatively in the confession of sins)—“whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, lazy, [ill-tempered, unruly, quarrelsome], whether you have harmed anyone by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, wasted, or injured anything.”¹¹

In university lectures and parish preaching Luther enlisted biblical figures as models for Christian living and talked about their harkening to God’s commands within the structures of their callings.¹² Luther imagined that Abraham could teach his students something about this subject and had the patriarch explain to the students how their trust in God’s love shaped their life in the world. He imagined Abraham saying that because God is “gracious, ready to forgive, and kind, I go out and turn my face from God to human beings, that is, I tend to my calling. If I am a king, I govern the state. If I am the head of a household, I direct the domestics; if I am a schoolmaster, I teach pupils, mold their habits and views toward godliness . . . In all of our works we serve God, who wanted us to do such things and, so to speak, placed us in our walks of life here.”¹³ Jacob’s household served as a model of Christian love exercised

through the common, ordinary of callings in daily life. Exercising his calling as son, Judah showed love and concern for his father in Genesis 43:1–5, as Luther looked back over the ages to read his mind.¹⁴ The professor did not shy away from speculation in constructing such exemplars of the exercise of callings, imagining that following the deaths of all four of Jacob’s wives and “Jacob been deprived of the son he loved most,” his daughters-in-law and his daughter Dinah “took the place of the mother of the household . . . These women were without doubt very upright matrons who administered Jacob’s household diligently and faithfully, and it prospered under their care. They were not indolent and lazy, for managing livestock demands thoroughness and care.” Luther reveled in the ordinariness of God’s providential ways: why does the Holy Spirit mention “such trifling, childish, servile, feminine, worldly and fleshly things about these most holy men . . .?” “Why did he not write about things more serious and sublime? Why does he make so much out of the sweat of their working with the squalid matters of the household?” Because, Luther observed, “God hides his saints under such masks and matters of the flesh so that they may seem more wretched than everything else.” For the people who trust in God live out their callings in the midst of the troubles and afflictions of the world he created which has now fallen from its created goodness. That is where the promises and commands of God are active and deliver his presence.¹⁵ Family callings did not always run so smoothly, however, and Luther offered encouragement to spouses who experienced frustrations and tensions akin to those that plagued Abraham and Sarah. “Inconveniences, vexations, and various crosses are encountered in marriage. What does it matter? Is it not better that I please God in this manner that God hears me when I call upon him, that he delivers me in misfortunes, and that he benefits me in various ways through my life’s companion, the upright wife whom I have joined to myself?” In a sinful world callings are a remedy for much, but precisely in suffering believers experience how the God who solved the chief problem by going to the cross contends with the burdens of daily life and blesses in spite of them by joining his human creatures together in exercising their mutual response-abilities.¹⁶

Some biblical figures provided models for living out economic callings,¹⁷ as did some for political or social responsibilities. Never shy about advising princes and town councils regarding their calling to exercise justice and fairness in ordering society, the Wittenberg reformer offered them guidelines for their calling in the *politia*. Among his favorite models was King David. David is a classic example of how saints fall into sin and are recalled to trust in God by the Holy Spirit.¹⁸ But in the decade following the death of Frederick the Wise, David became the personification of the ideal ruler for Luther. He integrated the story of David in 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 Kings with psalm texts, particularly Psalms 82 and 101, and found in him a paradigm of virtuous practice of vocation: “Dear David was so highly gifted. Such a precious, special hero is not only innocent of all deception and taking of life that took place in his kingdom. Indeed, he also actually opposed such liars and murderers, did not want to tolerate them, and acted against them so that they had to yield.”¹⁹ Psalm 101 placed the king squarely in the earthly realm; in its callings believers such as David practice the commands of the Lord: “We hear in this psalm of many fine, princely virtues that David practiced. In

this psalm he does not treat how to serve God, as in the first commandment, but how people should behave properly toward their neighbors. For just as the spiritual realm or responsibility shows how people should act properly in relationship to God, so the earthly realm shows how people live in relationship to each other and how they do it in such a way that body, possessions, wife, child, home, land, and material goods remain in peace and security and how they can fare well on this earth.”²⁰

Luther believed that the calling of believers in the church involved more than the respect and support which he described in his 1540 revision of the Small Catechism. He believed that the “power” which made the church lies in God’s word (Rom 1:16) rather than in the office of the pastor, who certainly has a special role or responsibility by virtue of that office in the public use of the word and its power. Therefore, Luther viewed the calling that believers receive with their baptism as embracing the sharing of God’s word with others. In 1522, while preaching on 1 Peter 2:9, he explained that the “royal priesthood” amounts simply to being Christian. On that basis he urged the people of Wittenberg to exercise this priesthood by proclaiming God’s wonderful deeds that brought them out of darkness into the light and delivered them from all evils. “Thus, you should also teach other people how they, too, come into such light. For you must bend every effort to realize what God has done for you. Then let it be your chief work to proclaim this publicly and to call everyone into the light into which you have been called.”²¹ The sermon chosen for his “Church Postil” for the nineteenth Sunday after Trinity proclaimed,

all who are Christians and have been baptized have this power [to forgive one another’s sins]. For with this they praise Christ, and the word is put into their mouth, so that they may and are able to say, if they wish, and as often as it is necessary: “Look! God offers you his grace, forgives you all your sins. Be comforted; your sins are forgiven. Only believe, and you will surely have forgiveness.” This word of consolation shall not cease among Christians until the last day: “Your sins are forgiven, be of good cheer.” Such language a Christian always uses and openly declares the forgiveness of sins. For this reason and in this manner a Christian has power to forgive sins.²²

This position did not disappear from his expectations for the exercise of the calling of all Christians as he grew older. In 1537 he told the Wittenberg congregation on the basis of Matthew 18:15–20 that they were on daily call as children of God who spoke in his behalf:

Here Jesus is saying that he does not only want [the condemnation of sin and proclamation of the forgiveness of sins] to take place in the church, but he also gives this right and freedom where two or three are gathered together, so that among them the comfort and the forgiveness of sins may be proclaimed and pronounced. He pours out [his forgiveness] even more richly and places the forgiveness of sins for them in every corner, so that they not only find the forgiveness of sins in the congregation but also at home in their houses, in the fields and gardens, wherever one of them comes to another in search

of comfort and deliverance. It shall be at my disposal when I am troubled and sorry, in tribulation and vulnerable, when I need something, at whatever hour and time it may be. There is not always a sermon being given publicly in the church, so when my brother or neighbor comes to me, I am to lay my troubles before my neighbor and ask for comfort . . . Again I should comfort others, and say, “dear friend, dear brother, why don’t you lay aside your burdens. It is certainly not God’s will that you experience this suffering. God had his Son die for you so that you do not sorrow but rejoice.”²³

Christ’s faithful people live from the power of his word of forgiveness and life, and Luther believed that all the baptized are called not only to worship with fellow believers but also to converse with them about that word and console them with it.

The reformer’s teaching on the calling of Christians became anchored in the Lutheran confessions of the faith that were gathered into the Book of Concord.²⁴ Throughout the intervening centuries Lutheran theologians and their counterparts in the Calvinist tradition used the concept of the three walks of life in society, and particularly in the Calvinist tradition the concept of the Christian’s calling played a significant role.²⁵ In Lutheran orthodoxy however, the dogmatic organization of public teaching left no room for a synthetic treatment of “calling” in the ethics even though the callings of family and government often had their own loci in dogmatic works. The revival of interest in this category so vital to Luther’s own thinking stems in large part from the works of the German Karl Eger²⁶ and Swedish theologian Einar Billing.²⁷ Both published studies in 1900. Billing’s view appeared in summarized form in English translation in the 1940s, preparing the way for the impact of the rejoinder to parts of Billing’s interpretation of Luther by another Swedish thinker, Gustaf Wingren.²⁸ The translation of Wingren’s *Luther on Vocation* has shaped a great deal of English-language Lutheran thinking as well as those beyond Lutheran churches in the more than half century since its appearance.²⁹

Luther’s teaching on the Christian’s calling within the structures of God’s design for society is sometimes regarded as out of date because current social theory does not operate with the medieval conception of a society with three estates. However, in every culture, despite vastly different institutional arrangements of the “places” in which human beings conduct their lives, home and family life, economic activity, political and social organization, and religious communities structure the lives of people. Whether they conceive of their responsibilities as burdensome duties, down payment on future help from those whom they help today, the tasks necessary to preserve societies, or response-abilities exercised in answer to their Creator’s call, all societies define roles and the functions of those occupying these situations or walks of life. Luther’s teaching on the Christian’s calling can be adapted to and applied in every human society.

Luther’s teaching on vocation is valuable today as an aid for concrete ethical instruction, in North American and Western European cultures an ever more pressing task, which is imposed by the decline and disintegration of moral expectations and of the Creator-driven “Judeo-Christian” narrative that has guided those cultures for centuries. It is important to reflect the biblical truth that God’s commands are not arbitrary dicta,

the whims of a whimsical demiurge, but rather the plan designed by the Creator who determined the reality of human life as he shaped his creatures. His commands operate with a structure designed to weave together the good life, with mutual help for one another, in a society in which no one is left alone or left behind. God's continuing "creation" as he provides and cares for his world takes place in significant ways through the human masks or agents he has called to their places in society. Beyond concrete direction for the Christian's conduct, Luther's concept of the believer's calling provides a framework for wider-ranging reflection on virtuous living and the satisfaction and fulfillment virtuous living brings when one lives on the basis of the Creator's gift of new life through his re-creative word spoken from cross and open tomb.

Evangelistically, this framework for human behavior can appeal to those with a utilitarian view of life and who are on the prowl for "what really works"—although we must also refashion the larger conception of reality of most contemporary western utilitarians. Recognizing that God's call gives us a "place"—several places in fact—in a world with no firm place to plant our vision of ourselves, aids those who feel adrift in a mobile society. For those who wrestle with tarnished images of their own worth and dignity in the world, a sense of calling provides secondary strengthening for the new identity that God gives when he brings us to faith in Christ. There is no greater worth and dignity than that accorded those whom God has chosen as his own and brought to new birth through Christ's blood and his reclamation of life through the resurrection, but a secondary level of worth and dignity arises out of service according to God's plan, at the behest of this calling Creator, as the Holy Spirit bestows the ability to respond to others' needs and live with them in the conversations and communities for which God made us in the first place.

Bringing salt and light to God's creation (Mt 5:13) involves the life-restoring presence of Christ speaking by the power of the Holy Spirit through his word in answer to his call to be the children of God. Bringing salt and light to God's creation also involves embodying God's providential care and concern for his creatures through the exercise of his commands and callings, his virtues and vocations. For evangelistic and ecumenical witness in the twenty-first century, Luther's understanding of the Christian's callings is a significant element which speaks directly to this world in which the church continues to carry on its mission.

Endnotes

¹ Irene Dingel, "Melancthon and the Establishment of Confessional Norms," in Irene Dingel, Robert Kolb, Nicole Kuroepka, and Timothy J. Wengert, *Philip Melancthon. Theologian in Classroom, Confession, and Controversy* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 161–179.

² *D. Martin Luthers Werke* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1883–1993 [henceforth WA]), 40,1:45,24–27, *Luther's Works* (Saint Louis/Philadelphia: Concordia/Fortress, 1958–1986 [henceforth LW]), 26:7. See Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology. A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 21–128.

³ Luther's initial treatise on this topic described "three kinds of righteousness," including what he later labeled "civic righteousness" as well as "alien and "proper" righteousness, WA 2: 43–47; probably because he lived in a society in which nearly all were baptized and could be expected to perform the active righteousness which passive righteousness produces, he refined his ideas in 1519 in the treatise *On Two Kinds of Righteousness*, WA 2:145–152, LW 31:293–306.

⁴ Not to be confused with his two "kingdoms," God's and Satan's, which are at war in both "realms," or dimensions of human life.

⁵ Scott Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard. The Reformation Agendas of Christianization* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 1–35.

⁶ See particularly Luther's criticism of monasticism, based in part on his understanding of the calling of all Christians to serve God in active righteousness, in his *Judicium de votis monasticis*, WA 8:573–669, LW 44:251–400; cf. Robert Kolb, "Die Zweidimensionalität des Mensch-Seins. Die zweierlei Gerechtigkeit in Luthers *De votis monasticis Judicium*," in *Luther und Das monastische Erbe*, Christoph Bultmann, Volker Leppin, Andreas Lindner, (eds.) (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2007), 207–220.

⁷ Timothy J. Wengert, "'Per mutuum colloquium et consolationem fratrum': Monastische Züge in Luthers ökumenischer Theologie," in *Luther und Das monastische Erbe*, 253–258 (243–268).

⁸ WA 44:6, 23–25, LW 6:10. On the concept of "masks of God," see Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1957), esp. 137–143.

⁹ *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992 [henceforth BSLK]), 521–522, *The Book of Concord*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000 [hereforth BC]), 363–364.

¹⁰ The "Questions on Communion" from Andreas Osiander or the circle around him entered editions of the Small Catechism after Luther's death. The "Baptismal Book" and the "Marriage Book" were kept distinct from the Catechism itself even if they were published with it. They were not intended for instruction of and memorization by the young.

¹¹ BC 360.

¹² See Robert L. Rosin, *Reformers, the Preacher, and Skepticism. Luther, Brenz, Melancthon and Ecclesiastes* (Mainz: Zabern, 1997), esp. 124–147, on Luther's use of his concept of vocation in his criticism of Erasmus's *Diatribe* and its implications for life in the horizontal realm of life in his *Ecclesiastes* lectures of 1526; and Robert Kolb, *Luther and the Stories of God, Biblical Narratives as a Foundation for Christian Living* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 141–168, for Luther's use of the concept of vocation in framing his treatment of the life of new obedience.

¹³ WA 42:632, 1–7; LW 3:117.

¹⁴ WA 44:529, 35–530, 2; LW 7:311.

¹⁵ WA 44:529, 20–530, 6; LW 7:510–511.

¹⁶ WA 43:140, 16–20, 140, 28–141, 3; LW 4:6–7.

¹⁷ E.g., Abraham's faithful servant Eliezar, WA 43:338, 27–340,10, LW 4:283–285; WA 43:342, 4–8; LW 4:288.

¹⁸ See Robert Kolb, "David: King, Prophet, Repentant Sinner. Martin Luther's Image of the Son of Jesse," *Perichoresis* 8 (2010): 203–232.

¹⁹ WA 51:234, 12–16, 235, 10–16; LW 13:188–189. Luther's comment on Psalm 101 is found in WA 51:200–264; LW 13:146–224; on Psalm 82 in WA 31, 1:200–264; LW 13:42–72.

²⁰ WA 51:241, 31–42; LW 13:197.

²¹ "Sermons on 1 Peter," 1522; LW 30:64–65; WA 12:318, 26–319, 6.

²² "Luther's Church Postil, Sermon on Matthew 9:1–8," 1526, *Sermons of Martin Luther*, ed. John Nicholas Lenker 5 (1905; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 209; WA 10, 1:412–414.

²³ "Sermons on Matthew 18–24," 1537–1540, WA 47:297, 36–298, 14, preached in autumn 1537.

²⁴ Robert Kolb, "God Calling, 'Take Care of My People': Luther's Concept of Vocation in the Augsburg Confession and Its Apology," *Concordia Journal* 8 (1982): 4–11.

²⁵ Though perhaps not the role assigned this concept by the sociologist Max Weber in his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Routledge, 2001, German original 1904/1905). On the ways in which the concept of the "two kingdoms" played a more prominent role in the Reformed tradition, particularly in John Calvin's own thought, see David van Druenen, *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms. A Study in the Development of Reformed Social Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

²⁶ *Die Anschauungen Luthers vom Beruf. Ein Beitrag zur Ethik Luthers* (Giessen: Ricker, 1900).

²⁷ Billing's *Our Calling* (Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1947; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964) provides a summary of the ideas he first advanced in *Luthers Lära om staten: dess Samband med hans reformatoriska grundtankar och med tidigare kyrkliga* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1900).

²⁸ See note 8 above. Wingren wrote this study as a doctoral dissertation in 1942, published it in Swedish in 1952. Apart from the critique of Kenneth Hagen, "A Critique of Wingren on Luther on Vocation," *Lutheran Quarterly* 16 (2002): 249–273, Wingren's presentation of the topic has gone largely unchallenged. For an extensive bibliographical analysis of modern scholarship on Luther's ethics in general, including his understanding of the Christian's calling, see Andreas Stegmann, "Die Geschichte der Erforschung von Martin Luthers Ethik," *Lutherjahrbuch* 79 (2012): 211–303, and idem, "Bibliographie zur Ethik Martin Luthers," *Lutherjahrbuch* 79 (2012): 305–342.

²⁹ A notable example is the work of Robert Benne, on the popular level in *Ordinary Saints, an Introduction to the Christian Life* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2001); on the scholarly level, e.g., in *The Paradoxical Vision: A Public theology for the Twenty-first Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995).



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