

## Readings from The Large Catechism

of Dr. Martin Luther

### Lent 5 – Judica

LC Part 1, ¶¶ 56-57  
LC Part 1, ¶¶ 267-270  
LC Part 3, ¶¶ 86-87  
LC Part 5, ¶¶ 80-82  
LC Part 6, ¶ 28



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#### The Second Commandment.

*You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.*

56] Here, then, let us learn and take to heart the great importance of this commandment, that with all diligence we may guard against and dread every misuse of the holy name, as the greatest sin that can be outwardly committed. For to lie and deceive is in itself a great sin, but is greatly aggravated when we attempt to justify it, and seek to confirm it by invoking the name of God and using it as a cloak for shame, so that from a single lie a double lie, nay, manifold lies, result.

57] For this reason, too, God has added a solemn threat to this commandment, to wit: For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain. That is: It shall not be condoned to any one nor pass unpunished. For as little as He will leave it unavenged if any one turn his heart from Him, as little will He suffer His name to be employed for dressing up a lie.

#### The Eighth Commandment.

*You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

267] Those, then, are called slanderers who are not content with knowing a thing, but proceed to assume jurisdiction, and when they know a slight offense of another, carry it into every corner, and are delighted and tickled that they can stir up another's displeasure [baseness], as swine roll themselves in the dirt and root in it with the snout. 268] This is nothing else than meddling with the judgment and office of God, and pronouncing sentence and punishment with the most severe verdict. For no judge can punish to a higher degree nor go farther than to say: "He is a thief, a murderer, a traitor," etc. Therefore, whoever presumes to say the same of his neighbor goes just as far as the emperor and all governments. For although you do not wield the sword, you employ your poisonous tongue to the shame and hurt of your neighbor.

269] God therefore would have it prohibited, that any one speak evil of another even though he be guilty, and the latter know it right well; much less if he do not know it, and have it only from hearsay.

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269] God therefore would have it prohibited, that any one speak evil of another even though he be guilty, and the latter know it right well; much less if he do not know it, and have it only from hearsay.

But you say: 270] Shall I not say it if it be the truth? Answer: Why do you not make accusation to regular judges? Ah, I cannot prove it publicly, and hence I might be silenced and turned away in a harsh manner [incur the penalty of a false accusation]. "Ah, indeed, do you smell the roast?" If you do not trust yourself to stand before the proper authorities and to make answer, then hold your tongue. But if you know it, know it for yourself and not for another. For if you tell it to others, although it be true, you will appear as a liar, because you cannot prove it, and you are, besides, acting like a knave. For we ought never to deprive any one of his honor or good name unless it be first taken away from him publicly.

### **The Fifth Petition.**

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

86] This part now relates to our poor miserable life, which, although we have and believe the Word of God, and do and submit to His will, and are supported by His gifts and blessings, is nevertheless not without sin. For we still stumble daily and transgress because we live in the world among men who do us much harm and give us cause for impatience, anger, revenge, etc. 87] Besides, we have Satan at our back, who sets upon us on every side, and fights (as we have heard) against all the foregoing petitions, so that it is not possible always to stand firm in such a persistent conflict.

### ***What is the Sacrament of the Altar?***

80] Besides this, you will also have the devil about you, whom you will not entirely tread under foot, because our Lord Christ Himself could not entirely avoid him. Now, what is the devil? 81] Nothing else than what the Scriptures call him, a liar and murderer. A liar, to lead the heart astray from the Word of God, and to blind it, that you cannot feel your distress or come to Christ. A murderer, who cannot bear to see you live one single hour. 82] 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. But there is no reason why we walk so securely and heedlessly, except that we neither think nor believe that we are in the flesh, and in this wicked world or in the kingdom of the devil.

### **A Brief Admonition to Confession**

28] So we teach what a splendid, precious, and comforting thing Confession is. Furthermore, we strongly urge people not to despise a blessing that in view of our great need is so priceless. Now, if you are a Christian, then you do not need either my pressuring or the pope's orders, but you will undoubtedly compel yourself to come to Confession and will beg me for a share in it.

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