

An Introduction

How are you feeling? What's it like taking a firm step forward in faith knowledge and application? Does it feel comfortable -- like your favorite shoes? Or perhaps you've been away for awhile, and you're still not convinced that this is what you need to know or learn? Or maybe this is like a blind date -- full of anxiety and questions?

In any event, I want to welcome you to this Connecting Study - A Life in Christ! It is my hope that you will come to see the depth of God's love for you as an individual -- and for His call for you and us together in community into His world. This will happen by connecting together in small groups and this through learning about the basic teachings of the Christian faith as revealed to us in the Bible and through God's people.

Your Questions

You certainly have questions. Maybe -- "What are Lutherans like? What does it mean to be a Christian? Is there a heaven or hell? What are they like? Does God really have a plan for me? What about baptism? What's going on in Holy Communion? What's happening in Worship?"

Some things may trouble you... "I don't think I like the idea of being born again -- I know too many weirdoes and radicals who claim that. How can you think the Bible is true? What's it mean to have a relationship with God? Who really is Jesus? Why do there seem to be so many hypocrites in the church? Does God really care about me?"

I hope you will ask your questions. Unspoken questions never go unanswered -- they simply get answered from typically unreliable sources. Asking questions helps you gather the data you need to formulate a cogent, intelligent response. The content of this "Life in Christ" resource seeks to anticipate many of your questions -- but will not cover them all. Study the content 1st. Then come together for insight, application, and spiritual growth! Connect with others! You can email me pastored@emmanuelclovis.org. You need to know that our lives this side of heaven will be a constant curve of growth in knowledge and a call for obedience to all that God puts before us. I know you are in for an amazing journey. Welcome!

Our Questions

Also important to us are your needs and hopes. So we ask questions of you: what are your most pressing spiritual, emotional, and physical needs? How can we best serve together? We want to know. Not every need can be answered immediately -- we're always "in process" in our relationship with God -- but at least knowing your needs helps us to serve you more effectively.

But a most important question which we pose to you is: who and what are you in the eyes of God? Some answer this in terms of membership or what is expected of them at church. The church, however, is most concerned about your relationship with God. All other relationships arise out of that primary relationship.

A Life with God

Just as human relationships can flourish or wither, so can ours with our Lord. Perhaps you've experienced this. Clear communication, honesty, hard work, personal discovery, humor... all these and more help us in all our relationships. So too with God. A Life in Christ is just that -- Life. How we live, interact, learn, and grow. Our goal is to begin that journey with the One who is life: Jesus Christ.