

Luther's Legacy for Laity
Disc 1: Dr. Timothy Wengert
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This study guide will follow the 10 parts of Dr. Wengert's DVD. Each part will include a brief summary, a list of Biblical passages and citations from the Book of Concord (Wengert Edition) when used, and questions for discussion. Key glossary terms will be listed at the end of each section.

Part 3 – Introduction to the Augsburg Confession

Summary:

The tension between Up Religion and Down Religion forms the backbone of the Augsburg Confession. Throughout this document, Melancthon defends Lutheran doctrine against the Roman Catholic Church of his day, as well as most other reformers. Central to the theology of the reformers is their belief that humans by nature cannot climb the ladder to God. If any of us could, then Jesus' death would be unnecessary. Rather, because of God's love of the whole creation, God comes to us through the Word and sacraments, and offers us life. All we can do is joyfully receive this gift of love.

Biblical References Part 3:

Psalm 51
1 Corinthians 4:7
James 2:19
Hebrews 11:1
Luke 15:11-32

Confessional References in Part 3:

Page 36ff. Article II. Concerning Original Sin
Page 38. Article III. Concerning the Son of God
Page 38ff. Article IV. Concerning Justification
Page 52ff. Article XX. Concerning Faith and Good Works

Questions for Discussion:

1. How does Up Religion "insult the suffering and merit of Christ?"
2. React to Dr. Wengert's statement that Up Religion "makes Jesus the best ladder climber and we can climb it because Jesus did."
3. Why do you think Art. XX of the Augsburg Confession (Concerning Faith and Good Works) is the longest one?

4. How does faith that can console terrified minds actually occur?
5. Dr. Wengert believes that both sons in the parable of the Waiting Father suffer from the same malady. What is it, and how can it be removed?

Glossary:

Augsburg Confession – It was written by Melachthon to defend the Lutheran understanding of the faith and to set it apart from other reforming movements and presented to Emperor Charles V at an imperial diet in Augsburg on June 25, 1530. Melanchthon based this defense of the Lutheran understanding of the faith on a number of previous works and subsequent to its reading before Emperor Charles, Melanchthon continued to edit it for future editions which were to follow.

Pelagius – (ca. 350-ca. 425) Born in Britain but active in Rome, Pelagius taught, amongst other things, that humans have free will and emphasized the importance of good works. He taught that Jesus simply provided us with a good example to follow and if we simply put our minds to it, we could.