

TABLE OF CONTENTS

To the Reader.....	6
--------------------	---

THE SMALL CATECHISM

Chapter One, God's Ten Commandments.....	11
Chapter Two, The Apostle's Creed.....	15
Chapter Three, The Lord's Prayer.....	17
Chapter Four, The Sacrament of Holy Baptism.....	21
Chapter Five, The Office of Keys and Confession.....	23
Chapter Six, The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.....	25
Supplement 1, Prayers.....	27
Supplement 2, Table of Duties.....	29
Supplement 3, Christian Questions and Answers for those who intend to go to the Sacrament.....	33

A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Introduction.....	39
The Bible.....	40

Chapter I

God's Ten Commandments or God's Law.....	44
--	----

The First Table

The First Commandment.....	47
The Second Commandment.....	54
The Third Commandment.....	61

The Second Table

The Fourth Commandment.....	71
The Fifth Commandment.....	78
The Sixth Commandment.....	85
The Seventh Commandment.....	96
The Eighth Commandment.....	101
The Ninth and Tenth Commandments.....	107
The Close of the Commandments.....	110
The Purpose and Use of God's Law.....	114
Sin.....	117

Chapter II	
The Apostle's Creed.....	123
The difference between the Law and the Gospel.....	125
God.....	126
The First Article, Creation	132
God the Father.....	132
The Angels.....	133
Man.....	136
The Second Article, Redemption	141
Jesus Christ and His work of Redemption.....	142
The Third Article, Sanctification	164
The Holy Spirit.....	165
The Church.....	174
The Forgiveness of sins and Justification.....	185
The Resurrection of the Body.....	191
Everlasting Life.....	195
Chapter III, The Lord's Prayer	199
Of Prayer in General.....	199
The Lord's Prayer	209
The Salutation.....	210
The First Petition.....	211
The Second Petition.....	212
The Third Petition.....	214
The Fourth Petition.....	215
The Fifth Petition.....	217
The Sixth Petition.....	221
The Seventh Petition.....	224
The Conclusion.....	225
Chapter IV, The Sacrament of Holy Baptism	226
The Nature of Holy Baptism.....	226
Infant Baptism.....	229
The Benefit of Baptism.....	232
The Power of Baptism.....	236
The Significance of Baptism or the Proper Use of Baptism.....	239
Chapter V, The Office of the Keys and Confession	243
The Office of the Keys.....	243
The Office of the Public Ministry.....	249
Confession.....	254

Chapter VI, The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.....	259
The Nature of the Lord's Supper.....	259
The Benefits of the Lord's Supper.....	264
The Power of the Lord's Supper.....	265
The Proper Use of the Lord's Supper.....	266
The Watchword of Lutherans.....	272
SUPPLEMENT 1, The Lord's Blessing.....	273
SUPPLEMENT 2, The Gifts of Grace.....	276
APPENDIX 1, The Books of the Bible and their Abbreviations.....	282
APPENDIX 2, The Confessional Books of the Lutheran Church.....	284
APPENDIX 3, The Church Year.....	285
APPENDIX 4, A Short Form for Holy Baptism in Cases of Necessity.....	286
APPENDIX 5, Questions and Answers for the Rite of Confirmation.....	287
APPENDIX 6, The Nicene Creed.....	289
APPENDIX 7, The Athanasian Creed.....	290

TO THE READER

Christians need Biblical knowledge concerning the foundations of the Christian faith. To satisfy this need, the Confessional Lutheran Church of Finland now publishes the Reformer Martin Luther's Small Catechism and an Explanation of Christian Doctrine based on it.

The Confessional Lutheran Church of Finland published an Explanation of Christian Doctrine, which was edited by Pastor Kauko Valve, for the first time in 1941. It had been in use in mimeographed form already for ten years prior to that. This Summary of Christian Doctrine, which served the church well for 60 years, has now been completely revised by the decision of the Church Board.

The Church Board gave the work of editing and revising to Pastor Markku Särelä. The cover and illustrations are by Kimmo Pälikkö, also at the request of the church board.

Upon completion of the manuscript in August 1989, the Board asked for a critique of the work from the congregations and pastors, and delegated Pastor Särelä, upon receiving the suggestions of the congregations and pastors, to prepare the final copy for publication. In this he was assisted by Pastors Aulis Jalonon and Jorma Kallio. The Board expressed its gratitude to all those who offered suggestions and took part in the work.

The Small Catechism presents the basic doctrines of the Christian faith in a brief form. The Explanation of Christian Doctrine explains them in more detail and applies them to the present time in an easily understood way. The explanations are confirmed with passages from the Bible. For the English translation we have used the King James version of the Bible.

The revised work is based on the earlier work. The quotations from Luther, if the source is not indicated, are generally from the Large Catechism. Many of the timely doctrinal questions are confirmed also with other quotations from Luther and the Lutheran Confessions. They indicate that the teaching of the Confessional Lutheran Church has a reliable, Biblically Lutheran basis. Much help has been received from Dr. Johann Conrad Dietrich's (1575-1639) trailblazing explanation of the Catechism. The explanations of the Lord's Blessing and the Gifts of Grace appear for the first time in this revised version of the Explanation of Christian Doctrine. There is also a section on the Public Ministry in connection with the Office of the Keys, which was not included in the earlier work. Our hope is that the Assignments will be a motivation for further study and discussion.

We pray that this book may serve the cause of the Chief Shepherd of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the eternal salvation of souls.

23.01.1990

The Executive Board of the Confessional Lutheran Church of Finland

Doctor Martin Luther

S M A L L C A T E C H I S M



"Keep therefore and do them" Deut. 4:6

CHAPTER ONE

GOD'S TEN COMMANDMENTS

As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to his household.

The First Commandment

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

What does this mean?

We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.

The Second Commandment

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.
“For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks.

The Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (Thou shalt sanctify the holy day.)

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

The Fourth Commandment

Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not despise our parents and masters, nor provoke them to anger, but give them honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem.

The Fifth Commandment

Thou shalt not kill.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.

The Sixth Commandment

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse.

The Seventh Commandment

Thou shalt not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not take our neighbor's money or good, nor get them by false ware or dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and business.

The Eighth Commandment

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.

The Ninth Commandment

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, nor obtain it by a show of right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

The Tenth Commandment

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not estrange, force or entice away from our neighbor his wife, servants, or cattle, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

The Close of the Commandments

What does God say of all these Commandments?

He says thus:

I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My Commandments.

What does this mean?

God threatens to punish all that transgress these Commandments. Therefore we should fear His wrath and not act contrary to them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these Commandments. Therefore we should also love and trust in Him and willingly do according to His Commandments.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CREED

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

The First Article

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them; also clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, wife and children, fields, cattle and all my goods; that He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life; that He defends me against all danger, and guards and protects me from all evil; and all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which it is my duty to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

THE SECOND ARTICLE

Redemption

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He

descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

The Third Article

Sanctification

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the Last Day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life.

This is most certainly true.

CHAPTER THREE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.

The First Petition

Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean?

God's name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be holy among us also.

How is this done?

When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead a holy life according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven. But he that teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches, profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, Heavenly Father.

The Second Petition

Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean?

The kingdom of God comes indeed without prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also.

How is this done?

When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life, here in time and hereafter in eternity.

The Third Petition

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

What does this mean?

The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our payer: but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

How is this done?

When God breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow God's name nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh; but strengthens and preserves us steadfast in His Word and faith unto our end. This is His gracious and good will.

The Fourth Petition

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer, also to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to know it, and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread?

Everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, field, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors and the like.

The Fifth Petition

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor on their account deny our prayer; for we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them; but that He would grant them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. So will we also heartily forgive, and readily do good, to those who sin against us.

The Sixth Petition

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

God indeed tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us nor seduce us into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice; and though we be assailed by them, that still we may finally overcome and obtain the victory

The Seventh Petition

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, as the sum of all, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from every evil of body and soul, property and honor, and finally, when our last hour has come, grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven.

The Conclusion

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

What is meant by the word “Amen”?

That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us so to pray, and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen,

that is, Yea, yea, it shall be so.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

I

What is Baptism?

Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's Word.

Which is that word of God?

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Matthew: **Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.**

II

What does Baptism give or profit?

It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Which are such words and promises of God?

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Mark: **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth**

not shall be damned.

III

How can water do such great things?

It is not the water indeed that does them, but the word of God which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts such word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is simple water and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus, chapter third: **According to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying.**

IV

What does such baptizing with water signify?

It signifies that the Old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

St. Paul writes, Romans, chapter sixth: **We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death, that, like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.**

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OFFICE OF THE KEYS AND CONFESSION

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

What is the Office of the Keys?

It is the peculiar church Power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of penitent sinners, but to retain the sins of the impenitent as long as they do not repent.

Where is this written?

Thus writes the holy Evangelist John, chapter twentieth: **The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and saith unto them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.**

What do you believe according to these words?

I believe that, when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, especially when they exclude manifest and impenitent sinners from the Christian congregation, and, again, when they absolve those who repent of their sins and are willing to amend, this is as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself.

How are Christians to be taught to use Confession?

What is Confession?

Confession embraces two parts. One is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believe, that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

What sins should we confess?

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the pastor we should confess those sins only which we know and feel in our hearts.

Which are these?

Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments, whether you are a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have grieved any person by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, or wasted aught, or done other injury.

When you feel the need for private absolution, go to your pastor and speak to him as follows: "Pastor, I would like to have you hear my confession and to grant me absolution in God's behalf". Then tell him what's causing you distress and troubling your conscience. Listen intently as he instructs you and comforts you with God's word, and then in behalf of God grants you absolution in the following words: "By the Command and in the stead of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER SIX

THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ Himself.

Where is this written?

The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and St. Paul, the Apostle, write thus: **Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.**

After the same manner also He took the cup when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.

What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

That is shown us by these words: **Given and shed for you for the remission of sins.** In the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life,

and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

*How can bodily eating and drinking do
such great things?*

It is not the eating and drinking indeed that does them, but the words here written: **Given and shed for you for the remission of sins.**

These words, besides the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

Who, then, receives such Sacrament worthily?

Fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a fine outward training; but he is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: **Given and shed for you for the remission of sins.** But he that does not believe these words, or doubts, is unworthy and unprepared; for the words **for you** require all hearts to believe.

SUPPLEMENT 1

PRAYERS

How the head of the family should teach his household to pray morning and evening.

Morning Prayer

In the morning when you get up, make the sign of the holy cross and say: *In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Then kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may also say this little prayer:

I thank Thee, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray Thee that Thou wouldst keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doing and life may please Thee. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the wicked Foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go joyfully to your work, singing a hymn, like that of the Ten Commandments, or whatever your devotion may suggest.

Evening Prayer

In the evening, when you go to bed, make the sign of the holy cross and say: *In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.* Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may also say this little prayer: *I thank Thee, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast graciously kept me this day;*

and I pray Thee that Thou wouldst forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the wicked Foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go to sleep at once and in good cheer.

Prayers before and after Meals

How the head of the family should teach his household to ask a blessing and return thanks.

Prayer before Meals

The children and members of the household shall go to the table reverently, fold their hands and say: *The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O lord, and Thou givest them their meat in due season; Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*

Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer and the following: Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless us and these Thy gifts which we receive from Thy bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving after Meals

Also after eating, they shall, in like manner, reverently and with folded hands say: *Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever. He giveth food to all flesh; He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse. He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy.*

Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer, and the following:

We thank Thee, Lord God, Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ,

our Lord, for all Thy benefits, who livest and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

SUPPLEMENT 2

TABLE OF DUTIES

Of certain passages of Scripture for various holy orders and estates whereby these are severally to be admonished as to their office and duty.

TO BISHOPS, PASTORS, AND PREACHERS

A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; not a novice; holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. (1Tim. 3:2, 3, 4, 6; Titus 1:9).

WHAT THE HEARERS OWE TO THEIR PASTORS

Eat and drink such things as they give; for the laborer is worthy of his hire. (Luke 10:7).

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. (1Cor. 9:14)

Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (Gal. 6:6,7)

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and, The laborer is worthy of his reward. (1 Tim. 5:17,18)

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. (1 Thess. 5:12,13)

Obeys them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you. (Heb. 13:17)

OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou, then, not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. (Rom. 13:1-4).

OF SUBJECTS

Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. (Matt. 22:21).

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honor, to whom honor. (Rom. 13:5-7).

I exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Savior. (1Tim. 2:1-3).

Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work. (Titus 3:1)

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake:

whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. (1Pet. 2:13,14).

TO HUSBANDS

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. And be not bitter against them. (1Pet. 3:7; Col.3:19).

TO WIVES

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. (Eph. 5:22).

Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. (1Pet. 3:6).

TO PARENTS

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4).

TO CHILDREN

Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. (Eph. 6:1-3).

TO SERVANTS, HIRED MEN, AND EMPLOYERS

Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that

whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. (Eph. 6:5-8).

TO EMPLOYERS

And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him. (Eph. 6:9).

TO THE YOUNG IN GENERAL

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. (1Pet. 5:5,6).

TO WIDOWS

Now, she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. (1Tim. 5:5,6).

TO ALL IN COMMON

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Herein are comprehended all the Commandments. (Rom. 13:9). And persevere in prayer for all men. (1Tim. 2:1).

*Let each his lesson learn with care,
And all the household well shall fare.*

SUPPLEMENT 3

CHRISTIAN QUESTIONS WITH THEIR ANSWERS

Drawn up by Dr. Martin Luther for those
who intend to go to the Sacrament.

After Confession and instruction in the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, the pastor may ask, or one may ask himself:

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner? – Yes, I believe it; I am a sinner.
2. How do you know this? – From the Ten Commandments; these I have not kept.
3. Are you also sorry for your sins? – Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.
4. What have you deserved of God by your sins? – His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation. Rom.6:21,23.
5. Do you also hope to be saved?– Yes, such is my hope.
6. In whom, then, do you trust? – In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.
7. Who is Christ? – The Son of God, true God and man.
8. How many Gods are there? – Only one; but there are three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
9. What, then, hast Christ done for you that you trust in Him? – He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

10. Did the Father also die for you? – He did not; for the Father is God only, the Holy Ghost likewise; but the Son is true God and true man; He died for me and shed His blood for me.

11. How do you know this? – From the holy Gospel and from the words of the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the Sacrament.

12. How do those words read? – Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.

13. You believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament? – Yes, I believe it.

14. What induces you to believe this? – The word of Christ, Take, eat, this is My body; Drink ye all of it, this is My blood.

15. What ought we to do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and thus receive the pledge? – We ought to remember and proclaim His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.

16. Why ought we to remember and proclaim His death? – That we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins but Christ, true God and man; and that we may learn to look with terror at our sins, and to regard them as great indeed, and to find joy and comfort in Him alone, and thus be saved through such faith.

17. What was it that moved Him to die and make satisfaction for your sins? – His great love to His Father and to me and other

sinner, as it is written: “The Son of God..loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal. 2:20.

18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament? – That I may learn to believe that Christ died for my sin out of great love, as before said; and that I may also learn of Him to love God and my neighbor.

19. What should admonish and incite a Christian to receive the Sacrament frequently? – In respect to God, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord should move him, and in respect to himself, the trouble that lies heavy on him, on account of which such command, encouragement, and promise are given.

20. But what shall a person do if he be not sensible of such trouble and feel no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament? – To such a person no better advice can be given than that, in the first place, he put his hand into his bosom, and feel whether he still have flesh and blood, and that he by all means believe what the Scriptures say: “I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing”, Rom. 7:18. Secondly, that he look around to see whether he is still in the world, and keep in mind that there will be no lack of sin and trouble, as the Scriptures say: “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world”, 1 Joh. 2:16. Thirdly, he will certainly have the devil also about him, who with his lying and murdering, day and night, will let him have no peace within or without, as the Scriptures say: “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 1. Pet. 5:8-9.

The faithful servant of the Lord, Doctor Martin Luther says: “If you could see how many knives, darts, and arrows are every moment aimed at you, you would be glad to come to the Sacrament as often as possible.”



**An Explanation of Doctor Martin Luther's Small
Catechism**

OR

A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Introduction

1. Why should we learn to know God's Word?

Our Lord Jesus Christ has already in Holy Baptism made us disciples of His. He wants us to learn to know God's Word and to be saved through it. He has said:

Matt. 28: 18-20: All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

In order that this earnest wish of our Savior can be fulfilled, it is necessary that we learn God's Word point by point in an orderly fashion. The Small Catechism and its explanation will help us do this.

Note: Jesus also wants those who have not received a Christian Baptism as infants to learn God's Word and to be baptized in the name of the Triune God.

2. What kind of a book is the Small Catechism?

When Doctor Martin Luther (1483 - 1546) served as an inspector of congregations, he discovered that there was a desperate need of instruction in Christian doctrine in the congregations. The members and even some of the pastors were not acquainted with the basic doctrines of the Christian religion. This prompted Luther to write the Small Catechism in the year 1529. Into this small book he collected from the Bible the chief doctrines of the Christian religion. The book was well received by the people. It was included among the confessional books of the Lutheran Church, and is still used as a book of instruction in all confessional Lutheran churches.

Assignment: Check in your Catechism and see what the chief articles of the Christian faith are.

3. How are we to learn God's Word?

We are to learn God's Word with a receptive and humble heart because God Himself is speaking to us and He wants to save us through this Word. The Apostle Peter writes:

1 Pet. 2:2: As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.

The Bible

4. What is the Bible?

The Holy Bible is God's Word, which holy men have written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Peter writes:

2 Pet. 1:21: For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Bible does not just contain God's words, but is God's Word, word for word.

5. Who wrote the Bible?

The Old Testament was written by Moses and other Prophets. The Apostles and Evangelists wrote the New Testament. These men served as instruments of the Holy Spirit, who gave them His words in a spoken or written manner.

David says:

2 Sam.23:2: The Spirit of the Lord spake by me; His Word was in my tongue.

The Apostle Paul says:

Thess. 2:13: When ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God.

6. What kind of book is the Bible?

The Bible is the only book of its kind because it is the inerrant, living, powerful and eternally unchanging truth. We can rely on it both in life and death.

Num. 23:19: God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?

Hebr. 4:12: The Word of God is quick and powerful.

John 10:35: The Scripture cannot be broken.

Hebr. 6:18: It is impossible for God to lie.

1 Pet. 1:25: The Word of the Lord endureth forever.

John 17:17: Thy Word is truth.

7. Why did God give us the Bible?

God has given us the Holy Bible to teach us how we can be eternally blessed or how we can be saved.

For this reason God wants us:

1. To diligently read and study it.
2. To believe it in our heart.

3. To live according to it.

4. To make it known to others.

2 Tim. 3:15: From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

John 20:31: These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name.

2 Tim. 3:16,17: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Ps. 119:105: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Luke 11:28: Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it.

Mark 16:15: Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

The Holy Bible is for the Christian Church the highest authority and the only rule in matters of Christian doctrine and life.

1 Cor. 4:6: (Do not go) beyond that which is written.

Gal. 1:8: Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

8. How is the Bible made up?

The Bible consists of the Old and the New Testaments. There are 39 books in the Old Testament. They were written much before the time of Jesus. There are 27 books in the New Testament. They were written during the time of the Apostles. The Bible is therefore a collection of 66 books.

The books were divided into chapters and verses at a later date.

Assignments: Learn the names of the books of the Bible. Abbreviations are used for the names. Learn to find the designated Bible passages by abbreviations. Solve the following: James received a telegram from his godfather for his birthday. It said: "Ps. 86:5 and Phil. 2:10-11". What was the message?

The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, a few parts of it also in Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek. The Bible, or parts of it, has been translated into many different languages and is still being translated.

Chapter I

God's Ten Commandments or the Law of God

9. What are God's Ten Commandments?

God's Ten Commandments are God's holy will or his Law. In his Law God tells us what we are to do, what we are not to do, and how we are to be.

Micah: 6:8: He has shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Lev. 19:2: Ye shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy.

10. When did God give his Law?

God first gave his Law at creation. At that time he wrote it into man's heart, so that man fully knew God's will and lived according to it.

When man fell into sin, his knowledge of God's Law weakened. Some knowledge of it remained, but it is no longer clear or complete, let alone that a person would be able to live according to God's will.

The Law, which God wrote into man's heart at creation still testifies to man's conscience in a weakened way.

Later God gave his Law to Moses on Mount Sinai.

Gen. 1:27: God created man in his own image.

Rom. 2:14,15: When Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature things contained in the Law, these having not the Law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.

Assignment: Read Ex. 19:16-20:20 and Deut. 10:1-5: The giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.

11. What three kinds of law did God give on Mount Sinai?

On Mount Sinai God gave Moses: 1. The Moral Law, 2. The Ceremonial Law, and 3. The Political Law.

1. The Moral Law is the same law which he wrote in man's heart at creation. Now he gave it written on two stone tablets in the form of Ten Commandments. Everything in these commandments that is Moral Law pertains to us and all people.

Deut. 4:13: He declared to you his covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments, and He wrote them upon two tables of stone.

2. The Ceremonial Laws regulated the religious practices and certain other practices of the Israelites. In a symbolical way they pointed to the promised Savior, who became man as a member of this nation.

By means of these laws God kept Israel apart from the pagan nations during the Old Testament time and taught the Israelites to wait for the coming Savior. Now that the Savior has come, the Ceremonial Law is no longer in force. Our conscience is free in regard to its observance.

Col.2:16-17: Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.

When someone is approaching us from behind a building, we first see his shadow and try to determine from the shadow who the person is. But when the person emerges from behind the building, we no longer concentrate on the shadow, but on the person himself. The Ceremonial Law was like a shadow of Jesus. The Old Testament believers looked for Jesus in this law because he himself had not yet come. But now that he has come, we can believe in him directly without the aid of the Ceremonial Law.

Heb. 8:13: A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

3. The Political Law prescribed how the people of Israel were to be governed during the Old Testament time. Their ruler was God himself (theocracy, God-rule), and this theocracy was a type of Christ's spiritual kingdom during the New Testament time.

1 Sam.12:12: The Lord your God was your king.

Gen. 49:10: The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.

12. Into what two groups does the Catechism divide the Ten Commandments?

The Catechism divides the Ten Commandments into two tables, because Moses received the commandments on two tables (or tablets).

The summary of the **First Table** is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." Matt. 22:37.

The summary of the **Second Table** is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. 22:39.

Matt. 22:40: "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

13. What is the summary of all the Commandments?

The summary of all the Commandments is genuine love. All of God's Commandments therefore demand genuine love from us.

1 Tim. 1:5: Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.

Rom. 13:10: Love is the fulfilling of the Law.

The First Table

14. Which Commandments belong to the First Table?

The first three Commandments belong to the First Table.

15. What does God speak about in the First Table?

In the First Table God speaks about our relationship to God.

The First Commandment

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

What does this mean? We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

16. What does God want of us in this Commandment?

God wants us sincerely from our hearts to have only Him as our God, and to love, worship and serve only Him.

Matt.4:10: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

Deut.6:5: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

17. What does God forbid in this Commandment?

God forbids us to have other gods.

Is. 42:8: I am the Lord; that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

18. What is a god?

A person's god is that from whom he expects all good things, in whom he trusts in all times of need, in whose hands he believes his life to be, and whom he thanks for all the good things he has. If a person trusts in the God of the Bible, he has the true God. But if he trusts in anything else, he has a false god.

Luther: "That to which your heart clings and in whom you trust, is in truth your god."

19. What is idolatry? (Worship of false gods)

When a person trusts in something that has been created instead of trusting in God, such trust is idolatry or worshipping a false god. Everything that is more precious or more important than God to someone, is the god that he worships.

20. What types of idolatry are there?

There are two types of idolatry: Open and concealed.

1. Open idolatry can be observed or seen. Such idolatry is:

a) the type practiced by **pagans**, such as worshipping statues or pictures of false gods, worshipping heavenly bodies, animals, etc. Worshipping earthly rulers is also a form of open idolatry. Satan worship is an especially gross form of idolatry.

Assignment: Consider: what type of people-worship is practiced today, and what kinds of needs does it satisfy? Why is it idol-worship?

Rom.1:22-23: Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

Assignment: Read Ex. 32: the golden calf, Ps. 115:3-8 and Is. 44:15-19.

b) the worship of angels, the Virgin Mary, saints, pictures, holy places, etc. This type of worship is practiced by certain churches of external Christendom.

Matt. 4:10: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

Rev. 19:10: I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Is. 63:16: Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

Ex. 20:4-5: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.

Assignment: Discuss: What are some groups of this type within the visible Christian Church?

c) those who deny that God is a **Triune God**. They may confess that there is only one God, but they refuse to confess that Christ is true God and that the Holy Ghost is true God. All those who call God “mother” belong to this group, because they deny the God of the Bible, who is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Assignment: Consider what religions belong to this group.

2. Concealed idolatry: This type of idolatry takes place in a person's heart and does not involve outward worship. A person practicing this type of idolatry fears, loves and trusts some creature as if it were God. Some types of hidden idolatry are:

a) trusting in one's possessions, wealth, money and material things.

Job 31:24-25, 28 : If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, thou art my confidence; if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gotten much..... this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above.

Assignment: Read Luke 12:15-21: the rich man trusted in his crops; Luke 16:19: trust in a sumptuous life.

Luther considered a person's possessions to be the most common false god.

b) trust in power and authority, in one's position, in one's profession.

c) trust in one's self or in others.

Ps. 146:3,4: Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

Assignment: Read what happened to Goliath 1 Sam. 17, to Nebuchadnezzar Dan. 4:27-29 and to Peter Matt. 26:33-35, 69-75. Read what the Bible says about one's own wisdom Jer. 9:23, one's own righteousness Luke 18:9-12, the idolization of one's self Ps. 14:1.

d) being a slave to some lust.

Assignment: Discuss; What does a person have as his god when he lusts after gambling, alcohol, honor and glory and power and authority? When can the opinion of the majority or the latest fashions be false gods? Our work or our hobbies can also become false gods if they

prevent us from hearing God's Word. Cite some examples.

e) trusting that one's fate is determined by the stars (astrology, horoscopes), believing in fortune telling (palm reading, looking into a crystal ball) withcraft, etc.

Assignment: Discuss: Why is there a contradiction between astrology and true faith? Read: Is. 47:11-14.

21. What kind of a sin is the sin of idolatry?

Idolatry is the first and chief sin. When a person practices idolatry he has rejected the living God, he trusts in something created, and is subject to eternal damnation.

Matt. 6:24: Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Jer. 17:5: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.

Eph. 5:5: For this know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolator, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Philip. 3:19: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

22. What does God require of us in the First Commandment?

God requires that with our whole heart we trust only in Him and rely completely on Him as we live from day to day.

23. What are the three characteristics of a heart that trusts only in God?

1. True fear of God, 2. true love of God, 3. true trust in God.

24. What is true fear of God?

We truly fear God when we always bear in mind that we are living in God's presence and when we with child-like, respectful and holy fear avoid transgressing God's will even in the least way. A God-fearing person will not live in terror of God nor try to flee from His presence, but will fear to commit sin and will avoid what displeases Him, because he loves and respects Him.

Gen. 17:1: I am Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect.

Ps. 33:8: Let all the earth fear the Lord.

Gen. 39:9: (Joseph's word to the one who tempted him to commit sin:) How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

Ps. 111:10: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Assignment: Read Dan. 6: Daniel in the lions' den, and Dan. 3: three men in a fiery furnace.

25. What is true love of God?

We love God above all things when we with our whole heart cling to Him as our dearest treasure and highest joy. A person who truly loves God will reject everything that would separate him from God, and will gladly live in accordance with His Commandments.

Ps. 73:25,26: Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Matt. 10:37: He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of me.

John 14:23,24: Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love Me, he will keep my words...He that loveth Me, keepeth not my sayings.

1 John 5:3: This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous..

Assignment: Read Gen. 22 and Heb. 11:17-19: Abraham's faith is tested.
Discuss: Can falling in love (romantic love) keep one from loving God?

26. What is true trust in God?

We truly trust God when we believe that God will faithfully take care of us throughout our life and will finally take us to heaven. When we truly trust in Him, we expect Him to give us only that which is for our good.

Matt. 4:4: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Prov. 3:5,6: Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

Job 1:21: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Assignment: Read Gen. 39:2,3, 45:4-8 and 50:20: God took care of Joseph.

27. How does the First Commandment compare to the other Commandments?

The First Commandment is the chief Commandment. It already includes the other Commandments because only he who in his heart obeys the First Commandment, obeys the other Commandments in the right way. For this reason the explanations to the other Commandments all begin with the words: "We should fear and love God that..". Luther says: "If

the heart relates to God in this way, it has kept this and all the other Commandments. On the other hand, he who fears and loves something else in heaven or on earth, keeps neither this Commandment nor any of the other Commandments.” All of us have to confess that we have not kept even the First Commandment, but have broken it. We can, however, confess our sin to God and believe that it has been forgiven for the sake of our Savior, Jesus Christ

The Second Commandment

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain. What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by his name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

28. What does God speak about in the Second Commandment?

In this Commandment He speaks about the use of His name.

Luther says: “As the First Commandment has instructed the heart and taught faith, so this Commandment leads us forth and directs the mouth and tongue to God.”

29. What does the Bible mean by God’s name?

God’s name is God Himself as He has made Himself known to us by His Word and deeds.

Ps. 48:10: According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth.

Ps. 8:1: O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!
who has set thy glory above the heavens.

30. What does God forbid in the Second Commandment?

God forbids the wrong use of His name. We must not use God's name carelessly or uselessly, nor are we to use it to support a sinful matter. The following are forbidden: Blaspheming God, cursing and swearing, wishing evil on someone, calling down God's anger and punishment upon any person or thing, taking a forbidden oath, using witchcraft and lying and deceiving by God's name.

31. What does the Bible say about blaspheming God?

The Bible says:

Lev. 24:15: Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin.

Assignment: Read Lev. 24: 11-16: Shelomith's son blasphemed the name of the Lord. Matt. 27:27-31: The soldiers blasphemed the Lord Jesus.

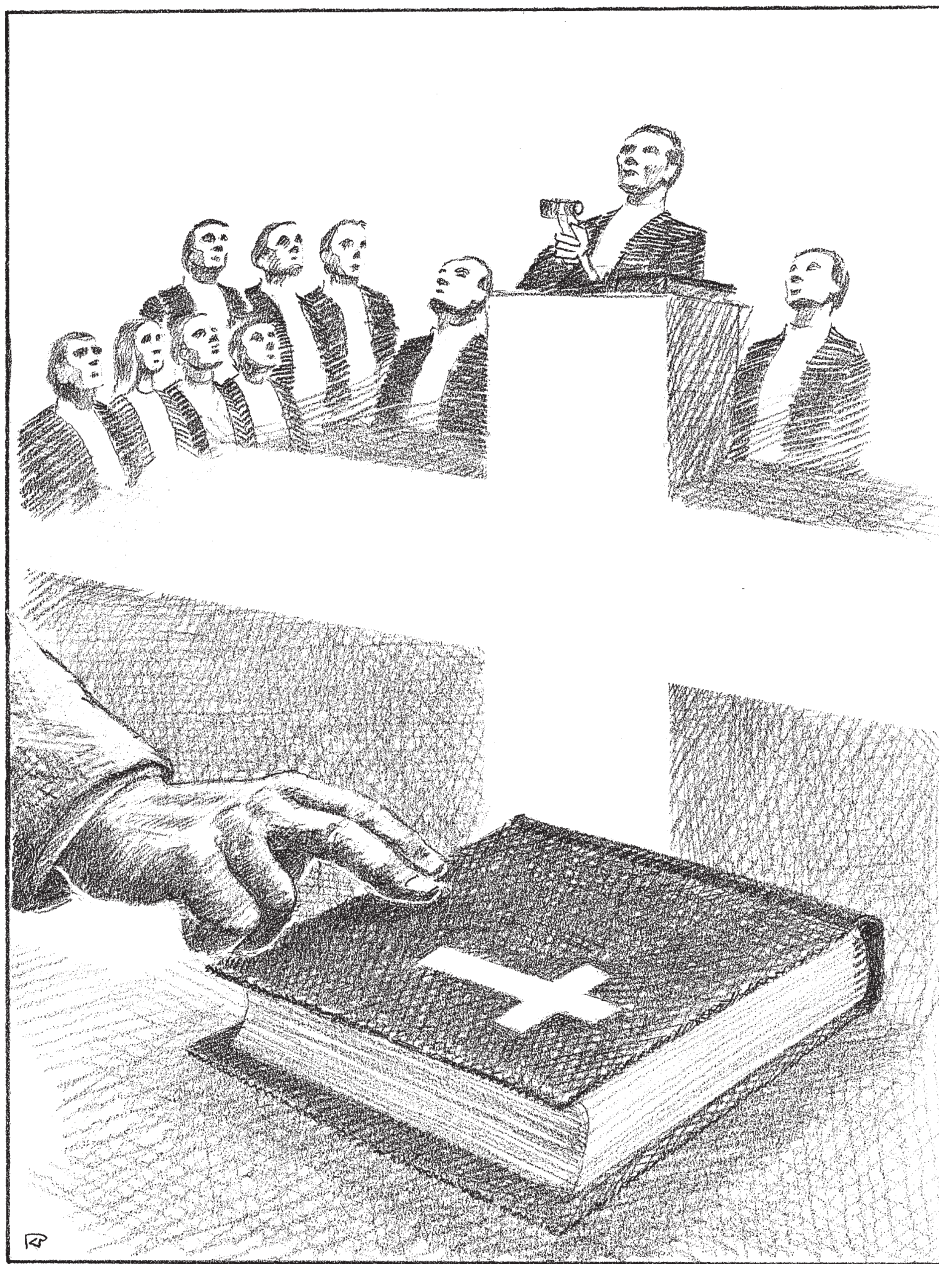
32. What does God say about wishing evil on someone?

Wishing evil on someone by God's name is calling down God's anger and punishment on any person or ourselves. All wishing of evil is forbidden.

James 3: 9,10: (With the tongue) bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Rom. 12:14: Bless them who persecute you; bless, and curse not.

Zech. 8:17: Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor.



"Fear the Lord thy God and...swear by his name." Deut. 6:13

Assignment: Read II Sam. 16:7,8: Shimei cursed David; Matt. 26:74: Peter cursed himself; Matt. 27:25: The Jews called down God's anger and punishment on themselves. Discuss: Why is it not right to use God's name as a curse word or complaint, and why is it also wrong to use other curse words?

33. When is swearing forbidden?

Swearing is forbidden under the following circumstances:

1. False oath: A person swears he is telling the truth even though he is lying.

Zech. 8:17: Love no false oath.

Assignment: Read Matt. 26:72: Peter's false oath.

2. Swearing in sinful matters:

Assignment: Read Acts 23:12: The Jews swore they would kill Paul.

3. Swearing in uncertain matters: When we swear that something is true, but are not sure that it is:

Zech. 8:16: Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor.

4. Thoughtless and frivolous swearing:

Assignment: Read: Matt. 14:6-10: Herod's frivolous oath.

5. Swearing in support of something that is wrong:.

Assignment: Read 1 Sam. 28:8-10: Saul's oath.

6. Swearing in unimportant matters of everyday life:

Assignment: Read: Matt 5:33-37: Jesus' warning.

34. When are we permitted and even required to swear?

All swearing or taking an oath in God's name is not forbidden. An oath is proper, permitted and commanded when it is required to confirm the truth in important matters. In such an instance it is for the glory of God and the welfare of our neighbor. When we swear by God's name we call upon God to witness the truth of what we say.

2 Cor. 1:23: I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth.

Deut. 6:13: Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His name.

Heb. 6:16: Men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

Ecc. 8:2: I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.

Assignment: Read Gen. 14:22,23 and 24:2-9: Abraham, the father of faith, took an oath and demanded an oath from his servant; Matt. 26:63,64: Jesus agreed to an oath. Cite some examples of proper oaths in our day and age.

35. What is using witchcraft by God's name?

Using witchcraft by God's name is using God's name in a superstitious way; for example, to heal sicknesses, reveal secret matters and to predict the future. People who engage in this sin may, as a punishment, become allied with the devil.

Lev. 19:31: Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God.

Deut. 18:10-12: There shall not be found among you anyone that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.

Assignment: Read 1 Sam. 28:5-14: Saul's delusion; Acts 8:9-24: Simon, the sorcerer. Discuss occultism and spiritism in the light of the Bible.

36. What is lying and deceiving by God's name?

The person who, in God's name, spreads, defends and promotes false doctrine and a godless life, lies and deceives by God's name.

Jer. 23:31: Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith.

Matt. 15: 8,9: This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Matt. 7:21: Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.

37. In What way does god warn us not to take this Commandment lightly?

God has added a serious warning to the Second Commandment: "For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

Assignment: Read Acts 5:1-11: The punishment of Ananias and Sapphira.

38. How are we to use God's name?

God wants us to use His name in accordance with the Bible in a sincere and respectful manner.

Ps. 115:1: Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

1. God wants us to trust in His name in all times of trouble.

Ps. 50:15: Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.

Assignment: Read Matt. 8:23-27: The disciples in distress; Matt. 15:22:

The Canaanite woman; Luke 23:42,43: The thief on the cross.

2. God wants us to trust in His name when we pray:

Matt. 7:7: Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.

Luther says: “For this end it is also of service that we form the habit of daily commending ourselves to God, with soul and body, wife, children, servants, and all that we have, against every need that may occur; whence also the blessing and thanksgiving at meals, and other prayers, morning and evening, have originated and remain in use.”

3. God wants us to **thank** and **praise** His name. This occurs in our prayers of thanks and hymns of praise and at other times when we confess that we have received all the good things we have as gifts from God.

James 1:17: Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.

Ps. 103:1,2: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Assignment: Read Luke 17:11-19.

4. God wants us to tell others about Him with our words and deeds.

Ps. 145:10-12: All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee. They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power, to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom.

Confessing that we are Christ’s disciples, faithfulness and honesty in our everyday lives, conscientiousness and a sense of responsibility in all things at home, at work and elsewhere, a contented and friendly spirit – all these are noble testimonies of our faith.

2 Cor. 3:3: Ye are...the epistle of Christ.

5. God wants us to confess His name before our fellow men. This happens especially when we teach the pure doctrine of God's Word, defend it against false teachings and commit everything we have to the glory of God and the eternal salvation of souls.

Matt. 10:32,33: Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.

Mark 8:38: Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

39. When do we thank and praise God's name?

We thank God's name everyday in our individual prayers and our home devotions. Together we thank and praise Him in prayer, and with our hymns and offerings at the worship services of our church.

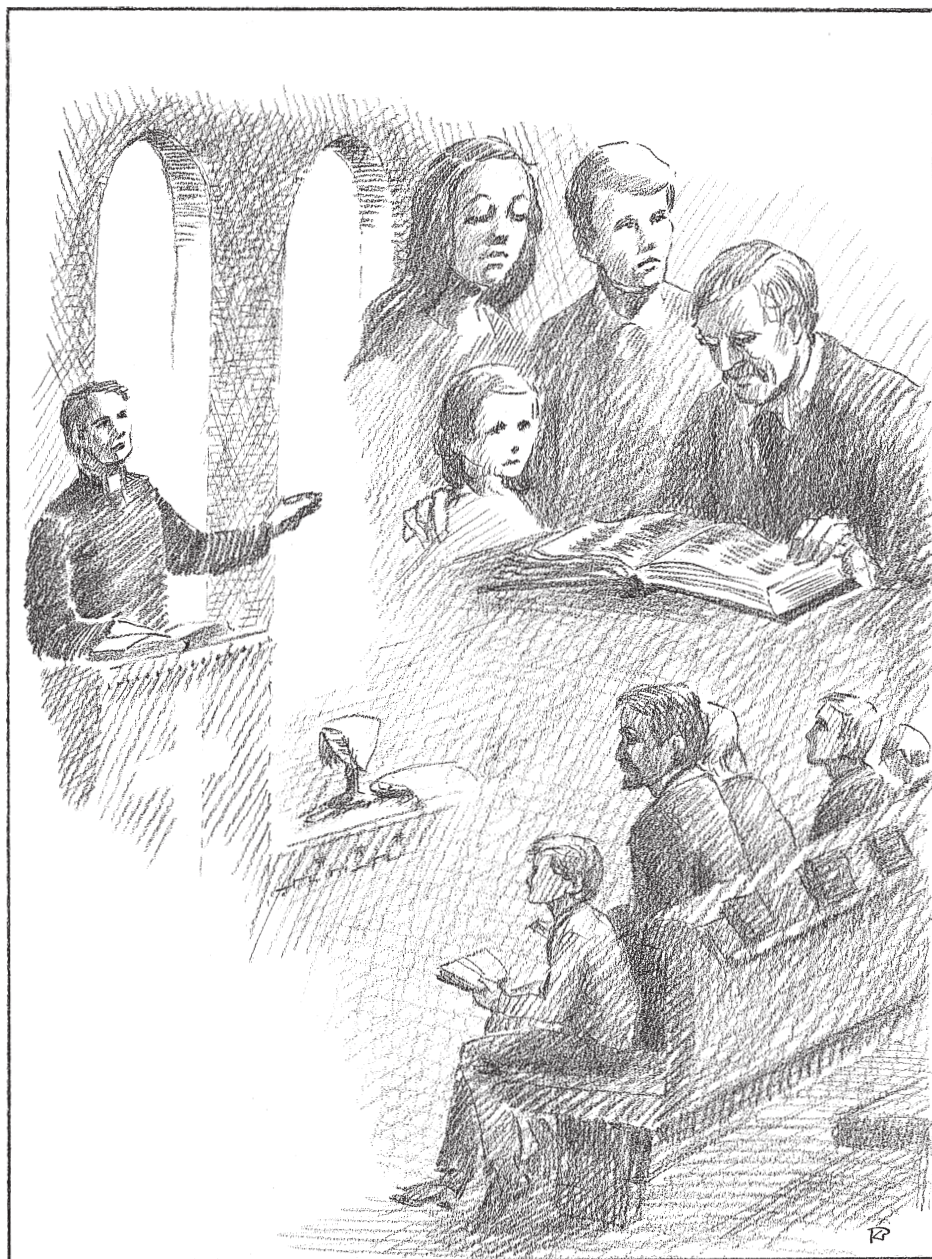
Col. 3:16: Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Prov. 3:9: Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.

Jonah 2:9: I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving.

The Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (Thou shalt sanctify the holy day.) What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and his Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.



"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet."

40. What day of the week was the Sabbath day during the Old Testament time?

The Old Testament day of rest was the Sabbath day or Saturday. On that day the people gathered to hear God's Word. Sabbath means rest. The Sabbath foreshadowed Christ in whom we have forgiveness for our sins without having to earn it by our own works. As a result, our conscience is at rest and we are eternally blessed.

Lev. 23:3: Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation.

Heb. 4:3: We which have believed do enter into rest.

Matt. 11:28: Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

41. How is the New Testament Church to observe the Third Commandment?

God has not bound the New Testament Church to the Jewish Sabbath, which was Saturday. Nor has he designated any other day to replace it. But he wants us to continue to gather together to worship Him and to hear His Word. Exercising their Christian liberty, Christians chose Sunday or the Lord's Day as a special day for gathering together for worship because Christ arose from the dead on Sunday, the first day of the week. He brought us genuine rest when He conquered sin and death.

John 5:18: He not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Col. 2:13-17: And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us.....Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath day.

Col. 3:16: Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spir-

itual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Assignment: Read Heb. 4:1-13: Rest for the people of God.

42. What does the word 'sanctify' mean?

To sanctify something means to set it apart and bless it with God's Word and prayer for its God-intended use. We cannot sanctify anything without God's Word.

1 Tim. 4:4,5: For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

43. What does it mean to sanctify the holy day?

We sanctify the holy day in the right way, when

1. We join our fellow Christians in our congregation and, with believing hearts, hear the pure Word of God, partake of the Sacraments, pray, and thank and praise God.
2. We individually use God's Word diligently, and when we sanctify our lives by believing this Word.

We do not sanctify the holy day if we only rest but do not use God's Word.

Acts 2:42: And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Heb. 10:25: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.

Acts 17:11: They received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

44. What does God require of us in the Third Commandment?

God requires that we hold His Word sacred, gladly hear it and live in accordance with it all the days of our lives.

John 17:17: Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth.

Luther: “At whatever hour, then, God’s Word is taught, preached, heard, read or meditated upon, there the person, day and work are sanctified thereby, not because of the external work, but because of the Word, which makes saints of us all...Where this is done, this commandment is in force and being fulfilled.”

45. What does God forbid in the Third Commandment?

God forbids us to despise His Word.

Hebr. 10:25: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is.

John 8:47: He that is of God heareth God’s words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

46. What does it mean to despise God’s Word?

God’s Word is despised when its divine authority is not respected.

This happens *openly* when the Bible is not regarded as God’s Word, and when God’s Word is not used, heard, or studied, and the Sacraments are not used.

It happens in a *hidden manner*, when they are indeed used, but reluctantly, carelessly and hypocritically.

Assignment: Read Jer. 36: Jehoiakim burned Jeremiah’s scroll, on which the Word of the Lord had been written; Luke 8:5-15: Jesus’ parable of the sower.

47. When do we despise God's Word?

We despise God's Word:

1. When we consider worldly matters more important than hearing God's Word.

Luke 8:11,14: From Jesus' parable of the sower: The seed is the Word of God....The seed which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

2. When we refuse to hear God's Word.

Luke 14: 16-24: Jesus' parable of the great banquet. The invited guests refused to come because worldly matters were more important to them. Read the entire parable.

3. When we do not believe the Word and do not want to live in accordance with it.

Heb. 4:2: For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

James 1:22: Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

48. Why is despising God's Word such a serious sin?

When a person despises God's Word, he despises God himself. At the same time he rejects God's good intention, because God wants to save him through His Word.

Luke 10:16: He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

John 8:47: He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

49. How do we hold the Word of God sacred?

We hold God's Word sacred, when we at all times with a truly respectful heart regard it as God's own word and with holy fear avoid desecrating it and taking it lightly.

1 Thes. 2:13: When ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the Word of God.

Is. 66:2: To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word.

50. When do we gladly hear God's Word?

We gladly hear God's Word, when possessing it means more to us than anything else. This is apparent when

1. We want to be present when our congregation meets to hear and study God's Word.
2. We support the preaching, teaching and spreading of God's Word according to our ability.
3. We faithfully participate in our family devotions.
4. We individually study God's Word diligently.

Ps. 119:72: The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

Ps. 26:8: Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honor dwelleth.

Ps. 122:1: I was glad when they said to me: Let us go into the house of the Lord.

Acts 2:42: And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Gal. 6:6: Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

Acts 17:11: They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Assignment: Read Luke 10:38-42: Mary, sister Martha. Discuss: How can we help to maintain the office of the ministry and spread the Word of God?

51. Why does God want us to support the preaching and teaching of His Word?

God not only wants *us* to benefit from His word, He wants *others* to receive this benefit also. Therefore He wants us to testify of Jesus and to do and support mission work both at home and in other countries.

Mark 16:15: Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

Matt. 28:19,20: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.

Assignment: Discuss: How can we do mission work?

52: When do we hear the Word of God gladly?

We hear the Word of God gladly, when we receive it in faith, keep it in our hearts, meditate upon it and live in accordance with it.

James 1:21: Receive with meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.

Luke 2:19: Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Luke 8:15: But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Luther says: “Any observance or work that is practiced without God’s Word is unholy before God, no matter how brilliantly it may shine.”

Assignment: Learn the festivals and seasons of the church year.

The Second Table

53. What does God speak about in the Commandments of the Second Table?

In the Commandments of the Second Table God tells us that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves.

54. Who is our neighbor?

Our neighbor is every person, whether he is our friend or our enemy, who needs our love and our help.

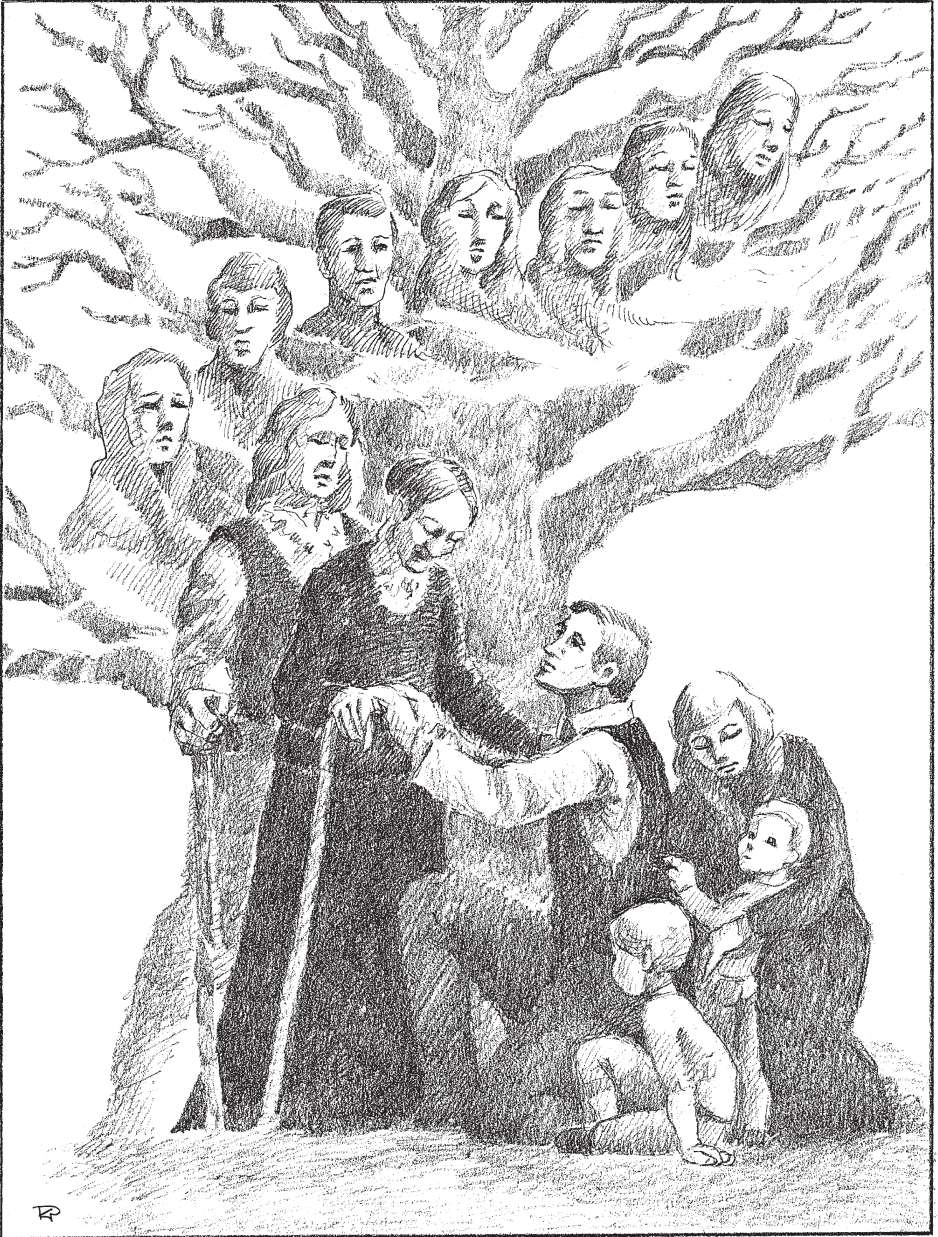
Gal. 6:10: As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are the household of faith.

Matt. 5:44,45: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Assignment: Read: Luke 10:29-37: The good Samaritan.

55. How are we to love our neighbor?

God wants us to love our neighbor just as sincerely and truly as we love ourselves. When we love our neighbor in the right way, we also love God.



"Honor thy father and thy mother."

Matt. 7:12: All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

1 John 4:20,21: If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, Whom he has not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also.

Assignment: Read: Matt. 25:31-46

The Fourth Commandment

Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. *What does this mean?* We should fear and love God that we may not despise our parents and masters, nor provoke them to anger, but give them honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem.

56. Whom does God speak about in the Fourth Commandment?

In the Fourth Commandment God speaks to us about those neighbors, whom He has placed over us to govern us and whom He especially wants us to honor. They are:

1. Father and mother and our guardians.

Prov. 20:20: Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

John 19:26,27: When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto his mother: Woman, behold thy son. Then saith He to the disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Assignment: Consider: Who substitute for parents at day-care centers, at school and at camp?.

2. Pastors and other teachers of the church.

2 Kings 2:12: Elisha saw this (Elijah being taken to heaven) and cried out, “My father! My father!”

1 Cor. 4:15: In Christ Jesus I (Paul) have begotten you through the Gospel.

3. Earthly government, government officials, law and order.

Rom. 13:1,6: Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God...They are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

1 Pet. 2:13,14: Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

4. Employers and directors.

2 Kings 5:13: His (Naaman’s) servants came near, and spake unto him, and said: My father.

1 Pet. 2:18: Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

Matt. 8:8-10: The centurion answered and said: Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me, and I say to this man: Go, and he goeth; and to another: Come, and he cometh; and to my servant: Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed: Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

5. The elderly.

Acts 22:1: (Paul said to them): Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence.

1 Tim. 5:1,2: Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren, the elder women as mothers, the younger as

sisters, with all purity.

57. What does God require of parents in this Commandment?

God requires that parents care for their children with paternal and maternal love, provide for their needs and their safety, teach them God's Word and instill in them a sincere fear of God. He also wants them to be good examples to their children in their faith, and life. The goal of a Christian upbringing is to enable children to grow into mature, responsible and independent adults, who believe God's Word and live in accordance with it, who respect their country's rightful laws, good order and good habits.

Eph. 6:4: Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Note: Discipline is the establishment of correct and safe limits within which a person is to live and act.

Assignment: Read Gen. 18:19, Deut. 6:6-9, Prov. 13:24; 22:15; 23:13,14 and Matt. 18:6,10. Discuss the topic: He who grows up without discipline, dies without honor.

58. What does the Fourth Commandment require of children and subordinates?

The Fourth Commandment requires that we honor, obey and love our own parents and all those whom God places over us. It also forbids us to despise them and hold them in contempt.

59. Why are we to honor our parents?

God himself has instituted parenthood, the office of the ministry and earthly governments. He has also ordained that the young are to respect the elderly. Therefore we are to obey the Fourth Commandment

for God's sake. When we honor our parents, we honor God. If we despise our parents, we despise God.

Titus 2:5: To be obedient... that the word of God be not blasphemed.

60. Who is actually taking care of us through our parents?

God himself is taking care of us through our parents, pastors and the governing authorities. Therefore also for this reason we are to honor them in holy fear with humility and obedience. "It is a far higher thing to honor than to love one, inasmuch as it comprehends not only love, but also modesty, humility and deference as to a majesty there hidden." (Luther).

Rom. 13:1,4: Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God...For he is the minister of God to thee for good.

61. When do we despise and anger our parents?

We despise and anger our parents and the governing authorities, when we do not give them the honor that God wants us to give them, but are disobedient, talk to them in a disrespectful manner or cause them grief in some other way. In this way we arouse them to rightful anger and force them to punish us.

Deut. 27: 16: Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say: Amen.

Rom. 13:3,4: For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Assignment: Read Gen. 37:32-35: The evil deeds of Jacob's sons caused their father grief.

62. What kind of a sin is the despising of one's parents?

Despising one's parents is a very serious sin which brings on God's severe punishment.

Prov. 30:17: The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

Rom. 13:2: Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Assignment: Read 1 Sam. 4:11: The death of Eli's sons, 2 Sam.15: Absalom's rebellion and death, and 2 Kings 2:23,24: The punishment of the youths of Bethel, who ridiculed Elisha.

63. When do we honor our parents?

We honor our parents and all those in authority, if in the true fear of God we give them the honor, that God demands, and at all time show that we honor them by our behavior.

Mal. 1:6: A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master.

Rom. 13:7: Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Lev. 19:32: Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God. I am the Lord.

Assignment: Read 1 Kings 2:19: King Solomon respected his mother, and Gen. 46:29: Joseph's warm-hearted and loving treatment of his father.

Luther says: “We must, therefore, impress it upon the young, that they should regard their parents as in God’s stead, and remember that however lowly, poor, frail, and odd they may be, nevertheless they are father and mother given them by God. They are not to be deprived of their honor because of their conduct or their failings... Furthermore, that also in our words we observe modesty toward them, do not accost them roughly, haughtily, and defiantly, but yield to them and be silent, even though they go too far.”

64. When do we serve our parents in the right way?

We serve our parents in the right way when, even without being told to do so, we do all manner of good to them and show them our heartfelt gratitude.

Assignment: Read Gen. 47:11,12: Joseph took care of his father, and John 19:26,27: The Lord Jesus provided for the care of his mother.

65. When are we properly obedient to our parents?

We are properly obedient to our parents, when we obey them in all matters in which God has given them authority over us.

Col. 3:20: Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

Assignment: Read Luke 2:51: The Lord Jesus was obedient to his parents.

66. When are we not to obey our parents?

If our parents, our boss, the law of our country or anyone else commands us to do something that is contrary to God’s Word, which we cannot therefore with a good conscience do, we are to obey God rather than men.

Acts 5:29: We ought to obey God rather than men.

Assignment: Read Ex. 1:15-21: The Hebrew midwives did not kill the male infants even though the king commanded them to do so, and Esther

3:13-5:2: Esther defied the law in order to save her people. Consider: Could situations arise today, that would prevent us from obeying a law or a given command?

67 When do we love and cherish our parents?

We love and cherish our parents when we desire that which is for their good, patiently endure their weaknesses, and pray for them.

Assignment: Read Gen. 45:3 and 50:1: Joseph's love for his father and 1 Tim. 5:4. Discuss what we can do at home.

68. What promise is added to the Fourth Commandment?

The following promise has been added to the Fourth Commandment: That it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.

69. What does God want to impress upon us with this promise?

With this promise God wants to impress upon us that he considers obedience to our parents to be a very important matter that results in a great temporal blessing, so that we would gladly obey this Commandment.

Eph. 6:2,3: Honor thy father and mother – which is the first commandment with promise – that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

The Fifth and following Commandments

In the Fourth Commandment God talked about those whom he has placed over us. In the Fifth and following Commandments God talks about all our neighbors and tells us that we are to genuinely love them regardless of their station in life.

The Fifth Commandment

Thou shalt not kill.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.

70. Who has the right to determine the length of a person's life?

Inasmuch as temporal life is a gift from the Creator, only God has the right to determine its length.

Job 14:5: His days are determined, the number of his months are with thee.

71. What sin does God forbid in the Fifth Commandment?

In the Fifth Commandment God forbids us, by our own authority, to take the life of a fellow human being or to harm it in any way.

72. When does human life begin?

Human life begins at conception, and with the Fifth Commandment God also protects the life of the fetus.

Ps. 139:13,16: For Thou hast possessed my reins; Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

Ps. 51:5: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Jer. 1:4-5: The Word of the Lord came to me, saying: Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.

When the Bible uses the personal pronouns, I and you, in referring to the fetus, this proves that we were God's personal works of creation already in our mother's womb, hence, before we were born.

Assignment: Consider: How we should view abortion from the Christian perspective. What if the fetus is not healthy? Read Amos 1:13 and Luke 1:41-44 and consider what these passages have to say about the question of abortion.

73. When is the Fifth Commandment broken?

The Fifth commandment is broken when:

1. Someone takes another person's life or his own life with his own hand or with the help of others. God therefore forbids premeditated murder, unpremeditated murder, suicide and participation in murder.

Lev. 19:16: Neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor. I am the Lord.

Acts 16:28: Do thyself no harm.

Assignment: Read Gen. 4:3-12: Cain murders Abel, 1 Sam. 12:9: David has Uriah killed, Deut. 22:8: causing death through carelessness, Matt. 27:5 and Joh. 17:12: Judas commits suicide and is eternally condemned, Amos 1:13: the sin of the Ammonites, and 2 Sam. 1:1-16: the Amalekites participated in Saul's suicide.

2. When we do or say something that shortens the life of our neighbor or makes life difficult for him. God also forbids us to harm ourselves or to shorten our own life through dissolute living or by needlessly endangering it.

Prov. 12:18: There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise is health.

Rom. 3:13-17: Their throat is an open sepulchre: with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known.

Ef. 4:22: Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

Matt.4:7: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Assignment: Read Gen. 37:19-35: Jacob's brothers sell Joseph into slavery and cause their father grief, Jer. 18:18: Jeremiah was accosted by malicious words, and Luke 10:30: the robbers on the way to Jericho. Discuss: In what type of situations do we endanger our own or our neighbor's life and health?

3. Our heart remains cold toward our neighbor, we don't help him when he needs help, we envy him, get angry at him and carry hatred toward him in our heart.

1 John 3:17: Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Matt. 15:19: Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders.

Eph. 4:26: Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

1 John 3:15: Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.

Assignment: Read Gen. 4:5: Cain envied Abel, Luke 10:31-32: The priest and the Levite, and Acts 7:54: The Jews ground their teeth at Stephen.

Luther says: "If you leave a person unclothed, even though you could give him clothing you thereby let him freeze to death. If you see someone suffering from hunger and do not feed him, you thereby let him die of starvation."

74. To whom has God given the authority to punish evil?

God has given parents the right and the responsibility to punish, their children's disobedience. This is to be done with discretion. The government also has the right and responsibility to punish evil doers and, in case of need, to protect the nation and people with the use of arms

from attack by the enemy.

Prov. 13:24: He that spareth his rod hateth his son.

Ps.103: 13: Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

Gen. 9:6: Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man.

Rom. 13:4: For he (public authority) beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

75. May a Christian himself avenge any wrong that has been done to him?

A Christian does not have the right to take vengeance into his own hands, but he does have the right to seek justice in courts of law, thus enabling God to avenge the evil doer through the government.

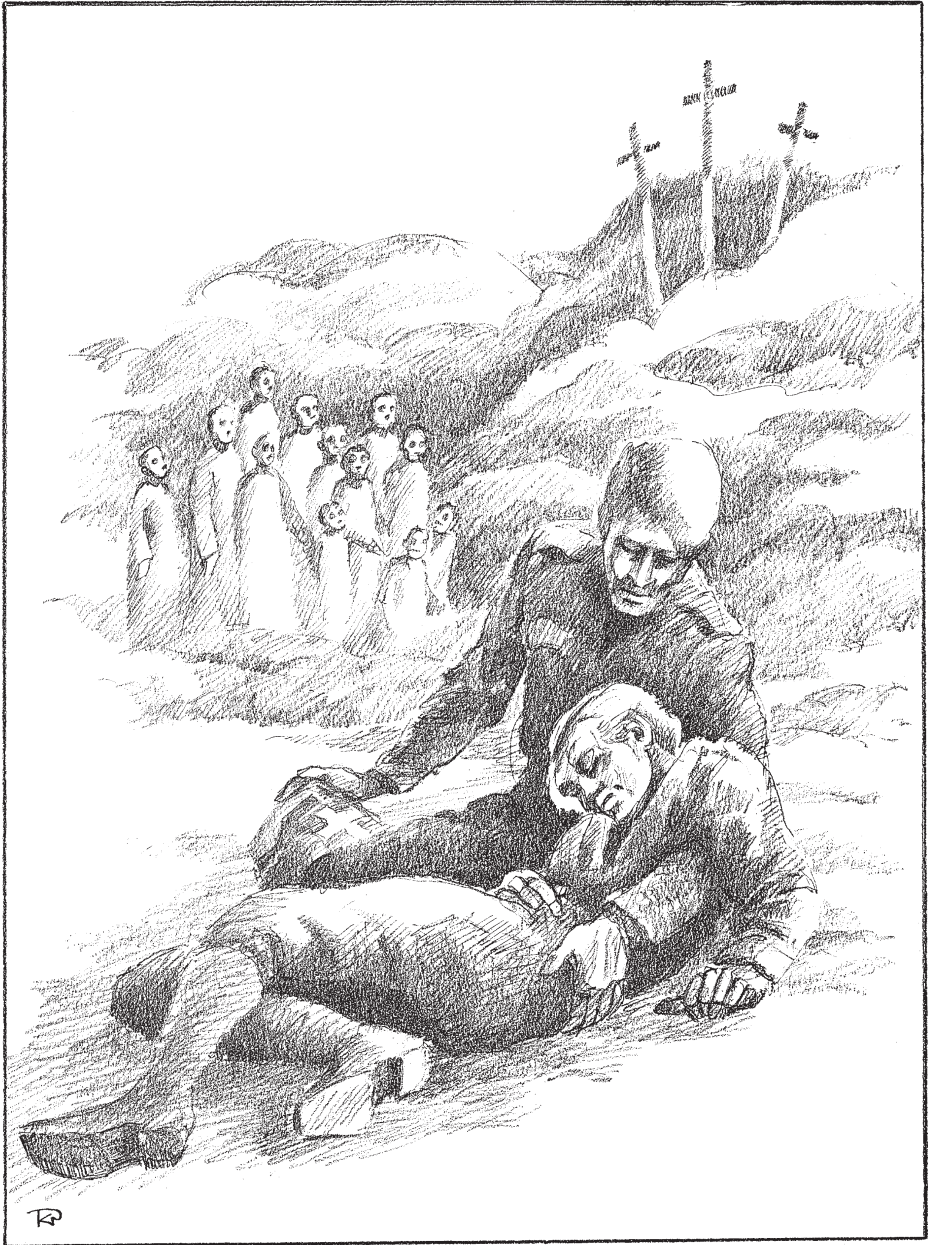
Rom. 12:19: Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written: Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.

Rom. 13:4: He (public authority) is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Assignment: Read Acts 25:9-12: Paul appealed to Caesar.

76 . Are we permitted to defend ourselves in an emergency?

We have the right to defend ourselves in an emergency. In such a situation, the person himself, who is under attack, represents the government, inasmuch as the government representatives are unable to help. The civil law also grants him permission to do this. The need for self-defense should not be exaggerated.



"Let us love in deed and in truth".

77. When do we have the right and the responsibility to sacrifice our life?

We have the right and the responsibility to sacrifice our life and health, when matters ordained by God require that we do so: for example, matters pertaining to our earthly calling, the defense of our country, the protection of our neighbor from harm and danger.

1 John. 3:16: Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Neh. 4:14: Fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

Assignment: Read Gen. 14:14-16: Abraham, the father of faith, went to war to save Lot.

78. What does God require of us in the Fifth Commandment?

In the Fifth Commandment God requires that we help preserve our neighbor's life and help him in such a way that his life will redound to his temporal and eternal good. We will appreciate the purpose of earthly life, if we remember that God has given it to us as a time of grace in order that we might be saved.

1 Joh. 3:18: My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.

1 Thess. 5:14-15: Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

79. How can we help our neighbor?

We can help our neighbor by coming to his aid when he needs help.

Is. 58:6-7: Is not this the fast that I have chosen... to deal thy bread to

the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh.

Rom. 12:20-21: If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Assignment: Read 1 Sam. 26:7-12, 21-24: David saved the life of his persecutor, king Saul, and Luke 10:33-35: the good Samaritan.

80. When do we show proper concern for our neighbor?

We show proper concern for our neighbor, when we take good care of him until he is able to care for himself.

Luke 10:35: On the morrow, when he (the good Samaritan) departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him: Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

81. What should be our attitude toward our neighbor?

We are to have a patient, merciful, and forgiving attitude toward our neighbor.

Luke 6:27-28: Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you. Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Luke 6:36: Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Matt. 5:25: Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him.

Assignment: Read Luke 23:34: Jesus prays for those who crucified him.

82. How can we get a merciful heart?

Our heart becomes merciful toward our neighbor, when in our hearts we confess our own sins to God and believe that he has forgiven all our sins as well as all our neighbor's sins. Then we will remember that God has also created our neighbor in his own image and has also redeemed him. And we will remember that God's grace in Christ is also our neighbor's only source of comfort when his sins cause him distress.

James 3:9-10: Therewith (the tongue) bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Eph. 4:32: Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Rom. 14:15: Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

Assignment: Read Matt. 25:35: Christ's words to believers on Judgment Day.

The Sixth commandment

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse.

83. What Does God want to protect in the Sixth Commandment?

In the Sixth Commandment God wants to protect everyone's moral character and the sanctity of marriage, which He has instituted, by exhorting us to lead chaste and decent lives and to keep marriage holy.

Prov. 4:23: Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life.

84. What is adultery?

Adultery includes the following:

1. The sinful sexual lust of the heart.

Matt. 15:19: Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications.

Col. 3:5-6: Mortify, therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry, for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.

2. Covetous or seductive looks and gestures:

Matt. 5:27-28: Jesus said: Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

2 Pet. 2:14. Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin... cursed children.

3. Improper talk and double-entendres:

Eph. 5:3-4: But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks.

4. All other forms of sexual immorality such as sexual relationships outside of marriage, adultery, group sex, rape, seduction, homosexuality, bestiality, etc.

Heb. 13:4: Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Note: The word 'marriage', as it is used here, is the translation of the Greek word 'gamos', which means nuptials or the marriage feast. God therefore wants Christians to honor the marriage ceremony.

1 Cor. 5:1: It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

Rom. 1:26-27: For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

Lev. 18:23: Neither shalt thou lie with any beast.

85. How are youth and others, who are not married, to observe the Sixth Commandment?

When you keep company with a member of the opposite sex, remember that you are in the presence of God, and pray to Him for strength to preserve your own and your companion's chastity.

When you seek a spouse for yourself, pray for God's guidance. Ask Him for a mate who is a believer, and trust that God will hear your prayer.

You have the right to seek as your spouse, only someone who is eligible for marriage; in other words, such a one who is not already married or promised to someone else. See also question 93.

1 Thess. 4:3-5: For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication, that everyone of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God.

Prov. 18:22: Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord.

Ps. 6:9: The Lord hath heard my supplication.

Assignment: Consider: Why is it important that your spouse has the same faith as you have? Read Gen. 6:1-8, where the term, “sons of God”, refers to men who are not believers, and the term, “daughters of men”, refers to unbelieving women.

86. What is engagement?

When a man and a woman have agreed that they will marry, they are engaged.

Engagement is therefore a promise to marry and to live together as man and wife until death ends the marriage.

Those who have become engaged are promised to each other, but have not yet been given to each other. The purpose of the engagement announcement is to make public the intention to marry. Assignment: Consider: What benefits are there from an engagement announcement?

87. What does a valid engagement include?

A rightful and valid engagement includes the following:

1. Both of the engaged persons are suitable for marriage and have the right to marry.
2. They have the permission of their parents or the civil authorities.
3. They give their promise to marry voluntarily, without any coercion from anyone, and do not conceal anything relevant to the matter.

Assignment: Read Gen. 24:48-58: Rebekah’s engagement. Consider: What matters cannot be concealed when becoming engaged?

88. Is engagement binding?

The Bible calls those who are engaged, husband and wife. In this way it indicates that couples have entered into matrimony by promise already when the promise to marry was given. If an engagement is a valid engagement, it is binding on the conscience. For this reason Christians must seriously consider the matter before becoming engaged, for the matter in question is a life-long matter.

Assignment: Read Matt. 1:20-24: The angel calls Mary, Joseph's wife although they were only engaged to be married and didn't live together.

89. How is an engaged couple to live?

An engaged couple does not have the right to live in the marriage relationship before the marriage takes place, because God has not as yet given them to each other. They are therefore not to begin living together before the marriage ceremony, but, faithful to each other, they are separately, in a humble way, to prepare for their future life together.

90. What is marriage?

Marriage, which was instituted by God, is a life-union of a man and a woman. It is entered into by engagement in the form of a promise, but only when the marriage ceremony takes place, does God give the man and the woman to each other.

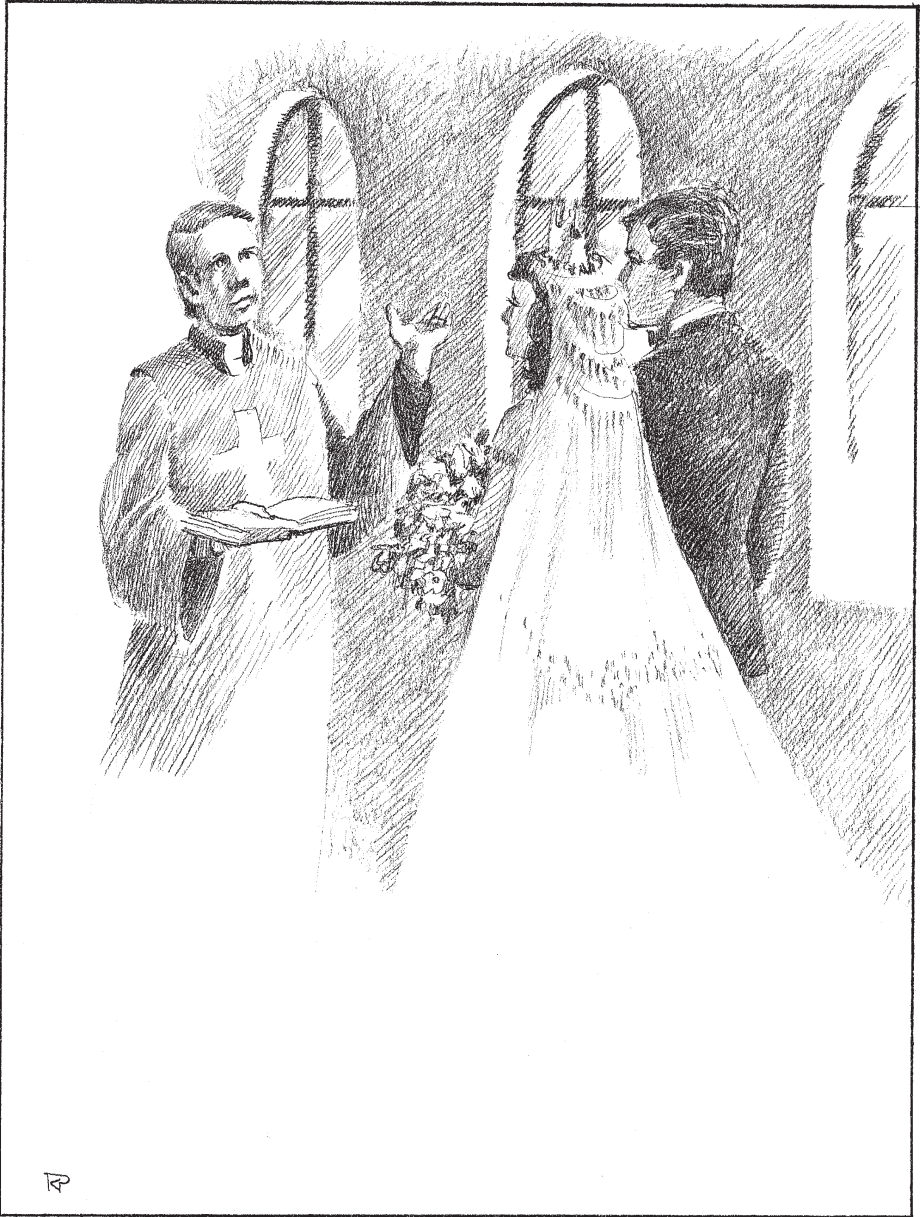
Christians want to sanctify their marriage with a marriage ceremony in which God's Word and prayer are used, and to receive God's blessing for their life together.

Marriage lasts until death separates husband and wife from each other.

Gen. 5:2: Male and female created he Them, and blessed them.

Matt. 19:5-6: For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

Assignment: Read Gen. 2:18-24: The institution of marriage. Read Rom. 7:3-3, I Cor. 7:39



"Let marriage be held in honor among all."

91. What order has God established for the marriage relationship?

God, who is a God of order, in His love, has established a **certain order** that is to prevail in the marriage relationship. In this relationship the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the Head of the Church. God wants this order to prevail in a spirit of mutual, self-sacrificing **love**, so that the marriage will be a happy one.

Gen. 2:18: It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

1 Cor. 14:33: For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

Eph. 5:22-25, 33: **Wives**, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church, and He is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. **Husbands** love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it... Nevertheless, let everyone of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

92. What is the purpose of marriage?

The purpose of marriage is the intimate life together of a husband and wife, who, faithful to each other, share the joys and sorrows of life during both festive and ordinary times. Through such a union God wants to richly bless both husband and wife.

Marriage is also the basis of organized society.

Husband and wife are especially blessed, when God permits them to become fathers and mothers, and to raise their children in the home they provide for them.

A God-fearing Christian home is a precious gift of God, and is a great blessing to the occupants of the home. It is also a good example to

others and a blessing to them.

Gen. 2:24: Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.

Gen. 1:28: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

Ps. 127:3: Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

93. When is a divorce permissible?

It is to be remembered, that the break-up of a home and marriage is never the will of God, for God wants every marriage and every home to remain intact. But if the marriage has actually already been broken by the unfaithfulness of a spouse, God's Word gives the innocent spouse permission to obtain a legal divorce and to marry again. Nevertheless, if possible, efforts should be made to restore the broken marriage. God's Word also grants permission for a new marriage, when an unbelieving spouse deserts a believing spouse because of his or her faith. In that case the believer has the right to remarry. (Other marriage-related facts: see Matt. 19:10-12).

Matt. 19:9: Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery.

1 Cor. 7:5: But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God hath called us to **peace**.

The Lutheran Confessions: "Unjust also is the tradition which forbids an innocent person to marry after the divorce." (Of the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops, 78).

Note: Society approves of divorce on a much broader basis, because it includes not only Christians but also unbelievers.

94. What punishment results from breaking the Sixth Commandment?

When a person sins against the Sixth Commandment he may already suffer in many ways while here on earth. But the person who remains impenitent and does not flee to the refuge of God's grace, will suffer eternal damnation.

Heb. 13:4: Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Eph. 5:5: For this ye know, that no whoremonger nor unclean person... hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

95. Can sins against the Sixth Commandment be forgiven

God gladly forgives those who have sinned against the Sixth Commandment and all the other Commandments, for Christ's sake, because Christ has atoned for all sins. We can penitently confess our sins to God, trust in His grace, and began, as it were, our life anew.

Rom. 5:20: Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

CONCERNING CERTAIN MATTERS OF SIGNIFICANCE RE- LATED TO CHRISTIAN LIVING

96. What sort of things must a Christian avoid in order to remain on the right road?

1. Bad company: the type that spends time idling, engages in improper talk, blasphemes God or other people, and incites oneself or others to commit sin.

Ps. 1:1: Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

1 Cor. 15:33: Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

1 Tim. 5:13: And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

Being idle is not wise, because idleness does not inspire good incentives or thoughts, but induces us to dwell on the evil thoughts and temptations that arise from our hearts and our surroundings.

2. Using drugs and alchohol to satisfy lust or to induce a state of intoxication. When we are faced with difficulties, we must not seek refuge in such things, but rather trust in God and ask Him for help; for He helps us in the right way at the right time according to His good will. Note: Even a little experimentation with drugs may be detrimental, because it may lead to addiction and a person's ruin.

Prov. 23:32: Look not upon the wine when it is red.

Eph. 5:18: Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.

1 Cor. 6:10: Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

3. Dancing of the type that involves sexually arousing movement and music, improper words, and company that tempts one to engage in sin.

Rom. 13:13-14: Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision of the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

4. The wrong type of spirituality and all other fleshly pursuits.

5. We are also to beware that we do not use our eyes to view, our ears to hear, or our imagination to follow and approve films, programs or other forms of entertainment and life styles that glorify crime, immorality,

unfaithfulness and other types of sinful living.

Assignment: Discuss: Where will we possibly be confronted with such forms of entertainment, and when so confronted, what should we do?

Note: Everything that God has created also has its right use. It is used properly when its use is in accordance with God's Commandments.

97. What things help us to lead a morally clean and proper life?

The use of God's Word, prayer, the worship services and activities of our congregation, being in the company of fellow Christians, work, study, and good hobbies, help us to think, speak and do that which is right.

Phil. 4:8: Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think of these things.

Mark 14:38: Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

98. What are we to think of those matters which are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's word?

There are matters which God has neither commanded nor forbidden, which are also called adiaphora. God has given us the freedom to deal with these matters according to our discretion. In matters such as these, however, the government, our parents, our employers and supervisors, each in their own sphere of responsibility, may give commands, which we are conscience-bound to obey because of the Fourth Commandment.

We are also to remember that we must not offend those weak Christians,

who consider certain matters of free choice to be sin, because they do not understand true Christian freedom. Brotherly love demands that in cases of this type, we refrain from exercising our Christian freedom, in order that no one will become confused and be in danger of acting contrary to his weak conscience. In cases like these we are to be willing to conform in a spirit of unselfishness, and at the same time to teach the weak what true Christian freedom is.

Assignment: Read 1 Cor. 8 and Rom. 14:13-23. Discuss: What are some matters of this type, that are related to our lives?

If legalistically inclined sects or individuals demand that we avoid and consider as sin, matters that are free according to God's Word, we must not even for a moment submit to their demands, but must rather hold fast to our freedom, as a matter of confession of faith, and defend the truth of the Gospel.

Assignment: Read Gal. 2:45 and 5:1, also Col. 2:16.

If we are not certain as to whether or not something is sinful, we are first to study the matter in the light of God's Word, and only then are we to act, for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).

The Seventh Commandment

Thou shalt not steal.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may not take our neighbor's money or goods, nor get them by false ware or dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and business.

99. What does God protect in the Seventh Commandment?

In the Seventh Commandment God protects our neighbor's earthly possessions.

100. From whom have we received our earthly possessions and the right to own them?

God has given us our earthly possessions, for He is the creator and owner of all things. God blesses our life on this earth by providing us with our livelihood, salaries and other forms of income, wealth and possessions.

Ps. 24: 1: The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

Matt. 6:26: Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Assignment: Read Job 42:12-13: The blessing that Job received.

101. What things are included in God's life-plan for us, as far as our earthly possessions are concerned?

God's life-plan for us includes, among other things, work and wages, money and possessions, the right to buy, sell, own and establish businesses. People have the right to acquire earthly possessions through honest means, and they also have the right of ownership.

2 Thess. 3:10: If any would not work, neither should he eat.

Luke 10:7: The laborer is worthy of his hire.

Assignment: Read Gen. 23:3-18: Abraham buys property, and Mark 1:19-20: Zebedee's fishing enterprise and its workers. Discuss: What are we to think of unemployment? Read Matt. 20:1-12.

102. What does God forbid in the Seventh Commandment?

In the Seventh Commandment God forbids all stealing or all taking of other people's property without their permission, to their detriment.

The following are types of this sin:

1. Assault (robbery):

Assignment: Read Luke 10:30: (robbers)

2. Stealing

Assignment: Read Josh. 7:20-26: Achan, 2 Kings 5:19-27: Gehazi, and John 12:6: Judas Iscariot.

3. Dealing with stolen goods

Prov. 29:24: Whoso is partner with a thief, hateth his own soul.

4. Profiting, at the expense of our neighbor, through fraudulent business deals.

Jer. 22:13: Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work.

5. Usury. Illegally charging exorbitant interest, profiting by charging interest from those in need, and extortion.

Ex. 22:25: If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

Assignment: Discuss: Is charging interest always sinful? Read Matt. 25:27 and Luke 19:23.

6. Taking unwise loans and not paying back loans.

Ps. 37:21: The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again.

7. Laziness.

Assignment: Read Prov. 6:6 and 2 Thess. 3:10. Also discuss on what basis a Christian can with a good conscience accept a pension or welfare.

8. Desiring the possession of others, envy, selfishness and greed.

Matt. 15:19: Out of the heart proceed... thefts.

1 Tim. 6:10: The love of money is the root of all evil.

9. Using common possessions for one's personal use, wasting them or not properly caring for them; being dishonest in paying one's taxes or stealing from the community or business establishments in some other way.

103. Who sees every theft and renders punishment for it?

God sees every theft and eternally punishes everyone, who does not repent of his sin. Therefore we must carefully guard against falling into this sin. If we have wrongfully acquired our neighbor's possessions, we must confess our sin and, as far as possible, make restitution.

1 Thess. 4:36: For this is the will of God... that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such.

Eph. 4:28: Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Assignment: Read Luke 19:8: Zaccheus promised to pay back what he had acquired through wrongful means.

104. What does God require of us in the Seventh Commandment?

In the Seventh Commandment God requires that we act in such a way, that our neighbor can continue to make a living and prosper and that his possessions can remain intact and increase.

This occurs when:

1. We help our neighbor make a living with good advice and deeds.

Heb. 13:16: But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifice God is well pleased.

Assignment: Read Gen. 46:33-34: Joseph advises his brothers, and Ex. 23:4: taking care of our enemy's possessions.

2. We faithfully take care of the private and corporate property entrusted to our care.

1 Cor. 10:24: Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

Assignment: Read Gen. 39:4-6: Joseph faithfully took care of his employer's property, Gen. 41:46-57: and of the Egyptian economy.

3. We are ready to serve our neighbor with our possessions, trusting that God in His grace will take care of us.

Prov. 19:17: He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Assignment: Read Gen. 13:4-12: Abraham permitted Lot to choose the best area.

105. What are we to remember in particular?

In particular we are to remember that accumulating possessions is not the substance or goal of a Christian's life. A Christian's goal is the bliss of heaven. We use our possessions in the right way, when we use them to serve the members of our family and our neighbors, particularly the needy, and to support the work of God's kingdom.

Luke 12:15: Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

1 Tim. 6:17,18: Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.

Gal. 2:10: We should remember the poor.

2 Cor. 9:7: Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.

The Eighth Commandment

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. *What does this mean?* We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.

106. What does God protect in the Eighth Commandment?

In the Eighth Commandment God protects our neighbor's honor and reputation.

107. What does God forbid in the Eighth Commandment?

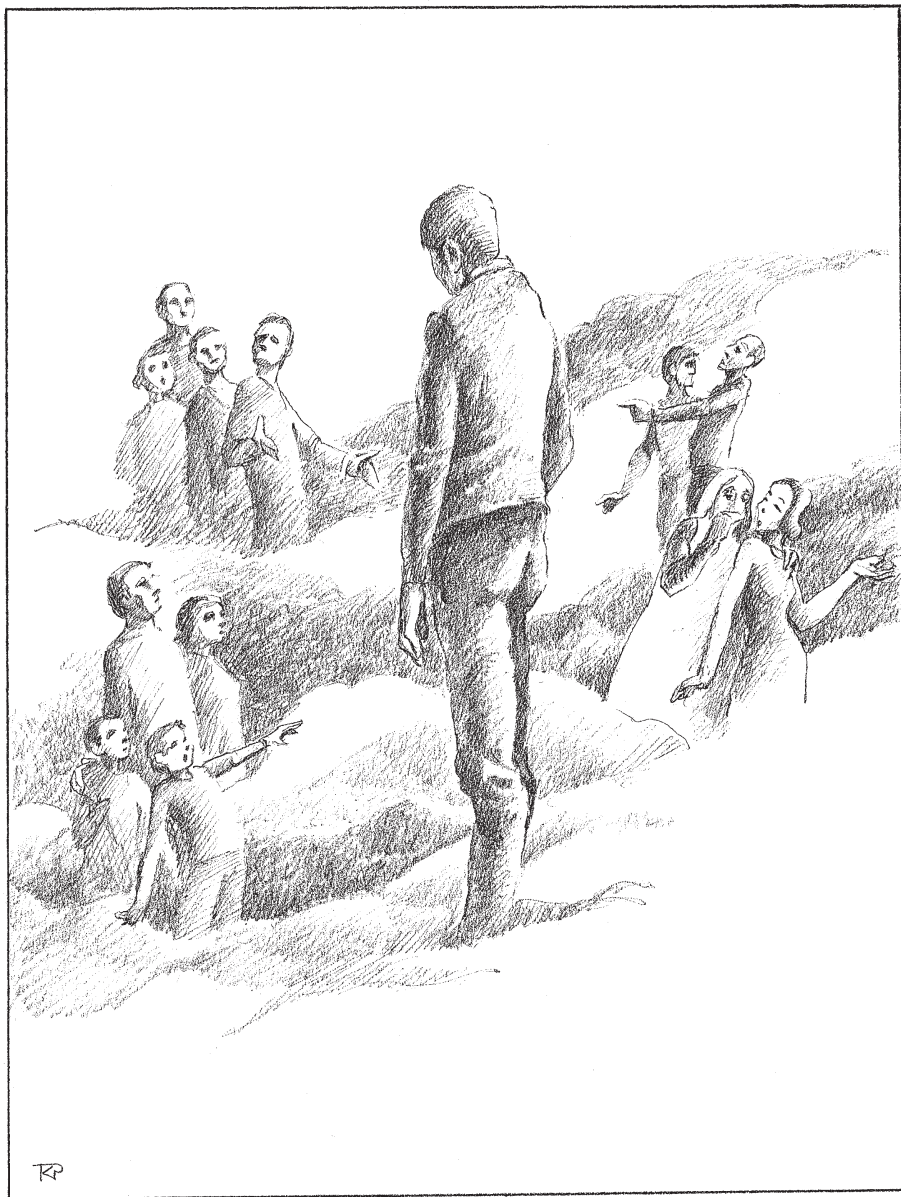
God forbids us to speak evil about our neighbor unless God's Word commands or obligates us to do so.

108. What is false witness?

False witness includes all thoughts and words originating in our corrupt hearts that harm our neighbor's honor and reputation.

The following are examples of this sin:

1. Lies, false testimony, false accusations, and false defense before a court of law or a government official, and false judgments.



"Speak not evil one of another".

False witnesses:

Prov. 19:5: A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.

Assignment: Read Acts 6:11-14: False witnesses against Stephen.

False accusers: Read Matt. 27:12 and Joh. 18:29-30.

Enacting unjust laws and defending a wrong matter.

Is. 10:1-2: Woe unto them that decree unrighteousness decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!

False judges:

Prov. 17:15: He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.

Luke 23:24: And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required (to crucify Jesus).

2. When we speak about our neighbor with a deceitful and evil intent, contrary to the truth, and refrain from speaking the truth (gossip and slander).

Eph.4:25: Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Joh. 8:44: Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Assignment: Read 2 Kings 5:19-27: Gehazi's lies.

3. When we reveal what our neighbor has told us in confidence.

Prov. 11:13: A talebearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

4. When we speak evil about our neighbor to others.

James 4:11: Speak not evil one of another.

Luke 6:37: Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned.

5. When in our hearts we harbor evil against our neighbor and think evil of him.

Zech. 8:17: Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor, and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate.

109. How are we to apply the Eighth Commandment?

We are to apply the Eighth Commandment and justice in such a way that it is not used against the innocent. Thus, for example, concealing the truth from the enemies of our country or from evil doers, so that they cannot carry out their plans, is not a sin against this commandment — true love of our neighbor obligates us to do so. We are also obligated to reveal the evil intentions of others when we have knowledge of them. The government, parents, and some others, each in their own sphere of jurisdiction, have the right and the obligation to admonish, judge and punish evil. The congregation and its pastor have the right to use the power of the Office of the Keys.

Assignment: Read Joshua 2:4-5, and Heb. 11:31: Rahab did not speak the truth to the enemies of Israel. 1 Sam. 20:12-13: Jonathon promised to reveal evil intentions to David, and Acts 23:12-16: Paul's nephew told Paul about the Jews' intention to murder him.

110. How are we to speak about our neighbor?

God wants us always to speak sincerely about our neighbor and in his or her best interest.

Rom. 12:9: Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cling to that which is good.

Col. 4:6: Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

This occurs when

1. We defend our neighbor against lies, gossip, and false and exaggerated accusations.

Prov. 31:8-9: Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

Luther: “Therefore, if you encounter an idle tongue which betrays and slanders some one, contradict such a one promptly to his face, that he may blush; thus many a one will hold his tongue who else would bring some poor man into bad repute, from which he would not easily extricate himself. For honor and a good name are easily taken away, but not easily restored.”

2. We sincerely speak about our neighbor’s truly good qualities and deeds, and commend him.

1 Sam. 19:4: And Jonathon spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him: Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been theeward very good.

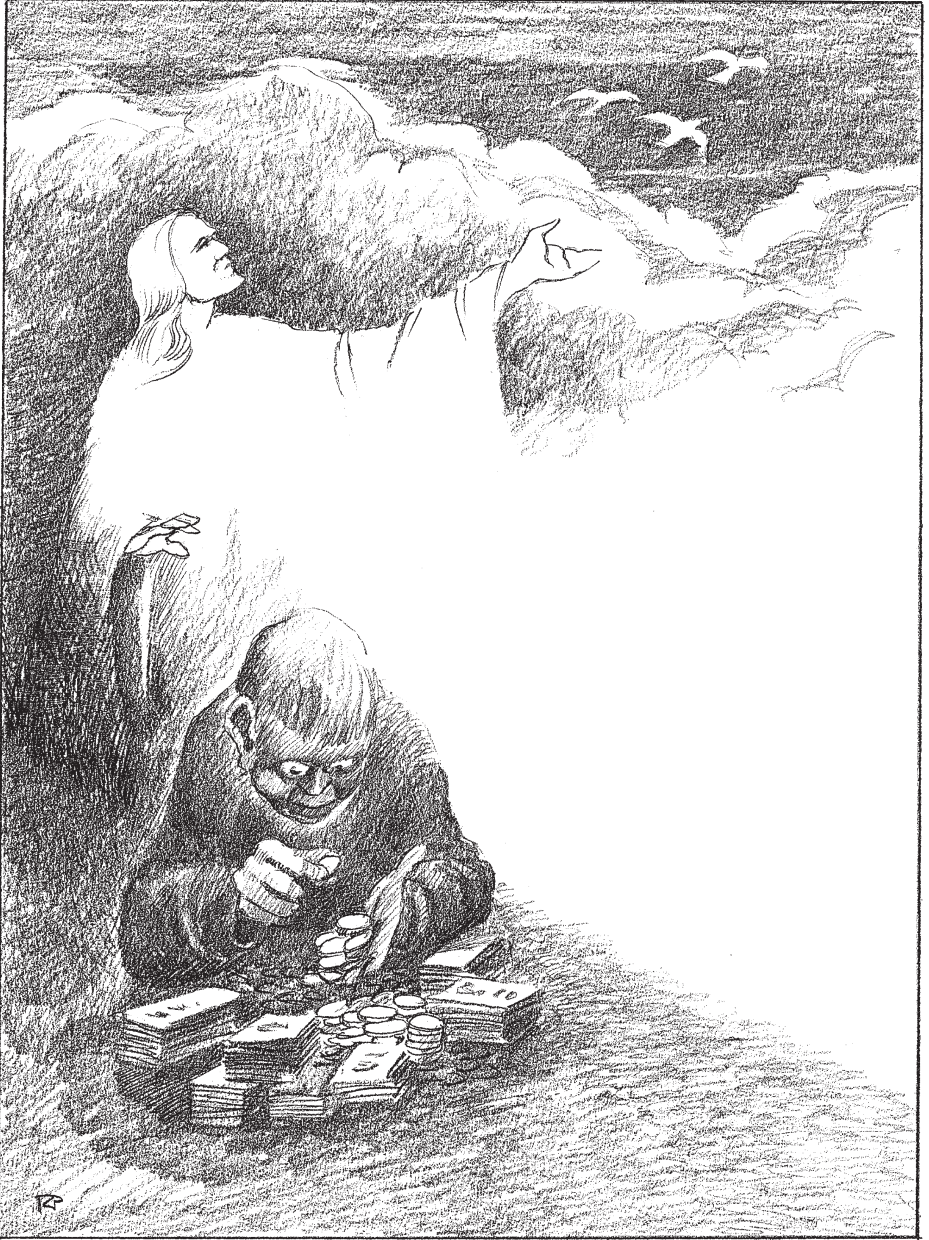
3. We don’t readily believe evil about our neighbor, but put the best construction on everything. We cover up his weaknesses and mistakes, pray for him, hope for improvement and always speak the truth ourselves.

Prov. 14:30: A sound heart is the life of the flesh; but envy the rottenness of the bones.

1 Pet.4:8: And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

1 Cor. 13:7: (Love)...beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Luther: “It is especially an excellent and noble virtue for one always to explain advantageously and put the best construction upon all he may hear of his neighbor (if it be not notoriously evil), or at any rate to condone it over and against the poisonous tongues that are busy wherever they can pry out and discover something to blame in a neighbor,



"Behold the fowls of the Air".

and that explain and pervert it in the worst way.”

Assignment: Read James 3:5-8: Our tongue can be the cause of a great curse or a great blessing.

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

Ninth Commandment: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house. What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may not craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, nor obtain it by a show of right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

Tenth Commandment. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's. What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may not estrange, force, or entice away from our neighbor his wife, servants, or cattle, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

111. What does God protect in the Ninth and Tenth Commandments?

In the Ninth and Tenth Commandments God protects the advantages and the living conditions that our neighbor has in this life according to God's plan.

112. What does God forbid in these Commandments?

God forbids us to be dissatisfied with what He has given us, and with what He expects of us. He also forbids us to covet that, which does not belong to us according to His will, and which we cannot get without acting against it.

1 Tim. 6:7-9: For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be there-with content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

113. What is coveting?

Coveting is desiring, longing and hoping for anything that God in His Word has forbidden us to have. These sins of the heart are already condemning sins in themselves, even though they have not yet resulted in deeds. But that which God has not forbidden, is not sinful.

Gal. 5:17: The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.

Rom. 7:7: I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said: Thou shalt not covet.

James 1:14-15: Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

114. What forms of coveting does God forbid in these Commandments?

God forbids us to

1. Greedily try to get our neighbor's inheritance or other means of livelihood through fraudulent methods or by a show of right.

Assignment: Read Gen. 31:7: Laban deceived Jacob, 1 Kings 21: Ahab and Jezebel seized Naboth's vineyard for themselves by misapplying the law, and Matt. 23:14: the Pharisees took widow's possessions for themselves.

2. Persuade, incite or force our neighbor's spouse or employee to leave him and come to us, or try to get some other advantages or benefits enjoyed by our neighbor for ourselves.

Assignment: Read 2 Sam. 11:1-4: David seduced Bathseba, and 2 Sam. 15:1-6: Absalom estranged the hearts of the people away from David.

3. Envy, and hunger for that which belongs to our neighbor.

Luke 12:15: Take heed, and beware of covetousness.

Luther: “These commandments are especially directed against envy and miserable avarice, God wishing to remove all causes and sources whence arises everything by which we do injury to our neighbor.”

Assignment: Discuss what advantages and circumstances of others are coveted today?

115. What does God require of us in these Commandments?

God requires that we be content with the circumstances into which He has placed us. He requires that we faithfully help our neighbor and encourage everyone to remain firmly in that place and to serve in that calling which God has provided for him.

1 Tim. 6:6: Godliness with contentment is great gain.

Luke 16:10: He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much.

Matt. 25:21: Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things.

Phil. 2:4: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Assignment: Read Gen. 1:39: Joseph demanded that Potifar’s wife remain faithful to her husband. The Epistle to Philemon: Paul returned a runaway slave to his master. Discuss: Is it permissible to change one’s place of employment and to improve one’s unfavorable circumstances? Is it right for an employer to dismiss faithful older employees and hire new ones?

116. According to God’s word, what kind of a heart are we to have?

We are to have a clean heart, so that we have only a clean, holy desire and zeal for all that God wants.

Matt. 5:8: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Lev. 19:2: Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

1 Sam. 16:7: The Lord looketh on the heart.

THE CLOSE OF THE COMMANDMENTS

I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My Commandments. *What does this mean?* God threatens to punish all that transgress these Commandments. Therefore we should fear His wrath and not act contrary to them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these Commandments. Therefore we should also love and trust in Him and willingly do according to His Commandments.

117. Of what does God remind us with the words: “I, the Lord, thy God”?

With the words: “I, the Lord, thy God”, God reminds us of the fact that He has the full right to give us these Commandments, and demands unconditional obedience to them.

Deut. 5:32: Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you; ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

118. What does God impress upon us with the words: “I am a jealous God”?

With the words, “I am a jealous God”, God impresses upon everyone, that He strictly observes the manner in which His Commandments are obeyed, and most assuredly punishes those who transgress them, but rewards those who keep them.

James 4:12: There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.

119. What awaits everyone who hates God and defiantly breaks His commandments?

God's unavoidable punishment awaits everyone who hates Him and defiantly transgresses His commandments. This punishment is God's wrath and displeasure, temporal death and eternal damnation.

Deut. 27:26: Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them: and all the people shall say: Amen.

Rom. 6:23: The wages of sin is death.

Assignments: Read Gen.6-7: the flood, Gen. 19:1-19: the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Luke 19:43-44: the destruction of Jerusalem. Read what the Bible says of eternal damnation or hell: Matt. 8:12, 11:16-24, 13:49-50, 25:41, Mark 9:43-44, Luke 16:23-24, Rom. 2:9.

Luther: "These are the ones God has in mind, when He says "them that hate me", namely, those who remain defiant and proud."

120. Whom will God punish?

God will punish every unrepentant and unbelieving sinner, each, because of his own sins.

Deut. 24:16: The fathers shall not be put to death for their children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers. Every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

121. How does God's punishment affect even the descendants of those who hate Him?

God tells us that His righteous punishment of the sins of ungodly parents, will also affect their descendants for several generations, if they, like their parents, despise God and lead ungodly lives in unbelief.

Lev. 26:39: Also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.

Assignment: Read Gen.9:25: Ham caused a curse to fall on his ungodly son, Canaan and his descendants, and Matt. 27:25: the Jews caused their unbelieving descendants to be cursed.

God-fearing children also are often made to suffer the consequences of their parents sins. This, however, is not punishment for them, but rather God's good and fatherly discipline, which finally works for their good.

Rom. 8:28: We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

Assignment: Read 1 Sam. 15:26-28: Jonathon lost his right to ascend to the throne, because of his father Saul's ungodliness, even though Jonath on himself enjoyed God's favor.

122. What is the purpose of God's severe threat?

The purpose of God's severe threat is that we would fear God's righteous wrath because of every sin, and that we would be afraid to sin.

Matt. 7:19: Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

123. What does God promise to those who love Him and keep His Commandments?

God promises to richly bless and reward, both in this life and in eternity, all those who love Him and keep His Commandments.

Luke 10:28: This do, and thou shalt live.

1 Tim. 4:8: Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

124. How does God fulfill this promise?

God fulfills this promise in those, who confess their sins and trust in Christ's grace, and who desire to keep His Commandments both in the area of doctrine and life. We can, you see, love God only if we believe in Jesus. God blesses solely through His grace, not because of the works of believers, for their obedience is not perfect, but very deficient.

Heb. 11:6: Without faith it is impossible to please Him (God).

Ps. 103: 17-18: But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them.

125. How long does God's blessing last?

God blesses the children of God-fearing parents for thousands of generations, in other words, **endlessly**.

Luke 1:50: His mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

Assignment: Read Gen. 15:5-6: God blessed the Israelites because of Abraham. Consider: What blessings you have received through your parents or grandparents.

126. What is the purpose of God's gracious promise?

God's gracious promise and great goodness exhorts us to love God, to trust in Him and gladly to obey His Commandments.

1 Joh. 5:3: This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.

127. To what Commandment are the closing words of the Commandments connected?

The closing words of the Commandments are connected to the First Commandment, which in fact includes all the other Commandments. The closing words reveal that God's Commandments can only be obeyed by a heart that above all fears and loves God and trusts alone in Him.

THE PURPOSE AND USE OF GOD'S LAW

128. How does God want us to keep his Commandments?

God demands that we perfectly keep His Commandments, in thought, word and deed.

Matt. 5:48: Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven, is perfect.

James 2:10: Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

129. Is a person able to fulfill God's law?

After the fall into sin, no one is able to fulfill God's Law in a manner acceptable to God. Unbelievers do not fulfill it at all, and even the obedience of believers in Christ is sadly deficient. Christ alone has fulfilled God's Law.

Rom. 3:23: All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Is. 64:6: We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

Ps. 143:2: Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in they sight shall no man living be justified.

130. What then cannot be the purpose of the Law?

The purpose of God's Law is not, that we, by keeping it, will be saved.

Gal. 3:11: That no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, it is evident.

131. What then is the purpose and the function of God's Law?

The three purposes and functions of God's Law are:

1. The threat and punishments of God's Law, in a measure, check the coarse outbursts of sin. In this way the Law maintains outward discipline, order and morality in the world, and curbs outward evil.

The Law is a **curb**. This is called the first use of the Law.

1 Tim. 1:9: The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers.

2. The Law teaches us rightly to know our sin before God. The Law is a **mirror**. This is the chief purpose of the Law. It is called the second use of the Law.

Rom. 3:20: By the Law is the knowledge of sin.

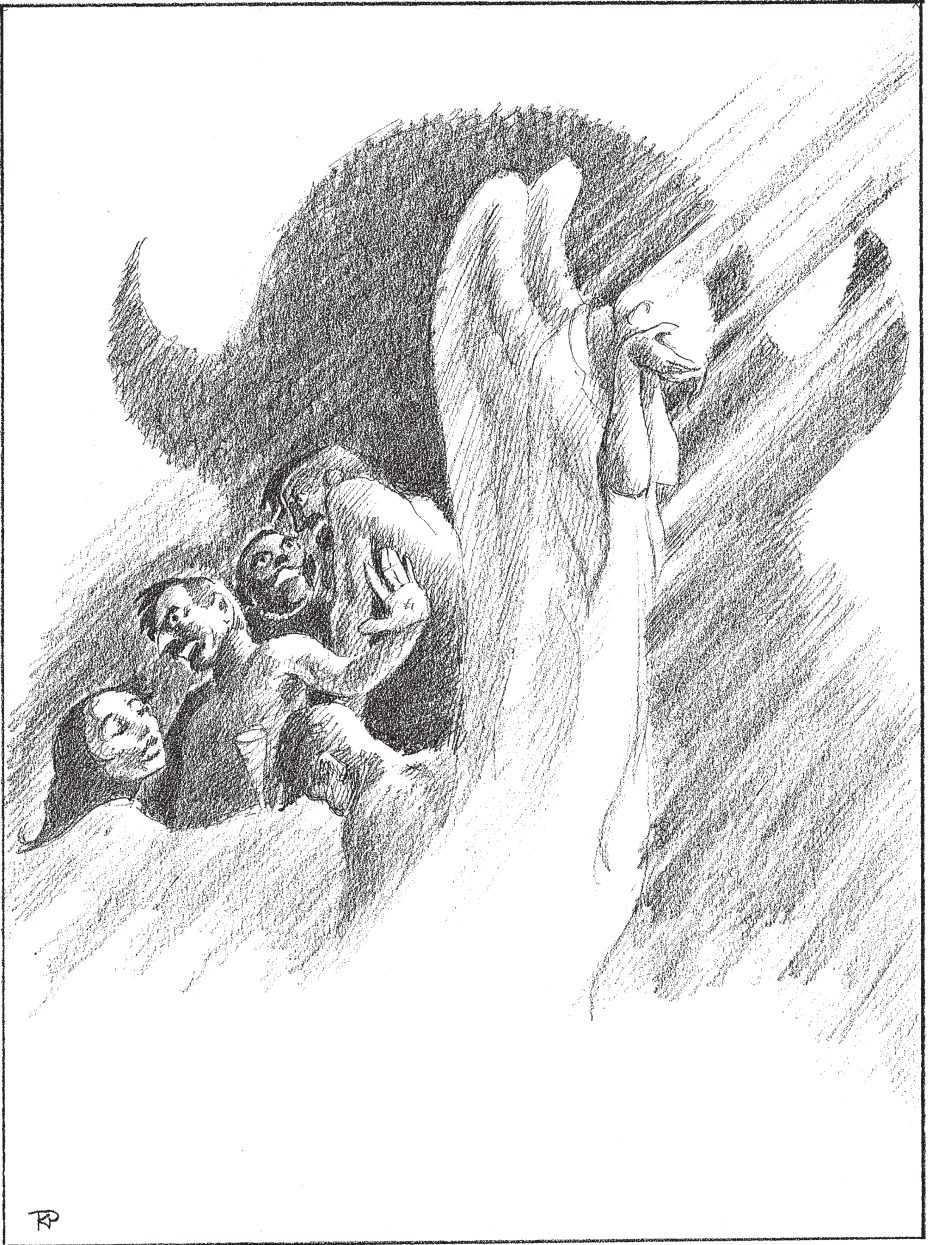
Rom. 7:7: I had not known sin but by the Law, for I had not known lust, except the Law had said: Thous shalt not covet.

Gal. 3:17: The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

3. The Law shows believers in Christ what their God-ordained responsibilities are in this life. The Law is a **rule**. This is called the third use of the Law.

Ps. 119:105: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Rom. 3:31: Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the Law.



"We were by nature the children of wrath."

Luther teaches the third use of the Law already in his explanations of the Small Catechism, for he has written them so that we, as the children of God, would “also lead a holy life according to” the Word of God. (See the explanation of the First Petition.)

Sin

132. What is sin?

Sin is all departure from God’s Commandments.

1 Joh. 3:4: Sin is the transgression of the Law.

The Bible also calls sin disobedience (Rom. 5:19), transgression, iniquity (Ex. 34:7), trespass, (2 Cor. 5:19), and unrighteousness (Rom. 6:13).

133. How did sin come into the world?

Sin came into the world through the devil, who first fell away from God. Sin then came also through human beings, who, tempted by the devil, voluntarily succumbed to sin.

Joh. 8:44: He (the devil) was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it.

1 Joh.3:8: He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

Rom. 5:12: By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.

Assignment: Read Gen. 3:1-7: the fall into sin.

134. What two types of sin are there?

The Bible speaks of two types of sin, original sin and actual sin.

135. What is original sin?

Original sin is the total spiritual corruption of human nature, which we have inherited from Adam through our parents. Because of original sin people have lost the righteousness, which God gave them at creation. A person, corrupted by original sin, does not actually fear or love God and does not trust solely in Him, but is spiritually dead and blind, an enemy of God and full of evil, with a desire for it.

Joh. 3:6: That which is born of the flesh is flesh.

Rom. 7:18: I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.

Rom. 8:7: The carnal mind is enmity against God.

Note: With the word **flesh**, when it is used in this context, the Bible means a person, as he by nature is conceived and born, who is therefore corrupted by original sin and without the Holy Spirit (the old man or old Adam).

Ps. 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Gen. 8:21: The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.

Gen. 6:5: God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

1 Cor. 2:14: The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.

Eph. 2:1: You... were dead in trespasses and sins.

136. In what condition is a person by nature because

of original sin?

By nature a person, because of original sin, is not acceptable to God and is subject to judgment and damnation. In order to be saved, he must be born again through Baptism and faith.

Eph. 2:3: We were by nature the children of wrath even as others.

Joh. 3:5-6: Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

The Lutheran Confessions: “Since the fall of Adam, all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost.” (Augsburg Confession II).

137. What are actual sins?

A person, corrupted by original sin, breaks God’s Commandments in thoughts, words and deeds. These sins are called actual sins. They also include the sins of neglect or those works that we leave undone, even though God’s Word tells us to do them.

Matt. 7:17: A corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

James 4:17: To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Actual sins can be classed into different groups. For example: Sins committed against better knowledge and sins of ignorance; deliberate sins and sins of weakness; participation in the sins of others (1 Tim. 5:22), 2 Joh. 11), coarse manifest sins and wrongs, that cry to heaven

for God's punishment. Such sins are: open ungodliness Gen. 18:20, murder Gen. 4:10, Rev. 6:9-10, and the oppression of strangers, widows, orphans, the poor and the helpless Ex. 3:7-9; 22:21-24; Mal.3:5; James 5:4; and the destruction of those yet in a mother's womb, Amos 1:13.

138. What is the sin against the Holy Ghost?

The sin against the Holy Ghost Spirit differs from all other sins in that it can never be forgiven.

Mark 3:28-29: All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness.

This sin occurs in the following manner: The Holy Ghost enlightens a person in such a way that a person must in his heart confess divine truth to be divine, but he nevertheless still deliberately and against better knowledge denies it, rebels against it, blasphemes, and shames the Holy Ghost. A person such as this becomes hardened, so that he cannot repent. Therefore we are to beware that we do not begin resisting and blaspheming the truth, which we have come to know from God's Word. The sin against the Holy Ghost is not directed against the Person of the Holy Ghost, but against His office.

Luke 12:10: Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

1 Joh. 5:16: There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it.

Heb. 6:4-6: For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto

repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.

Assignment: Read Matt. 12:22-32: Jesus' warning to the Pharisees, who resisted the obvious truth and blasphemed.

139. How can we tell that we have not committed the sin against the Holy Ghost?

A person who is spiritually distressed and fears that he has committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and is troubled about the possibility that he has been shut out from God's grace in Christ, **has not committed** this specific sin against the Holy Ghost.

The strong influence of the Holy Ghost in him is evidenced by the fact that he is concerned about the condition of his soul and its eternal destiny. He is a believer, even though he is greatly troubled.

His weak faith must be strengthened with God's gracious Word; for Christ has died in behalf of everyone, and wants all people to be saved.

The person, however, who has committed this particular sin against the Holy Ghost, is not troubled by the fact. Neither is he concerned about his soul's salvation, but goes on living with a proud and rebellious spirit, his heart hardened beyond change, refusing to submit to the clear Word of God.

140. How are we saved from the condition we are in because of original sin, and from eternal damnation?

There is no possibility that we can be saved through the Law or by our own works. But God has given us another Word, namely His Gospel, in which He has made known to us the salvation, which our Savior Jesus Christ has earned for us. We can receive this salvation for ourselves as a free gift through faith and thus be free from the curse of sin, righteous and blessed in God's sight. We will learn more about this in the Second

Article of the Creed.

Rom. 1:16: The Gospel... is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

Rom. 10:4: Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

CHAPTER II

The Apostles' Creed

141. What Creed is in the Small Catechism?

The creed that is in the Small Catechism is the Apostles' Creed. It is the oldest creed of the Christian Church. It was born already during the time of the Apostles, at which time it was used as a baptismal confession. In the three articles of the Creed we are taught those great and good works of God which He has already done, which He is now doing, and which He will do for us.

The Creed is not law, but is altogether a different type of God's Word, namely **Gospel**.

142. What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is the good news of God's grace in Jesus Christ through which we are saved.

Joh. 3:16: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Rom. 1:16: For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.



What is the difference between the Law and the Gospel?

The difference between Law and Gospel

143. What is the difference between the Law and the Gospel?

There are two distinctly different doctrines in God's Word, namely, the Law and the Gospel. It will be of great benefit to us in our spiritual life, if we know how to correctly distinguish between these two doctrines in our hearts. Therefore, it is important that we thoroughly understand the difference between them.

1.

The Law teaches us what we are to do and not to do.

The Gospel teaches us what God has done and still does for our salvation.

2.

The Law shows us our sins and God's wrath because of them.

The Gospel is the good news of God's boundless grace in Christ, who has saved us from our sins.

3.

The Law demands, threatens and condemns.

The Gospel promises, and gives as a free gift the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.

4.

The Law causes a person to feel that his sins are very much alive, enormous and oppressive, and in this way causes the sinner to die.

Rom. 7:9-10: For I was alive without the Law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

The Gospel wipes away all sins, creates a comforting faith in God's grace in the sinner's heart, and in this way makes him spiritually alive.

2 Cor ..3:6: The letter (the Law) killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

5.

The Law is to be preached in order to bring a person to a knowledge of his sins.

The Gospel is to be proclaimed in order to comfort those who are alarmed by their sins.

God

144. How do we know about God?

We have knowledge of God in two ways. There is a natural knowledge of God and a supernatural knowledge of Him.

145. What is the natural knowledge of God?

All people have knowledge of God by nature; they know that God exists and have some idea of His attributes and of His holy will.

This knowledge is born and preserved in this way: A person sees God's works of creation and sees how God, in a wondrous way, governs all Creation, guides and leads individual nations, and controls the destiny of all mankind. In addition every person has a conscience that testifies that he or she is accountable to God.

Thus everyone has a natural knowledge of God. No one, however, as a result of this knowledge, longs for the Gospel of Christ, nor can be saved through this knowledge. All people continue to live with an accusing conscience, unless they hear and believe the Gospel.

Heb. 3:4: Every house is builded by some man, but He that built all things is God.

Ps. 19:1: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork.

Rom. 1:19-20: That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

Rom. 2:15: The Gentiles show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.

Acts 14:16-17: In times past (He) suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

146. What is the supernatural knowledge of God?

In His Word God has, for our salvation, given a clear and completely sufficient knowledge of Himself. From this Word people have a supernatural knowledge of God. Only through this Word does God reveal to us His grace in Christ and free us from an accusing conscience. Thus we learn to know God in the right way, and learn to know and believe that we are saved through faith in Christ.

Note: The Bible does not answer all our questions, but it contains everything that we need to know in order to be saved.

1 Pet. 1:23: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, Which liveth and abideth forever.

Joh. 17:3: This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom thou hast sent.

147. How does the Bible describe God?

The Bible tells us that God is an infinite and unchangeable spirit, who does not have a body such as we have.

Joh. 4:24: God is a Spirit.

Ps.145:3: His greatness is unsearchable.

Mal. 3:6: I am the Lord, I change not.

God is:

1. Eternal

Ps. 90:2: Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

2. Omnipresent

Acts 17:27: (God is) not far from everyone of us.

3. Omniscient and all-wise

1 Joh. 3:20: God knoweth all things.

Job 12:13: With him (God) is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

4. Omnipotent

Luke 1:37: With God nothing shall be impossible.

5. Holy

Is. 6:3: Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.

6. Truthful

Num. 23:19: God is not a man that he should lie: neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

7. Righteous

Deut. 32:4: A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

8. Benevolent, a lover of mankind, gracious, long-suffering.

Tit. 3:4-5: After that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared... He saved us.

Ps. 145:8: The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

148. What else has God revealed to us about His nature?

In His Word God has revealed that He is Triune, in other words, He is three distinct Persons in one divine Being. These are: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Deut. 6:4: The Lord our God is one Lord.

1 Cor. 8:4: There is none other God but one.

Matt. 28:19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

2 Cor. 13:14: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

Assignment: Read Matt. 3:16-17: Jesus is baptized, Is. 42:1: (The Lord, the Lord's Servant, and the Lord's Spirit), and Num. 6:24-27 (In the Lord's Blessing the name of the Lord is pronounced three times over the Israelites).

149. What has God told us concerning the difference between the divine persons?

God has revealed the following **eternal** facts concerning this difference:

1. God has in eternity begotten the Son.

Ps. 2:7: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.

2. The Son has in eternity been begotten of the Father.

3. The Holy Spirit from eternity proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Joh. 15:26: Jesus said: When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, Which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me.

Gal. 4:6: Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying “Abba, Father.”

150. What has God revealed concerning the works of the divine persons?

God has revealed the following facts concerning the works of the divine Persons:

–To the Father especially is ascribed the work of Creation (First Article).

–To the Son, the work of Redemption (Second Article).

–To the Holy Spirit especially, the work of Sanctification (Third Article).

151. What is to be said of those who deny God’s Triune nature?

Those who deny that God is One and Triune are not Christians and cannot be saved.

1 Joh. 2:23: Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.

Joh. 14:6: Jesus saith unto him: I am the Way, and the truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

152. What do we confess in each of the three articles of the Creed, when we say: “I believe...”?

When we in the Creed say “I believe”, we confess the following:

1. We know what the Bible says about God.

1 Cor. 4:6: That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written.

2. In our hearts we accept it as the sure truth.

Rom. 10:17: Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

Joh. 20:31: These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name.

3. We live and die firmly trusting in God and His good works.

2 Tim. 1:12: I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

153. Of what else do the words “I believe” remind us?

The words “I believe” also remind us of the fact that no one can be saved through another’s faith, but everyone must believe for himself and trust in the promises of God’s Word.

Hab. 2:4: The just shall live by his faith.

Assignment: Read Matt. 25:8-12: the parable of the wise and foolish virgins.

THE FIRST ARTICLE

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean? I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them; also clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, wife and children, fields, cattle, and all my goods; that He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life; that He defends me against all danger, and guards and protects me from all evil; and all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which it is my duty to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

God the Father

154. Why do we call God's First Person, Father?

We call God's First Person Father because He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and also our true Father.

Is. 63:16: Thou, O Lord, art our Father.

Joh. 20:17: I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.

155. What do we confess with the words "Almighty, maker of heaven and earth"?

With the words "Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth", we confess that God the Father has through His Word created everything from nothing. At the same time we believe that God was able to create the world in the manner and in the amount of time revealed in the Bible.

Gen. 1:1: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Ps.33:9: For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Heb. 11:3: Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Assignments: Read Gen. 1: the Creation of the world. Consider: What is the difference between the Biblical account of Creation and the theory of evolution?

156. What do we mean by the words “Heaven and Earth”?

By the words “heaven and earth” we mean everything that God has created, both the visible and the invisible.

Col. 1:16: By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible.

The Angels

157. What are angels?

Angels are invisible spiritual beings created by God. There are two types of angels: the good and the fallen or evil ones.

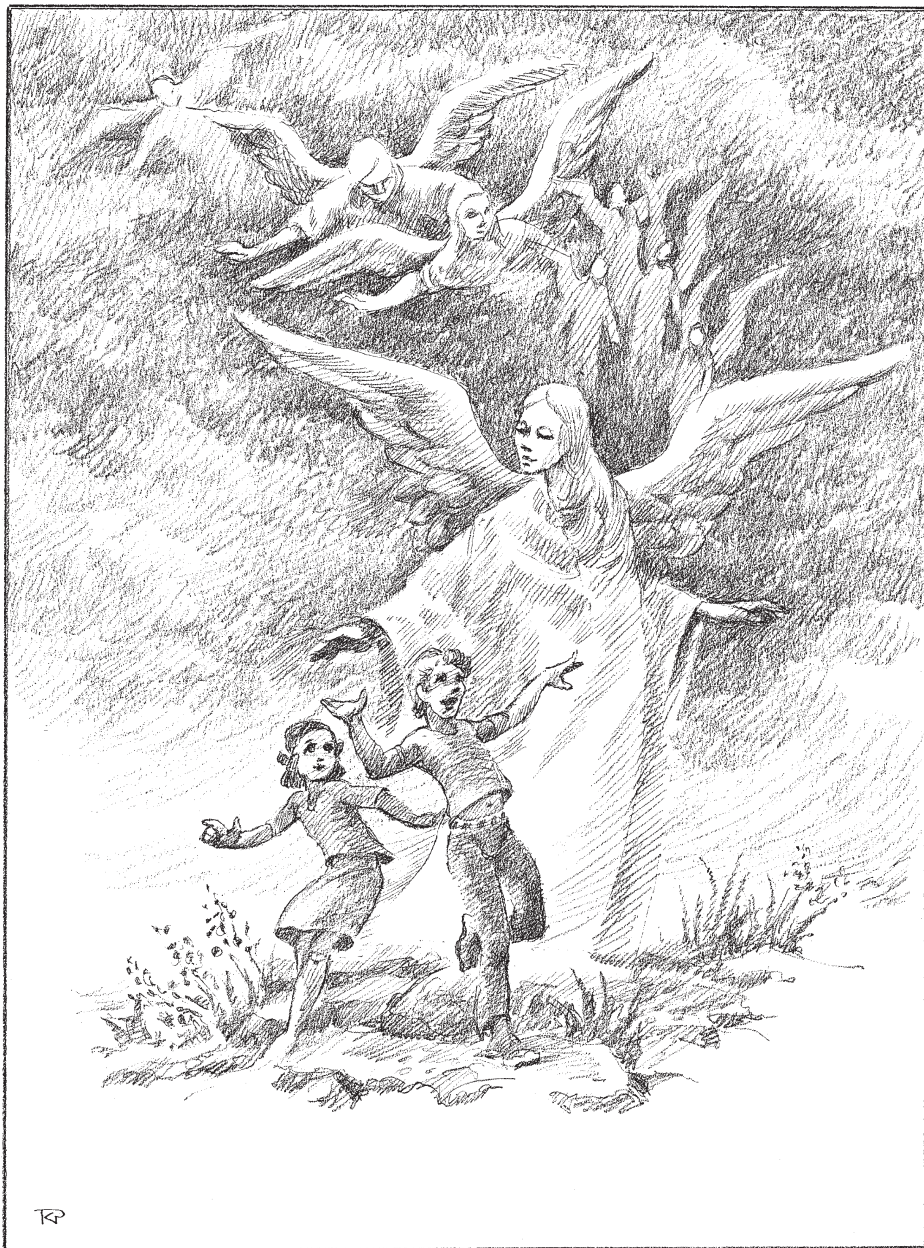
158. What kind of angels are the good angels?

The good angels are holy spirits, that God has confirmed in their holiness, so that they are eternally blessed. There is a great number of them and they are very powerful. They praise God and carry out His commands. They were present during the various phases of Christ’s work of redemption and they will accompany Him when He comes for the final Judgment. They also especially serve believers on their journey to heaven.

Matt. 18:10: Their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven.

Dan. 7:10: Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.

Ps. 103:20: Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word.



Angels are sent forth to minister

Matt. 25:31: When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall He sit upon the throne of his glory.

Heb. 1:14: Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Heb 12:22: Ye (believers) are come unto... an innumerable company of angels.

Assignments: Read Gen. 3:24: the Cherubim guard Paradise, 2 Kings 6:12-17: the angels protect Elisha, Is. 6:1-7: the Seraphim proclaim God's holiness, Dan. 6:22: angels protect Daniel, Luke 2:13-14: a great multitude of angels praise God when Christ is born, Luke 16:22: angels bear the soul of Lazarus to heaven, and Luke 24:4-5: angels announce Christ's resurrection. – Recall what the Bible says about the manner in which angels have appeared to people.

159. What kind of angels are the evil angels?

The evil angels are spirits. God created them holy, but they fell into sin and God rejected them forever. They are cunning, powerful and adept at doing evil. There is also a great number of them. They are the sworn enemies of God, of people and everything that is good and right, and they wish to corrupt and destroy God's works. In particular they want to prevent people from being saved and to lead them, along with themselves, into the torments of hell. Their leader is the devil, whom the Bible also calls Satan or accuser, tempter, adversary or evil one. The Bible also calls the evil angels unclean and evil spirits and demons.

2 Pet. 2:4: God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.

Eph. 6:11-12: Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against... spiritual wickedness in high places.

Mark 5:9: The unclean spirit said to Jesus: "My name is Legion, for we are many."

Joh. 8:44: The devil was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

1 Pet. 5:8-9: Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith.

Assignment: Read Gen. 3:1-5: the devil's deceitful temptation in Paradise, and Matt. 4:1-11: the temptation of Jesus. – To what animal does God compare the tempter?

Man

160. Who is the foremost of God's visible creatures?

Man is the foremost of God's visible creatures, because God created his body in a special way, gave him a rational soul, and made him ruler over all the earth. He is foremost above all because God created him in His own image.

Gen. 2:7: The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Gen. 1:26-27: God said: Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them.

161. What was God's image in man?

God's image in man consisted in this: Man knew God as his loving Father and lived happily and without sin in communion with Him. Man was therefore perfectly holy and righteous or sinless. Thus his

faith, doctrine and life were God pleasing. Man, however, lost the image of God when he fell into sin.

Col. 3:10: Ye have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.

Eph. 4:24: Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

162. Whose image is in man after the fall into sin?

After the fall into sin, fallen Adam's image is in man.

Gen. 5:3: Adam... begat a son in his own likeness, after his image.

163. How will God's image return to us?

God's image will return to us, when through the power of the Holy Spirit by means of Baptism and the Gospel, we believe in Jesus. Through this faith we again know God in the right way and have a sincere desire to lead a righteous and holy life. But only in heaven, when faith changes to seeing and we no longer have sin, will God's image be fully restored in us.

Col. 3:10 and Eph. 4:24. See question 161!

1 Joh. 3:2: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but ye know that when He shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Ps. 17:15: As for me, I will be hold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.

164. What do you confess about yourself in the First Article?

I confess that God has created me and has given me a body and soul and all the gifts connected to them.

Ps. 139:14: I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.

165. What do you confess about the providence of God?

I confess that God preserves and governs me and all creatures. We call this work of God, providence.

Acts 17:28: For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.

166. In what way does God give us our food and the other necessities of life?

God gives us our food and the other necessities of life through other creatures. He uses other people, animals, plants, earth, air, water, natural resources, the sun, etc. God's will is that we earn our living from them through diligent work, trusting every day in His blessing.

Ps. 145:15-16: The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Gen. 3:19: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.

1 Pet. 5:7: Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.

God can at times preserve people without the use of these usual means mentioned above, in a supernatural manner through miracles. He cared for the Israelites in this way during their journey in the wilderness

(Deut. 8:3-4), Elijah at the home of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17), and He fed people through miracles that Jesus performed (Joh. 6:1-15, Matt. 15:32-29).

167. How does God protect you?

God rules, guides and leads me on life's journey, in such a way that I have a sure protection in the midst of all danger. He does not permit any real evil to befall me, only that which is for my good. In this way I will one day reach my eternal destination and enjoy the eternal bliss of heaven.

Matt. 10:29-30: Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Ps. 23:4: Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Rom. 8:28: We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

Assignment: Recall from Bible history how God has protected His children, for example Joseph (Gen. 37-50) and Moses (Ex. 2), and even caused evil to serve His own good purpose. Consider how God has guided your life and protected you.

168. What moves God to do all this for you?

God does all these good things for me purely out of His goodness, without any of my own merit or worthiness, for He is a merciful Father and gracious God.

Ps. 145:9: The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Rom. 11:35: Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

Gen. 32:10: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant.

Assignment: Read Luke 7:6-7: the Centurion of Capernaum.

169. What is my responsibility to God?

I am to confess from my heart that all of God's loving care for me is a free gift. I am to thank and praise Him for His grace and throughout my whole life gladly obey all His Commandments.

Ps. 116:12: What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?

Ps. 118:1: O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, because His mercy endureth forever.

1 Joh. 5:3: This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.

170. Finally, what do you confess with the words “this is most certainly true”?

With the words “This is most certainly true” I confess, that everything that has been stated in the article, is the absolute, certain and unchangeable truth, in which my heart trusts in life and in death.

THE SECOND ARTICLE

Redemption

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. *What does this mean?* I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

171. What does the Second Article of the Creed teach us?

The Second Article of the Creed teaches us to know God's second good work, Redemption.

172. Why was Redemption necessary?

Redemption was necessary because of the fall into sin. The great gifts of Creation were not able to save man from sin or its punishment. God, however, performed another good work, which is even much greater and more wonderful than Creation. He redeemed us from our sins through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ and His work of Redemption

173. Why is our Redeemer's name Jesus?

Jesus is the name of our Redeemer, because He is the only Savior of all people. This is what the name Jesus means.

Matt. 1:21: Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.

Acts 4:12: Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

174. Why is our Redeemer's name Christ?

The name of our Redeemer is Christ or Messiah, because both names mean, the ANOINTED. According to His human nature our Redeemer was anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure.

Acts 10:38: (Ye know) how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.

Joh. 3:34: For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him.

175. What does the Bible tell us of the person of Jesus Christ?

The Bible tells us that our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, is unique in that He is God-man or true God and true man in the same Person. God's Son took full humanity for Himself from the Virgin Mary, in such a way that God and man are one Person in Christ.

Col. 2:9: For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Joh. 1:14: The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

175. How do I know and believe that Jesus is true God?

I know and believe that Jesus is true God because the Bible ascribes to Him:

1. Divine names

1 Joh. 5:20: (His Son Jesus Christ). This is the true God, and eternal life.

Joh. 20:28: Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

2. Divine attributes

Eternal.

Joh. 1:1-2: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

Unchangeable. Heb. 13:8: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

Omnipresent.

Matt. 28:20: Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Omniscient.

Joh. 21:17: Lord, Thou knowest all things.

Almighty.

Matt. 28:18: All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.

Heb. 1:3: Upholding all things (the universe) by the word of his power.

3. Divine works.

The sending of the Holy Spirit.

Joh. 15:26: But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

Joh. 16:7: For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

Creation.

Joh. 1:3: All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

Providence.

Col. 1:17: By Him all things consist.

Commanding creatures.

Luke 8:25: What manner of man is this, for He commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey Him.

Assignment:

Read Joh. 11:38-44: Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, Luke 7:11-16: the widow's son at Nain, and Matt. 28:5-6 and Joh. 10:17-18: Himself.

Forgiveness of sins.

Matt. 9:6: The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.

Execution of Last Judgment.

Joh. 5:27: The Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

4. The same honor as the Father.

Joh. 5:23:.. that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

177. How do I know and believe that my Redeemer is true man?

I know and believe that my Redeemer, Jesus Christ, is true man, because the Bible:

1. Expressly calls Him man.

1 Tim. 2:5: For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

2. Ascribes to Him a human body and soul.

Luke 24:39: Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself.

Matt. 26:38: My soul is exceeding sorrowful.

3. Ascribes to Him human emotions and actions.

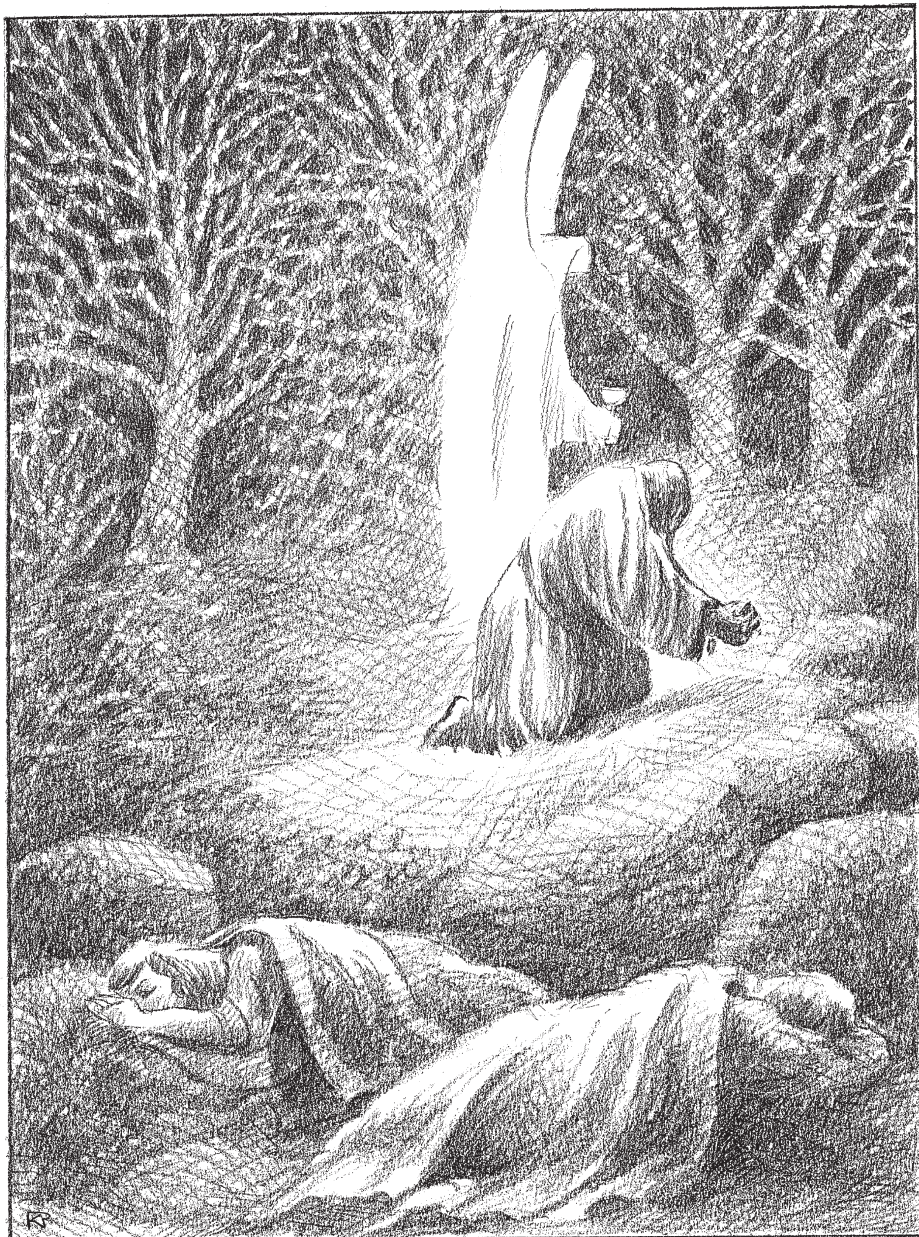
Assignment: Read Luke 2:1-12: Jesus is born, Luke 2:52: He grew, Joh. 4:6: He became tired, Mark 4:38: He slept, Matt. 4:2: He hungered, Joh. 19:28: He thirsted, Joh. 11:35: He wept, and Matt. 26-27: He suffered and died.

178. What two natures does our Savior have?

Our Savior Jesus, simultaneously has two natures, the divine and the human. They are united in His person in such a way, that both participate in the attributes of each other.

Thus, suffering is an attribute of human nature, but the divine nature participated in it, as the Bible testifies: “Ye killed the Prince of life”. (Acts 3:15)

Omnipotence is an attribute of God, which the divine nature of Christ has. But the human nature of Christ participates in this attribute, as it does also in the other divine attributes. The unwavering principle of Biblical interpretation of the entire ancient Church, as to how the doctrines concerning Christ are to be understood, is the following:



Christ, God-man, suffered for us.

When the Bible says that Christ has been given something here in time, it is to be understood as given to Him according to His human nature, not according to His divine nature. When this principle is followed, the problem of thinking that the Bible contradicts itself, will be solved.

Col. 2:9: In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

1 Joh. 1:7: The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

2 Sam. 7:19: This is the manner of that man, who is Lord God. (According to Luther's translation.)

Jer. 23:5-6: Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Is. 9:6: For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Matt. 16:13,16: Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?...Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

179. Why did our Redeemer have to be true man?

Our Redeemer had to be true man, so that He could, as our substitute, be under the Law, fulfill the Law, suffer and die. Because man had broken the Law, man was responsible for the expiation.

Gal. 4:4-5: When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

Heb. 2:14: Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.

180. Why did our Redeemer have to be true God?

Our Redeemer had to be true God so that He could by His life and death pay the full price of redemption for all people and reconcile them to God.

Ps. 49:7-8: None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.

2 Cor. 5:19: God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

181. What threefold office does Christ have in His work of Redemption?

In His work of Redemption Jesus Christ has these three offices: He is 1. our Prophet, 2. our Priest and 3. our King.

182. What does Jesus do as our Prophet?

As our Prophet, Jesus has through word and deed revealed that He is God's Son and the Savior of the world. This, He Himself did while He was here on earth, before that, through the Prophets, and later, through the Apostles and Evangelists. His prophetic office still continues everywhere, where His Gospel is proclaimed.

Deut 18:15: The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken.

Matt. 17:5: This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.

Luke 24:19: Jesus of Nazareth, Which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all people.

Joh. 20:21: As my Father hath sent Me, even so I send you.

Luke 10:16: He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me.

183. What does Jesus do as our High Priest?

As our High Priest Jesus has, as our Substitute, fulfilled God's Law and offered Himself as an atoning sacrifice for us. As our Advocate He also continually defends us before the Father in heaven.

Heb. 9:11-12: But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come... He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Gal. 4:4-5: When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

1 Pet. 2:24: Christ himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree.

1 Joh. 2:1: If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

184. What does Jesus do as our King?

As our King , Jesus

1. Rules over all creation and is thus King of the kingdom of power.

Matt. 28:18: All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Luke 8:25: What manner of man is this! for He commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey Him.

2. With His Word, rules His Church on earth and is therefore King of His kingdom of grace.

Joh. 18:36: My kingdom is not of this world.

Matt. 21:5: Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Luke 1:33: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever.

3. Finally will lead His Church to eternal glory in heaven, and is therefore King of the kingdom of glory.

2 Tim. 4:18: And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom, to Whom be glory for ever and ever.

185. What two states do we distinguish in Christ's work of Redemption?

The two states in Christ's work of Redemption are: the state of humiliation and the state of exaltation.

He was in the state of humiliation from the time of His holy conception until His burial.

His state of exaltation began with His resurrection from the dead and continues eternally.

186. What was Christ's state of humiliation?

In His state of humiliation our Redeemer did not, according to His human nature, always and fully use the divine glory communicated to His human nature, but humbled Himself to the very depths, in order that He might redeem us through His obedience and suffering. The redemption would not have been accomplished, had He always and fully used His divine glory.

Phil. 2:6-8: Christ Jesus being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Note: At times Jesus did use His divine glory also according to His human nature; for example, when He was glorified and when He performed miracles. In this way He revealed that He was God's Son and the promised Savior.

Joh. 10:37-38: If I do not the works of My Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.

Assignment: Read Mark 9:1-8: Jesus' glorification.

187. With what words does the Creed tell us about the various phases of Christ's state of humiliation?

The Creed tells us about the various phases of Christ's state of humiliation with these words: Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried.

188. What does the Bible teach us concerning Christ's conception?

The Bible teaches that God's Son became true man, when He was conceived through the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary. In this way He has also cleansed and sanctified us from our own conception, which was affected by original sin.

Luke 1:35: The angel answered and said unto her (Mary): The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Matt. 1:20: Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

189. What does the Bible teach us concerning Christ's birth?

The Bible teaches us, that Jesus was born of His mother, the Virgin Mary, as a true human child, in poverty and was despised and rejected by men.

Is. 9:6: For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.

Assignment1: Read Luke 2:1-20: the Christmas Gospel.

190. What does the Bible teach us concerning Christ's suffering and death?

The Bible teaches that Jesus

–suffered poverty, temptations, persecution and loneliness during the entire time of His earthly life.

–at the end of His earthly life particularly, suffered untold agony of body and soul.

–died on the accursed tree of the cross.

Matt. 8:20: The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.

Heb. 4:15: He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Matt. 26:40: What! could ye not watch with Me one hour?

Luke 22:44: And being in agony He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Matt. 27:46: And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli lama sabachthani! why has Thou forsaken Me?"

Joh. 19:30: He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.

Gal. 3:13: It is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.

Rejected by God, Jesus suffered the eternal torments of hell in our behalf.

Assignment: Read about Jesus' life of tribulation: Matt. 2 and the Passion history: for example, Matt. chapters 26 and 27.

191. What does the Bible teach us concerning Jesus' burial?

The Bible teaches that His holy body was taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb. It did not begin to decay, but remained uncorrupted until His resurrection.

Matt. 27:59-60: When Joseph had taken the body (of Jesus), he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock.

Acts 2:27: Thou wilt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.

192. Why did God's son humble himself so deeply?

God's Son humbled Himself so deeply in order to redeem me, a lost and condemned sinner. In this way He saved me from all my sins, death and the power of the devil.

193. How did Christ redeem you from all your sins?

My Lord Christ redeemed me from all my sins by fulfilling God's Law in my behalf and suffering the punishment for my sins. In this way He also saved me from the slavery of sin.

Gal. 4:4-5: When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

2 Cor. 5:21: For he hath made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Joh. 1:29: Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!

Gal. 3:13: Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: for it is written: "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree."

Joh. 8:34,36: Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

194. How did Christ save you from death?

My Lord Christ saved me from death by paying the full price of redemption for my sins. For this reason eternal death has no claim or power over me. Temporal death is the gate to eternal life and cannot harm me.

1 Cor. 15:55-57: O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Tim. 1:10: Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

195. How did Christ redeem you from the power of the devil?

My Lord Christ saved me from the power of the devil by conquering and disarming him. This terrible enemy can no longer accuse me, and I, as my Lord Christ's own, can successfully resist his temptations; and if I should in my weakness fall, I can rise again through the power of grace.

Gen. 3:15: I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

1 Joh. 3:8: For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Rom. 8:31: What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

James: 4:7: Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1 Pet. 5:9: Resist (the devil) steadfast in the faith.

1 Joh. 2:1: And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

196. With what precious price did Christ redeem you?

My Lord Jesus Christ redeemed me, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and His innocent suffering and death. Thus

He has, by sacrificing Himself in my stead, done everything and paid everything that I owed to God.

1 Pet. 1:18, 19: Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

1 Joh. 1:7: The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Is. 53:5: He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.

197. Whom has Christ redeemed and saved in this way?

My Lord Jesus Christ has in this way redeemed and saved me and all sinners.

1 Tim. 1:15: This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

1 Joh. 2:2: He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

2 Cor. 5:19: God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

2 Pet. 2:1: There shall be false teachers among you, ... denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

198. What is our Redeemer's state of exaltation?

In His state of exaltation our Redeemer, now also according to His human nature, always and fully uses His divine glory.

Phil. 2:9: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.

199. With what words does the Creed describe the various phases of Christ's state of exaltation?

The Creed describes the various phases of Christ's state of exaltation with these words: He descended into hell, on the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

200. What does the Bible teach concerning Jesus' descent into hell?

The Bible teaches that when Jesus became alive in His tomb, He descended into hell and showed Himself to all His enemies as the triumphant conqueror of all the mighty forces of darkness. Jesus did not, therefore, descend there to suffer, but to proclaim His victory. It was a powerful proclamation of the Law, by which He disarmed His enemies and publicly shamed them.

1 Pet. 3:18,19: Christ... being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.

Eph. 4:9,10: Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

Col. 2:15: And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

201. What does the Bible teach us concerning Christ's resurrection?

The Bible teaches that He victoriously arose from the dead and the tomb on the third day, with a glorified body and showed Himself to

His disciples on various occasions.

Acts 3:15: Whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses.

1 Cor. 15:4-6: He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve. After that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.

Assignment: Find the accounts of Christ's resurrection in the Gospels and read them.

202. What does Jesus' resurrection mean to you?

To me and other sinners Jesus' resurrection means complete comfort and peace, which I receive for myself through faith. His resurrection proves that:

1. Jesus is God's Son and everyone of His words is true.

Joh. 10:18: I have power to lay it (my life) down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Heb. 6:18: It was impossible for God to lie.

2. God has accepted His Son's atoning sacrifice and because of it has reconciled the world unto Himself.

Rom. 4:25: Who (Christ) was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

3. There will be a resurrection of all people. At that time those who have died in unbelief will be judged and condemned, but all believers in Christ will rise to everlasting life.

Joh. 11:25: I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

1 Cor. 15: 12, 20-21: Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead,

how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?... But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

2 Cor. 5:10: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

203. What does the Bible teach us concerning Jesus' ascension into heaven?

Concerning Jesus' ascension into heaven, the Bible teaches the following: Jesus has visibly, according to His human nature, ascended into heaven to the Father's glory. As our Savior He has taken heaven, with all its mansions, into His possession for us, His own.

Eph. 4:10: He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.

Joh. 14:3: I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.

Joh. 14:2-3: In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.

204. What does the Bible teach concerning Christ's sitting on the right hand of God?

The Bible teaches that Christ now sits on the right hand of God. Thus also according to His human nature, with His divine almighty power, He rules and fulfills all things. In a very special way He rules and protects His Church on earth.

The right hand of God does not mean some confined area or place, but



The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgement upon all. Jude: 14-15

the eternal, endless, divine power, rule and majesty, through which He influences, governs and fills all things.

1 Pet. 3:22: Who (Jesus) is gone to heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.

Eph. 1:20-22: God set him (Christ) at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church.

Ps. 110:1. (The Father says to Jesus) Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Heb. 1:3: The Son... when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

1 Joh. 2:1-2: If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Matt. 26: 64: Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Matt. 28:20: Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Matt. 18:20: Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

205. What does the Bible teach concerning Christ's coming to Judgment?

The Bible teaches that Christ will come to Judgment, visibly and in great glory. He will judge the world according to His Word. The unbelievers will be condemned to eternal damnation, but Christ will take His believers to eternal bliss and glory. This will happen on the Last Day, which God has appointed and which is known only to Him. God has not revealed the time of Jesus' second coming, so that we would

watch in faith and always be ready to receive Him.

Acts 1:11: This same Jesus, Which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.

Matt. 25:31: When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

Acts 17:31: God hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.

Matt. 24:27: As the lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.

Joh. 12:48: The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

Joh.3:18: He that believeth on Him is not condemned.

Mark 13:32-33: But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is.

1 Pet. 4:7: The end of all things is at hand.

Col. 3:4: When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.

Mark 16:16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Matt. 25:46: And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Assignment: Read Matt. 25:31-46: the Last Judgment.

206. What does Christ's work of redemption mean to you?

Jesus has redeemed or bought me for His own. He is now my Lord in whose kingdom I have as my own His eternal righteousness, innocence and blessedness.

Already now, blessed in faith and obedient to His Word, I can serve Him in His kingdom. In heaven I can serve and praise Him in perfect bliss.

Is. 43:1: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.

Joh. 20:28: Thomas answered and said unto him: "My Lord and my God."

2 Cor. 5:15: He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.

1 Joh. 3:2: We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we will see Him as He is.

Is. 35:10: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

207. What do you confess with the words: "This is most certainly true?"

With the words, "This is most certainly true", I confess that I trust in Christ in life and in death.

Rom. 8:38,39: For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life... shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Tim. 4:18: The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

THE THIRD ARTICLE OF THE CREED

Sanctification

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen. *What does this mean?* I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the Last Day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

208. What does the Third Article of the Creed teach us?

The Third Article of the Creed teaches us the third great work which God has done, and which He still continues to do for our salvation. This work is called sanctification.

209. Why do we need sanctification?

Because of original sin we cannot through our own efforts receive for ourselves the fruits of Christ's work of redemption. If the Holy Spirit did not sanctify us, we would be without hope, eternally damned. For this reason God sent the Holy Spirit, so that He would create faith in Christ in our hearts, would preserve us in faith and lead us to heaven.

1 Cor. 2:14: But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Eph. 5:8: For ye were sometimes darkness.

Eph. 2:1: Ye were dead in trespasses and sins.

Rom. 8:7: The carnal mind is enmity against God.

1 Cor. 12:3: No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Luther says: “Therefore sanctifying is nothing else than bringing us to Christ to receive this good, to which we could not attain of ourselves.”

The Holy Spirit

I believe in the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit)

210. Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity, true God with the Father and Son.

Matt. 28:19: Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

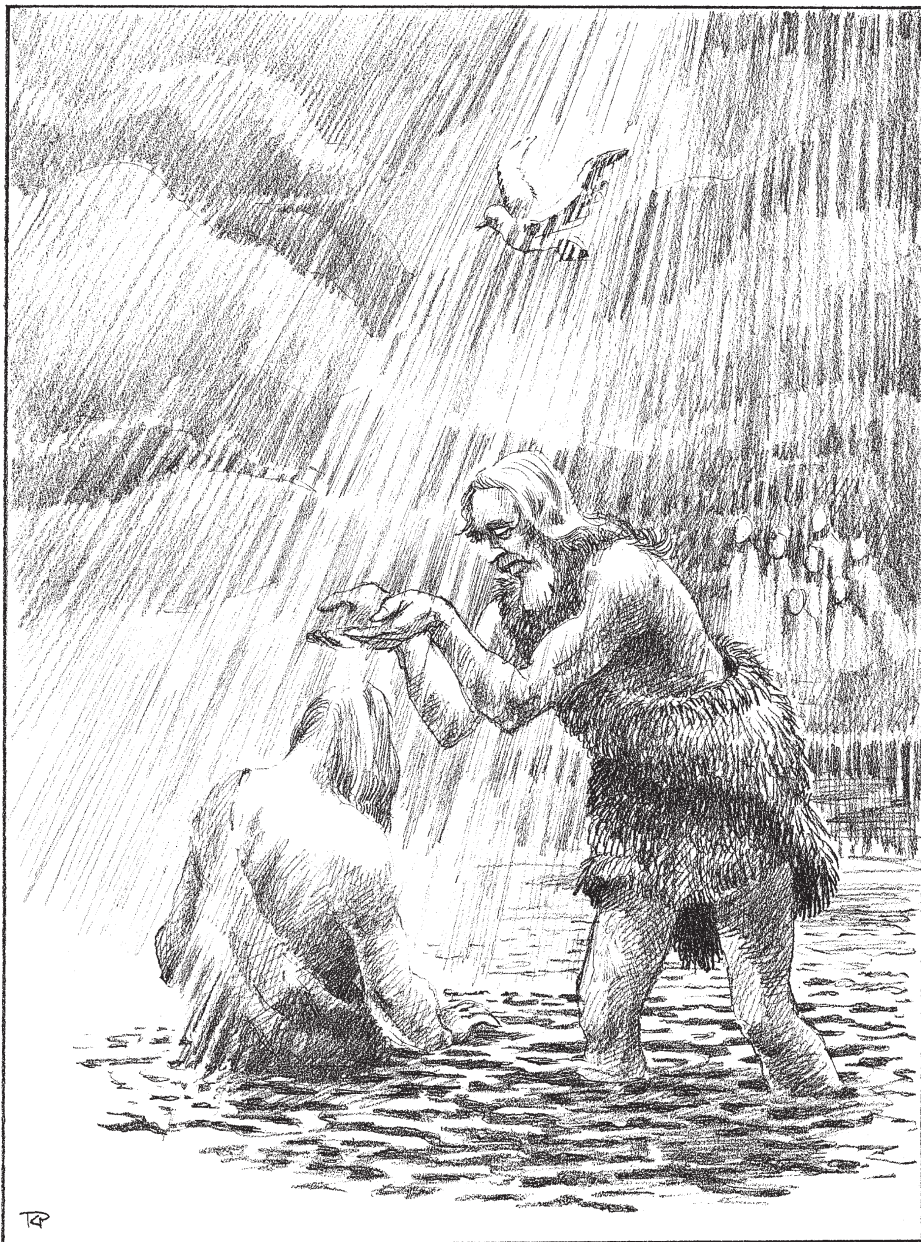
Note: Jesus does not say: the names, but: “the name”, for there is only one name of God, which is the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

211. How do you know that the Holy Spirit is true God?

The Holy Spirit is true God because the Bible ascribes to Him

1. Divine names.

Acts 5: 3-4: Ananias... why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost... thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.



The Holy Spirit is present in Baptism.

1 Cor. 3:16: Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

2. Divine attributes

Omnipresent:

Ps. 139:7-8: Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there.

Omniscient:

1 Cor. 2:10: For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.

Omnipotent:

1 Cor. 12:11: But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.

Holy:

Is. 6:3: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

His name is Holy Spirit.

3. Divine works.

Proceeds from the Father and the Son:

Joh. 15:26: Jesus said: But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me.

Joh. 16:7: Jesus said: For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.

Gal. 4:6: And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.

Rom. 8:9: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

2 Thess. 2:8: Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth.

Is. 11: 1,2,4: But there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him... and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth.

Creation:

Ps. 33:6: By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

Regeneration and renewal:

Tit. 3:5: According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Joh. 3:5: Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Giving of God's Word or inspiration:

2 Tim. 3:16: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.

2 Pet. 1:21: Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Miracles:

Matt. 12:28: But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

212. How has the Holy Spirit brought you to faith?

The Holy Spirit has

1. Through the Law, brought me to a knowledge of my sinfulness.

Jer. 23:29: Is not my Word like a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

Gal. 3:24: Wherefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Rom. 3:20: By the Law is the knowledge of sin.

2. Through the Gospel He has invited me to accept God's grace or the forgiveness of sins. Through the bright light of the Gospel He has enlightened my sin-darkened heart, so that I know Jesus Christ, my Savior, and in my heart believe in Him. In this way the Holy Spirit has given my conscience true assurance, comfort and peace.

Luke 14:17: Come, for all things are now ready.

1 Pet. 2:9: God hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Rom. 10:17: Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

Joh. 16:14: Jesus said: He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.

Assignment: Read Acts 16:25-34: The conversion of the jailor at Philippi.

213: What concepts does the Bible use to describe the work of the Holy Spirit?

The Bible uses, among others, the following concepts to describe that work of the Holy Spirit through which a person becomes a partaker of God's grace:

1. Conversion or return to God: Read Acts 11:20-21, 1 Pet. 2:25.
2. Regeneration: (being born again) Read Joh. 3:5, 1 Joh. 5:1, 1 Pet. 1:23.
3. Awakening from the dead or making alive: Read Col. 2:12, Eph. 2:5-8, Luke 15:32.

4. Enlightening, leading from darkness into light. Read Eph. 5:8, Acts 26:18, Joh. 12:46, 2 Cor. 4:6.

5. Repentance or change of mind. Read Luke 13:3-5, 15:7, and 24:47.

Note: It is important that the word, repentance, be understood in the right way, so that we will not go astray. It is often believed that it means a person's own efforts to improve his life and thus to be acceptable to God. This is not the case, however. It means a person's change of mind, which God brings about through His Word. This consists of the two afore-mentioned phases: 1. Terror of conscience, when a person through the word of the Law realizes in his heart, that he has truly earned God's eternal condemnation. 2. The comforting of the conscience. This is accomplished by the Gospel, when it announces that Christ has earned forgiveness of sins as a free gift for all sinners. In this way the Gospel creates faith in forgiveness and grants peace of conscience. The fruit of repentance is a thankful, willing obedience to God's Word and God's will. – At times the Bible uses the word, repentance, to mean only its first phase, that is, contrition or terror of conscience. For example, Luke 24:47.

214. Is conversion the work of the Holy Spirit alone, or is a person himself able to co-operate in this work?

Because of original sin a person by nature does not know Christ or the grace of God. He does not have a desire or the strength to turn in truth to God, and cannot in the slightest measure co-operate in his conversion. All glory and thanks for our salvation belong to God, who alone converts us, so that we believe in Jesus.

Even though in temporal matters a person has a measure of free will, in spiritual matters an unbeliever has no freedom of will whatsoever. A person who wants to believe in Jesus, already believes, even though he may not be aware of having in faith.

1 Cor. 2:9-10: Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.

1 Cor. 2:14: But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.

Eph. 2:1: You... were dead in trespasses and sins.

Joh. 6:44: No man can come unto me, except the Father Which hath sent me, draw him.

Assignment: Discuss: Can an unbeliever make so-called decisions in spiritual matters, and is a person able to choose God and eternal life?

215. What else has the Holy Spirit worked in you besides faith?

When the Holy Spirit brought me to faith in Christ, He also renewed my heart and gave me a new mind and will, so that from my heart I truly want to live to the glory of God and to love Him. I believe that He will continually give me strength to wage a successful battle against the devil, the world and my own sinful flesh, and give me strength and zeal to live a Christian life and do good works. (Sanctification in the narrow sense).

Ps. 51:10: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

1 Pet. 5:8-9: Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

1 Joh. 5:4: For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Gal. 5:24: They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Rom. 6:22: Now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness.

Rom. 7:22: For I delight in the Law of God after the inward man.

Assignment: Discuss: How do a person's mind and understanding, his will and emotional life, change when he turns from unbelief to faith? Does a person's basic nature change?

216. What are good works?

All that believers in Christ do, speak and think in faith according to God's Ten Commandments to the glory of God and the benefit of their neighbor, are good works. These include, among other things: performing their life's work in faith, or serving faithfully in their calling, living a Christian life in faith as well as a Christian's spiritual priesthood. These are God pleasing good works because of faith, for faith receives cleansing and forgiveness in Christ for all the evil with which our old Adam stains our good works.

Eph. 2:10: We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Col. 3:23-24: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Eph. 6:5-8: Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not men, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Ps. 119:32: I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

1 Cor. 10:31: Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Gal. 5:13: By love serve one another.

1 Pet. 2:9: Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

217: How will you remain in faith?

I can confidently trust that the Holy Spirit through the Gospel will preserve and protect me in the true faith unto the end.

Phil. 1:6: He Which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

218. Why do not all people who hear the Gospel believe and be saved?

The Holy Spirit desires to work faith in everyone, who hears the Gospel, but nevertheless all people do not believe. Those, who to the end resist God's Word and the Holy Spirit, are damned by their own fault.

Ezek. 33:11: As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn away from his way and live.

Matt. 23:37: How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.

Hos. 13:9: O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help.

2 Thess. 3:2: All men have not faith.

Ps. 109:17: As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. (Said of Judas Iscariot).

Heb. 4:2: For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

The Church

I believe... in the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints

219. What is Christ's Church?

Christ's Church consists of all those who in their hearts truly trust in Christ. This group of believers is also called the communion of saints and the one holy Christian Church or Christendom. Christians or believers therefore are the Church, and its Head is Christ. It is not the accomplishment of men, but has been created by the Holy Spirit through the Means of Grace.

Eph. 2:19-22: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone, in Whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.

Eph. 5:25-26: Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

Rom. 8:9: If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

Col. 1:18: He is the head of the body, the Church.

Assignment: Read Acts 1 and 2: The birth of the New Testament Church.

Luther: "For thank God, (today) a child seven years old knows what the Church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd. (Smalcald Articles).

220. How does the Bible describe Christ's Church?

Christ's Church is invisible, lasting, one, holy, Christian and universal.

221. What does it mean that the Church is invisible?

Christ's Church here in the world is invisible to us according to its essence, because we cannot see into another person's heart and determine whether there is faith there. Because the actual church is invisible to the human eye, we confess in the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in the holy Christian Church."

2 Tim. 2:19: The Lord knoweth them that are His.

Luke 17:20-21: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say: Lo here! or Lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you.

Assignment: Read 1 Kings 19:14,18: Prophet Elijah and the 7000, and 2 Sam. 15:11: Some followed Absalom in ignorance.

222. What does it mean that the Church is lasting?

Christ's Church is lasting, because the Holy Spirit continually until the end of the world gathers and protects His believers here on earth. It will therefore remain until the end of the world.

Matt. 16:18: Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matt. 28:20: Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

223. What does it mean that the Church is one?

Christ's Church is one because

1. The Triune God is one.
2. The Church's only foundation is Christ.
3. Its members all have the same faith, the same Means of Grace and the same hope.

4. They live in the same spiritual body under the same Head, Christ.

Eph. 4:4-6: There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Joh. 10:16: Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

1 Cor. 3:11: Other foundation can no man lay that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Luther: "I believe that there is upon earth a little holy group and congregation of pure saints, under one head, even Christ, called together by the Holy Ghost in one faith, one mind, and understanding, with manifold gifts, yet agreeing in love, without sects or schisms."

224. What does it mean that the Church is holy?

Christ's Church is holy because

1. Christ has sanctified and cleansed it from sin with His blood through the Means of Grace.

Heb. 10: 19;22: Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus... having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

1 Cor. 1:2: Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints.

2. It serves God with holy and righteous works.

1 Pet. 2:5: Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

225. What does it mean that the Church is Christian?

Christ's Church is Christian, because its only foundation is Christ and the apostolic-prophetic word of the Bible, which He has given.

1 Cor. 3:11: For other foundation can no man lay that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Eph. 2:19-20: Ye are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Cornerstone.

226. What does it mean that the Church is universal?

Christ's Church is universal because all believers in Christ of all times in all the world belong to it.

Gal. 3:28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Col. 1:5-6: The word of the truth of the Gospel, which is come unto you, as it is all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it does also in you.

Rev. 7:9: After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.

227. What are the identifying marks of the Church?

Even though Christ's Church is invisible to the human eye according to its essence, it nevertheless has identifying marks, on the basis of which it can be found, and on the basis of which we can faithfully adhere to it. These identifying marks are the pure teaching of God's Word and the Sacraments administered according to Christ's command.

Is. 55:10-11: As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my Word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Joh. 8:31-32: If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Joh. 10: 27-28: My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.

Luke 8:11: The seed is the Word of God.

228. What effect do the marks of the Church have on its existence and life?

The existence and life of the Church cannot be separated from its identifying marks.

Where the identifying marks of the Church cease, there the Church also ceases to exist.

Where something other than the pure word of God is allowed to be sown, there the devil can do his sowing unhindered, and because of the teaching of such a church, believers are in constant danger.

Where the identifying marks of the Church are pure, there believers receive the type of shepherding that the Good Shepherd wants to give them. There they have a true spiritual home.

Rev. 3:10-11: Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast that no man take thy crown.

Gal. 5:9: A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Assignment: Read Acts 15. The apostolic Church rejected the suggestion that converts from paganism be given the command: “Unless you have yourselves circumcised... you cannot be saved.

229. What is a local congregation?

A local congregation is a group of professing Christians who gather together in a certain locality around the Word of God and the Sacraments, and receive spiritual nourishment from them. Mixed into this group may be some hypocrites and ungodly people, but they do not belong to the congregation in essence. The Bible speaks of local congregations in the plural and calls them the churches of God and Christ. In this way the Bible indicates that local congregations are of God.

1 Cor. 16:19: The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

Rom. 16:16: The churches of Christ salute you.

2 Cor. 1:1: Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia.

Eph. 1:1: To the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Assignment: Read Matt. 22:1-12: The wedding guest without a wedding garment, and Matt. 13: 47-48: the parable of the net.

230. What is a synod?

A synod is a group of local congregations with the same confession, who have joined together in order to work together. During the time of the Apostles the congregations were not joined together in an organized synod, even though they were in fellowship with each other and worked together for the edification of God’s kingdom. The right kind of confession, oneness in faith and doctrine and a common mission are matters ordained by God, but a synod as an organization is a matter of free choice.

Assignment: Read Acts 15: The Antioch and Jerusalem congregations work together in matters concerning doctrine, and 2 Cor. 8:18-9:15: proclaiming the Word together, helping those in need together, praying for each other; all this was confessing and submitting to Christ's Gospel. (9:13)

231. What kind of local congregations and synods are acceptable to God?

God wants Christian local congregations and synods to possess, confess and teach the entire doctrine of His Word in its truth and purity and to administer the Sacraments according to Christ's command. In other words, God wants the identifying marks of the Church to remain pure in local congregations and synods. (The true visible Church).

Matt. 28:20: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

1 Cor. 1:10: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

232. What kinds of visible local congregations and synods, however, are there in external Christendom?

There are two types of visible local congregations, synods and church federations: **1.** Those that teach and confess God's Word in its truth and purity (orthodox or doctrinally pure churches) and **2.** Those that tolerate and teach false doctrine (heterodox or doctrinally impure churches).

The doctrinally pure Church at the beginning of the New Testament era consisted of the apostolic congregations, later it consisted of those churches purified by the Lutheran Reformation, and in our day it includes the faithful Lutheran (confessional) congregations and synods. The heterodox church during the post-apostolic era included, for example, the Arians; in our day: the Roman Catholics, the Greek Orthodox, the Reformed churches, the re-baptizing movements, and the nomi-

nal Lutherans. Heterodox federations today are the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches.

233. How are Christians to relate to the doctrinally pure Church?

Christians are faithfully to adhere to the doctrinally pure church.

For the strengthening of our faith we are to attend its worship services and other gatherings faithfully, heed the teaching that it offers and use the holy Sacraments.

As faithful members of the doctrinally pure church, we are to make use of our spiritual priesthood, and according to our ability financially support the work of the church, thus enabling the church to continue its activity and the spreading of God's pure Word.

We must not be offended by the oppressed state of the church or by its small size.

We are to bear each other's weaknesses patiently and live together in a spirit of brotherly love.

Acts 2:42: They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

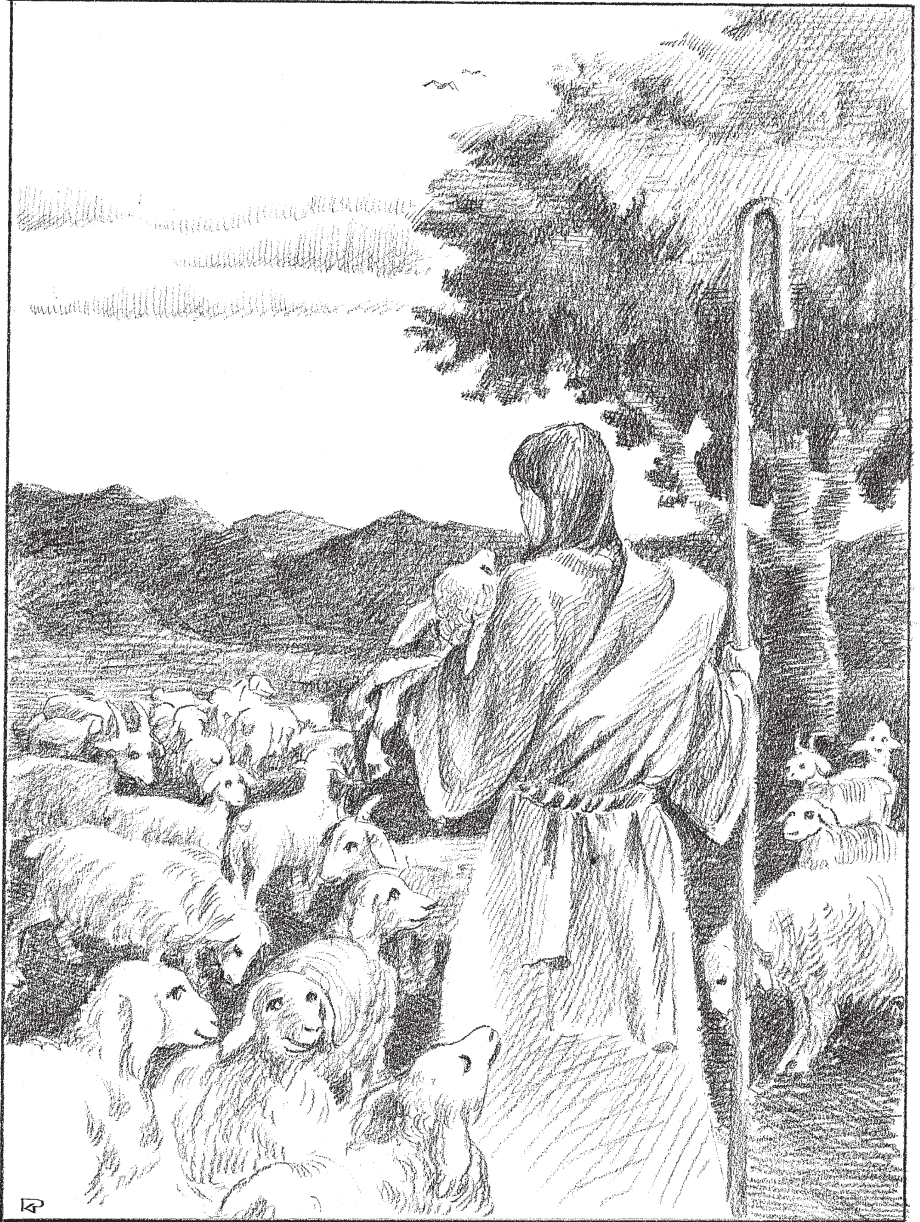
Joh. 10:27: My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

Heb. 10:25: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is.

1 Pet. 2:9: Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.

Gal. 6:6,10: Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things... as we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

2 Cor. 9:7: Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity for God loveth a cheerful giver.



"My sheep hear my voice"

2 Thess. 3:1: Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.

Eph. 4:1-3: I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1 Thess. 5:14: Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

Luke 12:32: Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

234. How are Christians to relate to heterodox congregations, churches and church federations?

Christians are to remain apart from the heterodox church, and if they have already joined such a church, they are to separate from it and join a church faithful to God's Word. A member of a doctrinally pure church will not participate in the activity of a heterodox church or commune at its altar.

1 Joh. 4:1: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Matt. 7:15: Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.

Rom. 16:17: I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.

2 Cor. 6:14-17: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness...Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.

2 Joh. 10-11: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth

him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Assignment: Discuss: Why is the decision as to what church to join on the basis of God's Word often so difficult for people?

235. What kind of a road must Christ's Church travel here on earth?

Even though all believers have salvation through faith, and even though they enjoy God's peace in their hearts, their life here on earth is a life of cross-bearing, and they experience the same as Christ experienced in His state of humiliation. Here on earth Christ's Church is a militant church.

Act. 14:22: We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Matt. 10: 22: Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Luke 9:23: If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Eph. 6:11: Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

236. What is the final destiny of Christ's Church?

When the complete number of the elect has come into Christ's Church, Christ will come to judgment and will take His Church to the eternal joy of heaven. This heavenly, glorified Church is called the Church triumphant. This teaching of God's Word gives the Church militant great comfort as it continues its journey and is subject to tribulation and persecution.

Matt. 5:10: Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

Rev. 19: 7,9: Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him, for the

marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready... Blessed are they, which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb... these are the true sayings of God.

The Forgiveness of sins and Justification

I believe in the forgiveness of sins

237. Why do I confess: “I believe in the forgiveness of sins”?

I confess that I believe in the forgiveness of sins, because I am certain that I cannot through my own strength and works be acceptable to God and be justified in His sight, but forgiveness of sins is given to me a gift by grace through faith in Jesus. Forgiveness of sins is the same as justification.

Ps. 130:3-4: If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.

Eph. 2:8-9: For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God – not of works – lest any man should boast.

Rom. 4:6-7: God imputeth righteousness without works, saying: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

238. What is justification?

Jesus Christ has atoned for all the sins of all mankind and in this way has earned God’s forgiveness for all people. Thus, Christ’s resurrection from the dead is also the justification of the whole world. We call this objective justification.

2 Cor. 5:19: God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation.

1 Joh. 2:2: He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Heb. 1:3: The Son... when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Jer. 23:5-6: I will raise unto David a righteous Branch... and this is the name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Rom. 3:23-24: All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Rom. 4:25: Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.

Luther: "For He (God's Son) has died for the sins of the whole world. Now it is most assuredly true that I too belong to the world. Therefore it is most assuredly true, that he has also died for my sins." (On the basis of Rom. 3:28, thesis 19, from the year 1535).

God proclaims this forgiveness to me in the Word of the Gospel and in the promises of the Sacraments, from which I receive it through mere faith, solely by grace, as a free gift, without a single work or merit on my part. This faith God counts unto me for righteousness. We call this justification by faith. (subjective justification).

Rom. 1:16: For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

Rom. 4:5: To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Rom. 4:16: Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace.

Lutheran Confessions: "The word justify means to declare righteous and free from sins, and to absolve one from eternal punishment for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which is imputed by God to faith. Phil. 3:9" (Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, 3:17).

239. Why does God forgive your sins or justify you?

I have no good work or merit because of which God would forgive my sins, but He forgives them solely by grace and solely for the sake of Christ, as a free gift.

Jer. 31:3: I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.

Eph. 2:8-9: For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God – not of works – lest any man should boast.

Joh. 14:6: Jesus saith unto him: I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

Lutheran Confessions: “Therefore the righteousness which is imputed to faith or to the believer out of pure grace is the obedience, suffering, and resurrection of Christ, since He has made satisfaction for us to the Law and paid for (expiated) our sins.” (Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration 3:14).

Note: Even those works that we do as fruits of our faith, do not merit anything.

Luke 17:10: Likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants. We have done that which was our duty to do.

240. Can every believer be assured of the forgiveness of sins?

Every believer in Christ can be absolutely certain of the forgiveness of his sins before God, because

1. God’s promises are firm and sure.

2 Cor. 1:20: For all the promises of God in him are yea.

Heb. 6:18: It was impossible for God to lie.

Tit. 1:2: God, that cannot lie.

2 Tim. 1:12: I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

1 Tim. 1:15: This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

2. God has confirmed the forgiveness with an oath.

Ezek. 33:11: As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.

3. The Holy Spirit has sealed the forgiveness in the hearts of believers with the Word and the Sacraments.

2 Cor. 1:21-22: Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

Rom. 4:11: Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.

Thus we can be certain “that neither death, nor life, nor angels or principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:38,39)

241. What do we, along with the whole true Church of Christ, teach concerning justification?

Along with the entire true Church of Christ we join the Apostle Paul in confessing: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” (Rom. 3:28).

Rom. 3:21-22: But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe.

242. Why must we so firmly hold fast to the Biblical doctrine of justification?

The doctrine of justification is the chief Christian doctrine:

1. Without this doctrine everything else is useless.

Acts 4:12: Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved.

2. This doctrine separates the Christian Church from all false religions.

Gal. 5:4: Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace.

All false religions teach people to seek justification before God on the basis of their own works and merits. For this reason there are so many false religions.

Luther says: “These articles of the Creed, therefore, divide and separate us Christians from all other people upon earth. For all outside of Christianity, whether heathen, Turks, Jews or false Christians and hypocrites, although they would believe in, and worship one true God, yet they know not what His mind towards them is, and cannot expect any love or blessing from Him; therefore they abide in eternal wrath and damnation. For they have not the Lord, Christ, and, besides, are not illumined and favored by any gifts of the Holy Ghost.”

3. Only the Biblical doctrine of justification gives and presents to wretched sinners true, lasting and unwavering comfort in life and death.

Matt. 9:2: Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.

4. This doctrine alone gives all glory to God.

Ps. 115:1: Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

243. How then are you justified before God or how are you saved?

I am not justified before God through any work or merit of my own, or because of any righteousness that is within me or that has been infused into me, but I am justified solely through God's grace and goodness, solely because of Christ's merit, to which I cling in faith and through which I have received it for myself.

In other words:

I receive righteousness and salvation acceptable to God, because of the most holy obedience, suffering and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and not because of the works of anyone else. This perfect fulfillment of the Law by Christ, His obedience and sacrifice, God imputes to me for my benefit through faith. The righteousness in which I am acceptable to God is not my own, but Christ's righteousness.

Rom. 10:4: For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

Rom. 5:19: For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Is. 64:6: But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

Is. 53:5,11: He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed... By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

Assignment: Read Rom. 3 and 4. Note: James 2:17-26 does not speak of becoming righteous in God's sight, but being consid-

ered righteous in the sight of men.

The Resurrection of the Body

I believe...in the resurrection of the body

244. What does the Bible teach concerning the resurrection of the body?

The Bible teaches that on the Last Day Christ will raise up me and all the dead. At that time He will make this same body in which I have lived and died, alive again.

Joh. 5:28-29: The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

245. What difference will there be in the resurrection of the dead?

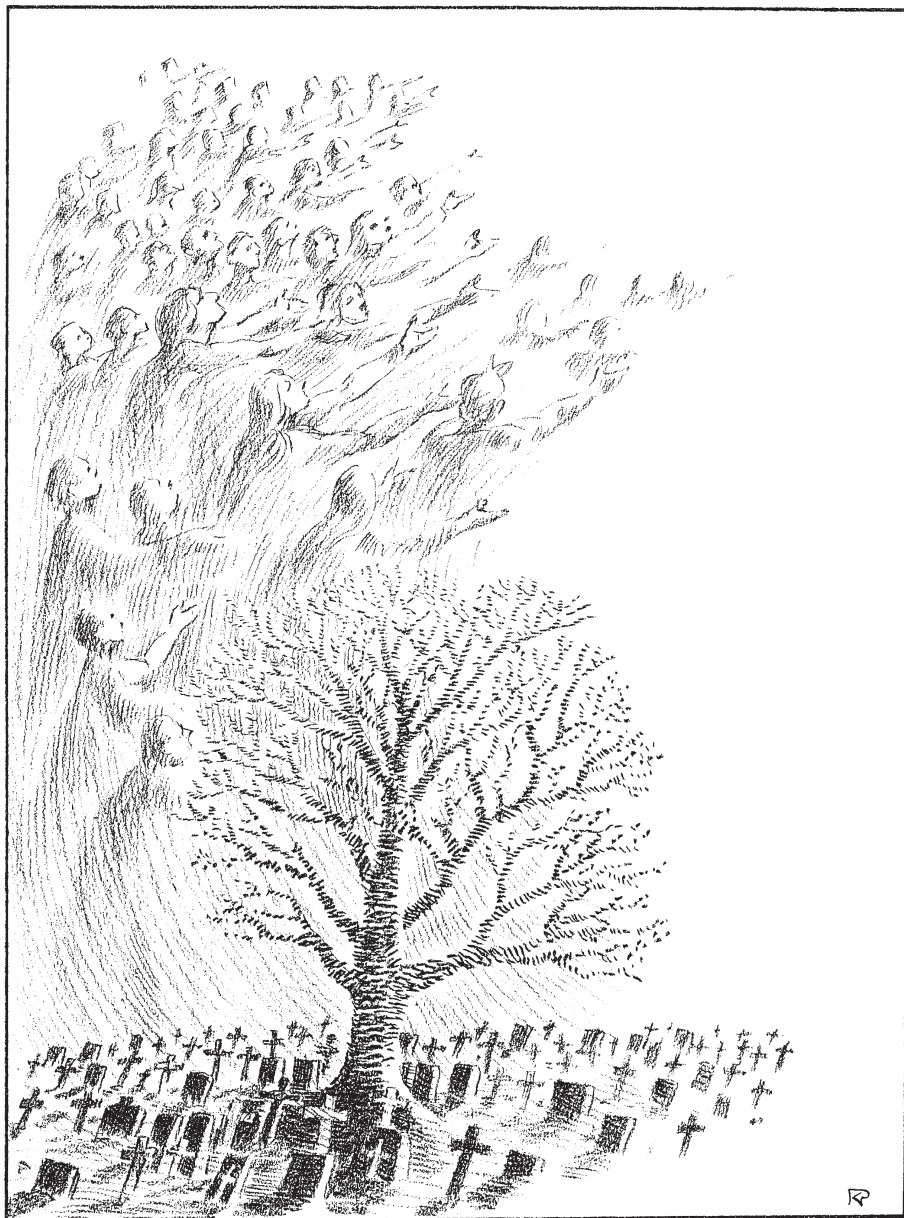
Believers in Christ will rise with glorified bodies to eternal life, but unbelievers will arise to eternal death and torment, with bodies subjected to sin, ridicule and shame.

Phil. 3:21: Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.

Is. 66:24: Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

246. What will be the order of events in the resurrection?

On the Last Day, in connection with the second coming of Christ, a general resurrection of all people will take place. First those who died



"They shall hear His voice, and shall come forth."

in faith will be raised, and then those believers yet living will be glorified. There will not be a long period of time between the resurrection of the believers and unbelievers, or a thousand-year kingdom, as some believe.

Matt. 12:41: The men of Nineve shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here.

1 Cor. 15:51-52: Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1 Thess. 4:16-17: For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Heb. 9:27: It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

Assignment: Consider which of the above Bible passages refutes reincarnation.

Note: The belief in the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth (Chiliasm) is based on the literal interpretation of certain prophecies of the Old Testament and the book of Revelation. The Old Testament, using illustrations from temporal life, describes the time of the Messiah, His kingdom and its spread as a wonderful kingdom of peace. The New Testament shows us that these prophecies were fulfilled in Christ Jesus and His kingdom of grace, and refutes their literal interpretation with the words: "The kingdom of God comes not with observation". (Luke 17:20). Compare, for example, Is. 9:1-6 and chapter 11, where the happy time of peace and the return of the remnant of Israel are connected to Christ's birth and the ensuing proclamation of the Gospel. The prophecies of the book of Revelation are illustrative and they are to be interpreted in the light of the clear passages of the Bible. The Confessions of the Christian Church do not recognize the teaching of Chiliasm, and teach according to the Bible that Christ will return vis-

ibly only once and at that time will conduct the Judgment. The Small Catechism: "Will at the Last Day raise up me and all the dead."

247. How can you comprehend the resurrection of the body?

The resurrection of the body is such an overwhelming matter, that I cannot comprehend it with my mind, but I believe it with child-like faith because God teaches it in His Word, and because it is not based on our human abilities, but on God's power.

For God, who created the world out of nothing through His Word, nothing is impossible. He is able merely by His Word to call forth also all the dead.

Matt. 22:29: (Jesus said to the Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection of the body): Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.

Matt. 11:25: At that time Jesus answered and said: I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

Rom. 4:17: Abraham believed, even God, Who quickeneth the dead and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

Rom. 4:21: And (Abraham) being fully persuaded that what He (God) had promised He was able also to perform.

Assignment: Read Matt. 22:23-33: Jesus and the Sadducees, and 1 Cor. 15: The Apostle Paul teaches concerning the resurrection of the body.

Everlasting Life

I believe in... the life everlasting

248. On what basis do you believe that there is everlasting life?

I believe that there is everlasting life, because the Bible so teaches.

Matt. 25:46: And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Joh. 10:28: I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Joh. 3:16: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Heb. 13:14: For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

249. What does the Bible teach concerning everlasting life?

Everlasting life is unspeakably wonderful bliss, peace, righteousness, joy and glory, when we can see the Lamb of God face to face and be free of sin and its curse. Everlasting life is a spiritual type of life. When our bodies have been glorified, they will no longer have temporal needs. We will not partake of earthly food in heaven, nor will there be marriage there, but we will be like the angels.

Rev. 21:4: And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

Ps. 17:15: I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.

Ps. 16:11: In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Rom. 8:18: The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Rom. 14:17: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Rev. 22:3-4: And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face.

Mark 12:25: When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage: but are as the angels which are in heaven.

250. Who will receive eternal life?

Everyone who believes in Christ will receive everlasting life. We already possess it through faith, but we will enjoy it in its fulness only when we are in heaven. Those who die in unbelief will not attain eternal life, but will be eternally damned.

Joh. 3:36: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

1 Joh. 3:2: Behold, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is.

Mark 16:16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

251. What happens to a believer when he dies?

When a believer dies his body returns to dust or decays, but the Holy Spirit transports his soul to be with Christ in peace.

Luke 23:43: Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.

Luke 16:22: And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

Phil. 1:23-25: I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith.

Col. 3:3-4: For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.

252. What will happen to the body and soul of a believer on the last day?

When the Holy Spirit on the Last Day raises the dead, a believer's body together with his soul will live with Christ forever in everlasting joy and glory.

Phil. 3:21: Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.

253. Are you sure that you will get to heaven?

God has already here in time called us by the Gospel, enlightened and sanctified and preserve us in the true faith. I am also sure that He has already in eternity elected me to eternal life and that no one can pluck me out of His hand.

There is only an election of grace; there is no election to eternal death. God has not in eternity elected anyone to hell, but unbelievers are lost by their own fault.

Eph. 1:3-6: God... hath chosen us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself.

Joh. 10:27-28: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.

1 Thess. 5:9: For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Tim.2:4: God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

254. Why do you conclude also the Third Article of the Creed with the words: “This is most certainly true”?

I conclude also the Third Article of the Creed with the words: “This is most certainly true”, because, as I continue my journey to heaven, I firmly believe that the Holy Spirit will accomplish in me and in the entire Church, that which I confess in this Article.

CHAPTER III

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Of Prayer in General

255. What is prayer?

True prayer: A believer in Christ speaking to God from his heart.

Prayer is an act of worship, wherein we in true faith in our Mediator, Jesus Christ, bring our petitions before the true and living God in order to receive what we ourselves and our neighbor need. In prayer we also praise and thank God for what He has given and promised us.

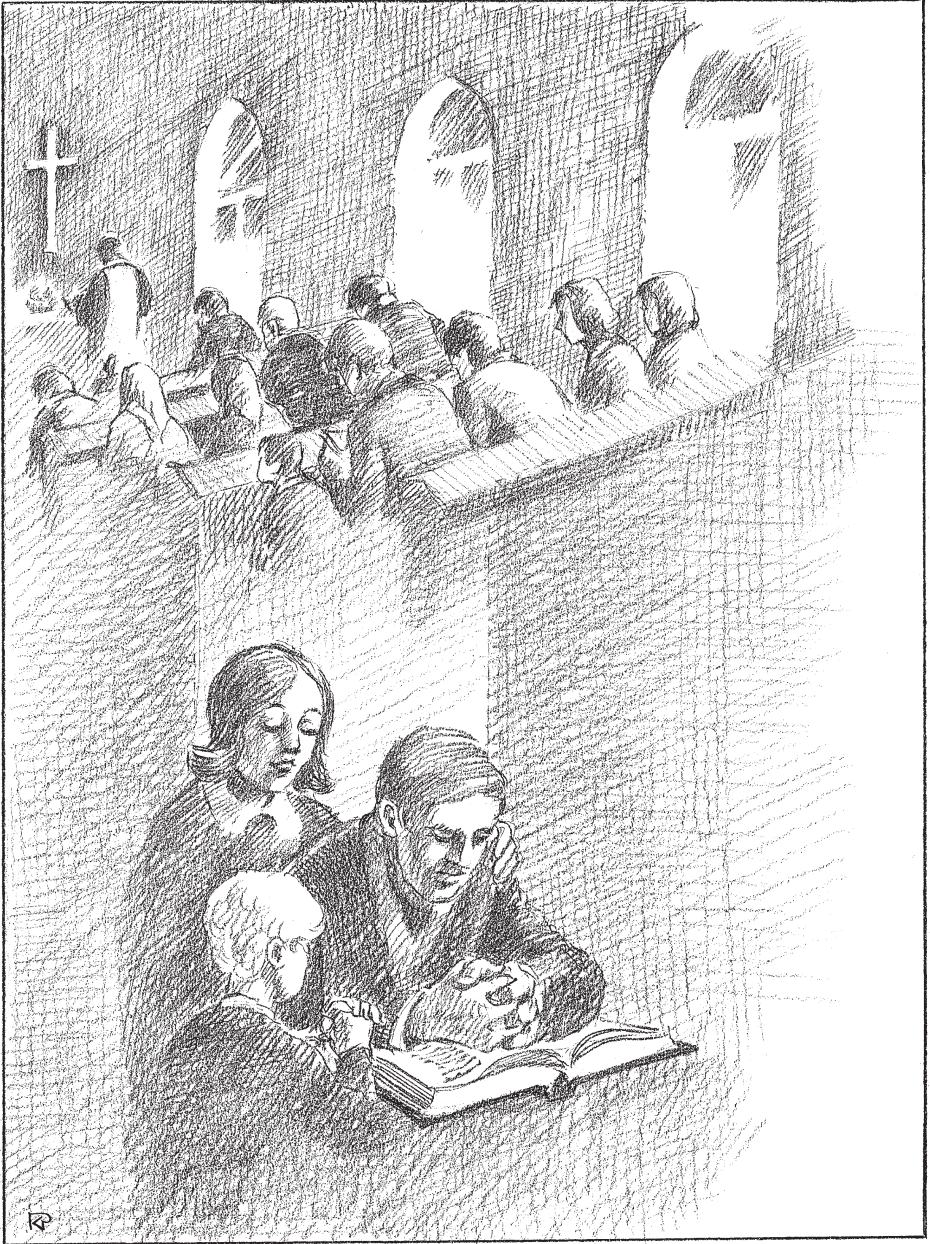
Prayer is based on God's command and the promises of God's Word, as well as on God's mercy – not on our own merits.

Prayer is the result of faith and belongs in the area of good works. It is not a means of grace. True prayer nevertheless refreshes believers spiritually, because it is connected with the remembrance and use of God's Word, and the Word is a means of grace through which God speaks to us.

Ps. 19:14: Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.

Ps. 145:18: The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth.

Is. 65: Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.



True believers pray to the Father in Spirit and in truth.

Dan. 9:18: We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies.

Matt. 7:7: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Matt. 18:19: If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

James 4:2: Ye have not, because ye ask not.

Ps. 50:15: Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.

Ps. 103:2-3: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities.

256. What moves us to pray?

We are moved to pray by

1. God's command.
2. God's promise to hear and answer our prayers.
3. Our own and our neighbor's needs.
4. The glory and honor that belong to God.

257. To whom are we to pray?

We are to pray only to the true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For there is no other God. To Him alone belongs all honor, and only He can hear us and help us. Therefore joint prayers with those, who pray to angels, to people or to other false gods, are an abomination to the Lord.

Matt. 4:10: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Ps. 65:2: Thou that hearest prayer.

Prov. 28:9: He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

1 Tim. 1:17: Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Is. 63:16: Thou art our Father though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

Rev. 22:8-9: I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me: See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book; worship God.

258. For what may we pray and for what are we to pray?

We may pray for, and we are to pray for, everything that redounds to God's glory and for the true benefit of ourselves and our neighbor.

When we pray for temporal matters, such as health and better living conditions, we are to add the following words to our prayer: "If it be Your will." God, you see, alone knows what is to His glory and for our benefit.

For spiritual gifts that are necessary for our salvation, such as forgiveness for our sins, perseverance in faith, and the salvation of our neighbor, we are to pray unconditionally; for we know from God's Word, that God wants to give us these gifts and that they are for His glory and our good.

Phil. 4:6: Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God.

Luke 11:13: If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your

children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.

James 1:5: If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, That giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Matt. 8:2: A leper... worshiped him, saying: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

259. To what are we to appeal when we pray?

We are to present our prayers to God in the **name of Jesus**; in other words, we are to trust firmly that God is merciful to us and hears our prayers because of Jesus Christ.

Joh. 16:23: Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.

260. For whom are we to pray?

We are to pray for ourselves and for all people, especially for God's Church, mission work, the servants of the Word, our government, and also for our enemies.

1 Tim. 2:1-2: I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: For kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Col. 4:2-3: Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ.

Matt. 5:44: Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

We are not to pray for the dead, for the time of grace ends at death, and after that, our prayers would have no effect on the state of the dead. Neither have we a command from God to pray for the dead.

Heb. 9:27: It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

2 Cor. 5:10: We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Luther: “We are to preserve the funeral customs, and weep with those who weep, because they have lost their dear friends, and express our sympathy to them, but not in such a manner, that we pray for the dead.” (Explanation of Genesis, 1540, on the basis of Gen. 35:20).

Assignment: Read about those who prayed: Luke 18:13: The Publican prayed for himself; Gen. 18:23-32: Abraham prayed for Sodom; Job. 42:10: Job prayed for his friends; Dan. 6:5-13 and 9:3-20: Daniel prayed for God’s people; Matt. 15:22-28: The Canaanite woman prayed for her daughter; Luke 23:34: Jesus prayed for His enemies; Acts 7:60: Stephen prayed for those who stoned him.

261. Does God hear every prayer?

God hears every true prayer, but He answers in His own way at His own time, and each time gives us what is truly for our good.

2 Cor. 12:7-9: And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me: My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.

Joh. 2:4: Mine hour is not yet come.

Is. 54:7: For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

262. What types of prayers has God not promised to hear?

God has not promised to hear prayers that

1. Are offered in unbelief

James 1:6-7: But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.

2. Are selfish and contrary to God's will

James 4:3: Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Assignment: Read Matt. 20:20-23: The selfish prayer of the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

3. Wish evil for our neighbor

Rom. 12:14: Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

4. Prescribe to God the time and manner, when and how He should help us. Note: In God-pleasing prayer we do not give commands to God. A God-pleasing prayer is the humble and thankful plea of a forgiven and obedient child.

263. Why may a Christian at times feel that God has not heard his prayer?

In times of tribulation we often do not notice the help that God has already given us. When God does not always give us help that would free us from our distress, He has His own good and fatherly reasons for doing so, even though we are unable to understand them. He teaches us in the midst of tribulation to trust in Him as our merciful heavenly Father, and to continue to rely on the promises of His Word.

Mark 11:24: What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

Ps. 42:9,11: I will say unto God my rock: Why hast Thou forgotten me?... Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art Thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God. For I shall yet praise Him, Who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Assignment: Read Matt. 15:22-28: The Canaanite woman.

264. Where and when may we pray?

We may, and we are to pray everywhere, especially when we are alone, when we have our home devotions, and when we participate in the congregation's worship services. We are to pray at all times, especially during times of tribulation, and before we make decisions.

1 Tim. 2:8: I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Matt. 6:6: But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to the Father which is in secret. And thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Ps. 26:12: In the congregations will I bless the Lord.

1 Thess. 5:17: Pray without ceasing.

Ps. 50:15: Call upon Me in the day of trouble.

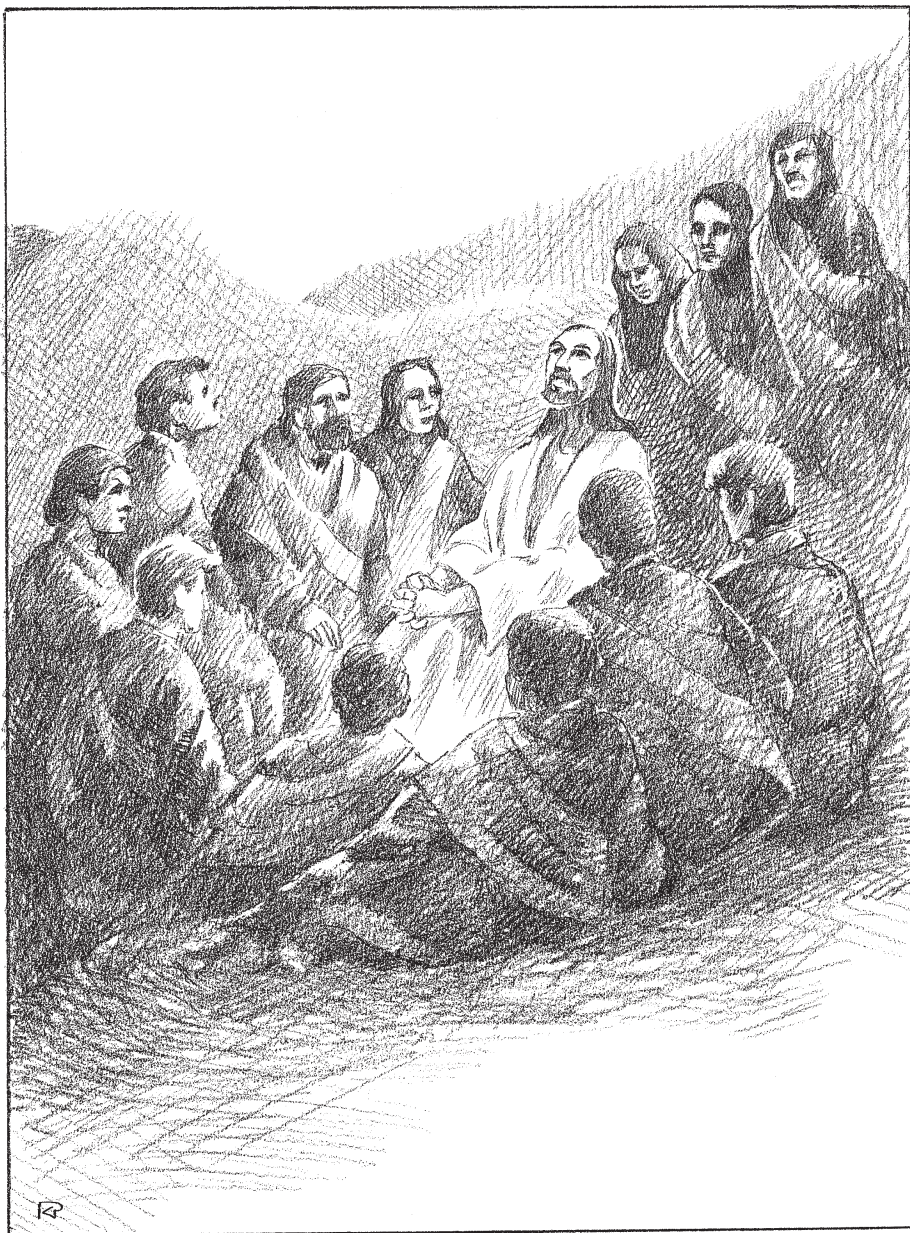
Appropriate times for prayer at home, are: morning and evening, before and after meals.

265. What promise of God is especially comforting to us, when we feel that we are not able to pray properly?

When we feel that we do not know how to pray to God, we are com-

forted by the fact that God knows all things, and that the Holy Spirit Himself prays for us.

Rom. 8:26-27: Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.



"After this manner therefore pray"

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

266. What is the best prayer of all?

The best prayer of all is the Lord's Prayer, which our Lord Christ Himself has taught us. It includes everything that God, our gracious Father, has promised to give us.

Assignment: Read Matt. 6:9-13: Jesus teaches how to pray.

Luther: "There is no nobler prayer to be found upon earth than the Lord's Prayer which we daily pray, because it has the excellent testimony that God loves to hear it, which we ought not surrender for all the riches of the world."

The Lord's Prayer has three parts: The salutation, the seven petitions, and the conclusion.

The Salutation

Our Father, who art in heaven. *What does this mean?* God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.

267. Why does Jesus teach us to call God “Father”?

The word “Father” encourages us to pray with confidence, and without fear and doubt.

Rom. 8:15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

268. What does Jesus teach us with the word “our”?

With the word “our” Jesus teaches that all of us who believe in Him are God’s children, and we pray to Him as one group, each of us supporting one another.

Gal. 3:26: For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

269. Of what does Jesus remind us with the words “who art in heaven”?

With the words “who art in heaven” Jesus reminds us of the truth that our heavenly Father is the Lord of all, “who can do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Eph. 3:20.

THE SEVEN PETITIONS

The First Petition

Hallowed be Thy name. *What does this mean?* God's name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be holy among us also. *How is this done?* (God's name is hallowed) When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead a holy life according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven. But he that teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches, profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, Heavenly Father.

270. For what do we pray in the First Petition?

Because God's name is our highest treasure, we first of all ask God for help in keeping His name holy.

271. How is God's name hallowed?

God's name is hallowed, when

1. God's Word is taught clearly and purely (pure doctrine).

Joh. 17:17: Sanctify them though thy truth; thy Word is truth.

Jer. 23:28: He that hath my Word, let him speak my word faithfully.

2. We live as God's obedient children according to His Word (righteous life).

Matt. 5:16: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Luther: "God will not hear anything more dear to Him than that His

honor and praise is exalted above everything else, and His Word is taught in its purity and is esteemed precious and dear.”

272. *How is God’s name profaned?*

God’s name is profaned by

1. Teaching contrary to what God’s Word teaches (false doctrine).

Ezek. 22:26: Her priests have violated my Law, and have profaned mine holy things... and I am profaned among them.

2. Living contrary to the way God’s Word teaches us to live (sinful life).

Rom. 2:23-24: Thou that makest thy boast of the Law, through breaking the Law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.

Luther: “In the first place then, God’s name is profaned when men preach, teach, and speak in the name of God what is false and misleading, so that His name must serve to adorn and to find a market for falsehood. That is, indeed, the greatest profanation and dishonor of the divine name. In the second place, also by an openly wicked life and works, when those who are called Christians and the people of God are adulterers, drunkards, misers, envious and slanderous.”

The Second Petition

Thy kingdom come. *What does this mean?* The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also. *How is this done?* (The kingdom of God comes to us) When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life, here in time and hereafter in eternity.

273. What is meant by God's kingdom in the Second Petition?

God's kingdom in this petition does not refer to an earthly kingdom, but to Christ's kingdom of grace here in time, and to His kingdom of glory in heaven.

Rom. 14:17: The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Luke 17:20: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation

Joh. 18:36: My kingdom is not of this world.

Phil. 3:20-21: For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

274. For what do we pray in the Second Petition?

We pray that

1. True faith and righteous living according to God's will might increase, and Christ's kingdom of grace would grow and expand.

2 Pet. 3:18: Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Thess. 3:1: Pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.

Matt. 9:38: Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.

2. Christ's kingdom of glory would come soon

Luke 12:32: Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Rev. 22:20: He Which testifieth these things saith: Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

The Third Petition

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. *What does this mean?* The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also. *How is this done?* (God's good and gracious will is done among us) When God breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow God's name nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh; but strengthens and preserves us steadfast in His Word and faith unto our end. This is His gracious and good will.

275. What is the good and gracious will of God?

The good and gracious will of God is that we would remain in faith, would patiently live according to His will, and finally enter the eternal glory of heaven.

1 Tim. 2:4: (God) will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Ps. 86:11: Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth.

Acts 14:22: We must through much tribulation enter in the kingdom of God.

Joh. 6:40: This is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

276. *For what do we pray in the Third Petition?*

Because the evil will of the devil, the world and our flesh resists God's good and gracious will, we pray in the Third Petition, that God would break that evil will or turn it to our good, and would strengthen us, so that we could endure and remain in faith unto the end.

1 Pet. 5:8-9: Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

1 Joh. 2:15-17: Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

2 Thess. 3:3: But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

Gen. 50:20: Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good.

The Fourth Petition

Give us this day our daily bread. *What does this mean?* God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer, also to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to know it, and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving. *What is meant by daily bread?* (Daily bread is) Everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, field, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

277. What is meant by daily bread?

Daily bread is everything we need for our temporal life. God is ready to provide it, and does provide it, to everyone every day. But He wants us to ask Him for it in our prayers and thankfully to confess that we receive it as a free gift out His great goodness.

Matt. 5:45: He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

1 Tim. 4:4-5: For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. For it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

Assignment: Discuss: How are we to understand famines, wars, and disasters, through which human lives are lost. Read Ps. 139:16 and Luke 13:1-5.

278. What does our Lord Jesus Christ teach us with the words “our bread”?

By using the words “our bread” our Lord Christ teaches us to ask for bread that comes to us in a manner that is in accord with His will. At the same time He teaches us that we are not to desire bread, which does not belong to us. He also teaches us to remember those neighbors of our who are in need.

2 Thess. 3:10-12: If any would not work, neither should he eat... Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

Eph. 4:28: Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

279. What does our Lord Christ teach us with the words “this day” and “daily”?

With the words “this day” and “daily” our Lord Christ teaches us that we need these gifts just one day at a time. Therefore we are not to

worry about our future livelihood as the pagans do.

Matt. 6:34: Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Assignment: Read Matt. 6:25-34: Jesus urges us to consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field.

The Fifth Petition

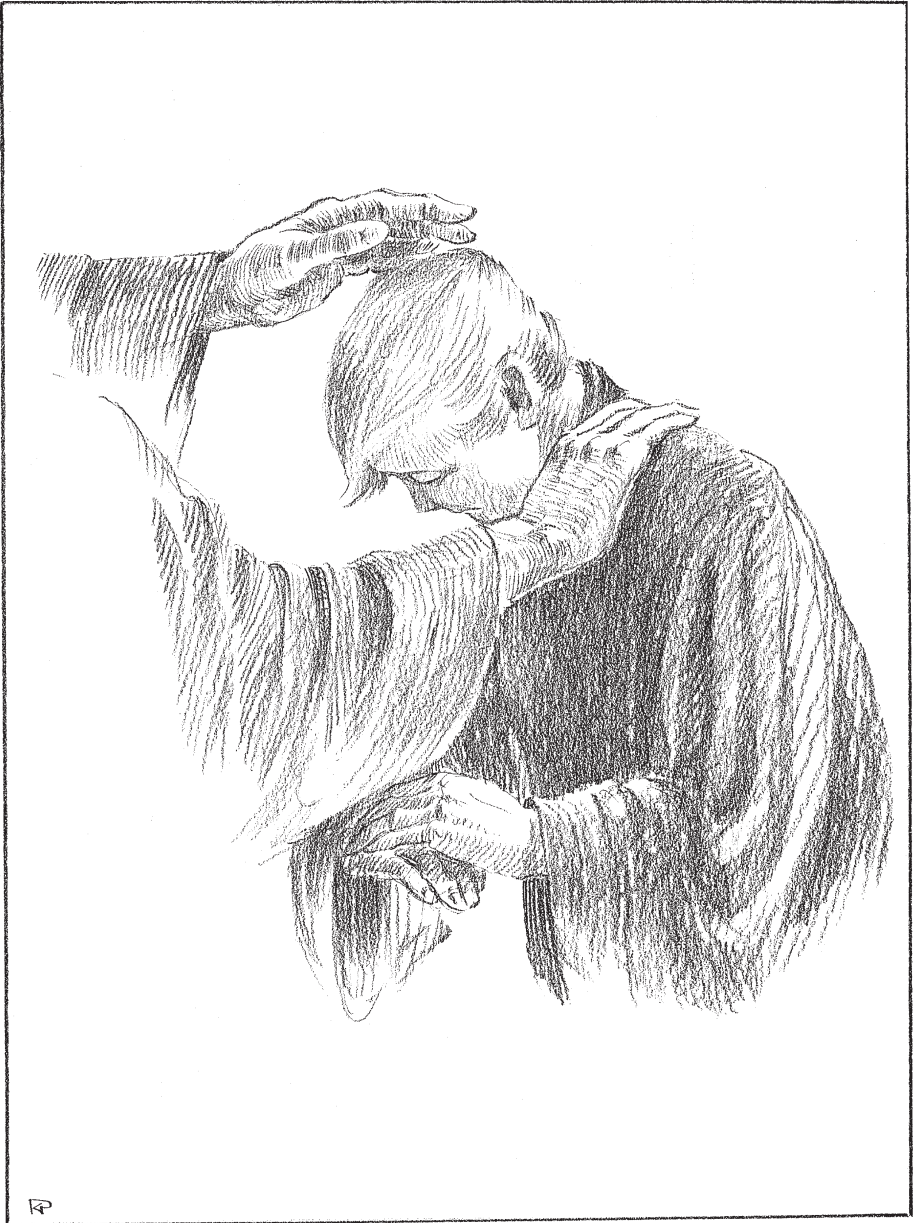
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. *What does this mean?* We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor on their account deny our prayer; for we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them; but that He would grant them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. So will we also heartily forgive, and readily do good to, those who sin against us.

280. For what do we pray in the Fifth Petition?

Our Savior teaches us to ask God to forgive us our sins. For it is our own sins that cause us and all our fellow believers the greatest and bitterest distress.

Ps. 130:3-4: If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.

Luther: “Not as though God did not forgive sin without and even before our prayer, for He has given us the Gospel, in which is pure forgiveness before we prayed or even thought about it. But this is to the intent that we may recognize and accept such forgiveness.”



"Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

281: How often do we need this prayer?

Because we always have with us our flesh that has been corrupted by original sin, and we sin in many ways every day and deserve nothing but punishment, we therefore constantly need the comfort of forgiveness. Just as we pray for daily bread every day, so we also need to pray for spiritual bread or forgiveness of sins every day.

Gen. 32:10: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant.

Luke 15:21: Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

Dan. 6:10,11: He kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Dan. 9:18-19: We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive.

282. When we pray for forgiveness, why do we add the words “as we forgive those who trespass against us” to our prayer?

Our forgiveness does not cause God to forgive us our sins, for God has already forgiven our sins and the sins of all people in Christ His Son, because of His Son's work of atonement. We do not therefore earn forgiveness for ourselves by forgiving the sins of our fellow men, who have sinned against us. We receive forgiveness for our sins solely by grace, through faith, without our works. It is a free gift of God.

In the Lord's Prayer our Savior does not teach unbelievers how to pray, but rather teaches those, who already believe that their sins have been forgiven, and who know the grace of God. Thus in this petition the Savior teaches believers, that they are always to watch, so that their hearts will not become hardened toward their neighbor, and so that they will not in this way drive out the Holy Spirit from their hearts, and

lose their saving faith and forgiveness, because of their unbelief.

Assignment: Read Matt. 5:21-26: Jesus teaches the disciples to live together in harmony.

283. What kind of an exhortation and reminder to us is the fact that God has forgiven our sins?

The fact that God forgives us our sins solely by His grace

1. Exhorts us with grateful hearts to forgive, from our hearts, all of our neighbor's sins against us.

Col. 3:13: Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

2. Reminds us, that whoever does not want to forgive his neighbor, but still believes that he himself has God's forgiveness, is deceiving himself. Such a person truly does not know his own sins, and does not have forgiveness for them, but in his impenitence brings God's judgment on himself.

Matt. 6:15: If ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Assignment: Read Matt. 18:23-35: Jesus' parable of the merciless servant.

Luther: "If, therefore, you do not forgive, then do not think that God forgives you; but if you forgive, you have that consolation and assurance, that you are forgiven in heaven, not on account of your forgiving – for God forgives freely and without condition, out of pure grace, because He has so promised, as the Gospel teaches – but in order that He may set this up for our confirmation and assurance for a sign alongside of the promise which accords with this prayer, Luke 6:37 'Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven'."

The Sixth Petition

And lead us not into temptation. *What does this mean?* God indeed tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us nor seduce us into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice; and though we be assailed by them, that still we may finally overcome and obtain the victory.

284. What types of trials confront people here on earth?

There are two types of trials, good and evil. Evil trials are called temptations.

285. What are good trials?

The good trials are of God. Through them He tests His children, permitting them to experience tribulation and difficulties in order to purify their faith, to strengthen and protect them from something much worse.

Joh. 6:5-6: Jesus saith unto Philip: Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this He said to prove him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

Ps.139:23-24: Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts.

Ps. 119:67: Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept Thy Word.

Is. 48:10: Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

Joh. 5:14: Jesus said to the man who had been sick for 38 years: Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

Assignment: Read Gen. 22:1-12: God tests Abraham, and Mark 7:25-30: Jesus tests the Canaanite woman. Read about Job. What kind of an attitude did he have after he was tested? Job 42:1-6: and 2 Cor. 8:12: in the Macedonian churches “in a severe test of affliction”.

When a believer confesses his faith in Jesus, he has to suffer because of Jesus’ name. This is called a **cross**. This is a good type of trial.

Assignment: Study the Bible to see what it says about the cross. Read Matt. 5:11-12; 10:37-38 and 1 Pet. 4:12-16.

286. What are temptations?

Temptations are the type of trials through which the devil, the world and our sinful flesh try, by deceitful means, to seduce us away from God’s Word into false belief, fleshly carelessness and other sins, and finally into unbelief. The tempter presents sin to us as something good, advantageous and pleasant. If he succeeds in getting us to fall, he tries to make us believe, that our sin is so great, that it will not be forgiven. The tempter wants us to remain in unbelief as slaves of sin, and finally be eternally damned.

James 1:13-14: Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God... But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away, of his own lust, and enticed.

Prov. 1:10: My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

Matt. 18:7: Woe unto the world because of offences!

Gen. 4:7: Sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

287. For what do we pray in the Sixth Petition?

In the Sixth Petition we pray that God would keep temptations from us, but if He permits them to come to us, that He would enable us to overcome them.

Eph. 6:13,18: Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand... praying always with all prayer and supplication.

1 Cor. 10:13: God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Luther: “We must endure trials, yea, be engulfed in them; but we pray for this, that we may not fall and be drowned in them.”

288. How can we successfully resist temptation?

We cannot successfully resist temptation with our own strength or our own wisdom, but with God’s strength and wisdom we can overcome them. Therefore when we are tempted, we are to pray in faith, and use as our weapons God’s Word, Christ’s victory over the tempter, and God’s grace.

If we have nevertheless fallen, we may penitently confess our sins, trust in Christ, and believe that our sins have been forgiven through God’s grace.

Eph. 6:13: Take unto you the whole armour of God.

Heb. 2:18: For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.

Rom. 5:20: Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

1 Joh. 5:4-5: This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.

Matt. 14:30: (Peter, about to sink) Lord, save me!

The Seventh Petition

But deliver us from evil. *What does this mean?* We pray in this petition, as the sum of all, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from every evil of body and soul, property and honor, and finally, when our last hour has come, grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven.

289. For what do we pray in the Seventh Petition?

As a result of sin there is much evil and suffering in this world. For this reason we pray that God would spare us, so that we would not have to experience it, that He would take away the cross He has given us to bear, or give us the strength to bear it, and cause it to work for our good. We also pray that He would protect us from falling into the control of the devil, and finally would deliver us from all evil through a blessed death.

Ps. 90:10: The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow.

Heb. 12:6: For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.

Job. 5:19: He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

Is. 40:29: He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.

Luke 2:29: Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word.

290. Why do we pray “deliver us from evil”?

Our Savior does not only exhort us to pray for ourselves, but He also desires that the needs of our neighbor and of all mankind would be the

concern of our hearts.

1 Cor. 12:26: And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.

The Conclusion

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. *What is meant by the word “Amen”?* That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us so to pray, and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen, that is, Yea, yea, it shall be so.

291. What do we confess with the closing words of the Lord’s Prayer?

With the closing words of the Lord’s Prayer, we confess that everything that we pray for is under God’s control, and that to Him belongs all honor and thanks for His fatherly care and guidance.

1 Chron. 29:11: Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all.

292. How are we to conclude each of our prayers?

God wants us to be certain that He hears our prayers and that they are acceptable to Him. For we are His dear children, and He Himself has commanded us to pray and has promised to hear us. For this reason we are to conclude every prayer in the confidence of faith.

1 Pet. 3:12: For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers.

Mark 11:24: What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

CHAPTER IV

The three preceding chapters already contain the chief parts of Christian doctrine. The following three chapters deal in more detail with matters that are connected to the Third Article of the Creed. These chapters deal with the Sacraments and Confession.

293. What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is a sacred act instituted by Christ, in which God, through His Word connected to certain visible means, gives us, and assures us of the grace earned by Christ and received by faith.

Ex. 20:24: In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

Augustine: When the Word unites with the substance, a Sacrament is born.

294. What sacraments has Christ instituted?

Christ instituted the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We do not generally call Confession a sacrament – although God in Confession also gives us His grace – because there are no visible means connected to it. We call the Word of the Gospel and the Sacraments the Means of Grace.

During the time of the Old Testament, there also were Sacraments: circumcision and the passover lamb.

Assignment: Read from the Lutheran Confessions, how they describe a sacrament: The Large Catechism, Baptism 1 and the Apology of the Augsburg confession 13.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

The Nature of Holy Baptism

What is Baptism? Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's word. *What is that word of God?* Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Matthew: **Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.**

295. How is water used in Holy Baptism?

In Baptism water is not used in the natural way, for it is connected with God's Word. Luther: "Baptism is nothing else than a divine water; not that the water in itself is nobler than other water, but that God's Word and command are added."

296. Who has instituted Holy Baptism?

Our Savior, the Lord Christ Himself, instituted Holy Baptism when He gave the disciples His mission command.

Matt. 28:18-20: All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world.

297. Who administers Baptism?

Baptism, as a rule, is administered by the pastor of the congregation, but in case of an emergency, every Christian has the right and responsibility to administer it. (See appendix 4: a short form for Holy Baptism in case of an emergency.)

1 Cor. 4:1: Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

298. How is Baptism to be administered?

Our Lord Christ has not given a command as to the manner in which Baptism is to be administered. Christians have the freedom to decide the manner – pouring, immersing or sprinkling – just as long as water is used and the Baptism is administered in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The word baptize (in Greek, baptidzein) is used in the Bible to denote washing, pouring, sprinkling and immersing; hence, all contact with water.

Assignment: Read Mark 7:4, Acts 22:16, Matt. 3:11, Eph. 5:26 and Heb. 9:10.

299. What is meant by Baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

When Baptism is administered according to Christ's command in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, this means that the true God Himself baptizes and receives the one baptized into communion with Himself and makes him a partaker of all His grace.

Ex. 20:24: In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

Luther: "To be baptized in the name of God is to be baptized not by men, but by God Himself. Therefore, although it is performed by human hands, it is nevertheless truly God's own work."

300. Who is to be baptized?

According to the command of our Lord Christ, all nations are to be baptized, therefore all living people, children as well as adults, in the following order:

1. Those who can receive instruction are first to be taught the chief parts of Christian doctrine. After that, they are baptized, at which time they also confess their faith in Christ.

Assignment: Read Acts 8:26-39: Philip baptized the Ethiopian courtier.

2. Those infants who are born to members of a Christian congregation, are first to be baptized and then instructed. Also those children, whose guardians give the congregation permission to instruct them in the Christian faith and to give them a Christian upbringing.

Infant Baptism

301. Why are infants also to be baptized?

Infants are to be baptized because

1. They are included in all nations.

Matt. 28:19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing...

2. They too are spiritually dead, and must be born again through faith in Christ in order to be saved.

Joh. 3:3,5: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God... Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

3. The covenant of grace and the promise of the kingdom of heaven also belong to children. Therefore, the seal of the covenant and of the promise, Baptism, also belongs to them.

Gen. 17:7: I will establish... an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

Acts 2:38-39: Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children.



"Suffer the little children to come unto me."

Mark 10:14: Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.

4. The Holy Spirit creates faith also in infants.

Mark 10:14-15: Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

Matt. 18:6: Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me...

Matt. 21:16: Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.

5. Baptism replaced circumcision.

Col. 2:11-12: In Whom (Christ) also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead.

6. Through Baptism, the Holy Spirit creates faith and regenerates.

Col. 2:12: Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God.

7. Baptism belongs to the entire Church of Christ, to which also believing children belong.

Eph. 5:25-26: Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.

8. God has not given us any other means besides Baptism, through which infants can believe and become partakers of the redemption.

Matt. 18:10-11: Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven. For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost.

9. The Apostles baptized entire households.

Assignment: Read Acts 10 and 11: the household of Cornelius, 16:13-15: of Lydia, 16:25-34: of the jailor of Philippi, 18:8: of Crispus, and 1 Cor. 1:16: of Stephanas.

The church father, Origen (182-254): “The Church has, from the Apostles, received the custom of also baptizing infants.”

Luther: “Having come to be baptized and... as the officiant in the stead of Christ administers the Sacrament, Christ blesses infants, giving them faith and the kingdom of heaven.” (Church Postil)

302: What is the responsibility of sponsors?

The sponsors testify that the child has been properly baptized, pray for the child, assist in his Christian training and, when necessary, assume responsibility for it.

The Benefit of Baptism

What does Baptism give or profit? It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare. *Which are such words, and promises of God?* Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Mark: **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.**

303. How does Holy Baptism give the forgiveness of sins?

Because in Baptism we through faith put on the Lord Jesus Christ, His righteousness therefore covers all our sin, original sin as well as actual sins, and we are cleansed with His blood.

Gal. 3:27: For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Acts 2:38: Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

Acts 22:16: Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.

Heb. 10:22: Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

304. How does Baptism deliver from death?

Baptism delivers us from death because it takes away the sting of death, which is sin, and unites us with Christ Jesus. Thus, temporal death cannot harm baptized, believing Christians, and eternal death or damnation has no power over them, but they are in Christ, live with Him and Christ lives in them. Temporal death is the gate to eternal life for Christians.

1 Cor. 15:55-57: O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, Which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom. 8:1: There is therefore now no more condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

305. How does Baptism deliver from the devil?

Baptism delivers us from the devil, because in Baptism we are snatched away from the kingdom of the devil and transferred into God's kingdom. In Baptism we put on Christ and receive forgiveness of sins, so that the devil can no longer successfully accuse us. We can now in faith, in the shelter of our Baptismal covenant, defend ourselves against the tempter and successfully resist him.

Col. 1:12-13: Giving thanks unto the Father, Which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

Col. 2:12: Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him

through faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead.

Gal. 3:27: For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Rom. 8:34: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, That is risen again.

1 Joh. 4:4: Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.

1 Joh. 5:4: This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

306. How does Holy Baptism give us eternal salvation?

At the same time that Baptism makes us children of God, it also makes us heirs of eternal salvation. We can be absolutely certain of this on the basis of the Baptismal covenant.

1 Pet. 3:21: Baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Rom. 8:17: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

Tit. 3:5-7: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

1 Pet. 1:21: Who by him (Christ) do believe in God, That raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.

Rom. 5:5: Hope maketh not ashamed.

307. How are the gifts given in Baptism received and used?

The gifts given to us in Baptism are received and used through faith. Unbelief, on the other hand, rejects them and does not use them.

Mark 16:16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Heb. 11:6: Without faith it is impossible to please Him.

308. Is Baptism absolutely necessary for salvation?

Our Lord Christ does not say: He who does not believe and who has not been baptized will be damned, but only “He who does not believe”. Thus, He indicates, that unbelief alone damns and that saving faith can exist without Baptism, just as long as Baptism is not despised and rejected. Situations like this may occur on the mission fields. On the same basis, in accordance with Luther’s illustration, those parents, whose child has died before it has been baptized, have been comforted (Gen. 17:7). Not the lack of Baptism, but the despisal of Baptism, damns.

The Power of Baptism

How can water do such great things? It is not the water indeed that does them, but the Word of God which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts such word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is simple water and no Baptism. But with the Word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus Chapter third: **According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying.**

309. What gives Baptism its power to save?

Water in itself cannot save us, but God's Word places the saving gifts into Baptism. Through faith, which trusts this Word of God, a person receives these gifts for himself.

Eph. 5:25-26: Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.

310. Does Baptism regenerate?

Baptism does regenerate, for the Bible calls it a washing of regeneration. Baptism is a means through which the Holy Spirit causes us to be born again.

Tit. 3:5: According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Joh. 3:5: Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Note: Those who in mission areas have already been born again through

the Word, also need Baptism. They too are regenerated through Baptism according to God's Word. The power and effect of Baptism does not change, even though before Baptism, the Gospel is proclaimed and heard. Baptism and the Word of the Gospel do not nullify, but strengthen the effect of each other. During the time of the Apostles, the Gospel was proclaimed first, and then Baptism was administered. To those who were baptized under such circumstances, the Apostle Paul proclaims that Baptism regenerates (Tit. 3:5). – Those, on the other hand, who after having been baptized, are spiritually dead because of their unbelief, may like the Prodigal Son repent and return to their Father in the shelter of their Baptism, and become alive again. Luther: "Repentance, therefore, is nothing else than a return and approach to Baptism, that we repeat and practice what we began before, but abandoned."

311. What is meant by the renewing of the Holy Spirit?

The renewal wrought by the Holy Spirit includes the following: When Baptism regenerates us through faith, at the same time it gives us a new spiritual life. The Holy Spirit begins living in us, enlightens our minds and our understanding, directs our will toward everything good, and gives us strength to live as God's children, to resist lusts and be renewed according to the image of God.

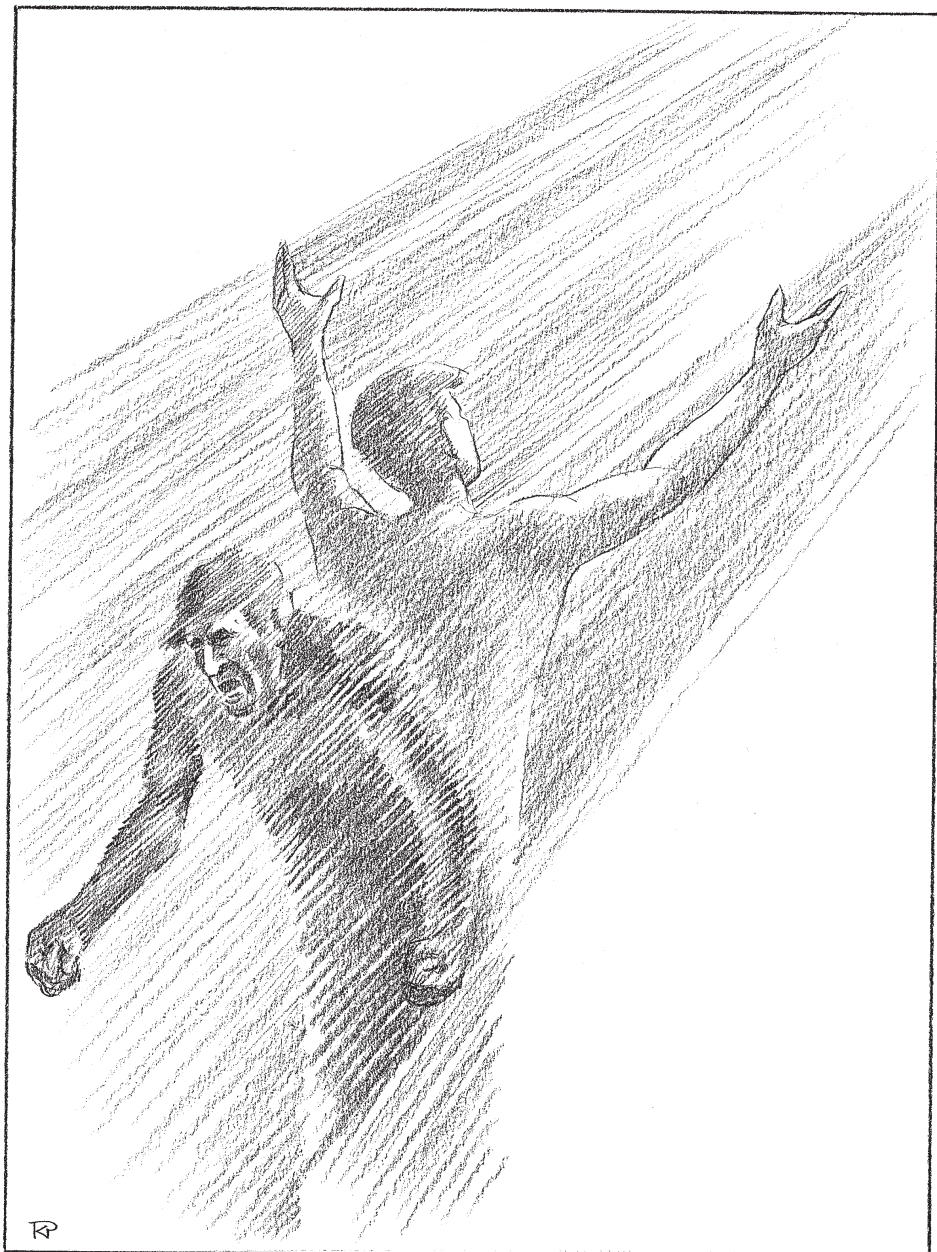
On the Last Day in the resurrection, Christ's Church will be glorified, at which time we will be free of our Old Adam and completely cleansed and holy.

Tit. 3:5: According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Rom. 8:14: For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

2 Cor. 5:17: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

Eph. 5: 25-27: Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or



"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

The Significance of Baptism

or

The Proper Use of Baptism

What does such baptizing with water signify? It signifies that the Old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever. *Where is this written?* St. Paul writes, Romans, chapter sixth: **We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death, that, like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.**

312. What is the Old Adam?

According to the Bible, the old man or the Old Adam is our corrupt, sinful nature, which we have inherited from Adam and which will remain with us until we die. Everyone has an Old Adam.

Eph. 4:22: Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

Luther: “What is the old man? It is that which is born in us from Adam, angry, hateful, envious, unchaste, stingy, lazy, haughty, yea, unbelieving, infected with all vices, and having by nature nothing good in it.”

313. What is the new man?

The new man is the new spiritual essence or life, which the Holy Spirit has created in us by regenerating us in Holy Baptism. It lives before God in righteousness and purity, hence in true faith, and a holy life

without pretense. Only believers have a new man, which also through the Holy Spirit crucifies the old man.

2 Cor. 5:17: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

Rom. 7:6: That we should serve in newness of Spirit.

Eph. 4:24: Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Col. 3:10: Ye have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.

Rom. 8:13: If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Assignment: Formulate a definition of the new man on the basis of the quotation from Luther in the preceding question, but using opposite characteristics that apply.

314. What is the lot of the old man, and the lot of the new man?

The old man, with its evil intentions and actions, deserves death.

To the new man belongs the gift of life now and forever.

Gal. 5:24: They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Rom. 6:11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

315. How are we to use Baptism in accomplishing this?

The old man is drowned and in its place the new man arises in such a way, that we condemn the intentions and the activity of the old man every day, and in faith are buried in the grace-rich water of Baptism, and arise cleansed, to live in true faith and obedience before God.

Zech. 13:1: In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness.

Is. 12: 3: Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

Luther: “A truly Christian life is nothing else than a daily Baptism, once begun and ever to be continued. For this must be practised without ceasing... Therefore, if you live in repentance, you walk in Baptism, which not only signifies such a new life, but also produces, begins, and exercises it.”

316. May a person, who has fallen from his Baptismal covenant, return to it?

Yes, he may. For even though he has fallen from his Baptismal covenant, God is nevertheless faithful and on His part the Baptismal covenant remains in force. In His grace God calls the fallen to return to their Baptismal covenant, and draws them to Himself. Nothing gives God more joy, than a sinner’s return to Him.

Jer. 3:22: Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.

2 Tim. 2:13: If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny himself.

Is. 54:10: For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

Luke 15:32: It was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this brother was dead, and is alive again, and was lost, and is found.

Assignment: Read Luke 15.

Luther: “Let every one esteem his Baptism as a daily dress in which he is to walk constantly, that he may ever be found in the faith and its fruits, that he suppress the old man and grow up on the new.”

317. May a Baptism be renewed?

We must not be rebaptized, for a properly administered Baptism is God’s work, and His works do not need renewing or repairing. If someone has erred and been rebaptized, he may repent of his sin, and rely on his first or true Baptismal covenant.

Eph. 4:5: One Lord, one faith, one Baptism.

CHAPTER V

THE OFFICE OF THE KEYS AND CONFESSION

The Office of the Keys

What is the Office of the Keys? It is the peculiar church power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of penitent sinners, but to retain the sins of the impenitent as long as they do not repent. *Where is this written?* Thus writes the holy Evangelist John, chapter twentieth: **The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and saith unto them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.**

318. What kind of a power is the Office of the Keys?

The power of the Office of the Keys is a spiritual power, which Christ has given to His entire Church on earth, in such a way that each Christian local congregation, even the smallest one, has this power and is fully entitled to use it. This power is exercised through God's Word.

Joh. 20:22-23: See above.

Matt. 16:19: And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matt. 18:17-18: And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matt. 18:20: For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.

319: What does the power of the Office of the Keys include?

This power includes all the spiritual authority, which Christ has given to His Church on earth. On the basis of this authority the congregation has the right:

1. To proclaim and teach God's Word and administer the holy Sacraments.
2. To care for souls with God's Word.
3. To remit the sins of penitent sinners, and to retain the sins of the impenitent.
4. To call and ordain pastors to perform the above functions.

1 Pet. 2:9: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Mark 16:15: Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Matt. 28:18-20: The Baptismal command.

1 Cor. 11:24: This do in remembrance of Me (Holy Communion).

This power is called the Office of the Keys, because it opens heaven by forgiving sins and closes heaven by retaining sins.

320. Who are repentant sinner in God's Church?

Repentant sinners in God's Church are those who confess their sins to be sins before God, who are sorry because of their sins, desire to improve their life, and who trust in Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners.

To them we are to pronounce the absolution.

Ps. 51: 17: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite hearts, O God, Thou wilt not despise.

Luke 18:13: God be merciful to me, a sinner.

Matt. 26:75: And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

Prov. 28:13: He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

Acts 16:31: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

Matt. 3:8: Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.

Assignment: Read Luke 15:11-24: the prodigal son.

321. Who are impenitent sinners?

Impenitent sinners are sinners, who do not confess their sins to be sins before God, but try to defend themselves and cover up their sins. They do not feel the need to believe their sins forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ. The congregation must not pronounce the absolution to them, but must retain their sins as long as they do not repent.

Prov. 28:13: He that covereth his sins shall not prosper.

1 Joh. 1:8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

322. How does the congregation retain a person's sins?

If a person remains impenitent, and does not heed the warning and admonition of God's Word that the congregation has given, the congregation finally excludes that person from the congregation.

If a person's sin is not publicly known, the following instructions given by Jesus, are observed:

Matt. 18:15-17: If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

The first two steps are not necessary, if the sin is a matter of common knowledge. In that case it is an offense and sin against the entire congregation. The congregation can then directly discipline the offender.

1 Cor. 5:3-5: Concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The congregation declares those, who despite admonition, stubbornly teach and spread doctrine contrary to God's Word, to be such with whom they cannot be in church fellowship.

1 Tim. 6:3-5: If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud... from such withdraw thyself.

Tit. 3:10: A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, reject.

A person that has been excommunicated from the congregation cannot partake of Holy Communion, be a sponsor for a baptized child, or serve in any other position of trust in the congregation.

Assignment: Discuss on the basis of 1 Cor. chapter 5, how a congregation is to relate to those, who wish to be in fellowship with believers, but who live in manifest sin. How does a Christian relate in family situations, at work and in the community?

323. What type of sins cause faith to die, and drive away the Holy Spirit?

Gross or coarse sins drive away faith and the Holy Spirit from the heart. Such sins, for example, are: drunkenness, murder and adultery. These are called mortal sins. If a person dies while living in such sins, he will be damned.

1 Cor. 5:11,13: If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one do not to eat... put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

Gal. 5:19-21: Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like... they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

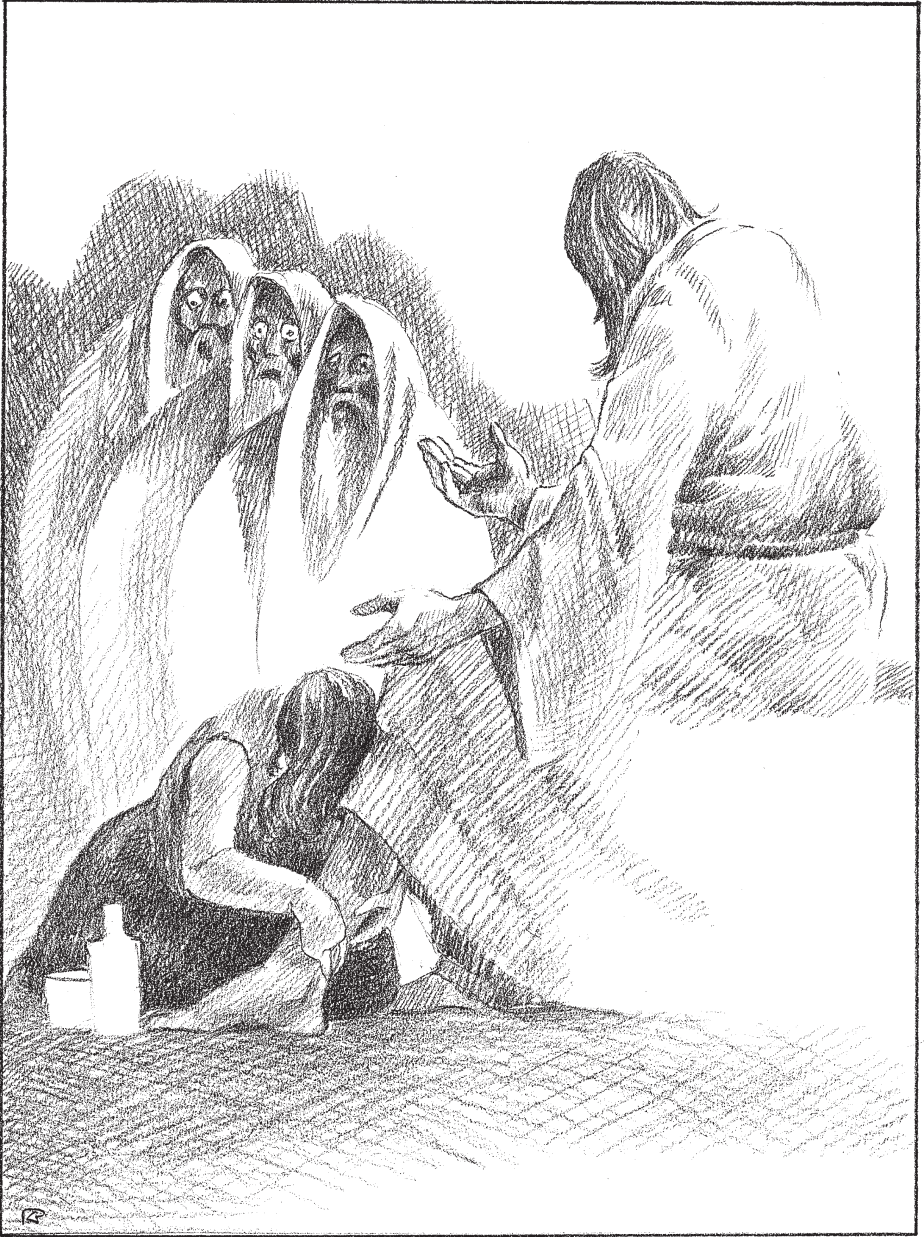
Ezek. 33:18: When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

324. Can a person who has fallen into mortal sin receive forgiveness for his sin?

If a person who has fallen into mortal sins, repents of his sin and trusts in God's grace in Christ, he receives forgiveness and is saved.

Ezek. 34:16: I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.

Ezek. 33:19: If the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.



"Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."

1 Joh. 1:9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

325. Can a person who has been excommunicated from a congregation be received back into the congregation?

If an excommunicated person comes to a knowledge of his sin and repents, and promises to improve his sinful life, the congregation through the pastor pronounces God's forgiveness to the person and receives him or her again as a brother or sister in faith and as a member of the congregation. At the same time the congregation forgives the person also on its own behalf. Excommunication is not an earthly punishment, but an admonition, intended for the soul's salvation.

Prov. 27:6: Faithful are the wounds of a friend.

2 Cor. 2:6-8: Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

The Office of the Public Ministry

What do you believe according to these words (John 20:22,23)? I believe that, when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, especially when they exclude manifest and impenitent sinners from the Christian congregation, and, again, when they absolve those who repent of their sins and are willing to amend, this is as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself.

326. What is the Office of the Public Ministry?

The functions of the Office of the Public Ministry are: to care for the souls in the congregation, to teach and proclaim God's Word, to administer the holy Sacraments, and to retain the sins of the impenitent and to remit the sins of the penitent.

Heb. 13:17: Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.

Tit. 1:9: (A bishop) must be blameless... holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

2 Tim. 4:2: Preach the Word.

1 Cor. 4:1: Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Joh. 20:22-23: Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

The theological training of those preparing to enter the Office of the Ministry, is also the responsibility of the Christian Church and its ministry.

2 Tim. 2:2: The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

327. What do we call those who serve in the Office of the Ministry?

The Bible calls those who serve in the Office of the Public Ministry, shepherds and bishops (overseers), teachers, elders, and servants.

Eph. 4:11: And he gave some... pastors (shepherds) and teachers.

1 Tim. 3:1: This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

1 Tim. 5:17: Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.

Col. 1:6-7: Ye knew the grace of God in truth... of Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ.

In Confessional Lutheran churches the word, pastor, has become the generally accepted title for those who serve in the Office of the Public Ministry. The word, pastor, means shepherd. In referring to those who serve in the Ministry, the Lutheran Confession use names such as overseer or bishop, preacher, pastor, and presbyter or elder.

328. How does a person enter the Office of the Public Ministry?

Although all Christians, on the basis of the priesthood of all believers, have the right to testify of their Savior, the will of God, however, is not that all Christians should be pastors, but He rather calls people to this office. A person enters the office of the Ministry through a valid call.

Rom. 10:15: How shall they preach except they be sent?

1 Cor. 12:29: Are all teachers?

Heb. 5:4: No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Jer. 23: 21: I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran.

Acts 20:28: Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over

which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

The Lutheran Confessions: “No one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called” (rite vocatus; Augsburg Confession 14). Luther: “The office of the ministry must be separated from the priesthood of all believers.” (Ps. 110, second explanation, 1538).

329. Who has the right to call?

The right to call belongs to those to whom God has originally given the power of the Office of the Keys, in other words, to believers in Christ. (See questions 318 and 319).

The Lutheran Confessions: “It is necessary for the Church to retain the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers.” (Smalcald Articles).

330. Whom does the congregation have the right to call into the Office of the Ministry?

The congregation has the right to call as its pastors, men who are able and fit to serve in that capacity.

1 Tim. 3:2-4: A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.

1 Tim. 2:12: I suffer not a woman to teach.

Acts 1:21-22: Of these men... must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

Luther: “It is true (speaking of the Office of the Ministry), that the

Holy Ghost has made exception, in this matter, of women, children, and incompetent folk, and, except in cases of necessity, chooses only qualified males. Thus we read here and there in St. Paul's epistles that a bishop must be apt to teach, pious and the husband of one wife (1 Tim. 3:2) and in 1 Corinthians 14:34, that a woman shall not teach in the assembly. In a word it shall be a well-prepared, selected man" (On the Councils and the Churches, 1539).

331. Is the congregation bound to heterodox pastors?

Because God's congregation must listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd and flee the voice of strangers, it is not compelled to bind itself, nor does it have permission to bind itself to heterodox pastors.

Joh. 10:27: (Jesus said) My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

Joh. 10:5: A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers.

332. What are we to think of the office of the bishop?

In the Apostolic church there was no office of the bishop comparable to the present-day office. It has been instituted much later. It is a matter of free choice. It is well to remember what the Lutheran Confessions say: "If the bishops either are heretics, or will not ordain suitable persons, the churches are in duty bound before God, according to divine law, to ordain for themselves pastors and ministers. Even though this be now called an irregularity or schism, it shall be known that the godless doctrine and tyranny of the bishops is chargeable with it, because Paul, (Gal 1:7-9) enjoins that bishops who teach and defend a godless doctrine and godless services shall be regarded as accursed."

Confession

What is Confession? Confession embraces two parts. One is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believe, that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven. *What sins should we confess?* Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the pastor we should confess those sins only which we know and feel in our hearts? *What are they?* Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments, whether you are a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have grieved any person by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, or wasted aught, or done other injury.

333. Can a pastor forgive sins?

Only God has the power and authority to forgive sins, but because a pastor serves as God's instrument, God Himself acts through his office. A pastor, therefore, grants the absolution on the basis of Christ's completed work of atonement, by God's command.

2 Cor. 5:20: We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us.

334. Do we receive forgiveness of sins if the pastor is an unbeliever?

Yes, we do. For even though the good will of God is that the pastor be a believer, in receiving the absolution, we must not think of the pastor's faith and the condition of his heart, but must rather concentrate on the words of absolution and believe them. For because of his call, a pastor does not represent his own person, but Christ.

2 Tim. 2:9: The Word of God is not bound.

*335. May some other Christian besides the pastor
grant the absolution?*

Yes, especially in an exceptional situation. However, it is the pastor's duty, on the basis of his office in the congregation, to hear the confession of manifest sinners and to grant them absolution.

*336. Do hypocrites, who hear the absolution, receive
forgiveness for their sins?*

It is possible that hypocrites are present when the absolution is pronounced, for a pastor cannot see into a person's heart. God alone knows them. But a hypocrite does not receive forgiveness for himself, because he does not through faith accept the grace offered and pronounced to him. The absolution is not automatically effective without faith.

Heb. 4:2: Unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Is. 62:10: Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.

337. How many kinds of Confession are there?

There are five kinds of confession: continuous confession before God, the confession of love before our neighbor, private confession before the pastor, the public or general confession in the worship service, and the public confession of manifest sinners before the congregation.

*338. What do we mean by continuous confession
before God?*

By continuous confession before God we mean, that we are always before God, and confess that we are continually guilty of all sins, even those of which we are unaware; we pray for forgiveness and in faith accept forgiveness on the basis of God's promises of grace, even though

someone else does not proclaim it to us. In other types of confessions, a person is also before God.

Ps. 32:5: I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

Ps. 19:12: Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults.

339. What is the confession of love before our neighbor?

Before our neighbor we must confess those sins with which we have sinned against him, and ask his forgiveness. If we do not want to do this, we are not truly sorry for our sins before God either.

James 5:16: Confess your faults one to another.

Matt. 5:23-25: Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

Luther: "The first confession occurs before God... the second confession occurs before our neighbor and is a confession of love, whereas the first, on the other hand, is a confession of faith. As it is written in the Epistle of James: 'Confess your faults one to another.' (James 5:16) In the confession of love, he who has sinned against his neighbor, must confess his sin to his neighbor, as Christ says: (Matt. 5:23-25, see above). Here Christ makes a demand to both parties: He who has offended, must seek forgiveness, and he, who has been offended, must forgive. This confession too is necessary and commanded by God, as is the other. For God does not want to be gracious or forgive sins to anyone, who does not forgive his neighbor. So too faith cannot be genuine, unless it produces the fruit of forgiveness and of asking for forgiveness. Otherwise a person cannot come before God. If this fruit is

lacking, neither faith nor the first confession is genuine.” (Sermon on Confession and the Sacraments, 1524).

340. What is private confession before the pastor?

In private confession we can confess our sins and everything that is pressing heavily upon our heart to God in the presence of the pastor. We receive pastoral advice, the comfort of God’s Word and, above all, absolution. This type of confession is a voluntary matter. We may use it also when no particular sin is causing us distress. But it offers great comfort especially to the sin-burdened soul. It must be available in the congregation at all times.

Matt. 9:2: Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.

Luther: “Where, therefore, there is a heart, that is aware of its sin, and longs for comfort, such a heart has a sure refuge in confession. In confession it finds and hears God’s Word, as God, through men, frees it from sin.”

Assignment: Read from the Small Catechism, Luther’s brief instruction concerning the use of private confession.

341. What is general confession?

General confession takes place in connection with the worship service of the congregation, when we join our fellow-believers in the confession of sins and then hear the pronouncement of the absolution.

342. What is public confession?

If brothers or sisters in faith have fallen into manifest sin, it is necessary that they receive spiritual care and that the resulting offense to the congregation be removed. If they have not in any other way come to a knowledge of their sin and its damning nature, the pastor must lead them to this knowledge. When they come to a knowledge of their sins, the pastor pronounces God’s and the congregation’s forgiveness to

them, and receives them as beloved brothers or sisters in faith back into the fellowship of the other pardoned children of God.

1 Tim. 5:20: Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

2 Sam. 12:13: David said unto Nathan: I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David: The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.



CHAPTER VI

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

What is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper? It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ Himself.

Where is this written? The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and St. Paul (the Apostle) write thus: **Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying: Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it: this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.**

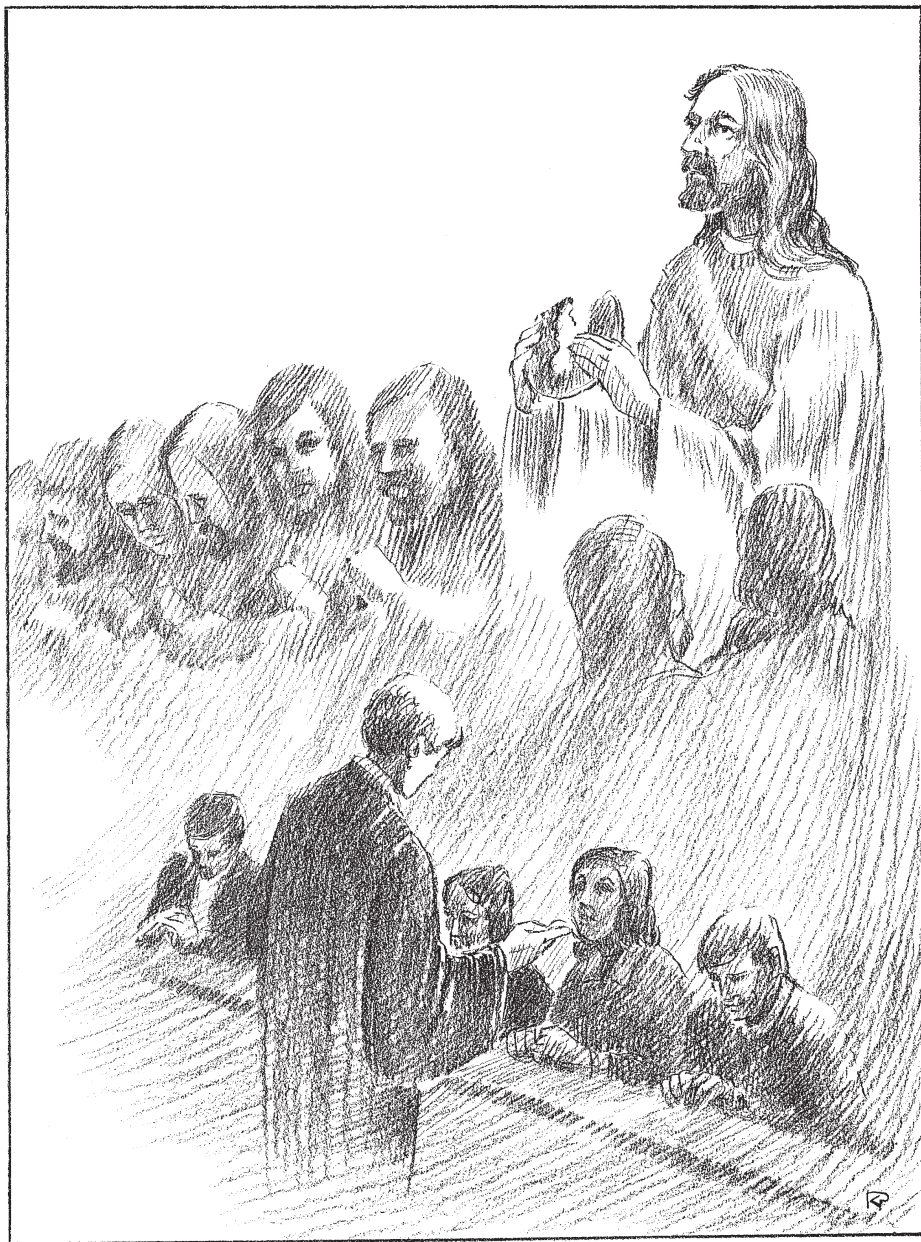
The nature of the Lord's Supper

343. Who instituted the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was instituted by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has all power, who knows all things, and who is able to give us that which He promises. The words with which Christ instituted this Sacrament are called the words of institution.

Ps. 33:4: For this Word of the Lord is right: and all His works are done in truth.

Eph. 3:20-21: Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.



Given for you - for the remission of sins.

344. What are the visible means in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

The Lord Christ commanded that the visible means to be used in the Lord's Supper are to be bread made from grain flour, and wine prepared from grapes.

Assignment: Read Matt. 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:18-20, and 1 Cor. 11:23-25: the institution of the Lord's Supper.

345. For what purpose does our Lord Christ use the visible means in the Lord's Supper?

In the Lord's Supper our Lord Christ gives His true body in the bread, and His true blood in the wine, as He states in the words of institution.

346. Through what power are the true body and the true blood of Christ present in the bread and wine?

Christ's true body and true blood are present in the bread and wine, through the power of the words of institution, which Christ spoke when He first instituted the Lord's Supper, and which are repeated, when the visible means are consecrated.

347. Why cannot Christ's words "this is my body" and "this is my blood" be understood symbolically?

These words of Christ cannot be understood symbolically, as the re-baptizers and other Reformed churches do, because

1. Our Lord Christ, in the words of institution, tells us that He gives us that body of His, which He has given for us, and that blood of His, which He has shed for us.
2. The Apostle Paul tells us that in the Lord's Supper the cup is the communion with the blood of Christ, and that the bread is the communion with the body of Christ.

1 Cor. 10:16: The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of

the body of Christ?

3. The Apostle Paul states, that he that partakes of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner is guilty of sinning – not against the bread and wine – but against Christ's body and blood.

1 Cor. 11:27: Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

4. The words of institution are words of a divine institution and testament.

Gal. 3:15: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuleth or addeth thereto.

Luther: "For as the lips of Christ say and speak, so it is, as He can never lie or deceive."

348. Do the bread and wine change into the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper?

The bread and wine do not change into the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, as the Papal Church teaches, but the bread remains bread and the wine remains wine during the entire time. But at the same time, as we eat the consecrated bread, we receive Christ's true body, and as we drink the consecrated wine, we receive Christ's true blood.

1 Cor. 10:16: See above.

349. How many types of eating and drinking occur in the Lord's Supper?

Three types of eating and drinking occur in the Lord's Supper: natural, spiritual and Sacramental. Natural eating and drinking is regular eating and drinking. In the Lord's Supper the bread and wine are eaten in a natural manner, like food.

Spiritual eating and drinking is faith in Christ. Through faith we enjoy the fruits of Christ's work of redemption, forgiveness of sins. Read Joh. 6:47-58. We are always to engage in this spiritual eating and drinking. Note: Joh. 6:47-58 does not speak of partaking of the Lord's Supper, but rather of this spiritual eating and drinking.

Sacramental eating and drinking occurs only in the Lord's Supper, for only in the Lord's Supper can we with our mouth receive and in a supernatural manner eat and drink Christ's true body and blood. This occurs at the same time as we eat the bread and drink the wine.

*350. What does the Lord Christ teach, when he says:
"This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me"?*

When Christ says: "This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me", He teaches that

1. The Lord's Supper is to be celebrated frequently and continually in His Church until He returns on the Last Day.

2. It is to be celebrated in accordance with His institution.

3. The visible means are to be consecrated by repeating the words of institution.

1 Cor. 11:26: For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

Acts 2:42: They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Luther: "Let those who would be Christians make ready to receive this venerable Sacrament often."

The Benefits of the Lord's Supper

What is the benefit of such eating and drinking? That is shown us by these words, “Given and shed for you for the remission of sins”; namely, that in the sacrament, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

351. What benefits do we receive from the Lord's Supper?

Partaking of this Sacrament brings us great benefits. For in this Sacrament our Lord Christ gives us forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. As a pledge and seal of these blessings He gives us His true body and blood, which He has sacrificed for each of us, when He paid the penalty for our sins.

1 Joh. 5:11: God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Rom. 4:7-8: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

352. For what purpose do we partake of the Lord's Supper?

We partake of the Lord's Supper, in order that

1. Our faith will be strengthened and refreshed, as we receive special and personal assurance of forgiveness.

Jer. 31:25: For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

2. We can better live according to God's will, as our faith is strengthened.

Ps. 119:32: I will run the ways of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart.

Joh. 15:5: I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without Me ye can do nothing.

3. We confess the true unity of faith.

1 Cor. 10:17: For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.

1 Cor. 10:21: Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

1 Cor. 11:26: For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

Luther: "There is this comfort from this holy Sacrament, that by means of it, Christ keeps His small flock together... But this can never happen, unless there is agreement in doctrine... Our dear Lord Christ instituted this Sacrament in order to preserve unity in doctrine, faith and life." (Sermon on the Lord's Supper).

The Power of the Lord's Supper

How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things? It is not the eating and drinking indeed that does them, but the words here written, "**Given and shed for you for the remission of sins**"; which words, besides the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

353. Who benefits from partaking of the Lord's Supper?

Every partaker of the Sacrament receives Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine, but only those receive them to their benefit, who believe those words of Christ and in their hearts accept what they promise and declare.

The Proper Use of the Lord's Supper

Who, then, receives such Sacrament worthily? Fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a fine outward training; but he is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words, **“Given and shed for you for the remission of sins.”** But he that does not believe these words, or doubts, is unworthy and unprepared; for the words “for you” require all hearts to believe.

354. Why are we to partake of the Lord's Supper worthily?

We are to partake of the Lord's Supper worthily, because we are partaking of the body and blood of the Lord Christ Himself, and because God's Word expressly exhorts us to do so.

1 Cor. 11:28-29: Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

355. What benefit is there in outward preparation?

Outward preparation, such as fasting, restrained and dignified demeanor, and appropriate dress are good customs. They may help us to think of the priceless worth of the Sacrament and its great blessings and help us to receive it with thanksgiving. God's Word, however, does not command outward preparation, so it is a matter of free choice. Outward customs do not make worthy communicants of us. Even unbelievers may have them.

*356. When are we properly prepared for the Lord's
Supper, and worthy communicants?*

No work or preparation of our own makes us worthy communicants. We are worthy when we have a tender conscience and are sorry for our own sins, but nevertheless believe, that Christ has sacrificed His body and blood also for the forgiveness of our sins, and we long to be assured of this.

Matt. 9:12: They that be whole need not a physician, but they are sick.

Matt. 11:28: Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

*357. How are you to examine yourself before
partaking of the Lord's Supper?*

I am to examine myself before partaking of the Lord's Supper, and to ask myself before God,

1. Do I confess that I have earned God's condemnation because of my sins?
2. Do I believe that God is merciful to me because of Christ, and that He assures me of this with His Son's true body and blood in the Lord's Supper?
3. Do I sincerely intend, and do I desire, with the help of God's grace, to forsake sin and to improve my life?

*358. May a person whose faith is weak partake of the
Lord's Supper?*

Especially those whose faith is weak should partake of the Lord's Sup-

per, for they receive strength for their faith through this Sacrament.

Matt. 9:24: I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.

Is. 42:3: A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.

Joh. 6:37: Him that cometh to Me I will inno wise cast out.

359. Who are unworthy guests at the Lord's Table?

Unworthy guests at the Lord's Table are those, who do not consider their sins to be damning sins, and who do not consider the Lord Christ's work of redemption to be indispensable. They do not therefore believe that Christ has paid their debt of sin, and that in this Sacrament He gives them His body and blood as a pledge and seal of this forgiveness. If such people nevertheless partake of the Lord's Supper, they eat and drink to their damnation.

Joh. 3:18: He that believeth not is condemned already.

1 Cor. 11:27-29: Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

360. To whom must a pastor not give Holy Communion?

He must not give Holy Communion

1. To those, who have not been baptized into the Christian faith.
2. To manifest and impenitent sinners, in order that they will not eat and drink to their damnation.

Matt. 7:6: Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine.

1 Cor. 11:27: See above.

3. To those who have abandoned the Christian faith and have not repented and returned.

4. To those of different faiths, for in partaking of the Lord's Supper, we confess that we are one in faith with those with whom we commune.

Rom. 16:17: I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.

Cor. 10:21-22: Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

5. To those who have caused offense, and have not as yet removed it, so that no one will have any basis for believing that they are partaking of the Lord's Supper while impenitent.

Matt. 5:24: First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

1 Cor. 10:32: Give none offense... nor to the church of God.

6. To those who are not able to examine themselves, and do not understand what they receive in the Lord's Supper. Such people are small children, the unconscious, those mentally confused, those who are asleep, those patients who because of their illness do not understand what the Lord's Supper is, and those other Christians, to whom the chief parts of Christian doctrine, especially the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, have not as yet been taught.

1 Cor. 11:29: He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.

Luther: "I cannot say that the Bohemians, who give Communion to children, are right." (Letter to Hausmann, 1527)

361. What is the practice in Lutheran churches, when coming to partake of the Lord's Supper?

Since ancient times Lutheran churches have required that those who intend to partake of the Lord's Supper, make their intention known to the pastor. At the same time they have the opportunity for private confession and for conversing with the pastor concerning spiritual matters. This is a good practice to retain, where possible, even though in small congregations a pastor knows his flock well. A pastor always has the right, when he so desires, as the shepherd of souls, to talk to communicants before they commune.

1 Cor. 4:1: Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Heb. 13:17: Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you.

362. Where may we partake of the Lord's Supper?

A doctrinally informed Christian will commune only there, where the real presence of Christ's body and blood is confessed, and where God's Word is taught in its truth and purity.

1 Cor. 10:21: Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the table of devils.

363. What custom is observed when those who have

*received confirmation instruction are admitted to
Lord's Supper for the first time?*

Before coming to the Lord's Table for the first time, those who have been baptized and have received confirmation instruction, publicly confess their faith before the congregation, and promise to be faithful members of a congregation that is faithful to God's Word. After that, the congregation receives them as members eligible to receive Communion, and prays that the Holy Spirit will give them strength to remain in faith in their Lord and Savior until they die, and to inherit eternal life. (The rite of Confirmation).

If young people or adults have not been baptized, before being baptized, they are asked questions similar to those asked in the rite of Confirmation. They are eligible to partake of Communion after being baptized.

Rev. 2:10: Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Rev. 3:11: Behold, I come quickly. Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.



The Watchword of Lutherans: God's Word and Luther's doctrine endure now and forever.

SUPPLEMENT I

A Brief Explanation of

THE LORD'S BLESSING

According to the teaching of Martin Luther

The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

1. What is the Lord's Blessing?

God gave the Lord's Blessing to Moses and told the priests to bless the congregation of Israel with it. The Lord said: "And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them."

Assignment: Read Num. 6:22-27.

2. What is the name of God that is put upon the whole congregation and individual Christians in the Lord's Blessing?

It is the name of the gracious, blessing-bestowing Triune God. There are three parts in the Blessing, and the Lord's name is mentioned three times.

In place of the Lord's Blessing, the Apostolic Blessings, which is similar in content, can at times be used: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all", 2 Cor. 13:14.

3. What does the first blessing include?

The first blessing consists of these words: “The Lord bless thee and keep thee.” In this blessing the Lord blesses and protects His believers in all matters pertaining to their temporal life, such as government and country, marriage and home, life and health, work, property and livelihood. Compare Luther’s explanation of the First Article of the Creed and the Fourth Petition of the Lord’s Prayer in the Small Catechism.

4. What does the second blessing include?

The second blessing consists of these words: “The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee.” In this blessing the Lord blesses by illuminating our Savior’s gentle and gracious face in such a way that it shines on us as the “sun of righteousness” (Mal. 4:2) or radiates forgiveness of sins to us, and we receive strength to approach Him in faith. As a result of this, He then grants us grace in the sense that we receive the strength and ability to do good works. The first part of the second blessing, therefore, pertains to the forgiveness of sins and the last part, to good works.

5. What does the third blessing include?

The third blessing consists of these words: “The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.” In times of tribulation it seems to us that the Lord has turned His face away from us, and is angry at us. In this third blessing He blesses us by freeing us from our distress with His wonderful Gospel promises. He grants us forgiveness for our sins, peace of conscience is restored, and Christ again shines on us as the “sun of righteousness”. Thus we are free of our distress, and we can once again, in faith, enjoy the peace of Christ.

6. Where does the Lord put his name upon us?

The Lord especially blesses His congregation that is gathered together around His Word and Sacraments, when the pastor blesses them with the Lord's Blessing. Receiving the Lord's Blessing alone is sufficient reason to attend the worship service. The Lord does not withhold His blessing from those who for insurmountable reasons, such as illness or old age, cannot attend the worship services, but would desire to do so, but He is also their refuge and help. They too are the objects of His blessing and the prayers of the congregation.



THE GIFTS OF GRACE

1. How many types of spiritual gifts are mentioned in the Bible?

The Bible speaks of three types of spiritual gifts. They are 1. God's grace in Christ, 2. gifts that God gives at all times in all places to His Church, and 3. special gifts of grace, which God does not give at all times and not to everyone in His Church.

2. What kind of a spiritual gift is God's grace in Christ?

God's grace in Christ, or the forgiveness of sins, is necessary for all people for salvation.

Rom. 6:23: The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

3. What are the gifts of grace that God gives at all times in all places to his Church?

Such gifts, for example, are: leading, praying, giving, explaining the Scriptures (prophesying), teaching, discerning the spirits and judging doctrine, and brotherly love. These gifts are always found in God's Church, although all Christians do not have them in an equal measure. No one can earn forgiveness or heaven through these gifts, which our Lord Christ also earned for us. God gives these gifts in proportion to one's knowledge of the Scriptures and one's growth in faith. Through these gifts God builds and protects His Church. They are therefore of great benefit.

Rom. 12:6-12: Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy (ability to explain the Bible, the first meaning

of the word “prophesy”), let us prophesy according to the analogy of faith: or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching: Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation... continuing instant in prayer.

Joh. 10:27 and 10:5: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. – And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers.

1 Joh. 4:1: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Assignment: Read 1 Cor. 12:31 and chapter 13.

4. What gifts of grace are not given at all times?

The Bible speaks of special gifts of the Spirit, signs and wonders, which have not been given at all times in all places. Such gifts, for example, are: raising the dead, healing the sick, speaking in foreign tongues without study, prophesying future times of persecution (the other meaning of the word “prophesy”), and explaining certain passages of the Bible through a special revelation of the Spirit (the third meaning of the word “prophesy”).

Assignment: Read Mark 16: 17-20, 1 Cor. 12-14, Acts 21:9, Luke 4:27.

5. What is the purpose of these special gifts of grace?

God gave special gifts of grace during great periods of transition, such as the times of Moses, the prophet Elijah and the time of the Apostles. During the Old Testament times God showed, through miracles and signs, that He is the true God, that the Israelites are His chosen people, and from among them, the Messiah will be born.

2 Kings 5:15: Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel.

Jesus showed through miracles and signs, that He is God's Son and the promised Messiah.

Joh. 10:36-38: Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.

During the Apostolic times God confirmed His Word through miracles and signs.

Mark. 16:20: And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.

2 Cor. 12:12: Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

Because God has already confirmed His Word, we must not demand new signs in order to believe, but we are to believe and adhere to the Apostolic Word of the Bible and to the preaching of Christ crucified, based on this Word. Special signs and miracles are not the marks of a true church, but the only infallible marks of the true Church are the pure proclamation of God's Word and the Sacraments administered according to Christ's command.

1 Cor. 21-23: It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.

Luke 16:29-31: Abraham saith unto him: They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them. And he said: Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

Luther: “If we were now to begin demanding such signs, it would be the same, as if we would say: I doubt whether Baptism, the Lord’s Supper and the entire teaching of the Gospel are true. For these have already long been in force, and have been powerfully confirmed, so that such signs and wonders have ceased.” (Sermon on the Mount, 8:1-13, 1535).

6. Can miracles still occur?

Although miracles are not the marks of the Church, and although we do not have the right to demand them, God may in His goodness see fit to hear our prayer and help us, His children, through a direct miracle, for all things are in His power. For example, in 1540 Luther wrote to his critically ill friend, Friedrich Mykonius: “I urge you in God’s name to live, for you are very necessary for me for the reformation of the Church.” When the letter arrived, Mykonius was on the verge of death, and could no longer speak. After the letter had been read, he recovered and lived yet another six years, and only died after the Reformer’s death, as Luther had requested of God.

7. May we, in the hope of a miracle, reject the natural means of receiving help?

No, we may not. We must rather with gratitude use all the help, which God gives us through natural means. For example, we get our livelihood through work and diligence, our nourishment by preparing food and eating, we protect our health by observing wholesome living habits, and illnesses can be cured by medical means. To reject these natural means and demand that God take care of us through supernatural means, is to tempt God.

1 Tim. 5:23: Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities.

Matt. 4:6-7: (The devil) saith unto him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast

Thyself down; for it is written: He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him: It is written again: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

8. What are the greatest of all miracles?

The greatest miracles are those that are generally not considered to be miracles at all. For example, when an unbeliever is converted, or when someone who had become the victim of false doctrine, comes to a knowledge of the truth, or when God's Word in its truth and purity is preserved even among a small group of Christians.

Joh. 14:12: Verily, verily I say unto you: He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.

9. Are there also false and deceptive miracles?

Yes, there are. Especially during the last times there are many of them. Through false and deceptive miracles and wonders, the devil tries to lead God's children astray.

Matt. 7:22-23: Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them: I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.

2 Thess. 2:9-10: Even him (the Papal Antichrist) whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

10. How can false and deceptive miracles be distinguished from genuine ones?

False and deceptive miracles can be so well masked and can occur in the guise of such outward piety, that detecting their false character can be overwhelmingly difficult.

Matt. 24: 4,24: Take heed that no man deceive you... For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

11. How can we avoid being deceived?

We are not to run after miracles, but we are rather to seek the pure doctrine of God's Word and adhere to it. At the same time we are to avoid those who teach contrary to God's Word, even though their "miracles" appear to be genuine.

Deut. 13:1-4: If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying: Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them. Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.

2 Thess. 2:10: And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish (those who follow the miracles of the Antichrist), because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

APPENDIX I

The Books of the Bible and their Abbreviations

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis – Gen.
Exodus – Ex.
Leviticus – Lev.
Numbers – Num.
Deuteronomy – Deut.
Joshua – Josh.
Judges – Judg.
Ruth – Ruth
First Samuel – 1 Sam.
Second Samuel – 2 Sam.
First Kings – 1 Kings
Second Kings – 2 Kings
First Chronicles – 1 Chron.
Second Chronicles – 2 Chron.
Ezra – Ezra
Nehemiah – Neh.
Esther – Est.
Job – Job
Psalms – Ps.
Proverbs – Prov.
Ecclesiastes – Eccl.
Song of Solomon – Song of Sol.
Isaiah – Is.
Jeremiah – Jer.
Lamentations – Lam.
Ezekiel – Ezek.
Daniel – Dan.
Hosea – Hos.
Joel – Joel
Amos – Amos
Obadiah – Ob.
Jonah – Jonah

Micah – Mic.
Nahum – Nah.
Habakuk – Hab.
Zephaniah – Zeph.
Haggai – Hag.
Zechariah – Zech.
Malachi – Mal.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew – Matt.
Mark – Mark
Luke – Luke
John – Joh.
The Acts of the Apostles – Acts
Romans – Rom.
First Corinthians – 1 Cor.
Second Corinthians – 2 Cor.
Galations – Gal.
Ephesians – Eph.
Philippians – Phil.
Colossians – Col.
First Thessalonians – 1 Thess.
Second Thessalonians – 2 Thess.
First Timothy – 1 Tim.
Second Timothy – 2 Tim.
Titus – Titus
Philemon – Philemon
Hebrews – Heb.
James – James
First Peter – 1 Pet.
Second Peter – 2 Pet.
First John – 1 Joh.
Second John – 2 Joh.
Third John – 3 Joh.
Jude – Jude
The Revelation of St. John – Rev.

APPENDIX 2

The Confessional Books of the Lutheran Church

1. The Ecumenical or Universal Creeds

1. The Apostles' Creed
2. The Nicene Creed
3. The Athanasian Creed

2. The Confessional Books born as a result of the Lutheran Reformation

1. The Augsburg Confession
2. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession
3. The Smalcald Articles
4. Luther's Small Catechism
5. Luther's Large Catechism
6. The Formula of Concord

All these Confessions were gathered together into one book, which is called the Book of Concord (*Liber Concordiae*, in Latin). Concord means complete and true agreement in doctrine, which faithful Lutherans, with God's help, wish to preserve and protect in their midst. The Confessional Lutheran Churches adhere to all these Confessions – not in so far as (*quatenus*) as their doctrine is taken from the Bible – but because (*quia*) their doctrine is taken from the Bible. The Lutheran Confessions constitute a universally applicable confession of Christ's Church.

APPENDIX 3

The Church Year

The Church Year is the time from Advent to Advent. The order of the chief seasons of the Church Year is as follows:

1. The Advent Season. This season includes the four Advent Sundays. The word Advent is of Latin origin and means coming. During this season we remember what God's Word tells us of the coming of Christ:

1. How during Old Testament times the people waited for Him to come to atone for the sins of all people, according to the promises of God's Word.
2. How He came to perform His work of redemption.
3. How He now comes to us through the Means of Grace.
4. How He will come again on the Last Day for the Judgment, and will take His own to heaven.

The season of Advent is also a time of preparation for Christmas.

2. The Christmas Season. This season includes Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, when we celebrate the birth of our Savior, the Second Christmas Day or St. Stephen's the first martyr's day, New Year's Day in commemoration of Christ's circumcision, and Epiphany or the "Christmas of the Gentiles", which is observed on January 6th to commemorate the Wisemen from the East. The Holy Innocent's Day on December 28 in commemoration of the mass murder of the children of Bethlehem, which was ordered by Herod. On the basis of their content, the festival of Candlemas and the Presentation of Christ in February and the Annunciation in March also belong to the Christmas season.

3. The Sundays after Epiphany. There are from 2 to 5 of them, depending on the date of Easter.

4. Septuagesima Sunday (70 days before Easter), Sexagesima Sunday (approximately 60 days before Easter), and Quinquagesima Sunday are the Sundays preceding Lent.

5. The Lenten Season. This season has six Sundays. It is a time set aside especially for the study of the Passion of Christ (Lenten services). The last week of Lent is called Holy Week. It begins on Palm Sunday, on which Sunday we commemorate Christ's entry into Jerusalem as the Messiah. Holy Week includes Maundy Thursday, when we commemorate the institution of the Lord's Supper, and Good Friday, in commemoration of Christ's suffering and death on the cross.

6. The Easter Season. On the First and Second Easter Days we commemorate Christ's triumphant resurrection from the dead. Easter occurs on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox. There are six Sundays between Easter and Pentecost.

7. The Season of Pentecost. The sixth Sunday after Easter is already considered to be a part of the Pentecost Season. This season includes Ascension Day, which occurs 40 days after Easter. Pentecost is observed in commemoration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit approximately 50 days after Easter. It is preceded by a day of preparation.

8. The Trinity Season. The Trinity Season includes Trinity Sunday and the following 23 to 27 Sundays. The last one of these is Judgment Sunday. During the Trinity Season the following days are observed: St. John the Baptist's Day, St. Michael's and all Angels' Day (in commemoration of angels and children) on the first Sunday in October, All Saints' Day (in commemoration of those who have died in faith) at the beginning of November, and Reformation Day (October 31 or the Sunday nearest to it).

There are four Days of Prayer, one during each of the four seasons of the year. The themes for these days are: repentance, youth, reformation, and thanksgiving. The fifth Sunday after Easter is Prayer Sunday.

Texts from the Bible have been selected for every Sunday of the year and for every Festival. These texts are read during the worship services and are the texts for the sermons. They include texts from the Gospels, the Epistles, the Old Testament and the Psalms. There are three series of texts for each year.

The Church Year with its series of texts teaches us the main phases of Christ's work of redemption, and the chief parts of Christian doctrine, guards against a one-sided presentation of God's Word and creates a festive spirit and gratitude to the Triune God. Even though the observance of the Church Year is a matter of free choice, it is a good practice to retain. It is of great benefit and gives great joy.

APPENDIX 4

A Short Form for Holy Baptism in Cases of Necessity

When a child is ill, and there is no time to wait for the arrival of a pastor, an emergency Baptism is administered. It can be administered by any Christian, according to the following formula:

1. Take clean, appropriately warm water. If there is time, the Baptism may be preceded by the following prayer: If there is no time, proceed directly to step 2.

Almighty and merciful God, dear heavenly Father, we thank Thee, that through Thy Son Jesus Christ, Thou hast made Baptism a gracious water of life, in which our sins are washed away in the name of Jesus Christ. We pray: Look with mercy upon this child. Receive (him, her) into communion with Thee, so that being free from the dominion of sin, death and the devil, (he, she) will be filled with the Holy Spirit and will joyfully live as Thy child throughout (his, her) life here on earth, and after this life live with Thee in eternal glory. Amen.

2. Pour or sprinkle water three times on the head of the child, as you say:

I baptize you (Name) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then contact the pastor of the congregation and inform him of the emergency Baptism.

APPENDIX 5

Questions and Answers for the Rite of Confirmation

1. Do you this day, in the presence of God and of this Christian congregation, desire to confirm the solemn covenant which at your Baptism the Triune God made with you? – I do.
2. Do you, then, desire to continue to renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways? – I do.
3. Do you believe in God the Father? – Yes, I believe in God the Father... (Say the First Article of the Creed).
4. Do you believe in God the Son? – Yes, I believe in Jesus Christ... (Say the Second Article of the Creed).
5. Do you believe in God the Holy Ghost? – Yes I believe in the Holy Ghost... (Say the Third Article of the Creed).
6. Do you desire to remain a member of the Confessional Lutheran Church? – I do.
7. Do you hold all the canonical books of the Bible to be the inspired, inerrant Word of God? – I do.
8. Do you hold the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, drawn from these books, as you have learned to know it from Luther's Small Catechism, to be the only true and correct one? – I do.
9. Do you also, as a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, desire to continue steadfast in the confession of this Church, and suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it? – I do so desire, with the help of God.

10. Do you desire faithfully to conform all your life to the rule of the divine Word, to be diligent in the use of the means of grace, to walk as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to the Triune God, even unto death? – I do so desire, by the grace of God.

Note 1: A confessional Lutheran congregation and church is a congregation or church that, in practice, teaches according to the Confessional Books of the Lutheran Church, listed in appendix 3.

Note 2: The canonical books of the Bible are those books, which according to the testimony of the early Church have Apostolic authority, which have been born by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and which form a rule (canon, rule). The canonical books are those which make up the collection of books in the Bible.

Note 3. The Confessional Lutheran Church of Finland and its congregations are Evangelical Lutherans, even though the word evangelical is not part of the name. True confessionalism is true evangelicalism.

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary and was made man: and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have not end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead; and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Athanasian Creed

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic (i.e., universal, Christian) faith. Which faith except every-one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish ever-lastingly.

And the catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Sub-stance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three Eternals, but one Eter-nal. As there are not three Uncreated nor three Incomprehensibles, but one Uncreated and one Incomprehensible.

So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty. And yet they are not three Almightyies, but one Al-mighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords, but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God and Lord, so are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say, there be three Gods or three Lords.

The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

And in this Trinity none is before or after other: none is greater or less than another; but the whole three Persons are coeternal together and coequal, so that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped.

He therefore, that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe faithfully the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.

God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood.

Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ: One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God; One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but unity of Person.

For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation; descended into hell; rose again the third day from the dead; He ascended into heaven; He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty; from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies and shall give an account of their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire.

This is the catholic faith; which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.