

Tools for Personal Study

During this time of isolation for many of us, what can we do for Bible reading as well as learnings from the Lutheran Confessions? I would like to recommend three books to you for your personal devotions and Bible study. These three Concordia Publishing House books are:

- *The Lutheran Study Bible* (2009)
- *The Apocrypha: The Lutheran Edition with Notes* (2012)
- *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions – A reader's Edition of the Book of Concord*. 2nd edition (2006).

Each of these volumes offer you much to study and to learn. Your reading and Bible study will augment what your Bible study leader will offer.

All three volumes offer you much for your own personal study. The most important volume for us Lutheran Christians is the Bible. We as Lutheran readers have the special version known as *The Lutheran Study Bible*. What is so special about this study bible? The translation is the English Standard Version.

Throughout this version you will find numerous study notes interspersed within the text. You will also find in the preface of this study bible a preface with many helpful bible study tools. The first major tools are guides to reading and studying the bible as a Lutheran Christian. You will next discover Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*. These tools are helpful for each of us as we prepare to study the Bible.

The next part of the preface are helpful tools to help you to study the text of Scripture. The first of these tools is the Lectionaries section. The first part of the lectionary series provides the reader with the Sunday and festival readings for Series A through C. These are the readings that the pastors of Faith Lutheran Church use in our worship services. You will find the one-year lectionary also. This is a modified version of what you would find in the *Old Lutheran Hymnal*. This section is helpful as you prepare for worship. If you as a student of the bible want to go more in depth, you will find a two-year guide for the reading of the bible.

The next title I want to introduce you to here is the latest translation of the Lutheran Confessions. The original languages of the Lutheran Confessions are Latin and German. If you read Latin and/or German I would commend to you the *Bekennnisschriften der Evangelisch Lutherischen Kirche* and/or The Concordia Triglotta. The latter version contains an English translation. During my lifetime we have two English translations. The current volume is *Concordia; The Lutheran Confessions*. The Introduction to this volume has a helpful conversation about the Confessions. Throughout this version of the Confessions you will discover insightful notes explaining the section. If you are interested in reading the *Book of Concord* in a year, you will discover *A Book of Concord Reading Guide*.

The last book I would like to suggest is *The Apocrypha: The Lutheran Edition with Notes*. Why the Apocrypha since they are not of the Bible nor are they inspired and inerrant? These books offer the reader helpful background to the Old and the New Testaments. The background material is drawn from Raymond Surburg's volume on the *Intertestamental Period* and an article by Edwin Cone Bissell. The editors used the English Standard Version as the basic text. As you read through each of the books of the Apocrypha, you will find many helpful notes. You will also discover a nineteen week reading guide for the Apocrypha in the introduction.

As chair of the Adult Bible study team, I would like to commend these three books from Concordia Publishing House. You can purchase hardcover copies through the bookstore here at Faith Lutheran Church. You can also acquire an ebook version of these books through Amazon and download them on to your Kindle app. I would also encourage you to be in bible study as offered at Faith Lutheran Church.

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