

# **A DICTIONARY OF TERMS**

**For**

**Confirmation Class**

**Abba**

The word for "father" in the language of the Jews.

**Abortion**

The killing of an unborn child.

**Abound**

To be plentiful; to exist in large numbers or amounts.

**Absolution**

The announcement after a confession of sins that God has forgiven our sins because Jesus died for them. Absolution may be spoken publicly in a worship service or privately to an individual.

**Abstain**

To hold oneself back from doing something; to do without.

**Acknowledge**

To recognize the authority or claims of someone; to approve of someone or something; to accept.

**Active Obedience of Christ**

Christ's fulfillment of the law by keeping all the commandments perfectly for all sinners.

**Address**

The first words of the Lord's Prayer, indicating to whom the prayer is spoken.

**Administrator**

Someone who directs an organization or a department of an organization.

**Admonish**

To warn against or point out a sin.

**Adultery**

Sexual intercourse with someone other than the person to whom one is married; impure words or thoughts in respect to sexual matters.

**Advent**

"Coming"; 1. the season of the church year in which we celebrate the coming of Christ into the world as a man; 2. the coming of Christ in Word and Sacrament; 3. the coming of Christ on Judgment Day.

**Alien**

Stranger; foreigner.

**Alienate**

To estrange; to make a stranger of.

**Amen**

"Yes, it shall be so!" A word used at the end of a prayer to express confidence that the prayer will be heard and answered.

**Angel**

"Messenger"; a bodiless spirit created by God to serve Him.

**Anguish**

Agony; intense pain or distress.

**Anoint**

To pour oil on to show that someone or something is being set aside for the service of God.

**Apology**

"Defense." The Apology is a booklet written by Melanchthon to defend the Augsburg Confession.

**Apostle**

One of the special men personally chosen and sent out by Christ to preach the gospel.

**Arrogance**

Haughtiness; excessive pride.

**Ascension**

Christ's visible return to heaven 40 days after His resurrection.

**Atheist**

An atheist is a person who denies the existence of God, not because he/she can prove that there is no God, but because they are corrupt, wicked, and do not want to submit to God's rule. Everyone believes in the existence of some Higher power or Supreme Being. This truth is forced upon every rational being by the creation of the world.

**Atone**

To make a payment to remove the guilt of sin so that God will no longer be angry.

**Atonement**

A payment offered to remove the guilt of sin so that God and sinful man are reconciled (set at one). See Vicarious Atonement.

**Attribute**

A quality that is characteristic of a person.

**Authority**

The power and right to do something.

**Baal**

The name of a false god of the Canaanites.

**Babble**

To speak nonsense.

**Baptism**

The Sacrament in which water is used in the name of the Triune God to bring us into the family of God.

**Baptize**

To use water by immersing, washing, pouring, or sprinkling.

**Barren**

Childless; unable to have children.

**Beatitudes**

The blessings spoken by Jesus in Matthew 5:3-12.

**Believe**

1. To accept as true; 2. to trust or rely upon.

**Betray**

1. To hand over (a friend to an enemy);  
2. to reveal (a secret).

**Bible**

God's written Word; a collection of 66 books inspired by God.

**Binding Key**

The power and right given by Christ to his church to refuse to forgive the sins of those who are impenitent.

**Birthright**

The right of the firstborn son to receive a special blessing or inheritance.

**Bishop**

Overseer; a church leader who watches over a congregation.

**Blaspheme**

To speak of God in an evil or disrespectful way.

**Blessing**

1. Any good thing given by God; 2. the words which promise good things to be given by God.

**Born Again**

Converted; having begun the new life in Christ (see rebirth).

**Captivate**

To hold the attention of; to fascinate.

**Catechism**

A book of instruction in the form of questions and answers.

**Celestial**

Heavenly.

**Centurion**

A Roman army officer in command of about 100 soldiers.

**Ceremonial Law**

That portion of the law of Moses which instructed the Israelites how to worship God.

**Chaplain**

A minister who takes care of the spiritual needs of people in a special setting (e.g. the armed forces, health institutions etc.).

**Christ**

"Anointed"; the name of Jesus which refers to his office. In Hebrew the word for "the Anointed" is "Messiah."

**Christian**

1. Belonging to Christ (adjective); 2. one who trusts in Christ alone for salvation (noun).

**Church**

1. All those everywhere who believe in Jesus as the Savior (same as holy Christian church, invisible church, communion of saints); 2. a group of people who come together to hear the gospel (visible church, congregation, church body).

**Church Fellowship**

The sharing of worship and church work by which people express their unity of faith (see Fellowship).

**Circumcision**

The cutting off of the foreskin of the male sex organ, which made an Old Testament man a member of God's family and obligated him to keep the Old Testament Law.

**Civil Law**

That portion of the law of Moses which governed the Israelites as a nation. Since the time of Christ, God no longer requires that his church keep this part of the law.

**Code**

A collection of laws.

**Commend**

1. To praise for a job well done; 2. to entrust or hand over to someone for safekeeping.

**Commune**

To receive the Lord's Supper (see Communion).

**Communion**

A coming together or having something in common. The church is called the communion of saints because all believers are united by the faith in Christ they have in common. The Lord's Supper is called Holy Communion because in it Christians are joined to the Lord and thus also to each other (see [Church](#); [Holy Communion](#)).

**Compassion**

Sorrow for another's distress and a desire to help.

**Conceive**

1. To think or imagine; 2. to become pregnant.

**Concord**

Agreement; harmony.

**Condemn**

To judge someone guilty of sin and deserving of punishment.

**Confess**

1. To admit that one has sinned; 2. to tell what one believes.

**Confession**

1. An Admission of sin; 2. a statement of faith.

**Confirmation**

A ceremony following instruction in which Christians confess their faith and are acknowledged as sufficiently instructed to receive Holy Communion.

**Conform**

To do something in a way which has been determined by someone else.

**Conformity**

Becoming or acting like someone else in his way of thinking or doing.

**Congregation**

A group of Christians who unite for the public worship of God.

**Conscience**

The voice God places in us which bears witness to his law.

**Consecrate**

To set aside for special use in the church.

**Consolation**

Comfort.

**Conspire**

To plot together.

**Contempt**

Scorn; the feeling that someone or something is odd or worthless.

**Contrition**

Fear and sorrow caused by a knowledge of one's sin.

**Conversion**

Turning from unbelief to faith in Christ.

**Convert**

To turn from unbelief to faith in Christ.

**Corrupt**

1. To spoil or make bad (verb); 2. morally bad or rotten (adjective).

**Covenant**

A solemn agreement, especially one in which God promises to bless and save.

**Covet**

To desire something which God does not want us to have.

**Crave**

To desire intensely.

**Create**

To bring into existence; to make.

**Creation**

1. The act of making; 2. that which is made.

**Credit**

To list on the plus side of an account. Faith in Christ is credited to the sinner as righteousness, thus cancelling the debt of sin.

**Creed**

A statement of what a person or group of people believes and teaches.

**Crucify**

To put to death by hanging on a cross.

**Curse**

To use God's name to wish evil on someone or something.

**Damnation**

Everlasting punishment in hell.

**Deacon**

"Servant"; someone chosen by a congregation to serve in a church, especially by helping the needy.

**Debauchery**

Giving in to sinful sexual desires to an extreme degree.

**Deceive**

To lead into sin or error by telling lies.

**Decree**

A command made by a ruler.

**Defile**

To make unclean or impure.

**Deluge**

To flood.

**Delusion**

A false belief or opinion.

**Demon**

A fallen angel. The demons are led by Satan in war against God and his believers. The demons are also called devils.

**Desertion**

The act of abandoning or leaving when one should stay; especially, the act of abandoning one's marriage partner.

**Despair**

The sin of losing all hope in God's goodness.

**Detest**

To hate; to dislike intensely.

**Devil**

1. The leader of the fallen angels and chief enemy of God. The devil's name is Satan. 2. Any fallen angel. The devils are also called demons.

**Discern**

To recognize.

**Disciple**

One who follows in order to learn; frequently used of the twelve who followed Jesus most closely during His ministry. It can be used of any Christian.



**Discipline**

A rebuke and/or punishment given in love to a wrongdoer to turn that person away from any further sinning.

**Discord**

Disagreement; lack of harmony.

**Dismay**

Fear of discouragement in the face of trouble.

**Disrepute**

Dishonor; bad reputation.

**Dissension**

Quarreling.

**Distort**

To twist so as to misrepresent the truth.

**Divination**

The attempt to learn hidden things or predict the future by using supernatural power.

**Divine**

Of God; having to do with God.

**Divine Call**

The call a person receives from a congregation or group of congregations to serve in the public ministry.

**Divisive**

Causing division or disagreement.

**Divorce**

To end a marriage officially in a court of law.

**Doctrine**

A teaching.

**Dominion**

Rule; the power of a lord to govern.

**Doxology**

An expression of praise to God.

**Easter**

The festival of the church year on which we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. As a matter of church tradition, Easter is the first Sunday on or after the first full moon on or after March 21.

**Elder**

A man who is given certain spiritual responsibilities in the congregation.

**Element**

A part of a whole. The water in Holy Baptism and the bread and wine in Holy Communion are called "earthly elements" because they are only a part of what is received in the sacrament.

**Enmity**

Hatred; hostility.

**Entice**

To lure or attract to commit sin.

**Epiphany**

1. Christ's appearance to people as the Son of God and Savior of the world; 2. the festival of the church year (January 6) on which we celebrate Christ's appearance as God's Son.

**Epistle**

A letter.

**Esteem**

To think highly of; to respect.

**Eternal**

1. Having no beginning or end (God is eternal); 2. everlasting, having no end (eternal life, eternal death).

**Eternal Death**

Eternal separation from the blessings of God in the torment of hell.

**Eternal Life**

Enjoyment of God's blessings eternally in heaven.

**Eucharist**

"Thanksgiving," same as Holy Communion.

**Eunuch**

A man who is physically unable to father children.

**Evangelist**

1. Someone who shares the gospel with those who have not heard it; 2. writer of one of the four Gospels.

**Evil**

1. Moral badness; wickedness; 2. any bad thing which is part of our life on earth as the result of Adam's fall into sin.

**Exaltation of Christ**

That part of Christ's ministry beginning with his victorious descent into hell when he again made full use of his heavenly power and glory.

**Exasperate**

To make angry.

**Excommunication**

The act of excluding from the congregation those who are plainly impenitent that they may repent.

**Extol**

To praise highly.

**Faction**

Strife; quarreling; dissension.

**Faith**

Trust; saving faith is trust in the true God and in the salvation which Jesus won for us.

**False Prophet**

Someone who claims to teach God's Word but whose teachings include doctrines that are not true.

**False Visible Churches**

Groups that teach or permit false doctrines but are still to be recognized as churches because Jesus is taught as the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

**Fasting**

The practice of voluntarily going without food for a certain period of time.

**Fear of God**

1. Being afraid of God's anger. 2. awe and respect for God and his commands as a result of faith in him.

**Fellowship**

1. Being united with others in the same faith; 2. an act of expressing this unity (e.g. by worshiping or praying together, doing mission work together, etc.).

**Firstfruits**

That part of a crop which is harvested first.

**Fleeting**

Passing swiftly; not lasting.

**Flesh**

1. The muscular tissue of a body; 2. human nature; that which makes up a human person; 3. same as Sinful Nature.

**Folly**

Foolishness, especially the foolishness of disobeying God's law.

**Forgiveness of Sins**

"Forgiven-ness"; the state of being forgiven or pardoned for our sins. God does not overlook our sins as though they do not matter, but he punished Jesus for them instead of us and declares us innocent. We receive this forgiveness through faith in Jesus.

**Formula**

A written statement of doctrine.

**Fraud**

Getting the possessions of others by dishonest dealing.

**Fulfill**

To bring to completion. Jesus fulfilled the law by obeying it perfectly. God fulfills his promises and prophecies by carrying them out.

**Futile**

Useless; without benefit or effect.

**Gangrene**

Decay of tissues which starts in one part of the body and spreads if left untreated.

**Garland**

Wreath.

**Garment**

An article of clothing.

**Gentile**

A non-Jew.

**Glory**

1. Splendor of a very high degree. "The glory of the Lord shone around them" (Luke 2:9); 2. adoring praise. "Abraham gave glory to God" (Romans 4:20).

**Godless**

Without faith in the true God.

**Good Friday**

The Friday before Easter on which we observe the death and burial of Jesus.

**Good Works**

Everything a believer does according to God's Word out of love and thanks for all of God's goodness.

**Gospel**

1. The good news that God in love sent Jesus to take away the sins of all people; 2. one of the first four books of the New Testament.

**Grace**

God's undeserved love which provides free forgiveness of sins, life and salvation for all people.

**Gradual**

"A step"; in the order of service, a response of praise which leads from the Epistle to the Gospel lessons.

**Guilt**

The state of someone who has done wrong and deserves to be punished.

**Hallow**

To regard as Holy.

**Heaven**

1. The sky; 2. The place of eternal life and perfect joy in the presence of God.

**Hell**

The place of eternal death and punishment where the devil and his angels and all who die as unbelievers are tormented.

**Heresy**

False doctrine.

**Heritage**

Something which is passed on from one generation to the next.

**High Priest**

The most important of the priests. According to the Ceremonial Law, only the high priest can enter the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement and atone for the sins of the nation. Jesus is our high priest because he atoned for the sins of the world by offering himself as a sacrifice.

**Holy**

1. Pure; sinless. "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy" (Leviticus 29:2); 2. set apart for the holy God. "The seventh day shall be your holy day" Exodus 35:2).

**Holy Communion**

The sacrament in which the body and blood of Jesus are given to us together with bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins.

**Holy Spirit**

One of the three persons of the Triune God; also called Holy Ghost, Comforter, Counselor, Paraclete.

**Homosexuality**

The sin of having sexual relations with a person of one's own sex or having a desire for such relations.

**Hope**

A confident longing for the things God has promised.

**Hover**

To remain in one place in the air.

**Humiliation of Christ**

The first part of Christ's ministry, when he usually chose not to make full use of his divine power and glory so that he might live and die in a lowly way.

**Hypocrite**

One who pretends to be a believer but is not.

**Idol**

A false god, especially one that is represented by a statue or image.

**Idolatry**

The worship of a false god (see [Open Idolatry](#); [Secret Idolatry](#)).

**Image of God**

The holiness and knowledge of God's will in which Adam and Eve were created. The image of God was lost through the fall into sin, but it is restored through the work of the Holy Spirit (see the [New Man](#)).

**Immanuel**

"God with us"; one of the names of Jesus (Matthew 1:23).

**Immerse**

To put completely into water.

**Immorality**

That which is contrary to the Moral Law.

**Impenitent**

Not sorry for one's sins; not penitent.

**Incarnation**

The taking on of a human nature by the Son of God. In this way God became a man. It refers to the conception and birth of Jesus.

**Inclination**

A leaning or tendency; a liking or preference.

**Indulge**

To give in to desire.

**Iniquity**

"Failing to measure up perfectly" to God's law by breaking one of his commandments.

**Inner Being**

Same as New Man.

**Inspiration**

The miracle by which God "breathed into" the prophets and the apostles what he wanted them to write in the Bible. It is called verbal inspiration to show that God guided them to use the exact words he wanted them to write.

**Institute**

To establish; to found.

**Intercede**

To beg or plead in behalf of others.

**Intercourse**

The bodily joining of a man and woman in sexual relations.

**Introit**

In the order of service, an opening psalm or sentences.

**Invisible Church**

The group consisting of all those everywhere who believe in Jesus as their Savior. They cannot be identified with absolute certainty because only God can see faith in the heart.

**Justification**

God's declaration that people are not guilty because Jesus has paid for their sins (see also Objective Justification; Subjective Justification).

**Justify**

To declare not guilty. This word pictures a judge in a courtroom who tells a criminal that there is no longer any charge against him.

**Keys**

The power and right given by Christ to the Church either to forgive sins or to refuse to forgive sins (see also Binding Key; Loosing Key).

**Kingdom of God**

Christ's rule in the hearts of his believers through his Word.

**Lavish**

To give or bestow generously.

**Law**

1. The commands which tell people what God wants them to do and not to do. 2. Sometimes in the Bible the word "law" refers to God's Word in general, even those parts that are not commands.

**Lent**

The season of the church year between Epiphany season and Easter during which we give special attention to Christ's suffering and death; also called Passion season.

**Lewdnness**

Indecency, lustfulness.

**Loathsome**

disgusting.

**Loosing Key**

The power and right given by Christ to the church to forgive the sins of those who are penitent.

**Lord**

When this word appears in all capital letters, it stands of Yahweh, the name of God which emphasizes his grace and faithfulness to his promises.

**Lord's Supper**

Same as Holy Communion.

**Lord's Table**

Same as Holy Communion.

**Malice**

The desire to harm someone.

**Marital**

Having to do with marriage.

**Maundy Thursday**

"Thursday of the Commandment" (John 13:34); The day on which we observe the institution of the Lord's Supper.

**Means of Grace**

The gospel in Word and sacraments, by which god offers and gives us the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.

**Mediator**

One who serves as a go-between or negotiator between two parties.

**Meditate**

To think deeply.



**Medium**

Person through whom one tries to communicate with the dead or with evil spirits.

**Mercy**

God's kindness in not punishing sinners as they deserve but providing a Savior instead.

**Mercy Death**

A killing performed to end pain where there is no hope of recovery.

**Minister**

"Servant"; especially someone called to serve people with the means of grace.

**Ministry**

The office or work of a minister.

**Miracle**

A wonder or very unusual happening brought about by God beyond the natural order of things.

**Mission Work**

The sharing of the gospel with those who have not heard it.

**Missionary**

A person who is sent to preach the gospel, especially to those who have not heard it.

**Moral Law**

God's will for all people of all time; summarized in the Ten Commandments and the command to love.

**Most Holy Place**

Room in the tabernacle or temple where the ark of the covenant was kept and where the high priest sprinkled blood once a year to make payment for the sins of Israel.

**Myth**

A story or teaching that seems to be historically true but is actually made up by some person.

**Name of God**

God's titles and everything else he has revealed about himself in his Word.

**Natural Law**

The law of God as it is written on the hearts of all people.

**New Man**

The new heart and mind which God creates in us by faith in Jesus. The New Man delights in doing God's will and fights against the sinful nature. Also called New Self; Inner Being; Spirit.

**Oath**

A promise to do something appealing to God as witness.

**Observe**

1. To celebrate (a festival); 2. to keep or obey, such as to observe the law.

**Offense**

1. A sin; 2. something that causes another believer to stumble in faith.

**Offering**

A sacrifice or gift brought to God.

**Office**

The work or services assigned to someone. In the church, the office of the public ministry is the work that the called ministers do. The office of Christ is the whole work Christ does as Prophet, Priest and King.

**Old Adam**

The same as the Sinful Nature. It is called the Old Adam because it is an inherited condition going back to Adam and Eve.

**Old Man**

Same as Sinful Nature.

**Old Self**

Same as Sinful Nature.

**Omen**

A happening regarded as a special sign foretelling the future.

**Omnipotent**

Allmighty; all-powerful; able to do all things.

**Omnipresent**

Present in all places.

**Omniscient**

All-knowing; knowing everything past, present and future.

**Open Idolatry**

To worship openly someone or something other than the Triune God.

**Orgy**

A wild, immoral party.

**Original Sin**

The guilt and sinfulness inherited by all people as a result of Adam's fall into sin (see also Sinful Nature).

**Pagan**

Unbeliever; heathen.

**Palm Sunday**

The festival of the church year (the Sunday before Easter) on which we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

**Parable**

A story told to teach a spiritual truth or lesson.

**Paradise**

1. The garden of Eden; 2. a name for heaven pictured as a beautiful park.

**Partake**

To receive a portion, especially of food.

**Passion**

1. Suffering (e.g. the passion of Christ); 2. very strong feeling (the passions of the sinful nature).

**Passionate**

Having very strong feelings.

**Passive Obedience of Christ**

Christ's suffering of the penalties which we deserve for breaking God's law.

**Passover**

A yearly festival of the Ceremonial law in which the Israelites sacrificed a lamb and remembered how God had rescued the nation from slavery in Egypt. The Passover Lamb was a sign pointing to Christ the Lamb of God.

**Pastor**

"Shepherd"; someone called to serve a group of Christians with the Word of God.

**Penance**

According to Roman Catholic teaching, forgiveness of sin is not obtained through faith, but through the good works done by the individual.

**Penitent**

Being sorry for sin and willing to stop sinning.

**Pentecost**

The festival of the church year on which we celebrate the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' disciples 50 days after Easter.

**Perjurer**

Someone who tells a lie when he is sworn to tell the truth.

**Persecution**

Troubles which the unbelieving people of the world cause for a Christian because they are enemies of Christ.

**Persevere**

To continue in spite of difficulties.

**Priest**

1. One who is permitted to deal with God directly in prayer and in the use of God's Word and sacraments (See Priesthood of All Believers); 2. one who is chosen to lead the people in worship and to offer sacrifices for them.

**Priesthood of All Believers**

The priestly office held by all believers which gives them the right to pray to God directly and to use his Word and sacraments.

**Profane**

To treat something that is holy with disrespect; to dishonor.

**Propers**

The parts of the order of service that change from Sunday to Sunday, such as the gradual, introit, collect and Scripture readings.

**Prophecy**

Any message from God spoken or written by a prophet; often a message foretelling the future.

**Prophet**

One who speaks a message from God.

**Prostitute**

A person who commits sexual sins for pay.

**Provision**

A supply.

**Prudent**

Wise; having sound judgment.

**Perverse**

Having a twisted mind which is set upon wrongdoing.

**Pervert**

Someone whose sexual desires are unnatural.

**Petition**

A request. Since there are requests in the Lord's Prayer, we call them the 7 petitions.

**Pharisee**

A member of a Jewish religious group who claimed to keep more laws than the ones God commanded and thought that this made him right with God.

**Physical**

Bodily; not spiritual.

**Praise**

To speak joyfully and admiringly about God's goodness.

**Prayer**

An act of worship in which we speak to God from our hearts.

**Prayer Fellowship**

A way of expressing unity in faith by praying with others.

**Precept**

A command; a rule; a teaching.

**Preservation**

God's work of providing all that we need to keep our body of life.

**Public Ministry**

The teaching of God's Word and the administering of the sacraments by workers (pastors, teachers, and others) who have a divine call. These workers act as representatives of the group of Christians who called them.

**Purgatory**

According to Roman Catholic teaching, a state of condition, in which after death, souls are purified for their entrance into heaven.

**Quickening**

Making alive; raising from the dead. This is one way to picture the miracle of faith which the Holy Spirit works in us.

**Radiant**

Bright; shining.

**Ransom**

1. Payment given to free people from captivity (noun); 2. to free from captivity by paying a price (verb).

**Real Presence**

The miraculous presence of Jesus' real body with the bread of his real blood with the wine in Holy Communion.

**Realm**

Kingdom.

**Rebirth**

Being born again. This is one way to picture the miracle of faith which the Holy Spirit works in us.

**Rebuke**

To scold someone for doing wrong.

**Reconcile**

To restore someone to peace and harmony with another.

**Reconciliation**

The restoration of peace between God and man as a result of Christ's death.

**Redeem**

To ransom; to buy back; to pay a price in order to free from slavery or captivity.

**Redemption**

Christ's work of ransoming all people from the slavery of sin, death and the devil by paying the price of his blood, suffering and death.

**Regeneration**

Same as Rebirth.

**Render**

1. To give; 2. to cause to become; to make.

**Renewal**

The Holy Spirit's work of making us new by creating a New Man inside of us through the gospel.

**Renounce**

To give up; to intend to have nothing to do with.

**Repentance**

A "change of mind" about one's sin. The Bible uses the word "repentance" in two senses: 1. sorrow over sin and desire to stop sinning; 2. sorrow over sin and faith in the forgiveness of sins.

**Repentant**

Same as Penitent.

**Resurrection**

Coming to life after death; refers especially to Christ's return to life on Easter and to the raising of all the dead on the Last Day.

**Reveal**

To "unveil"; to make known something hidden.

**Revenue**

A country's income from taxes, which is used to pay public expenses.

**Reville**

To use bad language about someone; to call bad names.

**Righteous**

Sinless; morally perfect.

**Righteousness**

Sinlessness; moral perfection. God has righteousness and demands righteousness from us. Through faith in Christ his righteousness is given to us.

**Robbery**

Taking the possessions of others by force.

**Sabbath**

Hebrew word for rest.

**Sabbath Day**

The day of rest. According to the Ceremonial Law, the Israelites were commanded to rest from their work on the 7th day of the week (Saturday).

**Sacrament**

A sacred act which Christ established for his church, in which an earthly element is used together with God's Word, as a means of offering, giving, and sealing to us the forgiveness of sins and thus also life and salvation.

**Sacrament of the Altar**

Same as Holy Communion.

**Sacrifice**

The killing of a living being (usually an animal) as an offering to God. The most important purpose of sacrifice was for atonement (see Atonement).

**Saint**

"Holy One." Every believer in Christ is a saint because through faith in Christ he has the holiness of Christ.

**Salvation**

Rescue or deliverance; especially the rescue from sin, death and the devil accomplished by Jesus, the Savior.

**Sanctification**

The work of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace. For the two different ways the Bible uses the word, see Sanctify.

**Sanctify**

To make holy, used in two different ways in the Bible: 1. to call someone out of the unbelieving world to be holy by bringing that person to faith in Christ, enlightening him, and keeping him in the faith (sanctify in the wider sense); 2. to lead a believer to hate sin and be eager to live a holy life filled with good works (sanctify in the narrow sense).

**Sanctuary**

A holy place set apart for the worship of God. Both the tabernacle and the temple are called a "sanctuary".

**Satan**

"Adversary"; a name of the devil.

**Scripture**

"Writing." Usually the word "Scripture(s)" refers to the Bible.

**Second Birth**

Same as Rebirth.

**Secret Idolatry**

Giving someone or something first place in one's heart instead of God.

**Self-righteousness**

Same as Work-righteousness.

**Sensuality**

Allowing oneself to have sinful bodily pleasures.

**Sin**

"Missing the bull's eye" of God's law by breaking one of his commandments.

**Sin of Commission**

Doing something which God forbids.

**Sin of Omission**

Not doing something which God wants us to do.

**Sinful Nature**

Original sin that totally corrupted our whole human nature which we have inherited from Adam through our parents. Also called Original Sin, Flesh, Old Adam, Old Man.

**Slander**

False statements which harm someone's reputation.

**Sorcery**

Witchcraft; the magic of one who is aided by the devil.

**Soul**

The spiritual being which, when united with a body, makes a living human person.

**Sovereign**

1. Having the highest ruling power (adjective); 2. highest ruler (noun).



**Spell**

A form of words believed to have magical power.

**Spirit**

1. A bodiless personal being (e.g. God, angels, the devil, demons); 2. "the Spirit" often means the Holy Spirit. 3. the New Man which is given to believers by the Holy Spirit; 4. sometimes "spirit" means the same as soul.

**Spiritist**

Someone who supposedly communicates with the spirits of the dead.

**Spiritual Death**

Separation from the spiritual blessings of God. All men are born spiritually dead and remain that way until the Holy Spirit quickens them, that is, calls them to faith in Christ.

**Sponsor**

Someone chosen to speak at the Baptism of a baby, who is to be concerned with the spiritual welfare of the child as he grows up. Sponsors are not mentioned in the Bible and are not necessary for a valid Baptism.

**Statute**

A law.

**Steadfast**

Firm, unmovable.

**Subdue**

To take control of.

**Substitute**

One who takes the place of another.

**Suicide**

The sin of killing oneself.

**Superstitious**

Trusting in powers which God has forbidden.

**Sustain**

To hold up or support; to keep alive.

**Swear**

To use God's name to assure someone that the truth is being told.

**Synod**

A group of congregations which unite to help each other in the Lord's work.

**Tabernacle**

The tent used by the Israelites as a place of worship from the time of the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai until the building of Solomon's temple.

**Temple**

God's house; a building where he dwells and is worshipped. Believers are called the temple of God because he lives in them.

**Tempt**

To try to lead someone into sin, false belief, or despair.

**Temptation**

Any situation in which someone may be led into sin, false belief or despair.

**Testament**

A covenant. The Old Testament books of the Bible cover that portion of history when the old covenant (the law at Mt. Sinai) was in effect. The New Testament books describe the new covenant which Jesus established by fulfilling the law perfectly and by dying to earn the forgiveness of sins.

**Testify**

To speak as a witness.

**Testimony**

A statement of what one knows to be true. Frequently testimony refers to God's Word or a portion of it.

**Theft**

Taking the possessions of others secretly.

**Time of Grace**

The time of one's life on earth which God gives to an individual as his only opportunity to come to faith in Jesus and be saved.

**Transform**

To change.

**Transgression**

"Crossing the forbidden line" of God's law by breaking one of his commandments.

**Trespass**

Same as Transgression.

**Tribulation**

Suffering; affliction.

**Trinity**

The Triune God.

**Triune**

Existing as both three (tri-) and one (-une). The Triune God is three persons but only one God.

**Unblemished**

Spotless; faultless.

**Uncircumcision**

Not being circumcised; sometimes used as a picture of unbelief and disobedience.

**Unrighteous**

Morally imperfect; sinful; contrary to God's will.

**Unrighteousness**

Lack of righteousness; sinfulness.

**Valid**

Legally binding; acceptable.

**Verbal Inspiration**

See Inspiration.

**Vicar**

A student training for the ministry who serves a congregation under the direction of a pastor.

**Vicarious**

Performed by taking the place of another; substitutionary.

**Vicarious Atonement**

The sacrifice of Jesus in our place, accepted by the Father as payment for our sins.

**Visible Churches**

Groups of people who gather to use the means of grace.

**Vision**

Something that is seen by other than normal sight, such as, in sleep or in a trance.

**Wickedness**

Great sinfulness.

**Witch**

A woman who seeks supernatural power by making an agreement with evil spirits.

**Witchcraft**

The attempt to do things by the power of the devil.

**Witness**

1. Someone who is an observer. The Apostles were witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. Witnesses at a Baptism observe the Baptism and verify that it took place (noun). 2. the testimony which an observer gives. To bear witness means to give testimony (noun); 3. to testify; to speak as one who has seen (verb).

**Word of God**

That which God has said either directly, or through angels, prophets, or apostles. The Bible is the written Word of God.

**Workmanship**

A product; something which has been made.

**Work-righteousness**

Trying to earn righteousness before God by one's own works.

**Worship**

Any thoughts, words, or actions which we direct toward God as a way of praising Him.

**Wrath**

Intense anger.

**Written Law**

The law of God as it is written in the Bible.

**Zion**

The hill on which Jerusalem stands. Zion is also used as a name for the church.