

## **THE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

### **Romans 16:16**

#### **Introduction:**

- 1. The Lutheran Church is the oldest Protestant denomination.**
- 2. There are sixty-six million Lutherans worldwide.**
- 3. Eight and one half million Lutherans are in the USA and Canada.**
- 5. Lutherans are actually a family of different denominations just as Baptists are; they do not always agree with one another or even fellowship one another.**
- 6. We will look at Lutheranism in general and note some of the differences among them.**

#### **Discussion:**

- I. MARTIN LUTHER IS THE FOUNDER OF LUTHERANISM.**
  - A. Luther was an Augustinian monk, preacher, and professor who challenged the corruptions of the Roman Catholic Church.**
    - 1. In 1517, he nailed 95 theses to the church door in Wittenburg, Germany.**
    - 2. He was eventually excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church.**
    - 3. In 1530, Luther's followers were united by the Augsburg Confession, a creed.**
  - B. Luther taught the Scriptures alone are the authority in religion.**
    - 1. He emphasized the priesthood of all believers.**
    - 2. He taught justification by faith alone.**
    - 3. He denied the authority of the papacy.**
  - C. Luther believed in retaining everything from the Roman Catholic Church not specifically condemned in the Bible.**
    - 1. Reformed churches rejected practices that they believed were not specifically taught in the Scriptures.**
    - 2. As a result, the Lutheran churches are the most like the Catholic Church of any Protestant denomination except perhaps the High Anglican Church (Episcopal).**
- II. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF TRUTHS HELD BY LUTHERANS.**
  - A. They teach there is one God but three Persons who possess Divinity - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19).**
  - B. Traditionally, they have taught the Bible is God's Word, but they have several creeds they follow (2 Tim. 3:16,17).**

1. Some Lutherans today believe there are errors in the Bible.
  2. This is a major difference between the two largest Lutheran denominations in America.
- C. They teach the priesthood of all believers but have a clergy (1 Pet. 2:5, 9).
- D. They believe communion should be taken every Sunday (Acts 20:7).

### III. LUTHERANS TEACH MANY THINGS CONTRARY TO THE BIBLE.

- A. Lutherans have a human founder, Martin Luther (Matt. 16:18).
- B. The Lutheran Church began at the wrong time and the wrong place to be the church of the Bible (Acts 2).
- C. Lutherans accept several creeds including the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles of Faith, and the Formula of Concord instead of God's Word alone (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).
- D. Lutherans call themselves after the name of a man rather than after the Christ (Acts 11:26).
1. Luther himself pleaded: "I pray you leave my name alone and do not call yourselves Lutherans, but Christians" (Michelle, Life of Luther, p. 262).
  2. They wrongly name the church (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2).
- E. Lutherans retain many Catholic practices in their worship for which there is no Scriptural authority (John 4:24).
1. Instrumental music and choirs (Col. 3:16,17).
  2. The wearing of clerical robes and ecclesiastical titles (Matt. 23:1-12).
  3. The keeping of special religious holidays not mentioned in the Bible (Easter, Lent, Christmas, etc.).
- F. Lutherans teach Christ is actually present in the Communion.
1. They deny the Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation.
  2. They also deny the Lord's supper is a simple memorial.
    - a. When Jesus said: "This is My body," "This is My blood," He was using a figure of speech called a metaphor.
    - b. He was in His body with His blood flowing in His veins when He instituted the communion (Matt. 26:26-28).
    - c. He said: "Do this in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11: 23 - 25).

- G. Lutherans believe the Lord's supper is a sacrament.**
1. A sacrament is a "religious rite by which grace is conferred and sins forgiven."
  2. Sins are not forgiven in the Lord's supper.
  3. Christians are reminded that Christ died to forgive our sins when the Lord's supper is eaten.
- H. Lutherans deny man has free will.**
1. The very fact that God gave Adam and Eve a command that they could obey or disobey says they had free will (Gen. 2:16,17).
  2. Throughout the Bible, men are commanded to "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve" (Jos. 24:15).
- I. Lutherans teach the Catholic doctrine of inherited or original sin.**
1. "They have inherited a sinful heart, and the germ of sin in them will soon grow" (Lutheran Catechism by Stump).
  2. The Bible teaches "the soul who sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:20).
- J. Lutherans practice infant baptism.**
1. "Christ has commanded that little children should be brought to Him and we obey this command by baptizing them and teaching them" (Lutheran Catechism by Stump).
  2. There is nothing in this passage that says anything about baptism (Matt. 19:13-15; Acts 8:12).
- K. Lutherans practice sprinkling and pouring for baptism.**
1. New Testament baptism is immersion.
  2. It is a burial in water (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).
- L. Lutherans teach justification by faith alone.**
1. "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" (Jam. 2:24).
  2. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6).

**Conclusion:**

1. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America ordains women, accepts abortion and homosexuality, and questions the inerrancy of the Bible.
2. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod rejects women clergy, opposes abortion and homosexuality, and believe in the inerrancy of the Bible.
3. Why not simply do what the Bible says to be saved (Acts 2:36-47)?

