

To Whom does our Faith Look up?

I. WHAT DO WE DO WITH BIBLE STORIES?

What Five Things do the Scriptures do?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Where would you go in the Bible to find this?

What are some of your favorite Bible stories? How do they teach, reprove, correct, train, or comfort you? Who are the main characters in those stories?

II. WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE EXAMPLE OF THE SAINTS?

Augsburg Confession Article XXI: Of the Worship of the Saints

(English *Triglotta* from www.bookofconcord.org)

1 Of the Worship of Saints they teach that the memory of saints may be set before us, that we may **follow their faith and good works, according to our calling**, as the Emperor may follow the example of David in making war to drive away the Turk from his country.

2 For both are kings. But the Scripture teaches not the invocation of saints or to ask help of saints, since it sets before us the one Christ as the Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor.

3 He is to be prayed to, and has promised that He will hear our prayer; and this worship He approves above all, to wit, that in all afflictions He be called upon, 1 John 2:1:

4 If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, etc.

Lutherans look to the Saints to follow their _____ and _____ according to our _____. (Latin text: *vocationem*)

- Who are some of your favorite saints? (either before, in, or after the New Testament)
- How do they teach, reprove, correct, train, or comfort you?
- How can you find examples of faith and holy living according to your calling?
- How do we give thanks to God for the living examples in our lives?

III. MORE ON THE SAINTS

Scripture passages quoted in *The Defense of the Augsburg Confession*
Article XXI: Of the Worship of the Saints
 (English Triglotta from www.bookofconcord.org)

Matthew 5:21 – *God Himself sets apart those who have been given many gifts.*

Romans 5:20 – *God's grace is stronger than the sin, so it is not sin but faith that believes in grace which provides an example*

Zechariah 1:12 – *Angels pray for the Church on earth.*

2 Maccabees 15:14 – *does this compel us?*

John 16:23 – *Christ attaches promises to pray to Him, not to anyone else.*

Matthew 11:28 – *there is a promise given to those who call upon Christ, not anyone else.*

Isaiah 11:10 – *there is a singular one who stands as a signal for the nations.*

John 5:23 – *honoring the Son is honoring the father*

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 – *Blessings are always given in the name of Christ*

1 Corinthians 3:8 – *we cannot trust in the merits of others to provide grace for us.*

Note: Hilary of Poitiers (4th Century) on the Parable of the Ten Virgins: And as the foolish virgins could not go forth with their lamps extinguished, they besought those who were prudent to lend them oil; to whom they replied that they could not give it because peradventure there might not be enough for all; i.e., no one can be aided by the works and merits of another, because it is necessary for every one to buy oil for his own lamp. [Here he points out that none of us can aid another by other people's works or merits.] AP: XI:30

Romans 9:33; 1 Peter 2:6; Isaiah 28:16 – *there is a singular stone that will cause stumbling, but those who trust in Him will not be put to shame.*

All of the above passages give instances of calling upon, honoring, and worshiping Christ.
No one else

IV. LIVING OUT THE CALENDAR OF THE SAINTS

xii and xxii in *Lutheran Service Book*

Prepare a 2 minute presentation on a saint from our Church's calendar. A good 'starting point' is to choose the Feast/Commemoration day closest to your birthday, but you can pick anyone you like.

- The saint I chose is . . .

- His/her feast day is . . .

- I chose this saint because . . .

- I learned more about him/her through . . .

- He/she experienced God's grace in . . .

- He/she was called by God as a . . .

- I found that he/she is usually depicted in art as . . . this is [good/problematic]

- I can find an example in this saint's good works by embodying [*blank*] in my life.

- Summarizing thoughts (including positive and negative examples)

Example by Pastor Benson

- The saint I chose is Johannes von Staupitz.
- His feast day is November 8th.
- I chose this saint because his feast day is only two days away from my birthday and because he was a pastor who stood his ground (even if he was not always in the right).
- I learned more about Johannes von Staupitz through Weedon's *Celebrating the Saints* and the *Christian Cyclopedia*.
 - 1469/70 - 1524
 - Never embraced the Reformation
- He experienced God's grace by being exposed to the Lutheran doctrine of salvation by faith apart from works of the law.
- He was called by God as a preacher and father confessor.
- I can find an example in this saint's good works by embodying his response to Martin Luther's panged conscience when he would go to confession.
- There are not many artistic depictions of Staupitz. He was very fat.
- I shouldn't imitate Staupitz's faith because he never left the Roman Catholic Church. (This makes me question why he's remembered in our hymnal). But his example can strengthen my *faithfulness* when I see that there are good father confessors, even in other traditions. I still give God thanks for Staupitz, because without his patience and care, Martin Luther may have never turned the corner in rediscovering the Gospel.
- Even though Johannes von Staupitz never embraced Lutheran theology, he is an example of fulfilling his vocation of pastor and confessor. His refusal to leave the Roman Catholic Church also serves as a warning to all – especially pastors – that it is not easy to become and remain faithful to Holy Scriptures above all, even church bodies and denominations.