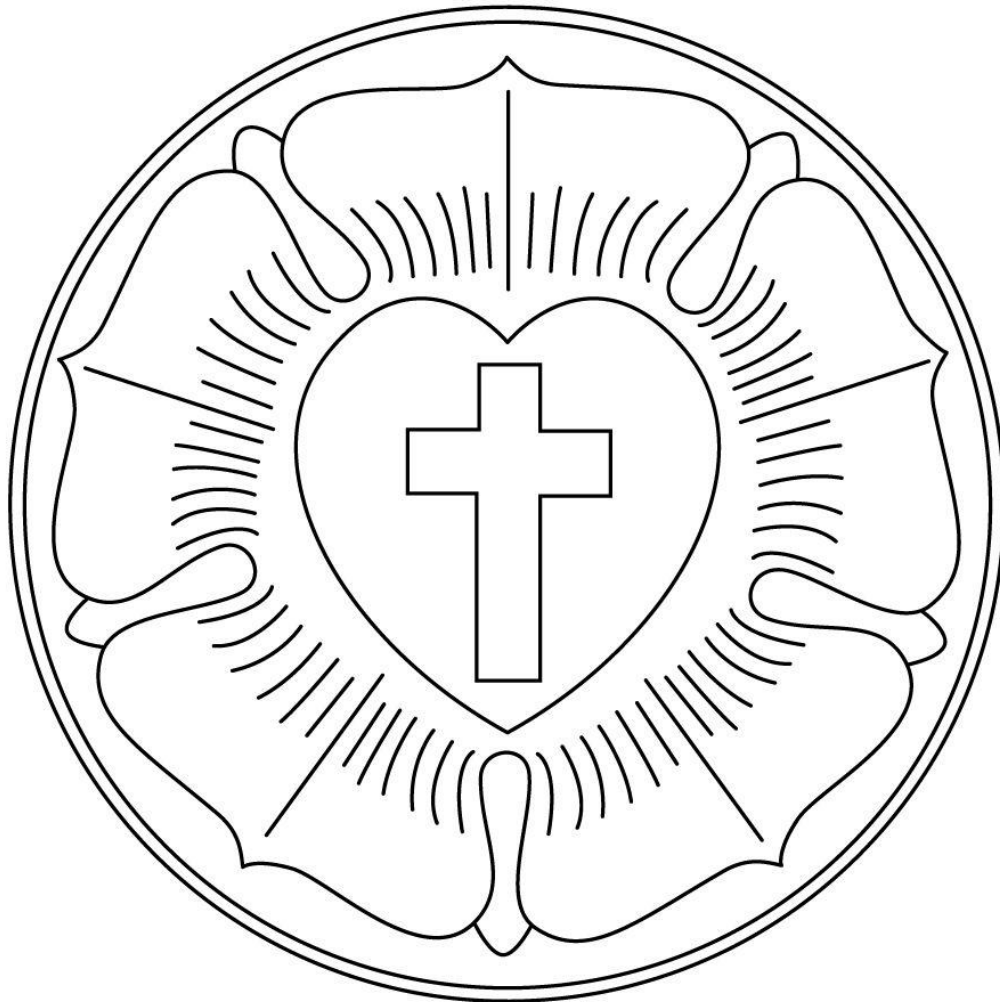


The Small Catechism



Preface.

Martin Luther to all faithful, pious pastors and preachers: grace, mercy, and peace in Christ Jesus, our Lord!

The deplorable destitution which I recently observed, during a visitation of the churches, has impelled and constrained me to prepare this Catechism or Christian Doctrine in such a small and simple form. Alas, what manifold misery I beheld! The common people, especially in the villages, know nothing at all of Christian doctrine; and many pastors are quite unfit and incompetent to teach. Yet all are called Christians, have been baptized, and enjoy the use of the Sacraments, although they know neither the Lord's Prayer, nor the Creed, nor the Ten Commandments, and live like the poor brutes and irrational swine. Still they have, now that the Gospel has come, learned to abuse all liberty in a masterly manner.

O ye bishops! how will ye ever render account to Christ for having so shamefully neglected the people, and having never for a moment exercised your office! May the judgment not overtake you! You command communion in one kind, and urge your human ordinances; but never ask, in the mean time, whether the people know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or any part of God's Word. Woe, woe unto you everlastingly!

Therefore I entreat you all, for God's sake, my dear brethren who are pastors and preachers, to devote yourselves heartily to your office, and have pity upon the people who are committed to your charge. Help us to inculcate the Catechism upon them, especially upon the young. Let those who are not able to do better take these tables and forms and set them word for word before the people, in the manner following:—

First, the minister should above all things avoid the use of different texts and forms of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Sacraments, etc. Let him adopt one form and adhere to it, using it one year as the other; for young and ignorant people must be taught one certain text and form, and will easily become confused if we teach thus today and otherwise next year, as if we thought of making improvements. In this way all effort and labor will be lost. This our honored fathers well understood, who all used the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments in one and the same manner. Therefore we also should so teach these forms to the young and inexperienced as not to change a syllable, nor set them forth and recite them one year differently from the other.

Hence, choose whatever form you think best, and adhere to it forever. When you preach among the learned and judicious, you may show your art, and set

these things forth with as many flourishes, and turn them as skillfully as you wish; but among the young adhere to one and the same fixed form and manner, and teach them, first of all, the text of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, etc., so that they can say it after you word for word, and commit it to memory.

But those who are unwilling to learn it should be told that they deny Christ and are no Christians; neither should they be admitted to the Sacrament, accepted as sponsors at baptism, nor be accorded the exercise of Christian liberty; but they are simply to be remanded to the pope and his officials, yea, to the devil himself. Parents and employers should also refuse them meat and drink, and give them to understand that the prince will drive such rude fellows from the country. For although we cannot and should not force anyone to believe, yet we should lead and urge the masses to perceive what those consider right and wrong among whom they live and find their sustenance. Whoever would live in a city and enjoy its privileges, should know and observe its laws, whether he believe or be at heart a rogue or knave.

Secondly, when they have well learned the text, teach them the sense also, that they may know what it means. Again take the form of these tables or some other short fixed form of your choice, and adhere to it without the change of a single syllable, as was said of the text; and take your time to it; for it is not necessary to take up all the parts at once, but take one after the other. When they well understand the First Commandment, proceed to the Second, and thus continue; otherwise they will be overburdened, and be able to retain nothing well.

Thirdly, after you have taught them this short Catechism, take up the Large Catechism, and impart to them a richer and fuller knowledge; dwell on each Commandment, Petition, and Part, with its various works, uses, benefits, dangers, and harm, as you may find these abundantly pointed out in many books treating of these subjects; and especially give most attention to the Commandment or Part which is most neglected among your people. For example, the Seventh Commandment, which forbids stealing, you must particularly enforce among mechanics and merchants, and also among farmers and servants; for among such people all kinds of unfaithfulness and thieving are frequent. Again, you must urge the Fourth Commandment among children and the common people, that they may be quiet, faithful, obedient, peaceable, always adducing frequent examples from the Scriptures to show how God punished or blessed such persons.

Especially should you here urge civil rulers and parents to govern well and educate children for service in schools, showing them their duty in this regard, and the greatness of their sin if they neglect it; for by such neglect they overthrow and destroy both the kingdom of God and that of this world, and show themselves to be the worst foes both of God and man. Dwell on the great

harm they do if they will not help to educate children for the ministry, clerkships, and other offices, etc., and on the terrible punishment God will visit upon them for it. It is necessary to preach of these things; for parents and rulers sin unspeakably in them, and the devil has a horrible object in view.

Lastly, since the people are freed from the tyranny of the pope, they no longer desire to go to the Sacrament, but despise it. It is necessary to be urgent on this point, remembering, however, that we are to force no one to believe, or to receive the Sacrament, nor to fix any law, time, or place for it, but so to preach that they will be urged by their own accord, without our law, and will, as it were, compel us pastors to administer the Sacrament. This is done by telling them that if a person does not seek nor desire the Lord's Supper at least some four times a year, it is to be feared that he despises the Sacrament and is not a Christian, just as he is not a Christian who refuses to believe or to hear the Gospel. For Christ did not say, Omit this, or, Despise this; but, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it," etc. Truly, He wants it done, and by no means neglected or despised. "This do ye," is His command.

Whoever does not highly prize the Sacrament, thus shows that he has no sin, no flesh, no devil, no world, no death, no danger, no hell; that is, he does not believe that they exist, although he is in them over head and ears, and is doubly the devil's. On the other hand, he needs no grace, life, Paradise, heaven, Christ, God, nor anything good; for if he believed that he has so much that is evil, and needs so much that is good, he would not thus neglect the Sacrament, by which such evil is remedied and so much good is bestowed. Neither would it be necessary to force him to the Sacrament by any law, but he would hasten to it of his own accord, and constrain himself, and compel you to administer it to him.

Therefore you need not make any law in this matter, as the pope does; only set forth clearly the benefit and harm, the necessity and use, the danger and blessing, connected with this Sacrament, and the people will come of themselves, without your compulsion. But if they do not come, let them alone, telling them that they are of the devil, as they do not regard nor feel their great need and God's gracious help. Should you, however, fail to urge this matter, or make a law or a bane of it, it is your fault if they despise the Sacrament. How could they be otherwise than slothful if you sleep and keep silence? Therefore look to it, ye pastors and preachers; our office is a different thing now from what it was under the pope; it has now become earnest and salutary. Hence it involves much more trouble and labor, danger and trial, and secures but little reward and gratitude in the world. But Christ Himself will be our reward if we labor faithfully. To this end may the Father of all grace help us, to whom be praise and thanks in eternity, through Christ, our Lord! Amen.

The Ten Commandments,

as the head of the family should teach them in all simplicity to his household.

The First Commandment.

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

What does this mean? Answer:

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.

What does this mean? Answer:

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.

Thou shalt sanctify the holy-day.

What does this mean? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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.

The Eighth Commandment.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What does this mean? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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.

What does God say of all these Commandments? Answer:

He says thus: I the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities 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? Answer:

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.

The Creed,

as the head of the family should teach it in all simplicity to his household.

The First Article.

OF CREATION.

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

What does this mean? Answer:

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.

OF REDEMPTION.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived of 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 at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

What does this mean? Answer:

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.

OF 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? Answer:

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.

The Lord's Prayer,

as the head of the family should teach it in all simplicity to his household.

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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, then, is meant by daily bread? Answer:

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? Answer:

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 by 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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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.

Amen.

What does this mean? Answer:

That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven, and heard; 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.

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism,

as the head of the family should teach it in all simplicity to his household.

FIRST.

What is Baptism? Answer:

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? Answer:

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.

SECONDLY.

What does Baptism give or profit? Answer:

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? Answer:

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.

THIRDLY.

How can water do such great things? Answer:

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:

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.

FOURTHLY.

What does such baptizing with water signify? Answer:

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? Answer:

St. Paul says, 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.

The Office of the Keys,

as the head of the family should teach it in all simplicity to his household.

What is the Office of the Keys? Answer:

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

Where is this written? Answer:

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? Answer:

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 the Unlearned Should Be Taught to Confess.

What is Confession? Answer:

Confession embraces two parts: one is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the confessor, 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? Answer:

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 confessor we should confess those sins only which we know and feel in our hearts.

Which are these? Answer:

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.

Pray, give me a brief form of confession. Answer:

Say to the confessor, Reverend and dear Sir, I beseech you to hear my confession, and pronounce forgiveness to me, for God's sake.

Proceed!

I, a poor sinner, confess myself before God guilty of all sins. Especially do I confess before you that I am a servant, etc., but, alas! I serve my master unfaithfully; for in this and in that I have not done what they commanded me; I have provoked them to anger and profane words, have been negligent and have not prevented injury, have been immodest in words and deeds, have quarreled with my equals, have murmured and used profane words against my mistress, etc. For all this I am sorry, and implore grace; I promise amendment.

A master or mistress may say:

Especially do I confess before you that I have not faithfully trained my children and household to the glory of God; I have used profane language, set a bad example by indecent words and deeds, have done my neighbor harm and spoken evil of him, have overcharged and given false ware and short measure;—

and whatever else he has done against God's Commandments and his station, etc.

But if anyone does not find himself burdened with such or greater sins, he should not trouble himself on that account, nor seek or invent other sins, and thus make confession a torture, but simply mention one or two that you know, after this manner: Especially do I confess that I have once been profane; I have once used improper words; I have once neglected this or that, etc. Let that suffice.

But if you are conscious of none at all, which, however, is scarcely possible, then mention none in particular, but receive absolution upon the General Confession which you make before God to the confessor.

Then shall the confessor say:

God be merciful to thee, and strengthen thy faith. Amen.

Furthermore:

Dost thou believe that my forgiveness is God's forgiveness?

Yes, I believe.

Then he shall say:

Be it unto thee as thou believest. And I, by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive thee thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Depart in peace.

Those, however, whose conscience is heavily burdened, or who are troubled and tempted, the confessor will know how to comfort and incite to faith with more passages of Scripture. This is designed merely to be a general form of confession for the unlearned.

The Sacrament of the Altar,

as the head of the family should teach it in all simplicity to his household.

What is the Sacrament of the Altar? Answer:

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? Answer:

The holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul, 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? Answer:

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.

How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things? Answer:

It is not the eating and drinking, indeed, which does them, but the words here written, “Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins”; which words, beside the bodily eating and drinking, are as 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? Answer:

Fasting and bodily preparation is, 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.

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 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 doings 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 on the Ten Commandments,* or whatever your devotion may suggest.

*Luther is referring to the hymn "These are the Holy Ten Commands"

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.

How the Head of the Family Should Teach His Household to Ask a Blessing and Return Thanks.

ASKING A BLESSING.

The children and servants 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 Thy hands 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.

RETURNING THANKS.

Also, after eating, they shall, in like manner, reverently and with folded hands say:

O 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 for ever and ever. Amen.

Table of Duties;

or, certain passages of Scripture for various holy orders and estates whereby these are severally to be admonished of 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. 1 Tim. 3:2–4, 6; Tit. 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. 1 Cor. 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. 1 Tim. 2:1-3.

Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work. Tit. 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 evil-doers, ad for the praise of them that do well. 1 Pet. 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. 1 Pet. 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. 1 Pet. 3:5-6.

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 Laborers.

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 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 Masters and Mistresses.

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. 1 Pet. 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. 1 Tim. 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. 1 Tim. 2:1.

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

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, Creed, Lord's Prayer, and the sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, the confessor may ask, or one may ask himself:—

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner? Answer:

Yes, I believe it; I am a sinner.

2. How do you know this? Answer:

From the Ten Commandments; these I have not kept.

3. Are you also sorry for your sins? Answer:

Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

4. What have you deserved of God by your sins? Answer:

His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation. Rom. 6:21–23.

5. Do you also hope to be saved? Answer:

Yes, such is my hope.

6. In whom, then, do you trust? Answer:

In my dear Lord, Jesus Christ.

7. Who is Christ? Answer:

The Son of God, true God and man.

8. How many Gods are there? Answer:

Only one; but there are three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

9. What, then, has Christ done for you that you trust in Him? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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 these words read? Answer:

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? Answer:

Yes, I believe it.

14. What induces you to believe this? Answer:

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? Answer:

We ought to show and remember His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: This do, as oft as ye do it, in remembrance of Me.

16. Why ought we to remember and show His death? Answer:

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? Answer:

His great love to His Father, and to me and other sinners, as it is written in John 14; Rom. 5; Gal. 2; Eph. 5.

18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament? Answer:

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? Answer:

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? Answer:

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 of it, in Gal. 5 and Rom. 7.

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, in John 15 and 16; 1 John 2 and 5.

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 picture him, in John 8 and 16; 1 Pet. 5; Eph. 6; 2 Tim. 2.

Note.

These questions and answers are no child's play, but are drawn up with great earnestness of purpose by the venerable and pious Dr. Luther for both young and old. Let each one take heed and likewise consider it a serious matter; for St. Paul says, to the Galatians, chapter sixth: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked."

One Simple Catechism Reading Plan

Luther kept reading the Small Catechism every day.

It is a prayer book and a meditation book and a life book. It keeps offering more for prayer, meditation, and living. It comes to us in daily life, when we know it well, frequently think on it, and pray from it.

There are many good reading plans for growth in prayer, meditation, and living from the catechism. Here is one that is simple and realistic for a person just starting.

If you miss a day, don't condemn yourself. The part you missed will come again next week. Today you can read the little part for this day, never mind whatever might have happened yesterday. God will bless you with wisdom without upbraiding you about yesterday. He will give liberally, generously, ungrudgingly. He will give without reproach, without criticizing, and without rebuke (James 1:5 — KJV, NKJV, ESV, NABRE, ISV, NET). If you ask for bread, your Father will not give you a stone. (Matthew 7:9). If you ask for a fish, He will not give you a snake (Luke 11:11). If you ask for an egg, He will not give you a scorpion (Luke 11:12).

Monday – The Ten Commandments pgs 5-7

Tuesday – The Creed pgs 7-8

Wednesday – The Lord's Prayer pgs 9-11

Thursday –The Sacrament of Holy Baptism pgs 11-12

Friday – The Sacrament of The Altar pgs 15-16

Saturday – Table of Duties pgs 19-21

Sunday (before the Divine Service) – Christian Questions with their Answers
pgs 21-23

Sunday (anytime later in the day) – Confession pg 13-15

Every morning – Morning Prayer pg 16-17

Every evening – Evening Prayer pg 17

Before and after meals – Asking a blessing pg 17 Returning thanks pg 18