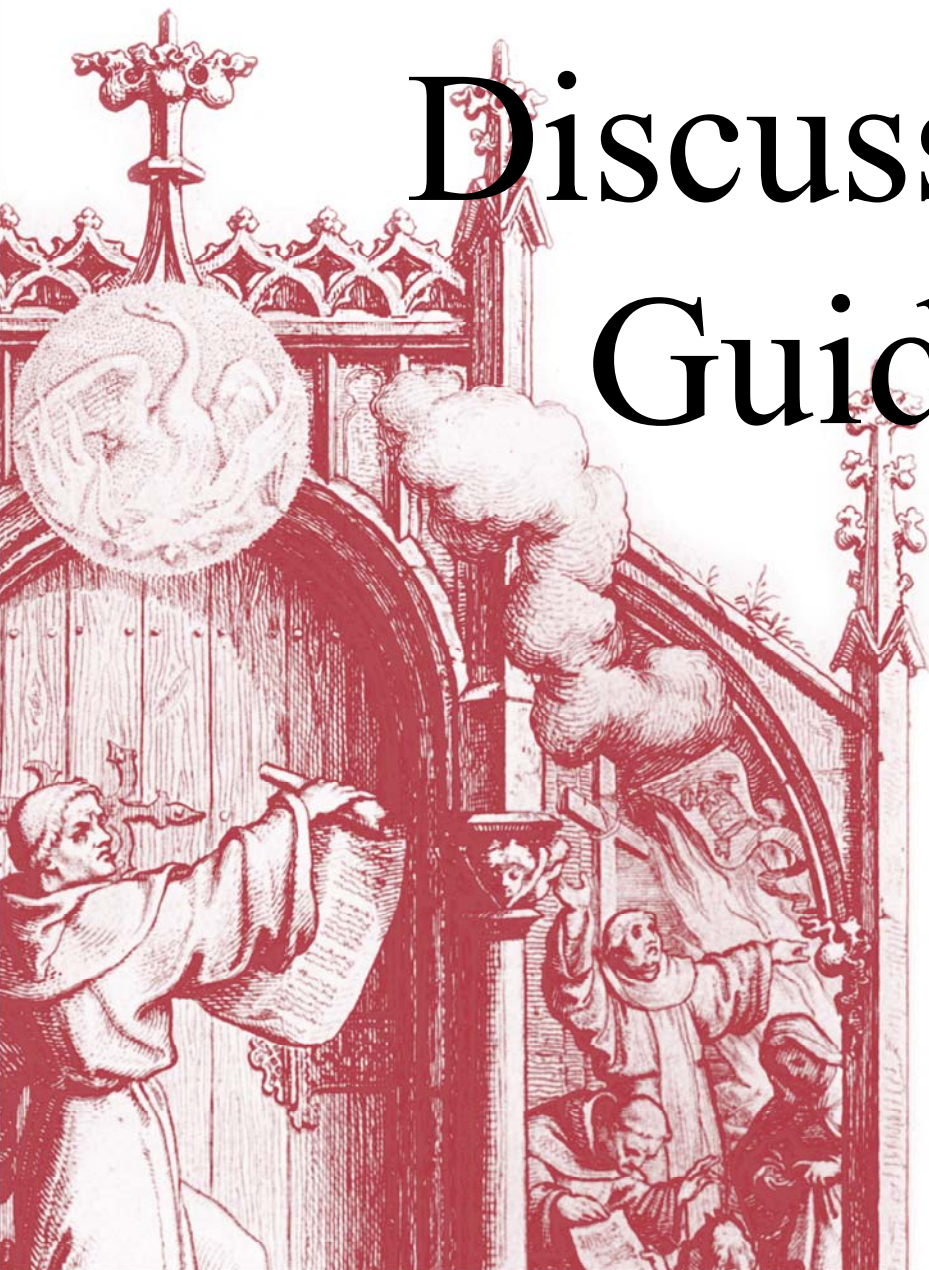


TREATISE ON GOOD WORKS

1520

THE ANNOTATED LUTHER STUDY EDITION

Discussion Guide



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TREATISE ON GOOD WORKS, 1520

Overview

An early critique of the Lutheran movement was that the preaching of justification by faith alone would lead to Christians not caring about good works. With this little book, Luther aimed to show that his teaching about faith not only supported good works but actually provided the only true foundation for good works that serve others with no strings attached.

Discussion Questions

1. In the preface to Duke John of Saxony, Luther wrote that he was content to teach the Christian faith to regular people in humble ways. How does this idea resonate with the rest of this treatise?
2. How did Luther connect faith and works in his discussion of the first commandment?
3. Luther believed all other commandments flow from the first commandment. How does that viewpoint change one's perspective on good works?
4. How did Luther combat the argument that good works are not important for Christians if faith alone justifies?
5. Do you recognize tendencies within yourself or others that relate to Luther's description of the four kinds of people? (p. 281-282)
6. On page 295, Luther described times when God's name is not honored. Consider a time when you may have experienced the following: "The most pernicious kind comes when there is no attack at all and everything is running smoothly, lest in such a situation the person forgets God and through lack of restraint misuses the good times."
7. Luther connected the third commandment with prayer. How does remembering the Sabbath and keeping it holy enrich both outward prayer and inward prayer?
8. Luther described the Ten Commandments as a mirror. What do they reflect back at you when you contemplate on them?
9. Honoring authority in the home, church, and civil realm served an important role in Luther's view fulfilling the fourth commandment. How did he describe the relationship between faith, freedom, authority, and obedience? What purpose did Acts 5:29 play in Luther's understanding of this commandment? (p. 350)