

## Vocation – Its content 2

In every vocation there will be crosses. “I don’t like this task,” you mutter. “You have lost faith,” Luther would say. “You have forgotten that vocation comes with its crosses.” Temptation in your vocation is the devil’s attempt to get you out of your vocation, thus disrupting God’s plan to work good through you. But faithfulness within your vocation makes you a coworker against the devil.

Elsewhere Luther notes that there is a benefit for the cross-bearer. For Luther, vocation is the means of making the cross real in the life of the Christian. Vocation is the place where God himself lets the cross take form. So, you will bear crosses as you serve your fellow man. You fulfill your task out of love for Christ and you receive the same measure of thanks as He did.

Another tension, “Lost love” (*die verlorene liebe*). Christian love is poured out and lost in the world. It’s a great temptation to do something other than your vocation, something that yields more reward for you and at least some modicum of acclaim from the world.

Pastors, perhaps more than any other occupation, struggle with thoughts of remaining in their office as preacher and teacher. Let me share this little gem that I found. Luther declared that doubt and despair in vocation are direct evidence that one is indeed in his proper position, in which faith is to be confirmed and the battle against darkness continued.

“Take it as a sure sign that you are in the right station which is pleasing to God, if you feel disgust and dislike for it. God is certainly at hand. He permits the evil spirit to attack and tempt you, to see whether you are fickle or steadfast, or not; and he provided an opportunity for your faith to fight and grow stronger.”

Perhaps you could find time this month to scan through Stephen Degner’s Symposium paper [Understanding Our Calling: The Doctrine of Christian Vocation in the Holy Scriptures](#). Or, review Jonathan Schroeder’s 2009 Convention essay [Our Calling: Christian Vocation and the Ministry of the Gospel](#).