



CHAPTER 1 - CLOSED

As you watch the video for this lesson, use the space below to take notes. The video will prompt you when to fill out each of the following sections.



Opening Video Notes

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Sin

In the section titled “Closed Is Our Default Position” on page 5, we read about sin demolishing our relationship with God. We read in Genesis 3 about the fall into sin. This fall into sin brought on our original sin. We see our need for Christ in our sinful flesh.

The original sin in a man is like his beard, which, though shaved off today so that a man is very smooth around his mouth, yet grows again by tomorrow morning. . . . Just so original sin remains in us and bestirs itself as long as we live, but we must resist it and always cut off its hair.

[WLS § 4176]

Q1. As we daily struggle with the old Adam (our original sin), write in your notes what you see around you in the world that shows the demolished relationship with God in the fall.



Protoevangelium - Video Notes

Read Genesis 3:15. This verse is called the protoevangelium, or the first Gospel. If you have a copy of The Lutheran Study Bible, read the footnote for the verse (pp. 18, 20).

Read John 14:6-7.

Q2. Jesus tells us here that He is the one promised in the protevangelium. How does Jesus give us access to God the Father?



History

Pages 9–18 talk about “Open Access to the Gospel” and our heritage. There is a lot of history in these sections. In fact, it is important history for you to know!

Q3. What was the most interesting thing that you learned in these pages of the book?



Imperfections

In the section titled “Imperfections,” we read about something called the Saxon Visitation, where Luther and other teams of Lutheran leaders visited parishes to look at the health of the congregation and what they were teaching and practicing. From these visitations, we received two of the most influential pieces of Luther’s writing: the Small and Large Catechisms.

Pull out your Small Catechism.

Q4. What is something that we learn in the catechism about closed hearts being opened by the Gospel?



Vignette: Seliman - Video Notes

■ The statement we hear as we read about Seliman is “praying with both eyes closed makes it that much easier to fall asleep.”

Q5. What does this mean to you? What are things we can do in our daily life to combat this “falling asleep”?

CHAPTER 2 - LUKEWARM

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Opening Video Notes





JESUS ≠ MEH

Read all of the passages below; then answer the questions.

Luke 1:32-33

Luke 1:41

Luke 1:46-56

Luke 2:10-11

Luke 2:17-18

Luke 2:29-30

Luke 2:38

Q1. What do these passages teach us?

Q2. Is the statement “Jesus ≠ meh” true?

Lukewarm

Finally, after days and nights of wrestling with the difficulty, God had mercy on me, and then I was able to note the connection of the words “the righteousness of God is revealed in the Gospel” and “the just shall live by faith.” Then I began to understand that the “righteousness of God” is that through which the righteous lives by the gift (dono) of God, that is, through faith.

[WLS § 3905]



We see our passive righteousness is won through Christ, which then enables our active righteousness to serve our neighbor.

Q3. How does this knowledge empower you to move beyond lukewarmness for Christ?



Apathy - Video Notes

Pages 36–40 deal with different types of apathy we have: apathy in devotion, in worship, in the Sacraments, in prayer, and in serving our neighbor.

Q4. What is one takeaway you had from this section of the chapter? Where in your life do you find apathy?

Here I Stand

Since then your serene majesty and your lordships seek a simple answer, I will give it in this manner, neither horned nor toothed: Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience.

I cannot do otherwise, here I stand, may God help me, Amen.

[LW 32:112–13]



Q5. We read that “dull left the room when he spoke those words” (p. 41). In the society and world we live in today, how does this confession of Luther (staring certain death in the eyes, mind you) empower us to live boldly in our faith? How does it show us that Lutheran ≠ meh?



Vignette: Dietrich - Video Notes

Q6. While today we enjoy a life where we are not challenged with probable death for our beliefs, we do face the possibility of a future where our beliefs are openly persecuted. What will be important as you continue to build your apologetic in a world ever hostile toward Christianity?

CHAPTER 3 - CONFUSED

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Authority

Read all of the passages below; then answer the questions.

Matthew 7:28-29

Luke 4:32

Mark 1:27

■ We see so many instances where people recognized the authority by which Christ taught.

Q1. After reading the section called “Teaching with Authority,” why do you think this was so startling to the people around Christ?



Your Confession - Video Notes

We learn about St. Augustine and his formation in “Confusion and Confession.” At the end of it all, we find that having a confession of faith was essential for Augustine.

As Lutherans, we have the Book of Concord that houses our confessions of faith.

Q2. If someone asked you to make a confession of your faith, what would you say?



THEOLOGICAL PEZ® DISPENSERS

In “Theological PEZ® Dispensers,” we read about our desire to take complex theological issues and have the answer spit out in 140 characters or less.

Q3. Here is a challenge: What is a complex theological question you have? Write it below and do what we are encouraged to do—search the Scriptures and the Confessions to help shape your answer in the truth of what is taught.



THEOLOGICAL BLOODLETTING

We see in our culture so many different ways that other denominations give confusion with their beliefs, and we are not immune! On pages 68–70 in the section “Theological Bloodletting,” we see several areas that we are not confused about.

Q4. Pick one of the topics from pages 68–70 and write your own description of it.



Vignette: Maira - Video Notes

We read about María's personal journey and her lifelong journey of theological struggles. She was, however, determined to find answers.

María would not remain confused. She wanted to know what she believed, why she believed it, and how she could rationally defend it. (p. 74)

Q5. What is a matter of faith that confused you in the past or confuses you still? Where can you turn to help you with that confusion?



CHAPTER 4 - LAZY

As you watch the video for this lesson, use the space below to take notes. The video will prompt you when to fill out each of the following sections.



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Labor

Read Genesis 3:17-18

Q1. Here we see where work became something different from what it was meant to be. What else would you add to the list of examples where you might see sin frustrating our labor?



The Work of Salvation

Immediately after sin entered into creation, God began the work of salvation.
(p. 82)

Q2. What does this statement mean?



Subject to All

A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none.

A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.

[LW 31:344]

Q3. What does this Luther quote mean?



Serve Your Neighbor - Video Notes

Q4. As we look at the list of ways that Lutherans serve their neighbor in “Sanctified Sweat” (starting on p. 88), we see that this is an incomplete list. What are some other ways that Lutherans (or Christians in general) serve their neighbor? (Feel free to give specific examples from your context.)



Vignette: Bessie - Video Notes

In chapter 9, we will learn a lot about vocation. Dr. Bessie was a great example of serving the Lord through her many different vocations.

Pull out your Small Catechism and open it to the Table of Duties (or [click here](#)).

Q5. What is your understanding of how we serve the Lord in our vocations?



CHAPTER 5 - PASTEL

As you watch the video for this lesson, use the space below to take notes. The video will prompt you when to fill out each of the following sections.



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Read Matthew 5

Read Matthew 5

In “The Color of Jesus,” we read about how Jesus’ teachings were different from what the Pharisees and the Sadducees taught and believed.

Q1. Since we just read Matthew 5, contemplate these expectations and teachings of Christ. Can we ever stand up to these expectations?



Strength

Read Romans 8:10-11 and Ephesians 3:14-21.

Q2. What do these Scripture passages teach us?



Be Different

Being a Christian means being different. Believers stand out from the crowd because Christ dwells within them. (p. 110)

Q3. In the words of Luther, “Was ist das?” What does this mean?



Cultural Disobedience

Read Matthew 10:16-18

Q4. As we approach the world “wise as serpents and innocent as doves,” we see a history of cultural disobedience in Lutheranism. What historical event did you find most interesting in the section “Cultural Disobedience in the Past”?



Culture Thinks For Us - Video Notes

One of the encouragements in the section “Cultural Disobedience in the Present” says to think for yourself.

Q5. As we look at the world through the Lutheran lens, how can we more effectively think for ourselves rather than let the culture think for us?



Vignette: Jack - Video Notes

Jack is a unique guy! Even as grounded as he is on the outside, he still is tempted to fall away from Christ.

Q6. When you are tempted to give up your faith, what are things that keep you grounded?

CHAPTER 6 - NEW

As you watch the video for this lesson, use the space below to take notes. The video will prompt you when to fill out each of the following sections.



Opening Video Notes

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Read 1 Corinthians 15:17,20

Q1. What comfort is found in these verses?



Making You New

Choose one of the passages listed at the top of page 134, right before the section “Jesus: Making You New.” Jesus gave us signs of His authority.

Q2. What did you learn in the passage you chose?





Radical Teachings - Video Notes

In regard to justification by faith alone, we read this:

These teachings were at one time so radical that they could get you killed. These teachings were so vehemently rejected by the Church that people were put to death over the issue. (p. 136)

Q3. What are examples you see in the world today of people losing their lives because of their faith?



A Confused Gospel

The section "A Confused Gospel" discusses all of the ways that the Holy Roman Empire had brought philosophy into the Christian Church and removed the Gospel teaching from their doctrine.

Luther wrote this about justification:

If this one teaching stands in its purity, then Christendom will also remain pure and good, undivided and unseparated; for this alone, and nothing else, makes and maintains Christendom . . . where this falls, it is impossible to ward off any error or sectarian spirit.

[LW 14:37]

Read Article IV of the Augsburg Confession:

1 Our churches teach that people cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works. 2 People are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins. 3 God counts this faith for righteousness in His sight (Romans 3:21-26; 4:5).

[AC IV]

Q4. Why is this article so important to our Lutheran Confessions?

Starting on page 141, we see descriptions for what having a new life in Christ means.

Q5. Choose a title (Today, Hope, Confidence, Glory, or Tomorrow) and write about how that applies to your life.



Vignette: Ben - Video Notes

Ben led a high-stakes life. He lived in the fast lane. While it may seem that we have nothing in common with Ben, we do find commonality in the fact that we, too, are poor, miserable sinners.

Q6. As we go through rough spots in this broken, sinful world, what are things we hold on to that keep us going every day?



CHAPTER 7 - ORDINARY

As you watch the video for this lesson, use the space below to take notes. The video will prompt you when to fill out each of the following sections.



Opening Video Notes



WOOD, NAILS, AND ROCK

Q1. For each of the “ordinary” things talked about in the section “Wood, Nails, and Rock,” what makes them extraordinary?



GOLD, RELICS, AND MAGIC – VIDEO NOTES

Q2. Pull out your Bible. As we look at the errors listed in the section “Gold, Relics, and Magic,” what examples do we find in Scripture of people putting their trust in things outside of what God had promised?



Means of Grace

Read Augsburg Confession V

1 So that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. 2 Through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given (John 20:22). He works faith, when and where it pleases God (John 3:8), in those who hear the good news that God justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake. 3 This happens not through our own merits, but for Christ's sake.

4 Our churches condemn the Anabaptists and others who think that through their own preparations and works the Holy Spirit comes to them without the external Word.

[AC V]

Q3. What are our Means of Grace? Why might God deliver His grace through such earthly, ordinary means?



READ 1 JOHN 3:1

Q4. Let's ask the ever-pressing Lutheran question: What does this mean?



Vignette: Sharon - Video Notes

When we learn about Sharon, we hear the words her pastor spoke to her on her last day.
These words are anything but ordinary.

Q5. What comfort do we find in these words of Jesus as we go through our day-to-day lives?



CHAPTER 8 - UNRESOLVED

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Creatures

Creatures depend on what the Creator chooses to reveal. (p. 180)

Q1. What has God revealed to us? Where do we find this revelation?



New Revelation

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide believers in all truth (John 15:26). Jesus spoke only what God the Father had given Him to speak. And the Holy Spirit speaks only what bears witness to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost to guide believers in speaking the truth about Jesus. Believers do not receive the Holy Spirit so that some new revelation about God might be known; rather, the Holy Spirit directs believers to what Jesus Christ has already revealed. (p. 183)

Q2. When you come across someone who claims to have a new revelation from God, how would you interact with that claim?



Crux Theologorum

Q3. Explain the crux theologorum in your own words.



Bad News - Video Notes

Q4. Why do we not answer questions that God has not revealed the answers to?



Vignette: Hannah - Video Notes

Our vignette ends with this sentence:

“Hannah lived in the unresolved tension of faith in Christ Jesus.”

Her story is one many of us can relate to, either personally or through a family member or friend who has experienced this tension.

Q5. What are other tensions we find in faith?



CHAPTER 9 - PURPOSE

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Opening Video Notes

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MARK 1 - VIDEO NOTES

Read Mark 1:16-18

Q1. There are lots of vocations in your life. Talk/Write about how God uses your specific vocations to serve your neighbor.



Estate

No particular estate was more godly or noble than any of the other estates; serving the family and the state were as spiritual as serving in the church. Preaching the Gospel to a congregation or nursing a newborn child are both godly tasks. Baking bread, burying the dead, and keeping cattle fed are all God-pleasing vocations. (p. 212)

Q2. How do we, as Lutherans, know this statement to be true?



VOCATION

Vocation is not about what we do to find purpose in our work; instead, vocation is about God accomplishing His purposes in and through the work of His people. (p. 214)

Q3. Luther spoke of this through the lens of the Ten Commandments. How do the Ten Commandments show us how to serve our neighbor?



READ ROMANS 10:14

Q4. How do we understand the difference between the universal priesthood of all believers and the Office of the Holy Ministry?



Vignette: Scott - Video Notes

There was a point in time when priests and other religious orders were held as “more holy” than other vocations. Luther combated this thought. As we read about Scott, we see he is serving the Lord where He has called him to be.

Q5. How does God use you in your local congregation?

Q6. How does God use you to serve those outside the walls of your local congregation?



CHAPTER 10 - LOCAL

As you watch the video for this lesson, use the space below to take notes. The video will prompt you when to fill out each of the following sections.



Opening Video Notes



MARK 1 – VIDEO NOTES

Read John 1:14

What Luther Says

When the evangelist declared that Christ dwelt among us, he meant to say: “He did not appear like the angel Gabriel, who came to Mary with God’s command and then soon departed from her; for angels do not tarry long in visible form among mankind. Christ, however, remained with us according to His human nature, which was inseparably united with the divine since His incarnation. Into His thirty-fourth year He ate and drank with us, He was angry and sad, He prayed and He wept. He executed His Father’s mission, suffered persecution and death in the end at the hands of His own people. And thus the Jews crucified the true Son of God, the Lord of Glory (1 Cor. 2:8); and we saw His blood oozing forth and flowing to the ground.”

This is the article of faith which we Christians believe, which is our greatest consolation, and by means of which we become children of God. We should not engage in lengthy debates about whether the fact that God became man redounds to God’s glory or to His disgrace; but we should accept it gladly and with all our hearts as something for our welfare and comfort, and we should thank God for it sincerely.

Q1. What is the comfort that we find in Christ dwelling among us?

Q2. In the section “Christ Coming to Us,” we learn about the external Word. How does God dwell among us today?



PROCLAIMED

Knowing that the voice of Christ is contained in Holy Scripture, we read that “the sheep are to judge whether they are hearing the voice of Christ” (p. 237).

Q3. What should we expect to be hearing proclaimed to us in our churches?



LOCATION

Christ has located His gifts in the Church. Forgiveness is not floating out there in a cloud. Christ has told His people where forgiveness can be found: where the Word is proclaimed, where the Sacraments are delivered, and where Absolution is given. In other words, you can find forgiveness in the local congregation. (p. 243)

Q4. Consider how this statement applies to you and your local congregation.



Vignette: [Insert Name Here] - Video Notes

We all have great programs at our churches. We all have things that happen outside the doors of our parishes. These things are good for our neighbor and for our community. As Lutherans, we find solace in the fact that what really matters is our Word and Sacrament ministry.

That is where Jesus has promised to meet us.

Q5. What comfort can we take away from this knowledge?