

# Making Disciples Among American Evangelicals

Part 2: Through the Liturgy

Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard



# The Material Will Be Posted To My Blog:

**PM Notes**  
EVANGELIZING MORAL THERAPEUTIC DEISTS; COMFORTING POST-EVANGELICALS; STRENGTHENING MONERGISTS

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**JAN 25** **What Is Truth? – An Evangelism Conference Unlike Any Other**  
Post by Pastor Daniel Hinton  
Originally posted on Steadfast Lutherans

We all recognize the question asked by Pontius Pilate in John 18:38, (my Latin students ought to recognize the question as Quid est veritas?) "What is truth?". Observers of Western culture might note a shift in how the teachings of the Church are being attacked by the world. Where once the Church was challenged on whether our distinctive truth claims, such as the virgin birth of Christ, His atoning death, His resurrection, His return again in judgment, etc., are in fact true. Now, many attack the Church as arrogant, ignorant, or elitist for claiming that we have the truth, that we claim that other "truths" cannot also simultaneously be true, and even that we believe truth can be known at all. ----  
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**JAN 24** **Got Theology?**  
"She turned me into a newt. I got better though..."  
A little theological humor combined with Monty Python. Enjoy the laugh.

**JAN 22** **Free PDF Sheet: The Nature Of Christ**  
Today's PDF:  
The Nature of Christ  
To Access More PDF Sheets:

**JAN 19** **God's Lamb For You**  
(John 1:29-41)  
Text: John 1:29-41  
Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**JAN 18** **Sacramental Yearnings;**  
Young Christians Are Desiring Historical Liturgy, Not Contemporary Worship  
The following article was found on

[www.pastormatrichard.com](http://www.pastormatrichard.com)

[www.pastormatrichard.org](http://www.pastormatrichard.org)

# Any Further Thoughts from Session 1



# Part 2: Making Disciples Among American Evangelicals

## Objective:

What are the common misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles of American Evangelicals who have joined a liturgical Lutheran Church.



# Are American Evangelicals Encountering the Lutheran Liturgy?



# Remember

## David Kinnaman's Assessment:

- President of the Barna Group
- Author of 'You Lost Me'
- Found that prior to the 1960s young adults were just as likely to attend church as older individuals.
- His research shows that after the 1960s the trends diverge, and there began to be a significant disengagement of younger adults in the church.
- As a result, Kinnaman classifies these disengaged younger adults as nomads and prodigals.
- He says the problem is that the church has abandoned these nomads.

“AFTER COUNTLESS INTERVIEWS AND CONVERSATIONS, I AM CONVINCED THAT HISTORIC AND TRADITIONAL PRACTICES, AND ORTHODOX AND WISDOM-LADEN WAYS OF BELIEVING, ARE WHAT THE NEXT GENERATION REALLY NEEDS.”

David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church... And Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 202.



**The following two quotes  
also from our previous session  
observe that  
American Evangelicals  
are in fact encountering  
liturgical aspects.**



“YOUNG CHRISTIANS ARE GOING  
OVER TO CATHOLICISM AND HIGH  
ANGLICANISM/LUTHERANISM IN  
DROVES, DESPITE GROWING UP IN  
LOW PROTESTANT CHURCHES.”

- Rebecca VanDoodewaard ,The Christian Pundit

Rebecca VanDoodewaard, “Young Evangelicals Are Getting High,” 17 July 2013,  
<http://thechristianpundit.org/2013/07/17/young-evangelicals-are-getting-high/> (13  
August 2013).



**“[Lee] Nelson believes a sacramental hunger lies at the heart of what many millennials feel.**

**“We are highly wired to be experiential,” he says. In the midst of our consumer culture, young people “ache for sacramentality.”**

**“If you ask me why kids are going high church, I’d say it’s because the single greatest threat to our generation and to young people nowadays is the deprivation of meaning in our lives,” Cone says.**

**“IN THE LITURGICAL SPACE, EVERYTHING BECOMES MEANINGFUL.**

**IN THE OFFERING UP OF THE BREAD AND WINE,**

**WE SEE THE OFFERING UP OF THE WHEAT**

**AND GRAIN AND FRUITS OF THE EARTH,**

**AND GOD GIVES THEM BACK IN A SANCTIFIED FORM.**

**[Continued Next Slide]**

Gracy Olmstead, “Why Millennials Long for Liturgy,” 14 January 2014,

<http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/why-millennials-long-for-liturgy/> (18 February



[Continued]

**We're so thirsty for meaning that goes deeper, that can speak to our entire lives, hearts, and wallets, that we're really thirsty to be attached to the earth and to each other and to God.**

**THE LITURGY IS A HISTORICAL  
WAY IN WHICH THAT HAPPENS.”**

**The millennial generation is seeking a holistic, honest, yet mysterious truth that their current churches cannot provide. Where they search will have large implications for the future of Christianity.**

**Protestant churches that want to preserve their youth membership may have to develop a greater openness toward the treasures of the past.**

**ONE THING SEEMS CERTAIN: THIS “SACRAMENTAL YEARNING”  
WILL NOT GO AWAY.”**



What happens to former  
Evangelicals when they encounter  
the Lutheran Liturgy?



# About The 'Becoming a Liturgical Lutheran Survey':

- Conducted using an internet survey tool called, Survey Monkey
- Between the dates of May 6th of 2013 to May 20<sup>th</sup> of 2013
- Completed by 125 participants
- Assuming a population of 100,000 individuals who have journeyed and/or are journeying from American Evangelicalism into Lutheranism, 125 participant responses yield the statistical confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 8.76%.



# Observations In Regard To Ritual/Agenda

Out of those surveyed,  
63.2% of participants  
agree or strongly agree to the following:

‘I EXPERIENCED MISUNDERSTANDINGS,  
HESITATIONS, AND STRUGGLES IN MY JOURNEY  
FROM AMERICAN EVANGELICALISM INTO  
THE LUTHERAN LITURGY IN REGARD  
TO THE RITUAL/AGENDA AND ALTAR BOOK OF THE  
LUTHERAN LITURGY’

(I.E., THE RITE OR ORDER OF SERVICE OF THE EUCHARIST, OR HOLY  
BAPTISM, OR CONFIRMATION, OR MATRIMONY, OR BURIAL, ETC...)

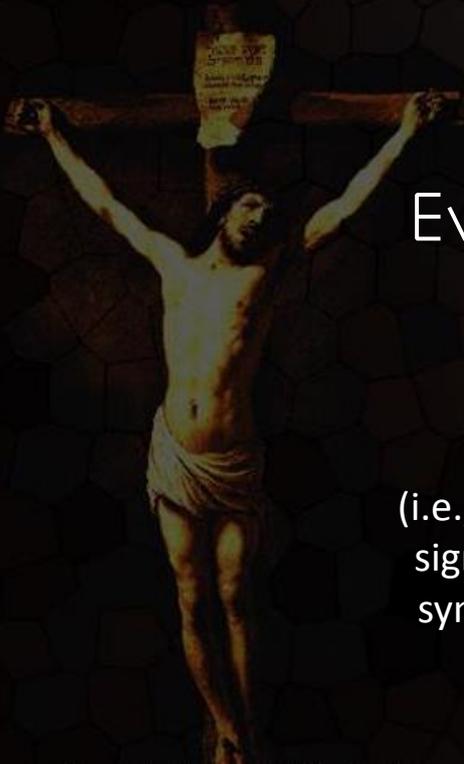


# Observations In Regard To *Ceremonies* of the Lutheran Liturgy

Furthermore, 67.2% of participants in the research agree or strongly agree that they

EXPERIENCED MISUNDERSTANDINGS,  
HESITATIONS, AND STRUGGLES  
IN THEIR JOURNEY FROM AMERICAN  
EVANGELICALISM INTO THE LUTHERAN LITURGY  
IN REGARD TO THE CEREMONIES OF THE  
LUTHERAN LITURGY

(i.e., bodily expressions, speaking, singing, kneeling, bowing, making the sign of the cross, outward observances of the church year, ornaments, symbols, material objects employed in the church's worship, the altar, candles, vestments, etc...



# General Observations

Generally speaking the participants stated that before they journeyed into Lutheran liturgy

that their opinions of it were merely based on external perceptions.

However, as they peeled the layers back and learned about the liturgy, their perceptions of the Lutheran liturgy changed drastically.



# General Observations

Participant #7 stated,

“All of the pieces of the liturgy confused me until I understood the structure and meaning behind them, all of which point to God’s work for us through Christ. I was not familiar enough with my Bible to know that all of the liturgy came from it, and had a reason for being used in worship.

I began searching to learn more about the liturgy because when we left the fundie church for a confessional church, a friend from the fundie church wrote an 18 page letter to us explaining what was evil and wrong about the Lutheran church...mainly that it was closely tied with the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and so was associating with the whore of Babylon. Written prayers and the liturgy, he maintained, were dead works and not spiritual, so I began researching to see if he was correct.

Needless to say, once I found out that the liturgy was God’s Word spoken all throughout the service, and understood that the Divine Service is simply a reception of God’s gifts, with our responses of thanks and praise to Him for His mercy through Christ, I never wanted to leave.”



MANY PARTICIPANTS STATED THAT AS THEY CONTINUALLY LEARNED  
ABOUT THE LITURGY THEIR PRESUPPOSITIONS  
ALSO CONTINUALLY CHANGED.

## General Observations

Participant #11 stated,

“The outward appearance of confessional Lutheranism seemed to me formal and archaic. Yet, once I began to learn more about the historic church, I came to deeply appreciate the reverence and awe that came from following the pattern of sound words that have been passed down for centuries. The outward forms of reverence (kneeling/bowing/sign of the cross/chanting/etc...) may vary from congregation to congregation, but the Divine Service takes on such meaning and significance once one realizes what these things are and why we have them.

Similarly, the candles, vestments, and other objects have no meaning unless one knows WHY they are there. I had no idea why they were used until my curiosity drove me to research and now I can view them as wonderful tools in teaching the meaning of God’s Word. The fact that everything has a purpose in the Divine Service is lost on many sitting in the pews, and that is a sad fact indeed. Worship is ever so much richer when we understand why we’re doing what we’re doing (and why the Church has done these same things for centuries).



# What Are the Top Areas of Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles Regarding Ritual/Agenda and the Altar Book



# Top Areas of Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles Regarding Ritual/Agenda and the Altar Book:

- The Rite of Holy Baptism
- The Rite of Holy Communion
- Confession of Sin & Absolution



# Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles with the rite of Holy Baptism

Of the 67.8% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the rite of HOLY BAPTISM, generally speaking their confusion existed not with the rite and/or order of the ritual but WITH THE THEOLOGY OF BAPTISM (*i.e., namely infant baptism*).

One participant stated,

“IT TOOK A LONG TIME TO ‘UNLEARN’ BAD THEOLOGY ABOUT THIS.”



# Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles with the rite of Holy Communion

Of the 61.4% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the rite of HOLY COMMUNION, generally speaking their confusion existed not with the rite and/or order of the ritual but WITH THE THEOLOGY OF COMMUNION.

One participant stated,

*“IT’S A LONG ROAD FROM A SYMBOL USING GRAPE JUICE TO WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND TRUE BODY/TRUE BLOOD. LOTS OF TEACHING IS NEEDED TO RE-LEARN.”*

Furthermore, participants noted that issues of closed communion were difficult to understand and accept.



# Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles with Confession and Absolution

Of the 59.5% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the rite of CONFESSION OF SIN AND ABSOLUTION, generally speaking their confusion existed due to Confession and Absolution being extremely FOREIGN TO THEIR FORMER EVANGELICAL CONTEXT and/or Evangelical understanding.

As one participant stated,

*“I WAS CLUELESS!”*

As noted by participants the cluelessness was due to them not understanding the office of the keys and how a pastor could forgive sins in God’s stead.



What do these three rituals  
have in common?

The Rite of Holy Baptism  
The Rite of Holy Communion  
Confession of Sin & Absolution



## Important Note:

It is interesting to note that the top three ritual confusions were all

MEANS OF GRACE.

It is also interesting to note that the general struggles were due to the

THEOLOGY

embedded in each of these means of grace.



OUR LORD SPEAKS AND WE LISTEN. HIS WORD BESTOWS WHAT IT SAYS. FAITH THAT IS BORN FROM WHAT IS HEARD ACKNOWLEDGES THE GIFTS RECEIVED WITH EAGER THANKFULNESS AND PRAISE. . . . SAYING BACK TO HIM WHAT HE HAS SAID TO US, WE REPEAT WHAT IS MOST TRUE AND SURE. MOST TRUE AND SURE IS HIS NAME, WHICH HE PUT ON US WITH THE WATER OF OUR BAPTISM. . . . THE RHYTHM OF OUR WORSHIP IS FROM HIM TO US, AND THEN FROM US BACK TO HIM. HE GIVES HIS GIFTS, AND TOGETHER WE RECEIVE AND EXTOL THEM. WE BUILD ONE ANOTHER UP AS WE SPEAK TO ONE ANOTHER IN PSALMS, HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS. OUR LORD GIVES US HIS BODY TO EAT AND HIS BLOOD TO DRINK. FINALLY HIS BLESSING MOVES US OUT INTO OUR CALLING, WHERE HIS GIFTS HAVE THEIR FRUITION.

*Introduction to the 1982 Hymnal of the  
Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Lutheran Worship*



# What Are the Top Areas of Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles Regarding Ceremonies of the Lutheran Liturgy



# Top Areas of Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles Regarding Ceremonies of the Lutheran Liturgy:

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- The Sign of the Cross
- The Liturgical Chanting
- The Kneeling and Bowing
- The Sacred Vessels and Vestments



# Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles with the Sign of the Cross

Of the 56.7% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the SIGN OF THE CROSS, generally speaking their hesitations were due to believing that

IT WAS TOO ROMAN CATHOLIC.

As one participant stated,

*"I THOUGHT ONLY ROMANS CATHOLICS DID IT, BUT ONCE I LEARNED THAT IT WASN'T JUST FOR FIELD GOALS AND EXTRA POINTS IN OVERTIME, I NOW THINK ALL CHRISTIANS SHOULD DO IT."*

Another participant stated,

*"I FEARED IT BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS CATHOLIC. HOWEVER, I CAME TO REALIZE THAT IT WAS A MARK OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY."*



# Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles with Chanting

Of the 54% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with LITURGICAL CHANTING,

generally speaking their struggle was due to

THEIR LACK OF EXPERIENCE WITH CHANTING.

One participant stated,

*“I CANNOT READ CHANT MUSIC YET; THOUGH I PLAY THE VIOLIN.  
IT IS NOT INTUITIVE TO ME.”*

*Even though this struggle existed, generally speaking there was a very favorable opinion of chanting from the participants.*

Commenting favorably one participant said,

*“I LOVE TO HEAR THE PRAYERS CHANTED. IT MAKES ME SAD TO VISIT OTHER LCMS CHURCHES AND TO SEE HOW FEW PASTORS CHANT.”*



# Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles with Kneeling and Bowing

Of the 53.2% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with KNEELING AND BOWING, generally speaking their struggle was due to

SIMPLY NOT BEING EXPOSED TO IT BEFORE.

Participant #28 stated,

*“OTHER THAN AT THE COMMUNION RAIL,  
I HAVE NEVER SEEN THIS.”*



# Misunderstandings, Hesitations, and Struggles with the Sacred Vessels and Vestments

Of the 52.7% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the

SACRED VESSELS AND VESTMENTS,

generally speaking their struggle was due to

NOT UNDERSTANDING OR BEING FAMILIAR WITH IT.

In fact one participant even said that,

*“LIFELONG LUTHERANS SEEM TO HAVE LITTLE UNDERSTANDING OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GARMENTS.”*



For those journeying into the Lutheran Liturgy,  
what is positive and what is negative?



# What has been the worst thing about the journey into Lutheran liturgy?

Generally speaking the participants stated that the worst thing about their journey into Lutheran liturgy was

THE LOSS OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY, AS WELL AS THE FEAR OF PERSECUTION AND THE PERSECUTION ITSELF.

Participant #1 shares that the worst part of the journey is,

“THE FEAR OF BEING MISUNDERSTOOD BY MY BAPTIST PARENTS, OF THEM THINKING I’VE GONE OFF THE DEEP END... THE FEAR OF BEING OSTRACIZED BY MY FORMER CHURCH.”



# What has been the worst thing about the journey into Lutheran liturgy?

Furthermore, participants noted that it was difficult dealing with lifelong Lutherans who did not appreciate the gift of their liturgy.

Participant #40 speaks to this saying,

*“DEALING WITH LIFELONG LUTHERANS WHO AREN’T AS PASSIONATE ABOUT THEIR FAITH AND WHO WANT TO JUMP INTO THE MUCK OF EVANGELICALISM. I AM MADE TO FEEL LIKE A TROUBLEMAKER FOR NOT APPROVING OF OR WANTING TO JUMP INTO THE MUCK WITH THEM. I’VE BEEN THERE AND IT IS NOT PRETTY.”*

Participant #45 comments on this saying that one of the worst parts of this journey is,

*“SEEING LIFELONG LUTHERANS NOT UNDERSTANDING WHAT THEY HAVE AND BECOME BORED WITH IT OR WANTING WHAT THEY THINK WOULD BE EXCITING.”*



# What is the best thing about the journey into Lutheran liturgy?

Generally speaking the participants stated that the best thing about their journey into Lutheran liturgy was the

CONTINUITY, CONSISTENCY, AND CLARITY  
of the divine service.

Participant #1 stated that the best thing is,

*“BEING IN A CHURCH WHERE I DON’T HAVE TO WORRY IF I’M GOING TO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD EACH WEEK. IN MY EVANGELICAL CHURCH, I NEVER KNEW WHAT I WAS GOING TO GET. IT WAS NEVER CONSISTENT. MY LUTHERAN CHURCH IS STABLE, AND I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I’M GOING TO GET: WORD AND SACRAMENT, LAW AND GOSPEL, REPENTANCE AND FAITH, HISTORIC CHRISTIANITY. I DON’T DREAD SUNDAYS ANYMORE.”*



# What is the best thing about the journey into Lutheran liturgy?

Furthermore, there was a great appreciation for the historic heritage of the liturgy.

Participant #10 stated,

“I AM CONNECTED TO A STORY AND A WAY OF WORSHIP THAT IS AS OLD AS THE CHURCH. I AM CATHOLICALLY CONNECTED WITH SACRAMENTAL CHRISTIANS THE WORLD OVER.”

Finally, there was a great appreciation for the privilege of being able to attend a divine service where they could ‘receive’ from God and ‘hear’ a Christ-centered message.



What advice, encouragements, insights, and/or thoughts can you give to Lutheran pastors so that they might better minister to former Evangelicals joining their liturgical churches?

Generally speaking the participants would like to share with pastors that former Evangelicals coming to the Lutheran Church need pastors to

BE PATIENT AS THEY TEACH THEM.

Participant #36 says to pastors,

*“TEACH YOUR PEOPLE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE CONFSSIONAL,  
AND WHAT IT MEANS TO WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH.*

*DON'T MESS WITH THE LITURGY TO DUMB IT DOWN  
OR MAKE IT EASIER OR LESS BORING!*

*DO YOU KISS YOUR WIFE EVERY DAY? IS THAT BORING?”*



What advice, encouragements, insights, and/or thoughts can you give to Lutheran pastors so that they might better minister to former Evangelicals joining their liturgical churches?

Pastors can be prepared  
for many questions.

Participant #22 says to pastors,

“WHEN THEY [FORMER EVANGELICALS] ASK, DON'T  
TAKE IT AS A CHALLENGE TO YOUR AUTHORITY BUT  
AS A SEEKER LOOKING TO UNDERSTAND.”



# Special Focus

In comparing the 117 participants who are currently attending a Lutheran Church that upholds the Lutheran Confessions as expressed in the Book of Concord and practices the historical liturgy with the 8 respondents who are not currently attending a liturgical church, one significant thing needs to be noted.

BOTH THE 117 PARTICIPANTS AND THE 8 PARTICIPANTS NOTED THAT THEY ARE CURRENTLY FAMILIAR OR VERY FAMILIAR WITH THE LUTHERAN LITURGY

(Specifically 96.6% of those currently attending say that they are very familiar or familiar with the liturgy, whereas 75% of those not currently attending a liturgical Lutheran Church say that they are very familiar or familiar with the liturgy).



# Special Focus

However, when participants were asked about *specific items* of the liturgy

(i.e., *the Nunc-Dimittis, The Pax Domini, The Sanctus, The Salutations and Collect, Etc...*)

those who are not attending a liturgical church scored much higher in the realm of not understanding these terms and concepts.

THEREFORE IT MAY BE CONCLUDED THAT A PERSON'S DEFINITION AND DEGREE OF FAMILIARITY WITH THE LITURGY MAY BE DIRECTLY TIED TO WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE ATTENDING A LITURGICAL CHURCH.

Thus it is plausible that one can familiarize himself with the Lutheran liturgy to a certain degree theoretically speaking, but without attending and participating in the Lutheran liturgy through a congregation, one's familiarization may still be lacking or incomplete.



# Summary:

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Please take a moment and read:

‘THE LITURGY;  
A TRUE SERVICE THAT AIDS  
BOTH THE PROCLAMATION  
AND THE HEARING OF THE GOSPEL  
FOR THE SAKE OF FAITH’



Questions and/or Comments?



## Take Home Bonus:

“How Do You View Christianity?”



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