

Memory Cards

Luther's Small Catechism



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The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods before me (Exodus 20:3).

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1

The First Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we are to fear, love, and trust God above anything else.

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The Second Commandment

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name (Exodus 20:7).

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3

The Second Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we are to fear and love God so that we do not use His name to curse, swear, conjure, lie, or deceive, but call on Him in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

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The Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy (Exodus 20:8).

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The Third Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we should fear and love God so that we do not despise His word and the preaching of it, but consider it to be holy and gladly hear and learn it.

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The Fourth Commandment

Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you (Exodus 20:12).

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The Fourth Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we should fear and love God so that we do not despise our parents and those in authority nor provoke them to anger, but honor, serve, obey, love, and think highly of them.

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The Fifth Commandment

You shall not murder (Exodus 20:13).

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The Fifth Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we should fear and love God so that we do our neighbor no bodily harm nor cause any suffering, but help and befriend our neighbor in every bodily need.

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The Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit adultery (Exodus 20:14).

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The Sixth Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we should fear and love God so that we lead a chaste and pure life, in word and deed, and that husband and wife love and respect each other.

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The Seventh Commandment

You shall not steal (Exodus 20:15).

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The Seventh Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we should fear and love God so that we do not rob our neighbor of his money or property, nor bring them into our possession by unfair dealing or fraud, but help him to improve and protect his property and right to make a living.

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The Eighth Commandment

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor (Exodus 20:16).

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The Eighth Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we should fear and love God so that we do not misrepresent, betray, lie about, nor slander our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and say the kindest things we can about all he does.

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The Ninth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's house (Exodus 20:17a).

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The Ninth Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we should fear and love God so that we do not seek by scheming to gain possession of our neighbor's inheritance or house nor pretend to have a legal right to them but always help him to keep what is rightfully his.

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The Tenth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor (Exodus 20:17b).

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The Tenth Commandment

What does this mean?

This means that we should fear and love God so that we do not tempt away our neighbor's spouse or workers nor deprive him of anything that is his but encourage his wife and workers to remain loyal to him and seek to have his property stay in his possession.

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Conclusion of the Ten Commandments

What does God say of all His commandments?

I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments (Exodus 20:5,6).

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Conclusion of the Ten Commandments

What does this mean?

This means that God threatens to punish all who fail to keep these commandments. We should, therefore, fear His wrath, and in no manner disobey them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep them. We should, therefore, love Him, trust in Him, and gladly keep His commandments.

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The First Article

Creation

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

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The First Article

What does this mean?

I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He has given to me and still sustains my body and soul, my senses and all my members, my reason and all the powers of my soul. I believe that He gives me food and clothing, home and family, and all material blessings; that He daily provides abundantly for all the needs of my life, protects me from all danger, and guards and keeps me from all evil. I believe that He does this because of His fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this I should thank, praise, serve, and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

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The Second Article

Redemption

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

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The Second Article

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, bought and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil—not with silver and gold, but with His holy and precious blood, and with His innocent sufferings and death—in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His Kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness; even as He is risen from the dead, and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

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The Third Article

Sanctification

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

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The Third Article

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 Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith, just as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith, in which Christian church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers, and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true.

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The Lord's Prayer

[Introduction]

Our Father in heaven.

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The Lord's Prayer

[Introduction]

What does this mean?

With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are his true children, so that we may pray to Him as boldly and confidently as dear children ask their dear father.

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The First Petition

Hallowed be your name.

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The First Petition

What does this mean?

God's name is holy in itself, but we pray that it may be holy also among us.

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The First Petition

How is this done?

It is made holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and when we, as God's children, live holy lives in accordance with it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven! But whoever teaches and lives in a way other than what the Word of God teaches, profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, heavenly Father.

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The Second Petition

Your kingdom come.

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The Second Petition

What does this mean?

The kingdom of God truly does come of itself, without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may also come to us.

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The Second Petition

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 live a godly life here on earth and in heaven forever.

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The Third Petition

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

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The Third Petition

What does this mean?

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

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The Third Petition

How is this done?

The good and gracious will of God is done when God destroys and brings to nothing every evil counsel and purpose of Satan, the world, and our own human nature, which would hinder us from hallowing His name and prevent the coming of His Kingdom, and when He strengthens us and keeps us steadfast in His Word and in faith, even to the end.

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The Fourth Petition

Give us today our daily bread.

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The Fourth Petition

What is meant by this?

God truly does give daily bread to all, even to the wicked, without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that He would make us aware that these gifts come from Him as a gift and enable us to receive these gifts with thanksgiving.

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The Fourth Petition

What is meant by daily bread?

By daily bread we mean everything that is required to satisfy our bodily needs, such as food and clothing, house and home, fields and flocks, money and property, pious parents and children, trustworthy servants, godly and faithful rulers, good government, seasonable weather, peace and health, order and honor, true friends, good neighbors, and the like.

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The Fifth Petition

Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.

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The Fifth Petition

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition that our heavenly Father would not look upon our sins nor deny our prayers because of them, for we neither merit nor are worthy of those things for which we pray. However, we pray that He would grant us all things through His grace, even though we daily sin and deserve nothing but punishment. And certainly, on our part, we will gladly forgive and cheerfully do good to those who may sin against us.

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The Sixth Petition

And lead us not into temptation.

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The Sixth Petition

What does this mean?

God tempts no one to sin, but we pray in this petition that He would so guard and preserve us, that the devil, the world, and our own human nature may not deceive us nor lead us into error and unbelief, despair and other great and shameful sins; but when tempted, we may finally prevail and gain the victory.

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The Seventh Petition

Deliver us from the evil one.

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The Seventh Petition

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our heavenly Father would deliver us from the evil one, whether he affects body or soul, property or reputation, and that at last when the hour of death shall come, God may grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

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Conclusion of the Lord's Prayer

For yours is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen

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What is a sacrament?

A Sacrament is a holy act, instituted by Christ, in which by visible means, He gives and confirms His invisible grace.

The Sacraments

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What are the sacraments of the New Testament?

The sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper

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What is Baptism?

Baptism is not merely water, but it is water used according to God's command and connected with God's Word.

The Sacrament of Baptism

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What Command about baptism has God given to His followers?

It is the word of Christ in Matthew 28: 18-20, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

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What benefits did you receive when you were baptized?

My sin was forgiven. I was born again. God adopted me into His family, the church. God established his covenant with me. God gave me a way to live.

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How can water do such great things?

Water used in baptism does not do anything by itself because it is ordinary water. However, when this water is joined to the Word of God and used according to the command of Christ, it is Christian Baptism, and it becomes the gracious water of life as St. Paul writes to Titus, “He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.” (Titus 3:5,6).

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What is the meaning of baptism with water?

Baptism with water means that we have been identified with Christ by being “buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Romans 6:4).

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How can you be kept in fellowship with God after baptism?

I am kept in fellowship with God only through the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives within me and ministers to me through Word and Sacrament.

Colossians 2:6,7 - So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

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What is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper, instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, is His true body and blood, in, with and under the bread and the wine, given to Christians to eat and to drink.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

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Where is this [about the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper] written?

This is written in the Gospels according to Saints Matthew, Mark, and Luke and also by Saint Paul who said: "The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'"

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What benefits do you as a believer receive from the Lord's Supper?

When I worthily receive the Lord's Supper, I receive the assurance of the forgiveness of sin; I enter into a closer fellowship with Christ my Savior, and I am strengthened in faith, hope and love.

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How may I receive the Lord's Supper worthily?

I am truly worthy and well prepared when I believe the words of promise and assurance spoken by my Savior.

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What should your attitude be as you eat the bread and drink the wine?

My attitude should be one of grateful remembrance for the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross for me and for the grace given to me in the bread and wine.

Luke 22:19 – “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me”

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According to this catechism, who are you?

By God's grace, if I am a believer in and a follower of Jesus, I am a child of God.

John 1:12 - To all who received [Jesus], to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Conclusion of the Small Catechism

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According to this catechism, where did you come from?

God allowed me to be conceived and watched over me even before my birth.

Psalm 139:14-16 - I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

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According to this catechism, why are you here on earth?

I am here to glorify God my Savior.

Isaiah 43:6,7 - Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth — everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

Psalm 95:6,7 - Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

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According to this catechism, if you believe in Jesus, where are you going?

Because of my Savior's resurrection, I have the hope of eternal life forever in the presence of God if I believe in Jesus.

John 11:25,26 – "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."

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According to this catechism, how can you be sure of having eternal life and finally one day entering eternal life in heaven with God forever?

I can be sure of eternal life because of God's promise to me in the Scriptures.

John 20:31 - These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

1 John 5:11-15 - This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us — whatever we ask — we know that we have what we asked of him.

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