



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:**

**Luke 3:1-6** (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:**

John helps the people to be ready to receive the Messiah by inviting them to be baptized in the river Jordan. It was across this river that they entered the Promised Land after years of wandering; it is now the place to enter into the era of the Messiah. It symbolized that the passage from wandering about in the desert to settling down now becomes the passage from sin and death to grace and new life in God. John administered the baptism to those who accepted their own sins and their need of God and wanted to be forgiven. John and the people believed that it was not a human being but God who was forgiving them their sins. Our Baptism is the external expression of dying to the old self of sin and the determination to rise and live a new risen life with Jesus who is victorious over sin and death. The season of Advent is to help us prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus in a meaningful way. The commercial world proposes Christmas preparation in terms of material gifts. But without the preparation at the deeper level of the heart and the desire to be reconciled with God and with each other, Christmas will remain just another occasion to have good parties and then to continue living as before. Advent might be a good occasion to celebrate the way in which our baptism reconciles us to God and to others in our daily lives.



**Luke 3: 1-6** In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, 2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. 3 He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, 4 as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; 6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

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

Answer.....  
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Please send your "answers" to Pastor Bob: [Schmalzle@yahoo.com](mailto: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 like and re-post on social media*