



## Formula of Concord Session Five: Law and Gospel & Third Use of the Law

- What motivates people to obey? What are the limitations of any motivation strategy?
- What makes Lutheran preaching unique?

### Law and Gospel: Status

*Is the preaching of the Holy Gospel properly not just a preaching of grace (which announces the forgiveness of sins) but also a preaching of repentance and reproof? (Ep. V. 1, p.484)*

- At first glance, is this a very important distinction/argument? Why or why not?

*We must guard this distinction with special care, so that these two doctrines may not be mixed with each other, or a law be made out of the Gospel. When that happens, Christ's merit is hidden and troubled consciences are robbed of comfort. (SD V.1, p.552)*

### Law and Gospel: Affirmative and Negative Statements

*The term Gospel is not used in one and the same sense in the Holy Scriptures... if the term Gospel is understood to mean Christ's entire teaching that he proposed in His ministry, as His apostles did also, then it is correctly said and written that the Gospel is a preaching of repentance and of the forgiveness of sins.*

*The Law and the Gospel are also contrasted with one another... Moses himself as a teacher of the Law and Christ as a preacher of the Gospel are contrasted with one another. In these cases, we believe, teach, and confess that the Gospel is not a preaching of repentance or rebuke. But it is properly nothing other than a preaching of consolation and a joyful message that does not rebuke or terrify. The Gospel comforts consciences against the terrors of the Law, points only to Christ's merit, and raises them up again by the lovely preaching of God's grace and favor, gained through Christ's merit. (Ep V.5-7, p.485)*

- So how does Scripture use the term Gospel?
- Why is this understanding important?

*The Law is properly a divine doctrine in which God's righteous, unchangeable will is revealed... It remains the Law's peculiar office to rebuke sins and teach about good works. (SD V.17-18, p.555-6)*

*Merely preaching the Law, without Christ, either makes proud people, who imagine that they can fulfill the Law by outward works, or forces them utterly to despair. (SD V.10, p.554)*

- Too harsh?
- Read and discuss:
  - 2 Corinthians 3:12-16; Biblical examples of pride? Despair?



*The Gospel is properly the kind of teaching that shows what a person who has not kept the Law (and therefore is condemned by it) is to believe. (Ep V.4, p.484)*

*In other words, it teaches that God's Son, our Lord Christ, has taken upon Himself and borne the Law's curse and has atoned and paid for all our sins... Everything that comforts, that offers God's favor and grace to transgressors of the Law is, and is properly called, the Gospel. It is a good and joyful message that God will not punish sins, but will forgive them for Christ's sake (SD V.20-21, p.556)*

- **Read and discuss:**
  - 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 1:16

### Third Use of the Law: Status

*The law was given to people for three reasons: (1) that by the Law outward discipline might be maintained against wild, disobedient people; (2) that people may be led to the knowledge of their sins by the Law; and (3) that after they are regenerate and the flesh still cleaves to them, they might on this account have a fixed rule according to which they are to regulate and direct their whole new life. A dissension has arisen between a few theologians about the third use of the Law, namely, whether it is to be taught to regenerate Christians. The one side has said Yes; the other, No. (Ep VI.1, p.486)*

- **At first glance, is this a very important distinction/argument? Why or why not?**

### Third Use of the Law: Affirmative and Negative Statements

*Although believers are regenerate and renewed in the spirit of their mind, in the present life this regeneration and renewal is not complete. It is only begun. Believers are, by the spirit of their mind, in a constant struggle against the flesh... The Law of the Lord is necessary so that the old Adam may not use his own will, but may be subdued against his will. This happens not only by the warning and threatening of the Law, but also by punishments and blows, so that a person may follow and surrender himself as a captive to the Spirit. (Ep VI.4, p.486)*

- **Why do believers still need the Law?**
- **Read and discuss:**
  - Romans 7:15-18; Galatians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 9:27; Hebrews 12:8

*The Law is and remains – both to the penitent and impenitent, both to regenerate and unregenerate people – one and the same Law. It is God's unchangeable will. The difference, as far as obedience is concerned, is only in the person. For one who is not yet regenerate follows the Law out of constraint and unwillingly does what it requires of him (as also the regenerate do according to the flesh). But the believer, so far as he is regenerate, acts without constraint and with a willing spirit to do what no threat of the Law could ever force him to do. (Ep VI.7, p.487)*

- **The summary spoke of three reasons for the Law, often called the Three Uses – are there three Uses of the Law?**