Applying Luther’s Catechism
Student Guide
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A Look at the Bible

The Bible is the best-selling book of all time. Millions of copies have been printed and sold. All or parts of the Bible have been translated into more than a thousand languages. The Bible contains sixty-six separate books: thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in New Testament. It contains nearly twelve hundred chapters and almost thirty-one thousand verses.

1. Look at the first verse of the New Testament (Matthew 1:1). Who is mentioned there as the one who separated the Old and New Testaments?

2. What is the most important message of the Bible (John 3:16)?

3. The illustration on the right divides the books of the Bible according to the kind of writing they contain. Memorizing their names will help you find Bible references easily and quickly. Use the illustration to answer these questions:
   a. Which five books of Moses tell of the life of God’s people from creation through the wilderness wandering?
   b. Which four New Testament books tell the story of Jesus’ life?
   c. Name the Old Testament hymnbook.
4. How were the Bible books chosen? What criteria did the Early Church use to choose them?

God’s Word Has Power

Kevin finds out that the father of his friend Alex is an alcoholic. Kevin is concerned. He invites Alex and his family to church with him and his family. There, they hear the Gospel preached. Over time, the families become friends and Alex's family keeps coming to church.

Today, Alex's dad is participating in a support group, reading the Bible, going to Bible class, and taking adult instruction at church. If you ask Alex's dad why the change happened in his life, he'll say, “The Word of God did it.”

1. According to the following verse, what power does the Word (the Gospel) have? “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

2. For what purpose has God’s written Word been given? “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13).

Power in Your Life

You were changed, like Alex’s dad, when you were baptized. And the changing goes on every day as the Spirit, through the Word, helps you repent, seek forgiveness, and live in service to God.

How might God help you through His Word in these situations?

1. Your best friend has let you down and told some secrets you shared.

2. You are facing a big test at school. You’ve studied a lot, but you are still nervous.

3. Your mom or dad grounds you for something wrong that you did.

4. You are told by the doctor that you need surgery soon.

To Review and Remember

Memorize the books of the Old and New Testament.
A Very Great Message

Review Questions 1–8 the Introduction to the Catechism. Place the following words in the blanks below to make true sentences about the Christian faith and the Bible, God’s Holy Word.

Christianity is the life and salvation God has given us in and through __________ _____________.

God’s truth about Jesus Christ is revealed in the __________ _____________, which promises the coming Savior, and the ______ ________________, which tells of the Savior who has come. We believe that God the Holy Spirit gave His chosen writers the thoughts that they expressed and the words they wrote. This belief is called ________________ ________________. We believe the Bible is God’s own Word and, as such, is without _____________.
The Old Testament was originally written in __________ and _____________. The New Testament was originally written in ____________.

Two Great Doctrines

God’s Word can be divided into either Law or Gospel. We need to examine the words of the Bible to find these divisions.

God’s Law tells us what we should or should not do.

The Gospel, however, tells what God has done for us because of His great love. The Gospel is the Good News of our salvation in Jesus Christ, through which God gives forgiveness, faith, life, and the power to serve Him in our lives.

Learn the italicized definitions of Law and Gospel to help you identify clear statements of them.

Read and think about each of the following statements from the Bible. Write L before each Law statement and G before each Gospel statement.

_____ 1. “He was wounded for our transgressions . . . and with His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).

_____ 2. “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children” (Deuteronomy 6:6–7).

_____ 3. “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy” (Leviticus 19:2).

_____ 4. “What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:6b).

_____ 5. “Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25b).

Use the same letters to identify Law or Gospel statements from life.

_____ 6. Jesus loves me, this I know.

_____ 7. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

_____ 8. We ought to obey God.

_____ 9. Heaven is a gift of God.

_____ 10. Jesus lived and died to save us from our sin.
God’s Rules for Our Benefit

God knew we needed guidelines for our direction and protection, so He gave us rules to live by. He gave them to us because He loves us and knows what is best for us.

1. Look up the following Bible verses, and identify the two ways God has given us His Law.
   a. Romans 2:14–15
   b. Exodus 19–20; 31:18

2. Match each of the three types of law God gave with its description.
   ______ Moral law
   ______ Ceremonial law
   ______ Political law
   a. Regulated the religious practices in the Old Testament
   b. Included the state law of the Israelites
   c. Tells all people their duty toward God and other people

3. God established His moral law, the Ten Commandments, not only for Old Testament times, but also for our times. What happened, however, to the ceremonial and political laws (Galatians 2:16)?

God Is Love

Because God loves us, He sent Jesus to keep His Law perfectly in our place and to suffer, die, and rise again from the dead to pay the penalty our sins deserved. God’s Spirit works in our lives to make us His forgiven people and to empower us to live according to His will. To assist us in our Christian life, our church has prepared a catechism. Review Questions 9–12 in Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation and fill in the following blanks.

A catechism is a book of instruction, usually in the form of ______________ and ______________.

Our Small Catechism was written by ______________ in ___________. It sums up Christian doctrine by dividing it into the following Six Chief Parts:

All the chief parts of the Small Catechism are taken from the Bible, the only final authority for Christian faith and life.

To Review and Remember

The summary of Commandments 1–3 (First Table): Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. Matthew 22:37

The summary of Commandments 4–10 (Second Table): And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Matthew 22:39

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:17

Through the law comes knowledge of sin. Romans 3:20

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. Romans 1:16