



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:

**Matthew 14:22-33** (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 Gospel provides a summary of how our faith matures: At first we are attracted to Jesus and give him a place in our hearts, trusting that our life will be better with him. For the most part we limit Jesus to our hearts. The areas of our daily life - school, business, leisure, relationships, marriage, etc. - are experienced without Jesus. Then it happens, a storm of life appears. Whether or not we turn to Jesus for help is not always certain. At some point our faith in Jesus experiences a new level of maturity when we cry out for Jesus to help us through one of the storms of life. As we go through life there are many storms and many opportunities to cry out to Jesus to help us. Usually, at some particular point, usually out of necessity, we deepen our dependency upon Jesus' saving power in the midst of a difficult storm. The Church's first great theologian, St. Augustine, wrote much about how our faith in Jesus becomes more mature. His commentary on this Gospel says, "The boat that is carrying the disciples is like the Church, tossed and shaken by the tempests of temptation, which come from the devil. But, greater is, 'He who is the Lord' (v. 30). In times of illness, troubles, and a multitude of difficulties we need to be reminded that Jesus taught that, 'God sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.' Fortunately, the storms of life can be for us Christians a great blessing. Unless we experience the storms of life, like Peter, our hearts will never truly learn to cling to Jesus as our Savior. A fearful, broken and troubled heart is the door through which Christ Jesus can find entry. Jesus, the one who saves, comes to us in the midst of our troubles saying to us 'take heart it is I, do not be afraid' (v. 27). Christ uses all the troubles of life to reveal his presence in our hearts and in the world."



**Matthew 14:22-33** <sup>22</sup>Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. <sup>23</sup>And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, <sup>24</sup>but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. <sup>25</sup>And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. <sup>26</sup>But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. <sup>27</sup>But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." <sup>28</sup>Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." <sup>29</sup>He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. <sup>30</sup>But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" <sup>31</sup>Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" <sup>32</sup>When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. <sup>33</sup>And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son 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.....  
 .....  
 .....

**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](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. Quietening 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*