

*God Reimagined: The Biblical Foundation of Luther's Reformation*  
*Living the Message 2023-2024*  
March 2024 Study Guide

**March - Visible Words: Sacraments with Pastor Ruud**

[Click here to watch the video.](#) Or [vimeo.com/915721522](https://vimeo.com/915721522)

**Opening Prayer**

*Dear God, bless each one who comes to this study. Open our ears, hearts, and minds so that we may come to know you more deeply through studying about the life and theology of your servant, Martin. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**Focus Statement**

Luther believed God was “predictably unpredictable,” regularly showing up where we least expect God to be – in the anguish of the cross (last month) and in the ordinary, even mundane elements of water, bread, and wine of the sacraments – in order to overturn our preconceived notions of a God of power and surprise with the love, mercy, and grace of the God we see revealed in Jesus Christ.

**Questions**

1. Recall what you may have learned about the sacraments already, whether from parents, a Sunday School teacher, or confirmation. How does what the pastors presented resonate, or differ from, that?
2. What is one new idea or key takeaway from this month's presentation on the sacraments?
3. What resonated with you about Luther's decision to reduce the number of sacraments from seven to two?
4. What stands out to you about Luther's three criteria for a sacrament:
  - a. Something Jesus commanded us to do
  - b. Uses a physical element – something ordinary
  - c. Connected to God's promise
5. How is God revealed in Jesus and in the promises of the sacraments? What difference does it make when you think of the sacraments revealing not just God, but the God who is completely “for you”?

## Dive with Pastor Lose

Pastor Lose shared some thoughts on both Baptism and Holy Communion:

**Baptism** is about identity: we learn who we are – God's beloved child.

*Does this idea of identity resonate with you as you think about your baptism and baptisms of loved ones? Is it different than what you've thought before?*

Understanding what is happening during **Holy Communion** through three different doctrines:

1. "Transubstantiation" *One thing cannot be two things at once. It **is** Jesus' body and blood.* (Roman Catholic)
2. "Memorial Feast" **Represents** *Jesus' body and blood.* (Reformed tradition)
3. "Theology of the Real Presence" *Jesus is truly present in, with, and under the bread and wine **for us**. It is bread and wine **and** the body and blood of Jesus--**truly both**.* (Lutheran)

*What stands out to you about these various doctrines?*

*"Real Presence" tries to capture the mystery of what Luther believed was happening in the Lord's Supper, but it is still a mystery. How does that phrase help you understand the words said at communion, "**This is my body, given for you. This is my blood, shed for you.**"*

## Closing Prayer

*Dear God, remind us daily of your promise in Baptism to love us always, and make good use of the Lord's Supper to affirm your unconditional love and forgiveness. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Next Month

*Semper Simul: Saint & Sinner with Pastor Lose*

Tuesday, April 2, 6:30-7:30pm at the Mpls Campus, Room 207

If you have any questions, please contact Katie Stevenson, Coordinator of Adult Education:  
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