

CHRISTIANITY

THE WAY

OF LIFE

A Bible study of the Basic Christian teachings
as summarized in Luther's Small Catechism

INTRODUCTION LIFE LINES

- I. This Study - Learning about life
- II. The Bible - God's Word in the language of men
- III. Bible Study - Read, mark and inwardly digest
- IV. Law and Gospel - Double edged truth.

UNIT ONE: Commandments LIFE STYLE

Chapter One *Relationship with God*

- I. God's Law - God's for good, ours to keep
- II. 1st Command – Personal relationship with God
- III. 2nd Command – Using God's powerful name
- IV. 3rd Command - Time together with God

Chapter Two *Relationship with other people*

- V. 4th Command - Authorities representing God
- VI. 5th Command - Human life and health
- VII. 6th Command - Human sexuality
- IIIX.7th Command - Personal Possessions
- IX. 8th Command - Truth and justice
- X. 9th & 10th Command - Desires and ambitions

UNIT TWO Creed LIFE SOURCE

Chapter One *First Article: God the Father*

- I. Creeds & Faith - I believe in one God
- II. Creation - Creator of heaven and earth
- III. Preservation - And still preserves them
- IV. Fall into Sin - The Father and the fall

Chapter Two *Second Article: God the Son*

- V. Person of Jesus - Son of God and Son of Man
- VI. Humiliation -Jesus the Savior
- VII.Exaltation - Who lives and reigns
- IIIX.Offices of Christ - Christ the Lord

Chapter Three *Third Article: God the Holy Spirit*

- IX. Spirit and his Work - Holy Spirit, holy people
- X. Church - The holy family
- XI. Forgiveness -Separated from Sin
- XII.Resurrection - God makes all things new

UNIT THREE Lord's Prayer LIFE CYCLE

Chapter One *What we ask for God*

- I. Prayer - Talking to God
- II. 1st Petition - Living as God's children
- III. 2nd Petition - Growing God's kingdom
- IV. 3rd Petition - Doing God's will

Chapter Two *What we Ask for Ourselves*

- V. 4th Petition - Getting daily bread
- VI. 5th Petition - Having forgiveness
- VII.6th Petition - Escaping temptation
- IIIX.7th Petition & Close - Deliverance from evil

UNIT FOUR Means of Grace LIFE SUPPORTS

Chapter One *Holy Baptism*

- I. Means of Grace (3rd Part) - God's tool box
- II. First Part - Washing away sin
- III. Second Part - God pours it on
- IV. Fourth Part - Fresh every day

Chapter Two *Office of the Keys and Confession*

- V. Office of the Keys - Forgiveness is for giving
- VI. Public Ministry - One for All
- VII.Confession - Forgiveness is for getting

Chapter Three *Holy Communion*

- IIIX.The Sacrament - Do this in remembrance
- IX. Benefits and Power - For the forgiveness of sins
- X. Worthy Reception - Given for you

THE BIBLE

God's Word in Human Language

1. How can we know about God?

- A. All people have a limited natural knowledge of God and what he expects.
- a. Rom. 1:18-20 also Psal. 19:1, Heb. 3:4
What can we see that shows us there is a powerful, eternal, God? (v. 20)
- b. Rom. 2:14-15
What tells us that some things must be right and we do some things wrong? (v. 15)
- B. We need God to give us a clear and complete knowledge of him and his truth.
- a. Rom. 1:21-23 also Eph. 4:17-18, 1 Co. 8:7
What do those who have only nature imagine God to be like? (v. 23)
- b. Heb. 1:1-2 [6]
How has God clearly spoken to us?
(v. 1)
(v. 2)
- c. John 1:17 also Deut 4:13
How has God clearly revealed what is right, the "law"? (v. 17)
- also Matt. 16:13-17, John 20:31, Rom 10:13-17
How has God revealed his grace, the "Gospel" (v. 17)

*According to the "law of the jungle", what happens to those that are weak or make mistakes?
If your conscience told you something was wrong but you and others kept doing it anyway, what do you think your conscience would begin to say?*

We have some natural knowledge of God and his will from his creation and our conscience, but we have clear, complete and enduring knowledge of God and his law only from his direct revelation. We know the gospel of God's grace only through his direct revelation, as in the Bible

2. How has God revealed himself directly?

- A. God has used various ways to speak to people such as:
- a. Num. 12:6 also Gen. 15:1, 1 Kings 3:5, Joel 2:28;
Matt. 1:20-21, 2:13; Acts 9:1-16, 10:1-20, 16:9
- b. Luke 1:11-13: also Luke 1:26-28, John 20:10-13,

c. Matt. 3:17: also Gen. 3:8-9, Exod. 3:4,
Acts 9:3-4, Rev. 1:10-11

d. Heb. 1:1 [6] also 1 Thess. 2:13, 1 Cor. 2:13, Acts 3:17,
2 Kings 17:13

B. God has specially revealed every thing we need to know about him today through...

a. Heb. 1:2 [6] also John 14:21, 17:1-8

b. 2 Tim 3:15-17 [15] also Rom 1:1-2, 2 Pet. 3:15-16,
John 20:31

If you received a message about God or that appear to be from God, what could you use to check and see if it was reliable?

God has revealed himself by dreams, visions, angels, voices, prophets and preachers, and especially by Jesus and the written Bible.

3. How Was the Bible Written?

- A. The writers of the Bible were inspired (breathed into) by God.
- a. 2 Pet. 1:21 [16] also 2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 3:15-16;
Rev. 1:11, 19; 2:1
Where do the ideas in the Bible come from?
- b. 1 Cor. 2:13 also Ex. 34:27, Jer. 30:1-2;
Rev. 19:9, 21:5
Where do all the words of the Bible come from?

B. God had the Bible writers use their own languages (Hebrew and Greek) with their own vocabulary and styles.

When you hear a musical instrument such as a trumpet, saxophone or flute, being played, what is causing the music? What determines exactly which notes are heard? Would different instruments, played by the same musician sound the same or different?

God caused certain men to write the words that they wrote (verbal inspiration) in their own native languages.

4. How do we know that what the Bible says is true?

- A. God has brought us to faith in Jesus.
- Rom. 10:17 also 1 Thess. 2:13,
John 19:25
What does God use to give us faith in Jesus?
 - John 14:26 [13] also John 16:13
What causes us to believe what we do?
- B. Jesus himself considered God's word in the Bible to be true.
- Luke 24:44 also John 5:39
Jesus said Old Testament prophecies will be
 - John 17:17 also Numb. 23:19, John 21:24, Rom 3:4
God's word is...
- C. The Bible accurately records the past
- 1 John 1:1 [10] also John 19:35
John writes what he himself and other witnesses...
 - Josh. 1:4; Esther 1:1
Archaeology has found evidence of these individuals once thought to be fictional.
- D. The Bible has accurately predicted unforeseeable details of the future.
- Is 44:28, 45:1 and 2 Chron. 36:22-23
The temple is restored by...
 - Is. 7:14 and Luke 1:30, 35
Jesus' mother is a ...
 - Daniel 2:39, 44 and Luke 3:1-2 and Matt 3:1-2
John announces the coming of God's...
 - Isaiah 53:4-12 and John 19:20-9
Jesus dies along with...
his body is ...
he is buried in the grave of...
he comes back to...

Psal. 22:18 and Matt. 27:35
Gamblers divide Jesus'...
- How do you know if what you hear on the news or read in textbooks is true?*
How can you tell when people you know are telling the truth, lying or just kidding?

We know that what the Bible says is true (inerrant) because Jesus considered it true, and especially because it is the source of what we know about Jesus. It is effective in giving us faith. Also, it accurately records the past and predicts the future,

Remember for Life

Books of the New Testament

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts,
Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians,
Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians,
1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians,
1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus
Philemon, Hebrews,
James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter,
1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude,
Revelation

2 Peter 1:21

For prophecy never had its origin
in the will of man,
but men spoke from God
as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

John 1:17-18

For the law was given through Moses;
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
No one has ever seen God,
but God the One and Only,
who is at the Father's side,
has made him known.

Review Questions

- From which two sources can everyone know something about God?
- What are the two general kinds of knowledge about God?
- Which is the only way to know fully and certainly about God?
- What are some ways God has revealed himself directly?
- Through which of these ways does God tell us all we need to know today?
- How did the Bible come to be written?
- What does inspiration mean?
- What are some reasons that we know the Bible is true?

9. Which do you think is the most important or significant reason?

BIBLE STUDY

Read, Mark, Learn and Take to Heart

1. How should we use God's word in the Bible?

A. We should seek to know, understand and apply the Bible in our lives as much as possible.

Identify what each of the following verses says about what we should do with God's word in the Bible.

- a. Deut 6:6 also Psal. 119:11; Rom. 10:8
- b. Deut 6:7 also: Rom. 10:14-15, 2 Tim. 4:2
- c. Deut. 17:18-19 also Deut 31:11
- d. John 5:39 also: Acts 17:11
- e. John 14:23 also: Luke 11:28
- f. Rev. 1:3 also: 1 Thes. 2:13; 1 Tim. 4:9
- g. Col. 4:16

We should use God's word by reading, listening to, believing, studying, learning by heart, living by and sharing it with others.

2. What are the basic guidelines for Bible study?

A. The main **purpose** of the Bible is to point to Christ.

- a. John 5:39 also: Rom. 15:4
Whom do the Old Testament Scriptures describe?
- b. John 20:31 also: 1 Jn. 4:13
Why were the books of the New Testament written?
- c. 2 Tim. 3:15-17
What is the first thing the Bible teaches us? (v. 15)

What does the Bible also teach us? (v. 17)

B. The **source** of the Bible is God.

- a. 2 Pet. 1:21 also 2 Tim. 3:16
Where did the Bible come from?
- b. 1 Cor. 2:13
Where did the Bible writers get their words?

- c. John 17:17 also: Num. 23:19
What can we know for sure about the whole Bible?

"Inspiration" means "breathed into", as one breathes into an instrument to make music. This word pictures how God put into various writers, languages and styles the exact words that he wanted to express his own ideas.

C. The **nature** of the Bible is spiritual.

- 1 Cor. 2:13-14 also John 16:13
What do we need in order to understand what the Bible is saying?

D. The Bible explains itself by a **connection** between the different parts that helps each Christian to see clearly what it says and means.

- a. Matt 22:29
What will keep us from making mistakes about the Bible?
- b. 2 Pet. 3:16
Are some parts of the Bible hard to understand?
- 2 Cor. 1:13-14
Can we understand the Bible?

Where do we start? (v. 14)

- c. Mark 4:2-3, 10-14
How do we know what the picture language of the Bible means? (v. 10)

- d. 2 Cor. 3:14-16 also John 5:39
What do we need to know to understand the whole Bible clearly?

The purpose of the whole Bible is first to be a textbook of salvation, pointing us to Christ and what he did. Secondly, it is a textbook of sanctification, showing us how to live as Christians.

The source of the Bible is God, who inspired the words so that each one is true and important.

The nature of the Bible is spiritual. It will not always make sense to human reason but the Holy Spirit makes us able to understand it through faith.

The Bible explains itself by a connection between the parts so that every Christian can...

- understand the parts in the light of the whole Bible.
- understand difficult parts in the light of parts that are easier to understand.
- understand "figurative" parts in light of the "literal".
- understand everything in the light of Christ.

3. What should we look for when studying the Bible?

A. First ask, "What does it say?"

To answer this question, use:

- a. vocabulary
- b. context
- c. parallel passages
- d. various translations
- c. commentaries

B. Second ask, "What does it mean?" (doctrine).

C. Third ask, "What does it mean for me?"
(application).

LAW AND GOSPEL

Double Edged Truth

1. What does the Bible teach?

A. The Bible teaches the law and the Gospel.

a. John 1:17 [29] also Deut 4:1-2, Matt 5:17-19
What do we learn especially from Moses?

b. John 1:17 [29] also Isa. 61:1, Mark 1:1
What do we learn especially from Jesus?

A fist can be used to threaten and to punish. An open hand can be used to show friendship and to offer gifts. Both can be sides of the same hand. God's word has two sides, the law and the gospel, both of them true and necessary. Which side of God's word is like the fist? Which side of God's word is like the open hand?

The whole Bible teaches two messages, the law and the gospel.

2. What is the law?

A. The law is God's word to show us our sin.

a. Lev. 19:2 also Ex. 34:11, Matt. 22:37
What does God say we must do and be?

b. Rom 3:23 also Is. 64:6, Rom. 3:9-12
What does God say we have done?

c. Rom. 6:23 also James 2:10, Ezek. 18:20, Gal. 3:20
What does God tell us about what we deserve and suffer?

d. Psal. 5:4-5 also Deut. 32:4, Rom 1:18
What does God tell us about what he is and does?

B. God uses the law for good purposes.

a. Rom. 2:14-15 [246] also 1 Tim. 1:8-10, Ps. 119:120
What is one way to know God's law? (v. 15)

What does it sometimes make people do?
(v. 14)

b. Rom. 3:20 [247] also John 5:45, Rom. 7:7, 13,
What does the law show us? Gal. 3:24, James 2:10

c. Psal. 119:105 [250] also Psal. 119:9, Mark 12:30-31
What does the law do for those who want to do right?

C. The law is limited in its usefulness.

a. Rom. 3:20 [247] also Isa. 27:11-13, Gal. 3:11
What cannot happen through the law?

b. Eph. 2:8-9 also Deut. 9:4-6
What does not result from our keeping the law?

How are the three uses of the law like...?

- a guardrail on a bridge to ___

- "rumble strips" on a road to ___

- an exit sign on the interstate to ___

a. keep us from falling into danger.

b. show where we want to go.

c. wake us up, or alert us we are off course or need to stop.

The Law, which shows our sin, is the Bible teaching that...

- we must be holy and do right.

- we have done wrong and deserve punishment

- God is always just and hates sin.

God's law is useful as...

1. a curb or fence to warn people not to do wrong.

2. a mirror to show us our sin and need to be saved

3. a guide or rule to tell believers how to show love for God.

The law cannot be used to make people truly good, loving or righteous; or to earn God's love, forgiveness or other blessings.

3. What is the Gospel?

A. The Gospel is God's word to show our Savior.

a. Rom. 5:8 also Rom. 5:6, 6:23, 8:1; Eph. 1:3-8, 1 Jn. 4:9
What has God done for us?

b. Eph. 2:8-9 also Rom. 1:16, 3:21-26, 6:23; Phil. 2:13
What does God want to give us?

c. John 3:16 [270] also Gen. 8:21, Exod. 34:6, Psal. 136
What is God's attitude toward us?

B. The Gospel does what the law cannot.

a. 1 Cor. 15:2 also Rom. 1:16, Gal. 3:13, Eph. 2:8-9
What does the Gospel do for us?

b. 1 Jn. 4:19 also Deut. 24:18, 1 Cor. 15:57-58, Eph. 4:1,
What does the Gospel make us do? Titus :2:11-12

Which of these is like the law or like the gospel?

- a road sign which reads "Danger, road closed"

- a road sign which reads "Detour" and points the way around the obstacle to reach our goal.

- a doctor's diagnosis of why we are sick.

- a doctor's prescription for what will cure us.

The Gospel, which shows us our Savior, is the Bible teaching that...

- God forgives because of what Jesus did.
 - God wants us to have life and salvation.
 - God is always kind, loving and gracious
 The gospel alone can give us salvation, through faith, and a desire to love and serve God.

Law and gospel must always be used together. Using gospel alone produces false security or disinterest. Using law alone produces pride or despair.
 The law must always be taught first and the gospel second.
 The law should be preached especially to those who feel secure in their sins. The gospel should be preached especially to those who are sorry for their sins.

4. How should the law and the gospel be used?

- A. Law and Gospel must be used together.
- a. Isa. 65:1-2 also Isa. 6:9-10
 How do some respond to God's love?

 - b. Luke 18:18-23 also Luke 18:9-13
 What did this man think about the law? (v. 21)

 How did he feel after hearing more of the law? (v. 23)
- B. Law and Gospel must be used in order.
- a. Acts 20:21 also Mark 1:15
 What is the first part of Paul's message?

 What is the second part of the message?
 - b. Which part is law? Which part is gospel?
- C. Law and Gospel must be used as needed.
- a. 1 Tim. 1:9 [245] also Isa 23:10; Matt. 19:18-22,
 Whom especially needs 23:23-28; Luke 18:18-23
 to hear the law?
 - b. Isa 61:1-3 also Luke 7:37-38, 48; Luke 23:40-43;
 Whom especially needs to hear Acts 2:37-39
 the gospel?

The God's word is like a basket with two handles, law and gospel. If we hold on to only one, we will spill and lose the full meaning.

God's word is like a battery with two poles, positive and negative. Unless we stay in contact with both of them, we have no power for action in our spiritual life.

God's word is like a bicycle with two wheels. The front on points you where you are to go. Without it you would crash into things. Only the back one has the power to make you go. Which one is like the law? Which one is like the gospel?

- Similarities of the law and the gospel:
- Both are God's word and are always true.
 - Both are powerful tools to change hearts and lives.
 - Both are needed by Christians every day.
- Differences between the law and the gospel:
- WHERE we learn about them.
 The law is revealed imperfectly by our conscience and perfectly by the Bible.
 The gospel is revealed only in the Bible.
 - WHO does the action.
 The law is about what we should do or not do.
 The gospel is about what God did and does for us.
 - WHY and how they get our attention and produce results
 The law always threatens and gives conditional promises.
 The gospel always comforts and gives unconditional promises.
 - WHAT result they produce in those who hear them
 The law causes sorrow which leads to repentance but can also cause rebellion, despair and death.
 The gospel causes faith, peace, joy and love and gives life.
 - WHEN they should be preached
 The law must be preached to as long as people are secure sinners who do not repent from sin.
 The gospel must be preached to sinners as soon as they are sorry for sin and want to change.

REMEMBER FOR LIFE

What does God say about all these commandments?

He says: "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments." [Ex. 20:5-6]

Rom. 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 4:19

We love because he first loved us.

Review Questions

The Bible has how many main messages? What are they?

What does the law tell us?

Who must do it? What is the result for us? What is God like?

In what three ways is the law to be used?

What can never be done through the law?

What does the gospel tell us?

Who is doing it? What is the result for us? What God is like?

What do we receive through the gospel?

What are some guidelines for using and teaching law and gospel?