



Lutheranism 101 – Week 1

Justified by Grace

1. 1. How do you define grace?
2. When was a time that you were shown grace? When was a time that you showed grace to others?
3. If you were to add a sacrament, what would you add?
 - For reference, Catholics have 7 - Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, Absolution or Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Ordination, and Marriage
 - Martin Luther was in favor of 3 sacraments - baptism, communion, and penance
 - Pastor Sam would argue that foot washing qualifies as a sacrament as well
4. Is there a special memory about baptism or communion that you have?
5. Do you think you need to be baptized to get into heaven?
6. Who do you think should be allowed to participate in communion?
7. The Word of God and the Sacraments certainly are means of grace, but are they the only ones? Are there other things in this world that convey God's grace to you? Could other religions contain aspects that would qualify as "means of grace?"



Lutheranism 101 – Week 2

Justified through Faith

1. In your opinion, what are the central/indispensable parts of a worship service? What would a bare bones service look like if you designed it?
2. What is your favorite part of the Lutheran worship service? Do you have a favorite song or hymn?
3. Where does your faith come from? Was it something passed on by your family of origin? Did you discover it on your own?
4. Have you always been Lutheran (if that is how you identify, of course)? How did you, or your family, become Lutheran? If you do not consider yourself to be Lutheran, how would you describe yourself and your faith?
5. Has your faith ever waivered or lapsed?
6. Do you think doubt is a part of faith, or the opposite of faith? What are some of the doubts that you have struggled with at times?
7. Is regular worship something that is necessary for your faith? Is church the only place that you “worship”?
8. How do other people play a role in your faith? Can you have faith on your own? How do different aspects of organized religion influence/strengthen/weaken your faith?
9. How does your faith influence how you live your life? Are there certain key teachings of the church that you would consider to be guiding principles?



heology On Tap



Lutheranism 101 – Week 3 **Justified for Christ's Sake**

1. How do you know what you know about God?
 - Was it taught to you by your family or someone important in your life?
 - From the Bible?
 - From church?
 - From personal experiences?
 - Something else?
2. Can you describe a moment, or period of your life where you absolutely knew that God was with you?
 - What did that presence feel like?
3. God's definition of power often looks like what our world calls weakness (humility, service to others, love). What are some examples of times this kind of power was used by humanity?
4. How has God surprised you in your own life?
5. Jesus' death on the cross was considered to be scandalous by some, and it certainly went against the prevailing understanding of how deities worked. How else was Jesus' message an unexpected one; something that went against common understandings? And how have those messages impacted your life?
6. Is there a particular aspect/period of, Jesus' life that you think is as important, or more important, than what he did on the cross?
 - If yes, please elaborate
 - If no, then what would you rank as being the second most important aspect/period?

7. What is one hardship (that you feel comfortable sharing) that God was with you through?
 - Were you aware of God's presence at the time?
 - Or did you notice when you reflected or looked back?
 - Have there been hardships where it was difficult to feel God's presence?
8. What are the strengths of a religion that addresses suffering, hardship, brokenness, like with the theology of the cross? Are there any weaknesses?
9. What are some of the pitfalls with a Theology of Glory? Why do you think it is so appealing to so many people?



Theology On Tap



Lutheranism 101 – Week 4 **Justified apart from Works**

Questions

1. What rules did you have in your household while growing up? Or what are some house rules you have now? What happened/happens when those rules were broken?
2. If we have the gospel, the good news of what Jesus has done for us, why do we need the law anymore? Does it still matter?
 - If we have the New Testament, why do we need the Old Testament?
3. What's the point of focusing on "the way things should be" when "the way things are" affects us in the here and now?
4. If you were to describe "the way things should be" what would you include in that list?
5. What were you taught about "good works" or "doing good things" when you were growing up?
6. If God is going to love us anyway, what is the point of doing good works?

7. How do we view these two passages from the book of James?

- "So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." (2:17)
- "You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone." (2:24)
- Side note, Martin Luther was highly in favor of not including James in the Bible ... not to sway your opinion or anything

8. What are your thoughts about Bonhoeffer's idea of cheap grace? Can forgiveness/grace be given/received without repentance? Is it repentance a prerequisite for grace or a result of it?

9. Final reflections on this series

- What is something that you learned during this theology of tap series?
- If you already knew all of this, what did you like being reminded about best?
- What surprised you the most?
- In what ways, if any, do you see the material from the past 4 weeks influencing your life of faith?
- How might you put some of what you learned into action in your life?