

# *Didache*

“The Teaching”

The *Didache* was a 1st-century Christian Book of Rubrics, written about AD 150 (some say as early as AD 50, others say around 90 A.D. [for context, most books of the New Testament were written in the 50's, John's books were written in the 90's]). The *Didache* contains the earliest mention of the written Gospel: “as the Lord commanded in his Gospel.” It was an early instruction manual, which also described Christian worship practices. Significantly, it describes baptism as the work of the Trinity and the celebration of the Lord's Supper each Sunday – things important to the Lutheran church still today, yet unfortunately not understood in the same way by many other churches today.

The word *Didache* means “teaching” or “doctrine.” We find this word in Acts 2:42, where Luke records that those at Pentecost who were baptized “devoted themselves to the apostle's doctrine [*didache*].”

For the apostles, the Pentecost believers, and the early Christians, this *teaching* wasn't their own, but was the Lord's. So is ours today. Our doctrine is not something that our church has invented over time, but the source is the teaching of the apostles, or God's Word.

This teaching that has its source as God's Word is confessed most succinctly in the Small Catechism and expressed in the Sunday Divine Service. This study uses the outline of the Divine Service to teach the truths in the Catechism and mirrors Luther's own suggestion for daily prayer.

## *MATERIALS*

These books will be foundational for this study: **the Bible, the Small Catechism, and the Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary.**

Other books you may wish to read to supplement your study:

- *The Book of Concord* – These are the Confessional documents of the Lutheran Church, including the three ecumenical creeds as well as the Small Catechism and the Large Catechism. Our church subscribes to these *because (quia)* we believe them to be true expositions of Scripture. This differs us from some other Lutheran churches who subscribe to them insofar as they (*quatenus*) explain Scripture.
- *Book of Family Prayer* – A devotion book by Danish Lutheran Bishop Nils Laache. This book and the devotions contained in it was considered so valuable for daily life that, along with the Bible, Catechism, and Hymnal was one of the only personal items brought over by Scandinavians in the 1800's.
- *The Hammer of God* – This is a novel by Swedish Lutheran Bishop Bo Geirtz which shows how the basic teachings of the Bible are able to stand amidst the changing world and spiritual attitudes.
- *The Spirituality of the Cross* – A compelling look at the spirituality of Lutheranism told by laymen Gene Veith. The book presents a true understanding of justification by faith, the means of grace, vocation, theology of the cross, the two kingdoms, worship, and the church.

## *TENTATIVE OUTLINE*

1. Didache Introduction & The Service of God
2. The Invocation: The Trinity & Baptism
3. Confession, Absolution & the Kyrie: Law & Gospel; Confession; and Which Sins Should We Confess? (The Ten Commandments), Absolution.
4. Gloria & the Service of the Word: The Incarnation & the power, clarity, and sufficiency of the Word of God
5. Creed: What is a Creed? The Three Persons of the Trinity
6. Lord's Prayer: The Lord's Prayer
7. Sanctus, Agnus Dei, Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper
8. Benediction: Two Kingdoms; Office of the Ministry
- 9.
- 10.

Are there any specific personal goals that you would like to achieve by participating in this study? any general questions you would like answered? any topics you would like to see covered? Please take a moment and write down your thoughts:

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# 1. THE SERVICE OF GOD

**Acts 2:42** “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers”

**Acts 20:7** “On the first day of the week...the disciples came together to break bread.”

**The Sunday Divine Service is the \_\_\_\_\_ on earth.** What would you fill in the blank with?

1. The dependability of the Service is ensured by the use of the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. ‘Liturgy’, to the ancient Greeks, meant the \_\_\_\_\_ of the people.
3. The focus of our service is always \_\_\_\_\_  
When this is so, the Service is truly a \_\_\_\_\_, in which the emphasis is not on \_\_\_\_\_, but on \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Is the liturgy primarily a format for *giving* or *receiving*?  
Key to this is that each week...  
Therefore, the liturgy (most properly) is drawn from \_\_\_\_\_.
5. We must, but are unable to...  
So He...
6. If we are not prepared for His presence, the result can be...  
Therefore, we must be able to give...

*“This is how God wants to be known and worshiped, that we accept His blessings and receive them because of His mercy... this is the greatest consolation in all afflictions.”*

**(The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Defense of the Augsburg Confession, Article IV, paragraph 60)**

*“The purpose of observing ceremonies is that men may learn the Scriptures and also pray.”*

**(Defense of the Augsburg Confession XXIV:3)**

*Faith is that worship which receives God’s offered blessings... It is by faith that God wants to be worshiped, namely, that we receive from Him what He promises and offers.*

**(Defense of the Augsburg Confession IV:49)**

*The woman came, believing that she should seek the forgiveness of sins from Christ. This is the highest way of worshiping Christ. Nothing greater could she ascribe to Him.*

**(Defense of the Augsburg Confession IV:154)**

*Behold, here you have the true honor and the true worship which please God and which He commands under penalty of eternal wrath, namely, that the heart should know no other consolation or confidence than that in Him.*

**(The Large Catechism I:16)**

*The highest worship... is the desire to receive forgiveness.*

**(Defense of the Augsburg Confession IV:310)**