

## THE END IS JUST THE BEGINNING



### *A Continuing Education in God's Word*

**W**E HAVE COME TO THE FINAL LESSON in this instruction course. We have covered together all of the basic doctrines of Holy Scripture. Your basic knowledge of salvation by faith in the merits of Jesus Christ is the greatest gift from the Holy Spirit that you will ever receive. Now the Apostle Peter, in his second letter, encourages you to keep on adding to that knowledge:

*"You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." 3:17-18*

#### ICON KEY

- Introduction
- Important point
- For further reading

For the time of your life that remains you are called to strengthen your faith through God's Word and Sacraments. And you are called to share the wonderful Good News of the Gospel with all to whom the Spirit leads you. We warmly invite you also to join us as we carry out this great work together in our Congregation.

You are finishing this course. But your course of life goes on. Be encouraged to join us in all the blessings of congregational membership, including the regular study of the Word and partaking of Holy Communion, in order that your love for God and your fellow human beings continue growing.

1. Read Psalm 133. From verse 1, *what emotions did the Psalmist experience as he lived his faith in unity with his fellow-believers?*

2. Read Matthew 28:18-20. These verses comprise what has become known as the Christian's "walking papers." *What assignment has the Triune God given you and all believers?*

**"LEARN FROM ME"**

3. Look up 1 Corinthians 12:20-25. Every member of the Christian congregation has been given gifts to contribute to the spiritual welfare of all. From verse 25, *what two things should especially concern us about the congregation?*

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4. Refer to Hebrews 10:24-25. From verse 24, *what two things are we to "stir up" in one another?*

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5. From verse 25, *what should we not forsake or neglect?*

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6. Read Acts 2:44-47. These words describe the believers' way of life in the first Christian congregation in Jerusalem. *How did their way of life agree with the ideals set forth in the passages one through five above?*

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7. Read Galatians 6:10. *Name two ways in which we may show our faith by our good works:*

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8. Congregations may appoint people to help the Pastor in the public work of the ministry. Read Acts 6:1-7. *What did the early Christians in the Jerusalem Congregation do when the work of distributing food to the poor began to take away from the Apostles' preaching of the Word?*

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9. Read Hebrews 3:12-13. Someone has said that the Christian life is never in neutral; it is either going forward or back. *What can we do daily to help one another from being overcome by the hardening deceitfulness of sin?*

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10. Read Matthew 18:20. *What assurance do we have as we continue gathering together in Jesus' name?*

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## "LEARN FROM ME"

11. Read Colossians 3:15-16. Much of our worship forms [liturgy] come from the Psalms, and our hymns are based on various Bible verses. From verse 16, *in what ways may we also help ["teach and admonish"] one another?*

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12. Look up 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. A number of questions are here posed. The answers are so obvious that none need to be given. From verse 17, *what does the Apostle direct us to do rather than worship together with those whose teachings do not agree with God's Word?*

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- Discuss together, if possible, the congregation's constitution.
- Discuss together, if possible, the congregation's liturgical form for welcoming new members.
- Suggest materials for private and family devotions.
- Supply available historical and confessional documents.
- Encourage subscription to and regular reading of church publications and magazines.

*"When I was a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." - - 1 Corinthians 13:11-13*