



HISTORY INTEGRITY TRUTH SCRIPTURE

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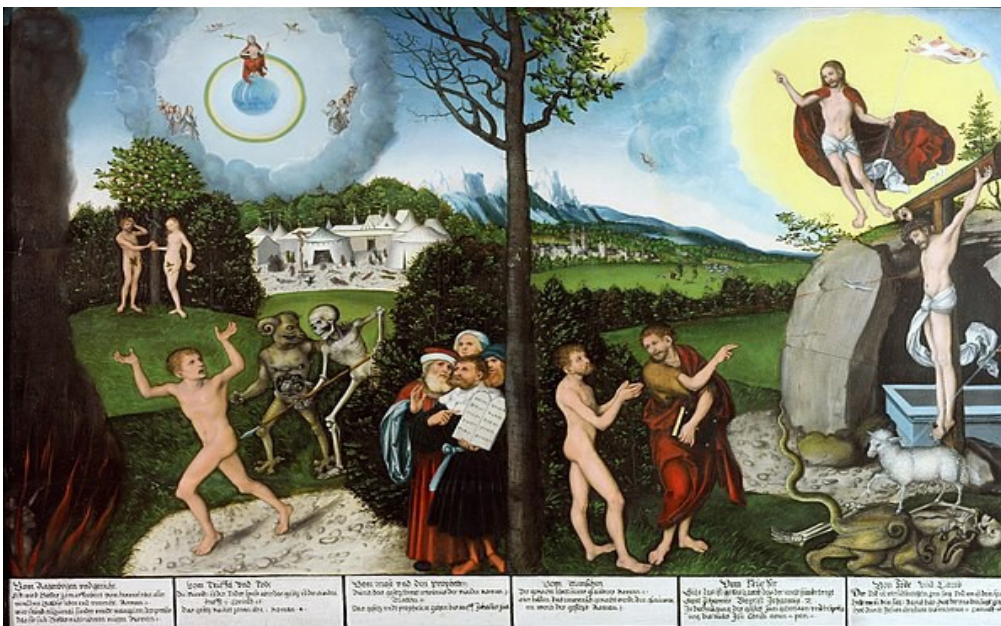
May 2022 What's the Difference?

A Christian friend who is not a Lutheran recently asked me what sets Lutherans apart from other Christians. I love this kind of question since it helps me refine the way I explain things. It also really helps when it's time to write newsletter articles!

We discussed Luther's renewed emphasis on salvation by grace alone through faith alone. While that's a great distinctive, we realize that virtually all the Christian church bodies in this country would confess it. It no longer sets us apart.

Lutherans also understand baptism and communion as actual means by which God delivers the forgiveness and grace promised to all who believe him. This, of course, is a big deal. A sacramental view of baptism and communion, however, is a majority view among Christians around the world. We could say that Lutherans are attuned to historic Christianity. But many groups will confess this.

A Lutheran distinctive which is actually distinctive, however, is our view of Law and Gospel. We treat it very differently than all the other church bodies. It's simple to describe but hard to apply.



Lucas Cranach the Elder *Law and Gospel*, Herzogliches Museum, Gotha, Germany

Virtually all of God's Word can be identified as Law or Gospel. In the Law statements we are told what God expects us to do. In the Gospel statements, we are told what God has done for our sake. That's easy enough to describe. The challenge is living in the hope of the Gospel.

Take, for example, 1 John chapter one, verse nine. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (ESV). There's a Law statement, telling us to confess our sins. We most certainly are expected to do this, and to do it as well as we can. We realize that our obedience will be imperfect, but that we are to do it. But there's also a Gospel statement, saying that God forgives us and cleanses us. We don't make atonement for our sins. We don't earn forgiveness. We don't cleanse ourselves. Jesus does that.

Compare the weight of the Law and the Gospel statements there. We bring our imperfect obedience to God as we attempt to confess accurately and honestly. He brings his perfect forgiveness. Even as we neglect some of our confession or fail to do it thoroughly, he cleanses us entirely.

Lutherans confess that God is able to accomplish all his promises. His power and love never fail. Our obedience falls short. God's power will never fall short.

Learning to live in the freedom of the Gospel? That's something. Yet, as we consider God's Word, our prayer is that we will, more and more, walk in the freedom with which Christ has set us free. Thanks be to God for his wonderful grace!

Wittenberg Door Financial Update

Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.

Luke 6:38, NKJV

In the past several days, we've had some encouraging signs in the area of ministry growth and financial standing.

One regular contributor committed to helping with increasing our visibility through publicity and advertising.

A new participant in the ministry has started contributing so as to support the ongoing work of face to face on-site pastoral care.

Several church congregations have told me they want me to come and tell them about my ministry work and remind them of our financial needs.

The “Wittenberg Door 300” is our group of regular contributors. With the average monthly contribution of \$50, if we have three hundred contributors we will be fully funded to have a full-time pastor, whatever office assistance we need, and to conduct many activities on campus to bring the Gospel to all who will hear. We're still short of that goal. With your help we know we can accomplish great things for Christ!

We take stewardship of finances seriously, and you can be assured that all contributions are received with thanksgiving. Your contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Please remember Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry in your giving, and encourage others who want to bring this ministry to the collegiate communities in Columbia to give as well.

Here's the good news! The local church I have been serving on a part time basis has called a pastor, who will be on-site by mid-July, Lord willing. This means I will jump back into work with Wittenberg Door full-time. I'll be ready to visit with you, your church congregation, your Bible study group, or anybody else about how we can work together to bring the hope of Christ to our college campuses!

Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Checks mailed to us are deposited with no commission paid to any intermediary. Most of our contributions are actually received this way, but we can receive funds sent through Paypal or Google Pay as well. Giving is easy! Simply visit our website at www.wittenbergcomo.com and click on “about” and “support us.”



(Albrecht Dürer, 1508, Praying Hands, Albertina Museum, Vienna)

Special Prayer Updates

Praise report! Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Centralia Missouri has called a pastor, who will be on-site this summer!

Pray for James Lanning, his wife Hannah, and their child Katie, as they enter this new chapter in their life.

Pray that I will have many opportunities, both in person and remotely, to tell local congregations about the work I do, bringing real-live pastoral care to anybody in need within the campus communities.

Pray that we will be able to build the ministry budget so as to provide well for future ministry needs.

Our English language coaching program has regularly been the front line for making contact and building relationships with newcomers. Please pray that more native English speakers will step forward and receive the training to expand our coaching program.

Pray that we will be faithful to care for each person we are brought in contact with.

There is increasing interest among some of the leaders of a local fraternity to have a more distinctive Christian character in the local chapter.

Pray that relationships will grow in a Christ-honoring manner and that the young men will grow in their desire to live out a Christian life in all things.

Pray that we will continue to have fruitful contacts with the students in the Greek system.

Pray that the Lord's Word will show itself powerful to draw young men to him.

Pray that we will be able to continue to minister with consistent care and attention.

We'll be taking a little break from our Wednesday evening studies at the Heidelberg. We hope to start them up again as the next academic year approaches. In the past, these have become intense and thoughtful discussions, reminding me of some of the interactions I've heard about from Francis Schaeffer's L'Abri communities.

When we first did a Heidelberg discussion, it took about a year before it started drawing interest. Pray that we will be steadfast and patient.

I have asked for prayer as I deal with exhaustion and sleep apnea. I am gradually recovering energy.

Pray for continued recovery and rest.

Pray that I will find a workable balance and schedule that will allow productive ministry.

Pray that the Lord will make it clear to me what is critical and what is not.

In all things I give thanks for you and your care which you have shown for me, both now and over the past several years!

Upcoming Activities:

Thursdays at 12:30 pm – Lunch and Learn Bible discussion at the MU Student Center

Sundays - Adult Bible Class 9:00 am, Divine Service 10:00 am, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Centralia MO

Friday 5/6, 6-8 pm End of Semester Cookout and Conversation Evening

Sunday 6/19 Pastor Spotts at Ascension Lutheran Church, Waterloo, Iowa

Monday-Tuesday 6/20-21 TAALC Clergy Commission Interviews, Minneapolis

Tuesday 6/21-Friday 6/24 TAALC General Convention, Minneapolis

Sunday 6/26 Pastor Spotts at Grace Lutheran Church, Nunda SD, and Lake Madison Lutheran Church, Rutland, SD

Remember to get your church on my calendar!

Watch the calendar at www.wittenbergcomo.com, follow our Facebook page, and friend WDCM Chaplain on Facebook to see times and places where Pastor Spotts can be found around campuses in coffee shops or restaurants!

We always have something new at the website, the blog, and the activities calendar. Please be a friend on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. If you're in Columbia, let's get together on or near campus. Go to <https://www.wittenbergcomo.com/support-us.html> to provide financial support. The Wittenberg Door 300 needs you!