

Confirmation Rewind 1

Student
Sheet

The Age of Vinyl

The first sound recordings were made by a stylus picking up sound vibrations and marking the vibrations on a wax cylinder. After the cylinder had hardened, a needle was pulled along the groove created by the stylus. The sound created by the needle running through the groove replicated the original sound. Eventually the cylinder was replaced by a flat carbon based disk, which was itself later replaced by vinyl disks. The quality of the sound was determined by how accurately the scratches on the disk replicated the original vibrations. Later improvements allowed the vibrations to be enhanced electronically.

Remember Your Confirmation?

Like the wax cylinder used in early recordings, you were impressionable when you went through confirmation instruction. Markings were made on you that influenced what you thought about God and what it means to be a Christian. Then came a special day when what had been recorded in you was played back before the congregation—Your Confirmation Day!

What did you think the Rite of Confirmation meant for you? For your family? Read Matthew 10:32-33.

Why is this passage read at the Rite of Confirmation?

Review the Rite of Confirmation from Lutheran Worship. What promises did you make? How do you feel about those promises now? What helps you keep to keep them?

Contemporary Recordings

You never lose the quality of being impressionable, no matter how old you become. Markings are still being made in your life today that may be played back for years to come.

What are some sources that make marks in your life? Would you want all of them to be played back? Why or why not?

Who makes the markings in the recording of your life according to 1 Peter 3:15? Who is benefited by the recording of your life?

Scatched Records

Vinyl records wore out easily. When scratched they could do one of two things. If the scratch pushed the needle away from the center, the needle would get stuck, repeating the same circle of sounds over and over again. If the scratch pushed the needle toward the center, the needle would skip entire sections of the recording.

In what ways do people get stuck? Skip? Are there ways in which you feel scratched? See 1 John 2:1-2.

How can you keep the recording of your life from wearing out? What help does God give you

A tremendous breakthrough occurred in the recording industry when records were produced in “High-Fidelity,” meaning they sounded more and more like the life performance. Then an inventor realized that the markings, which had only been on the horizontal side of the groove, could also be placed in the vertical as well—and “Stereo” was born. A true replication of the original sound was becoming more and more a possibility. Will our lives ever be in “Stereo?”

Confirmation Rewind 2

Student
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The Age of Tape

Magnetic tape is a quantum leap in audio reproduction. No longer is recording dependent on scratches on a malleable plate. Instead, magnetic tape holds an electrical signal that's picked up by the tape player head, sent through the amplification system, and directed to the speakers that replicate the sound. Recording tape meant that people on the move were no longer dependent on the radio to play their favorite songs, they could use handy tape players. People no longer needed expensive equipment to record their own music, they could tape it. Turntables changed from playback technology to rap music instruments.

Remember to Set the Counter!

Vinyl records still had one advantage over the cassette tape. You could move the needle quickly. Finding the song you wanted on tape took more effort. There was a lot of "Fast Forward" and "Rewind" necessary to get where you wanted to be. That is, of course, unless you had set the counter – a little gadget that measured inches of tape.

Have you ever been in a discussion and wanted to use a Scripture passage but you just couldn't remember where it is in Scripture? What did you do? Wouldn't it be great to have some kind of "counter?"

Where do you go when you want to be near to God? What does John 16:12-15 have to say about this?

Through what means does the Holy Spirit make Jesus known?

Rewind and Fast Forward

Though you may want always to please God, you don't. Why? Why don't you resonate perfectly to God's will? To really understand why the song of your life gets off-key, you have to rewind back to the beginning.

Rewind to Genesis 3. Why are things so messed up? What hope is offered in v. 15? Fast forward to Galatians 4:4 for support of your understanding of Gen. 3:15. Rewind to Isaiah 7:14 for more detail on the Galatians verse. Fast forward to Matt. 3:13-17. How does the cross of Jesus get you back on-key?

God's Counter System

You don't have to fast forward or rewind when you want to get close to God. You don't have to search for him. He's given you a three-part counter system that works perfectly without waiting for the tape to catch up. It's called the "Means of Grace." The Holy Spirit uses the Means of Grace to provide you with the benefits of Jesus' work.

Use God's Counter System: [Rewind - << Fast Forward - >>]

God's Word: >> 1 Peter 1:23; << Romans 10:14-17; >> 2 Peter 1:21; << Hebrews 4:12

Holy Baptism: << Matthew 28:19-20; >> 1 Peter 3:21; << Acts 2:38-39; >> Romans 6:1-7

Holy Communion: << Matthew 26:26-28; >> 1 Cor. 11:25-29; << 1 Cor. 10: 16-17; >> 1 Peter 2:3

The Curse of the 8 Track! A particularly insidious form of audio reproduction was the 8 track tape. 8 track tapes worked on a continuous loop system that kept the tape sliding against itself as it wound around inside an impenetrable casing. Inevitably it would twist, catch and break. Many cars had 8 track players, and for a decade highways were littered with magnetic tape from malfunctioning 8 track tapes tossed from car windows. God's system by which he reproduces faith in your heart doesn't twist, catch or break. It's there for you, just where the Holy Spirit has promised to be; in Word and Sacrament.

Confirmation Rewind 3

Student
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The Coming of Digital

Computers function at the digital level, meaning that they operate with only two signals, 1 and 0; or put another way, “on” and “off.” How such a simple system can result in all the complexity of digital information available today on CD, DVD, and the World Wide Web is truly mind-boggling. By digitalizing old audio recordings made on records and tapes, poor quality sound can be edited out. Big bands long gone have never sounded better. Music is more accessible than ever, creating new means of distribution over the Web, and new issues regarding ownership and copyright.

Digital Doctrine

In your catechetical instruction you learned that God’s Word comes to us with two messages, not unlike “on” and “off” switches in digital technology. You remember these two messages as Law and Gospel.

Discuss how Law and Gospel differ. Here are a few hints. [Mode of Revelation? Content? Purpose? Effect? Promise? Audience?] Why is the Law like an off switch? The Gospel like an on switch?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. What does it mean to you to “regard no one from a worldly point of view?”

As a Christian, you live in the freedom of the Gospel, not under the curse of the Law. What important function does the Law fulfill for you? What are you free to be for Jesus Christ according to Paul?

What Turns You “ON?”

Although the Law does have power to bring about a temporary change in behavior, the Law is powerless to change hearts. Changing hearts is the Gospel’s work.

What were you like before you were turned on to God by the Gospel? See Romans 5:6-11 and Ephesians 2:1. Then read Ephesians 2:8-10. We didn’t turn ourselves on. We didn’t go from a 0 to a 1 by any act of our own power. The Holy Spirit, working through the Word, flipped the switch.

Now That You Are “ON”

There is a big difference between a switch in the on position and the power exerted through that switch. That difference illustrates something about your life of faith. You were “justified by grace through faith” in Jesus Christ. When you received the gift of saving faith you were turned on to God. Your understanding of that faith, however, has been growing and changing, as has your ability to show your love for God in your behavior.

Do you recall the words “justification” and “sanctification” from your confirmation instruction? What did they mean to you at that time? How do you understand them now?

What evidence do you see of justification and sanctification in your life?

Ever heard the term “Digital Dark Ages?” It is the situation created when technology moves ahead so fast that it fails to recognize what’s been left behind. Many computer systems no longer use floppy disks. Unless one backs up the data from old floppies to CD’s, or maintains an external floppy drive, the information on the floppies becomes inaccessible. Much information from the early years of computer use has been lost because the equipment that could read it no longer exists! Each advance in audio reproduction has meant an investment in new equipment. What a blessing that God’s Word is not dependent on our technology. No new investment on our part is required to maintain a clear hearing of the Gospel.

Confirmation Rewind 4

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I-Pod, You-Pod, We All-Pod

The digital revolution is continuing – to use an obsolete metaphor – full steam ahead. It has allowed a variety of technologies to merge into one. Phones that play music, work as cameras, use text messaging, and provide video now exist; all in one unit the size of pocket calculator. With so much change, no wonder older generations adapt slowly. Audio reproduction, along with all the other communication technologies, has become personalized. People hear what they want to hear, where they want and when they want to hear it. The same is true for what they see.

Personalized Faith?

One feared result of everyone having their own personal digital network is that society may break into smaller and smaller parts, each having tremendous loyalty within itself, but little love for society as a whole. When you were confirmed your part in a larger group, the church, was affirmed. What had begun in your baptism was now recognized as growing into adult roles and responsibilities.

Is society breaking into smaller groups in your opinion? How much do you feel a part of your congregation? Your youth group?

Read Ephesians 4:11-16. Is diversity the goal of Christian community? Why or why not? What do you see as your role in the Christian community?

Confirmation Downloads

You need something to guide you as you explore the roles and responsibilities you will have within the larger Christian community. God's Word is here for you. Your confirmation instruction provided you with the hit recordings of Lutheran theology in your own album – "The Six Chief Parts." How do these hits fit into your life?

10 K – The Ten Commandments [see Exodus 20:1-17]

Credo – The Apostles Creed [see 2 Corinthians 13:14]

LP's Long Play – The Lord's Prayer [see Matthew 6:9-13]

Speaking H2O – Holy Baptism [see Matthew 28:19-20]

Keys Please – Office of the Keys and Confession [see John 20:21-22]

King's Banquet – Holy Communion [see 1 Corinthians 10:16-17]

The Live Concert Is Always Better

Ever been to a live concert? Having music available at your fingertips is a tremendous convenience. But no matter how good the audio sound, the reproduction doesn't match the energy and excitement of the live performance.

For Christians, the live concert is the Divine Service. When you gather for worship (Hebrews 10:25) things really happen. You aren't just singing hymns or being taught (Colossians 3:15-16). What does absolution do for you (1 John 1)? What are you receiving in the sacrament (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)?

What does the future hold for audio reproduction technology? What will your grandchildren say when they see pictures of you with strings coming out of your ears? Won't they ask you, "Grandma, why didn't you get an audio implant?" The truth is that we don't know. Rewinding will be a thing of the past, but remembering will always be necessary. Whatever technology helps you remember God's love for you through Jesus Christ will be a rich blessing. Use it with thanksgiving and to his glory.