



A Word from Pastor Schielke

Law and Gospel Part 8: Confusing Law and Gospel

A very common problem with our understanding of Law and Gospel is to confuse or mix them. In our minds we may place elements of God's law into the Gospel and vice versa. Here are some examples.

- *"You've been so bad that God will never forgive you."* This is a gross misunderstanding of the Gospel. The Gospel of the forgiveness of sins in Christ is exactly for people who have been "so bad." We all need the Gospel no matter how small or large our sins might appear to others. There is no person who was "so bad" for which Jesus' sacrifice on the cross cannot avail. As St. Paul reminds us, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:23-24).
- *"If you are truly sorry, God will forgive you."* God's forgiveness in Christ isn't dependent on how sorry you are. If it were, how would we ever know if we were forgiven? Our forgiveness is dependent on Christ's sacrifice on the cross to atone for all our sins. That is the Gospel. This saving work is freely available to all. This is what we mean by

objective justification; Jesus died for the sins of the world. That includes your sin and mine. It's true that those who are unrepentant and reject unto death God's gift of forgiveness do not receive the benefit of Christ's death, but that is not a shortcoming of Christ's work.

- *"Oh, what a happy person the Christian is! He is free from anxiety, fear, and doubt."* This is simply not true. Scripture does not promise the Christian a happy life. Neither are our life circumstances a reflection of how much God loves us. God loves us, period. Anxieties, fears, and doubts will arise in the Christian due to our sinful nature, the temptations of the world, and the work of the devil. However, the Christian knows to turn to Jesus in prayer and devotion in such times to find rest and relief in Him.
- *"Now that you know you've been saved by Jesus, it's time to live according to God's law."* This one is perhaps a little more subtle. It's always time to live according to God's law because God's law prescribes what is best for us. However, the mindset behind this quote implies that how I live as a

Christian is a condition for God continuing to apply the Gospel to me. The Christian, by the power of the Gospel, desires to live a life according to the law of God, that is true. However, God's forgiveness is not contingent on our keeping of the law. That is the whole point of the Gospel!

One of the keys to not confusing Law and Gospel is to remember how the Gospel is applied to us. God does it. The Gospel comes from outside of ourselves, from God to us. Jesus won our salvation on the cross. That was completely His work. He delivers it to us in His word, in baptism, in the absolution, and in the Lord's Supper. That is also, completely His work. When you question or doubt your salvation, your forgiveness, don't look inside of yourself. Don't judge your salvation based on the sin you still see in yourself. Instead look to Christ. Trust in His word and promises. Remember Christ's death on the cross, His resurrection from the dead, and your baptism into that death and resurrection. Rejoice, for Christ has done it all.

Next month we will consider a different kind of danger regarding law and gospel, gospel reductionism.



Transfiguration Sunday - March 2 is Transfiguration Sunday, the Last Sunday of Epiphany before the beginning of the Lenten season. It commemorates when Jesus Christ went up on the mount to meet with Moses and Elijah, and His glory was shown to Peter, James, and John.

Ash Wednesday - Lent begins on Wednesday, March 5, with Ash Wednesday. During the Lenten season, we focus on our sins and repent of them as we look towards Jesus' trial, punishment, and death for our sins as the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for us.

Transfiguration Sunday

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
1 Corinthians 15:57

Victory in Christ Lutheran Church
508 Main St., Newark, TX
817-489-5400
viclutheranchurch.org



The Formula of Concord - The Formula of Concord (FC) was the last of the confessional documents written by the Lutherans in the 16th century. Finished in 1577, the FC consists of twelve articles presented in two parts. The first part, the Epitome, is a brief presentation of each point of doctrine and the controversy surrounding it while the Solid Declaration presents a more detailed discussion. Over a dozen authors contributed portions of draft versions of the FC, but the most influential authors of the final document were Jakob Andrea and Martin Chemnitz. The need for the FC arose after the death of Martin Luther in 1546. Over time, the Lutherans became divided over several points of doctrine. Several political peace treaties also forced the Lutherans to entertain and accept certain points of Reformed theology which had been developing in Switzerland. Thus, the FC was pivotal in clarifying the Lutheran position over and against both the Roman Catholic position and, more significantly, over the Reformed position. It is the FC that most clearly distinguishes Lutheran teaching on several important points and against the various Protestant bodies we see around us even today. Over the next months, you will find the articles of the Epitome of the Formula of Concord in our newsletter. It's good for all of us to have at least some familiarity with this important doctrinal statement.

X. Church Rites - Continued

AFFIRMATIVE THESES: The Correct and True Doctrine and Confession concerning This Article.

3 1. For settling also this controversy we unanimously believe, teach, and confess that the ceremonies or church rites which are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word, but have been instituted alone for the sake of propriety and good order, are in and of themselves no divine worship, nor even a part of it. Matt. 15:9: In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

4 2. We believe, teach, and confess that the congregation of God of every place and every time has the power, according to its circumstances, to change such ceremonies in such manner as may be most useful and edifying to the congregation of God.

5 3. Nevertheless, that herein all frivolity and offense should be avoided, and special care should be taken to exercise forbearance towards the weak in faith. 1 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 14:13.

6 4. We believe, teach, and confess that in time of persecution, when a plain [and steadfast] confession is required of us, we should not yield to the enemies in regard to such adiaphora, as the apostle has written Gal. 5:1: Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage. Also 2 Cor. 6:14: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, etc. For what concord hath light with darkness? Also Gal. 2:5: To whom we gave place, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might remain with you. For in such a case it is no longer a question concerning adiaphora, but concerning the truth of the Gospel, concerning [preserving] Christian liberty, and concerning sanctioning open idolatry, as also concerning the prevention of offense to the weak in the faith [how care should be taken lest idolatry be openly sanctioned and the weak in faith be offended]; in which we have nothing to concede, but should plainly confess and suffer on that account what God sends, and what He allows the enemies of His Word to inflict upon us.

7 5. We believe, teach, and confess also that no Church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies not commanded by God than the other, if otherwise there is agreement among them in doctrine and all its articles, as also in the right use of the holy Sacraments, according to the well-known saying: *Dissonantia ieiunii non dissolvit consonantiam fidei*, Disagreement in fasting does not destroy agreement in faith.

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the
victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
1 Corinthians 15:57



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
2 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	3	4 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	5	6	7	8 All Boards Meeting 9:00 a.m.
9 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	10	11 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15 Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
16 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	17 Presidents' Day No School	18 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	19	20	21	22 St. Matthias, Apostle Day
23 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon Youth Confirmation 12:30 p.m.	24 St. Matthias, Apostle	25 Women's Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	26	27	28	

VIC Happenings

Lenten and Easter Services - Ash Wednesday and Lent begin on March 5. We will be having a meal at 6:00 p.m. followed by worship services at 7:00 p.m.

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
1 Corinthians 15:57



Victory in Christ Lutheran Church
508 Main Street Newark, Texas
817-489-5400
viclutheranchurch.org

February Birthdays:

- 1 Ashton Rodgers
- 2 Brad Rohloff
- 2 Jared Rohloff
- 3 Zoey Richardson
- 11 Jenny Jones
- 14 Angi Haney
- 16 Tim Schmidt
- 18 Hailey Richardson
- 22 Burgandy Knox
- 24 Suzanne Richardson



Future Church Cleanings:

- Feb. 8 Hill Family
- Feb. 22 Kroeger, McClain, Wilson,
and Schwiesow Families
- Mar. 8 Brad Rohloff Family
- Mar. 22 Schielke Family

The Bible readings for February and part of March are listed below.

Feb. 1: Leviticus 1-4	Feb. 15: Numbers 8-10	March 1: Deuteronomy 5-7
Feb. 2: Leviticus 5-7	Feb. 16: Numbers 11-13	March 2: Deuteronomy 8-10
Feb. 3: Leviticus 8-10	Feb. 17: Numbers 14-15	March 3: Deuteronomy 11-13
Feb. 4: Leviticus 11-13	Feb. 18: Numbers 16-17	March 4: Deuteronomy 14-16
Feb. 5: Leviticus 14-15	Feb. 19: Numbers 18-20	March 5: Deuteronomy 17-20
Feb. 6: Leviticus 16-18	Feb. 20: Numbers 21-22	March 6: Deuteronomy 21-23
Feb. 7: Leviticus 19-21	Feb. 21: Numbers 23-25	March 7: Deuteronomy 24-27
Feb. 8: Leviticus 22-23	Feb. 22: Numbers 26-27	March 8: Deuteronomy 28-29
Feb. 9: Leviticus 24-25	Feb. 23: Numbers 28-30	March 9: Deuteronomy 30-31
Feb. 10: Leviticus 26-27	Feb. 24: Numbers 31-32	March 10: Deuteronomy 32-34
Feb. 11: Numbers 1-2	Feb. 25: Numbers 33-34	March 11: Joshua 1-4
Feb. 12: Numbers 3-4	Feb. 26: Numbers 35-36	March 12: Joshua 5-8
Feb. 13: Numbers 5-6	Feb. 27: Deuteronomy 1-2	March 13: Joshua 9-11
Feb. 14: Numbers 7	Feb. 28: Deuteronomy 3-4	March 14: Joshua 12-15

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
1 Corinthians 15:57

Victory in Christ Lutheran Church
508 Main Street Newark, Texas
817-489-5400
viclutheranchurch.org