

# Churches in America Study Guide

## SECTION #1

1. Read pages 7-10
2. As humans, we don't like conflict and disagreement. We prefer that we all get along. It makes us uncomfortable when we disagree, especially when we discuss religion. We all know people who are from other churches like Baptist, Methodist, and Catholics. Make a list of differences you know about other religions. Include discussions you have had with your friends and neighbors about what it means to be a Lutheran Christian. What do your friends and neighbors say about Baptism, Holy Communion, etc.?

## SECTION #2

3. Read pages 10-11
4. On page 11 we are encouraged to "*stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you*" (2 Thessalonians 2:15). As an organizational leader, how does this encouragement affect you if someone says, "Oh, I think Holy Communion is just a time for us to fellowship, it's not the true body and blood of Christ?"

## SECTION #3

5. Read pages 12-13
6. Read the three creeds (Apostles, Nicene, and Athanasian) as found in Lutheran Worship.
7. Using the information in *Defending the Faith: The Creeds* on Page 13, explain why we have the creeds.

## SECTION #4

8. Read pages 13-17
9. How are the sins of a Christian paid for and forgiven?
10. Review the *Something to Think About* questions on page 17. Meet with your mentor and discuss any questions you may have.

## SECTION #5

11. Read page 19
12. Discuss the word “evangelical” with your mentor. Be sure you understand the difference between evangelical and evangelism.

## SECTION #6

13. Read pages 20-21.
14. We have the Confessions and Scripture, what is the purpose of the Confessions? Why can we trust the authority of the Confessions?

## SECTION #7

15. Review again pages 20-21.
16. What was Luther talking about when he mentioned “*The Layman’s Bible?*” Why?
17. Read *Statements of the Lutheran Heritage* and be able to summarize each item and why it was written.
18. Discuss the following vocabulary words with your mentor: a) symbols, b) confessions (a document) versus confessing our sins, c) Apology (as in the *Apology of Augsburg Confession*)

## SECTION #8

19. Read page 22
20. Review the Apostles Creed and compare it with what you read on page 22.

## SECTION #9

21. Review page 22.
22. How is the Christian person different from other good and nice people we know in the world who are not Christian?

## SECTION #10

23. Read page 23.
24. What does “*Means of Grace*” mean? What do Lutherans teach about that?
25. Explain the concept about the Church in our Lutheran view.

## SECTION #11

26. Read page 24.
27. Why doesn’t God choose some to go to heaven and some to go to hell, since God already knows about their faith since before the world was created?
28. Explain the Apostle’s Creed in the section about Jesus’ second coming (the return of Christ).
29. What is Lutheran Worship for?
30. Read the “*Something to Think About*” questions on page 25. Discuss with your mentor.

## SECTION #12

31. Read page 27.
32. Explain the two words “Eastern” and “Orthodox.”

## SECTION #13

33. Read pages 27 and 28.
34. What is the Eastern Orthodox Church’s view about the Holy Spirit — proceeds from the Father and the Son?
35. Why did Martin Luther oppose the source of Eastern Orthodox Doctrine, especially regarding councils, oral tradition, etc.?
36. Explain the way of salvation as believed by the Eastern Orthodox Church and how does that compare with the Lutheran Church?

## SECTION #14

37. Read pages 28 and 29.
38. Explain the difference between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Lutheran Church regarding sacraments. Especially explain the different beliefs regarding Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
39. Read and understand about the customs of the Eastern Orthodox Church from the reading on page 29 in the second column.

## SECTION #15

40. Read pages 30 and 31.
41. Explain the difference between "Catholic" and "catholic."
42. The Roman Catholic Church uses creed, councils, writing of the Pope, and many official Church papers as *doctrine*. Why do Lutherans oppose this method of coming up with doctrine?

## SECTION #16

43. Read page 31.
44. Read carefully and be certain you understand the important chard *How Your Debt of Sin is Paid* on page 31.
45. Explain the satisfaction for forgiving our sins. Why do the Lutherans not agree?

## SECTION #17

46. Read page 33.
47. What is the Roman Catholic doctrine about the Church? Do the Lutherans agree or disagree?
48. Explain the office of the ministry. What does the Roman Catholic Church think about the Lutheran ministry?

## **SECTION #18**

49. Read pages 33-35.
50. Please read and understand the chart "*The Sacrifice of the Mass*" on page 33. That's why the Lutherans are opposed to the Mass.
51. What is the difference between mortal and venial sin?
52. What do you think about Mary and others as Roman Catholic saints?

## **SECTION #19**

53. Read pages 37 and 38.
54. What do some Calvinists believe is the basic Christian teaching? Read page 37, the third paragraph for help.
55. What do the Calvinists and the Lutherans agree about and have in common?

## **SECTION #20**

56. Read page 38 and 41.
57. Study the five things about salvation (TULIP) on page 38. The chart is on page 41.

## **SECTION #21**

58. Read page 40.
59. What are the Lutherans' and the Calvinists' teaching about the means of grace?
60. Read carefully and understand Lutheran and Calvinist teaching about Christ on page 40.

## **SECTION #22**

61. Read pages 40-42.
62. What is TULIP?

63. What type of church government do Calvinists use?

64. Read page 42 regarding bishops. Why may Lutherans have trouble with “bishop?”

## **SECTION #23**

65. Read pages 43 and 44.

66. What is another name for “The Church of England?”

67. What type of government does the Episcopal Church use? Explain your answer.

68. Read the “*Something to Think About*” questions on page 44. Discuss them with your mentor if you do not understand a question.

## **SECTION #24**

69. Read page 45.

70. Who is the founder of the Armenian Church?

## **SECTION #25**

71. Read pages 45 and 46.

72. Who is the founder of the Methodist Church?

73. How strict is the Methodist Church about what doctrines will be and won’t be accepted? Explain your answer.

## **SECTION #26**

74. Read page 46.

75. Read the Bible verses in the first paragraph under *Grace and Free Will* to better understand the difference between Methodists and Lutherans on this topic.

76. Compare the understanding of the Means of Grace from the Lutheran and Methodist viewpoints.

## **SECTION #27**

77. Read pages 46 and 47.
78. What is wrong with the statement “*A Christian can attain sinless perfection?*”
79. What are some of the good things that come out of the Salvation Army?
80. Is it wrong for a Lutheran to be a Salvation Army bell ringer?

## **SECTION #28**

81. Read page 47.
82. Why is it dangerous to our faith to put too much emphasis on holiness?
83. Is healing of sickness a guaranteed gift from Jesus?

## **SECTION #29**

84. Read pages 47 and 48.
85. What do Pentecostals say the reason is some people are healed from sickness and others are not? What would be a Lutheran explanation?
86. Read the “*Something to Think About*” questions on page 48. Discuss them with your mentor if you do not understand a question.

## **SECTION #30**

87. Read page 49.
88. The Mennonites emphasize a holy life for salvation. Even though we know Jesus already gives us salvation, why would we still want to live holy lives?
89. Explain the difference between “Christ-*in-us*” and “Christ-*for-us*.”

## **SECTION #31**

90. Read page 50.
91. Why do we want to be Christians IN the world and not only associate with Christians and ignore the rest of the world?
92. What is good could come from more “quiet” time in church?
93. What benefit might we get from living more simple lives like the Mennonites?

## **SECTION #32**

94. Read pages 50-52.
95. What is the difference between a Lutheran wanting to be baptized by immersion and saying he will only be baptized by immersion or he won't be baptized.
96. Read the “*Something to Think About*” questions on page 52. Discuss them with your mentor if you do not understand a question.

## **SECTION #33**

97. Read pages 53-55.
98. Which is more important to a Unionist Church? 1] Right Doctrine or, 2] Having one visible Church?
99. Is it wrong for two churches to unite? Read I Corinthians 1:10. What must happen first before the churches unite?

## **SECTION #34**

100. Read pages 55 and 56.
101. Read the Moravian Motto on page 55. Do you think everyone says the same things are essential or most important? What would a Moravian say is most important? What do we as Lutherans say is most important?



102. What was the goal of the Restorationist Churches? Did they succeed?

### **SECTION #35**

103. Read page 56 and 57.

104. Campbellite churches say they have “no creed but Christ.” How do they know what to believe?

105. The Disciples of Christ say which is more important: 1) What the church *believes*, or 2) What the church *does*?

### **SECTION #37**

106. Read pages 57-58.

107. What do the Campbellite churches teach about Baptism?

### **SECTION #38**

108. Read page 58.

109. What kind of independent churches exist?

### **SECTION #39**

110. Read pages 58 and 59.

111. Does the United Church of Christ think doctrine is important?

112. What churches merged to form the United Church of Christ?

### **SECTION #40**

113. Read pages 59 and 60.

114. Explain the WCC’s three reasons for their cooperation.

115. How can the WCC make many groups join without making them feel offended?

## **SECTION #41**

116. Read 61-62.

117. Explain clearly A-millennialism, Pre-millennialism, and Post-millennialism.

118. Why do Lutherans support the concept of a-millennialism?

119. Read pages 62-63.

120. What must the Seventh Day Adventists people follow if Jesus approves of them for salvation?

121. Why do the Seventh Day Adventists keep the Sabbath day on Saturday?

122. What does Jesus do while the people sleep?

## **SECTION #42**

123. Read page 63 and 64.

124. Define “Dispensationalism.”

125. Study Dispensationalist’s teaching about “the end times.”

## **SECTION #43**

126. Read page 65.

127. Explain the difference between sociological and religious cults.

128. Why do the Lutherans oppose the New Age Movement? Refer to page 65 if you need help.

## **SECTION #44**

129. Read page 65 and 66.

130. What do the Unitarian-Universalists claim in common?

131. Study the “The Unitarian Angle” carefully and see what the Unitarian Universalists believe about the Trinity.

## **SECTION #45**

132. Read pages 67 and 68.

133. Who are the Jehovah’s Witnesses?

134. What do the Jehovah’s Witnesses teach about Christ?

135. Explain the “144,000.”

## **SECTION #46**

136. Read pages 68 and 69.

137. Read the chart “*Moroni*” on page 69.

## **SECTION #47**

138. Read page 70.

139. Explain what the Mormons believe about God.

140. What do the Mormon’s think about the Lutheran doctrine of justification?

## **SECTION #48**

141. Read pages 70-72.

142. What do Christian Scientists teach about the Trinity and the triple divine principle?

143. Explain the Christian Scientist’s belief about healing.

## SECTION #49

144. Read pages 72 and 73.

145. Define *pantheism*.

146. Read the warnings in Scripture against spiritism. These verses are listed in the second complete paragraph on page 73. List some popular spiritism groups in America today and why they are dangerous.

## SECTION #50

147. Read page 73.

148. Under *New Age-ism*, find the names of some of the more common groups. Select one and do a little research about that group to understand their beliefs better.

149. How would you talk to a New Age person to show them the need to know Jesus?

## SECTION #51

150. Read pages 73 and 74.

151. Under *Human Divinity*, read each of the Bible verses and make a list of ways you know from the Bible that show how Christians can talk against the New Age Movement.

152. Under *Reincarnation*, read the Bible verses for the Christians response and write a brief paragraph on the joy and comfort you have as a Christian.

## SECTION #52

153. Read pages 74-76.

154. Read all the Bible passages listed again in these areas. Put two columns on a piece of paper. In one column write what the New Age Movement says and in the other what the Bible says.

155. Research each of the methods brought up in the second paragraph under the section on *Holistic Health*. List each of the methods and what parts of it may be okay to use and which are dangerous.

## SECTION #53

156. Read pages 76 and 77.

157. What five things have you learned from this course that have helped you the most?

158. Read the “*Something to Think About*” questions on page 77. Discuss them with your mentor if you do not understand a question.

159. Review the helps in the back of the book and also see the different church sizes for the various denominations.