

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:

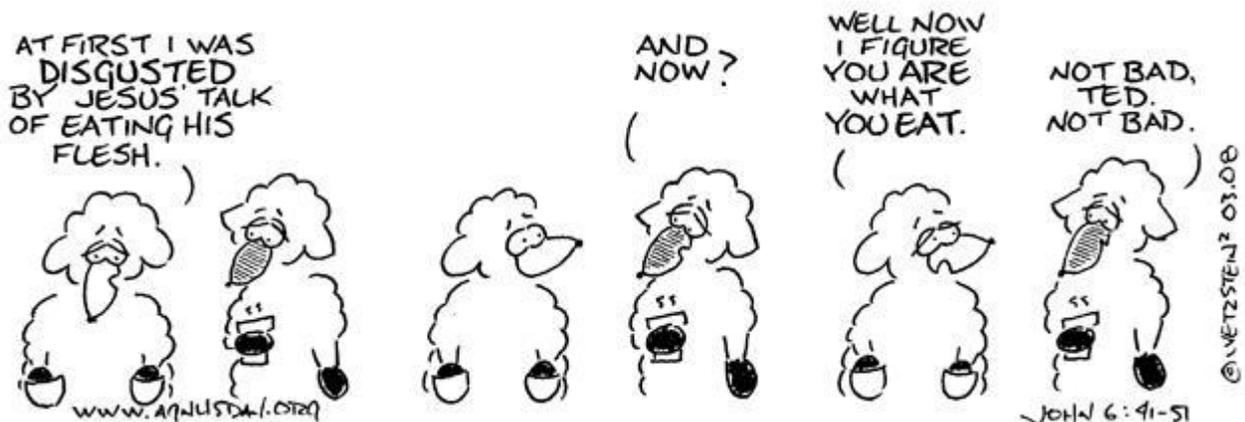
"Father, let your law and Gospel voice renew our love, faith, and hope."

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

John 6:35,41-51 (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:

Jesus invited his listeners to believe in him so that they might have the kind of life that God always wanted for them. The people cannot believe that he has come down from heaven. They know his mother, Mary and his father, Joseph. Knowing his human origin prevents them from believing in his divine origin. Jesus does not try to make his difficult message easier, but repeats that he is the living bread came down from heaven. But to understand and accept who Jesus really is, a person must be drawn by his Father. Faith in Jesus is a gift of God. God is the origin of everything that has happened in the history of salvation. God has always taken the first step. It is He who created the world and everything in it. It is God who invites the people of Israel to make a special covenant with Him and become his people. Now in the person of Jesus, God has taken a new and unique initiative (Hebrews 1:1-2). In the person of his own Son, he shows us that his relationship with us is one of love. God never forces us to come to him. He respects the freedom of his creatures. We can choose to move with the inspiration God puts into our heart or we can refuse and stay where we are. The Gospel concludes with the words, "The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." This statement sounds strange, even offensive. What does this word 'flesh' mean? 'Flesh' in the Bible means the whole person as a creature of God. (e.g. Gen 2:23. 6:13; Mk 10:8; Lk 3:6). The "Word became flesh" (Jn 1:14) means it became fully human. When Jesus says: I give my flesh, he is saying: I give myself totally and freely for the world. Jesus is life-giving and if we wish to live we must receive him as food. It is in Holy Communion that Jesus has given us the sign of the total giving of himself and more than a sign he actually gives us his own flesh to be our food. When we celebrate Holy Communion together that celebration becomes a great moment. We receive Jesus in the Word and in Holy Communion to bring his life to others. By our way of living we give witness to our new life so that the world that seeks life may have it through us.



John 6:35, 41-51 35Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. 41Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" 43Jesus answered them, "Do not complain among yourselves. 44No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. 45It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. 46Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. 47Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48I am the bread of life. 49Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

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. 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