

Luther's Legacy for Laity
Disc 1: Dr. Timothy Wengert
Ministerium of Pennsylvania Professor
Reformation History
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

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 5: The Word for You

Summary:

Article Five, a continuation of Article Four of the Augsburg Confession, explains that God instituted the office or ministry of preaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments so that we might obtain saving faith. Dr. Wengert believes this article is crucial for today's church because so many Christians believe/act as if two things don't really matter. They are: the assembly of Christians together to hear the word and celebrate the sacraments (worship) and the Word of God (Bible). Throughout the centuries the Bible has been turned into one of three things: a rulebook (what we have to do to climb the ladder), an encyclopedia (all the answers to all the questions), or a star chart (predict the future). But the Bible and the ministry of preaching from the Bible is given to us by God so that we would know the one answer that is needed. It is God's love letter to us, saying clearly and repeatedly that God loved us so much that God gave himself for us so that we might have life in his name.

Biblical References Part 5:

John 5:39

Confessional References in Part 5:

Page 40. Article 5. Concerning the Office of Preaching

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are the implications of Melancthon's assertion that **God instituted** the ministry or office of preaching and administering the sacraments on our worship attendance and Bible reading habits?
2. Can you give examples of how the Bible is turned into one of the following: a rulebook, an encyclopedia, or a star chart?
3. Compare John 5:39 with Dr. Wengert's statement that the Bible tells us the one answer that is needed.
4. If the Bible is God's love letter to God's world, how does that free us from the trap of turning it into rulebook, encyclopedia or star chart?

5. The Left Behind series is yet another example of how the Old Adam in each of us loves to keep us in control of the Bible. God's word becomes our word. Whether or not you've read the series, why do you think that is true?

Glossary:

Old Adam – Paul's term, borrowed by Luther, to describe our condition without the gift of God's grace. We are trapped in our original sin of desiring to be like God, or more aptly put to be god's for ourselves.

Argumentum – Melanchthon used this Latin word to describe how he read chapters of the Bible. He was criticized for skipping verses and zeroing in on the heart of the chapter and then simply fitting in those verses or dismissing them by stating we don't know what they mean.