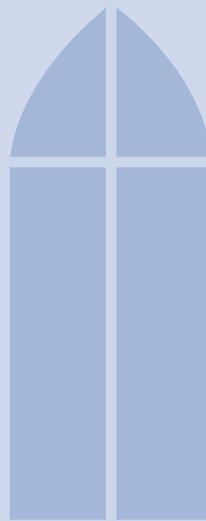


The Pastor's Life of Prayer



by Rev. Dr. James A. Baneck

Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS) is a collaborative effort of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s Pastoral Education department and LCMS districts to help pastors and their wives in the transition from seminary to congregation. To learn more, visit lcms.org/pals.

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Introduction

The Pastor's Life of Prayer is about *your* prayer life. While the pastor's prayer life includes what is said to God, the emphasis of this course is about what God says to the pastor through His Word. In the life of prayer, we hear God's Word and meditate upon it. Through His Word, God creates, nourishes and sustains saving faith — even in the pastor and his family!

How does God create faith in His pastors? How does God create faith in *you* and keep *you* in the faith? How about your wife? How does God create and sustain saving faith in your children? Are these important questions? Why?

This course provides a deeper look into the pastor's spiritual warfare and the role that prayer plays in this battle. Remember *Oratio*, *Meditatio* and *Tentatio*? You're no longer learning about it; now you're living it! What does this mean for your faith and life?

How about the prayer life of the pastor and his family? Is this important? As a husband and father, what is your spiritual joy and responsibility in the home? What does a prayer life look like in the parsonage?

And dear pastor, how about *your* disciplined life of prayer. How do you get started? What happens if you get out of the habit of prayer? What materials and resources are good and useful for you as a pastor? When do you pray? Where do you pray? Why do you pray?

I pray you take to heart your immersion in God's Word. God promises that His Word is effective, sharper than a two-edged sword, that it is the power to give *you* life and salvation. It is the power to chase away the devil, the power to change your death into eternal life, and the power to fortify and sustain you in the pastoral ministry and every vocation of this life.

I pray this course is a blessing to you, your family and your congregation.



Session 1: Beggars

Focus

Saving faith in the pastor is no different than saving faith in your parishioners. Like your people, dear pastor, *you too* are dead, blind and an enemy of God in your state of original sin. Just as Luther confessed, you too are an unrighteous beggar before a righteous God. Yet, saving faith in you is created, nourished and sustained the same way it is in your people — the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies *you* through Word and Sacrament. A beggar before God receiving God's life-giving Word — this is the heart of the pastor's life of prayer.

Prayer

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
And make our hearts Your place of rest;
Come with Your grace and heav'nly aid,
And fill the hearts which You have made.
Praise we the Father and the Son
And Holy Spirit, with them One,
And may the Son on us bestow
The gifts that from the Spirit flow! Amen.¹



Getting Started

No matter who we are — we have a difficult time thinking of ourselves as beggars. Put yourself in the place of the beggar in this picture.

- › What do you smell like?
- › What is your appearance?
- › What do others think of you?
- › What do you contribute to society?
- › What is your emotional state?
- › How does this describe you as a beggar before God?

In the Word

In Session 2, we hear Luther's suggestion of how one can meditate upon God's Word. He says we should "repeat the words of Scripture aloud and by rubbing at the written Word [like a sweet-smelling herb], by reading and rereading it, carefully, attentively, and reflectively, to gather what the Holy Spirit means by them."² I invite you to practice Luther's words as you consider the following:

1. Read Mark 9:14–29 aloud.
 - a. In verse 19, who is included in the "faithless generation" within this narrative?

¹ LSB 498/499:1, 7.

Hymn texts with the abbreviation *LSB* are from *Lutheran Service Book*, copyright © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved.

² For this translation, see John Kleinig, "The Kindled Heart: Luther on Meditation," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 20 (1986), accessed August 29, 2018, johnkleinig.com/files/2513/2695/2230/The_Kindled_Heart_-_Luther_on_Meditation.pdf.

b. What role did Satan play in faithlessness and unbelief of those in this narrative?

c. How do you see Satan specifically attacking *your* faith in Jesus Christ?

d. The father confessed, “I believe.” What did he mean, then, by confessing *unbelief*?

e. Discuss this tension of belief and unbelief in *your* life.

2. Read Rom. 10:14–17 aloud.

a. How does a pastor get faith?

b. How is the Word preached to the pastor?

c. How might this text be of particular burden to the pastor? What role does the pastor’s theological formation play in this burden?

d. What is the Good News for the pastor in this text?

3. Read John 8:31–38 aloud.

a. As a disciple of Christ, what is God’s promise for *you* as you abide, ruminate and are immersed in the Word?

b. What is the significance of Jesus’ use of the word λόγος concerning *your* saving faith when He says, “Abide in my *word*”?

4. What are the specific promises of God for *you* in His Word?

a. John 20:31

b. 2 Tim. 3:15

c. 1 Thess. 2:13

Further Reflection

5. “So the worship and divine service of the Gospel is to *receive* gifts from God” (Ap V 189). When the pastor (and his family) are in church, whether it be the Divine Service or a Service of the Word, he stands before God as a beggar. Whether clergy or laity, we all enter God’s presence as beggars. As He feeds *you* His Word, the Holy Spirit continues to create, nourish and sustain saving faith *in you*. This is all God’s doing. Consider the five *ordinaries* of the Divine Service. How is the Holy Spirit creating, nourishing and sustaining saving faith in you as *you* receive His gifts as a beggar before Him?

› Mark 10:47 (Kyrie)

› Luke 2:14; John 1:29 (Gloria)

› Gen. 1; Luke 1:26–38; Luke 2:1–20; Luke 23; Luke 24:1–12; Luke 24:50–53; John 16:4b–15; Eph. 2:19–22; Eph. 5:25–27; 1 John 2:2; 1 Thess. 4:16; John 17:3 (Creed)

› Is. 6:3; Matt. 21:9 (Sanctus)

› John 1:29 (Agnus Dei)



Session 2: Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio

Focus

Pastoral formation is a life-long process. It is absolutely necessary that we equip our seminarians with foundational building blocks, specifically the disciplines of Exegetics, Systematics, History and Practical Pastoral Care. Luther required two more: experience and wisdom. For Luther, wisdom was gained from experience. Luther believed that the core of experience and wisdom was the practice of the *vita passiva* (the receptive life of faith). This receptive life of faith happens through prayer, meditation and suffering. *Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio* was ingenious on Luther's part. The more one contemplates and uses this formational process, the more invaluable it becomes. *Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio* is the heart of the pastor's life of prayer.

Prayer

Your light to ev'ry thought impart,
And shed Your love in ev'ry heart;
The weakness of our mortal state
With deathless might invigorate.
Drive far away our wily foe,
And Your abiding peace bestow;
With You as our protecting guide,
No evil can with us abide. Amen.³

Getting Started

In the 1539 Preface to the *Wittenberg Edition of Luther's German Writings*,⁴ Luther states that the correct way of studying theology is three-fold.

6. Write the three words in Latin and English to which Luther is describing.

7. Fill in the blanks below.

Oratio is praying for the gift of the _____ to understand God's Word.

The gift of the Holy Spirit comes through the reception of God's _____.

Meditation upon God's Word results in spiritual attack from the _____.

H _____

R _____

S _____

8. In the spaces above, write the word that describes Luther's attitude or posture for each.

9. *Tentatio* leads the Christian back into further prayer (*Oratio*) and the Word (*Meditatio*), therefore this life of prayer is (circle one):

- › linear
- › cyclical

10. In Latin, Luther calls this "correct way of studying theology" V _____ P _____.

11. John Kleinig writes, "Luther, therefore, did not envisage the spiritual life in active terms as a process of self-development but in passive terms as a process of reception from the Triune God."⁵

³ LSB 498/499:4-5.

⁴ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works, vol. 34, Career of the Reformer IV*, eds. Lewis W. Spitz and Helmut T. Lehmann, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1960), 283-88.

⁵ John W. Kleinig, *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (July 2002): 258.

This leads us back to Luther's own writing, "We are _____; this is true."

In the Word

The following is taken from Luther's 1539 "Preface to the Wittenberg Edition of Luther's German Writings." Please read aloud.⁶

Moreover, I want to point out to you a correct way of studying theology, for I have had practice in that. If you keep to it, you will become so learned that you yourself could (if it were necessary) write books just as good as those of the fathers and councils, even as I (in God) dare to presume and boast, without arrogance and lying, that in the matter of writing books I do not stand much behind some of the fathers. Of my life I can by no means make the same boast. This is the way taught by holy King David (and doubtlessly used also by all the patriarchs and prophets) in the one hundred nineteenth Psalm. There you will find three rules, amply presented throughout the whole Psalm. They are *Oratio*, *Meditatio*, *Tentatio* [*Anfechtung*].

First, you must realise that the Holy Scriptures are the kind of book that turns the wisdom of all other books into folly, because none of them can teach about eternal life except this alone. So you should immediately despair of your own reason and understanding. With them you will not attain eternal life. Instead, with arrogance like that, you will hurl yourself, and others with you, from heaven, like Lucifer, into the abyss of hell. Rather, kneel down in your room and pray to God with true humility and earnestness, that through his dear Son, he would give you his Holy Spirit, to enlighten you, lead you, and give you understanding.

You can see how David keeps on praying in Psalm 119, "Teach me, Lord, instruct me, lead me, show me", and so on. Even though he knew the text of the Pentateuch well, and many other books, heard and read them daily, he wanted to have the true teacher (master) of the Scriptures for himself as well, so that he would not tackle them with his understanding and become his own teacher (master). That produces spiritual rattle-brainers who fancy that the Scriptures are subject

to them and are readily grasped with their own understanding, without the Holy Spirit and prayer, like the tales of Markolf, or Aesop's fables.

Secondly, you must meditate, not only with your heart but also externally, by always studying and rubbing, reading and re-reading the spoken word and written text in the Bible, with diligent attention and reflection on what the Holy Spirit means in it. Take care that you do not become bored and think that if you have read, heard, and spoken it once or twice, that is enough for you to understand it fully. You will never become much of a theologian like that, but will be like immature fruit that drops down before it is half-ripe.

Thus you see how David constantly boasts in Psalm 119 that, day and night and always, he would not speak, compose, say, sing, hear, and read anything except God's word and commandments. For God will not give you his Spirit without the external word. So be guided by that, since not for nothing did he command that it should be written, preached, read, heard, sung, and spoken, externally.

Thirdly, there is temptation (*tentatio*), '*Anfechtung*'. This is the touchstone that teaches you not only to know and understand, but also to experience how right and true, how sweet and lovely, how powerful and comforting God's word is, wisdom above all wisdom.

Thus you see how David, in Psalm 119, laments so often about all the different enemies, arrogant princes or tyrants, and about all the false spirits and hordes that he has to suffer just because he meditates; that is, because he deals with God's word, as we have said, in many different ways. For as soon as God's word shoots up and spreads through you, the devil persecutes you. He makes you a true doctor (of theology); through his temptations, he teaches you to seek and love God's word.

Oratio

John Kleinig writes, "[The student of theology] prays that the Holy Spirit will use the Scriptures to interpret him and his experience so that he

⁶ The first paragraph is from LW 34:285. The remaining paragraphs are a 2002 revised translation by John W. Kleinig included as part of the *Concordia Theological Quarterly* article. Text of revised translation may be found here: johnkleinig.com/files/1813/2730/7611/Oratio_Meditatio_Tentatio.pdf.

sees himself and others as God does. In this way he trusts in God's word as a means of grace, the channel of the Holy Spirit. The study of theology, then, is based on prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit turns would-be masters of theology, spiritual self-promoters, into humble, life-long students of the Scriptures."⁷

12. Read Ps. 119:25–32 aloud.

- a.** How does the psalmist see himself as a beggar before God?
- b.** Which words in this psalm identify with *Oratio*, that is, praying for the gift of the Holy Spirit to understand God's Word?
- c.** Why would you, as a pastor, pray to understand God's Word?
- d.** Luther warns of the danger of a theologian becoming his own teacher (master). Without *Oratio* and *Meditatio*, what does Luther say this produces? What does this look like in the life of the pastor, his life and his congregation?

13. Read John 14:16–17 and 16:13–14 aloud.

- a.** How do these words of Jesus speak to *Oratio* and *Meditatio*?
- b.** What does God promise you in these words?

Meditatio

14. Read Ps. 119:25–32 aloud again.

- a.** What is the connection between *Oratio* and *Meditatio* in this psalm?
- b.** What does the psalmist believe the Word will accomplish for him?
- c.** What is the pastor without meditation upon the Word of God?

15. Read Ps. 19:14 aloud. Many pastors pray this psalm before preaching a sermon. Upon *what* is

the meditation of the preacher's heart before he can utter words from his mouth?

16. Read Luke 24:44–49 aloud.

- a.** How does verse 45 relate to Luther's *Oratio* and *Meditatio*? Explain.
- b.** *Oratio* is praying for the gift of the Holy Spirit to understand God's Word. In *Meditatio*, the Holy Spirit comes through the reception of God's Word and gives meaning to the text. Luther would not divorce *Oratio* and *Meditatio* from proper exegesis and a confessional hermeneutic. This being said, Jesus identifies the heart and substance of all Scripture as being written about Him (v. 44). What do Jesus' words mean in this narrative for you, dear pastor, in *your* life of faith?

Tentatio

Kleinig writes, "As long as any pastor, or any student of theology, operates by his own power, with his own intellect and human ideas, the devil lets him be. But as soon as he meditates on God's word and so draws on the power of the Holy Spirit, the devil attacks him by stirring up misunderstandings, contradiction, opposition, and persecution. The attack is mounted by him through the enemies of the gospel in the church and in the world. All this happens to stop the work of God's word in the student of theology. As soon as God's word is planted in his heart, the devil tries to drive it out, so that he will not be able to operate by the power of the Holy Spirit. The large number of laments in the Psalter indicates that this is quite normal. They show how the ministry of the word produces enmity and opposition; it arouses the ire of the enemy."⁸

17. Read the following passages aloud. How do they confirm Kleinig and Luther's words concerning *Tentatio* with what you are experiencing in your first few months/years of your pastoral ministry? (Note: While the novice pastor may suffer for rookie mistakes, Luther

⁷ Kleinig, 260.

⁸ Kleinig, 264–65.

identifies *Anfechtung* as suffering on account of meditating, living and preaching the pure Word of God.)

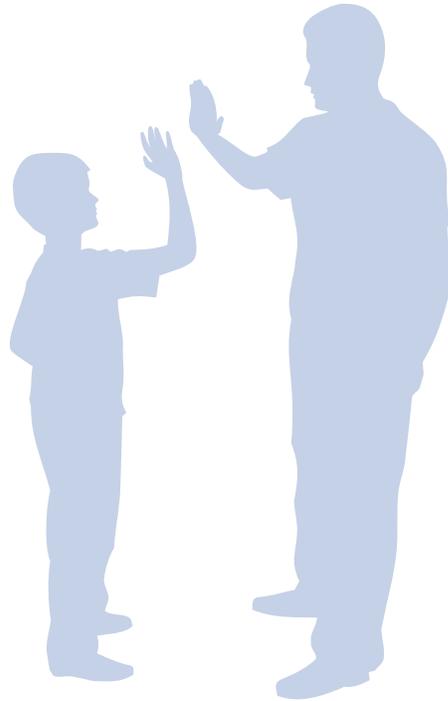
- a. Ps. 119:25–32 (one more time!)
- b. 1 Peter 5:6–10

18. Read Matt. 13:18–23 aloud. Luther writes, “For as soon as God’s word shoots up and spreads through you, the devil persecutes you. He makes you a real teacher (of theology); by his attacks (temptations) he teaches you to seek and love God’s Word.”⁹

- a. How do Satan’s attacks make you a better theologian and serve to strengthen your faith?
- b. Especially during your years in Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS), I would encourage you to take special note as to how your *Tentatio/Anfechtung* drives you back in to the Word. This, as you know, is the theology of the cross, or as Gene Veith identifies it, “the spirituality of the cross.”¹⁰ How have you already experienced this *Tentatio/Anfechtung* in your early years of ministry?

Further Reflection

Oratio, Meditatio and *Tentatio* is all theory until it becomes a part of your life. Make a plan. What time of day will you set aside for prayer? Do you commit to praying to the Holy Spirit to open your mind and soul to be receptive to the Word, so that He may open the Scriptures to you for understanding and the strengthening of your faith? While the possibilities are many, how will you discipline yourself to be in the Word? Upon which portion of Scripture will you meditate? How much of Scripture will you read, mark, learn and inwardly digest each day? Keep track of what you learn, what insights you gain and how you spiritually benefit from the Word. Finally, keep track on how this *Oratio* and *Meditatio* causes you *Tentatio*. Does the *Tentatio* drive you back into the Word? Are you willing to share your experience with the others in your PALS group? If not, how about one person with whom you can process your experience?



⁹ Kleinig, 265.

¹⁰ Gene Edward Veith, Jr., *The Spirituality of the Cross: The Way of the First Evangelicals* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999).

Session 3: Vocation

Focus

The pastor's life of prayer certainly spills over into his spiritual responsibilities in the home with his wife and children. Being the spiritual head in the home is not within the vocation as pastor, but as husband and father. And yet, the pastor's wife and children need to be spiritually fed and nourished with the Word of God in the home — just as in every home. No doubt, Luther had in mind for the father to teach the faith to his children, as he begins each section of his *Small Catechism* with these words: "As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household."

Prayer

To You, the Counselor, we cry,
To You, the gift of God Most High;
The fount of life, the fire of love,
The soul's anointing from above.
In You, with graces sevenfold,
We God's almighty hand behold
While You with tongues of fire proclaim
To all the world His holy name. Amen.¹¹

Getting Started

When addressing the responsibilities of husband, wife, father and mother in the home, especially in relationship to spiritual headship and care, we move into the realm of the "Order of Creation." The Order of Creation is about God designating particular positions in relation to Him and one another as His created beings. The 2009 Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) document, *The Creator's Tapestry*, states, "The responsibilities God gives to us as humanity in community and in our personal individuality continue to reflect the pattern begun with

creation." The paragraph goes on to describe the male's spiritual gifts and responsibilities in marriage and home, stating, "Such spiritual leadership would be undermined if the church did not also reflect it."¹²

It is not the intent of this study to get into the weeds of the Order of Creation, but rather to highlight the husband and father's spiritual responsibility and care for his wife and children. To highlight this one aspect of the Order of Creation, please consider the following:

19. Read 1 Cor. 11:3 aloud.

a. "The head of every man is _____, the head of a wife is her _____, and the head of Christ is _____."

b. What is the purpose of this Order of Creation?

20. Read Eph. 5:22–33 aloud.

a. What does it mean for the husband to be the head of the wife in relation to Christ being the head of the Church?

b. What is the husband's role in the marriage according to this text?

c. How does the husband and father's spiritual headship speak to teaching the faith at home and the family's prayer life?

In the Word

21. Read Deut. 11:18–21 aloud.

a. What is it we teach our children according to this text?

b. How do these words translate in your life today: "talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates"?

¹¹ LSB 498/499:2–3.

¹² Commission on Theology and Church Relations, *The Creator's Tapestry: Scriptural Perspectives on Man–Woman Relationships in Marriage and the Church* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, December 2009), 53.

22. Read Deut. 4:1, 9.

- a.** Why was it important for Moses to teach God's Word to the people?
- b.** What is the "land" of which you desire your children to take possession?
- c.** According to verse 9, why is it important for the Christian family to maintain a discipline of being in the Word and prayer?

23. Read 1 John 5:13 aloud.

- a.** Why does St. John write this letter to the Church?
- b.** Why is it important to you that your spouse and children believe in the name of the Son of God?
- c.** What role does your spiritual care in the home play in your children's eternal life?

24. Read Prov. 22:6 aloud.

- a.** What is God's promise in this text?
- b.** How do we reconcile raising our children in the faith, and yet, they depart from it?
- c.** What is the example of Monica and Augustine? Was Monica's prayer in vain?
- d.** Can you share a life story of a Christian child who departed from the faith and returned to it in later years? Do the parents always live to see this return to the faith?
- e.** Children straying from the faith can be very painful for a parent (especially in a pastor's family). What comfort does Rom. 8:26–30 give in this situation? What other scriptural words of hope and comfort can you give to such grieving parents?

Further Reflection

25. On occasion, St. Paul invites the Church to imitate him (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:7). Considering Paul's past life, one might consider if this is wise. St. Paul, of course, is talking about the Church imitating his Christian faith and life, including his life of repentance, devotion to God's Word and good works in Christ (Gal. 2:20).

- a.** Is there currently any discrepancy between what you say in family devotions and how you live your Christian life in public or private? Are you willing to share your answer with the group?
- b.** To whom might you consider confessing your sins: father-confessor, spouse, parent, other?
- c.** The intent of this reflection is not to inflict guilt, but to consider how our words and deeds influence and affect the spiritual life of those in our care. If the situation warrants, please read Eph. 1:7–10 aloud and proclaim absolution to the penitent.



Session 4: Habitus

Focus

Habitus is a Latin word that means “condition or appearance, dress and attire, denoting physical or mental constitution.” The intent of *habitus* is: “What do you look like?” More specifically, what does your *prayer life* look like? After doing it over and over, making it a “habit,” it becomes a part of who you are — *habitus!* Prayer *habitus* does not come naturally; the old man will fight and struggle against it constantly. Prayer *habitus* is a discipline of the new man who “should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever” (SC IV 12).

Prayer

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And You, from both, as Three in One

That we Your name may ever bless
And in our lives the truth confess.

Praise we the Father and the Son
And Holy Spirit, with them One,

And may the Son on us bestow
The gifts that from the Spirit flow! Amen.¹³

Getting Started

26. Describe your current personal and family prayer life (whatever it is — we’re all in this together). What resources are you using? What makes up your time of prayer? What time of day do you set aside? How long does your prayer time last? What does the physical space look like? Who’s involved? How are the family members involved?

In the Word

27. How do the following passages give you guidance and encouragement for your prayer life?

- a. Joshua 24:15
- b. Luke 11:1–4
- c. Acts 2:42–47

- d. Acts 16:25–34
- e. Mark 1:35
- f. Luke 6:12

Further Reflection

Depending on who you read, forming a habit can take as little as twenty-one days and up to sixty-six days or more. While extemporaneous prayers and weekly worship may already be a part of your *habitus*, how about your intentional personal and family prayer life? To avoid confusion, “prayer life” involves being immersed in the Word with Scripture being the primary source, accompanied by the Catechism, hymnody and liturgy. Our petitions to God, then, flow out of being fed by the Word, speaking back to God what He has already spoken to us.

How about your prayer *habitus*? If you’re not already in the habit, here a few things to consider (for personal and family prayer):

- › What time of day will be set aside for prayer?
- › How many days a week will you devote to prayer?
- › How long do you want to devote to prayer?
- › Do any adjustments need to be made to accommodate your time of prayer?
- › What resources will you use?
- › Who are the participants (e.g., adults only, toddlers, adolescents, teenagers, grandchildren)?
- › What will be your prayer setting (e.g., kitchen table, living room, study/office, bedroom, outside patio)?
- › What do you want to accomplish (e.g., read Scripture, discussion, memorize Catechism, memorize specific prayers, recite a Creed, learn hymns, prayer content)?
- › What am I missing?

¹³ LSB 498/499:6–7.

Appendix A: Discussion Guide Answers

(These abbreviated answers serve to initiate further discussion among the participants).

Session 1: Beggars

1.

a. The entire crowd present, including the scribes, disciples and the father of the boy.

b. Satan seized the boy to make him mute, he stirs up the scribes to speak against Jesus, and causes doubt in the mind of the disciples and despair in the father.

c. Answers may vary, but may include temptations, illness, despair, doubts about the pastoral vocation, conflict in the parish and so forth.

d. This is the ongoing struggle in this sinful world between the old man and new man; in his own flesh there is nothing but doubt and despair. Christ alone gives him faith and salvation.

e. Honest and open discussion will be most helpful to all participants.

2.

a. God works faith in the pastor the same way He works faith in all people — only through the Word. “Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17).

b. The Word is preached to the pastor through *Oratio*, *Meditatio* and *Tentatio*, as will be discussed in the next session. This is an immersion in the Word. It is also good when the pastor hears the Word in the Winkel, PALS group, pastor’s conference or wherever the pastor sits at the feet of a brother preacher where God feeds him life and salvation.

c. In the congregation’s gathering for Word and Sacrament, the pastor is the one doing the preaching to God’s people; the pastor is the

proclaimer and the people are the hearers. While the pastor indeed hears the Word he himself preaches, the sermon is crafted primarily for the ears of the sheep. Unlike most laypersons, the pastor’s own devotional life will be enhanced with his academic knowledge of exegesis, hermeneutics, systematics, the Church Fathers and so forth. Satan will continually strive to lead the pastor away from objective knowledge to subjective interpretation. This will always be a tension in the pastor’s prayer life.

d. Christ alone works faith through the Word of God.

3.

a. The truth [of Christ] sets us free from doubt, sin and eternal death. God’s Word is truth. God’s Word of truth works faith in *you*.

b. The Word is ultimately the Divine Logos, Jesus Christ. Only in Christ, does sinful man have faith, life and salvation. Note: this includes the pastor.

4.

a. The Word was written that *you* may believe that Jesus is the Christ, and through this Christ *you* have eternal life.

b. The Word alone gives *you* salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

c. The Holy Spirit creates, nourishes and sustains faith in *you* through the Word of truth.

5.

a. Only by God’s mercy (*kyrie*) are we saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

b. The *Gloria* is centered in Jesus Christ, through Whom alone we have life and salvation.

c. As the words and doctrine of God are spoken weekly in the Creed, the Holy Spirit continues to work faith in His people.

- d. In the *Sanctus*, the Holy Spirit works faith through Christ, who comes in the name of the Lord in Word and Sacrament.
- e. The Holy Spirit works faith in the words of John 1:29, in other words, in the Lamb of God who takes away *your* sins through His blood and atoning sacrifice now given in this Meal.

Session 2: *Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*

6. *Oratio*, Prayer

Meditatio, Meditation

Tentatio, Suffering

7. Holy Spirit, Word, Devil

8. Humility, Receptive, Suffering

9. Cyclical

10. *Vita Passiva*

11. Beggars

12.

a. As his soul clings to the dust, the psalmist begs God for what he does not have: life, God's statutes, understanding, strength and putting off false ways.

b. "Make me understand the way of your precepts" (v. 27).

c. Again, you stand before God as a humble beggar, praying for what you do not have. You are continually in the posture of student and disciple, being fed with God's Word for your own saving faith. It is with this understanding that you preach, teach, guide and lead God's people in your care.

d. Arrogance or despair.

13.

a. It is the Helper, the Holy Spirit, who will give us understanding and wisdom in the truth, in other words, that Word of God, even Jesus Christ, our Lord. This truth will guide and lead the pastor in his faith and in his daily vocations.

b. He promises a Helper, truth, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, guidance and all His speaking will come from Jesus Christ, who is your faith, life and salvation.

14.

a. The psalmist prays that God would make him understand His Word (*Oratio*) so that he can meditate (*Meditatio*) on God's wondrous works.

b. He believes God's Word will strengthen him in faith and deed, setting him on the path of faithfulness.

c. He is left defenseless with no understanding of God or His Word. He is left on his own understanding, which will destroy his faith and turn him in on himself.

15. This meditation must be on the Word of God to make the words of his mouth truthful and acceptable to God.

16.

a. In *Oratio*, we pray for the Holy Spirit to give us understanding and wisdom in the Word. Our prayer is that of Luke 24:45, that God would open our minds to understand the Scriptures.

b. While God's Word is indeed pertinent for your teaching and preaching, please focus on how God's Word (as you meditate upon it) feeds *your* faith and life as a child of God, in other words, in your struggles, temptations and doubts. Discuss how God's Word graciously teaches you His law for holy living in your various vocations in life.

17.

a. The psalmist prays for understanding so that he may meditate on God's wondrous works. In verse 31 he realizes that this life of *Oratio* and

Meditatio may cause him suffering as he prays, “I cling to your testimonies, O Lord; let me not be put to shame!”

b. St. Peter expresses a humility (*Oratio*) of being under the mighty hand of God (*Meditatio*). He realizes this makes the pastor, to whom Peter is writing, the target of the devil, who seeks to devour God’s servant and destroy his faith in Jesus Christ (*Tentatio*).

18. Consider the faith and life of the pastor in each of the soils mentioned in this parable. The pastor is not exempt from being either path, rocky ground, thorny or good. Satan will continually try (and he will not let up!) to snatch the seed of God’s Word away from you. He will desire that the suffering he can inflict on you will cause you to forsake God’s Word (even if you remain in the pulpit). This temptation of the devil drives the pastor (or anyone, for that matter), back into prayer and meditation upon God’s Word. As the pastor is continually driven back into the Word (despite Satan’s desire to destroy you), God continues to strengthen and nourish your faith, even giving you greater knowledge and wisdom in faith and life.

Session 3: Vocation

19.

a. Christ, husband, God

b. “The point of this doctrine is to affirm that Christians like all other human beings exist in a framework of universal structures that are there prior to and apart from the fact that Christians believe in Christ and belong to his Church.”¹⁴

20.

a. Christ is the head of His bride, the Church. In the same way, the earthly husband is the head of his wife, who is his lovely bride.

b. As Christ humbly loved the Church sacrificially, so also the husband toward his beloved bride, his wife. The husband loves,

protects and defends his wife. This is especially true as He takes responsibility to teach and lead his wife and children in the Word of God, through whom the Holy Spirit works saving faith in them and chases the devil and death away.

c. As the caregiver of his wife and children’s saving faith in Jesus Christ, the husband and father immerses his family in God’s Word. As Christ desires all to believe in Him and have eternal life, so the husband and father desires his wife and children believe and have eternal life. This headship is the God-given responsibility of teaching the Word at home, teaching his children to pray and taking them to the Lord’s House for Word and Sacrament.

21.

a. God’s Word (which means all the teachings and doctrine contained therein).

b. Examples may include: while riding in the car, when taking the children to swimming lessons, around the dinner table, during nighttime prayers, while on vacation, at the time of discipline, during time of sadness or suffering. Please give more examples in your discussion.

22.

a. So that they may live and go in and take possession of the land God was giving them.

b. We desire that our wife and children live eternally with saving faith in Jesus Christ. The “land” is heaven, in other words, eternal life with Christ and all believers.

c. We are diligent in the Word, lest we forget it. The world, Satan and our own flesh will continually strive to have us forget God’s Word and thus fall away from saving faith.

23.

a. So the hearers may believe in the name of the Son of God and have eternal life.

¹⁴ Carl Braaten, *No Other Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 120.

b. So, in unbelief they do not go to hell, but have everlasting life through Jesus Christ, who died for their salvation.

c. Extremely important. The father is the priest in his own home, teaching God's Word to his children, through which the Holy Spirit works life and salvation.

24.

a. The promise is that the child who is trained up in the Word of God will not depart from it.

b. This is a painful experience for many parents. Despite our children drifting or falling away from the faith, the parents continually hold to and cling to God's promises. Parents of adult children who fall away continually pray for the salvation of their children and look for opportunities to witness the faith in which their children were raised.

c. Monica prayed for her wayward son, even though he gave all appearances that he was lost and had deserted the faith. Monica's prayer was not in vain. Augustine not only came to faith through Ambrose, he became a major Church Father of the Christian Church.

d. Answers may vary.

25. Answers may vary.

Session 4: *Habitus*

26.

a. The pastor surely desires that he and his household believe, trust and serve the Lord.

b. The disciples desired to learn how to pray. The pastor, his wife and children are all students of the Word, desiring that God would teach them how to pray. Teaching his children to learn the Lord's Prayer by heart plants God's Word in their soul for faith and life throughout a lifetime (even in times of drifting away from the faith, tragedy or death).

c. Whether pastor or not, the Christian father does not give his children the option of going to church, rather he instills in them the discipline of Word and Sacrament, and with their mother, teaches them to listen and pray in church. Consider the added burden and stress of the pastor's wife who sits with her children in church, teaching them to pray, sing, pay attention and sit still. May be a conversation worth having in PALS.

d. The father cared not only for his own salvation, but the salvation of his household. This is the responsibility of every father, so too, the pastor and his children.

e. Jesus went off by himself to pray. So also, the pastor devotes time away for *Oratio* and *Meditatio*.

f. Same as above.

Appendix B: Resources

Lutheran Service Book

Luther's Small Catechism

Book of Concord

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