

God Reimagined: The Biblical Foundation of Luther's Reformation
Living the Message 2023-2024
January 2024 Study Guide for Participants and Facilitators

January: *Called for Good:* Vocation with Pastor Ruud
[Click here to watch the video.](#) Or vimeo.com/894220414

Opening Prayer

Dear God, bless each one who comes to this study. Open our ears, hearts, and minds so that we may come to know you more deeply through studying about the life and theology of your servant, Martin. In Jesus name, Amen.

Focus Statement

One of the most powerful—though often underutilized—elements of Luther's theology is his belief that God can use each one of us, wherever we may be, to care for our neighbors and to make the world a more trustworthy place. This adds a holiness to even our everyday activities and provides a logic to the Christian life as we come to church to hear God's word of grace and are equipped and sent into the world for lives of purpose and meaning.

Key Scriptures

1 Peter 2:4-9

Romans 12:3-8

1 Corinthians 7:17-24 | primarily v.20

1 Corinthians 12

Questions

1. What was one of your takeaways from Pastor Ruud's presentation? A first thought or question?
2. How does an expanded view of vocation/calling—including not just our jobs, but also our relationships, volunteering, school, and other roles we play—help us discover God's call when we are not working or do not work in rewarding occupations?
3. A question about the Fredrick Buechner vocation quote: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Throughout your life, how has your deep gladness changed or evolved?
4. When we meet someone new, it's not uncommon to ask, "What do you do?" In what ways is this link between our occupations and our identity helpful? How can it be challenging?

5. How does God's promise of forgiveness free us to make hard decisions, compromise, risk making mistakes, and recover from missteps? How might our worship services and life in the church heighten this sense of "faithful freedom"?

Deeper Dive with Pastor Lose

John 17:14-19

I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

John 3:16

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

1. Have you ever thought of yourself as called? If so, when and how?
2. Does Luther's stress on our vocation help you think of your ordinary tasks as having extraordinary significance for God and your neighbor?
3. Does Sunday worship and our life in the church equip us for our lives in the world? If so, what elements are most important? If not, how might it prepare us to respond to God's call to care for our neighbor and the world?

Closing Prayer

Dear God, you have promised to use us in all the roles we play to help our neighbor and care for the world. Help us to see you at work with us and through us and to view our work, relationships, volunteering and play as "holy ground," places where you are present and at work. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Next Month

God Hidden and Revealed: Theology of the Cross with Pastor Lose
Tuesday, February 6, 6:30-7:30pm at the Mpls Campus in Room 207

If you have any questions, please contact Katie Stevenson, Coordinator of Adult Education:
katies@mtolivet.org | 612.767.2232