

The Augsburg Confession

Study Guide

I. Introduction

This course of study deals, not merely with the basic teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, but with the basic teachings of the Holy Scriptures. The Augsburg Confession is the official, formal statement of the Lutherans in the 16th century of what they believed, taught, and confessed as based upon the Holy Scriptures and as the orthodox, catholic, confessional, evangelical Church has believed and taught and confessed throughout history.

"We confess the first, unaltered Augsburg Confession . . . not because it was written by our theologians. We confess it because it has been taken from God's Word and well founded firmly in the Word of God." (Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Rule and Norm, 5)

"The Diet of Augsburg is truly the last trumpet before the final Judgment. How the world there raged against the Word! But because of the confession of faith and of the Word of God which was there made, our doctrine and faith finally burst into light so that our opponents themselves had to testify that our Confession is pure Scripture." (Martin Luther)

"The Augsburg Confession is nothing else than Holy Scripture. Anyone who rejects the Augsburg Confession is rejecting Scripture because he is not accepting what the Bible itself says." (C. F. W. Walther, founding father of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod)

A. How Did The Augsburg Confession Come About?

1. Read the "Editor's Introduction".

2. Read Preface.

- a. What goal did the Confessors have in mind by the Augsburg Confession? (Preface 2-4)
- b. How much of the Augsburg Confession was being taught and practiced at the time of its presentation? (Preface 8)
- c. What is the basis for the Lutheran teaching confessed at Augsburg? (Preface 8)
- d. What was the intention of the Augsburg Confession? (Preface 10-11)

B. Are Confessions Of Faith Really Necessary?

1. Read Matthew 10:32-33.

- a. Who are we to acknowledge or confess?
- b. Before whom are we to confess?
- c. What is the blessing from making such a confession?

2. Read Matthew 16:13-18.

- a. What is Peter's confession of faith?
- b. How was Peter able to make such a confession faith?
- c. On what does Christ build His church?

3. Read Romans 10:9-10.

- a. What is the confession of faith that we make?
- b. What is the result or blessing of continuing in such a confession?

4. 1 Corinthians 12:3.

- a. What is the confession of faith that we make?
- b. How are we able to make such a confession of faith?

5. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

- a. What is the content of the Gospel or confession of faith that we have received?
- b. What are we to do with the Gospel we have received?

6. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:15-17.

- a. What are the "traditions" or "teachings" that Paul is speaking about?
- b. What are we to do with these "traditions" or "teachings"?

8. Read 1 Peter 3:15-16.

- a. What answer or defense are we to give before others?
- b. How are we able to do this?

9. Read Jude 3-4.

- a. What was the problem that Jude addresses?
- b. What exhortation does he give his readers?

C. Is The Augsburg Confession Still Important Today?

1. Questions asked of a pastor when he is ordained and installed:

"Do you confess the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to be a true exposition of Holy Scripture and a correct exhibition of the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church? And do you confess the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Small and Large Catechisms of Martin Luther, the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, and the Formula of Concord -- as these are contained in the Book of Concord -- are also in agreement with this one scriptural faith? 'Yes, I make these Confessions my own because they are in accord with the Word of God'." (Lutheran Service Book Agenda, p. 166)

"Do you promise that you will perform the duties of your office in accordance with these Confessions, and that all your preaching and teaching and your administration of the Sacraments will be in conformity with the Holy Scripture and with these Confessions? 'Yes, I promise with the help of God'." (Lutheran Service Book Agenda, p. 166).

2. Qualifications for membership in our synod:

"The Synod, and every member of the Synod, accepts without reservation: 2. all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord." (Constitution of Lutheran Church—Canada, Article II 2.)

"Conditions for acquiring and holding membership in Lutheran Church-Canada are: 1. Acceptance of the confessional basis of Article II." (Constitution of Lutheran Church—Canada, Article V 1.)

"The membership of a Member who acts contrary to the confession laid down in Article II or to the conditions of membership set out in Article V or persists in an offensive conduct, shall, after previous futile admonition, be terminated." (Constitution of Lutheran Church—Canada, Article VI 1.)

3. Doctrinal basis of our congregation:

"This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, as true and genuine expositions of the doctrines of the Bible. These confessional writings are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian); the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; the Apology of the Augsburg Confession; the Smalcald Articles; the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope; Luther's Large and Small Catechisms; and the Formula of Concord." (article in all constitutions of congregations of Lutheran Church—Canada)

"No doctrine or practice in conflict, or inconsistent, with the above norms of our faith and life shall be taught or tolerated in this congregation. Any doctrinal controversy which may arise in the congregation will be decided and adjudicated according to these norms" (article in all constitutions of congregations of Lutheran Church—Canada)

"The pastoral office shall be conferred only upon such ministers and candidates as profess their acceptance of and pledge their allegiance to all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and all the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as enumerated in Article 3.0 of this constitution." (article in all constitutions of congregations of Lutheran Church—Canada)

"Only such can be and remain communicant members, hold office, or enjoy and exercise all the rights and privileges of membership who: Declare their acceptance of Luther's Small Catechism along with the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church as the correct and scriptural confession." (article in all constitutions of congregations of Lutheran Church—Canada)

"All books, music and materials used for worship and instruction shall conform to the confessional standards as laid down in Article 3.0 of this constitution." (article in all constitutions of congregations of Lutheran Church—Canada)

II. Chief Articles Of The Faith

A. "God And Man At War"

1. Read "Article I - God".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans teach about God -- His being, His attributes, His works? (par. 1-4)

"one divine essence" –

"three persons" –

"eternal, without a body, without parts, without end,, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness" –

"the maker and preserver of all things" –

What do Lutherans reject? (par. 5-6)

"Manichaeans" –

"Valentinians" –

"Arians" –

"Eunomians" –

"Muslims" –

"Samosatenes" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"When in the first article the Lutheran princes confess the unity of the divine essence in three persons according to the doctrine of the Council of Nicaea, their confession must be accepted since it agrees in all respects with the rule of faith and the Roman Church." (Confutation)

How did the Lutherans respond?

"We have always taught and defended this doctrine and we believe that the Holy Scriptures testify to it firmly, surely, and irrefutably." (Apology, Article I. 2)

(Further Reading: Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; John 1:1-3; 5:23; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Apostles' Creed; Nicene Creed; Athanasian Creed)

Why did the Lutherans place this article first?

Is it necessary to believe in The Holy Trinity in order to be saved?

Why, in confessing the one true God, did the Lutherans state "that the decree of the Council of Nicaea about the unity of the divine essence and the three persons is true" (par. 1)?

What are some modern-day religions, cults, sects that teach falsely concerning this article and which the Confessors thus call heresies?

True-False Statements:

T F 1. There is one God who has revealed Himself to man in three forms or modes throughout history -- as Father, as Son, and as Holy Spirit.

T F 2. Allah, Krishnah, and the like are simply other names for God in different cultures and languages. Islam, Hinduism, and the like are just other paths to God.

T F 3. The Trinity may be defined as God the Father, the man Jesus, and their Spirit as the spirit of the Christian community.

T F 4. It is not contrary to the Scriptures to call God "our Mother."

2. Read "Article II - Original Sin".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans teach about man?

"since the fall of Adam" –

"all who are naturally born are born with sin" –

"without the fear of God, without trust in God" –

"with the inclination to sin called concupiscence" –

"a disease and original vice that is truly sin" –

"it damns and brings eternal death" –

What do Lutherans reject?

"Pelagians and others" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"But the assertion in the article that original sin means that men are born without the fear of God and without trust in God is to be entirely rejected because it is manifest to every Christian that to be without fear of God and without trust in God is the actual guilt of an adult rather than the offense of a recently born infant who does not as yet possess the full use of reason. Moreover, the statement is also rejected whereby they call the fault of origin 'concupiscence,' if they mean by this that concupiscence is a sin in a child even after Baptism." (Confutation)

How did the Lutherans respond? (Apology, Article II)

(Further Reading: "Article XVIII -"Free Will"; "Article XIX -"The Cause of Sin"; Genesis 8:21; Psalm 14:2-3; 51:5; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 7:24-25; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 John 1:8, 10)

By denying the totality of man's sinfulness, what truth about the work of Christ is denied?

According to Article XVIII 1-2, what is a person able to do by nature? What, however, can he not do?

According to Article XIX, what is the cause of evil and sin in the world?

True-False Statements:

T F 1. By nature people are dead in sin. Evil controls every thought and word and action. In fact, the Gospel concerning the work of Jesus Christ is meaningless and not really "Good News" unless and until a person is convicted of his sin and the effects of sin in his life.

T F 2. Although a person is born in sin, there still remains a spark of the divine left in his soul that enables him to choose good rather than evil, and to make a decision for Jesus Christ.

T F 3. Original sin is the total corruption of our human nature that we inherited at birth and which causes us to commit actual sins, that is, any thought or word or deed contrary to God's commandments.

T F 4. God has given every person a free will to either choose Him and His will for our lives or reject Him and His Word.

T F 5. Certainly God counts the new hospital wing donated by an unbeliever as a good work and acceptable and pleasing to Him.

B. "God And Man At Peace"

1. Read "Article III - The Son of God".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about the person and work of the Son of God?

"the Son of God assumed the human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary" –

"there are two natures—the divine and the human—inseparably joined in one person" –

"who was born of the Virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried" –

"to reconcile the Father to us and to be a sacrifice" –

"not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of mankind" –

"He also descended into hell, and truly rose again on the third day" –

"afterward, He ascended into heaven . . . there He forever reigns and has dominion over all creatures" –

"He sanctifies those who believe in Him, by sending the Holy Spirit into their hearts to rule, comfort, and make them alive" –

"the same Christ will openly come again to judge the living and the dead" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"The opponents approve our third article, in which we confess that there are two natures in Christ, namely, that the Word assumed the human nature into the unity of His person; that this same Christ suffered and died to reconcile the Father to us; and that He was raised to rule, justify, and sanctify the believers, etc., according to the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds" (Apology III.1).

(Further Reading: "Article XVII – Christ's Return for Judgment"; "Article XXI – Worship of the Saints"; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-2:15; Romans 5:6-10; John 1:1, 14; 6:23, 58; Hebrews 1:1-3; Galatians 4:4-5; 1 Timothy 2:5; Romans 4:25; Ephesians 1:20-23; Acts 1:11; 10:42; 17:31; Mark 13:32; 2 Peter 3:10; Matthew 25:31-46)

Why does Article III stress the fact that Christ was truly born of the virgin Mary?

Why does Article III use the word "true" God and "true" man in speaking of Christ?

What two errors does Article XVII reject in connection with Christ's second coming?

What positive thing does Article XXI tell us about remembering saints?

What, however, according to Article XXI, can the saints not do? Why?

Why is Article XXI such an important one?

True-False Statements:

T F 1. When Jesus was conceived and born He became the Son of God.

T F 2. When Jesus was conceived and born He became a real human being.

T F 3. Jesus is still a human being or true man today.

T F 4. Mary can rightfully be called "the mother of God."

T F 5. Jesus is true God who only appeared in the form of a man.

T F 6. Jesus is true man who was only especially gifted by God.

T F 7. Jesus had to be true God in order to overcome sin, death, and the devil.

T F 8. Jesus had to be true man in order to take our place under the Law and suffer and die for us.

T F 9. Jesus will return to earth to establish a 1,000-year kingdom of peace.

T F 10. Jesus will return to earth to judge all people.

2. Read "Article IV - Justification".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about justification?

"people cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, works" –

"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" –

"God counts this faith for righteousness" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"It is entirely contrary to Holy Scripture to deny that our works are meritorious. . . . Their ascription of justification to faith alone is diametrically opposed to the truth of the Gospel, by which works are not excluded. . . . Their frequent ascription of justification to faith is not admitted since it pertains to faith and love." (Confutation)

How did the Lutherans respond? (Apology, Article IV)

(Further Reading: "Article XX – Good Works"; Romans 5:19; 2 Corinthians 5:21; John 1:29; Galatians 3:13; 1 John 1:7; Isaiah 53:4-5; Romans 3:21-6; 3:28; 4:5; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Which statement is correct, or are they both right? "I am saved because of my faith." Or, "I am saved through my faith."

Which statement is correct, or are they both right? "God declares me to be righteous through faith in Christ." Or, "God makes me righteous through faith in Christ."

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? "Since we are saved through faith alone in Jesus Christ, good works are not necessary." Why or why not?

According to Article XX 9-10, what can our works not do?

According to Article XX 23-26, what is true saving faith?

According to Article XX 27-34, what are we to do?

Match the following words with their definitions:

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|-----------------------|---|
| ___ 1. salvation | a. to buy back; Jesus' payment of the price required to free us from sin, death, and the devil |
| ___ 2. life | b. God giving us something good that we do not deserve |
| ___ 3. redemption | c. God not giving us something bad that we do deserve |
| ___ 4. reconciliation | d. deliverance from sin, death, and the devil |
| ___ 5. justification | e. knowledge of God, fellowship with God, service to God |
| ___ 6. atonement | f. God declaring the guilty sinner to be innocent |
| ___ 7. grace | g. Jesus' perfect obedience to the Law and His sacrificial death whereby He paid for our sins |
| ___ 8. forgiveness | h. to bring together; the removal of the hostility between the one holy God and this sinful world |
| ___ 9. mercy | i. God not remembering our sins or charging them against us |

C. "God's Instruments Of Peace"

1. Read "Article V - The Ministry".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about receiving this peace with God?

"so that we obtain this faith" –

"the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments" –

"was instituted" –

"through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments" –

"the Holy Spirit is given" –

"He works faith" –

"when and where it pleases God" –

"in those who hear the good news" –

"that God justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake" –

What do Lutherans reject?

"the Anabaptists and others" --

What did the Romanists conclude?

(They agreed in the Confutation that the Holy Spirit is never given apart from the means of grace. However, they disagreed that the word "faith" should be understood as "faith alone"; but, rather, that it should mean "faith with works of love.")

(Further Reading: "Article XIV - Order in the Church"; John 3:5; 5:24; 6:63; 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; 17:17; 20:31; Romans 1:16; 10:17; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Timothy 3:14-15; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23)

According to Article V, what is the work of the Holy Spirit?

According to Article V, how does the Holy Spirit do this?

According to Article V, what, then, is the main task in the church?

According to Article XIV, how is this task to be carried out in the church?

2. Read "Article IX - Baptism".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about Baptism?

"Baptism" –

"is necessary for salvation" –

"God's grace is offered through Baptism" –

"children are to be baptized" –

"being offered to God through Baptism, they are received into God's grace" –

What do Lutherans reject?

"Anabaptists" --

What did the Romanists conclude?

"The ninth article, concerning Baptism, is approved and accepted, and they are right in condemning the Anabaptists." (Confutation)

(Further Reading: Matthew 28:18-20; John 3:5-6; Acts 2:38-39; Romans 6:2-4; Galatians 3:26-27; Ephesians 5:25-26; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 3:21)

True-False Statements:

T F 1. Baptism is an old custom or ceremony or rite that was established by the church.

T F 2. Holy Baptism is properly administered by applying water to an unbaptized person in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

T F 3. Through Holy Baptism the Holy Spirit imparts or gives to us the blessings of forgiveness and salvation that Jesus won for us on the cross.

T F 4. Through Holy Baptism the Holy Spirit imparts or gives to us the blessings that Jesus won for us.

T F 5. Since infants are innocent and without sin, they do not need to have their sins washed away in Holy Baptism.

T F 6. Since infants cannot believe, it is not proper to baptize them.

3. Read "Article X - The Lord's Supper".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about the Lord's Supper?

"the body and blood of Christ" –

"are truly present" –

"and distributed to those who eat the Lord's Supper" –

What do Lutherans reject?

"those who teach otherwise" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"They approve the tenth article, where we confess our belief that in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present and are truly offered with those things that are seen, the bread and the wine, to those who receive the sacrament." (Apology X 1)

(Further Reading: "Article XXII - Both Kinds in the Sacrament"; "Article XXIV - The Mass"; Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:25-30)

According to Article XXII 1-2, what is the clear command of Christ concerning the cup?

According to Article XXII 3-10, what was the historic practice in the church?

According to Article XXII 12, what should not be done with the Sacrament?

According to Article XXIV 1, 9, how or in what form is the Sacrament celebrated among Lutherans?

According to Article XXIV 3, what is the purpose of ceremonies, hymns, and the like?

According to Article XXIV 6-7, how are the people to be prepared to receive the Sacrament aright?

According to Article XXIV 10, 21, what abuse of the Sacrament is rejected by Lutherans?

According to Article XXIV 28-29, what central teaching of the Scriptures lies at the heart of these various abuses of the Sacrament?

According to Article XXIV 30-33, what is the purpose of the Mass?

According to Article XXIV 34-35, how often do Lutherans celebrate Holy Communion?

True-False Statements:

T F 1. The same body and blood of Jesus that was laid in the manger, nailed to the cross, risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven is present in and with the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper.

T F 2. The bread and wine in the Lord's Supper merely represent or symbolize Jesus' body and blood.

T F 3. Grape juice may be substituted for the wine in the Sacrament.

T F 4. Everyone who partakes of Holy Communion receives Jesus' true body and blood.

T F 5. Only those who believe in the words of Jesus concerning this Sacrament receive His body and blood.

T F 6. Everyone who partakes of Holy Communion receives the forgiveness of sins.

T F 7. Only those who believe in the words of Jesus concerning this Sacrament receive the forgiveness of sins.

Match the following words with their definitions:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Eucharist | a. Jesus instituted it at an evening meal |
| _____ 2. Sacrament of the Altar | b. the dismissal, prior to the celebration of Holy Communion, of those who have not been examined or who are unable to examine themselves; and the dismissal in peace, following the reception of the Lord's Supper, of those who received the blessings of the Sacrament |
| _____ 3. Breaking of Bread | c. a coming together of Jesus' body and blood with the bread and wine, of Jesus with the individual who partakes of it, and of the communicants with one another |
| _____ 4. The Mass | d. Jesus took bread and broke it when He instituted it |
| _____ 5. Holy Communion | e. the Lord Himself provides the food at this table |
| _____ 6. Lord's Supper | f. Jesus gave thanks when He instituted it and we do the same upon receiving it |
| _____ 7. Lord's Table | g. it is celebrated at the altar -- symbol of God's presence and of Jesus' sacrifice of Himself for us |

4. Read "Article XI - Confession".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about Confession?

"private Absolution should be retained" –

"although listing all sins is not necessary" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"In the eleventh article their acknowledgment that private absolution with confession should be retained in the church is accepted. Nevertheless, two things must be required of them in this connection: First, that they demand an annual observance of confession by their subjects according to the canon concerning penance and remission and the custom of the universal church. Second, that through their preachers they cause their subjects to be faithfully admonished before confession that, although they cannot state all their sins individually, nevertheless, a diligent examination of their conscience being made, they make an entire confession of their offenses." (Confutation)

How did the Lutherans respond? (Apology, Article XI)

(Further Reading: "Article XXV - Confession"; Psalm 51; John 20:22-23; Acts 5:31; Romans 7:19; James 5:16; 1 John 1)

According to Article XXV 1, what is necessary before a person is given the Sacrament?

According to Article XXV 2-4, what is the purpose and value of Confession?

According to Article XXV 7-9), what abuse concerning Confession is rejected by the Lutherans?

D. "Life In Christ's Church"

1. Read "Article VII - The Church".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about the Church?

"one holy Church is to remain forever" –

"the congregation of saints" –

"in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered" –

"for the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree about the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments" –

"it is not necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies instituted by men, should be the same everywhere" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"The seventh article of the Confession, in which it is affirmed that the church is the assembly of saints, cannot be admitted without prejudice to faith if by this definition the wicked and sinners are separated from the church." (Confutation)

How did the Lutherans respond? (Apology, Article VII and VIII)

2. Read "Article VIII - What the Church Is".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about the Church?

"strictly speaking, the Church is the congregation of saints and true believers" –

"because many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled within them in this life" –

"the Sacraments and Word are effective because of Christ's institution and command, even if they are administered by evil men" –

What do Lutherans reject?

"the Donatists and others like them" –

(Further Reading: Matthew 7:15-16; 13:47-48; 16:18; 18:17; Luke 17:20-21; Acts 2:42; Romans 16:17; Ephesians 2:19-22; 5:25-27)

What is the difference, if any, between the phrases "unity of the church" and "unity in the church"?

Examine and discuss the following statement: "In essentials unity, in non-essentials diversity, in all things love."

True-False Statements:

T F 1. Only true believers in Christ are members of "the holy Christian church."

T F 2. All true believers in Christ are saints or holy people.

T F 3. The church is called "holy" because true Christians do not sin.

T F 4. "The holy Christian church" is hidden in this world since no one can look into another person's heart to see whether or not he truly believes in Christ.

T F 5. "The holy Christian church" is revealed or made manifest in this world wherever the Word of God is taught correctly and the sacraments rightly administered.

T F 6. There are hypocrites or unbelievers in local or visible churches.

T F 7. If we truly believe in Jesus, it doesn't really make any difference as to which church we belong to.

T F 8. We are to avoid churches or religious organizations that do not believe, teach, and confess all that God's Word teaches.

T F 9. There is no salvation outside "the one holy Christian church."

3. Read "Article XIII - The Use of the Sacraments".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about the use of the Sacraments?

"not only to be marks of profession among men" –

"but even more, to be signs and testimonies of God's will toward us" –

"instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them" –

"we must use the Sacraments in such a way that faith, which believes the promises offered and set forth through the Sacraments, is increased" –

What do Lutherans reject?

"those who teach that the Sacraments justify simply by the act of doing them" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"We must request that they . . . confess specifically the seven sacraments of the church and take measures for their observance by their subjects." (Confutation)

How did the Lutherans respond? (Apology, Article XIII 3-4, 23)

According to the definition of the early church fathers, what is a "sacrament"?

According to this definition, what are the Sacraments?

4. Read "Article XIV - Order in the Church".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about proper order in the church?

"no one should publicly teach in the Church, or administer the Sacraments" –

"without a rightly ordered call" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"With the provision that we employ canonical ordination, they accept Article IV." (Apology IV 1)

How did the Lutherans respond? (Apology, Article XIV)

(Further Reading: "Article XXVIII - Church Authority"; John 20:22-23; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 2 Corinthians 5:18; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2-7; 1 Peter 5:2)

According to Article XXVIII 4, who or what is to be honored and revered? Why?

According to Article XXVIII 5, what is the authority of bishops?

According to Article XXVIII 8-10, what authority does the Church have? How does it exercise this authority?

According to Article XXVIII 12-13, what is the Church not to do?

According to Article XXVIII 21-23, what authority do bishops have? What, therefore, is expected of the congregation? What if the bishop teaches falsely?

According to Article XXVIII 30-34, what are bishops not allowed to do?

According to Article XXVIII 53-60, what are the reasons for keeping man-made ordinances?

True-False Statements:

T F 1. Pastors are hired by the congregation.

T F 2. Pastors are called into the office of the public ministry by the Holy Spirit through the congregation.

T F 3. The task of a pastor is to preach and teach God's Word and administer the Sacraments.

T F 4. In the Bible the words "pastor", "bishop", "elder", "teacher", and "minister" all refer to the same office or position.

T F 5. Only qualified men are to serve as pastors.

T F 6. The congregation may dismiss or 'fire' their pastor whenever they feel like it.

5. "Article XV - Church Ceremonies".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about ceremonies in the church?

"ceremonies ought to be observed that may be observed without sin" –

"that are profitable for tranquility and good order in the Church" –

"consciences are not to be burdened as though observing such things was necessary for salvation" –

"human traditions instituted to make atonement with God, to merit grace, and to make satisfaction for sins are opposed to the Gospel" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

"The appendix to this article must be entirely removed, for it is false that human ordinances instituted to propitiate God and make satisfactions for sins are opposed to the Gospel."
(Confutation)

How did the Lutherans respond?

"In Article XV they accept the first part, where we say that we should observe those ecclesiastical rites which can be observed without sin and which are conducive to tranquillity and good order in the church. They completely condemn the second part, where we say that human traditions instituted to appease God, to merit grace, and to make satisfaction for sin are contrary to the Gospel. . . . We expected our opponents to defend human traditions on other grounds. We did not think that they would actually condemn the doctrine that we do not merit grace or the forgiveness of sins by the observance of human traditions. Now that they have condemned this doctrine, we have an easy and simple case. Here our opponents are openly Judaizing; they are openly replacing the Gospel with doctrines of demons. Scripture calls traditions "doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1) when someone teaches that religious rites are helpful in gaining grace and the forgiveness of sins. This obscures the Gospel, the blessing of Christ, and righteousness of faith." (Apology, Article XV 1-4)

E. "The Christian Life"

1. Read "Article VI – New Obedience".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans believe and teach about the Christian life?

"faith is bound to bring forth good works" –

"it is necessary to do good works commanded by God" –

"should not rely on those works to merit justification before God" –

What did the Romanists conclude?

(The Confutation agreed that faith should produce good works, but rejected the statement that faith alone justifies, all works excluded. They insisted that grace and love within a person makes him righteous before God.)

(Further Reading: "Article XX - Good Works"; John 14:15; 15:5; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 2:14; James 2:10, 26)

If we trust in our works for a good standing before God, what are we saying about Christ's work?

According to Article XX 1-2, what is a good work?

According to Article XX 3, what are some of the "childish and needless works" that were being encouraged and urged on the people?

2. Read "Article XVI - Civil Government".

Of what were the Lutherans accused?

What do Lutherans teach and believe about the origin or nature of civil government?

What do Lutherans teach and believe about the purpose of civil government?

What do Lutherans teach and believe about the life of Christians in and under civil government?

What do Lutherans reject?

What did the Romanists conclude?

"The sixteenth article, concerning civil magistrates, is received with pleasure. . . . And the princes are praised for condemning the Anabaptists." (Confutation)

3. Read "Article XXIII - The Marriage of Priests".

According to Article XXIII 1, what was prevalent among the priests at that time?

According to Article XXIII 3-6, what did the Lutherans do to address the situation?

According to Article XXIII 10-13, what was the custom in the early church?

4. Read "Article XXVI - The Distinction of Meats".

According to Article XXVI 4-6, 21-22 what had human traditions, such as making distinctions among foods and the like, done to the Gospel?

According to Article XXVI 8-11, what had human traditions, such as making distinctions among foods and the like, done to God's commandments?

According to Article XXVI 33-39, what is to be the positive purpose of making distinctions among foods and the like?

5. Read "Article XXVII - Monastic Vows".

According to Article XXVII 11-14, what sacrament were monastic vows considered equivalent to? What did monastic life supposedly earn?

According to Article XXVII 15-16, what was the original purpose of monasteries?

According to Article XXVII 49-50, what is true Christian perfection?

In what ways can we fall into the same error as referred to here in Article XXVII even though we do not have monasteries in the Lutheran Church?

III. Conclusion

1. Read "A Summary Statement" (following Article XX1).

Of what were the Lutherans convinced concerning their teaching as set forth in the Augsburg Confession?

2. Read "Conclusion" (following Article XXVIII).

According to the Conclusion 4-5, what were the Confessors convinced of concerning their teaching and practice as set forth in the Augsburg Confession?

According to the Conclusion 5, what were they striving to prevent?

What is significant about who signed the Augsburg Confession?

"It is not enough that the Lutheran doctrine be on paper in the constitution; nor is it enough that all pastors are pledged to it when they enter their office. No, this Confession must also be faithfully practiced. It is not enough to have a Bible lying in the vestry, but it must be proclaimed from the pulpit. Moreover, a church may have sworn a thousand oaths to be faithful to the Augsburg Confession and yet be a vile sect; for the Confession of the church must also sound forth from the pulpit. A congregation may be part of a large Lutheran synod, but if it has a false pastor and he constantly preaches false doctrine and it likes his preaching very much and wants to keep him; then that is not a true Lutheran congregation, even if the right confessional statement is inscribed over the entrance. No, the Augsburg Confession must be proclaimed, and it dare not just say in a book somewhere that it should be preached. So when a church says: 'Here Lutheran doctrine is public doctrine!' and you don't hear it proclaimed, that church is a miserable sect, regardless of what it claims to be. . . . How our churches first accepted the Augsburg Confession is recorded in in the Formula of Concord: 'Herewith we again wholeheartedly subscribe this Christian and thoroughly scriptural Augsburg Confession, and we abide by the plain, clear, and pure meaning of its words. We consider this Confession a genuinely Christian symbol which all true Christians ought to accept next to the Word of God, just as in ancient times Christian symbols and confessions were formulated in the church of God when great controversies broke out, and orthodox teachers and hearers pledged themselves to these symbols with heart and mouth. Similarly we are determined by the grace of the Almighty to abide until our end by this repeatedly cited Christian Confession as it was delivered to Emperor Charles in 1530. And we do not intend, either in this or in subsequent doctrinal statements, to

depart from the aforementioned Confession or to set up a different and new confession.' . . . What our dear forefathers felt, that is what we also feel. Therefore we intend to follow in their footsteps and use the means they found trustworthy." ("Duties Of An Evangelical Lutheran Synod," Essays For The Church, Vol. II, C. F W. Walther, pp. 19, 11, 21)

"'Jesus Christ is Lord' is the original confession of the church. To understand this confession, to repeat it, to speak it in more detailed forms, to understand this confession ever more deeply, to repeat this confession, to speak it in ever new forms, to translate it into the language of all times and peoples, to protect it against misunderstandings and reinterpretations, and to understand its meaning for all areas of life -- that is the only task of the church. No later confession of the church can and wants to be anything else than a renewal of the original confession to Jesus as Christ and Lord. This is the true of the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the confessional writings of the Reformation, and any confession in which the Christendom of the future may want to speak its faith. As this confession stood at the beginning of the church's history, so it will stand at its end, for then will be fulfilled that great word of the apostle: 'At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father' (Philippians 2:10-11)." (We Confess Jesus Christ, Herman Sasse, p. 9)