

The Basics of Lutheran Teaching - Class #1

Prayer: Blessed Lord, Who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of Thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. (*For Grace to receive the Word*).

1. In what ways does the Triune God make Himself known?

A. Through the existence of the world (natural knowledge of God)

Psalms 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

Hebrews 3:4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.

Romans 1:19-20 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Psalms 14:1a The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

B. Through conscience (natural knowledge of God)

Romans 2:15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*)

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress **the truth** in unrighteousness,

C. Especially through the Holy Scriptures (revealed knowledge of God)

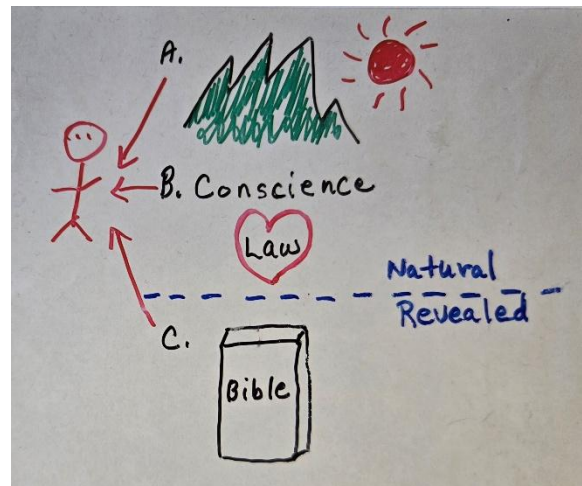
1 Corinthians 1:21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

John 20:30-31, And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

2 Timothy 3:15-16 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;



2. Where is God's truth about our Savior Jesus Christ made known?

In the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Scriptures.

Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

Luke 24:27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Ephesians 2:20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—

3. What is Christianity? Christianity is the

(1) _____ and _____ which

(2) God has _____

(3) in and through _____.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

1 John 5:11-12 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹²He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

4. By what authority do we read the Scripture correctly? Throughout history, there have been a number of different attempts to provide a "grounding" for religious beliefs. There are so many Christian denominations and cults that claim to have the correct interpretation. Some of those ways are...

A. Experience/Emotion - that which the individual "feels" to be true is true. Truth is defined in subjective categories. And thus the Scriptures mean different things to different people.

B. Reason/intellect - Human reason interprets Scripture. That which can be rationally demonstrated is true. Human reason is the final judge.

C. Personal - A "charismatic leader" gives the official interpretation and engenders obedience from his followers.

D. Institutional - A particular organization with its traditions and leadership structures gives the official interpretation.

5. **What happens when God speaks?** God exercises His Own authority through His Word. God's Word accomplishes His own purposes.

Psalm 33:6, "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth."

Isaiah 55: 10-11, "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

6. **Why do we call the Bible the "Holy Scripture" and consider it to be Inspired and Inerrant?**

Though Holy Scripture is written in human language, nevertheless it is God's Word. He worked through individual men (Moses, Isaiah, Matthew, etc.), so that the words which they wrote were His Holy Word and thus were without error. Thus we read individual passages in light of their immediate context as well as the context of the whole of Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is given by **inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:21, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

John 10:35b, ...and the Scripture cannot be broken

Acts 24:14, "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.

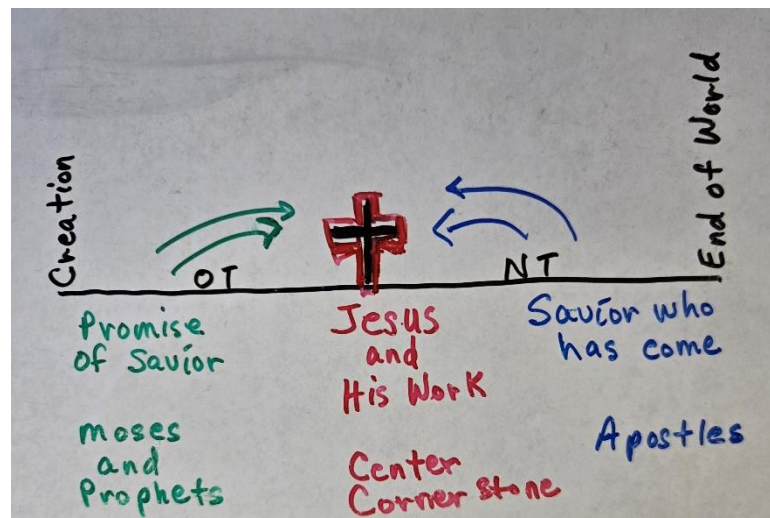
7. **The Scriptures are clear words which present what man must know to be saved.**

The Scriptures are not dark, hard to understand, and obscure writings which men must make clear.

Psalm 25 :4-5, "Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."

2 Peter 1:19, "And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place "



8. What is the key to the correct interpretation of the Bible?

Jesus is the heart, center and purpose.

John 5:39 “You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

Acts 10:43 “To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.”

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

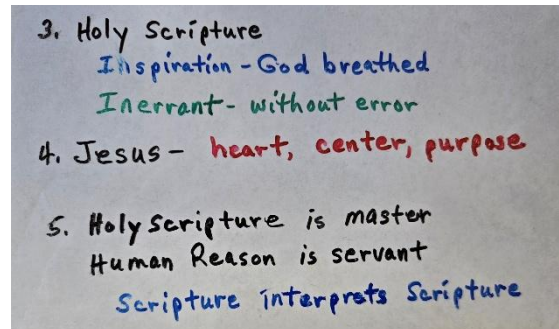
2 Timothy 3:15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

9. How is human reason to be used in understanding the Holy Scripture?

Holy Scripture is the _____.

Human reason is the _____.

_____ interprets Scripture.



Romans 3:4, Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written:
“That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged.”

2 Corinthians 10:5, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
Psalm 119:73, Give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments.

Acts 17:11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so.

Colossians 2:8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

10. The Holy Christian Church and the Office of the Holy Ministry

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” Amen.

Matthew 18:17 “And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

11. What basic distinction must we keep in mind in order to understand the Bible?

The proper distinction between the Law and the Gospel.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:6b ...for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

The Law was given through _____
(Ex. 20, Dt. 5)

The Law _____

The Gospel was given through _____

The Gospel gives _____

What does God teach and do in the Law?

In the law God commands good works of thought, word, and deed and condemns and punishes sin.

Mark 12:30-31 “And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is* the first commandment. ³¹And the second, like *it*, *is* this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

_____ must do.

_____ commands.

The Ten Commandments say, again and again,

“You _____.”

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Accuses = S _____

O _____

S _____

John 5:45 ...there is *one* who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust.

Romans 7:7, 10 ... I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.”... ¹⁰And the commandment, which *was* to *bring* life, I found to *bring* death.

Judges Heart, Soul, Mind
BAD NEWS

What does God teach and do in the Gospel?

The Gospel is the good news of our salvation in Jesus Christ. In the Gospel God gives forgiveness, faith, life and the power to please Him with good works.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

_____ has done and does.

_____ gives.

The Gospel declares, “it is the _____ of God” (Eph 2:8-9).

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Empowers = S _____

O _____

S _____

Romans 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

Gives Forgiveness, Faith, Life, Strength
GOOD NEWS

12. How does the Small Catechism sum up Christian doctrine?

1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

What is a catechism? An Instruction Book. “They {*Dr. Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms*} are ‘the layman’s Bible’ and contain everything which Holy Scripture discusses at greater length and which a Christian must know for his salvation” (FC EP, I, 5)

Who wrote our Small Catechism? Dr. Martin Luther. Our church has been using it since 1529.

Why are all six chief parts of the Small Catechism taken from the Bible alone?

Doctrine is to be based only on God’s Word.

Preface to Luther’s Small Catechism

¹ The deplorable conditions which I recently encountered when I was a visitor constrained me to prepare this brief and simple catechism or statement of Christian teaching. ² Good God, what wretchedness I beheld! The common people, especially those who live in the country, have no knowledge whatever of Christian teaching, and unfortunately many pastors are quite incompetent and unfitted for teaching. ³ Although the people are supposed to be Christian, are baptized, and receive the holy sacrament, **they do not know the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments,**³ they live as if they were pigs and irrational beasts, and now that the Gospel has been restored they have mastered the fine art of abusing liberty....

¹⁹ You should also take pains to urge governing authorities and **parents to rule wisely and educate their children.** They must be shown that they are obliged to do so, and that they are guilty of damnable sin if they do not do so, for by such neglect they undermine and lay waste both the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world and are the worst enemies of God and man.

Daily Devotion

1. Say: "In the name of the Father and of the ✚ Son and of the Holy Ghost. AMEN."
2. HYMN (ASBH, LW #337, TLH 264)
Preserve To Us the Treasure, Of Thy pure Word, dear Lord,
Increase Thy kingdom's measure, Strength to Thy Church afford
Keep us in faith forever, Our hope's true beacon light;
And let Thy gospel ever Shine thro' sin's dreary night. (stanza 1)
3. Pray Psalm 25:1-11
4. Scripture Readings:
Hear the Word of God as recorded in _____.
Readings:
Day 1 --2 Timothy 3:14-17
Day 2 -John 1
Day 3 -John 2
Day 4 -John 3
Day 5 -John 4
Day 6 -John 5
After the reading say: Thanks be to God.
5. Lord's Prayer
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen
6. Prayer - Luther's Morning Prayer
I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray Thee that Thou wouldst keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please Thee. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen. Amen.
or Luther's Evening Prayer
I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast graciously kept me this day; and I pray Thee that Thou wouldst forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.
7. Say: "May the almighty and most merciful God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Ghost, bless and preserve us. AMEN."

Large Catechism, II.

63 Here in the Creed you have the entire essence of God, his will, and his work exquisitely depicted in very short but rich words. In them consists all our wisdom, which surpasses all the wisdom, understanding, and reason of men. Although the whole world has sought painstakingly to learn what God is and what he thinks and does, yet it has never succeeded in the least. But here you have everything in richest measure. 64 In these three articles God himself has revealed and opened to us the most profound depths of his fatherly heart, his sheer, unutterable love. He created us for this very purpose, to redeem and sanctify us. Moreover, having bestowed upon us everything in heaven and on earth, he has given us his Son and his Holy Spirit, through whom he brings us to himself. 65 **As we explained before, we could never come to recognize the Father's favor and grace were it not for the Lord Christ, who is a mirror of the Father's heart.** Apart from him we see nothing but an angry and terrible Judge. But neither could we know anything of Christ, had it not been revealed by the Holy Spirit.

66 These articles of the Creed, therefore, divide and distinguish us Christians from all other people on earth. All who are outside the Christian church, whether heathen, Turks, Jews, or false Christians and hypocrites, even though they believe in and worship only the one, true God, nevertheless do not know what his attitude is toward them. They cannot be confident of his love and blessing. Therefore they remain in eternal wrath and damnation, for they do not have the Lord Christ, and, besides, they are not illuminated and blessed by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Large Catechism, Preface.

⁵ Besides, a shameful and insidious plague of security and boredom has overtaken us. Many regard the Catechism as a simple, silly teaching which they can absorb and master at one reading. After reading it once they toss the book into a corner as if they are ashamed to read it again. ⁶ Indeed, even among the nobility there are some louts and skinflints who declare that we can do without pastors and preachers from now on because they have everything in books and can learn it all by ourselves. So they blithely let parishes fall into decay, and brazenly allow both pastors and preachers to suffer distress and hunger. This is what one can expect of crazy Germans. We Germans have such disgraceful people among us and must put up with them.

⁷ As for myself, let me say that I, too, am a doctor and a preacher — yes, and as learned and experienced as any of those who act so high and mighty. **Yet I do as a child who is being taught the Catechism. Every morning, and whenever else I have time, I read and recite word for word the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Psalms, etc.** ⁸ **I must still read and study the Catechism daily, yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the Catechism, and I do it gladly.** These dainty, fastidious fellows would like quickly, with one reading, to become doctors above all doctors, to know all there is to be known. Well, this, too, is a sure sign that they despise both their office and the people's souls, yes, even God and his Word. They need not fear a fall, for they have already fallen all too horribly. What they need is to become children and begin learning their ABC's, which they think they have outgrown long ago.

⁹ Therefore, I beg these lazy-bellies and presumptuous saints, for God's sake, to get it into their heads that they are not really and truly such learned and great doctors as they think. I implore them not to imagine that they have learned these parts of the Catechism perfectly, or at least sufficiently, even though they think they know them ever so well. **Even if their knowledge of Catechism were perfect (though that is impossible in this life), yet it is highly profitable and fruitful daily to read it and make it the subject of meditation and conversation. In such reading, conversation, and meditation the Holy Spirit is present and bestows ever new and greater light and fervor, so that day by day we relish and appreciate the Catechism more greatly.** This is according to Christ's promise in Matt. 18:20, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Tappert)