



Key Components

# LUTHERAN IDENTITY



# Key Concepts

- Law and Gospel - ways that the Word comes to us
  - Justification – God comes to us
  - Theology of the Cross – God “breaks us open”
  - Communication of Attributes – the presence of Christ
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# The Word of God

What is a word?

What is the Word?



# What is the Word of God?

- “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.” John 1:1, 14



# How the Word comes to us

- Christ, the Word of God, is mediated to us in 3 ways:
    - Scripture
    - Proclamation (preaching)
    - Sacrament
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# The Word of God has two forms

- The Word of God comes as law and as gospel
- “The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”  
John 1:17
- It is not that the Old Testament is law and the New Testament is gospel, but rather that throughout scripture both are found.



# The Law

- Law: tells God's vision for the world, tells what we must do, yet we are unable to do it
  - Thus the law always convicts us of our sin
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# Uses of the Law

- First Use of the Law: Civil
  - Keeps society orderly.
  - We must follow this for the sake of a functioning society
- Second Use of the Law: Theological
  - Demonstrates to us how far we are from God's vision for our life
  - We cannot fulfill it; it always convicts us

# Gospel

- Gospel: tells God's promise of grace through Christ, tells what Christ does, is given to us
- The gospel is about God's action, not ours.
- It is the good news that we are saved not by our own righteousness but by Christ's righteousness.

# Law-Gospel-Transformation

- Law tells us what God wants from us. Yet it only serves to show our sin – the law only brings death, even though if we followed it we would have a better life.
- Gospel tells us what God does.
- Transformation: God's promise of transformation (theosis)



# Transformation

- Encountering God does not leave us unchanged
- We are *transformed* by the encounter
- The Holy Spirit works within us, leading us to see God's presence around us and be empowered by the Spirit to love the world around us
- This is God's work, not ours, and so is a form of grace rather than law



# Sanctification and Transformation

- To give our life in service to others is to follow Christ.
- Transformation, then, is the change from being concerned about ourselves to being concerned about other people's needs.
- This is sanctification. It is the work of the Holy Spirit.

# Law and Gospel together

- Each text contains law and gospel, and sometimes the same message is law for some and gospel for others.
- **Luke 18:9-14**
- **Romans 8:1-17**
- **Ephesians 2:11-22**
- **Galatians 5:13-15**
- **John 13:31-38**
- **Mark 1:40-45**
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For more...

Read Martin Luther:

“A Brief Exposition on What to Look for in the  
Gospels”

“How Christians are to Regard Moses”

