

What Lutherans Believe

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Keith Chuvala, Keith@BackToTheBibleCatechism.com
<https://www.BackToTheBibleCatechism.com/wlb>

The Fundamentals

Introduction:

(Who am I? Who are you? Why are we here?!!)

1. Which elements of Lutheran church practice, teaching, or doctrine are of the most concern to you?
2. Are any of these controversial in our society? In our church?
3. Which are the most opaque, or difficult to understand?
4. Are there any that are difficult to accept?



Foundational Principles for this Bible Study

- Inspiration. The Bible is "God breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16). Although Genesis is the first "Book of Moses", God is the author. It's easy to think "The Old Testament contains law, the New Testament contains gospel," but in fact we find both of these two great doctrines (law and gospel) throughout the Bible.
- Purpose. The main purpose of the Bible is to make us "...wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). When we read the Bible with that in mind, we read it not only to learn history and hear about interesting people; we read the Old Testament in anticipation of the Messiah, and the New Testament as the singular revelation of Jesus Christ as our Messiah, Savior, and Lord.
- Method. Sections and even entire books of the Bible have been interpreted and re-interpreted numerous ways by different Christians and churches for many years, but perhaps never so much as in the last century or so. In this study we will interpret what we read using the "historical/grammatical" method. That means that we accept the accounts in the Biblical text to be actual historical events unless there is something in the grammar or the words themselves that indicate they are to be taken differently. God used, and uses, real events, real human beings, and real human languages to communicate eternal truths to us.
- Context. When we read the Bible we pay attention to the context of the passage. While there are many verses in the Bible that stand alone and don't require context to be clearly understood, *there is never a downside* to reading the entire paragraph, chapter, book, and even other Biblical books to inform our understanding.
- "Sola Scriptura" all the way. Related to paying attention to context, because God is the Author of the entire Bible, and because God never intends to confuse us (1 Corinthians 14:33), we always seek to "let Scripture interpret Scripture." God often addresses the same matter in two or more places in Scripture. Very often one passage can help us understand another passage. So we seek to always let the clear passages help us interpret the obscure ones, not the other way around.

Today's Topics: *(The Fundamentals of Lutheran existence)*

1. Who is God?

2. What is a Christian?

3. What is the Church?

1. The Two “Great Doctrines” of the Bible:

a. Law: _____

b. Gospel: _____

2. Justification: _____

Romans 3:21-26, John 3:16, I John 2:2, I Peter 2:24, II Corinthians 5:19

3. Sanctification: _____

I Corinthians 6:9-11, I Thessalonians 5:23, II Corinthians 7:1, Romans 12:1-2

What Lutherans Believe about God (Koehler¹, Chapters VII – IX)

One True God: Exodus 20:3, Isaiah 45:5, 1 Corinthians 8:4

Immutable: Malachi 3:6, James 1:17

Infinite: 1 Kings 8:27

Eternal: Psalm 90:2, 2 Peter 3:8

Omniscient: Proverbs 15:3, 1 John 3:20

Wise: Romans 11:33, Job 12:13

Omnipotent: Psalm 33:9, Psalm 115:3, Luke 1:37

God is a Trinity of Persons:

- Genesis 1:26, Isaiah 48:16
- John 17:3, 1 Corinthians 8:6
- 1 John 5:20, John 15:26
- Acts 5:3-4

Creation and Providence (Koehler, Chapters X – XI)

Creator: Genesis 1:1, John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2, Hebrews 11:3, Colossians 1:17

Creation: Genesis 1:31, Psalm 104:24, Revelation 4:11

Preserves His Creation: Colossians 1:16-17, Acts 17:27-28

Does not provoke evil in man: Matthew 12:36, Romans 2:14-15

Has dominion over all: Matthew 5:45

Uses evil to accomplish good: Genesis 50:20, Romans 8:28

¹ Koehler, Edward W. A, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine*, Concordia Publishing House, 1971

For Next Week: The "Alones"

Read the following to prepare (if you have other favorites, bring them!)

1. Faith: Romans 1:16-17, Galatians 3:1-14, John 6:28-29, Hebrews 1:1
2. Grace: Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 5:15-17
3. Scripture: Acts 17:11, II Timothy 3:15-17, I Timothy 6:3-4, Romans 3:21-26