

## **The Augsburg Confession** *Talking About Faith with Family and Friends*

Emperor Charles V summoned the Protestant and Catholic theologians to Augsburg in 1530 to settle the divisions between them. The emperor asked for a concise statement of their beliefs with the intended purpose of finding areas of agreement to keep the empire united.



### **Article IX: Of Baptism**

**Discussion:** How can two people of different faiths and cultural backgrounds begin a discussion about baptism? Do you understand baptism as an important ceremony or as a means of God's grace? What is the date of your baptism? Should children of parents with different faith identities be baptized or is this decision left to the parents?

"Of Baptism they (our Lutheran churches) teach that it is necessary to salvation, and that through Baptism is offered the grace of God, and that children are to be baptized who, being offered to God through Baptism are received into God's grace.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who reject the baptism of children, and say that children are saved without Baptism."

**Importance:** You may be surprised that the doctrinal statement for such an important sacrament is so concisely written. Notice that the Lutheran Church teaches that:

1. Baptism is necessary to salvation. (But faith also saves and the faithful people who lived before the baptism of Jesus are also saved and in heaven. This position was clarified by Luther in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church which followed The Augsburg Confession. People who are baptized are sealed with the cross of Jesus Christ and given the promise of eternal salvation. Faith in Jesus Christ follows baptism.)
2. Baptism is a means through which we receive God's grace.
3. Children are to be baptized.



***"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (words of Jesus. Matthew 28:19,20)***