Luther's German Mass at 500 Years

Bible Class Video Worksheet

What the word Mass means

The word Mass is usually traced to the Latin missa, meaning "dismissal," as in ite, missa est—"Go; you are dismissed." Related to mittere, "to send," (e.g. commission, emission, remit) this word eventually became a name for the entire Communion service.

Luther himself favored a different explanation: the Hebrew word missah, meaning "offering" or "oblation." Although generally rejected as the linguistic origin of Mass, this proposed connection is part of the history of Luther's use of the word. It does not mean that Luther accepted the Mass as a priestly sacrifice obtaining forgiveness for the living and the dead. He rightly recognized that Holy Communion relays to the recipients the benefits of the "once for all" sacrifice of Christ by giving us the Lord's body and blood "in, with, and under" the bread and wine.

Luther's German Mass, published in 1526, helped people hear God's Word and receive Christ's gifts.

Five questions to answer while watching

1. **How many Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb?**

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2. Why did Luther publish an order of worship in German?

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3. Why was Luther especially concerned about children and ordinary worshipers understanding the service?

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4. What does Kyrie mean, and what are we asking God for when we sing it?

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5. How should Christian liberty and love for our neighbors guide decisions about worship customs?

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Video: Good Shepherd • Luther's German Mass and Order of Divine Service
https://youtu.be/UwBULsSQ-xU