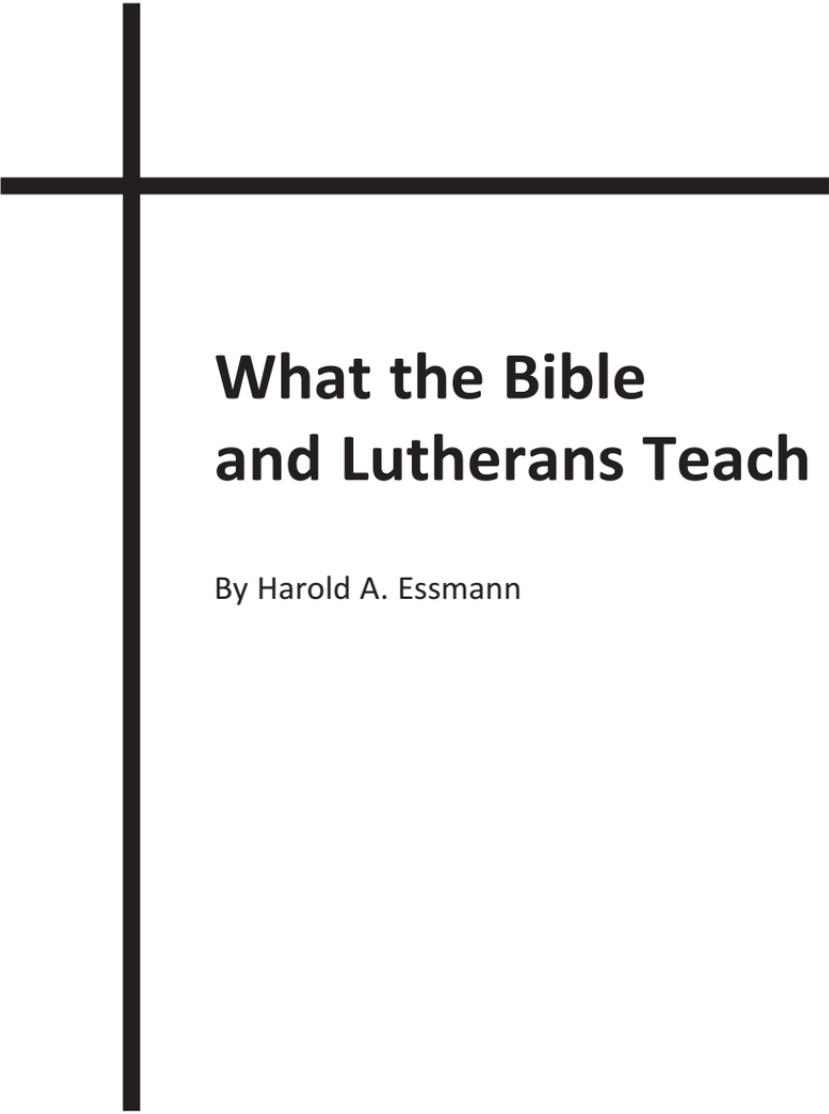




# What the Bible and Lutherans Teach



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By Harold A. Essmann

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Nearly 500 years ago, the Christian church was corrupted by many false teachings. A man named Martin Luther led people back to the teachings of the Bible. His work, and that of his friends, is called the Reformation. Through Luther God restored the church to purity of doctrine and a new life of faith in Christ.

The doctrines of the Lutheran Church are not new. They are the teachings of the Bible. Thus the Lutheran Church is not a new church.

It is not a sect or cult.

It is a church whose teaching is based on the words written by the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New Testament. The Bible tells us about Jesus Christ.

The teachings of the Lutheran Church are those of the original, ancient church of the apostles and early Christians.

This booklet will inform you what the Bible and the Lutheran Church teach.

## THE BIBLE

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that the Bible is the true word of God. It is inspired by the Holy Spirit. This means that God breathed into the writers the exact thoughts and words they were to write. As a result every statement in the Bible is the truth. One part of the Bible explains another part. It is the only guideline for the faith and life of Christians. We are to read and study it diligently. It clearly teaches all we need to know in order to obtain our eternal salvation.

**2 Peter 1:21** *Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

**1 Corinthians 2:13** *This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit.*

**2 Timothy 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed.*

**John 10:35** *The Scripture cannot be broken.*

**2 Timothy 3:15** *From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation.*

**Luke 11:28** *Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.*

**John 5:39** *You diligently study the Scriptures because you think by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me (Jesus).*

## THE TRIUNE GOD

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that there is only one true God. This God is invisible, holy, eternal, and has all power and wisdom. In the Bible God reveals himself as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is why he is called "Triune." These three persons in one God are all God. They are equal in power, glory and in every other quality. To deny or ignore one person is to deny all of them. It is God who created, redeemed and sanctified us.

**Deuteronomy 6:4** *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.*

**Matthew 28:19** *Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

**John 5:23** *He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.*

**Genesis 1:1** *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

**1 John 2:2** *He [Jesus] is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.*

**Romans 15:13** *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

# MAN AND WOMAN

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that men and women are a special creation of God. The first man was created from the dust of the earth. The first woman was made from the rib of man. They were created in God's image. This means that they were without sin and had a perfect knowledge of God. That image was destroyed when Adam and Eve first sinned. People have a soul which no other creature has. God gave us rule over all of his creation. Human beings have a free will in works of this life. But only the Holy Spirit, working through God's Word, can lead a person to love God.

**Genesis 2:7** *The Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.*

**Genesis 2:22** *Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of man.*

**Genesis 1:26** *God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule."*

**Ephesians 4:24** *Put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

**Colossians 3:10** *Put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.*

**1 Corinthians 2:14** *The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him.*

## GOD THE FATHER

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*The Bible and Lutherans teach* that God the Father is one of the three persons who are the Triune God. God is a spirit. This means that he cannot be seen or confined to one place. He is called Father because he is the Father of Jesus Christ and of all who believe in Jesus. He has created all things. He is holy, loving, and just. He continues to take care of all creation and all human beings.

**Matthew 28:19** *Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

**John 4:24** *God is a spirit.*

**John 20:17** *Jesus said, "I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."*

**Leviticus 19:2** *The Lord said to Moses, "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."*

**Malachi 2:10** *Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us?*

**Exodus 34:6,7** *The LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished.*

**Romans 8:32** *He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all-how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*

## CREATION

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that at the beginning of time God created heaven and earth and all creatures. He did this in six days. He spoke his almighty word to create all things. He made everything out of nothing. But man and woman are God's special creation.

**Genesis 1:1** *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

**Genesis 1:31** *God saw all that he had made and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning-the sixth day.*

**Exodus 20:11** *In six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them.*

**Psalms 33:6,9** *By the word of the LORD were the heavens made... He spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.*

**Psalms 124:8** *Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

**Mark 10:6** *At the beginning of creation God made them male and female.*

**Hebrews 11:3** *By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

## **GOD'S LAW**

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that God wrote his law in people's hearts at creation. The human conscience bears witness to that law. The knowledge of the law was blurred in people's hearts by sin. God repeated his law in the Ten Commandments. God's law demands obedience in our thoughts, speech, and actions. It condemns all who sin. Therefore no one can be saved by keeping the law. God's law serves to show us our sins, to warn us of God's anger against sin and to guide us in our Christian life.

**Deuteronomy 10:4** *The LORD wrote on these tablets what he had written before, the ten commandments he had proclaimed to you on the mountain.*

**Matthew 5:48** *Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

**John 1:17** *The law was given through Moses.*

**Romans 7:7** *I would not have known what sin was except through the law.*

**Romans 3:22,23** *There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

**Romans 3:20** *Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.*

**James 2:10** *Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point, is guilty of breaking all of it.*

**Psalms 119:9** *How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.*

## SIN

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that the first man and woman lost the image of God when they gave in to the temptation of Satan and disobeyed God's command. This brought on them the judgment of God. Since that time all people are conceived and born in sin, desire to do what is evil, and are dead spiritually. Therefore, we are unable to reconcile ourselves to God by our own efforts and deeds.

**Genesis 2:17** *You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.*

**Psalm 51:5** *Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.*

**Ephesians 2:1** *As for you, you were dead in your trespasses and sins.*

**John 3:6** *Flesh gives birth to flesh.*

**Psalm 5:4** *You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell.*

**Romans 5:12** *Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all have sinned.*

**1 John 3:4** *Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact sin is lawlessness.*

**Romans 8:7,8** *The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law... Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.*

## THE GOSPEL

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** the gospel. The message of the gospel is the good news that a loving God sent Jesus Christ to take away the sins of all people. This gospel freely offers to all sinners the righteousness that is found in Jesus. God offers and gives eternal life and salvation to all those who believe in the gospel promises.

**John 1:17** *The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

**Romans 1:16** *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.*

**John 3:16** *God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

**Colossians 2:13** *When you were dead in your sins... God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.*

**Luke 2:10,11** *The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."*

**Ezekiel 33:11** *As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.*

## JESUS CHRIST

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*The Bible and Lutherans teach* that Jesus Christ is the Savior of everyone. He is the eternal Son of God, equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit. He is also the son of the Virgin Mary. He became man to redeem all people. Taking our place, he lived a perfect life keeping the law of God for us. He also died as our innocent substitute on the cross to pay a price sufficient for everyone's sin. After rising from the dead, Jesus ascended into heaven. On the Last Day he will judge all the people who are still living and those whom he will raise from the dead.

**1 John 5:20** *We are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*

**Matthew 1:23** *"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means God with us.*

**Ephesians 1:7** *We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

**Galatians 3:13** *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.*

**Hebrews 4:15** *We have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet without sin.*

**Romans 1:4** *[He] was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead.*

**Acts 10:42** *He is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.*

## REDEMPTION

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that Jesus, who is both God and man, humbled himself by becoming a man and dying on the cross. He did this to redeem all people from the judgment for sin, the fear of death, and the power of the devil. He fulfilled the law perfectly and took on himself the guilt of all our sins. He ransomed us by the sacrifice of his life on the cross. God has looked on Jesus' death as our death for sin. The resurrection of Jesus is proof that God has accepted what Jesus did as payment for the sins of all people.

**Matthew 5:17** *[Jesus said] "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."*

**Romans 5:19** *Just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

**Isaiah 53:6** *The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

**Matthew 20:28** *The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

**2 Corinthians 5:21** *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

**Ephesians 1:7** *We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

**2 Timothy 1:10** *Our Savior, Christ Jesus...has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

## JUSTIFICATION

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that God judged all sinners righteous in his sight when Jesus Christ died on the cross for us. God declared everyone free from the guilt and punishment owed for our sins. The sinner receives this free gift of forgiveness, not by doing good deeds, but only by faith. A person is justified when he or she believes in Christ and his redemptive work. It is a gift from God.

***Ephesians 2:8,9*** *It is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is a gift of God-not by works so that no one can boast.*

**2 Corinthians 5:19** *God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them.*

**Romans 3:22-24** *This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ.*

**Romans 3:28** *For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.*

**Romans 4:5** *To the man who does not work but trusts in God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.*

**Mark 16:16** *Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.*

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that the Holy Spirit is true God equal to God the Father and God the Son. He has names and characteristics which belong only to God. The Holy Spirit creates faith in our hearts through the gospel. He also keeps us in the faith and motivates us to do good works.

**Acts 5:3,4** *Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit?... You have not lied to men but to God."*

**2 Corinthians 13:14** *May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

**Psalms 139:7,8** *Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.*

**Job 33:4** *The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*

**Titus 3:5** *He saves us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

**Ephesians 3:16** *I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.*

**Galatians 5:24,25** *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

## CONVERSION

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that the Holy Spirit causes the heart to trust in Jesus as its Savior. The Holy Spirit creates and maintains faith by means of the gospel in God's Word and the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. We believe, therefore, that our conversion is not our work. It is entirely the work of God's grace. Rejection of the gospel is, however, entirely our own fault.

**1 Corinthians 6:11** *You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

**John 17:17** *Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.*

**2 Thessalonians 2:13,14** *From the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Romans 10:17** *Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*

**Acts 2:38** *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

**Acts 15:3** *They told how the Gentiles had been converted.*

**Acts 7:51** *You stiff-necked people ... You always resist the Holy Spirit.*

## SAVED BY GRACE

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*The Bible and Lutherans teach* that already before the world was created, God chose those individuals whom he would in time convert through the gospel and preserve in the faith to eternal life. This choosing is in no way caused by qualities or actions God had foreseen in the people whom he chose. This shows how completely salvation is ours by God's grace alone. Grace is God's undeserved love and mercy that he shows to all mankind through Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 1:4-6** *For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will-to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.*

**Romans 11:5,6** *So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.*

**Acts 15:11** *We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved.*

**Romans 5:15** *But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ overflow to the many!*

## SAVED THROUGH FAITH

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**The Bible and Lutherans teach** that faith is a repentant sinner's acceptance of Jesus Christ as his only Savior and full trust in his worthiness for forgiveness of sins and salvation. Such faith is not a personal achievement or an act of human worthiness. The Holy Spirit creates faith. Whoever remains in this faith to the end of life will be saved eternally. Salvation is not possible without faith.

**John 1:12** *To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*

**Acts 10:43** *All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.*

**Galatians 2:16** *(We) know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ, not by observing the law, because by observing the law, no one will be justified.*

**Acts 16:30,31** *He... asked, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved-you and your household."*

**John 3:36** *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.*

**Matthew 24:13** *He who stands firm to the end will be saved.*

## REPENTANCE

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*The Bible and Lutherans teach* that repentance is an acknowledgment of sin and sincere regret for it. A repentant sinner also trusts that God will forgive sin for Jesus' sake. Repentance is a condition of the heart without which no one can hope to be saved. Every truly repentant sinner is assured of God's free and full pardon. Therefore, he or she will seek to forsake a sinful life and to live a holy life for God.

**Isaiah 55:6,7** *Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

**Mark 1:15** *[John said] "Repent and believe the good news."*

**Matthew 4:17** *From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."*

**2 Corinthians 7:10** *Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret.*

**Luke 18:13,14** *The tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God have mercy on me a sinner." [Jesus said] "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."*

## SANCTIFICATION

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that faith in Jesus Christ is living and active. Therefore faith produces good deeds that are pleasing to God. True faith, nourished by God's Word, delights to do the holy will of God. In this sinful world, however, even the best works of a Christian are still dirtied with sin. We will never be perfect in this life. For Jesus' sake, the imperfect efforts of a Christian are graciously considered acceptable by our Father in heaven.

**James 2:17** *Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

**Hebrews 11:6** *Without faith it is impossible to please God.*

**Romans 7:19** *For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do-this I keep doing.*

**Isaiah 64:6** *All our righteous acts are like filthy rags.*

**2 Corinthians 7:1** *Let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit.*

**Galatians 5:6** *The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:3** *It is God's will that you should be holy.*

**Ephesians 2:10** *For you are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.*

## PRAYER

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that believers pray. In the name of Jesus, that is, trusting in his salvation, a believer confidently speaks to God. We present to God our needs, praising him, thanking him, or interceding for others. Prayer is not a way to earn salvation. Christians pray because God commands us to pray and promises to answer our prayers. Sometimes his answer is yes, sometimes no. Sometimes God waits until the time is right to answer our prayers.

**Psalm 19:14** *May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock, and my Redeemer.*

**Psalm 50:15** *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.*

**Matthew 7:7** *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.*

**Matthew 21:22** *If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.*

**John 16:23** *My Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.*

**1 Timothy 2:1** *I urge, then, first of all that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:17** *Pray continually.*

**Ephesians 6:18** *Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.*

**1 Timothy 2:8** *I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer.*

## THE CHURCH

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that there is one holy, Christian Church. It is made up of all who believe in Jesus. Since faith is a matter of the heart it is invisible. Only God knows who has faith and therefore is a member of the Holy, Christian Church. This invisible church is found wherever the gospel is proclaimed. We call groups of people who come together to hear God's Word the visible church. Unfortunately, such groups, because of sinfulness, also include hypocrites and defenders of false teachings. Religious association is to be practiced only with those who faithfully adhere to all of God's Word.

**2 Timothy 2:19** *The Lord knows those who are his.*

**John 18:36** *Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world."*

**John 8:31,32** *If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*

**Isaiah 55:10,11** *As the rain and snow come down from heaven,... so is my word that goes out of my mouth; It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

**1 Corinthians 1:2** *To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy.*

**Romans 16:17** *Watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.*

## **BAPTISM**

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that baptism is a holy act. It is instituted by God. Using water and God's Word it offers and gives the forgiveness of sins, spiritual life, and eternal salvation. It is meant for young and old, including children. Infants also are sinful and therefore need the spiritual rebirth brought about through baptism.

**Matthew 28:19** *Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

**John 3:5,6** *Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."*

**Titus 3:5** *He [God] saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

**Mark 10:14** *He [Jesus] said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."*

**Acts 22:16** *What are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away.*

**Mark 16:16** *Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.*

## HOLY COMMUNION

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that Holy Communion is a holy act instituted by Christ. Together with bread and wine we receive Jesus' true body and blood. In this special meal Jesus gives the forgiveness of sins, strengthens our faith, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe. Only people who repent of their sins and receive proper instruction in the Christian faith should be admitted to this sacrament.

**Matthew 26:26-28** *Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*

**1 Corinthians 10:16** *Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?*

**1 Corinthians 11:27,28** *Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.*

**1 Corinthians 10:17** *We, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.*

## ANGELS AND HEAVEN

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that to be in heaven is to be in the presence of God. In heaven are the holy angels, who are messengers of God, together with the souls of all who have died as believers. On Judgment Day all the dead shall rise. Then the souls of all believers will be reunited with a glorified body and live forever in heaven. This is a place of eternal joy where there will be no more tears or sorrow.

**Ecclesiastes 12:7** *The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.*

**Hebrews 1:14** *Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*

**Philippians 3:21** *[Christ] will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

**1 Corinthians 15:52** *The trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*

**Revelation 21:4** *He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.*

**Psalms 16:11** *You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

**Revelation 22:20** *He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*

## THE DEVIL AND HELL

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that many of God's angels sinned and became powerful evil spirits, called demons. They are enemies of God and believers. The devil (Satan) is their leader. Although God threw them down into hell, they tempt everyone to sin and seek to destroy a believer's faith. On the Last Day all who have died without faith in Jesus Christ, will also be condemned to hell. Hell is a place of eternal torment and separation from God.

**Ephesians 6:11,12** *Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the... powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

**1 Peter 5:8,9** *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith.*

**Jude 6** *And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home-these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great day.*

**Matthew 25:41** *Then he [Jesus] will say, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."*

**Isaiah 66:24** *And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me. Their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.*

## **SPECIAL TOPICS - CREEDS**

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A creed is a statement of what a group of people believes and teaches. There are three statements of faith that are used throughout the Christian world—The Apostles' Creed, The Nicene Creed, and The Athanasian Creed. The teachings in these creeds are taken from the Bible. These statements of faith distinguish Christians from all false teachers.

**1 Peter 3:15** *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.*

**Matthew 10:32** *Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.*

**Matthew 16:13-16** *When Jesus came to the region of Ceasarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" He asked, "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

**Matthew 7:15** *[Jesus said] "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves."*

## UNITY OF THE CHURCH

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that true unity of the church is evident when Christians agree in their confession to the doctrine revealed in Scripture. It is not necessary that all agree in matters of church ritual or organization. The New Testament gives no commands about such matters. Those united in faith and doctrine will express their unity by joining in worship, communion, prayer, and church work. We cannot engage in religious association with those whose confession reveals that error is allowed, taught, or defended.

**Ephesians 4:3-6** *There is one body and one Spirit-just as you were called to one hope when you were called-one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

**Hebrews 10:23-25** *Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

**Romans 16:17** *Watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.*

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that the religious education of children is the primary duty of parents and especially of the fathers. The church may assist the parents by establishing schools and other organizations to teach Christian doctrine. Young people and adults should continue to read and study the Bible privately and through Bible classes offered by the congregation. We all will want to nurture and strengthen the faith that is in us and our children. Such study of the Scriptures also strengthens the family, the church, and the nation.

**Mark 10:14** *Let the little children come to me [Jesus], and do not hinder them.*

**Ephesians 6:4** *Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

**John 21:15** *Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."*

**Acts 17:11** *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*

**John 5:39** *You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me [Jesus].*

**Proverbs 14:34** *Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.*

## CHRISTIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

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*The Bible and Lutherans teach* that not only the Church, but also all governmental authority, is instituted by God. Therefore Christians will be obedient to the government that rules over them unless the government commands them to disobey God. God gives the government the task of keeping good order and peace so that its citizens may live quiet and godly lives.

**Romans 13:1-5** *Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment upon themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong... Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.*

**Acts 5:29** *We must obey God rather than men!*

**1 Timothy 2:1,2** *I urge, then, first of all that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone, for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.*

## **ABORTION AND SUICIDE**

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***The Bible and Lutherans teach*** that human life is the gift of a gracious God. Our life is a time of grace during which we have opportunity to learn the way of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Only God has the right to take the life he has given. Life begins at conception and ends when the soul leaves the body.

**Acts 17:25,26** *He himself [God] gives all men life and breath... In him we live and move and have our being.*

**Isaiah 55:6** *Seek the LORD while he may be found.*

**2 Corinthians 6:1,2** *We urge you not to receive God's grace in vain... I tell you now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.*

**Exodus 20:13** *You shall not murder.*

**Psalms 139:13-16** *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb... My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.*

**Jeremiah 1:5** *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.*

**Psalms 31:15** *My times are in your hands.*

## MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

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*The Bible and Lutherans teach* that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. It is a partnership in which the man is the loving head. Marriage is established by God. It is a holy relationship not to be broken. A married person sins if he or she divorces without a biblical reason. Before God, no divorce is valid except in cases of fornication or desertion. The tendency to consider marriage as unimportant results in great harm to the family, the church and the nation.

**Genesis 2:18** *The Lord God said, "It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."*

**Ephesians 5:24,25** *Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*

**Hebrews 13:4** *Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.*

**Matthew 19:9** *I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery.*

**1 Corinthians 7:15** *If the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances.*

**Psalms 51:10** *Create in me a pure heart, O God.*

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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