

The Augsburg Confession

A Bible Study Course for Adults

by

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The Augsburg Confession

• Lesson One •

Introduction to the Augsburg Confession

A. Important dates:

1. October 31, 1517
2. Diet of Leipzig, 1519
3. June 1520—Bull (an official decree) “*Exsurge Domine*”
4. 1521—Diet of Worms

B. What is a confession? Read 2 Corinthians 4:13-15.

C. Earlier confessions

1. 1528—Luther’s “Confession about the Lord’s Supper.” Luther didn’t want to die and then have people say this is what he meant or that is what he meant. So he confessed not only what he believed about the Lord’s Supper but other basic doctrines of Scripture as well.
2. “Instructions to the Visitors of Parish Pastors in Electoral Saxony” of 1528. Because there was such a poor understanding of basic doctrine among rural pastors, a visitation program was set up in which the basic doctrines of Scripture were taught and discussed. The “Instructions” were used as a basis for that teaching and discussion.
3. July or August 1529—the Schwabach Articles. Written by Wittenberg theologians, these articles were to serve as a basis for union among German Protestants meeting at Schwabach on October 16, 1529. They later helped to serve as a basis for Articles 1 to 21 of the Augsburg Confession.
4. October 1529—the Marburg Articles. These articles were written by Luther following the meeting in which Luther and his followers met Zwingli and his followers at the Marburg Castle on October 2–4, 1529. Although both sides could agree on the first 14 articles, they could not agree on the 15th article, which spoke about the Lord’s Supper. The Marburg Articles helped to serve as a basis for Articles 1 to 21 of the Augsburg Confession.

D. Background to the Diet at Augsburg

1. January 21, 1530, Emperor Charles V called for a Diet at Augsburg in April 1530. His purpose:
 - a. “How in the matter of errors and divisions concerning the holy faith and the Christian religion, we may and should deal and resolve . . . that divisions be allayed. . . . And that every care be taken to give a charitable hearing to every man’s opinion . . . and reconcile men to a unity in Christian truth.”
 - b. To deal with the threat of the Turks and Islam.
2. March 1530—Elector John the Steadfast of Saxony commissioned Luther and his theologians to deal specifically with abuses that caused the Lutherans to make some changes. These were presented to the emperor at his castle in Torgau and become known as the “Torgau Articles.” They served as the basis for Part Two of the Augsburg Confession, Articles 22-28.

E. The Diet at Augsburg

1. May 2, 1530—Lutherans arrived at Augsburg without Luther. Luther stayed at the Coburg Fortress, maintaining contact through a messenger service. Why?
2. June 15—the emperor and his court arrived in Augsburg.
3. June 20—the assembly was called to order.
 - a. Dr. Eck, a prominent Catholic theologian, had published “404 Propositions.” In them he labeled Lutheran teaching as old heresy already condemned by the church. He classified the Lutherans as being similar to Zwingli, the Anabaptists, and even other radicals who denied some of the truths confessed in the three ecumenical creeds.
 - b. A response was needed to Eck’s lies, not just where the two sides differed (Articles 22-28) but what the Lutherans truly believed and what they didn’t believe (Articles 1-21).
4. June 25—the Augsburg Confession was presented at 3:00 P.M. No Lutheran preaching was allowed. It had been originally scheduled for June 24. The Lutherans had been moved from a larger room to a smaller room.
 - a. Melancthon had used Eck’s propositions to form a confession of what Elector John of Saxony believed and what abuses needed changing.
 - b. Other Lutheran lay leaders had signed the confession written for John the Steadfast.
 - c. Chancellor Brueck had replaced Melancthon’s preface with a general preface.
 - d. It was written in both German and Latin. The emperor was presented with a Latin copy.
 - e. Chancellor Brueck read the confession out loud in German. The Lutherans rose from their seats for the entire reading.

5. When Luther read it (early in July, he finally received a copy), he quoted Psalm 119:46. It later became a motto attached to the confession itself.
 6. The Catholics responded with their “Confutation” on August 3, 1530. Lutherans were faced with losing their lands, threats of punishment, and exile. Although Melanchthon was tempted to waver, the laymen stood firm. Meetings to reconcile proved fruitless.
 7. September 22 – the Diet was declared recessed.
- F. Melanchthon responded with his “Apology” to the Augsburg Confession. He had a rough draft ready on September 22, but the emperor rejected it. Melanchthon continued to work on it and published the Apology along with the Augsburg Confession in April 1531. In it, Melanchthon was at his best. He was not at all timid but skillfully used Scripture and the writings of the early church to show that the Lutherans were teaching the truth and what the church had always held to be the truth. What does *apology* here mean?
- G. In 1537, at Smalcalden, Germany, where the Smalcald Articles were adopted, theologians present accepted both the Augsburg Confession and the Apology as formal confessions of their faith.
- H. During the intervening years from 1531 to his death, Melanchthon continually reworked the Augsburg Confession, sometimes changing its meaning and softening its tone to the detriment of the confession itself. As a result, Lutherans began to call his later editions the Altered Augsburg Confession and stressed their allegiance to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530.
- I. In 1580, both the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Apology were incorporated into the *Book of Concord*.

Questions:

1. From 1517 on, what was the underlying basis for everything that the Lutherans taught?
2. Give some examples of how this became a confession of Lutherans and not just a confession of Martin Luther.
3. Give some examples of the important role laypeople played at the time of the Reformation. What encouragement does that give you as to how the laity can serve today?

4. How did God use the delaying tactics of the emperor for his own good?

5. Why might we better call the birthday of the Lutheran Church June 25, 1530, as opposed to October 31, 1517?

6. What were some forerunners to the Augsburg Confession?

7. What is a confession and how can Lutheran Christians present their confessions today?

8. What is the original meaning of the word *apology*? Read 1 Peter 3:15. “In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer (Greek: “apology”) to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” What should we be ready to do with our “apologies”?

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• Lesson Two •

The Preface and Article 1: The Trinity

1. Read the Preface, paragraphs 1 and 2. For what two reasons did Charles V call the council (or diet) at Augsburg?
2. Read the Preface, paragraphs 3 and 4. For what did the emperor hope?
3. Read the Preface, paragraph 5. How did the lay leaders who presented the Augsburg Confession show they were serious about fulfilling the emperor's wishes?
4. Read the Preface, paragraphs 6 and 7. Why was the Augsburg Confession written in both German and Latin?
5. Read the Preface, paragraphs 8 and 11. On what did these men base their confession?

What are the words that show this?

6. Read the Preface, paragraphs 12 to 14. If agreement couldn't be reached, what would this confession show?
7. What's the difference between a "council" and a "general council"?
8. If the council at Augsburg could not bring agreement, what were the followers of Luther willing to do?

9. And what did they want Charles V to do? (Par. 22)

10. Read the Preface, paragraphs 23 and 24. Describe the tone or attitude of the Lutherans.

11. Read the following passages: Isaiah 8:19,20; 2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 4:11; 2 Peter 1:20,21. Why were the Lutherans right in letting God's Word decide the differences between them and the Catholics?

What do we call this Reformation principle?

12. On what did the Catholics base their teaching?

13. Agree or disagree. The only true theology is scriptural theology.

14. Why is this still important today?

15. Agree or disagree. The differences between churches that call themselves Christian are matters of interpretation.

16. Gregory Brueck, a layman, wrote the Preface to the Augsburg Confession. He read the entire confession in German out loud. What does this say about the Lutheran laymen at Augsburg and the role of laymen in the church today?

17. In his 404 Propositions, Eck had accused Luther of denying the Trinity. Read Article 1, paragraph 1. What did Melancthon and the other Lutherans confess about the Trinity?

18. Read Article 1, paragraphs 2 to 4. Which creeds make the same points?
19. Read the following passages: Galatians 1:8,9; 2 Thessalonians 2:11,12; Titus 3:10,11; Revelation 22:18,19. Why is it proper to have these condemning clauses in the Augsburg Confession?
20. Look up the following passages: Deuteronomy 6:4; John 1:1,2; John 10:30; 1 John 5:20. Put a Bible reference in the blank that shows each teaching to be wrong.
- _____ Manicheans said there were two competing gods of good and evil. The Valentinians taught something similar.
- _____ Arians taught Jesus had a beginning and was not of the same essence as the Father.
- _____ Eunomians believed that Jesus and God are almost totally unlike each other.
- _____ Paul of Samosata said Jesus was God but not from eternity.
- _____ Muslims speak of the work of Christ but only as a great prophet like Moses. To them, Jesus is not God but a creature subservient to Allah.
21. What other groups are there today that teach contrary to the biblical doctrine of the Trinity?

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• Lesson Three •

Articles 2, 18, and 19: God, Man, and Sin

1. What does the Bible tell us about mankind before Adam and Eve's fall into sin? (See Genesis 1:26,27; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10; and Genesis 5:3.)
2. Read Article 2, paragraphs 1,2. Since Adam and Eve fell into sin, how has mankind changed? (See Romans 5:12 and Ephesians 2:3.)
3. Besides Adam and Eve, who is the only person not conceived in a normal, physical way, and how is he different? (See Matthew 1:18; John 1:14; and Hebrews 4:15.)
4. The Roman Catholic Church in 1852 said in their official teachings that Mary, the mother of Jesus, from her conception was "preserved from all stain of sin." Read Psalm 51:5; Psalm 14:1-3; Romans 3:23; and John 3:6. How do these passages show that Mary was not preserved from the stain of sin?
5. The Catholic Church cannot accept the words that all people are "born without the fear of God, without trust in God." It teaches that if people do their best, they can earn God's gift of grace. If people will do their best, then God will "meet them halfway" and give them his gift of saving grace. Read Ephesians 2:1-5. How are people described before God makes them alive?
6. Read Romans 8:6,7. How is the sinful mind without the Holy Spirit described?
7. Why can people not meet God halfway?

8. The Catholic Church believes that people can meet God halfway because they believe that people are born with a free will. Read Article 18, paragraphs 1 and 4 to 7. In what area do people have free will?

9. Read Article 18, paragraphs 2 to 4. In what area does man not have free will?

10. Read Article 2, paragraph 3. What is the danger in believing that original sin does not damn or that man by nature has a free will to do some righteousness and works that are good in God's eyes?

11. For years people have asked, "If God exists and is good, where did evil come from?" On what must we base our answer to this or any question?

12. According to Article 19, what is the cause of sin?

13. In Article 1, Melancthon talked about the teaching of the Trinity. In Article 3, he's talking about Jesus as our Savior. Why was it important that he talk about sin in Article 2? (See Romans 7:18-25.)

14. Agree or disagree. Viewing sin as unimportant leads to viewing Jesus Christ as unimportant.

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• Lesson Four •

Articles 3 and 21: Jesus, Mankind's Only Mediator

1. Read Article 3, paragraph 1. Melancthon begins by calling Jesus “the Word.” What does John 1:1-3,14 tell us about Jesus, the Word?
2. Some have said that Jesus was there at the beginning of creation but that Jesus was not eternal. What does John 17:5 tell us about Jesus?
3. Read Article 3, paragraph 2. What does this paragraph emphasize?
4. The teaching of the two natures of Christ cannot be understood. It is a mystery. Read Colossians 2:9 and Hebrews 2:14. Why do Lutherans teach it?
5. Read Matthew 5:48 and Galatians 4:4,5. Why did Jesus have to be true man?
6. Read 1 Peter 1:18,19 and Hebrews 4:15. Why did Jesus have to be true God?
7. Read Ezekiel 18:20; Isaiah 53:4,5; and Galatians 3:10,13. Why else did Jesus have to be true man?
8. Read Romans 1:4; Romans 4:24; and 1 John 3:8. Why else did Jesus have to be true God?
9. Read 1 John 1:7. How does this passage show that Jesus didn't just pay for original sin but for all our actual sins too?

10. Read Matthew 28:20; Romans 8:28; and Ephesians 1:18-22. What does it mean that Jesus, the God-man, “rules forever and has power over all creatures”?

11. It’s clear that Jesus alone is mankind’s Savior and helper. Yet the Catholic Church of then and today encourages its people to pray to the virgin Mary and saints for help. Read 1 Corinthians 1:2. According to the Bible, what is a saint?

12. Read Article 21, paragraph 1. What good purpose can the saints serve?

13. Read Article 21, paragraph 2 and 1 Timothy 2:5. What purpose can saints not serve?

14. What bad result happens when people go to a saint or Mary in prayer or for help?

15. What’s wrong with this statement? “The holy fathers see Mary as used by God . . . to cooperate in the work of human salvation. . . . She cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity in the Savior’s work of restoring life to souls.”

16. What’s wrong with this prayer? “O Mother of love and mercy, who stood beside your dear Son when he was on the cross, and who suffered with him as co-redeemer, preserve in us his redemption and your compassion.”

17. Give examples of how people can confess their faith in Christ and yet look to someone or something else for help.

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• Lesson Five •

Articles 4 and 5: Justification, the Teaching by Which the Church Stands or Falls

1. Article 4, paragraph 1, states that people “cannot be justified (declared not guilty) *before God* by their own power, merits, or deeds.” Read Psalm 130:3; Psalm 143:2; and Isaiah 64:6. How does God see us?
2. Article 4, paragraph 1, also states that people “are freely justified for Christ’s sake.” Read Romans 3:23,24 and Titus 2:11. What word describes why we are freely justified?
3. Read Romans 11:6 and Titus 3:4,5. What is the source of this free justification?
4. “Grace is an infused quality that elevates man’s natural goodness to a much higher level and enables him to please God.” What’s wrong with this statement?
5. Some say that the word *justify* means to “make righteous,” that is, to make one morally right and good. Read Proverbs 17:15; Matthew 12:37; and Romans 3:28. What does the word *justify* mean in these verses?
6. Read John 3:16 and Romans 3:23,24. Who is justified?
7. Read Genesis 15:6 and Romans 4:2,3 and 23-25. How does this blessing of justification personally become our own?
8. Agree or disagree. Faith is believing in the man Jesus. (Read also James 2:19.)

9. Agree or disagree. Faith is the daring reliance, in spite of God's wrath, on Christ our mediator.

10. As Lutheran Christians, we believe that a glorious exchange has taken place. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. What is that exchange?

11. Agree or disagree. The Christian is both a saint and a sinner.

12. Read Romans 1:16 and 10:17. What is the means, or the tool, that works faith in the hearts of believers?

13. At the time of the Augsburg Confession, the Anabaptists (those against Baptism as a means of grace) believed that people could receive the Holy Spirit apart from the Word and sacraments "through their own preparations, thoughts, and actions." What group today also believes that the Holy Spirit can come to people apart from the Word and sacraments?

14. If someone claims to speak the words of the Holy Spirit, how can you test to see whether they are or are not speaking the Spirit's words? Read John 6:63 and Acts 17:11.

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• Lesson Six •

Articles 6, 20, 26, and 27: New Obedience, Our Response to Justification

1. Agree or disagree. Justification by faith alone does not interfere with good works; rather, it alone makes good works possible.
2. The Catholics accused the Lutherans of being against good works. They quoted Melancthon: “All the works of men, however praiseworthy they appear, are altogether vicious and are worthy of death.” Read Isaiah 64:6. Why could Melancthon say this?
3. The Catholics really didn’t like the Lutherans saying that good works could not earn forgiveness. They quoted Luther: “To say that our works earn forgiveness is to detract from the honor and work of Christ.” Read Romans 3:28 and Ephesians 2:8,9. Why could Luther say this?
4. Does God command good works? Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Titus 3:14; and Matthew 5:16.
5. Read Hebrews 11:6. Only what kind of person can please God?
6. Read Galatians 3:10,11. What happens when good works, doing what the law says, is placed ahead of justification?
7. Read Romans 12:1,2; 1 John 4:19; and Ephesians 2:8-10. From where do God-pleasing good works come?

8. Now review question 1 above.

9. True or false. Justification is a result of sanctification.

10. Read Article 20, paragraphs 3 and 6. What kind of good works did the Catholics encourage and for what reason?

11. Read Article 20, paragraph 8. What was the result of this Catholic teaching?

12. Read Article 20, paragraphs 9 to 11. What passages are used to show that the Catholics are wrong?

13. Read Article 20, paragraphs 15 to 22. What's one of the real blessings of knowing that we are saved by faith in Christ and not by the works we do?

14. Read Article 20, paragraphs 23 to 26. What is not saving faith?

15. Read Article 20, paragraphs 35 to 40. If a person has faith, how will he keep the First and Second Commandments? If a person does not have faith, how would he break the First and Second Commandments? Give examples.

16. Read Article 26, paragraphs 1 to 7. What was wrong with the way the church had been using human traditions (man-made commands or good works) such as eating or not eating certain foods?

17. Read Article 26, paragraphs 8 to 11. What else was wrong with the Catholic teaching about human traditions?

18. Read Article 26, paragraphs 12 to 17. What else was wrong with the Catholic teaching about human traditions?

19. Read Article 26, paragraphs 21 to 29. How did Melanchthon show the Catholics that they were wrong?

20. Read Article 26, paragraphs 40 to 45. The Lutherans didn't throw out all human traditions. But on what did they insist?

21. Another human tradition was that of monastic vows, promising to live as a monk or nun. Read Article 27, paragraphs 11 to 13. What was wrong with this?

22. Read Article 27, paragraphs 18 to 23. What else is wrong with monastic vows?

23. Read Article 27, paragraphs 36 to 48. What's the biggest and worst problem with monastic vows?

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• Lesson Seven •

Articles 7, 8, and 15: There Is One Church of God

At the time of the Augsburg Confession, the Catholics taught that the church is a visible body of people. They all professed the same faith and were ruled by the Roman pope. They believed Christ made the pope his personal earthly ruler. The pope could judge everyone, but no one could judge the pope. When Luther was excommunicated from the church, it caused the reformers to study just what the Scriptures say about the church. We have their response in Articles 7, 8, and 15.

1. Read Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22; 3:20-21; 5:25; and 1 Corinthians 1:2. How many churches are talked about? Compare with Article 7, paragraph 1.
2. Read Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 5:23. Who is the head of that church?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 1:2. Who makes up the church?
4. Read 1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 5:25-27; and 1 Corinthians 11:23-25. What are the marks of the church, those things that create the church and by which it is recognized?
5. Read 1 Samuel 16:7 and 2 Timothy 2:19. Who alone can see the members of that church?
6. Read Article 8, paragraph 1 and Matthew 13:24-30. What gets mixed into churches on earth, and what does Jesus call them?
7. What is the difference between the invisible church and visible churches?

8. What names in the Apostles' Creed do we give to the church over which Christ is the head?

9. Read Article 7, paragraphs 2 to 4. Read also Matthew 28:19,20; Romans 16:17; and Revelation 22:18,19. What is necessary for unity in the church, and what isn't?

10. Read Article 8. If a hypocrite gives someone the Lord's Supper, does the believer receive the body and blood of the Lord or not? Explain.

11. Read Article 15. When are church customs or traditions useful and good? Give some examples from the time of the Bible, the time of the Augsburg Confession, and today.

12. Read Article 15. When are church customs or traditions hurtful and bad? Give some examples from the time of the Bible, the time of the Augsburg Confession, and today.

13. Agree or disagree. God's Word cannot be without God's people, and God's people cannot be without God's Word.

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• Lesson Eight •

Articles 9 and 13: The Sacrament of Baptism

1. The Catholic Church says there are seven sacraments. Lutherans say there are two. What's the definition of a sacrament?
2. What are the two biblical sacraments?
3. What are the means of grace?
4. Why would confirmation, penance, marriage, holy orders, and extreme unction not be sacraments according to the Lutheran definition?
5. Article 9 begins, "About Baptism our churches teach that it is necessary for salvation . . ." Read Psalm 51:5; John 3:5,6; and Romans 6:23. What is one reason why Baptism is necessary for salvation?
6. Read Matthew 28:19. What's another reason why Baptism is necessary for salvation?
7. Article 9 continues, ". . . through Baptism God offers us his grace." Read Acts 2:38 and Titus 3:5-7. In Baptism, who is giving what to whom?
8. Article 9, paragraph 2, says that children are to be baptized. Read Matthew 28:19 and Acts 2:38,39. Why should children also be baptized?
9. The Anabaptists said that the Holy Spirit works directly in a person's heart apart from the Word of God and the sacraments. How would Titus 3:5-7 and Romans 10:17 disprove this?

10. The Anabaptists also said that children cannot believe and thus shouldn't be baptized until they are old enough to confess their faith. How do Matthew 18:5,6 and 28:19 disprove this?

11. The Anabaptists also said that Baptism was basically a symbolic act. It was a sign that one was a Christian. However, nothing really happens in Baptism. Read Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21; and Ephesians 5:26. What happens in Baptism?

12. Other people taught that an adult could receive forgiveness simply by being baptized or receiving the Lord's Supper, even if they didn't have faith. Just by taking part in the sacrament, they received its blessings. What does Hebrews 4:2 say about this?

13. Agree or disagree. Faith is necessary, not to make Baptism active but to receive its blessings.

14. Read Article 13, paragraph 2. Why should we make use of the sacraments?

15. Agree or disagree. Baptism is an adiaphoron.

16. Agree or disagree. The mode of Baptism (whether we apply the water by sprinkling or immersing) is an adiaphoron.

17. Some groups today say that "baptism in the Holy Spirit" is more important than water baptism. Read John 3:5,6 and Ephesians 4:4-6. How would you answer such a group?

18. What purpose does Baptism serve in our Christian lives today?

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• Lesson Nine •

Articles 10, 22, and 24: The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

1. At the time of the Augsburg Confession, there were three main views on the Lord's Supper.

Reformed church	Lutheran	Roman Catholic
only bread and wine	bread and wine	
	body and blood	only body and blood
Representation	Real Presence	Transubstantiation

Read Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; and Article 10. What is present in the Lord's Supper?

2. Another way to look at the differences is this: What does a person receive when he eats and drinks of the Lord's Supper?
3. According to Article 10, who are to be given the bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ? See also Article 22, paragraphs 1 and 2.
4. In Article 22, paragraph 3, Melancthon uses 1 Corinthians 11:27 as proof that laypeople also are to receive the wine, that the wine is not just for priests or pastors. Why is this a good passage to use?
5. Read Article 22, paragraphs 4 to 7. According to Melancthon, who else said that laypeople are to receive the wine?

6. According to Article 22, paragraphs 8 to 11, what two reasons are given for doing away with the practice that laypeople should not receive the wine?

7. According to Article 22, paragraph 12, what else was done away with?

8. Read Article 24, paragraphs 1 to 9. What two things did the Lutherans now do which showed that they very much revered the mass (the Lord's Supper)?

9. Read Article 24, paragraphs 10 to 20. What other problem had entered the Catholic Church's use of the mass?

10. Read Article 24, paragraphs 21 to 23. What other false teaching was added that was also a misuse of the mass?

11. Read Article 24, paragraphs 24 to 27. What two passages are used to disprove their teaching, and why are these such good passages to use?

12. Read Article 24, paragraphs 28 to 29. Why else is the Catholic mass wrong?

13. Read Article 24, paragraphs 30 to 33. What is one of the real blessings or results when a believer partakes of the Lord's Supper?

14. Agree or disagree. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the gospel.

15. Martin Luther wrote, "The two words 'my' and 'your' are mighty words which should move you gladly to walk over a hundred thousand miles for this sacrament." Why would he say that?

7. Read Article 25, paragraphs 2-4. Why is absolution to be so highly prized, and why is it such a privilege for us to use absolution?

8. Read Article 12, paragraphs 7 and 8.
 - a. Cite a biblical example of a believer who lost the Holy Spirit and his faith.

 - b. Read 1 John 1:8. Can people ever reach a state of perfection in this life?

9. Read Article 12, paragraph 9. Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8. What should we do when an errorist repents?

10. Read Article 12, paragraph 10. Who would this paragraph be directed against?

11. Compare King Saul with King David and Peter with Judas. Who was repentant and who wasn't, and why?

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• Lesson Eleven •

Articles 14 and 28: The Office of the Public, or Representative, Ministry

1. One of Lutheranism's most interesting scriptural doctrines is the priesthood of all believers. Read 1 Peter 1:1,2 and 2:9. Read also Revelation 1:5,6 and 5:9,10. What is meant by the "priesthood of all believers"?
2. Agree or disagree. The term *priest* is used in as universal a sense as the word *Christian*.
3. At the time of the Augsburg Confession, the Roman Catholic Church taught that the following was God's "order" for the church: through apostolic succession a priest received the divine grace and authority he would need for his office. So it separated the church into two classes, the spiritual and the temporal, the clergy and the laity. They then accused the Lutherans of destroying "order" in the church. Read Article 14. What did the Lutherans teach about order?
4. At the same time the Anabaptists believed that since everyone was a priest, anyone could preach whenever and wherever he felt the Spirit moved him. They disregarded all order. What does Article 14 say to that problem?
5. Agree or disagree. A Christian is perfectly free, subject to no one. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant, subject to everyone. (Note Galatians 5:1 and 5:13.)
6. Read Ephesians 4:11,12; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1,2; 1 Corinthians 4:1. What is the office of the public ministry?
7. Why can this also be called a representative ministry?

8. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7. Why cannot everyone be a called minister in the public or representative ministry?

9. The call into the public ministry can be “immediate” or “mediate.” Acts 9:3-6,15 is an example of an immediate call. Acts 14:23 is an example of a mediate call. What’s the difference? What’s the same?

10. Read Article 28, paragraphs 1-4. What other problem did the Catholic Church have?

11. Read Article 28, paragraphs 5-9. What is the power of the church, power of the keys, or the power that bishops have?

12. Read Article 28, paragraphs 10-18. In civil matters, what should the church not do?

13. Read Article 28, paragraphs 19-28. If the church goes contrary to Scripture, then what do congregations and individuals have the right to do?

14. Read Article 28, paragraphs 29-52. When does the church not have the right to institute ceremonies?

15. Read Article 28, paragraphs 53-56. When does the church have the authority or right to institute new ceremonies?

16. Article 28, paragraphs 57-78. What did the Lutherans really want when it came to the issue of church customs and the power of the bishops?

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• Lesson Twelve •

Articles 16, 23, and 28: Civil Life outside the Church

1. At the time of the Augsburg Confession, there were some who advocated a radical reform. By means of rebellion, they wanted to overthrow current governments and usher in a new “kingdom of God.” Eck’s 404 Propositions accused the Lutherans of this teaching. Read Article 16, paragraph 1 and Romans 13:1-6. What did the Lutherans truly teach?
2. Read Article 16, paragraph 2. If civil government and just laws are blessings from God, what are some things Christian people can do without sinning?
3. Lutherans have sometimes called this teaching the “teaching of the two kingdoms.” Read in order Matthew 4:17; 1 Corinthians 4:20; Romans 1:16; Colossians 1:13; and 2 Timothy 4:18. What is one of those two kingdoms?
4. Read 1 Peter 2:13-17 and Matthew 19:4-6. What is the other of the two kingdoms?
5. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-3 and 1 Peter 3:1,2,7,8. What are some of the blessings of living a godly life under such godly institutions as civil government and marriage?
6. Read Article 16, paragraph 5. Which of the two kingdoms is being talked about here?
7. Read Article 16, paragraphs 6,7. When only does a Christian have the right to disobey an authority in civil or earthly affairs?

8. Read Article 23. It deals with a human or man-made command that goes contrary to the command of God.
 - a. What was the man-made command?

 - b. What is God's command (and cite the Scripture references)?

9. Read Article 23, paragraphs 11-26. What other evidence is cited to show that the Catholic position was wrong?

10. Read Article 23, paragraphs 6, 13, and 18. What happens when people go against the law of God and why?

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• Lesson Thirteen •

Article 17: Christ's Return for Judgment

1. Read Article 17, paragraph 1. Read also Matthew 24:30,31 and Acts 1:11. How will Christ return?

2. Read Article 17, paragraph 1; John 5:22,23; and Acts 17:31. Why will Jesus return?

3. Read Article 17, paragraphs 2 and 3, and John 5:28,29. Who will rise to be judged?

4. Read Article 17, paragraphs 2 and 3, John 3:16-18; and Matthew 25:31-46.
 - a. What will happen to the believers and the unbelievers?

 - b. From the passages above, on what basis will that judgment be made?

5. Read Matthew 25:13. When will judgment day be?

6. Read Matthew 25:1-13 and Luke 21:28. What should be the Christian's response to the coming judgment?

7. Read Article 17, paragraph 4, and Matthew 25:41,46. How does the Bible passage show the Anabaptists to be wrong?

8. How does this false teaching also go contrary to the teaching of justification by faith alone?

9. Read Article 17, paragraph 5. The “Jewish idea” spoken of was that Christ would return as a political Messiah to rule this world. Read John 18:36. Why is this wrong?

10. What are some groups who promote this false teaching today?

11. This false teaching is often based on Revelation chapter 20. Read Revelation 20:1-10, and answer the following questions:
 - a. What would indicate that these verses are not to be taken completely literally?

 - b. What is the thousand years? Compare Revelation 20:3,7 with Matthew 24:21,22.

 - c. What would the first resurrection be (compare with Ephesians 2:4,5) and the second death be (compare with Romans 6:23)?

12. From what we have just done, what have you learned about the Lutheran principle of interpreting Scripture?