



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:

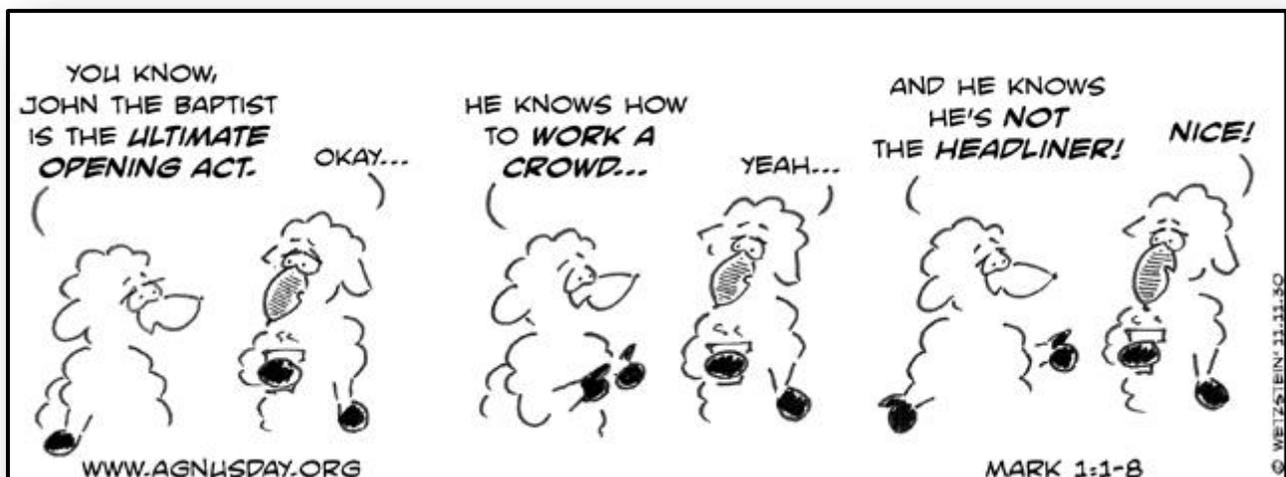
"Father, let your law and Gospel voice renew our love, faith, and hope."

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

Mark 1:1-8 (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 the Baptist pointed to the true help coming in Jesus. "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit," John said. When God helps, he doesn't just explain the problem and tell us where to get further help if we need it. Nor does he command and then expect us to live up to the commandments under our own ability. He gives commands to show us how much we need, and then he himself helps us completely, withholding nothing, giving us all that we need and more. That is what happens in Baptism. Christ doesn't simply mark us out for a gift and wait to see how we'll respond. Nor does he withhold the gift for some future date. He gives everything in Baptism, declaring us his own and sending his Spirit into us to "call, gather, enlighten, sanctify and keep us" as his own, as the Small Catechism's explanation of the Third Article says. That is the comfort of the gospel. People go part way in dealing with others. They take the initiative, then wait for a response. But Christ goes all the way, not only taking the initiative but creating the response in us by giving us faith as a gift of the Holy Spirit. He both promises to be our Lord and gives us the faith to believe it, coming to us again and again in his Spirit, keeping us in the faith to which he restores us. The good news in the Gospel for this Sunday is heard when we recognize who acts. Ordinarily we assume that we have the action, at least some of it - that God goes part way and that we meet him and complete the task, working faith in ourselves, but "all flesh is grass," as Isaiah says. "The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever" (vv.6-8). God is the one who takes the action, and he takes it all. As he sent his word of comfort to Israel, he speaks his word to us. And as he speaks to us, he also goes to work in the sacraments to give us every gift.



Mark 1:1-8 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" ⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

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