



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 28:16-20** (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:**

After the completion of his work of death and resurrection, Jesus goes before the eleven to Galilee. It is from Galilee that he sends the disciples out to the nations with the Great Commission. So this Gospel appropriately follows the message of Pentecost with its story of the gift of the Spirit to empower the twelve Apostles to carry the gospel to the world. The very name *apostle* means one who is "sent out." Here the apostles are commissioned by Jesus himself to do his work. Baptism is the means that Jesus institutes for bringing those who had not seen him to share his life. From the very beginning, as a response to the resurrection appearances, the young church began to baptize immediately following Pentecost. In Acts 2:38, for example, baptisms are celebrated "in the name of Jesus Christ." The baptismal phrase "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" is less a liturgical formula repeated to make a Baptism valid than it is a description of what Baptism accomplished. A person is baptized *into* the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and was thus incorporated into the fullness of this new life. A new relationship has been established. So the church honors Baptism as the beginning of Christian life; one's own entrance into the church. Baptism is the way that those of us who have not seen Jesus are enabled to share his life. What is celebrated today is not the doctrine of the Trinity, but the nature and mystery of God. If we understand the day properly, we shall be "lost in wonder, love, and praise." *Wonder* is the presence of God the Creator; *love* is the presence of God the Redeemer, who loved us and showed us what love is; and, *praise* inspired by the Spirit, without whom no one can say "Jesus is Lord." The Spirit brings believers to faith in Jesus as the one in whom God acted for us. By proclaiming the gospel, the church offers everyone a means of being a child of God and sharing in a life which is directed and given power by the Spirit, who leads us to acknowledge God as Father and as Savior. Read the explanation of the Third Article of the Creed in the Small Catechism: "I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit called me..." The church's ministry is the direct, unbroken continuation of the ministry of Jesus Christ, in whom the whole work of God comes to a focus.



**Matthew 28:16-20** <sup>16</sup>Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup>When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

**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 re-post on social media