



1530^{AD}

KEY DATES IN THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION

Psalm 66 1 Corinthians 15:3-11 Matthew 10:17-20, 26-33

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The **high point** of the **Lutheran Reformation** was **June 25, 1530**. It was three o'clock in the afternoon and the Lutheran reformers were standing before the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. On that day, the Lutheran reformers boldly confessed their faith with the words of the **Augsburg Confession**¹, knowing that their very lives were at stake. Charles V was a staunch Roman Catholic; Luther had long since been excommunicated and condemned, and the Emperor was no supporter of the Lutheran Reformation. ~~However~~, the Emperor needed political peace and unity in the Empire, and so he met with the Reformers. This meeting in Augsburg, and the Emperor listening to and accepting their Confession, was the decisive turning point in the Reformation².

The **Augsburg Confession** is the chief confession of the Lutheran Church; it is a clear and simple Biblically based confession of the Christian faith^{3,4}.

¹ The Augsburg Confession it is often times referred to simply as the "Augustana", the Latin term for "Augsburg."

² When Luther received the details of the actual presentation, he, in a letter of July 6, 1530, from the fortress Coburg, summed up the event in these words, "I am tremendously pleased to have lived to this moment when Christ, by His staunch confessors, has publicly been proclaimed in such a great assembly by means of this really most beautiful confession. And [so the Word] is fulfilled, 'I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings.' What follows will [also] be fulfilled: 'And will not be put to shame.' [Psalm 119:46]. For 'whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven.' [Matt. 10:32]" This verse which Luther quoted from Psalm 119 became the motto of the first printed edition of the Augsburg Confession in 1531 and has ever since been placed under the full title of the Confession. "The Augsburg Confession, Historical Introduction" by B.W. Teigen, online at <https://els.org/beliefs/augsburgconfession>

³ You can read the entire Augsburg Confession at <https://bookofconcord.org>

⁴ Historical Note: Philip Melanchthon, the author of the Augsburg Confession, considered it a personal document, rather than a historical Church document, and he continually rewrote portions of the Augsburg Confession after 1530. These later versions are known as the *Variata* (a Latin word, which means "a variant"). These later versions are not accepted by the Lutheran Church, and so you sometimes see the words "Unaltered

Remember that the word **confession** is the idea of "**echo**"; the Holy Christian Church "**echoes**" what it learns from Holy Scripture. That is what *a Creed and a Confession* is. They are **echoes** of God's Word.

For instance, think of the Apostles' Creed. "*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.*" That **confession** is simply the truth of Holy Scripture. The rest of the Apostles' Creed is the same way; as is the Nicene Creed, and even the Athanasian Creed. These Creeds⁵ are simply the Holy Christian Church echoing the truth of Holy Scripture. The Augsburg Confession is the same thing; it is the words that the Lutheran Reformers used to echo the truths of Holy Scripture.

The use of *Creeds and Confessions* are important in the Holy Christian Church. For most of history, the average person never had a Bible of their own. Bibles were copied by hand, and very expensive. So the church prepared *Creeds and Confessions* that confessed the truths of Holy Scripture. It was an important way that people learned about Christ and eternal salvation. They could memorize the *Creeds* and teach them to their the children.

In the history of the Christian Church, *Creeds* were used in worship services, similar to how they are today. We confess the Apostle's Creed at every Baptism; and recite it in worship services. Hopefully, you have it memorized. We teach the Apostles' Creed to our children; they learn it in our school, and it is one of the most important parts of Confirmation instruction. Most likely, when you are on your deathbed, a pastor or family member will be reciting the Apostles' Creed with you⁶.

Augsburg Confession (UAC)" used in reference to the original 1530 Augsburg Confession, which is the official confessional document of the Lutheran Church.

⁵ "Creed" derives from the Latin *credo*, "I believe." The form is active, denoting not just a body of beliefs but a confession of faith. This faith is trust: not "I believe that" (though this is included) but "I believe in." It is also individual; creeds may take the plural form of "we believe," but the term itself comes from the first person singular of the Latin: "I believe." the Creeds give you a concise and easy way to confess the Christian faith.

⁶ If you are comforting someone who is dying, then be sure to be pointing them to Jesus. When someone's in the throes of death and dying, the only thing they need to think about is the Lord Jesus Christ, their Savior who gives them peace at the time of death. The Apostle's Creed is an invaluable help in this. It also serves as

The use of *Creeds and Confessions* are important in the Holy Christian Church. They teach us the doctrines of the Christian faith. We learn about God the Father and the Creation of the world; We learn about the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The most important thing we learn is the truth of eternal salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. The largest sections the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are the sections about Jesus, the Savior of the world.

As Lutherans, our *confession* is that Jesus and His life, death, and resurrection is **the chief and most important doctrine** in the Christian faith.

The first and chief article is this, that Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, "was put to death for our trespasses and raised again for our justification;" He alone is the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" The Book Of Concord, Smalcald Articles, II.1

Why do we confess that? Because that is exactly what the Bible teaches us. This is our **echo** of Holy Scripture. Jesus is the Savior of the world; He has done all the work of salvation for all the people of all times and all places. His perfect life is credited to us; and our sin and guilt is transferred to Him. He dies on a cross in our place. On the third day, He rose again from the dead. This is the work that brings you the forgiveness of sins. This is how you have peace with God. This is why you have been given the gift of eternal life. Salvation is God's work in His Son Jesus; we confess -- that is, we **echo** from Scripture -- that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. That is our Lutheran *Confession*⁷!

things to talk about in those difficult times. The Apostle's Creed is pure Gospel: it proclaims what God the Holy Trinity has done for us!

⁷ It's important to note the difference between "Lutheran" and "Protestant." At first, the followers of Martin Luther were called the "protesters" -- where the name Protestant comes from. But early in the Reformation, there was a split amongst the Protestants. The split was over the meaning of Jesus' words in the Lord's Supper where He said, "Take and eat, this is My Body." Martin Luther believed that Jesus meant what He said, and that somehow, someway the bread in His hand was also His Body, given for us for the forgiveness of sins. (The same with the wine and "This is My Blood".) The other group of Protestants tried to explain what Jesus "really" meant, and they decided that Jesus really meant to say, "This represents and reminds you of My Body." But it is NOT His Body. They turned the bread and the wine into simply things to remember Jesus with, but not actually His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. Ultimately, they did not hold to Jesus' words, but they were trying to explain His words by their own reason and strength. (This split was finalized at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529.) The reformers who followed over the next decades and stayed with the symbolic

Through faith in Christ, you as an individual *confess* Christ in your life.

You *confess* that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior of the world! You know and believe that He has forgiven your sins and reconciled you to the Father. As you confess the truth of Christ with your good words and your good works, you are helping other people to learn about Jesus so that they too can believe in Him and have their sins forgiven!

Never underestimate your *confession* of Christ! It is important! People need to hear it! The Holy Spirit works through the *confession* of His people, echoing Holy Scripture, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and the Savior of the world! Be bold and *confess* Christ with your words and in your life!

What happened officially and formally in 1530 in front of the Holy Roman Emperor continues informally every day in our lives as we **BOLDLY** *confess* Christ and the truth of His Holy Word. There is danger for us just as there was danger for those first Lutheran Reformers, but we stand firm nonetheless.

Be bold!

And let your words and your actions echo Christ and His Word! Amen!

KEY DATES IN THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION
1517AD 95 Theses: the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation
1521AD The Diet of Worms
1530AD The Augsburg Confession
1546AD † Martin Luther
1580AD The Book of Concord
1847AD The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
1974AD Trinity Lutheran Church Litchfield Park, Arizona

interpretation of the Lord's Supper are now referred to with the term "Protestants"; and Lutherans who hold to the "Real Presence" are referred to as "Lutherans." At its core, there are essentially 4 theological positions in the Christian faith: (1) Roman Catholic (≈ Eastern Orthodox); (2) Lutheran; (3&4) Protestants → they split into two groups, the (3) Calvinists and the (4) Arminians. If you understand these 4 theological positions, you are a long way into understanding all the many and various denominations, churches, and parachurch organizations of today.

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Lord God, we thank you for the Lutheran reformers and the boldness and courage you gave to them to confess the truth of your Holy Word to the world. We thank you for preserving their confession and faith through the centuries. Send us the Holy Spirit so that we may faithfully confess Your Name and teach Your Word to those who come after us. Give us boldness and courage to confess Christ with good words and good works.

We pray this in His Name, amen!

Psalm 66

1 Shout for joy to God, all the earth! 2 Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious.

3 Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you. 4 All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing the praises of your name.” 5 Come and see what God has done, his awesome deeds for mankind! 6 He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the waters on foot—come, let us rejoice in him.

7 He rules forever by his power, his eyes watch the nations—let not the rebellious rise up against him. 8 Praise our God, all peoples, let the sound of his praise be heard;

9 he has preserved our lives and kept our feet from slipping. 10 For you, God, tested us; you refined us like silver. 11 You brought us into prison and laid burdens on our backs. 12 You let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and water, but you brought us to a place of abundance. 13 I will come to your temple with burnt offerings and fulfill my vows to you— 14 vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble. 15 I will sacrifice fat animals to you and an offering of rams; I will offer bulls and goats. 16 Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me. 17 I cried out to him with my mouth; his praise was on my tongue. 18 If I had cherished sin in my heart the Lord would not have listened; 19 but God has surely listened and has heard my prayer. 20 Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!

1 Corinthians 15:3-11

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[a]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas,[b] and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

9 For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. 11 Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

Matthew 10:17-20, 26-33

17 Jesus said, “Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

26 “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. 32 “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven

Augsburg Confession

Articles I-VI 1530AD Abridged

Our churches with common consent teach that the decree of the Council of Nicea concerning the Unity of the Divine Essence and concerning the Three Persons, is true and to be believed without any doubting; that is to say, there is one Divine Essence which is called and which is God: eternal, without body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible; and yet that there are Three Persons, of the same essence and power, who are co-eternal, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We teach that since the fall of Adam all who are propagated according to nature are born in sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Spirit.

We teach that the Word, that is, the Son of God, took on man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human, inseparably conjoined in one person, one Christ, true God and true Man, who was born of the Virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, died and was buried, that He might reconcile the Father unto us and be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but for all actual sins of men. He also descended into hell, and truly rose

again the third day; afterward He ascended into heaven, that He might sit at the right hand of the Father, and forever reign, and have dominion over all creatures and sanctify those who believe in Him by sending the Holy Spirit into their hearts to rule, comfort and enliven them, and to defend them against the devil and the power of sin. The same Christ shall openly come again to judge the living and the dead.

We teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God accounts as righteousness in His sight.

That we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, who works faith where and when it pleases God in those who hear the Gospel. That is, God, not because of our own merits, but for Christ's sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into favor for Christ's sake.

We teach that this faith is bound to bring forth good fruits, and that it is necessary to do good works commanded by God because it is God's will. Yet we should not rely on those works to merit justification before God.

The Augsburg Confession is the first official confession of faith of the Lutheran Reformers. It was read publicly before the Roman Emperor Charles V in 1530AD. There are 28 articles of faith in the document; you can read the entire, unabridged Augsburg Confession at <https://bookofconcord.org>