

**LUTHERAN BASICS LEADER GUIDE**

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| **Pre-Readings in *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017)**  *These readings are recommended to prepare you for each lesson. You are welcome to skim as needed. Please write down any questions or thoughts you have from these readings and bring them to class!*  **Lesson 2: The God Who Comes to Us: The Means of Grace**................................... **281-345**  **Lesson 3: The God Who Creates: The 1st Article**......................................................**128-163**  **Lesson 4: The God Who Redeems: The 2nd Article**…...........................................…**164-194**  **Lesson 5: The God Who Re-Creates: The 3rd Article** …...........................................**195-230**  **Lesson 6: Living in God’s Story: 10 Commandments** ………...................….....…..…**52-127** |

***Class Introduction***

* *Intro Hosts*

*Welcome to Lutheran Basics! I’m Pastor Jonathan Petzold, senior pastor at Trinity.*

*And I’m Christa Petzold, Pastor Jonathan’s wife.*

*This is Lesson X out of six of our Introduction to Lutheranism series, which is the core content for our new member class here at Trinity. Our new member class also has an in-person component where we dig deeper into these topics and work through your questions. If you’re part of our Lutheran Basics class, jot down your questions as you follow along and bring them with you to our discussion time.*

* *6-Episode Overview*

*In this episode we’ll be talking about the Bible and Christianity in general and Lutheranism in particular. In the next five weeks, we’ll cover each of the six chief parts of Luther’s Small Catechism.*

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# Lesson 1: Christianity as the Story of Everything: The Bible & Lutheranism

*As you listen, follow along beginning on page 3 in your journal.*

1. **(5 min) Christianity as a religion is a true story of everything.**

*A religion explains our origin, destiny, purpose, and helps us to make sense of the world. It’s a story that explains reality. It’s a truth claim.*

* 1. A Christian is someone who has a particular way of **living, speaking, and thinking** because Jesus’s death and resurrection atones for their sin and gives them eternal life.

*This is why Lutherans call themselves confessional: the fact that God created all things and that the Lord Jesus redeems everything compels us to confess the reality of Christ in the world.*

* 1. What is the Bible? How is the Bible *our* Story?  
     *66 books, 39 OT, 27 NT (written 60-90AD). Early Church used these books in worship and treated them as the authoritative word of the apostles/of God and useful for teaching for all peoples and nations.*

1. **(10 min) Genesis 1-3 begins the story of everything.**

*We’re going to move through these chapters quickly, but have your Bibles open.*

* 1. **Read 1:1-5.** Was creation good or bad?

***Day 1****: Light, Day/Night.* ***Day 2****: Separates waters/sky.* ***Day 3****: Land, sea, vegetation.* ***Day 4****: Sun, moon, stars.* ***Day 5****: Fish and birds.* ***Day 6****: man and animals.* ***Each day****: “It is good!”*

* 1. **Read 1:26-28.** What does it mean that Adam and Eve were made in God’s image?

***2 jobs****: Be fruitful and multiply, have dominion.* ***Righteous****: in a right relationship with God and creation.*

* 1. **Read 2:15-17, 3:1-13.** Why was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil placed in the Garden? What is sin?

***Sin:*** *rebellion against the Creator. Adam & Eve are deceived, but responsible.*

* 1. **Read 3:14-20.** What does God promise? What is cursed?

An Offspring of Eve (Jesus) will come to crush Satan and reverse the curse, foreshadowing His cross and resurrection. All creation and 2 jobs are cursed.

1. **(5 min) What is Lutheranism?**
   1. God’s Word is **written** and **proclaimed** authoritatively for *you*.

Sola Scriptura, importance of personal assurance of salvation.

* 1. Lutheranism practices the faith of **Jesus** and the **Apostles** as closely as we can.

Does not see itself as a break from historic Christianity.

* 1. Luther’s Small Catechism is a summary of how God enters into relationship with us (**Means** of **Grace**), what our faith is (the **Creed**), and how we live that faith out (the **10 Commandments** and **Lord’s Prayer**).

Luther gives catechism as a summary of the Christian faith.

**DIG DEEPER**

*Prepare your thoughts and questions for discussion based on the following:*

1. **What is a “religion”? What good or bad things does the word “religion” bring to mind?**
2. **Why did God create the world? What is sin? What does Jesus come to do?**

**FOR LESSON 2 READ OR SKIM SCE 281-345**

# Lesson 2: The God Who Comes to Us: The Means of Grace

*As you listen, follow along beginning on page 5 in your journal.*

1. **(3min) Our individual salvation is objective, accomplished about 2000 years ago at Jesus’s death and resurrection.**

Salvation is not subjective, it’s historical. It’s not up to us to save ourselves; it is a gift given to us.

* 1. Jesus gave us the **Means** of **Grace** to give us comfort and assurance of our salvation by connecting us to His death and resurrection.
  2. What 3 things make a Sacrament? **(SCE 282, Q293)**

Instituted by the command of Christ, Word joined to a visible element, bestows forgiveness of sins from His death and resurrection.

* 1. How many sacraments are there? **(SCE 282, Q294)**

2-3: Baptism, Communion, and Absolution.

1. **(10 min) Read Matthew 28:19. How does this tell us what Baptism is and how baptism defines who we are?**

By Jesus’ Word, Baptism makes us disciples by placing God’s Name on us, which bestows on us the Work of each person of the Trinity.

* 1. **Read SC 23-24.** What are the 2 things present in Baptism? Who baptizes us, and what happens to us at Baptism?

Water and Word. Even though the words come from the Pastor’s mouth, they are Christ’s Words that gives us eternal salvation.

* 1. **Read SCE 288, Q303.** Why should babies be baptized?

Babies are sinful contract contagion of death, thus they need God’s promises. Jesus is the only way. Faith should not be confused with intellectual ability.

1. **(5 min) Read John 20:19-23.** What special authority has Jesus given the Church?

**To forgive and retain sins in His Name.**

* 1. **Read SC 25.** What are the 2 parts of confession? Do you have to confess all your sins to be forgiven?
  2. **Read SC 21-22.** What do we pray for in the Fifth and Sixth Petitions of the Lord’s Prayer?

*\*We don’t have an episode dedicated to the Lord’s Prayer, but we’re going to intersperse the petitions in as we go.*

1. **(10 min) Read Matthew 26:17-29. How does this tell us what Communion is and what it is for?**
   1. **Read SC 28.** What 4 things are present in The Lord’s Supper?
   2. **Read SCE 324-326, Q350 and Q353.** Is the Lord’s Supper *truly* Jesus’s Body and Blood?
   3. **Read SC 29 and SCE 342-345, Q374.** What makes us worthy to receive The Lord’s Supper? Who should *not* receive it?

Those who believe Jesus’ Words: “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of your sins” are worthy. Unworthy are those not Christian or baptized, those unable to examine themselves or have not received instruction, those of a different confession of faith since the Supper is a testimony to our unity in doctrine, the unrepentant, those who are unforgiving.

**DIG DEEPER**

*Prepare your thoughts and questions for discussion based on the following:*

1. **How does baptism “rebirth” you to the story of God? How do we “use” our Baptism?**
2. **If Jesus accomplished forgiveness on the cross, why does He command the Church forgive sins? (SCE 315-316, Q334-337 and SCE 319, Q344-345)**
3. **Why should we receive Communion often?**

**FOR LESSON 3 READ OR SKIM SCE 128-163**

# Lesson 3: The God Who Creates: The 1st Article of the Apostles’ Creed

*As you listen, follow along beginning on page 7 in your journal.*

1. **(3min) The Apostles’ Creed summarizes the Story of the Bible according to the work of each person of the Trinity: the Father who creates, the Son who redeems, and the Spirit who re-creates.**
2. **(8 min) Read Psalm 104:10-30. Is creation fundamentally good or bad? Is it intentional or accidental?**

Gnosticism is Christianity’s ancient heresy. Creation is good, intentional, and redeemed.

* 1. How did God create everything? **(SCE 138, Q121)**

By His Word in 6 days. Creation was very good, beautiful, pure, designed, and intended to last for eternity.

* 1. Why did God make the world? **(SCE 157-158, Q141)**

God created the world freely out of love, He still sustains us in spite of our sinfulness, the world remains good and His even though cursed, and God redeems His creation and makes it new.

1. **(10 min) Read SC 19-20. Why do we call God “Father” in the Introduction to the Lord’s Prayer? Why does Jesus call God His “Father”?**
   1. **Read SC 16 and 21.** How does the Fourth Petition of the Lord’s Prayer describe God’s role in creation?
   2. **Read SCE 150-152, Q136-137.** Why do bad things happen? Why does suffering exist? What does God promise?

Adam and Eve brought evil and suffering in the world by their rebellion. God punished human rebellion by cursing the earth in judgment. We repent, trust God’s promise of forgiveness, care for the suffering, and pray for restoration. Some experience more suffering brought upon ourselves as a consequence of sin, but in many cases the reasons may be hidden or simply unnecessary.   
Don’t do theodicy: God all powerful? Loving or Good? Does evil really exist? Theology of glory: deny or justify sin/suffering. Theology of the cross: call a thing what it is and trust God to redeem the bad.

* 1. **Read SC 22.** What do we pray in the Seventh Petition of the Lord’s Prayer?

**DIG DEEPER**

*Prepare your thoughts and questions for discussion based on the following:*

1. **How would you tell the Story of Christianity? What is a creed?**
2. **How does seeing myself as God’s creature shape my relationship to Him and to His world?**
3. **What is our calling in the world? (SCE 161-163, Q147)**

**FOR LESSON 4 READ OR SKIM SCE 164-194**

# Lesson 4: The God Who Redeems: The 2nd Article of the Apostles’ Creed

*As you listen, follow along beginning on page 9 in your journal.*

1. **(5min) Read SC 17. As the God who entered creation, Jesus is both fully God and fully man.** 
   1. Why did Jesus become man for us? **(SCE 171-172, Q159)**

Jesus fulfilled our obligations to keep the Law, He suffered and died to pay the penalty for sin, and He overcame death so that we might overcome death.

* 1. Why is it important that Jesus is God? **(SCE 172-175, Q160)**

He reveals God to us by taking on our flesh, He provided sufficient ransom and atonement for the whole world, He is always with us, He intercedes for us, He rules over creation and the Church, He has authority to judge and forgive, He is worthy of honor and glory as God, He loves us with a steadfast love.

1. **(10 min) Why was Jesus crucified?**
   1. **Read John 19:16-42.** How did Jesus die? Why did He die in this way?

He gave His life willingly, so that He would die death for us. He is executed as the sacrifice for sin.

* 1. What did Jesus accomplish on the cross? **(SCE 179, Q166)**

He paid the entire penalty for sin, He appeased the wrath of God toward all people, reconciling us to God, and He destroyed the power of sin to enslave us.

1. **(10 min) Why did Jesus rise from the dead?**
   1. **Read John 20:1-18.** What does Jesus repair by His resurrection?
   2. What evidence is there for the resurrection of Jesus? **(SCE 192, Q181)**

Gospels attest to bodily resurrection, 500 witnesses of the resurrected Jesus, many martyred because they would not retract testimony about resurrection. No body has ever been produced, even though Jesus’ enemies were motivated to disprove the resurrection. The disciples would not have been able to steal the body. Secular sources speak of the Christian faith sweeping across the Roman Empire.

1. **(3min) Read SC 20. How does the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus answer the Third Petition of the Lord’s Prayer?**
2. **(3min) Read Colossians 1:15-23.** What is Jesus’s role in the story of everything?

**DIG DEEPER**

*Prepare your thoughts and questions for discussion based on the following:*

1. **What is atonement? How do you know your sins are atoned for? What do you have to do to get that?**
2. **Why is Jesus’s resurrection the most important event in history and what does it mean for us? (SCE 181, Q169)**
3. **What does Jesus redeem by His resurrection?**

**FOR LESSON 5 READ OR SKIM SCE 195-230**

# Lesson 5: The God Who Re-Creates: The 3rd Article of the Apostles’ Creed

*As you listen, follow along beginning on page 11 in your journal.*

1. **(10min) Apart from the Holy Spirit, sinners are spiritually blind and dead and thus cannot trust in Christ and resist the Gospel’s call to faith.**
   1. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation? What does this mean does ***not*** contribute to salvation? **(SCE 201, Q195)**

He brings people to repentance (by the Law) and to faith (by the Gospel)

* 1. What is justification? What is sanctification? Why is it important to know the difference? **(SCE 209, Q206 and SCE 198, Q190)**

Justification: God declaring sinners righteous for Christ’s sake; our sins have been imputed/charged to Christ, and His righteousness imputed/credited to us.

Sanctification: to be made holy, strengthened in the faith and increasing its fruit in our lives, changing our desires to overcome sin and do good works.

* 1. What is faith and why can you be confident in your salvation? **(SCE 210, Q208-209)**

It’s believing the Gospel is promised to you. Salvation is not reliant on your thoughts, feelings, words, or deeds. Salvation is sure because it God always keeps His promises, Jesus’ deeds are fully sufficient for salvation, the Means of Grace don’t just convey information about God but they actually *deliver* salvation, and Scripture describes how He choses His people out of pure grace to inherit eternal life.

1. **(10min) Read Romans 10:17, 1 Corinthians 10:16, and Matthew 18:20. What are the identifying characteristics of the Church? (SCE 214, Q212)**

Romans: pure proclamation of the Gospel. 1 Cor: proper administration of Communion. Matt: Gathered in His name.

* 1. **Read SC 20.** In what ways does the Holy Spirit answer the Second Petition of the Lord’s Prayer though His work in the Church?
  2. What is the mission of the Church? **(SCE 215, Q214)**

Confess/Proclaim forgiveness of sins by preaching the Word, administering Sacraments, sending missionaries, establishing new congregations, and by the daily witness of the baptized (priesthood of all believers).

* 1. **Read Matthew 28:18-20, John 20:21-23, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, and 1 Timothy 3:1-7.** What is the role of the Pastor?

1. **(8min) Read Romans 8:19-23. What is the hope of the Bible?**
   1. What happens when we die? **(SCE 224, Q223)**

Soul separates from body and is immediately with Jesus in Heaven. Body remains until resurrection.

* 1. What will happen at the return of Jesus? **(SCE 225-226, Q224-226)**

Jesus will make His dwelling with us, renewing creation, freeing it from corruption, and raising our bodies as His was raised on Easter.

**DIG DEEPER**

*Prepare your thoughts and questions for discussion based on the following:*

1. **Read SC 18. Is salvation something that happens by us, or something that happens to us?**
2. **What is the role of Christians in the Church and world? Why are Christians called to be good stewards? (SCE 216-218, Q215-216)**
3. **How is the Church on earth a colony of the New Creation?**

**FOR LESSON 6 READ OR SKIM SCE 52-127**

# Lesson 6: Living in God’s Story: 10 Commandments

*As you listen, follow along beginning on page 13 in your journal.*

1. **(3 min) Christians live in God’s “left-hand” realm of the world that strives for peace and order, and in God’s “right-hand” realm of the Church that strives for proclamation of the Gospel.**
2. **(25 min) The Ten Commandments help paint a picture of God’s design for an ideal world. Each of the Commandments acts as a “fence” protecting an institution of God’s good creation.**
   1. **Read SC13.** What does the 1st Commandment protect and promise? What is a god?
   2. **Read SC 13, 20.** What does the 2nd Commandment protect and promise? How do we apply this in the First Petition of the Lord’s Prayer?
   3. **Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12**. What does the 3rd Commandment protect and promise? **(SC 13)**
   4. **Read SC 14.** What does the 4th Commandment protect and promise? How does the 4th Commandment serve as a “bridge” between the 2 tables of the Law?
   5. **Read SC 14.** What does the 5th Commandment protect and promise? How is this applicable for us beyond simply not committing murder?
   6. **Read Ephesians 5:22-33**. What does the 6th Commandment protect and promise? What is the purpose of marriage? **(SC 14)**
   7. **Read SC 14.** does the 7th Commandment protect and promise? How does God want us to use our earthly goods?
   8. **Read SC 14.** What does the 8th Commandment protect and promise? How do we see this Commandment broken in our world?
   9. **Read SC 15.** What do the 9th and 10th Commandments protect and promise? How do Christians talk about dependence and satisfaction?

**DIG DEEPER**

*Prepare your thoughts and questions for discussion based on the following:*

1. **What are the three uses of God’s Law? What is repentance?   
   (SCE 54-55, Q18-19)**
2. **How is the Divine Service (worship) more than just a concert or classroom? (SCE 78-79, Q52-53)**
3. **How does Jesus fulfill each of these Commandments to save us?**