

CONTENTS

Introduction	5
1 Whose Am I? <i>1 Corinthians 1:1-30</i>	9
2 What Then Am I? <i>1 Corinthians 3:1-4:5</i>	18
3 It's Not All about Me? <i>1 Corinthians 6:12-20; 10:23-33</i>	27
4 What Am I Good For? <i>1 Corinthians 12:1-31</i>	36
5 What Will I Be Ultimately? <i>1 Corinthians 15:12-28, 35-58</i>	45
6 How Do I Achieve This Glory? <i>2 Corinthians 3:1-4:15</i>	55
7 What Can I Do Here and Now? <i>2 Corinthians 4:16-5:21</i>	65
8 What Is My Response to God's Grace? <i>2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 9:1-15</i>	73

Introduction

Book of Faith Adult Bible Studies

Welcome to the conversation! The Bible study resources you are using are created to support the bold vision of the Book of Faith initiative that calls “the whole church to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered, and sent by the Word.”

Simply put, this initiative and these resources invite you to “Open Scripture. Join the Conversation.”

We enter into this conversation based on the promise that exploring the Bible deeply with others opens us to God working in and through us. God’s Word is life changing, church changing, and world changing. Lutheran approaches to Scripture provide a fruitful foundation for connecting Bible, life, and faith.

A Session Overview

Each session is divided into the following four key sections. The amount of time spent in each section may vary based on choices you make. The core Learner Session Guide is designed for 50 minutes. A session can be expanded to as much as 90 minutes by using the Bonus Activities that appear in the Leader Session Guide.

• Gather (10-15 minutes)

Time to check in, make introductions, review homework assignments, share an opening prayer, and use the Focus Activity to introduce learners to the Session Focus.

• Open Scripture (10-15 minutes)

The session Scripture text is read using a variety of methods and activities. Learners are asked to respond to a few general questions. As leader, you may want to capture initial thoughts or questions on paper for later review.

• Join the Conversation (25-55 minutes)

Learners explore the session Scripture text through core questions and activities that cover each of the four perspectives (see diagram on p. 6). The core Learner Session Guide material may be expanded through use of the Bonus Activities provided in the Leader Session Guide. Each session ends with a brief Wrap-up and prayer.

• Extending the Conversation (5 minutes)

Lists homework assignments, including next week’s session Scripture text. The leader may choose one or more items to assign for all. Each session also includes additional Enrichment options and may include For Further Reading suggestions.

A Method to Guide the Conversation

Book of Faith Adult Bible Studies has three primary goals:

- To increase biblical fluency;
- To encourage and facilitate informed small group conversation based on God’s Word; and
- To renew and empower us to carry out God’s mission for the sake of the world.

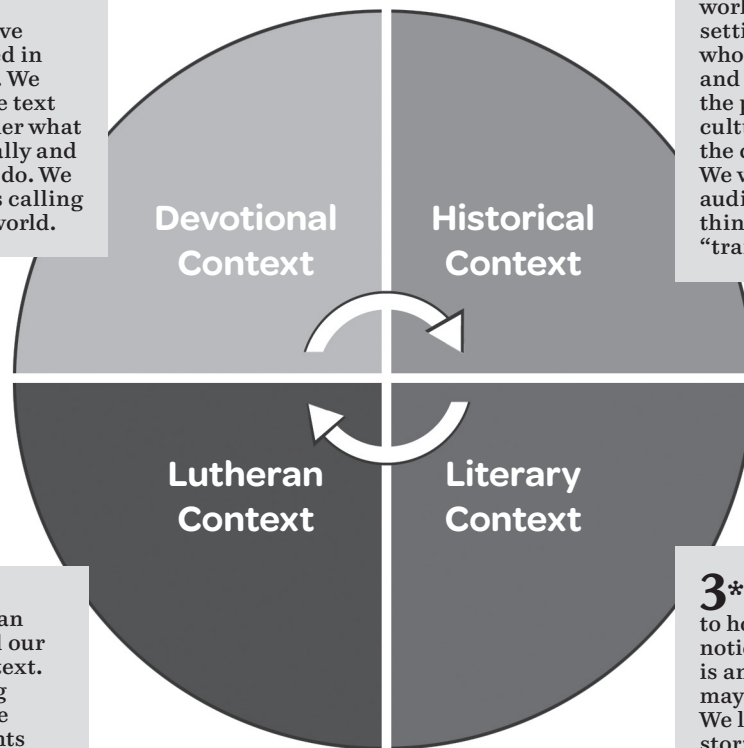
To accomplish these goals, each session will explore one or more primary Bible texts from four different angles and contexts—historical, literary, Lutheran, and devotional. These particular ways of exploring a text are not new, but used in combination they provide a full understanding of and experience with the text.

Complementing this approach is a commitment to engaging participants in active, learner-orientated Bible conversations. The resources call for prepared leaders to facilitate learner discovery, discussion, and activity. Active learning and frequent engagement with Scripture will lead to greater biblical fluency and encourage active faith.

1 We begin by reading the Bible text and reflecting on its meaning. We ask questions and identify items that are unclear. We bring our unique background and experience to the Bible, and the Bible meets us where we are.

5 We return to where we started, but now we have explored and experienced the Bible text from four different dimensions. We are ready to move into the “for” dimension. We have opened Scripture and joined in conversation for a purpose. We consider the meaning of the text for faithful living. We wonder what God is calling us (individually and as communities of faith) to do. We consider how God’s Word is calling us to do God’s work in the world.

2* We seek to understand the world of the Bible and locate the setting of the text. We explore who may have written the text and why. We seek to understand the particular social and cultural contexts that influenced the content and the message. We wonder who the original audience may have been. We think about how these things “translate” to our world today.



4 We consider the Lutheran principles that help ground our interpretation of the Bible text. We ask questions that bring those principles and unique Lutheran theological insights into conversation with the text. We discover how our Lutheran insights can ground and focus our understanding and shape our faithful response to the text.

3* We pay close attention to how the text is written. We notice what kind of literature it is and how this type of literature may function or may be used. We look at the characters, the story line, and the themes. We compare and contrast these with our own understanding and experience of life. In this interchange, we discover meaning.

*** Sessions may begin with either Historical Context or Literary Context.**

The diagram on p. 6 summarizes the general way this method is intended to work. A more detailed introduction to the method used in Book of Faith Adult Bible Studies is available in *Opening the Book of Faith* (Augsburg Fortress, 2008).

The Learner Session Guide

The Learner Session Guide content is built on the four sections (see p. 5). The content included in the main “Join the Conversation” section is considered to be the core material needed to explore the session Scripture text. Each session includes a Focus Image that is used as part of an activity or question somewhere within the core session. Other visuals (maps, charts, photographs, and illustrations) may be included to help enhance the learner’s experience with the text and its key concepts.

The Leader Session Guide

For easy reference, the Leader Session Guide contains all the content included in the Learner Session Guide and more. The elements that are unique to the Leader Session Guide are the following:

- **Before You Begin**—Helpful tips to use as you prepare to lead the session.
- **Session Overview**—Contains detailed description of key themes and content covered in each of the four contexts (Historical, Literary, Lutheran, Devotional). Core questions and activities in the Learner Session Guide are intended to emerge directly from this Session Overview.
- **Key Definitions**—Key terms or concepts that appear in the Session Overview may be illustrated or defined.
- **Facilitator’s Prayer**—To help the leader center on the session theme and leadership task.
- **Bonus Activities**—Optional activities included in each of the four sections of “Join the Conversation” used by the leader to expand the core session.
- **Tips**—A variety of helpful hints, instructions, or background content to aid leadership facilitation.
- **Looking Ahead**—Reminders to the leader about preparation for the upcoming session.

Leader and Learner

In Book of Faith Adult Bible Studies, the leader’s primary task is facilitating small group conversation and activity. These conversations are built around structured learning tasks. What is a structured learning task? It is an open question or activity that engages learners with new content and the resources they need to respond. Underlying this structured dialog approach are three primary assumptions about adult learners:

- Adult learners bring with them varied experiences and the capability to do active learning tasks;
- Adult learners learn best when they are invited to be actively involved in learning; and
- Adults are more accountable and engaged when active learning tasks are used.

Simply put, the goal is fluency in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture. How does one become fluent in a new language, proficient in building houses, or skilled at hitting a baseball? By practicing and doing in a hands-on way. Book of Faith Adult Bible Studies provide the kind of hands-on Bible exploration that will produce Bible-fluent learners equipped to do God’s work in the world.

Books of Faith Series

Book of Faith Adult Bible Studies include several series and courses. This 1, 2 Corinthians unit is part of the Books of Faith Series, which is designed to explore key themes and texts in the books of the Bible. Each book of the Bible reveals a unique story or message of faith. Many core themes and story lines and characters are shared by several books, but each book in its own right is a book of faith. Exploring these books of faith in depth opens us to the variety and richness of God’s written word for us.

1, 2 Corinthians Unit Overview

In 1 and 2 Corinthians we find correspondence from the apostle Paul to the early church in Corinth. Paul’s letters to this church provided guidance—for persons new to the faith as well as those growing in faith—about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. These letters continue to provide guidance

to us today, as we face many of the same “big questions” as the early Christians.

Session One (1 Corinthians 1:1-30) asks, “Whose Am I?” In baptism we are claimed by Christ for God.

Session Two (1 Corinthians 3:1-4:5) asks, “What Then Am I?” We are all servants, laborers working together in God’s field and on God’s building, the temple. Each one of us is also part of God’s field and temple that needs planting, watering, and building up.

Session Three (1 Corinthians 6:12-20; 10:23-33) asks, “It’s Not All about Me?” Freedom in Christ is not permission for selfish indulgence. Freedom in Christ liberates us for service to the other.

Session Four (1 Corinthians 12:1-31) asks, “What Am I Good For?” The Holy Spirit gives each person a gift that is indispensable to the body of Christ.

Session Five (1 Corinthians 15:12-28, 35-58) asks, “What Will I Be Ultimately?” In the resurrection we will be like Christ and with Christ in God who will be all in all.

Session Six (2 Corinthians 3:1-4:15) asks, “How Do I Achieve This Glory?” Our transformation into the image of Christ is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit.

Session Seven (2 Corinthians 4:16-5:21) asks, “What Can I Do Here and Now?” In Christ we are invited to participate in God’s mission of reconciliation.

Session Eight (2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 9:1-15) asks, “What Is My Response to God’s Grace?” God’s grace produces blessings. Our response is gratitude in the form of thanksgiving to God and generosity toward those in need.

SESSION ONE

1 Corinthians 1:1-30



Focus Statement

In baptism we are claimed by Christ for God.



Key Verse

[God] is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. 1 Corinthians 1:30



Focus Image



© Brendan Hunter / iStockphoto

Whose Am I?

Session Preparation

Before You Begin . . .

Take a moment to reflect on the key question of the session: “Whose Am I?” Who or what claims you, your time, and your energies every day? Do they wear you down? Remember you are baptized! The good news is that in baptism Christ has claimed you for God, who is the source of your vitality. Let God be the center of your life, and all those other claims will settle into their proper places.

Session Instructions

1. Read this Session Guide completely and highlight or underline any portions you wish to emphasize with the group. Note any Bonus Activities you wish to do.
2. If you plan to do any special activities, check to see what materials you’ll need, if any.
3. Have extra Bibles on hand in case a member of the group forgets to bring one.

Session Overview

Paul’s Corinthian correspondence provides guidance for persons new to the faith, as well as those growing in faith, about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Your group will discover that contemporary believers face many of the same “big questions” as the first Christians, even though the specific issues have changed. We begin this session where Paul began, exploring the questions, “Whose are you? To whom do you belong?”

LITERARY CONTEXT

Your group will begin by considering what kind of text you are studying. First Corinthians is a letter from Paul to the congregation in Corinth. This means that it is part of an ongoing long-distance relationship between Paul and members of this church. Reading it is like listening in on one side of a telephone conversation.

In the opening chapters Paul responds to an oral report received from “Chloe’s people” (1:11) about the formation of competitive cliques. It appears that some members are boasting about

? Wisdom:

A well-thought-out understanding of the meaning and purpose of life, with a plan of action for how to succeed in life. The most popular wisdom (philosophy) in Paul's day was Stoicism, which asserted that one could achieve peace of mind by accepting that everything happens for a reason and everything is just as it should be. Greek and Roman elites were particularly drawn to this form of wisdom because it preserved their positions in the social order. In such a social system, ordinary people could achieve success only by attaching themselves to the powerful and wealthy. Paul contrasts this worldly wisdom with the wisdom of God as demonstrated in the cross of Christ.

“belonging to” the person who baptized them, for example, Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, while others seem content to boast that they belong to Christ (1:10-16).

Paul has two responses to this situation. First, he describes the members of the church in his initial greeting and thanksgiving. For example, he says that they are the “church of God,” “sanctified in Christ Jesus,” “saints” (1:2). The “grace of God” has been given them “in Christ Jesus,” and they are “enriched in him” so that they lack no spiritual gift (1:7). Yet not many of them are wise, powerful, or of noble birth by human standards (1:26). Second, Paul contrasts worldly **wisdom**, that is, cultural understandings of how to live successfully, with the message about the cross of Christ.

Group members will be asked to reflect on what Paul is saying about who they really belong to, and what that might mean in their lives.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Participants will take a second look at this text through the historical lens of Greco-Roman cultural values. We can better understand the motives of the Corinthian church members by recognizing that they were raised in a society that viewed honor—the public recognition of status and prestige—as a primary value. Nobly born men, who were inevitably the best educated and politically powerful members of society, lorded over men of lower status, women, children, and slaves. These lower-status persons found a measure of prestige and pride by being publicly attached to such men as their kin, friends, employees, and dependents of various sorts.

Some Corinthian Christians were ranking the persons who had baptized them according to these cultural values. Apollos’s cosmopolitan background and eloquence appealed to some (Acts 18:24—19:1), while others wanted to lift up Cephas (whose Greek name was Peter), the leader of the apostles and pillar of the Jerusalem church (Galatians 1:18—2:14). Paul refuses to play their game, insisting that God is not interested in Greco-Roman social prestige and honor.

As the group examines the behavior of the first-century Corinthian Christians, you will be asked to apply Paul’s lesson to your own lives by reflecting on the ways that our society ascribes status, honor, and prestige. Do we unwittingly bring those habits

and values to church too? The group will explore how Paul would respond to some of the ways that we rank and classify each other.

LUTHERAN CONTEXT

Your group will reflect on two important insights developed by Martin Luther from his studies of Scripture. Paul's comments in 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 were the starting point for Martin Luther's meditations on the **theology of the cross**. This might be summed up as the conviction that God is revealed most fully where and when we are least likely to expect to find the divine presence. The death of Jesus on the cross, the ultimate symbol of shame and humiliation in the ancient world, reveals something extraordinary and profound about God's love for humanity. The theology of the cross also points us to those for whom God has a special concern—the foolish, the weak, the low and despised (1 Corinthians 1:27-28)—and has important implications for how we are to treat others. Learners will be asked to explore the implications of the theology of the cross in their own lives.

Luther insisted that **baptism** is God's action even though it is carried out by human hands. Luther's theology of the cross will provide the lens for examining this insight. Is it reasonable to expect God to be present in human activities and in ordinary earthly things like water? Could infant baptism be one of those foolish things that God chooses to do in order to confound the worldly and the wise? Participants will be encouraged to reflect on the meaning of their own baptisms.

DEVOTIONAL CONTEXT

Whose are you? To whom do you belong? In baptism, each one of us is named: “_____, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever” (ELW, p. 231). You belong to God. You are God's. In your devotional reflections on this session, you will lead your learners in a discussion of what it means to belong to God. How does the fact that we have been claimed by God in baptism affect all the other claims that are put on us in our lives? What claims get in the way of our relationship with God? How might we ask God to help us put those claims in their proper place and perspective?

Encourage each participant to spend some time reflecting on the significance of baptism. How might your life be different if you had not been claimed by Christ for God? Conclude with the rite of Thanksgiving for Baptism (ELW, p. 97).

? *Theology of the cross:*

The idea that God appears in the very last place we would reasonably think to look—in the manger and on the cross. We can discern this theology throughout the Bible (for example, God's choice of Moses, an old man with a speech impediment, to confront Pharaoh; Christ's choice of Paul, a man who had persecuted the early church, to take the gospel to the Gentiles). This theology is also evident in God's special concern for the weak, the foolish, the lowly, and the most vulnerable people on this planet.

? *Baptism:*

The ritual action of dipping water over a person symbolizing new birth “in Christ.” Some of the Corinthian Christians thought that this ritual created a relationship between the baptizer and the one being baptized, similar to the relationship between a parent and child. Paul insists that God is the source of life in Christ; therefore the baptized should boast in the Lord and not their baptizer (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).

SESSION ONE

Tip:

Arrange chairs in a circle around a small table on which you place a bowl and a pitcher of water (you will use these in the thanksgiving for baptism at the end of the session). Have copies of ELW available for the learners. You may wish to encourage learners to wear name tags if anyone is new to your group.

Tip:

Invite participants to pray the opening prayer together out loud as a group.

Tip:

Provide paper and pens or pencils for the learners. As time allows, invite participants (if they are comfortable doing so) to share responses in groups of two or three.

Facilitator's Prayer

Heavenly Father, source of my life in Christ, thank you for claiming me in my baptism. Thank you for the gift of forgiveness and salvation. Thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit. Open my heart and mind to the Spirit's calling and enlightening through your Word in Scripture. Open my heart to those who gather with me to study your Word. Open my ears to hear them and my mouth to share your gospel. Amen.

Gather (10-15 minutes)

Check-in

Take time to greet each person and invite learners to introduce themselves to one another.

Pray

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the Holy Scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, which you have given us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (ELW, p. 72)

Focus Activity

In one minute or less, write down the names of persons or groups that claim you as theirs.

Open Scripture (10-15 minutes)

Ask three volunteers to read in turn 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; 1:10-17; and 1:18-31. As the Bible passage is read, have participants underline words or phrases that catch their attention.

OR

Ask listeners to gravitate toward a single word from the reading that they will later share with the group, along with the reasons that word remained in their hearts and minds.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-30.

- What words or phrases caught your attention as you listened to this text?

- What people or situations were called to mind?
- What concerns were raised?



Join the Conversation (25-55 minutes)

Literary Context

1. The first three verses of the session Scripture text make it clear that this is a letter written by the apostle Paul to the congregation he founded in Corinth. This was one of several congregations he established in cities scattered around the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. This letter is part of an ongoing long-distance relationship between Paul and members of the Corinthian church involving multiple letters, some of which have not survived (see 1 Corinthians 5:9; 7:1).

- Reading this letter is like listening in on one side of a telephone conversation. Based on what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1, how would you describe his relationship with the church in Corinth? What seems to be happening in the congregation?
- Reread 1 Corinthians 1:2-9 and 1:26-31 and circle the words that Paul uses to describe the Corinthian congregation and its members. What are the characteristics of the church and its members? What or who is the source of these attributes? To whom do the people belong?

2. Wisdom is an important theme in the first two chapters of 1 Corinthians, where Paul contrasts God's wisdom with worldly wisdom.

- Look again at 1 Corinthians 1:17-31. What is wisdom? What is at the heart and center of God's wisdom, according to Paul?
- List some examples of worldly wisdom that are current in our culture today. How would they measure up against God's wisdom, as defined by Paul?

Historical Context

1. First Corinthians was written about five years after Paul planted the church in Corinth. This means that the first readers were relatively new Christians. They were still learning how to integrate faith with their previously held values, attitudes, and behavior. As first-century Greeks and Romans, they had



Tip:

Participants may find it helpful to have access to a Bible dictionary and/or a theological dictionary.



Tip:

Expand your church library! Throughout this study, a variety of books, videos, and additional resources are recommended. Consider purchasing a copy of items that may be of particular interest to participants and then donating them to the church library when the study is finished.

SESSION ONE



Bonus Activity:

It will be helpful to better understand Paul's background, call, and work in Corinth. Display a map of Paul's missionary journeys. Form three groups and assign each group a text: Galatians 1:11–2:14, Philippians 3:4-6, Acts 18:1-21. Have the smaller groups share their findings with the large group.



Tip:

The *Frontline* documentary *From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians* includes several minutes of footage about Paul and Corinth. It is available at www.pbs.org and may be viewed online with a laptop and projector or large-screen monitor. Alternatively, the entire documentary may be purchased online at www.shoppbs.org.



Tip:

As you prepare for this session, review the differences between Luther's theology of the cross and a theology of glory. A theology of glory conveys the message that being a Christian will make your life better, happier, wealthier, healthier, and/or more successful. A theology of the cross emphasizes God's love and grace in Christ, who claims us as his own even when we feel troubled, poor, and unattractive. For deeper insights, check out the resources listed under "For Further Reading."



Bonus Activity:

Consider how a "theology of the cross" may be present in the following movies: *Oh God!* (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1977), *Babette's Feast* (Panorama Films A/S, 1988), *The Matrix* (Warner Home Video, 1999), and *Bruce Almighty* (Universal Pictures, 2003). How do these movies challenge popular ideas about God?



Bonus Activity:

Sing or read the words of the hymn "We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus" (ELW 451), which is based on Romans 6:1-4. Ask participants to reflect on how the cross shapes the lives of the baptized. What does it mean to walk in newness of life?

been raised in a culture that placed a very high value on public honor and prestige deriving from social status. If one was not nobly born, well educated, or influential in society, one could acquire public prestige by associating with those who were. Working for, providing services to, and being seen in the company of high-status persons were ways that one could improve one's public image.

- Reread 1 Corinthians 1:10-16. How are these values evident in the behavior of the Corinthian Christians?
- To learn more about Apollos and Cephas, read Acts 18:24–19:1 and Galatians 1:18–2:14. What attributes of these men might have given them higher status than Paul, in the eyes of some Corinthian Christians?

2. Look at 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 again. According to Paul, what does God think of the Corinthian concern for honor and status among church members?

- What characteristics give church members status and importance today? How would Paul respond to these persons?

Lutheran Context

1. Martin Luther's teaching about the "theology of the cross" states that God comes to us in the very last place a reasonable person would think to look: as a baby sleeping in a manger, as a rough carpenter/healer/teacher from a backwoods region, and as a condemned rebel dying on a Roman cross.

- Reread 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. How does this passage support the theology of the cross?
- According to the theology of the cross, where are we most likely to find God present and actively at work in our communities? What implications does the theology of the cross have for how we ought to treat one another?

2. In the *Large Catechism*, Luther writes, "To be baptized in God's name is to be baptized not by human beings but by God himself. Although it is performed by human hands, it is nevertheless truly God's own act" (*The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, [Fortress Press, 2000]. 457.10).

- How does Luther's theology of the cross help us understand how God is active in human actions involving ordinary things like water?

- Consider Luther’s claim that baptism is God’s act. How does this change the way you think about baptism and what it means in your life?

Devotional Context

1. Look back at the Focus Image for the session. How does that image relate to Paul’s message about baptism in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17? How might it resonate with Luther’s understanding of baptism? How does it reflect your own experience of baptism?
2. Review the order for Holy Baptism in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (pp. 225–31). Reflect on how the words of the service might help us understand whose we are and to whom we belong.
 - Draw or describe how you would picture doubt, then do the same for faith. What similarities and differences do you see between doubt and faith?
 - Write or say a prayer asking and expecting God to give you the gift of wisdom.

Wrap-up

1. If there are any questions to explore further, write them on chart paper or a whiteboard. Ask for volunteers to do further research to share with the group at the next session.
2. As time allows, circle back to the opening question. Ask for the group to share new insights gained from your time together.
3. Ask learners to share any special prayer requests that they might have for the upcoming week. Encourage participants to pray for each other.

Pray

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. Amen. (ELW, p. 237)



Tip:

Be aware of and sensitive to any participants who may not be baptized. Let everyone know that baptism may take place at any point in one’s life, from infancy to old age and every age in between. Some participants may not feel comfortable sharing their personal responses; assure everyone that responding to these questions is completely voluntary.



Bonus Activity:

Gather around the baptismal font and give thanks for the gift of baptism, using the rite of Thanksgiving for Baptism (ELW, p. 97). At the end of the rite, each participant may dip his or her fingers into the water and make the sign of the cross upon his or her own forehead in remembrance of baptism.



Tip:

Some learners may feel uncomfortable sharing personal responses. Make it clear that sharing is always voluntary.



Tip:

You may wish to sing the hymn “Baptized in Water” (ELW 456) or another appropriate baptismal hymn.

SESSION ONE



Tip:

Encourage participants to keep a daily journal for recording their reflections on Homework and Enrichment activities. You may even wish to provide a low-cost journal for each learner.

Extending the Conversation (5 minutes)

Homework

1. Read the next session's Bible text: 1 Corinthians 3:1—4:5.
2. Begin each day by remembering your baptism and reminding yourself that you have been claimed by Christ for God, who is the source of your life and your salvation.
3. Become a “theologian of the cross” who intentionally seeks to be open to God's presence in the ordinary, hidden, and unexpected. Spend some time each day looking and listening for Christ in places where you would not normally expect to see, hear, or experience the divine. You might keep a daily journal in which you record your sightings of this God who is hidden in the ordinary.

Enrichment

1. If you want to read all of 1 and 2 Corinthians during this unit, read the following sections this week.
 - Day 1: 1 Corinthians 1:1-17
 - Day 2: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
 - Day 3: 1 Corinthians 1:26—2:5
 - Day 4: 1 Corinthians 2:6-16
 - Day 5: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
 - Day 6: 1 Corinthians 3:10-15
 - Day 7: 1 Corinthians 3:16—4:5
2. Learn more about wisdom in the Bible and in the ancient world. You might read Job 28, Proverbs 1-2 and 8-9, or Ecclesiastes in the Bible; or search the Internet for information about ancient philosophers (literally “lovers of wisdom”) such as Plato, Aristotle, the Epicureans, and the Stoics.
3. Watch the movie *Romero* (Paulist Productions, 1989) or *Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace* (Vision Video, 2000). How is God's wisdom evident in these stories?

For Further Reading

Charles B. Cousar, *A Theology of the Cross: The Death of Jesus in the Pauline Letters* (Augsburg Fortress, 1990).

Douglas John Hall, “The Theology of the Cross: A Usable Past.” Available at www.elca.org.

From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians. DVD and book available at www.shoppbs.org.

Robert Kolb, “Luther on the Theology of the Cross” *Lutheran Quarterly* 14 (2002): 443–466. Available at www.lutheranquarterly.com (previous issues, Winter 2002).

Martin E. Marty, *Baptism: A User’s Guide* (Augsburg Fortress, 2008).

Kirsi Stjerna, *No Greater Jewel: Thinking about Baptism with Luther* (Augsburg Fortress, 2009).

Looking Ahead

1. Read the next session’s Bible text: 1 Corinthians 3:1–4:5.
2. Read through the Leader Guide for the next session and mark portions you wish to highlight for the group.
3. Make a checklist of any materials you’ll need to do the Bonus Activities.
4. Pray for members of your group during the week.