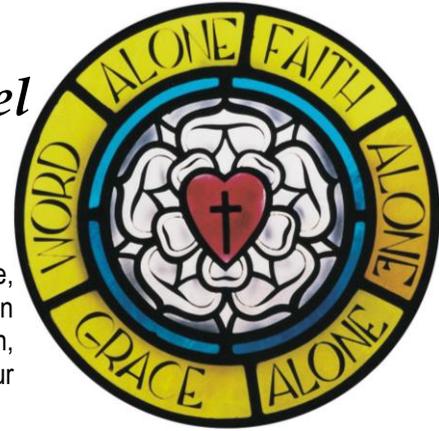




Weekly Law & Gospel Bible Study



The law & Gospel method of Bible study is the Church's traditional way to study the Bible, which was popularized by Martin Luther. Law & Gospel Bible study makes a distinction between God's two main Biblical themes: law & Gospel. God's law theme identifies our sin, by revealing what God wants us to do that we don't do. God's Gospel theme identifies our need for Jesus the Savior, and reveals how God's love offers us salvation through Christ.

STEP ONE PRAY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO REVEAL GOD'S VOICE THROUGH THE TEXT:

"Father, let your law and Gospel voice renew our love, faith, and hope."

STEP TWO READ THE TEXT REPEATEDLY UNTIL YOU CAN TELL IT IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

John 8:31-36 (See the reverse side of the worksheet for the printed Gospel text)

STEP THREE REVIEW A STUDY BIBLE TO DETERMINE THE TEXT'S THEOLOGICAL MEANING:

* *This Sunday is Reformation Sunday when we celebrate our Lutheran heritage and membership in the oldest and largest Protestant denomination. And yet, in what ways do we cling to that heritage instead of to Christ?*

* *Do we really know Christ Jesus to be the "truth" (v 32)? In "what" or "whom" do we place our faith? For many, faith and trust is put in the security of our incomes, investments, and retirement prospects. Whenever Jesus no longer becomes the "truth that sets us free," we lose our freedom (v 31).*

* *The ultimate tragedy is that God has no room for the religious, or being Lutheran. Without faith in Christ alone, we miss the promise. The faithless are deprived of any permanent place in God's "household" (v.35).*

* *Faith alone frees us: + from the power of sin, + for the ability to continue in the Word. Truly living a life of faith in Christ is what we celebrate on Reformation Sunday.*

* *The "faith" proclaimed by Paul, and Augustine, and then eventually Luther is a living faith in Christ that is real in our daily living. It is faith in Christ that revealed the truth to Luther and "set him free."*

* *It was the gift of faith that enabled Luther to continue in God's Word. It was faith in Christ that animated and empowered Luther's discipleship. It was faith that shaped Luther's reforms. And, it is faith in Christ that reveals God's truth to us about our sinful bondage and the new ability Christ offers us to continue in his Word.*

* *The Spirit's gift of faith connects us to Christ and offers us a place in God's "household." Getting into the household comes from having a member of the house, who lives there, invite us in. Christ Jesus is that one.*

* *What is faith?*

- 1.) **Ability** to believe/cling to the Crucified one for salvation.
- 2.) **Given** through baptism to reveal our sinful separation from God.



John 8:31-36 ³¹Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, ‘If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’ ³³They answered him, ‘We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, “You will be made free”?’ ³⁴Jesus answered them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

STEP FOUR COMPLETE A LAW & GOSPEL BIBLE STUDY TO *Restore Hope in the Savior*

Law Question: How does this text reveal our sin (self-centeredness) and how we do not live as God desires?

Answer.....

Gospel Question: How does this text reveal God’s gift of Jesus as the Savior who freely offers us salvation?

Answer.....

Please send your “answers” to Pastor Bob: Schmalzle@yahoo.com which he likes to incorporate into the sermon.

STEP FIVE PRAYERFULLY MEDITATE UPON GOD’S GOSPEL VOICE: *Restoring Our Hope*

A. Quieting Our Inner Sanctuary: We quiet our hearts (souls) by focusing on our breathing. Breathe in slowly to the count of five (J-E-S-U-S)...hold your breath to a count of six (C-H-R-I-S-T)...exhale to a count of seven (T-H-E-L-O-R-D). Repeat this pattern of breathing until you are relaxed.

B. Dwelling within Our Inner Sanctuary: We meet the Lord Jesus in the sanctuary of our hearts (souls), which is a place created within our mind’s eye for us to be with the Lord. Using our favorite sights, sounds, smells and feelings, we visualize our inner sanctuary as a place of peace where the Lord Jesus meets us.

C. Listening to God’s Voice in Scripture Speak to Us through Jesus: As Jesus meets us in our inner sanctuary, he lovingly shares God’s Gospel message of hope from the Scripture text we have just studied. Listening to God’s Gospel voice restores our trust and hope that Jesus’ death and resurrection freely offers us eternal Salvation. When Jesus speaks to us, our souls are nourished and refreshed.

STEP SIX SHARE THIS LAW & GOSPEL BIBLE STUDY WITH A FRIEND:

Forward this via email, give a printed copy, or post on social media