

GRACE IN ACTION

Discussion Guide: Practice 2

Worship, Tradition, and Moral Teaching

What was your church like growing up? What are some of your favorite memories about going to church when you were younger? What are some of the things you didn't like much about going to church? How is your church now different from what you remember from years past? What has changed for the better? What do you wish had stayed the same?

What are the most meaningful parts of the liturgy for you? Do you enjoy singing the hymns? Is the sacrament of Holy Communion the highlight of the worship service for you? Do you appreciate silence or time for contemplative prayer?

In your life, how did you learn the difference between what is right and what is wrong? Who are some of the mentors or role models who you've looked up to? What are some of the ways that you try to be an example for others?

What are some of the things that you're most worried about on a daily basis - in the world, in your life, etc.? How does your community of faith provide support for you? What do you need from your church to keep you grounded in faith, hope, and love?

Follow-up Actions

1. **Flip through the worship book at your church.** Perhaps it's the cranberry-colored Evangelical Lutheran Worship book. Find some of your favorite hymns and prayers. Spend some time looking at the language used during a baptism. What does your church do almost every week? What are some of the things you do less often? What are some of the things that are most meaningful for you?
2. **Visit another church one Sunday.** Take notes on what is similar and different - what the space looks like, what the worship service is like, how you feel, how you interact with others. Sometimes we can grasp a better understanding of what we know and love about our church when we experience something different.

Resources

Evangelical Lutheran Worship Book - Pick one up in your own congregation or ask your pastor if you can borrow a copy.

Luther's Small Catechism - The Articles of the Apostle's Creed - Read through Martin Luther's exploration of this age-old statement of faith.

Romans 12 - Paul's letter to the Romans is a particularly robust description of the purpose of a community of faith, and the 12th chapter explores tangible, realistic ways to be such a community in the world.