

EXPLANATION
OF
**Dr. Martin Luther's Small
Catechism**

TOGETHER WITH THREE SUPPLEMENTS

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

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Translator's Preface:

Professor Reu's Explanation of the Catechism is here offered in translation.

The work had hardly been issued in German when a translation was urgently demanded. To supply this demand the translation was undertaken. The hope is cherished, however, that in its English garb the Explanation will now find favor throughout our English Lutheran Church and be considered worthy of acceptance.

The text of the "Enchiridion" used in the translation is the one revised and recommended by the Joint Committee consisting of representatives of the General Council, General Synod, United Synod of the South, Joint Synod of Ohio and English Synod of Missouri. We have reluctantly adopted the rendering of the third commandment as it stands and would have preferred a literal translation of the German. But for the sake of a uniform text we have adopted it and have given the literal translation in footnote.

As to the principles governing the author in preparing the explanation, the advantages of the thetic form, the selection of proof-passages and the best method of using this explanation we refer to the author's preface.

We feel deeply obliged to Professor Alfred Ramsey of the Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary for many valuable suggestions and for painstaking and repeated revision of the whole. We also acknowledge our indebtedness to Rev. A. D. Crile of Chicago for valuable suggestions on several parts and to the Faculty of Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, for their kind assistance. The translator is also grateful to the many personal friends, who have looked over parts and by their kind words have greatly encouraged him.

If it should please God to suffer this translation to find as hearty a welcome as did the German original the translator would feel more than repaid for what was to him a labor of love.

C. G. Prottengeier

Preface.

In the preparation of the present explanation of the Catechism, the principle was adhered to, that an explanation should be no more, than an introduction into the fullness of religious truth, as contained in the *words* of Luther's Catechism. Accordingly every *addition* from Dogmatics and Sacred History was excluded, as well as every attempt to convert the Five Parts into a *system* by means of translations.—Along with this another principle was adhered to, to wit, that apart from necessary *definitions*, indispensable historical remarks (Article II) and contingent statements of plan (Part II), the text of the Catechism was not again to be explained, but that Luther's paraphrase was the object of explanation. (See "Kirchliche Zeitschrift" Vol. 25, No. 6, and Vol. 26, No 1.) Hence, the *matter* here given or omitted must be judged accordingly.

Concerning the *form*, the thetic was prescribed to the author in place of the erotematic. This form fetters the catechist in a much less degree than does the form of questions and answers. According to it, he may begin whenever he chooses, he may conclude whenever he chooses. In the presentation here given, he can even demarcate the matter for the separate *grades*, without causing disorder. He needs only, e.g., to have the definitions underlined, to get the lesson for the lower or middle grade. This is impossible with the prevalent form of questions and answers. There one is bound to the progress and connection of the questions and answers of the explanation, which have been deliberately put. Never-the-less to disregard them, is only to prove that the form of questions and answers is inadequate. For the child the thetic form has the great advantage that it teaches him to think independently, for in rehearsing the lesson he must find the answers independently from the given matter. Some difficulties will indeed be encountered at first, but they will soon be overcome and blessed results will not fail to appear. Add to this, that with the thetic form the child always receives something *whole*, while with the other he generally gets only something incomplete, since he is so prone simply to learn the given answer, without reference to the question. By means of the thetic form, finally, our youth are more apt to become well-versed in the Catechism, for here the text of the catechism can be plainly traced by the eye, as it winds through all the explanation like a string of beads. And pray, do not underrate this! Many who have entertained misgivings regarding the

thetic form, will find the reason for them in a confusion of instruction with the means of instruction; the doubts of others may be removed by a judicious employment of italics and black-type, as here attempted.—For pedagogic reasons the *personal* wording has been introduced, whenever possible.

Concerning the *text* of the " Enchiridion " to be explained, the one found in the edition of 1531 was selected, as this, contrary to prevalent opinion, is probably the last edition prepared by Luther himself. Since, however, various texts of Luther's Catechism are scattered among our congregations, as found, for instance, in our "Spruchbuch," our "Kirchenbuch," the "Konfirmandenbuechlein" and the catechisms of Caspari, Stohlmann, and Mecklenburg, the respective additions are given in parentheses. The explanation, however, is based on the original text only, with one exception; that regarding the superscription of the Ten Commandments.

In selecting *the proof-passages*, the author's endeavor was not only to offer *dicta probantia*, but also such passages, as would prove helpful for life. The passages are divided in four classes, ranging from the easy to the difficult. Those denoted by an asterisk (*) are intended for the lower, those by a double asterisk (**) for the middle, and those by a dagger (†) for the higher grade. Wherever the school consists of one class only, as in the confirmation schools, a part of the passages ought to be previously committed, in Saturday or Sunday School. Denoted passages have been inserted. either for highly gifted pupils, or because they offer particular sources of deduction for the catechist.

Every experienced catechist knows how an explanation of the catechism is to be **treated**. Let it, however, be distinctly understood, *that the printed explanation is to be considered only as the result or thesis of the previous **catechization** given so that the child, may have a fixed, lesson for home-study and as a basis for the following review-lesson. For the catechization proper, pupil as well as teacher knows only the text of Luther's Catechism. From it the catechization is developed. A given part of the Catechism must first be **analyzed** by the pupil with the help of the teacher. To simplify this, every part of the Catechism is divided into sections and placed at the head of the explanation in the present catechism. After the analysis comes the **development** (analytic or synthetic) of the separate sections in the form of a conversation between teacher and pupil, which must be so ordered as to terminate in the printed*

explanation. At this stage the children open their catechism and read the proper section, or the teacher reads it to them. The previous catechization having made all things clear, the children can now profitably prepare at home for the review to be held on the next day in the form of questions and answers. Only now and then one point or another will have to be specially emphasized when the lesson is assigned.

And now may this explanation of the catechism go forth under the blessed guidance of God and in a measure assist in the upbuilding of our Lutheran Church in this country. As a product of many years' study of the pertinent catechetical problems and of personal, practical work in the ministry, it may at least look forward to an unbiased examination, even where it ventures to tread upon new paths.

Dubuque, Iowa, October 1, 1904

M. Reu.

1.

**The Small Catechism
of
Dr. Martin Luther**

Part 1.

The Ten Commandments.

The Introduction.
I AM THE LORD THY GOD.

The First Commandment.
Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
What is meant by this?
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 is meant by this?
We should fear and love God and not curse, swear, conjure, lie or deceive by His name, but call upon His name in every time of need and worship Him with prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

The Third Commandment.
Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*
What is meant by this?
We should fear and love God and not despise preaching and His Word, but deem it holy and gladly hear and learn it.

* Literal translation: Thou shalt sanctify the holy-day.

The Fourth Commandment.

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

What is meant by this?

We should fear and love God and not despise our parents and superiors, nor provoke them to anger, but honor, serve, obey, love and esteem them.

The Fifth Commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

What is meant by this?

We should fear and love God and 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 is meant by this?

We should fear and love God and live chaste and pure in words and deeds, and husband and wife each love and honor the other.

The Seventh Commandment.

Thou shalt not steal.

What is meant by this?

We should fear and love God, and not take our neighbor's money or property, nor get it by false wares or false dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and living.

The Eighth Commandment.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What is meant, by this?

We should fear and love God, and not falsely belie, betray, backbite nor slander our neighbor, but excuse him, speak well of him and put the best construction on all he does.

The Ninth Commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house

What is meant by this?

We should fear and love God and not craftily seek to gain our neighbor's inheritance or home, nor get it by a show of right, but help and serve 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 his.

What is meant by this?

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

The Conclusion of the Commandments.

What does God say of all these commandments?

He says: "**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 is meant by this?

God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments, therefore we should fear His wrath, and do nothing against such commandments. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments; therefore, we should love and trust in Him and gladly do according to His commandments.

Part II.

The Creed.

The First Article.

Of Creation.

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

What is meant by this?

I believe that God has made me, together with all creatures; that He has given and still preserves to me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses; also clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, wife and child, land, cattle and all my goods; that He richly and daily provides me with all that I need for this body and life, protects me against all danger and guards and keeps 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 I am in duty bound 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 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 is meant by this?

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 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, 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; resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

What is meant by this?

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 and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; even 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 He daily and richly forgives me and all believers all our sins, and on the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant me and all believers in Christ everlasting life. This is most certainly true.

Part III.

The Lord's Prayer.

The Introduction.
Our Father who art in heaven.

What is meant by this?

God would hereby tenderly invite us to believe that He is truly our Father and we are truly His children, so that we may ask Him with all cheerfulness and confidence, as dear children ask of their dear father.

The First Petition.
Hallowed be Thy name.

What is meant by this?

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

How is this done?

When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and we as the children of God lead holy lives, in accordance with it; this grant us, dear Father in heaven! But he that teaches and lives otherwise than the Word of God teaches, profanes the name of God among us, from this preserve us, Heavenly Father!

The Second Petition.

Thy kingdom come.

What is meant by this?

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

How is this done ?

When our Heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit so that by His grace we believe His Holy Word and live godly, here in time, and in heaven forever.

The Third Petition.

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

What is meant by this?

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

How is this done?

When God defeats and hinders every evil counsel and purpose, 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 own flesh; but strengthens and keeps us steadfast in His Word and in faith unto our end. This is His gracious and good will.

The Fourth Petition.

Give us this day our daily bread

What is meant by this?

God gives daily bread indeed without our prayers even to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to acknowledge and receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by “daily bread”?

All that belongs to the wants and support of the body, such as meat, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious

children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, order, honor, good friends, trusty neighbors and the like.

The Fifth Petition.

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

What is meant by this?

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor, on account of them, deny our prayer; for we are not worthy of anything we ask, neither have we deserved it; but that He would grant us all through grace; for we sin much every day and deserve nothing but punishment. And we on our part will heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us.

The Sixth Petition.

And lead us not into temptation.

What is meant by this?

God indeed tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, that the devil, the world and our flesh may not deceive us, nor lead us into misbelief, despair and other shameful sin and vice; and, though we be thus tempted, that we may still in the end overcome and hold the victory.

The Seventh Petition.

But deliver us from evil.

What is meant by this ?

We pray in this petition, as the sum of all, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from all manner of evil—in body and soul, property and honor—and at last, when the hour of death shall come, grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this vale of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

Conclusion.

For Thine is the kingdom and the Power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

What is meant by this?

That I should be sure 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.

Part IV.

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

What is Baptism?

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

What is that Word of God?

That which 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."

What benefits does Baptism confer?

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

Which are those words and promises of God?

Those which 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.**"

How can water do such great things?

It is not water indeed that does it, but the Word of God, which is in and with the water, and faith which trusts this Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is simply 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 3: 5-8:

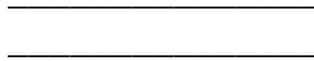
"According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior; that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying."

What does such baptizing with water signify?

It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily sorrow 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 says, Rom. 6:4: **"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."**



Part V.



The Sacrament of the Altar.

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

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

Where is this written?

The holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, together with St. Paul, write thus: **"Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke 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, when He had supped, He took the cup, 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 and for many, for the remission of sins; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Of what use is such eating and drinking?

It 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?

It is not the eating and drinking indeed that does it, but the words which stand here: **“Given and shed for you, for the remission of sins.”** These words, together with the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words, has what they say and mean, namely the forgiveness of sins.

Who then receives this Sacrament worthily?

Fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a good outward discipline; 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 who believes not these words, or doubts, is unworthy and unprepared; for the words, “For you,” require truly believing hearts.

Appendix.

1. OF THE OFFICE OF THE KEYS.*

What is the Office of the Keys?

The Office of the Keys 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?

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.

* The three questions of the Office of the Keys are not by Luther. The second and third questions are taken from the "Nuernberger Katechismuspredigten, 1533" and the first is of still later origin.

2. OF CONFESSION.*

What is Confession?

Confession embraces two parts; one, 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 through it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

What sins should we confess?

Before God we should acknowledge ourselves guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not discern; 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 in the light of the Ten Commandments, whether you be a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant; whether in these relations you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have wronged anyone by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, wasted aught, or done any harm.

* In his Catechism of 1531 Luther inserted the three questions of confession and placed them between Part IV and Part V. In this place we also explain them.—Occasionally we meet the “Office of the Keys” as a separate part in the sixteenth century already and usually it is reckoned, either alone or together with "Confession," as Part VI.

FORM OF CONFESSION.*

We confess unto Thee, O God, our Heavenly Father, that we have grievously sinned against Thee in many ways, not only by outward wrongdoing, but much more by inward blindness, unbelief, doubt, selfishness, fleshly lust, pride, impatience, uncharitableness, evil passions, covetous desires, and many other sins and faults, which we cannot fully understand, but which are all naked and open in Thy sight. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our offences; and we beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to have mercy upon us. O God, the Father in heaven, for the sake of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, forgive us our sins, and graciously help our infirmities. Amen.

CONFESSIONAL QUESTIONS.

Do you truly acknowledge, confess and lament that you are by nature sinful and unclean, and that, by omitting to do good, and the doing of evil, you have in many ways, both inwardly and outwardly, grieved and offended your God and Savior, and thereby deserved His condemnation and banishment from His presence?

Do you truly believe that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and that all who believe on His Name do receive forgiveness? Is it therefore your earnest desire to be delivered through Him from all your sins, and are you confident that your Heavenly Father is ready to be gracious to you for Christ's sake, to forgive your sins, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness?

Do you also desire of us, Ministers of the Church, to declare to you God's forgiveness in Christ's name, believing that this forgiveness avails for you in heaven? And are you resolved henceforth to be obedient to the Holy Spirit, so as to hate and forsake all manner of sin, to walk as in God's presence, and to strive daily to grow in holiness of heart and life?

* The Form of Confession, here given, as well as the confessional questions, are not by Luther, but are taken from the "Church Book". Luther gives several forms intended for Private Confession. These forms, however, are not always alike in the different editions of his Catechism.

3. HOW THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY SHOULD TEACH HIS HOUSEHOLD TO PRAY, MORNING AND EVENING.

MORNING PRAYER

In the morning when thou risest, thou shalt say:

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Ghost. Amen.

Then kneeling or standing, thou shalt say the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Then mayest thou also say this prayer:

I give thanks unto Thee, Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ Thy dear Son, that Thou hast protected me through the night from all danger and harm; and I beseech Thee to preserve and keep me this day also from all sin and evil; that in all my thoughts, words and deeds, I may serve and please Thee. Into Thy hands I commend my body and soul, and all that is mine. Let Thy holy angel hath charge concerning me, that the wicked one have no power over me. Amen. Then after a hymn or the Ten Commandments, or whatever thy devotion may suggest, go joyfully to thy work.

EVENING PRAYER

In the evening, when thou goest to bed, thou shalt say:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then kneeling or standing, thou shalt say the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Then mayest thou say this prayer:

I give thanks unto Thee, Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast this day so graciously protected me, and I beseech Thee to forgive me all my sins, and the wrong which I have done, and by Thy great mercy defend me from all the perils and dangers of this night. Into Thy hands I commend my body, and soul, and all that is mine. Let Thy holy angel hath charge concerning me, that the wicked one have no power over me. Amen. Then lie down in peace and sleep.

4. HOW THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY SHOULD TEACH HIS HOUSEHOLD TO ASK A BLESSING AND RETURN THANKS.

GRACE BEFORE MEAT.

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 Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer and after that this prayer:

O Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless us and these Thy gifts, which we receive from Thy loving-kindness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THANKS AFTER MEAT.

After meat, they shall 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. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy. Amen.

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.

5. THE TABLE OF DUTIES.

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 convince the gainsayers. 1 Tim. 3:2, 3, 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.

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. 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.

* The passage concerning the duties of hearers to their pastor, as well as those of subjects, were added before A. D. 1550.

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 evildoers, and 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. 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, EMPLOYEES 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 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 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.

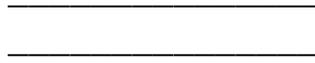
Now she that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God and continueth in supplication and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 1 Tim. 5:5, 6.

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.

Note: The "Christian Questions" often found in this place are not by Luther, but by his friend John Lange.



Explanation

of

Dr. Martin Luther's

Small Catechism

Introduction.

Soon after my birth I was *baptised* in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. In baptism all the blessings of salvation were bestowed upon me, for in that act God became my Father and I was received as His child. My greatest care throughout my life must therefore be to keep this salvation and not lose it, or, in other words, to remain a child of God.

**1. According to His mercy God saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Tit. 3:5.

**2. For ye are all the children of God' by faith in Christ Jesus ; for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ,, have put on Christ. Gal. 3: 26, 27.

*3. And now, Little children, abide in Him. I John 2:28.

Because I do not know of myself, that I have become a child of God, nor how I may remain one, God has told me in *the Holy Scriptures*. Here He tells me what course *He* has taken from the beginning. Here He also tells me what course *I* must take in order to remain a blessed child of God and to be received at last into His heavenly mansions. The Holy Scriptures were written by men, indeed, the Prophets and Apostles; but since these holy men of God wrote only as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, their writings are not the word of man, but *God's Word*. -- Now if I would keep my salvation and remain a child of God, I must diligently read God's Word, gladly hear it and keep it in my heart, as Mary did.

**4. 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. 2 Tim. 3:15.

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

†6. 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*. 2 Pet. 1:21.

**7. Search the *Scriptures*; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. John 5:39.

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

Whatever God would tell me in Holy Scripture regarding my whole life, I find briefly comprehended in the *Small Catechism*. The catechism was written in A. D. 1529 by the great reformer Dr. Martin Luther (born at Eisleben, Nov. 10, 1483 and died there Feb. 18, 1546) because he had observed how very little, both the youth and the

common people knew of Holy Scripture, and how wholly ignorant they were concerning the way of salvation. He called the little book "Catechism", for catechism signifies instruction. Luther's Catechism is divided into five Parts. An appendix is added to these, which does not always contain the same parts. The five Parts comprise the most important portion. They tell me how I have become a child of God and how I may remain one.

The *first*, treats of "The Ten Commandments" and tells *me* what I as a child of God, must *do and leave undone*;
the *second*, treats of "The Creed" and tells me what I, as a child of God, may and should *believe*;
the *third*, treats of "The Lord's Prayer" and tells me how I, as a child of God, may and should *pray*;
the *fourth* treats of "The Sacrament of Holy Baptism" and tells me by what *act* I became a child of God;
the *fifth* treats of "The Sacrament of the Altar" and tells me by what *act* God would strengthen me in my relation as a child of God.

The instruction which I receive in the catechism is most important and most necessary for me. Here I learn how I became a child of God and how I may remain one. Therefore I must give heed to it with all my heart, willingly hear it, accurately retain it and faithfully live according to it.

Part 1

The Ten Commandments, or The Law of God.

The first Part treats of the Ten Commandments and tells us what we, as children of God, must do and leave undone.

The Ten Commandments were first given by God to the people of Israel, after He, through His servant Moses, had delivered them from Egypt and led them to Mount Sinai. The commandments, however, concern us *Christians* also, because in them we find an expression of God's will for *all* limes, and because Christ by His whole life upon

earth has given us the example of obedience to them. Moreover, they concern us in *that* form in which Luther has explained them in the Catechism. They are divided into three parts: 1. The introduction; 2. The commandments proper; 3. The conclusion.

**9. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word. Ps. 119:9.

†10. Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Matt. 5:17.

1. THE INTRODUCTION TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The Introduction reads: "**I am the Lord thy God.**" These words tell us *who* it is that gives these commandments and by what peculiar *right* He gives them. It is the Lord, or Jehovah. He had a peculiar right to give Israel the commandments, because He had brought them out of Egypt and thus had proved Himself to be their God. He also has a peculiar right to give them *to us*, for in baptism He has become *our* God and Father and has received us as *His* children.

2. THE COMMANDMENTS PROPER.

The Ten Commandments are divided into two parts or tables. The first three tell us our duty to God, and the remaining seven tell us our duty to man, for God's sake.

The First Commandment.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

What is meant by this? **We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.**

Since the Lord God has become our God in baptism, He by right may require of us that henceforth we have no *other* gods beside Him, but regard *Him alone* as our God.

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

We regard God as our God when we:

1. **fear Him**, that is, constantly have Him before our eyes, so that, like Joseph, we never consent to sin;
2. **love Him**, that is, have a cordial affection for Him, so that we desire nothing else than to keep His commandments, as Abraham did;
3. **trust in Him**, that is, place our hands in God's hand, that He may lead us, and firmly believe that His guidance is always best for us, as Moses did. (Ex. 14:13-22.)

*12. I am the Almighty God; walk before Me and be thou perfect.

Gen. 17:1.

*13. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against *God*?

Gen. 39:9.—Read Tob. 4:6.

*14. For this is the love of God, that we *keep His commandments*, and His commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5:3.

*15. Commit thy way unto the *Lord*; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. Ps. 37:5.

†16. Nevertheless I am continually with Thee: Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory. Ps. 73:23, 24.

17. 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. Ps. 42:11.

If we would regard God as our God, we must fear, love, and trust in Him

above all things, that is, *more* than all things. We may indeed fear, love, and trust in many things besides God, as for instance, our parents, brothers and sisters, teachers and friends; but God must stand *high above all* others in our estimation and must occupy the *first place* in our lives. If we fear and love anything else more than God, and trust in it more than in Him, we have *other* gods before Him and practice worse *idolatry* than that of the heathen.

Now, we should *fear* God *above* all things; because, being everywhere present, He observes all our sins, and being holy, He must hate them. We should *love* Him *above* all things, because He is love itself and because He *first* loved us. We should *trust* in Him *above* all things; because He is almighty and

can deliver us from every need, and because He is most faithful, and never forgets His children.

†18. Fear not them which kill the *body*, but are *not able* to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matt. 10:28

†19. He that loveth father and mother *more* than Me, is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter *more* than Me, is not worthy of Me.

Matt. 10:37

**20. 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. 1 John 2:15.

**21. Trust in the Lord with *all* thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. Prov. 3:5.

*22. For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in *wickedness*: neither shall evil dwell with Thee. Ps. 5:4.

**23. God is *love*, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him. 1 John 4:16.

**24. We love Him, because He *first* loved us. 1 John 4:19.

25. Truly my soul waiteth upon God, from Him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved. Ps. 62:1, 2.

†26. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Is. 49:15.

27. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. Is. 40:31.

In the life of our Lord and Savior we observe the best fulfilment of the first commandment in its threefold application. He walked in *fear* before God; for His whole life was so lived before the eyes of His Heavenly Father that even His enemies could not convince Him of sin. He lived in *love* to God; for, when a child of twelve years, He said: " Must I not be about My Father's business? " and, when a man, it was His greatest delight to do the will of His Father (John 4:34), He even became obedient unto death. He walked *trusting* in God; hence He courageously faced His enemies,

and even at the foot of the cross the Pharisees were obliged to confess: "He trusted in God."

**28. Christ, also suffered for us, leaving us an *example*, that ye should follow His steps. 1 Pet. 2:21.

The words: " We should fear and love God " are repeated by Luther in all the other commandments; **1.** in order to show us that all the other commandments are comprehended in the first one, the other commandments only telling us in what particular points we should *show* our fear and love to God; **2.** in order to remind us that our obedience to the other commandments pleases God *only* when it proceeds from a heart that fears and loves God.

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 is meant by this? **We should fear and love God, and not curse, swear conjure, lie or deceive by His name, but call upon His name in every time of need, and worship Him with prayer, praise and thanksgiving.**

In the second commandment also God requires that we fear and love Him. According to it we should *show* our fear and love to God by **not taking in vain**, that is, using the name of God without reason or profit, as though it were not holy and exalted; or adding it to our sin, for the sake of emphasis; **His name**, that is, all the names by which we know Him (as God, Jesus, Christ) and everything by which He specially reveals Himself to us (as His Word, His Sacraments, the cross).—We should not take the *name* of God in vain especially because it is so great a treasure for us. By it God has revealed Himself to us, and by it He has allowed us sinful beings to call upon Him. Had He not told us His name, we could not commune with Him at all. It is the greatest blessing that we may call Him " *Father*."

a) If we **fear** God, we will *show* it by **not cursing by His name**, that is, using the name of God in order to wish evil. If we do this *thoughtlessly*, then we forget that the name of God is a holy and exalted

name, one which we dare mention only with reverence. If we do it *deliberately*, then we ask the assistance of God's holy name in order that our angry heart may carry out its evil desires, as was the case with Shimei when he cursed David (2 Sam. 16:5-8);

swearing by His name, that is, using the name of God without reason or profit in order to confirm our word as is so often done in our daily life;

conjuring by His name, that is, using the name of God upon something, in order to *find out* what God wisely has hidden, or to *obtain* what He wisely has kept from us, as Saul did, when he consulted the witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28:5-20);

lying or deceiving by His name, that is, using the name of God in order to cover our lie and thus to delude man. This is done by everyone who *commits a perjury*; for by the name of God he solemnly promises to speak the whole truth and still speaks what is not true, or only partly true, just as the false witnesses who accused Jesus did. *Against this we must especially be on our guard; for the perjurer severs all connection between himself and his God, and, as it were, tells Him that God need never help him any more, neither in life nor in death. Heretics and godless men also lie and deceive by the name of God; for though they use the Word and the name of God, they do it to cover their false doctrine and godless life, to which they try to persuade others. All hypocrites, who pretend to be devout, and yet are not, do likewise.*

**29. But I say unto you that *every* idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. Matt. 12:36.

**30. Bless them which persecute you; bless and curse not. Rom. 12:14.

†31. But I say unto you, swear not at all; but let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil. Matt. 5:34, 37.

32. There shall not be found among you anyone 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. Deut. 18: 10-12.

**33. Ye shall not swear by My name *falsely*: I am the Lord. Lev. 19:12.

34. What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction and castest My words behind thee. Ps. 50:16, 17.

†35. Not every one 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. Matt. 7:21.

b) If we love God, we will show it, by

calling upon His name in every time of need, that is, crying to God in our need, as to our only helper whether in heaven or upon earth, as the Syrophenician woman did; and that in every time of need, since our need is neither too great nor too small for God; He can and will help in every time of need. This also includes permission to swear before the court; for there in our own as well as in our neighbor's need, we call upon the name of God to intervene and to help that the truth may prevail. Both Christ and His apostles swore *before the court*. However, since we call upon the name of God whenever we take an oath, we must then speak with holy reverence, as though we stood in the very presence of God;

worshiping Him with prayer, that is, remaining in *constant* communion and affectionate conversation with God, having a real *order* of prayer, as Daniel had, who kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed to his God. (Dan. 6:10. See in the appendix the morning and evening prayer, grace before meat, and thanks after meat.) Our prayers should be said devoutly, with great confidence in God's mercy and omnipotence and without ceasing; nor dare we ever oppose our will to that of God, but rather say: "Lord, not my will, but Thine be done." Only such prayer may *always* be sure of being heard;

worshiping Him with praise and thanksgiving, that is, recounting and extolling the good and great things which God does in the world and to us, as Moses and the people of Israel did at the Red Sea.

*36. The *name* of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe. Prov. 18:10.

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

*38. The Lord is nigh unto *all* them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. Ps. 145:18.

**39. Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. Luke 11:9

**40. My mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips: when I remember Thee upon my bed; and meditate on Thee in the night-watches. Ps. 63:5, 6.

**41. 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.

Ps. 103:1, 2.

*42. O give *thanks* unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever. Ps. 106:1.

†43. It is a *good* thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High: To show forth Thy loving-kindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness every night. Ps. 92:1, 2.

In the life of our Lord and Savior we behold the best fulfilment of the second commandment. Not an idle word escaped His lips. He used the holy name of His Father only in prayer and confession. His whole life was as *one* prayer; for He lived in constant communion and conversation with His Father. He spent whole nights in prayer (Luke 6:12; 5:16; Mark 1:35; John 6:15), entered His passion praying (Mark 14: 36; Matt. 26:39, 42) and crying words of prayer He departed this life.—How many idle and evil words have we spoken!

The Third Commandment.

Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.*

What is meant by this? **We should fear and love God and not despise preaching and His Word, –but deem it holy and gladly hear and learn it.**

The third commandment requires anew that we fear and love God. According to it we should *show* our fear and love by:

keeping the Sabbath day holy (or sanctifying the holy-day), that is, by separating it from other days, and especially consecrating it to God for His service. In the Old Testament the *seventh* day, or *Saturday* (Sabbath), was thus separated. In the New Testament no particular day has been appointed of God, for *all* days should

* Literal translation: *Thou shalt sanctify the holy-day.*

be holy unto God, that is, consecrated to His service. But in emembrance of the resurrection of Christ, the Christian Church from the time of the Apostles has given prominence to the *first* day or *Sunday*. The Church Year with all its festivals and holy-days has grown out of the observance of Sunday (see supplement 2). On these days Christians assemble, listen to preaching and God's Word, celebrate the sacraments, pray and sing together. Thus they sanctify the holy-day or keep the Sabbath day holy.

†44. 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. Col. 2:16, 17.—Read also Ex. 20:8 and Gal. 4:9-13; Rom. 14:5-9.

a) If we *fear* God, we will *show* it by **not despising**, that is, thinking lightly of and regarding as simply the word of man: **preaching**, the explanation of the divine word at public worship; **and His Word**, which we have in addition to preaching at public worship, as when the Scriptures are being read, the sacraments celebrated, or when we pray and sing. —Contempt for preaching and God's Word is *shown* when we stay away from public worship, whether only to rest the body on the holy-day, or to pursue our work and sinful pleasures. Such contempt, however, is *shown* also when we attend divine services only from habit, or out of self-righteousness, as the Pharisees did, or when we do not pay attention to preaching nor apply it to ourselves in order to grow *better*.

45. Whoso despiseth the *Word* shall be destroyed. Prov. 13:13.

†46. He that heareth *you*, Heareth Me; and he that despiseth *you*, despiseth *Me*; and he that despiseth *Me*, despiseth *Him* that sent Me. Luke 10:16.

b) If we *love* God, we will *show* it by **deeming it holy**, that is, separating God's Word from all the words of man and recognizing in it the voice of God, which alone can save and help us, as was the case with Samuel; **gladly hearing it**, like Mary, the sister of Martha (Luke 10:38-42); **and learning it**, that is, impressing it upon the memory and heart, that it may become a consolation for us in time of need and a rule for our whole life, as it was with

Simeon and Anna.—He who loves God has no greater delight than to hear the voice of his Heavenly Father and to be able to sing and speak of Him.

47. 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*.

I Thess. 2:13.

†48. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the *power of God unto salvation* to everyone that believeth. Rom. 1:16.

49. So will I compass Thine altar, O Lord: that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Thy wondrous works. Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honor dwelleth.

Ps. 26:6-8.

50. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. Ps. 42:1, 2.

**51. Wist ye not that I *must be about* my Father's business? Luke 2:49.

*52. Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to *hear*. Eccles. 5:1.

53. Receive with *meekness* the engrafted Word. Jas. 1:21.

**54. But be ye *doers* of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. Jas.1:22.

**55. In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul. Ps. 94:19.

In the life of our Lord and Savior we observe the best fulfilment of the third commandment. For when He was a boy twelve years of age, He regarded the temple as His proper abode, and as a man, He was a regular attendant at the synagogue (Luke 4:1) and journeyed to Jerusalem to all the festivals. He *lived* in the Scriptures of the Old Testament and died with the words of Scripture on His lips.

The first three commandments tell us what we, as baptised Christian children, should do *toward God*; the remaining seven commandments tell us what out of fear and love to God, we should do *toward man*, with whom according to God's will we live. Whatever we do to man out of fear and love to God, He will regard as though done unto Himself.

†56. Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it *unto me*.... Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye *did it not to me*. Matt. 25:40, 45.

The Fourth Commandment.

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

What is meant by this? **We should fear and love God and not despise our parents and superiors, nor provoke them to anger,—but honor, serve, obey, love and esteem them.**

The fourth commandment also treats of fear and love to God. According to this commandment we should *show* this, by:

honoring, that is, highly esteeming them, as those whom *God Himself* has placed over us;

our father and mother, that is, our natural parents, but also our grand-parents, step-parents, foster-parents, yea all those also whom God has appointed as our *superiors*, whether in the home, the school, the church, or the state.—Parents and superiors are God's representatives on earth, *by whom* He gives us life and protection and *by whom* He would also educate us in obedience and all other virtues.

a) If we fear God, then for His sake we will **not**:

despise our parents and superiors, *His representatives on earth*, that is, make light of them in our *hearts* by not *submitting* to them, but rather setting ourselves *beside* or *above* them, as Absalom did;

provoke them to anger, that is, be unkind, stubborn and disobedient both in *words* and *deeds*, and thus cause them grief of heart, as Absalom and Esau did.

†57. 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. Prov. 30:17.

58. He that wasteth his father and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame and bringeth reproach. Prov. 19:26.

59. Despise not thy mother, when she is old. Prov. 23:22.

b) If we love God, then for His sake we will:

honor our parents and superiors, *His representatives on earth*, that is, highly esteem them as those whom God Himself has placed over us, as Joseph did;

serve them, that is, *always* be ready to do something for them, like Ruth. We must especially serve them when they grow old or sick. Then we should repay them the love with which they served us when we were young and weak;

obey them, that is, *cheerfully* do their bidding, as Samuel did. Moreover, we must also quickly, punctually, entirely and without murmuring comply with their wishes, when these run counter to our inclination and will. In later years we should at least ask their *advice*. Isaac was an obedient *son*, Eliezer and Joseph were obedient *servants*, Samuel was an obedient *scholar* and the first Christians were obedient *subjects*;

love and esteem them, that is, always regard them as a precious gift of God and heartily render them all love and honor, as Joseph did.

*60. Let them learn first to *requite* their parents; for that is good and acceptable before God. I Tim. 5:4.

*61. My son, *hear* the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother. Prov. 1:8.

†62. 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. Heb. 13:17.

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

†64. 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. Rom. 13:1, 2.

65. We ought to obey God *rather* than men. Acts 5:29.—See the passages in the Table of Duties.

The best example of true fulfilment of our commandment in every direction, we observe in the life of our Lord and Master. Though He was the Son of God, He was obedient to His *parents*. He rebuked Mary only when she attempted to interfere with His office. Even from the cross, as a loving son, He provided for her. Though He fought against all the pretensions and false doctrines of the *teachers* of Israel of that time, still He acknowledged their position as teachers of the law (Matt. 23:2, 3). To the Gentile *magistrates* He willingly paid taxes. Yea, though innocent, He suffered them to sentence Him to death, although twelve legions of angels were at His command.—How great our transgression is, compared with His fulfilment.

The Fifth Commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

What is meant by this? **We should fear and love God and not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, –but help and befriend him in every bodily need.**

We must show our fear and love to God, not only toward our parents and superiors, but also toward

our neighbor, that is, all those persons in whose neighborhood God has placed us.

The following commandments tell us what we for the sake of God owe to our neighbor.

According to the fifth commandment we should *show* our fear and love to God by not

killing, that is, taking our neighbor's life. Life is the property *of God*. He has given it, He *alone* may with right endanger it, shorten it, and take it again, when and how He will. When the magistrates take life they act as representatives of God. Whoever without divine authority endangers, shortens or takes the life of a neighbor interferes with the office *of God*.

66. *I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal.* Deut. 32:39.

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

a) If we *fear* God, then for His sake we will **not:
hurt our neighbor in his body, that is, injure him in his body or otherwise endanger his life and health, as those thieves did who wounded the Jew and stripped him**

of his raiment or as Pharaoh did to the Israelites when he required far more work of them than was in their power to do;

nor harm him, that is, embitter and shorten his life by envious looks, by spiteful words or by hostile acts, as Esau and the sons of Jacob did.

**68. Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be *glad* when he stumbleth. Prov. 24:17.

**69. Whosoever *hateth* his brother is a *murderer*, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 1 John 3:15.

**70. Be ye *angry* and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Eph. 4:26.

b) If we love God, then for His sake we will

help our neighbor, that is, hasten to relieve him when in danger, extend a helping hand and deliver him, as the Good Samaritan did;

and befriend him, that is, diligently assist him, as the Good Samaritan also did, by word and deed, that he may again prosper;

in every bodily need, that is, whenever his health or his life is endangered.

†71. Is it not 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; all that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Is. 58:7.

*72. Blessed are the *merciful*: for they shall obtain mercy. Matt. 5:7.

The neighbors toward whom we should show our fear and love to God include also those who have *offended* us and even our worst *enemies*.

†73. *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.

Matt. 5:44, 45.

**74. Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise *blessing*; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should. inherit a blessing. 1 Pet. 3:9.

†75. 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 hath *not* seen? 1 John 4:20.

*76. And be ye kind one to another; tenderhearted, forgiving one another.
Eph. 4:32.

In the life of Jesus we observe the best fulfilment also of the fifth commandment in every way. He came as the true Good Samaritan to earth, not to be ministered *unto*, but to *minister* and to give His life as a ransom for many. He was kind and gentle to everybody. He was the true friend of the poor and sick, who could not look upon distress without stretching forth His hand to remove it. At last He prayed for His murderers and died for them on the cross. Thus He has given us an example, that we should serve even as He did (John 13:12-15). From fear and love to God, which would serve as Jesus did, have grown all the works of mercy and ministering love, so well-pleasing to God, such as the case of orphans and the service of deaconesses.

The Sixth Commandment.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What is meant by this? **We should fear and love God and live chaste and pure in words and deeds, and husband and wife each love and honor the other.**

In the sixth commandment God again requires fear and love to God, which we should *show* by not **committing adultery**:

Marriage is the public and lasting union between one man and one woman in the closest fellowship of body and life. God Himself instituted marriage when in paradise He gave Eve to Adam as an helpment. In our times Christians enter the state of marriage when man and woman solemnly promise before God and human witnesses to love and honor one another until *God Himself* part them in death. They

commit adultery when they violate their *promise*, that is to say, when they no more love and honor one another, or even commit the gross sin of fornication, as David did, or when they faithlessly separate. If one party commits gross fornication, or *maliciously* deserts the other (1 Cor. 7:15) then God has permitted a *divorce*. If married people suffer themselves to be divorced for any *other* reason, that, in the eyes of God, is adultery and the Church must treat it as such.

*77. And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make an *helpmeet* for him. Gen. 2:18.

†78. 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*.
Matt. 5:27, 28.

**79. What therefore *God* hath joined together, let not *man* put asunder.
Matt. 19:6.

†80. Whosoever shall *put away* his wife, except it be for fornication and shall marry another, *committeth* adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. Matt. 19:9.

81. But whoremongers and adulterers *God* will judge. Heb. 13:4.

Where fear and love to God abide in the heart, such a sin will not be committed. For if we fear and love God, we will for His sake *at all times*:

live chaste, that is, strive and struggle as Joseph did that no shameless thought may lodge in our *heart*;

live pure, that is, strive and struggle that the inward chastity may appear also in our whole *outward* life, as it did with Joseph.—The purity of heart will appear:

in our words, that is, we will avoid all language of which we would have to be ashamed before God;

in our deeds, that is, we will avoid everything in our *behavior*, in our *dress* and in the use of the *members* of our body that does not agree with modesty.

†82. Let no *corrupt* communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of *edifying*, that it may *minister grace* unto the hearers. Eph. 4:29.

**83. *Flee* also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 2 Tim. 2:22.

84. Know ye not that your body is the *temple* of the *Holy Ghost* which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought *with a price*: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are *God's*. 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

But if we would live chaste and pure, we must avoid all idleness, bad company, bad books and pictures, as well as all excess in eating and drinking. We must rather work faithfully, pray diligently, be vigilant and sober.

*85. My son, if *sinn*ers entice thee, consent thou not. Prov. 1:10.

**86. Be not deceived: *evil communications* corrupt good *manners*.

1 Cor. 15:33.

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

**88. And they that are *Christ's*, have *crucified* the flesh with the affections and lusts. Gal. 5:24.

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

*90. Create in me a *clean* heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Ps. 51:10.

Now when God in His own time shall lead us into the estate of marriage, if we fear and love God we will

love, that is, have a cordial affection for;

and honor our husband or wife, that is, regard them as a gift of God and highly esteem them. (See the Table of Duties.)

In the life of our Savior we observe the best fulfilment of the sixth commandment. His heart was chaste and pure and His chastity so shone from His eyes, words and deeds, that all unchaste and impure persons avoided His company or, in their association with Him, became chaste and pure (as the Samaritan woman and the woman who had been a sinner. Luke 7:38-50). —How *unclean* alas! are we, compared with Him.

The Seventh Commandment.

Thou shalt not steal.

What is meant by this? **We should fear and love God, and not take our neighbor's money or property, nor get it by false wares or false dealing,—but help him to improve and protect his property and living.**

Our living as children of God depends upon fear and love to God. According to the seventh commandment we should *show* it, by not **stealing**, that is, acquiring our neighbor's property in a sinful way. Property was given our neighbor by *God Himself*. The difference between rich and poor therefore is *God's* arrangement. Whoever would disturb it revolts against *God*.

a) If we fear God, then for His sake we will **not take our neighbor's money or property**, that is, seize it openly and by force, as highway men do, or secretly or when opportunity offers, as thieves do; **nor get it by false wares or false dealings**, that is, give bad goods for good, or, in buying and selling generally, take too large a profit, as cheats do. —It is also *theft*, when for instance, we thoughtlessly contract debts, render poor service, do not when employed use well our time nor seek our master's profit; or when we pay too small wages, reduce wages, exact prices and interest that are too high, or understate the value of our property and thus cheat the government out of its taxes.—Read Luke 16:1-9.

**91. 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. 1 Thess. 4:3,6.—Read also Lev. 19:35, 36. Jer. 22:13. Tit. 2:10. Ps. 37:21. Prov. 22:2.

†92. 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. For the *love of money* is the root of all evil. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10.

**93. Be *content* with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never *leave* thee nor *forsake* thee. Heb. 13:5.

b) If we **love** God, then for His sake we will willingly **help to improve our neighbor's property and living**, that is, as his good friend we will assist him with advice and by deed, that he may always improve his property and living; **and to protect it**, that is, as his good friend we will assist him with advice and by deed, that he may not lose his property and living, and that it be not damaged, as Abraham did to his nephew, Lot.—He only who *loves* God can render such assistance, for he has been taught of his Heavenly Father, that it is more blessed to *give* than to *receive*.

94. As every man hath received the gift, even so *minister* the same one to another, as *good stewards* of the manifold grace of God. 1 Pet. 4:10.

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

*96. God loveth a *cheerful* giver. 2 Cor. 9:7.

†97. But 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? 1 John 3:17.

98. In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread. Gen. 3:19.

*99. Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. John 6:12.

The seventh commandment was best fulfilled by our Savior. Though He was rich, for our sake He became poor. He had compassion on the hungry multitude, so that He fed thousands. Though He Himself had not where to lay His head, He so well provided for His disciples that in the end they were obliged to confess: "Lord, never once lacked we anything."

The Eighth Commandment.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What is meant by this? **We should fear and love God, and not falsely belie, betray, backbite, nor slander our neighbor, –but excuse him, speak well of him and put the best construction on all he does.**

The Heavenly Father requires fear and love from us, His children. According to the eighth commandment we should *show* it by not:

bearing false witness against our neighbor, that is, making a false statement against him. Our statement is *false*, when it is contrary to the *truth*. It is *against* our neighbor, when we would hurt him by it, –in a word, when *love* is wanting. We can make such statements against him before the *court*, but also in our *daily life*. And it is just in our daily life that we so often bear false witness against our neighbor. We think that we need not be so very particular. God, however, will require an account of *every* idle word, and He is an enemy of everything that runs counter to truth and love.

†100. But I say unto you, that *every idle word* that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. Matt. 12:36.

101. Thou shalt destroy them that speak *leasing* (falsehood): The Lord will abhor the bloody and *deceitful* man. Ps. 5:6.

a) If we fear God, we will show it, and for His sake we will not falsely belie our neighbor, that is, speak untruthfully about him, in order to hurt him, as the wife of Potiphar did;
nor betray, that is, reveal what our neighbor would keep secret, as Doeg did (1 Samuel 22:6-10);
backbite, that is, speak evil about our neighbor behind his back, as Absalom did, so that he cannot defend himself;
slander him, that is, by backbiting take away the good name of our neighbor and bring him into bad repute, as Absalom did.

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

*103. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor. Eph. 4:25.

†104. Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with that measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. Matt. 7:1, 2.

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

b) If we love God, we will show it by:
excusing our neighbor, that is, taking his part and defending him against gossips and defamers, as Jonathan did;
speaking well of him, that is, pointing out what is good in him, as Jonathan did, when others speak only of his faults;
putting the best construction on all he does, that is, making the kindest explanation of every questionable thing in the conduct of our neighbor.

*106. Open thy mouth for the *dumb*, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Prov. 31:8.

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

**108. Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things. hopeth all things, endureth all things. 1 Cor. 13:6, 7.

None has better fulfilled the eighth commandment than Jesus Christ. He was both, truth and love. Full of truth, He unmasked sin, but He reproveth it to the face of the sinner (John 4:16; Matt. 16:23; Matt. 23). He reproveth, however, only to save and to amend. And when He did reprove, He was never unmindful of the bruised reed. and the smoking flax (Is. 42:3; John 21:15-19). But when His own were being accused by defamers, He courageously took their part, as for instance, John, the Baptist (Matt. 11:7), the woman who had been a sinner (Luke 7:38-50), Mary (John 12:1-17). Even on the cross he said: " They know not what they do."

The Ninth Commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

What is meant by this? **We should fear and love God and not craftily seek to gain our neighbor's inheritance or home, nor get it by a show of right—but help and serve 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 his.

What is meant by this? **We should fear and love God and not estrange, force or entice away from our neighbor, his wife, servants or cattle, –but urge them to stay and do their duty.**

Our living as children of God depends upon fear and love to God. According to the ninth and tenth commandments we should show such fear and love to God by not *coveting* what belongs to our neighbor. Frequently the Lord God has given to our

neighbor more things and better and fairer ones than we have. We should not *covet* these. We:

covet them, when we envy our neighbor their possession, as Ahab did, and are not content until they come into *our* possession. Coveting arises from the *evil lust* (desire) which, since the fall of Adam, has been inherited by *all* men and which, like an ugly sediment, rests in *every* heart from birth (inherited lust).* In baptism we have received forgiveness for this inborn evil lust, as well as the power to struggle against it. The evil lust *itself*, however, still exists and *moves* in the covetous thoughts. We must not let these thoughts work their will, but must faithfully struggle against them, so that they will not permanently *lodge* in us. For it is the will of our Heavenly Father that we do His will, not only in words and deeds, but in our *thoughts* also.

*109. The imagination of man's heart is *evil* from his youth. Gen. 8:21.

†110. For out of the heart proceed *evil thoughts*, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. Matt. 15:19.

†111. But *every* man is tempted when he is drawn away of his *own* lust, and enticed. Jas. 1:14.

†112. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth *no good thing*: for to will is present with me; but how to *perform* that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Rom. 7:18, 19.

*113. But unto thee (margin: subject unto thee) shall be sin's *desire*, and thou shalt *rule* over him. Gen. 4:7.

**114. Let *not* sin therefore *reign* in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Rom. 6:12.

And they that are Christ's—see No. 88.

* In the language of the church distinction is made between *inherited* lust and *actual* lust. By *inherited* lust is meant the inborn lust resting in the heart of man against whatever is divine. This is part of original sin, that mother of all sins. Now, when the *will* of man has yielded to the allurements of inherited lust, it has become *actual* lust..

1. a) If we **fear** God, we will struggle against all covetous thoughts so that *for His sake* we will not

craftily seek to gain our neighbor's inheritance or home, that is, devise all manner of cunning means whereby we may bring it into our possession, and seize every opportunity to do so, as Jacob did;

nor get it by a show of right, that is, acquire it in a way that *appears* to be right, as Jezebel did, though it is *wrong* before God. Even when the courts cannot hinder and perhaps must even assist us, it may *still* be wrong.—Read Mic. 2:1, 2.

b) If we **love** God we will struggle against all covetous thoughts, so that *for His sake* we will rather

help and serve our neighbor, that is, assist him, as Abraham did, that he may **keep** his inheritance and home and not be deprived of it.

2. Since the covetous thoughts often turn to *particular things*, the ninth commandment is followed by the *tenth*. According to it we are warned not to let our desires for *particular things* in our neighbor's household rule over us.

a) If we **fear** God, we will for His sake struggle against all covetous thoughts when they turn to *our neighbor's wife, servants or cattle*. We will **not estrange them**, that is, alienate them from our neighbor by all manner of allurements and fine promises, as Absalom did with the subjects of his father;

force them away, that is, urge them without ceasing until they leave, or give our neighbor no rest until he leaves them, as that man did of whom we read in the gospel (Luke 11:5-8);

entice them away, that is, in any way whatever turn them *from* our neighbor and *to* ourselves.

b) If we love God, we will struggle against all covetous thoughts and *for His sake* we will

urge our neighbor's wife and servants to stay and do their duty. This we do when we remind them of the good traits of our neighbor, of their own sin, and the promise they have given. When we no more seek what is *ours* but that which is our neighbor's, we shall have rightly fulfilled the ninth and tenth commandments, and rightly struggled against all covetous thoughts.

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

*116. Delight thyself also in the *Lord*; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Ps. 37:4.

In regard to the fulfilment of the ninth and tenth commandments also, we have no better example than our Lord and Master. He had only a *single* desire: To do the will of His Father, and thus to seek what was best for mankind.

117. My food is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.

John 4:34.

*118. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Luke 19:10.—Read Phil. 2:3-11.

119. Go and do thou likewise. Luke 10:37.

**120. But every one that is perfect shall be as his master. Luke 6:40.

3. THE CONCLUSION OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

What does God say of all these commandments? He says: " **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 is meant by this? **God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments, therefore we should fear His wrath, and do nothing against such commandments. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments; therefore we should love and trust in Him and gladly do according to His commandments.**

Considering the ten commandments severally, we must remember that the Lord God who gave us the commandments:

is a jealous God, that is, a God who is in great earnest regarding the fulfilment of His commandments. He insists, that the fear and love required in each commandment must be *really* given Him and Him *alone*. Because He is a jealous God He does two things:

1. He threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments. Every transgression of the commandments is sin, whether we transgress in words and deeds or only in our thoughts. But sin is virtually rebellion or *hatred* of God. We can observe this very plainly in those who *intentionally* and *boldly* disregard the commandments of God. They, however, more than others learn that God is not mocked and that the iniquity is:

visited, that is, sought out and punished upon the sinner. Nor does he punish the transgressors only, but also *unto the third and fourth generation*, that is, their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.—Sin puts us under the *wrath* of God and the wrath of God causes *punishment to follow upon sin*. In His wrath God punishes *in the present time* with a bad conscience and all manner of misfortune, and unless we repent, He will also punish us *in eternity* with condemnation. **Therefore we should fear His wrath and do nothing against such commandments.**

**121. The carnal mind is *enmity* against God. Rom. 8:7.

*122. *Righteousness* exalteth a nation: but *sin* is a reproach to any people. Prov. 14:34.

*123. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Gal. 6:7.

124. It is a *fearful* thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Heb.10:31.

*125. Let all the earth *fear* the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world *stand in awe* of Him. Ps. 33:8.

2. He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments.

Even though we, as children of God, try our utmost to keep the commandments, still we can not keep them as perfectly as did our Lord and Master. As often as we compare our lives with them, they will show us our *sin*, even as a *mirror* shows the filth of our body. They also show us the *wrath* of God which we have deserved by our sin.

But if we heartily love God and therefore keep His commandments as well as it is possible for us by His power to do, then, in spite of our sins, He will grant us *every blessing*. He will bless us in our *body*, keeping us in health and strength; in our *soul*, restoring to it peace and joy; in our *property*, prospering the work of our hands; in our *honor*, causing our name to be in good repute with all devout people. And at last out of pure mercy He will grant us a blessed end and life eternal. **Therefore we should love and trust in Him and gladly do according to His commandments.**

Especially should we *trust* in Him when we keep His commandments and still do not prosper. Then we must trust, as Joseph did, that in the end He will grant us every blessing even though it be not until eternity. He always has kept His word, He will not break it with us! The whole history of Israel proves that God is a jealous God who punishes sin and graciously rewards obedience.

**126. By the *law* is the *knowledge* of sin. Rom. 3:20.

**127. *Cursed* be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law, to do them. Deut. 27:26.

*128. *Mark* the perfect man, and behold the upright: for *the end* of that man is peace. Ps. 37:37.

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

Nevertheless I am, etc.—see No. 16.

Lord, keep me in Thy paths forever,
Nor let me any longer stray;
Direct my foot that I may never
Delay nor stumble in Thy way.
Give wisdom and with grace endue
That I Thy will may do.

Part 2

The Creed.

The Second Part tells what we, as children of God, may and should believe. Therefore it is called "The Creed" (or "The Christian Faith").

Faith always deals with those matters which the eye can not see nor the hands grasp. So *Christian Faith* deals with invisible matters, but only with *those* which God in Holy Scripture has revealed to us for our salvation. **Faith holds these to be true and real, though they can not be seen with the eye nor taken in the hand and relies on them so firmly that it would risk all and dare everything for them,** as Abraham did, who, when he left his country, had nothing on which to rely but the Word of God.—The centre of Holy Scripture is the true living God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. He is also the centre of true Christian Faith.

****130.** Now faith is the *substance* (margin: ground or confidence) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. 11:1.

131. *Without* faith it is *impossible* to please God. Heb. 11:6.—Read Heb. 11:1-40.

True faith dwells in the *heart*. It becomes *audible* when we *confess* it with our mouths. The noblest expression of that faith which we, as children of God, may bear in our hearts is found in the Second Part of the Catechism.

This is the Christian Church's confession of faith. She confesses it at her services, and in baptism imparts it to all who become her members and who are to receive it in faith. *It is to become their own confession,* in which they may accord with the Church. *They are also to apply it to themselves and in it to find consolation, in life as well as in the hour of death.* It is called the *Apostle's Creed*, because it briefly comprehends all that the apostles confessed as their faith.

This confession, like Holy Scripture, has for its centre the saving works of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost: namely Creation, Redemption and

Sanctification. Therefore Dr. Martin Luther divided it into three parts or Articles. He also added the excellent explanation.

†132. 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.

Matt. 10:32, 33.

†133. For with the heart man *believeth* unto righteousness, and with the mouth *confession* is made unto salvation. Rom. 10:10.

The First Article.

Of Creation.

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

What is meant by this? **I believe that God has made me, together with all creatures; –that He has given and still preserves to me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses; also clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, wife and child, cattle and all my goods; –that that He richly and daily provides me with all that I need for this body and life, –protects me against all danger, and guards and keeps 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 I am in duty bound to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. –This is most certainly true.

*In the first article the Christian Church confesses her faith in **God, the Creator.** Therefore Luther has given it the heading: "Of Creation."*

Wise men have ever inquired into the origin of the world and of mankind, but have not found it. The Church only knows, for God in His Word has told her that *He* is the Source of all things. Therefore she freely and gladly confesses:

I believe in God, the Maker of heaven and earth, that is, I know from God's Word that it is *God* who in the beginning made heaven and earth (the visible and

invisible world) out of nothing, by His Word; and am *assured* therefore that He is also the *Lord* of the whole world.—The Church further confesses that God, the Maker of heaven and earth, is

Father Almighty, that is, an almighty Father. She calls Him *Father*, because for Christ's sake His heart is full of love and compassion for us. And she calls Him *almighty* Father, because He has the power to do for His children *all things* to which His fatherly heart constrains Him. Whenever He wills He can even work *miracles* in their behalf.

†134. 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. Heb. 11:3.

*135. O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches. Ps. 104:24.

**136. Whom have I in heaven but *Thee*? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. Ps. 73:25.

†137. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of *Whom* the whole family in heaven and earth is *named*. Eph. 3:14,15.

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

139. But our God is in the heavens: He hath done *whatsoever* He hath pleased. Ps. 115:3.

140. Thou art the God that doest *wonders*. Ps. 77:74.—Read 1 Chr. 30:11, 12; Luke 1:51-54; Ex. 15:1-21.

Since I have through baptism become a child of God, I too may and should join in the confession of the Church. I may apply the first article to myself. As often as I recite it with the Church I will confess:

1. *I believe that it is **God** who made me together with all creatures; for whatever I am and have is from Him and He alone wards off whatever could hurt me and mine.*
2. *I believe that it is nothing but goodness and mercy when He has given me all that I am and have and when He wards off from me and mine whatever could hurt me.*

3. *I know that therefore I am in duty bound to thank and praise, to serve and, obey Him.*

1.

I confess, first, that it is God who has made me, together with all creatures.

1. *I believe (I know from God's Word and am assured) that whatever I am and have is from Him alone.*

a) *I believe that it is **God** who has given me my body and soul.* I indeed have father and mother and was born of them, but God's Word tells me that they were only the instrument of God. By them *He* has given me my body and soul. He gave me my *body* by giving me the wonderful eyes and ears and the whole frame of the other *members*. He gave me my *soul* by quickening my body and endowing it with *reason* and *all my senses*, that is, with all the powers of thought, sensation and will. Thus He has distinguished me from all other creatures on earth and placed me *above* them. So there is nothing in me except it be His free gift. I am a wonderful work of His creative power.

b) *I believe that it is **God** who also preserves to me my body and soul,* that is, causes them to subsist. It is not my own prudence nor the physician's skill, but the *will of God* alone that keeps my body and soul together. It is from Him alone that *to this day* I can see, hear and use my members, as well as that I can to this day think, feel, and will.

**141. The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. Job 33:4.

**142. I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and *wonderfully* made: marvelous are Thy works and that my soul knoweth right well. Ps. 139:14.

*143. God created man in His own image, in the image *of God* created He him. Gen. 1:27.—Read Gen. 1:26-28.

*144. Thou hast granted me life and favor, and Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit. Job 10:12.

c) *I believe that whatever else I have besides body and soul was given me by Him alone.* True, I have not everything that Luther enumerates in the explanation, for here the head of a family in the country speaks to his children, but everything that I have, as clothing and shoes, meat and drink, home, father and mother, sisters and brothers, was given me by *God*. My parents, as well as

I, must indeed work diligently and what we earn we must faithfully save. for the Heavenly Father does not wish any idle and extravagant children; but I *believe* (I know from God's voice and am assured) that with all our working and saving we could never provide our food and clothing unless God added His blessing.

d) *I believe that it is God alone who also richly and daily provides me with all that I need for this body and life; for, being Lord of the world, He gives me rain and sunshine, light and breath, fire and water; yea, He has appointed heaven and earth, air and sea for my service. With these He provides me richly, that is, so that I lack nothing and daily, that is, He never tires, but commences anew every morning.*

†145. God 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. Acts 14:17.

**146. Except the *Lord* build the house, they labor *in vain* that build it. Ps. 127:1.

**147. The eyes of all wait *upon Thee*; and *Thou* givest them their meat in due season. *Thou* openest Thine hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing. Ps. 145:15, 16.

2. *I believe that it is **God**, and not my own reason or strength, who also wards off whatever could hurt me and mine.*

a) *I believe that it is He alone who **protects** me and mine from all danger, that is, surrounds me and mine as with a strong shield so that danger can not hurt us, as He did with the Israelites when the Egyptians pursued them.*

b) *I believe that He alone **guards** me and mine from all evil, that is, so leads me by the hand that I with all that is mine will not run into evil (misfortunes), just as He led away the child Jesus before the servants of Herod arrived.*

c) *I believe He alone **keeps** me and mine from all evil, that is, does not let me and mine perish when we are led into evil. He stands at my side in misfortune and leads me out of it again in His own time, as He did with the children of Israel in the wilderness and with Daniel in the lion's den.—In order thus to guard us, God takes pleasure in using the host of His holy angels, as He did when He saved Peter from prison.*

*148. The Word of the Lord came unto Abram, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am *Thy shield*, and Thy exceeding great reward. Gen. 15:1.

†149. He that dwelleth in the *secret place* of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God: in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers and under His wings shalt thou trust.

Ps. 91:1-4.

†150. 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. Matt. 10:29, 30.

*151. He leadeth me in the paths of *righteousness* for his name's sake.

Ps. 23:3.

**152. Except the *Lord* keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

Ps. 127:1.

**153. 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.

Ps. 23:4.

†154. Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art *mine*. When thou passest through the waters, I will be *with thee*; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy *Savior*.

Is. 43:1-3.

†155. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His *angels* charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Ps. 91:10-12.

*156. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them. Ps. 34:7.

Commit to memory Psalms 91 and 121.

2.

I confess, secondly, that it is nothing but goodness and mercy when He has given me all that I am and have, and when He wards off from me and mine whatever could hurt me.

1. *I believe that it is purely goodness*, that is, I know from God's Word and am assured that it is nothing but *unmerited love*. Whatever God has done and still does for me are only favors of His love.

2. *I believe that it is purely mercy*, that is, I know from God's Word and am assured that it is nothing but holy *compassion* for me. God cannot suffer that I should perish. It grieves His heart. If His heart were not so full of compassion, He would have forsaken us sinful beings long ago. His goodness and mercy is called

fatherly, that is, I believe it to be great as only a *father* can have toward his children. And it is called

divine, that is, I believe it to be great as only *God*, the *almighty* Father can have. When the good of the children is at stake, nothing is impossible or too great for it.

3. *I believe that God has done this and still does it without any merit in me*, that is, without my first having done something for Him, so that He would be obliged to reward or repay me.

without any worthiness in me, that is, without my being worthy of it; for by my transgressions of His commandments I have often provoked and still do provoke Him to anger.

157. It is of the Lord's *mercies* that we are not consumed, because His *compassions* fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy *faithfulness*. Lam. 22:23

†158. The Lord is *merciful*, and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. He will not *always* chide: neither will He keep His anger *forever*. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Ps. 103:8-10.

†159. Can a *woman* forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? yea, they may forget, yet *will I not* forget thee. Is. 49:15.

**160. Who hath *first* given to Him and it shall be *recompensed* unto Him again. Rom. 11:35.

*161. I am *not worthy* of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant. Gen. 32:10.

3.

I confess, thirdly, that for all this I am in duty bound to thank and praise, to serve and obey my God.

It is *God* who, purely out of goodness and mercy, gives me whatever I have and wards off everything that could hurt me. I am therefore daily more and more God's *debtor*. Hence, I am in duty bound:

1. *To thank and praise Him*, that is, I must not proudly ascribe it to my *own* wisdom and strength, nor to the laws of nature that I have what I need, and that everything that could hurt me is being warded off. I must in meekness daily recognize it as the *gift* of God and acknowledge and magnify it before God and the whole world, as Moses and Israel did at the Red Sea. Especially in the morning and evening as well as before and after meat, I must thank and praise God. (Day of thanksgiving, Harvest Festival.)
2. *To serve Him*, that is, I will not now employ His gifts in the service of sin, but will cheerfully *work* with them for my Heavenly Father. I will work for Him at home and in the church and among the poor and suffering, so that my whole life may become a service *to God*, as Hannah offered Samuel to God for service, and as Israel gave tithes of all they had. (The deaconess cause, care of the sick, orphans' homes, especially Foreign, Home and Inner Missions, offerings for institutions of learning and other purposes pleasing to God.)
3. *To obey Him*, that is, I should willingly do His will as He has revealed it to me in the Ten Commandments. Especially should I, according to the first commandment, *trust* Him *never* to leave nor forsake me, if only I remain His child. Faith in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, can always keep my heart courageous and confident. It shall preserve me from pride as well as faint heartedness.

162. Nebuchadnezzar said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of *my* power, and for the honor of my majesty? Dan. 4:30.

*163. O give thanks unto the *Lord*; for He is good: because His mercy endureth forever. Ps. 118:1.

*164. Bless the *Lord*, O my soul, and forget not all *His* benefits. Ps. 103:2.

†165. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world. Jas. 1:27.

**166. But as for me and my house; we will serve the *Lord*. Josh. 24:15.

**167. To *obey* is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams. I Sam. 15:22.

**168. He hath said: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Heb. 13:5.

* 169. The *Lord* is my shepherd; I shall not want. Ps. 23:1.

With the words: "This is most certainly true " I conclude the article, and thereby would solemnly testify:

1. that it is really *God alone* who has made me, for He alone gives me all that I have and wards off everything that could hurt me; **2.** that He does this purely out of goodness and mercy; **3.** that thereby I have surely become His debtor, and therefore must daily thank, praise, serve and obey Him.

The Second Article.

Of 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 is meant by this? **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 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, lives and reigns to all eternity.—This is most certainly true.

In the second article the Christian Church confesses her faith in Jesus Christ, who by the Redemption has become her Lord. Therefore Luther has given it the heading: "Of Redemption."

Many have attempted to make themselves lords of the Church, but the Church knows from God's Word and is assured that *One* only is her Lord and King, namely Jesus Christ. Therefore she freely and gladly confesses: **"I believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord."**

***170. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12.*

†171. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2:9-11.

1. In the second article the Church confesses in the *first place who is her Lord.* It is none other, neither in heaven nor on earth than *Jesus Christ, God's only Son.*

Jesus Christ, that is, the *man* who was born of the Virgin Mary at Bethlehem and at His circumcision received the name Jesus (Helper, Savior), but who also had been promised as Redeemer by the whole *history* of the Old Testament as well as by particular *prophecies* (Christ, that is, the promised Messiah, or Redeemer).

God's only Son, that is, the true *God* who was begotten of the Father from eternity.

2. The church confesses in the second place **by what means Jesus Christ**, God's only Son, *became* and will evermore be *her Lord and King.* He did this by passing through all those experiences which the Church further confesses in the second article:

He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, that is, He began his earthly life without a human father and therefore without sin alone by the power of *God.*

†172. 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*. Luke 1:35.

He was born of the Virgin Mary, that is, he became a true man like other men.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, that is, though He did no sin and was kind to all men, His whole life according to the saving will of God was one continuous suffering. It ended in that great agony in Gethsemane and before the Jewish and Gentile courts. This was when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea.

He was crucified, that is, on Good Friday He allowed them to pass a merciless sentence upon Him, and suffered a most shameful and painful penalty, which was inflicted usually only on slaves.

He died, that is, the end came in death. Between three and four o'clock in the afternoon His soul parted from His body.

He was buried, that is, his friends laid His body in a tomb, just as they would have done with that of any other person.

Thus the way of Jesus Christ led Him from the loftiest height, the bosom of the Father, to the lowest depth (state of humiliation); and that only because He desired to be our Lord and Redeemer.

But just for this reason, and because He was the sinless Son of God, He could not remain in death. From the depth He must triumphantly again ascend on high (state of exaltation). The upward way begin even with the **descent into hell**, for by it He not only entered hades (Acts 2:27-31), but also as victor showed Himself to all *infernal* enemies. (Col. 2:15. 1 Pet. 3:8.)

The third day He rose again from the dead, that is, He came forth from the grave with a glorified body and on earth showed Himself to His own. *By His resurrection He proved to believers that He is the Son of God and the true Redeemer.*

†173. Ye killed the Prince of *life*, whom God hath *raised* from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. Acts 3:15.

†174. If Christ be not raised, your *faith* is vain; ye are yet in your *sins*. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are *perished*.—But now is Christ risen from the dead. 1 Cor. 15:17, 18, 20.

He ascended into heaven, that is, after forty days He ceased to commune visibly with His own and entered into the glory which He had with His Father before His incarnation.

He sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, that is, He lives now to all eternity, and in equal majesty with the Father He rules His redeemed ones as Lord and King. He also daily leads new members into His Church to acknowledge Him as their Lord.

**175. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was *received* up into heaven, and *sat on the right hand of God*. Mark 16:19.—Read Eph.1: 20, 21.

At last Jesus Christ will prove Himself Lord and King *before all the world*, for **at the last day He shall come to judge the quick and the dead**. Those that are alive at His second coming, He will change; the dead, He will raise. He will call both before His judgment seat and fix their eternal destiny. Then the wicked will be filled with fear and with weeping and gnashing of teeth be compelled to go away into everlasting perdition. The righteous, however, will greet Him as their Lord, who brings them at last into His everlasting kingdom.—The Church does not know when her Lord will come again. Therefore she *always* prepares herself with great vigilance, and patiently and longingly reads the signs which announce to her Christ's second coming.

*176. And then shall they see the Son of man *coming* in a cloud with *power* and great *glory*. Luke 21:27.

**177. *Watch* therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. Matt. 25:13.

**178. For we must *all* appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that *every one* may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 2 Cor. 5:10.

†179. 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: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and *He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats*: and He shall set the sheep on His right, but the goats on the left. Matt. 25:31-33.—Read also verses 34-46.

†180. 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. John 14:2,3.

The signs which shall proceed the second coming of Christ are described: Matt. 24:14-31 and Luke 21:25-36; also 2 Thess. 2.

Since by baptism I have become a child of God, I too may and should join in the confession of the Church. I may apply the second article to myself. As often as I join with the church, I will say confessing it:

I believe (I know from God's Word and am assured) **that Jesus Christ is my Lord and King also.**

*181. Thomas answered and said unto Him, My *Lord* and my God.
John 20:28.

With these words I will always declare anew:

1. **Who** *my Lord is;*
2. **By what means** *Jesus Christ became my Lord;*
3. **To what end** *He became my Lord by his sufferings and death.*

I.

In the second article I confess, first, who my Lord is.

I believe (I know from God's Word and am assured) that in Jesus Christ I have none other for my Lord than Him who is:

true God, that is, real God, being of *one* substance with God, the Maker of heaven and earth, for of Him, as *His Father*, He was *begotten from eternity*. He has testified this of Himself, and after Him His apostles also have thus confessed concerning Him. But He is also

true man, that is, real man; for *in time* He was born of the Virgin Mary and has not since laid aside His humanity, but is true man at the right hand of God even to this day.—Accordingly, He is God and man in *one* person and therefore is rightly called the “God-man”. *How* He can be both at the *same* time is beyond my reason, but it is my blessed consolation that my Lord is both *in reality*. He can save me out of all need only because He is true *God*, and only because He is

true *man*, even to this day does He know from experience my great infirmity and has a just *understanding* of all my needs.

*182. 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.

John 3:16.

**183. Verily, verily, I say unto you, *Before Abraham* was, I am. John 8:58.

†184. And now, O Father, *glorify* Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee *before the world* was. John 17:5.

185. He that hath seen *Me* hath seen the *Father*. John 14:9.

†186. And the high-priest said unto Him, I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the *Son of God*. Jesus saith unto him, *thou hast said* (that is, yes, I am what thou hast said).

Matt. 26:63, 64.

*187. And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Matt. 28:20.

*188. All *power* is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Matt. 28:18.

**189. Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of *eternal* life. And we believe and are sure that *Thou* art that Christ, the *Son* of the living God. John 6:68, 69.

†190. And 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. John 1:14

**191. In Him dwelleth *all* the fullness of the *God-head* bodily. Col. 2:9.

**192. For there is *one* God, and *one* mediator between God and men, the *man* Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. 2:5.

*If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 1 John 2:1.

*193. If *God* be for us, who can be against us? Rom. 8:31.

†194. We have not an high-priest which cannot be *touched with the feeling* of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Heb. 4:15.

If henceforth aught should distress me,
Or if any want oppress me,
If my powers dissolve and perish,

Still this truth alone I'll cherish:
I still have a Savior holy
Who is, from His manger lowly
To His grave and to His throne,
Mine, the sinner's, yes mine alone.

2.

I confess, secondly, by what means, Jesus Christ became my Lord and King.

I believe (I know from God's Word and am assured) that He became my Lord only by this, that He 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 sufferings and death.

I was in great need of such a Lord, for without Him I was

a lost creature, that is by my sins I was separated from God, and whoever is separated from God is lost; for God alone is the life and the light of man. I was like *Adam* and *Eve* when the gates of Paradise were closed upon them and they stood without in distress and misery and could no longer find a way of return. I was like the *Prodigal Son*, who by his sin was deprived of his father's house, fell into the greatest misery for the sake of brief pleasure and carried with him the sting of a bad conscience. I was also

a condemned creature, that is, *the wrath of God* rested upon me on account of my sins (Conclusion of the Commandments) and, God being a righteous judge, I was given over to the power of sin, death and the devil. They had become my masters.

**195. Your iniquities have *separated* between you and your God. Is. 59:2.

**196. All we like sheep have *gone astray*; we have turned everyone to his own way. Is. 53:6.

*197. There is *no peace* unto the wicked. Is. 48:22.

**198. We were by nature *the children of wrath*. Eph. 2:3.

**199. *Cursed* be he that *confirmeth* not all the words of this law to do them. Deut. 27:26.

†200. He that committeth sin is of the *devil*. 1 John 3:8.

†201. By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin. Rom. 5:12.

From such misery the God-man Jesus Christ alone could help me, for He alone was a match for sin, death, and the devil. And He has helped me, for I believe that He has

redeemed me, that is, He has freed and loosed me, as one would ransom a slave from bondage;

purchased me, that is, He has earned me as one earns anything by hard labor;

won me, that is, He has fought a hard fight for me and has triumphantly carried me off as the spoils of victory.

He has redeemed, purchased and won me—*from what ?*

From all sins, that is, He has cleared me of all the guilt of my sins, on account of which the wrath and judgment of God rested on me, and has reconciled me with God.—Moreover He has delivered me from *all* my sins, for I believe that not a single sin remains from which Christ my Lord has not redeemed me. In Him I have forgiveness of *all* sins;

from death, that is, He has earned me from death, so that it can no longer hold but must release me;

from the power of the devil, that is, He has won me from Satan in a hard fight, so that Satan has lost his power over me and can no longer force me to sin, but must let me withdraw from his kingdom.

*202. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.
Luke 19:10.

†203. For the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a *ransom* for many. Matt. 20:28.

**204. Christ hath redeemed us from the *curse* of the law, being made a curse for us. Gal. 3:13.

**205. Jesus Christ is the *propitiation* for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:2.

**206. Thou hast made me to *serve* with thy sins, thou hast *wearied* me with thine iniquities. Is. 43:24.

207. Jesus Christ hath abolished *death*, and hath brought *life* and immortality to light through the gospel. 2 Tim. 1:10.

†208. 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.
Gen. 3:15.

**209. For this *purpose* the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the *devil*. 1 John 3:8.

†210. Through death He has *destroyed* him, that had the power of death, that is, the *devil*. Heb. 2:14.

211. Death is swallowed up in victory. O *death*, where is thy sting? O *grave*, where is thy victory? But thanks be to God, which giveth us the *victory* through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15: 54, 55, 57.

From all sins, from death, and from the power of devil Christ has redeemed me—*with what ?*

not with gold or silver, with gold and silver much indeed may be accomplished, but *souls* can never be thus redeemed from the power of sin, death and the devil. This can be accomplished on by the laying down of another's sinless life;

but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent sufferings and death.

Jesus Christ has redeemed me, by substituting Himself for me in unmerited love, laying down *His* life for me, and bearing penalty of my sins, that I might be freed. I call His blood

Holy: because my Savior was neither born in sin, nor did he ever commit sin. I call it

Precious: because it is the blood of the *Son of God* Himself and therefore the dearest and most precious that could have been given for me. I call his sufferings

Innocent: because He was punished not for any guilt of His *own*, but for the guilt of *myself* and of the whole world. He bore it as the true Lamb of God, and in willing obedience to His Heavenly Father, so that it can no longer burden or condemn me.

†212. Ye know that 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 a lamb *without blemish and without spot*. 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19.

†213. Christ hath 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. Gal. 3:13.

*214. The *blood* of Jesus Christ, *God's Son*, cleanseth us from *all* sin. 1 John 1:7.

†215. Surely *He* hath borne our griefs, and carried *our* sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten *of God* and afflicted. But 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.

Is. 53:4, 5.—Read the whole chapter.

†216. God hath made Him to *be sin for us* who knew *no sin*; that we might be made the *righteousness* of God in Him. 2 Cor. 5:21.

This much Christ has done for me in order to redeem me. From it I learn how great and grievous is my sin, and also how infinitely great is the love of my God, who for my sake spared not His own Son, but delivered Him into such their sufferings and death. It cost Jesus Christ much, indeed, but He succeeded. Thus has He redeemed me, and by redemption He became my Lord and King, who alone now has a right to me.

3.

I confess, thirdly, to what end Jesus Christ became my Lord and King.

I believe (I know from God's Word and am assured) *that He became my Lord, in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.*

I was to be His own and live under Him in His kingdom. Jesus Christ had in view a *complete change* by His sufferings and death. Not only was I to be freed from old masters, sin, death and the devil, but I was also to be made *His own*, and to have a right to live in His kingdom. That is a *blessed* change indeed, for there is nothing more blessed than to be Jesus' own and a member of his kingdom.

In this kingdom Christ rules, not as a tyrant, but as a *shepherd*, leading and feeding His lambs. Under His rule I have protection from all the temptations of sin, of a godless world and of the devil, for, being my *almighty Lord*, He is with me always and helps me to overcome them. Here I have life and all sufficiency for my heart, for He refreshes it with *forgiveness of sins* and with peace and joy. But He has His kingdom here upon earth in the Christian Church, where His Word and sacraments are present, and in heaven among all the saints. I must therefore be in the *Church*, the communion of all the godly, if I would partake of all His gifts of grace.

*217. *To this end* Christ both died, and rose, and revived, *that He* might be *Lord* both of the dead and living. Rom. 14:9.

**218. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and *hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son*. Col. 1:13.

†219. Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself *a peculiar people*, zealous of good works. Tit. 2:14.

**220. The Lord is my shepherd, *I shall not want*. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. Ps. 23:1-3.—Read the whole Psalm.

†221. 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. John 10:27, 28. Read Rom. 8:31-39.

But I should also now serve Christ as my Lord and King, that is, I should devote myself wholly to Him with body and soul, and put everything that I am and have at His disposal. I should serve him

in righteousness, that is, I should go to Him daily for righteousness, that is, forgiveness of sins, so that whatever I do for Him may come from a justified heart.

in innocence, that is, I should walk carefully, so that I may not burden myself with new guilt, but live according to His holy example.

in blessedness, that is, in the joyful certainty, that now *peace* has been made between me, a poor sinner, and the Holy God, through Christ, my Lord.

My Lord, moreover, intended that I should live in His kingdom and serve Him in **everlasting** righteousness, innocence and blessedness; for His Kingdom is everlasting. *Even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity*, so with me too death shall not be my end. I also must indeed die, but my Lord will not suffer me to remain in death, but through death will receive me unto Himself in His everlasting kingdom, there to remain forever. There He will truly care for me and like a shepherd lead me; there I also shall truly serve Him in righteousness, innocence and blessedness forever.

222. *Thine* are we, David, and on *thy* side, thou son of Jesse.

1 Chron. 12:18.

†223. For none of us liveth *to himself*, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the *Lord*; and whether we die, we die unto the *Lord*; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the *Lord's*.

Rom. 14:7, 8.

224. *Christ* is made unto us wisdom, and *righteousness*, and sanctification, and redemption. 1 Cor. 1:30.

†225. Let *not sin therefore reign* in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Rom. 6:12.

226. Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should *follow His steps*. 1 Pet. 2:21.

†227. Therefore being justified by faith, we have *peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 5:1.

**228. I am the resurrection, and the life: he that *believeth* in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. John 11:25, 26.

**229. For to me to live is Christ, and to *die* is *gain*. Phil. 1:21.

230. Where *I* am, there shall also my servant be. John 12:26.

With the words: "*This is most certainly true!*" I conclude the article, and thereby solemnly testify that I know and am assured with all my heart:

1. *That Jesus Christ, the Son of God and of Mary, is my only Lord and King;*
2. *That He became such only by redeeming me, by means of His sufferings and death, from sin, death and the devil.*
3. *That He became my Lord by sufferings and death, that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him here as well as in heaven above.*

Jesus, to Thee I live; Jesus, to Thee I die;—
Living or dying, Lord Jesus, I am Thine.
O grant me mercy, love and compassion,
Take me, Lord Jesus, to Thine eternal home!

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 is meant by this ? **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 and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; even 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 and richly forgives me and all believers all our sins,

and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant me and all believers in Christ everlasting life.—This is most certainly true.

In the third article the Christian Church (that is, Christendom) confesses her faith in the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, that is, the Spirit that sanctifies. Therefore Luther has given in this article the heading: “Of Sanctification.”

Christ by His sufferings and death has become a Lord and King, in whose kingdom one can receive everything necessary to salvation. Now, there are many who imagine that by their own reason and strength they can leave the kingdom of Satan and enter the kingdom of Christ. The Christian Church on the contrary, freely and gladly confesses:

I believe in the Holy Ghost, that is, I know from God's Word and am assured that the *Holy Ghost alone* sanctifies me, that is, separates me from Satan's kingdom and brings me to Christ, and that in *His* kingdom I am blessed both here and in heaven above. For this purpose Christ sent Him on Pentecost, and to this end He works even to this day through the Word and sacraments. According to His *essence* He is *God*, even as the Father and the Son: according to His *work* He is the *Sanctifier*.

*I believe in the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the Forgiveness of sins, the Resurrection of the body; and the Life everlasting—*thus the Christian Church continues. With these words she would enumerate everything *whereby* the Holy Ghost sanctifies her. She would confess that in the *past*, the Holy Ghost has gathered and still has on earth a

Church, that is, Christendom. In her He *dwells* and *works* through the Word and sacraments. This church is called

Holy, or a communion of saints, because the Holy Ghost has sanctified her, that is, has brought her to Christ through the Word and sacraments. She is called Christian, because she has one Lord and King only, Jesus Christ.

Forgiveness of sins, the Church adds, and she would thereby make mention of the great treasure by which the Holy Ghost in the *present time* continually sanctifies her.

Resurrection of the body, and life everlasting,—thus she concludes, for she would confess that in the *future* also the Holy Ghost will sanctify her, by leading her through the resurrection of the body into life everlasting, thereby bringing her to Christ forever.

Since by baptism I have become a child of God, I too may and should join in the confession of the Church. I may apply the third article to myself. As often as I confess it with the Church I will say:

I believe that it is the Holy Ghost alone who sanctifies me, that is, who separates me from Satan's kingdom and brings me to Christ here, as well as in heaven above.

In particular, I will confess:

1. *I believe that it is the Holy Ghost who indeed has sanctified me in the **past**, for He alone has led me into the Christian Church, and thus to Christ, and preserves me there;*
2. *I believe that it is the Holy Ghost who still sanctifies me in the **present**, for in the Christian Church He daily bestow upon me the forgiveness of my sins, without which I would again lose Christ, my Lord;*
3. *I believe that it is the Holy Ghost who in the **future** will bring me to Christ forever, for He will raise me from the dead and lead me into life everlasting.*

1.

In the third article I confess, first, that it is the Holy Ghost alone who indeed has sanctified me in the past, for He alone has led me into the Christian Church, and thus to Christ, and preserves me there.

By His sufferings and death, Jesus Christ has become my Lord and King, in order that *I also* might have in His kingdom everything necessary to salvation. All now depends on my coming to Jesus Christ, my Lord and King. But I can come to Him in

no other way than by *faith*. He is present in the Word and sacraments. We must by faith embrace Him there until we may see Him in life everlasting.

But I cannot do the one thing needful. I *know* from God's Word **that I: cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.** I lack

the *reason*. By nature I am *blind* to all things divine and can never know that alone in Christ and in His kingdom I can find what will make me happy in time as well as in eternity. I lack

the *strength*. By nature I am *dead* to all things divine, so that I *could* not believe in Jesus at all, even if I could know Him (original sin).

**231. Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said: *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, and thou shalt be saved and thy house. Acts 16:30, 31.

**232. *No man can come to Me*, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him. John 6:44.

**233. No man *can* say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 12:3.

†234. 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. 1 Cor. 2:14.

†235. We were *dead* in the trespasses and sins. Eph. 2:1.

If therefore the Lord Jesus had not again interfered, His work of redemption would have been in vain. But He *did* interfere. He has also sent the Holy Ghost in my behalf, who has worked in me. Therefore I confess:

I believe that the Holy Ghost, and none other, has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts and sanctified and preserved me in true faith.

He has called me, that is, He has invited me to come forth from the kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of Christ. And this He has done *by the Gospel*, that is, by causing to be brought to me the good news that Christ has overcome Satan, opened the gates of freedom for me and establish a kingdom in which He will give me all things that I need in order to be saved.

**236. God *called* you by our *gospel*, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thess. 2:14.

He has enlightened me, that is, He has given light to my reason *with His gifts*, that is, with knowledge which by His Word He has lighted as a lamp in my soul. This is:

1. *The knowledge* that I am a lost and condemned creature; for I was born in sin and have often transgressed his commandments.

2. *The knowledge* that Jesus Christ has redeemed me from sin, death and the devil, and that in His kingdom He will now give me all things that I need in order to be saved.

****237.** God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath *shined* in our hearts. 2 Cor. 4:6.

He has sanctified me, that is, He has really led me forth out of the kingdom of Satan and has brought me to Jesus Christ, my Lord, even now and here upon the earth. This he did by working in me **true faith**, which is always preceded by contrition.

Contrition is the deep and sincere sorrow of the heart on account of my sin, which the Holy Ghost calls forth by the law. For law is everything that reveals and reproves sin.

Faith is the firm confidence that Jesus Christ has borne all the guilt of my sin and that I find forgiveness for His sake with God. This faith the Holy Ghost calls forth by the Gospel.* For Gospel is everything that offers and tenders grace.

Upon this faith God the Father has *justified* me, that is, He no longer looks upon my sins, but upon the Lord Jesus Christ as the *Redeemer* from sin, and *for Christ's sake, out of pure mercy, He has declared me innocent and acquitted*, yea even righteous and holy.—“*Alone for Christ's sake, by faith*”—this is the chief doctrine of Holy Scripture, hence also of our Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Thus from being a lost and condemned creature, I have become a member of the Kingdom of Christ and a blessed child of God. Now, too, the Holy Ghost makes His dwelling in my heart.

†238. *Godly* sorrow worketh *repentance* to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 2 Cor. 7:10.

* Contrition and faith are called in one word “repentance”. Whenever anyone sincerely repents he is truly “converted”.

†239. But ye are washed, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the spirit of our God. 1 Cor. 6:11.

**240. Father, I have *sinned* against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more *worthy* to be called thy son. Luke 15:21.

Now faith is the substance, etc.—see No. 130

**241. Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that *Thou* art that Christ, the Son of the living God. John 6:68. 69.

†242. To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever *believeth* in Him shall receive remission of sin. Acts 10:43.

**243. Therefore we conclude that a man is *justified* by faith *without* the deeds of the law. Rom. 3:28.

†244. Ye are all the *children of God* by *faith* in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Gal. 3:26, 27.

These benefits,—calling, enlightening and sanctifying,—the Holy Ghost bestowed upon me for the first time in baptism. In that act He brought me to Christ, and for Christ's sake received me as His child. Since then He has continually worked in me through the Christian instruction I received at home, in the school and in the church.—That I *in the past* have been brought to Christ and have become a child of God is the work of the Holy Spirit alone.

He has preserved me in the true faith. If *to this day* I still adhere to Christ and am obedient to His Word, I owe that also to the Holy Spirit. He has continually renewed and strengthened my faith, so that I have not drawn back.

*245. The Lord is *faithful*, who shall *stablish* you, and keep you from evil.
2 Thess. 3:3.

The Holy Ghost has bestowed these benefits not upon me only, but even as He has bestowed them upon me in the past **so He always bestows them upon the whole Christian Church on earth.**

Whenever the Word and sacraments are present on earth, there the Holy Ghost does His work.

He calls, for *at home* and *among the heathens*, by preaching and other instruction in the one case and by the missionaries in the other, He extends the invitation to forsake sin and Satan and to come unto Christ as to the true Lord. Moreover, He

invites *all*, and with the call He gives to *all* the *power* to come unto Christ: for He wills that *all* men should be saved and that *all* from being lost sinners should become children of God. (Parable of the Great Supper).

He gathers, that is, He does not suffer those who have heeded the call to remain apart, but adds them to the company of His disciples, as He did at Pentecost.

He enlightens, that is, He gives light to their reason by working true knowledge of sin and true knowledge of Christ.

He sanctifies, that is, He works contrition and faith in men, and thus leads them away from Satan's kingdom and unto Christ.

He preserves them in the true faith, that is, by the Word and sacraments He continually gives His Church the *power to abide* in Christ, her Lord and King, in spite of all the temptations of the world and the wiles of the devil.

He preserves them also in the “*one*” true faith. I know indeed that the Christian Church in its outward appearance is rent in too many denominations, but I believe, that is, I am sure from God's Word, that the Holy Ghost has in all these denominations a company who are *at one* in the true faith: “Jesus Christ by His sufferings and death has become Lord and King, and alone through faith in Him, God receives us as his children.” This faith is the only ground and foundation of our *Evangelical Lutheran Church*, as can be seen from all her confessions, especially from the Small Catechism. Therefore she is and ought to be and remain *My church*.

**246. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the *power* of God unto salvation to *every one* that believeth. Rom. 1:16.

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

*248. God will have *all* men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2:4.

**249. Being *confident* of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will *perform it until* the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. 1:6.

**250. *Fear not*, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke 12:32.

*251. Upon this rock I will build my church; and *the gates of hell* shall *not prevail* against it. Matt. 16:18.—Read Psalm 46.

†252. 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. John 8:31, 32.

2.

In the third article I confess in the second place that it is the Holy Ghost alone who still sanctifies me in the present time; for I believe that in the Christian Church He daily and richly forgives me all my sins.

When the Holy Ghost brought me to Christ, He at the same time brought me into the Christian Church, that is, Christendom, or the communion of the faithful. The church is the Kingdom of Christ as that kingdom appears here upon earth.

In the Christian Church alone the Holy Ghost continues to work in me. She is His dwelling place and workshop here upon earth. She alone has and administers the means of grace, instituted by Christ. Apart from her there is no salvation for me.

In the Christian Church the Holy Ghost daily forgives me all my sins. I *need* daily forgiveness, for in the mirror of the Ten Commandments I perceive that I sin much *every day*. But sin always separates me again from my God, and, unless I receive forgiveness for it, I shall again lose Him. So the Holy Ghost by the word of absolution, by the Sacrament of the Altar and by many comforting passages from the Gospel daily grants me forgiveness, so that I remain in the state of grace before God.

He grants me forgiveness of *all* sins, even of the greatest and most grievous (David, Peter, the thief on the cross), and that *richly and daily*, for He would provide for my soul even as God the Creator does for my body. He forgives me and all *believers*; for without faith in Jesus Christ, there is no forgiveness.—Therefore I owe it to the Holy Ghost alone that *to the present day* and in spite of my daily sins, I am still with Christ.

**253. Who can understand his errors? cleanse Thou me from *secret* faults. Ps. 19:12.

**254. Though your sins be as *scarlet*, they shall be as *white as snow*; though they be red like *crimson*, they shall be as *wool*. Is. 1:18.

†255. Let Israel hope in the *Lord*: for with the *Lord* there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from *all* his iniquities. Ps. 130:7, 8.

3.

In the third article I confess in the third place that it is the Holy Ghost alone who in the future will sanctify me; for I believe that at the last day the Holy

Ghost will raise up me and all the dead, and will lead me into life everlasting. Then I shall forever be with Christ.

He will raise me up, that is, he will cause my body to come forth from the grave and will reunite it with the soul which until then will have been with Christ.—The resurrection is the work of Christ, but He performs it through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit will glorify my body, that is, cleanse it from sin and weakness *for all time* and make it like unto the glorified body of Christ. The Holy Spirit will do the same *for all the other dead* who have died in faith in Christ

He will grant me and all believers in Christ everlasting life. Through faith in Christ I indeed have eternal life even here on earth, but I am to be with Christ in *eternity* also and to see Him face to face.

I shall have everlasting life *in Christ*, for He is and will ever be the centre. Together with me, *all believers* will have it. That will be a great and blessed host. But only they will belong to it who have suffered themselves to be brought to faith by the Holy Ghost here on earth; the others will indeed be raised up, but they will depart into eternal death. *Faith in Jesus Christ, my Lord*, is and ever will be the one thing needful.

†256. *Marvel not* at this; for the hour is coming, in 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. John 5:28, 29.

†257. It is sown in *corruption*; it is raised in *incorruption*: it is sown in *dishonor*; it is raised in *glory*: it is sown in *weakness*; it is raised in *power*: it is sown a *natural* body; it is raised a spiritual body. 1 Cor. 15:42-44.

258. Beloved, 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. 1 John 3:2.

†259. Eye hath *not* seen, *nor* ear heard, *neither* have entered into the heart of man, *the things* which God prepared *for them* that love Him. 1 Cor. 2:9.

260. And so shall we ever be *with the Lord*. 1 Thess. 4:17.

**261. He that believeth on the Son is not condemned. John 3:18.

This article also, I conclude with the words: "*This is most certainly true!*" With these words I would solemnly testify that my whole Christian life in *no* wise depends

upon my own reason or strength, but is the gracious work of the Holy Ghost alone. *To Him alone I owe it that in the past I have come to Christ, that I am still with Christ, and that I shall truly be with Him in life everlasting and be able to see him forevermore.*

We have come to the end of the Creed. By this confession the Christian Church is distinguished from all heathens, Mohammedans and Jews. We Christians believe that *God* is the *Creator*, who is the source of everything we have and who wards off whatever could hurt us. We believe that *Jesus Christ*, God's only Son, by His sufferings and death has become *our Lord* and King, in whose kingdom we are to be blessed. We believe that the *Holy Ghost* is the true *Sanctifier*, who alone leads us into the kingdom of Christ both here and in heaven. We believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, into whose names we have been baptized. There are *three* divine Persons, and yet but *one* divine essence; therefore the Church calls Him the *Triune* God. *How* there can be three Persons in the one essence, I know not; but *that so it is*, is my consolation. And when I shall first behold the Triune One in eternity, I shall also be able to understand this mystery. Until that time I will thank my God, that He has graciously revealed Himself to me, as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.

Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord. Deut. 6:4.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. 2 Cor. 13:14.

—Compare also the baptismal commission on pages 101 and 102.

PART 3

The Lord's Prayer.

The Third Part shows us how we, as children of God, may and should pray.

It does this by the example of the Lord's Prayer, the most precious and the noblest of all prayers, which Christ Himself taught His disciples (Matt. 6:9-13. Luke 11:2-4). Since Christ Himself has also taught us to pray in these words, this Part bears the heading: "The Lord's Prayer." It is divided into three parts: 1. The introduction; 2. The seven petitions; 3. The conclusion.

*262. God is a *Spirit*: and they that worship Him must worship Him in *spirit* and in *truth*. John 4:24.

**263. 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. 19:14.

†264. But when ye pray, use not *vain repetitions*, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their *much* speaking. Matt. 6:7.

1. The Introduction.

Our Father who art in heaven.

What is meant by this? **God would hereby tenderly invite us to believe that He is truly our Father and we are truly His children, so that we may ask Him with all cheerfulness and confidence, as dear children ask of their dear father.**

When the Holy Ghost has brought us to Christ by faith, God has become our Father and we His children. Therefore the Lord Jesus also teaches us that we may address God *by the name of Father*, saying, "Our *Father* who art in heaven." He might have taught us to address Him with these words: "Almighty and righteous God," but He has chosen just these words: "Our Father who art in heaven," because He would not frighten, but *tenderly invite* us by the address. He would thereby tenderly invite us firmly to *believe* that God in heaven, the Exalted and Pure One, is *our Father* and we are His children, notwithstanding our lowliness and sin. He would thereby tenderly invite us to believe particularly

That He is truly our Father, that is really our Father, who can and will do much more for us than our earthly fathers, for He is in heaven, that is, He is Almighty; **that we are truly**, that is, really **His children**, for whose good, nothing, in the estimation of His fatherly heart, is too much. Again, God would tenderly invite us to such belief

so that we may ask Him with all cheerfulness and confidence, as dear children ask of their dear father. If we do not firmly believe that God is our *Father* and we are His *children*, we will not come to God. We shall be in dread of God, as Israel was at Mt. Sinai, and shall therefore perish in our need. But, if we are assured that God is truly our *Father* and we are truly His *children*, we will run to *Him* in our need as dear children to their dear father. We will come to Him

with all cheerfulness, that is, without fear and dread;

with all confidence, that is, with the certainty that He can and will help us in every need.

Ye are all the children, etc.—see No. 2.

For this cause I bow my knee, etc.—see No. 137.

†265. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to *fear*; but ye have received the Spirit of *adoption*, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father*. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

Rom. 8:15, 16.

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

**267. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in My name*, He will give it you. John 16:23.

**268. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your *joy* may be full. John 16:24.

269. If ye then, being *evil*, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *how much more* shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask Him? Matt. 7:11.

270. 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. Jas. 1:6, 7.

2. The Seven Petitions.

The First Petition.

Hallowed by Thy name.

What is meant by this? **The name of God is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be hallowed also among us.**

How is this done? **When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and we as the children of God lead holy lives in accordance with it; this grant us, dear Father in heaven!**

But he that teaches and lives otherwise than the Word of God teaches, profanes the name of God among us; from this preserve us, Heavenly Father!

In the first petition we ask that the name of our Heavenly Father may be hallowed.

The name of God *is* holy. Therefore we are not first to *make* it holy, any more than we must first give to the sun its brightness and light. But since the name of God is so exalted and holy, we should always in our speech and actions *deem* it exalted and holy. We deem the name of God exalted and holy when we

1. teach the Word of God in its truth and purity, that is, do not mix it with error and sin as the heretics and profane persons do, but teach it just as it reads. Only by the *pure* teaching of the divine Word do we rightly know God. And only when we rightly know Him, will we place His name *above* all other names and extol and praise it more than them;

2. lead holy lives in accordance with it, that is, in all our actions comply only with the Word of God as the only sufficient rule, just as Christ always complied with the will of His Father. Only when we in all things live in accordance with the Word of God do we reflect honor upon the name of our Heavenly Father and help that others also may deem it holy and exalted.

But since our sinful heart is so prone to **profane** the name of God, that is, to teach and live *otherwise* than the Word of God teaches, therefore, we may and should ask our Heavenly Father for help, saying: "Hallowed be Thy name." We would thereby say:

1. *“Dear Heavenly Father, grant that we may always teach Thy Word in its truth and purity, and live holy lives in accordance with it.*
2. *Dear Heavenly Father, preserve us from ever teaching and living otherwise than as Thy Word prescribes.”*

If ye continue in My Word, etc.—see No. 252.

**271. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your *good* works, and *glorify* your *Father* which is in heaven. Matt. 5:16.

The Second Petition.

Thy kingdom come.

What is meant by this? **The kingdom of God comes indeed of itself, without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may come also to us.**

How is this done? **When our Heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His Holy Word and live godly, here in time, and in heaven forever.**

*In the second petition we ask for the coming of the **kingdom** of God.*

God has a kingdom, but it differs greatly from the kingdoms of earthly kings and princes. Only promised and prefigured in the Old Testament, it has been established in the New Testament by the Lord Christ, who has often described it (especially in the parables). It is the *blessed state* wherein we are redeemed from sin, death and the devil, *have Christ as Lord and King* and under His rule find protection against all enemies and life and full sufficiency for the heart.

In the Christian Church we have the *beginning* of this kingdom; its *consummation* Christ will bring about by His second coming. We become *members* of it by faith. Wherever therefore the Holy Ghost works faith in the hearts of men, and leads them by faith to Christ (compare the Third Article), there the kingdom of God comes in its *earthly* form; and whenever men *remain* in the faith unto the end and *prove* their faith by a godly life, the kingdom of God comes to them at last in its *heavenly* glory also.

That the kingdom of God shall come is certain; it comes *of itself, without our prayer*. For Christ lives and reigns just in order that He, through the Holy Spirit, may gather a congregation from all nations, and in His own time lead it into the glory of everlasting life. But it is not so certain that the kingdom of God will come *to us* also. It

will come to us only when the Heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, and through Him it comes only thus:

1. **That by God's grace we now believe His Holy Word;**
2. **that by God's grace we now live godly,*** that is, according to God's will, and that not only here in time, but also in heaven forever.

But since our old sinful heart always resists the Holy Spirit and wills not that faith and godly life be wrought in us, we call upon our Heavenly Father for help, praying: "Thy kingdom come." We would thereby say: *"Dear Heavenly Father, grant that true faith and a godly life be indeed wrought in us by Thy Holy Spirit, so that we here and hereafter may be with Thee in Thy Kingdom."*

**272. My kingdom is *not of this world*. John 18:36.

†273. The kingdom of God is *righteousness* and peace, and joy in the *Holy Ghost*. Rom. 14:17.

*274. Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief. Mark 9:24.

Not everyone that saith, etc.—see No. 35.

The Third Petition.

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

What is meant by this? **The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done also among us.**

How is this done? **When God defeats and hinders every evil counsel and purpose, 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 own flesh;**

but strengthens and keeps us steadfast in His Word and in faith unto our end. This is His gracious and good will.

In the third petition we ask that the will of God may be done, that is, prevail and obtain the victory.

*Living according to God's will requires, among other things, that we do *mission work*. The kingdom of God here on earth having come to *us*, we must do our share to have it come by the Word and sacraments to *all* who as yet do not have it.

And in particular that it may prevail here on earth just as it always does in heaven; for there the angels always gladly yield their will to the will of God.

The will of *God* concerning men is, that His name may be hallowed among them and that His kingdom may come to them. It is

a good will, for it has in view the honor of God as well as what is best for us, our salvation here and hereafter;

a gracious will, for God has conceived it out of unmerited love to us men.

To this good and gracious will of God there is opposed an *evil counsel* and *purpose*, which wills the opposite of that which God wills, to-wit, that men should *not* hallow the name of God *nor* have part in His kingdom. It is the counsel and purpose of **the devil**, who is indeed the real author of it. From the beginning the devil has been the enemy of God and will be to the end. The life of Christ was a constant battle with him. And now, since he has been conquered by the cross and can no more harm the *person* of Christ, he rages “with deep guile and great might” at least against Christ’s *congregation*. It sorely vexes him to see that it would fain hallow God’s name and have part in God’s kingdom;

the world, that is, the will of men fallen away from God, who seek the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, rather than to hallow God’s name and to have part in His kingdom. This godless world is in the service of Satan. By means of it he wars against all who desire to belong to the kingdom of God;

the flesh, that is, the will of our old, sinful heart, which even with Christians is still present side by side with the new life and is in secret accord with the will of the world and of the devil.

The good and gracious will of God and the evil purpose of the devil, the world and the flesh are in constant warfare until the last day. But in this contest the will of *God* shall undoubtedly be done, that is, prevail and obtain the victory over the evil purpose. In the end there will be a congregation which will hallow the name of God and through faith in Christ be saved in His kingdom. This shall come to pass *whether we pray for it or not*.

But since Satan, the world and the flesh are so active, it may easily be, that we resist the will of God, so that we at least do not hallow His name, nor have part in His blessed kingdom. Therefore we add the third petition to the second, saying, “Thy will be done.” We would thereby say: “*Dear Heavenly Father, though the devil, the world and our own flesh would not let us hallow Thy name nor let Thy kingdom come to us, nevertheless grant that Thy good and gracious will may prevail also among us:*”

1. *By defeating the evil purpose of the devil, the world and our own flesh, and by hindering their counsel, so that they may not prevail against us;*
2. *by strengthening us and keeping us steadfast unto our end in Thy Word and in faith.”*

He must **strengthen** us, for we are too weak to offer resistance to the evil counsel of the devil, the world and our own flesh.

He must keep us steadfast **in His Word**, because in the *Word* alone He has told us His will, to which we must submit as Christ did in Gethsemane, and it is just from the *Word* that Satan would tear us away.

He must keep us steadfast **in faith**, because the *Word* itself will avail us nothing, unless we embrace it in faith.

He must keep us steadfast in His *Word* and in faith **unto the end**, because the evil counsel of the devil, the world and our flesh aims to draw us away from the *Word* and true faith until our dying day.—God will also hear our prayer. It is just His good and gracious will to keep us steadfast unto our end, and to bring us to that place where we shall evermore hallow His name and be saved in His kingdom to all eternity.

God will have all men, etc.—see No. 248.

275. Those by the way-side are they that hear; then cometh the *devil*, and taketh away the *Word* out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. Luke 8:12.

†276. The whole word lieth in *wickedness* (that is, under the power of Satan). 1 John 5:19.

†277. Be not conformed to this *world*: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect *will of God*. Rom. 12:2.

The carnal mind is enmity, etc.—see No. 121.

**278. The Lord is *faithful*, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. 2 Thess. 3:3.

**279. The Lord Jesus Christ shall also *confirm* you unto the end. 1 Cor. 1:8.

†280. Abba, Father, *all things* are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me: nevertheless not what *I* will, but what *Thou* wilt. Mark 14:36.

**281. Teach me to do Thy will; for *Thou* art my God: Thy spirit is good, lead me unto the land of uprightness: Ps. 143:10.

The Fourth Petition.

Give us this day our daily bread.

What is meant by this? **God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer even to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to acknowledge and receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.**

What is meant by daily bread? **All that belongs to the wants and support of the body, such as meat, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, cattle, money, goods,—a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, order, honor, good friends, trusty neighbors and the like.**

*In the fourth petition we every day ask our Heavenly Father to give us our **daily bread.***

God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer, for He has pity on *all* His creatures; yea, He give it even to those whose wickedness is open. Nevertheless we pray again and yet again: “Give us this day our daily bread,” for we know that we do not owe our daily bread to our own labor and efforts, but alone to the mercy of God.

But since, nevertheless, we are so prone to ascribe everything to ourselves and so reluctant to thank anyone for it, we include in the petition: “Give us this day our daily bread,” this prayer: “*Dear Heavenly Father,*

1. *grant that we may always acknowledge our daily bread as an unmerited gift of Thy fatherly love;*
2. *grant also that we may never receive it without due thankfulness toward Thee.”*

However, we must consider not only meat and drink as a precious gift of God for which we must daily return thanks, but also all that belongs to the wants and support of the body.—Special forms of returning thanks are found in the Morning, Evening, and Table Prayers (see Appendix to Catechism).

****282.** The *Father* which is in heaven maketh His sun to rise on the *evil* and on the *good*, and sendeth rain on the *just* and *unjust*. Matt. 5:45.

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, etc.—see No. 147.

†283. But *godliness* with *contentment* is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. 1 Tim. 6:6-8.

The Fifth Petition.

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

What is meant by this? **We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor, on account of them, deny our prayer; for we are not worthy of anything we ask, neither have we deserved it; but that He would grant us all through grace; for we sin much every day and deserve nothing but punishment.**

And we on our part will heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us.

In the fifth petition we ask God for forgiveness of our trespasses and at the same time promise that we will forgive our neighbor.

In the first four petitions we have prayed for many and great things. But are we really *worthy* or have we even *deserved*, that our Heavenly Father should give us what we ask for? If we are humble and sincere children of God, we will acknowledge:

1. We are not *worthy* of anything for which we ask;
2. much less have we *deserved* it;
3. we sin much every day, and so amass a heavy *debt* toward God, which we can never repay;
4. yea, on account of this debt, we deserve that God should *deny* our prayer and send us nothing but *punishment*.

Whenever we consider this we will suffer great distress. The thought of our great debt will take away all our *courage* to pray. This the Lord Christ knew. Therefore, in anticipation, He has taught us this petition:

“Forgive us our trespasses.” Joyfully, then, we will thus pray, thereby saying:

1. *“Dear Heavenly Father, look not upon our many and grievous sins, for if Thou but look upon them, Thou must deny our prayer on account of them.*
2. *Dear Heavenly Father, rather be Thou merciful unto us and grant us through grace all that we ask of Thee.”*

In the fifth petition we add the words: “As we forgive those who trespass against us.” This is a *promise*. In *thankfulness* that God has forgiven the sins which we have committed against Him, we promise that we *on our part* surely will, 1. heartily forgive all who have sinned *against us*, and 2. prove it by readily doing good wherever we can. Therefore, only he can truly pray the fifth petition, who has a *humble* heart, that

acknowledges its great debt of sin against God; a *believing* heart, that relies on God's grace; a *forgiving* heart, that readily forgives its neighbor. (Parable of the unmerciful servant.)

I am not *worthy* of the least, etc.—see No. 161.

†284. 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. Luke 17:10.

*285. Who can understand his errors? Ps. 19:12.

*286. If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, *who* shall stand? Ps. 130:3.

**287. We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies. Dan. 9:18.

†288. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly *Father* will also forgive you: But if ye forgive *not* men their trespasses, *neither* will your *Father* forgive your trespasses. Matt. 6:14, 15.

†289. Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, *how oft* shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto Him, I say not unto Thee, Until seven times: but, Until *seventy times seven*. Matt. 18:21, 22.

**290. Therefore 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.

Rom. 12:20.

The Sixth Petition.

And lead us not into temptation

What is meant by this? **God indeed tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, that the devil, the world and our flesh may not deceive us, nor lead us into misbelief, despair and other shameful sin and vice; and, though we be thus tempted, that we may still in the end overcome and hold the victory.**

*In the sixth petition we ask God not to lead us into **temptation**.*

In the fifth petition we have looked into the *past* and upon our old trespasses which can take away all our courage to pray. In the sixth petition we look into the

future. The future is full of *perils* for our Christian faith and life. In it God, who orders *all* the ways of our life, can easily

lead us into temptation, that is, lead us into such circumstances of life wherein we may be drawn away and enticed to evil and to new sins. Thus the Spirit of God led Christ into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. (Matt. 4:1)

As children of God we most surely know that it is not *God* who in such circumstances

tempts us, that is, draws us away and entices us to evil, else He would not be our Father, but our enemy. No: *God* tempts no one, that is, draws no one away and entices him to evil. He only causes the conditions and situations of our life, in which we are tempted, that is drawn away and enticed to evil. And He causes them only *in order* that, in spite of all the temptations to evil, we may freely and wholly decide *against* sin and *in favor* of God alone, as Christ did, and Abraham and Job.

It is rather the **devil**, the **world** and our **own flesh** which tempt us, that is, draw us away and entice us to evil. They make use of those circumstances of our life, into which God leads us (with one these are good days, with another, evil days) to carry out their *evil* purposes in us.

How do they do this?

1. *They deceive us*, that is, they turn us away from the true *belief*, that obedience to God's Word is the only way to our salvation, and by their lies lead us into the *misbelief*, that is, *wrong* belief, that *sin* only can make us truly happy, as Satan did with Eve.
2. *They seduce us*, that is, they turn us away from the way of godliness and lead us in the way of ungodliness, as Satan did Eve. This wrong way ends in *despair*, that is, we come to believe that God no longer can or will help us, and thus we may indeed turn to suicide, as Judas did, or without shame live *in other shameful sin and vice*, not regarding God nor man. Then has Satan by the temptation gained his end; for his greatest delight is to have slaves of sin and vice.

And now, since we know that Satan, the world and the flesh continually lie in wait to tempt us, that is, to draw us away and entice us to evil, and since we know how weak and easily tempted we are, we therefore in our need call: "*Lead us not into temptation;*" thereby saying:

1. “Dear Heavenly Father, **guard** Thou us in those situations of life, wherein we are enticed to evil; lead us not into them, so that Satan, the world and the flesh may not deceive nor seduce us.

2. But, O Heavenly Father, if in Thy wisdom Thou nevertheless lead us into them, so that we must be thus tempted by Satan, the world and the flesh, then **keep** us, that we may overcome in the battle, and, like Christ, gain the victory.”

If we would pray the sixth petition, then, of course, we must not thoughtlessly run into those situations wherein our spiritual life is endangered, but must always be sober, watch and pray.

Then cometh the devil, etc.—see No. 275.

**291. Woe to *that* man by whom the offence cometh (that is, by whom the godly are tempted to evil). Matt. 18:7.

†292. Let *no man* say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God can not be tempted with *evil*, neither tempteth He *any man*: but *every man* is tempted when he is drawn away of this *own lust*, and enticed.

Jas. 1:13, 14.

*293. 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. 1 Cor. 10:13.

*294. *Watch* and *pray*, that ye enter not into temptation. Matt. 26:41.

*295. Be *sober*, be *vigilant*; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking who he may *devour*: whom *resist* steadfast in the faith. 1 Pet. 5:8, 9.

†296. Finally, my brethren, be *strong* in the Lord, and in the power of His might: Put on the whole *armor* of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Eph. 6:10, 11.—Read Eph. 6:10-18.

**297. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the *whole world*, and lose his own *soul*? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Matt. 16:26.

**298. Let him that thinketh he *standeth* take heed lest he *fall*.

1 Cor. 10:12.

The Seventh Petition.

But deliver us from evil.

What is meant by this? **We pray in this petition, as the sum of all, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from all manner of evil—in body and soul, property and honor—and at last, when the hour of death shall come, grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this vale of sorrow to Himself in heaven.**

In the seventh petition we ask that God would deliver us from evil.

We here include all petitions, as we often do in arithmetic with a number of figures, in one *sum*.

In the sixth petition we call upon God not to lead us in the *future* into such situations of life as that we might therein be drawn away and enticed to sin. But the *present time* also is full of such situations, for it is full of **evil**, that is, full of the *consequences of sin*. There are the evils in *body*, as sickness; evils in the *soul*, as grief of heart; in *property*, as impoverishment, or other losses; in *honor*, as when we are slandered or misjudged. Though there are many joys on earth, yet, by reason of sin, the world is full of evils also, so that Luther calls it a *vale of sorrow*.

Such evils work in us much misery and weigh us down like a heavy burden. And as long as they are present, Satan, the world and the flesh ever find opportunities to draw us away and entice us to evil. Therefore we not only ask: “Lead us in the future not *into* temptation,” but also: “Deliver us, that is, lead us *out* of the evil into which we have come even now on account of our sins.” With these words we would ask two things:

1. “*Dear Heavenly Father, deliver us from evil here and now in time* by relieving us from it, or by letting us know the salutary intentions Thou has in view. Teach us to regard and feel it no longer as an evil, but rather as a salutary *cross*, by which Thou wouldest fit us for Thy heavenly kingdom.
2. *Dear Heavenly Father, deliver us wholly at last from this vale of sorrow*, by granting us a *blessed* end and graciously taking us to Thyself in heaven, where there will be no more evil, no more temptation, but rather the glorious sum of all those things for which we pray in the Lord’s Prayer.”

†299. 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*. Ps. 90:10.

**300. We must through much *tribulation* enter into the kingdom of God. Acts 14:22.

**301. Whom the Lord *loveth* He *chasteneth*. Heb. 12:6.

†302. Blessed be the Lord, who *daily* loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our *salvation*. He that is our God is the God of *salvation*; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from *death*: Ps. 68:19, 20.

**303. In the multitude of *my thoughts within me* Thy *comforts* delight my soul. Ps. 94:19.

†304. Now no chastening *for the present* seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the *peaceable fruit* of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Heb. 12:11.

†305. For our *light* affliction which is but *for a moment*, worketh for us a *far* more *exceeding* and *eternal weight* of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are *not seen*: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

†306. For I reckon that the sufferings of *this present* time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Rom. 8:18.

**307. 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. 2 Tim. 4:18.

*308. *Blessed* are the dead which die in the *Lord*. Rev. 14:13.

**309. *Blessed* is the man that *endureth* temptation: for when he is *tried*, he shall receive the *crown of life*, which the Lord hat promised to them that love Him. Jas. 1:12.

†310. They that sow in *tears* shall reap in *joy*. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Ps. 126:5, 6.

†311. 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. Rev. 21:4.

3. The Conclusion.

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

What is mean by Amen? **That I should be sure that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen, that is, yea, yea; it shall be so.**

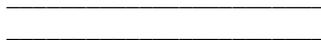
With the words: “For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever” the Christian Church from ancient times has concluded the Lord’s Prayer. With this doxology she would declare her *reason* for coming with her petitions to the Heavenly Father.

We come to *Him* just for the reason that the kingdom and the power and the glory are *His*, and that therefore He is *able* to hear our prayers. But we are *sure*, also, that our petitions are acceptable to Him and that He *will* hear them. Therefore we add “Amen;” for we would thereby say: *We are sure*

1. *that these petitions are acceptable to God, for He has **commanded** us so to pray;*
2. *that our petitions are heard by Him, for He has **promised** to hear us, and His Word is true; He lieth not.*

*312. The Word of the *Lord* is right; and all His works are done in truth:

Ps. 33:4.



Part 4

The Sacrament of Baptism.

The Fourth Part explains that sacred act which was performed upon me in my infancy and by which I was made a child of God, namely Holy Baptism. It bears the heading: "The Sacrament of Baptism;" for sacrament means sacred act, or, to be more exact: A sacred act instituted by Christ, by which in virtue of the divine Word, by means of a visible earthly element, an invisible heavenly gift is granted to us.

The Fourth Part is divided into four sections, each consisting of a question, an answer and a proof- passage from Holy Scripture.

First.

What is baptism? **Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command, and connected with God's Word.**

What is that Word of God? **That which 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."**

The first section of the Fourth Part tells me what baptism is according to its outward form. It is

water, simple, common water. Whether we use river or well water, whether much or little, is of no consequence, but *water* must be used. Without water, there is no baptism. But baptism is not *simply* common water, it is the water

comprehended in God's command, that is, that water that is used only because God has commanded it. If God had not expressly commanded *this* use of the water, there would be in baptism nothing but common water. The command of God, however, distinguishes the water of baptism from *all other waters* and makes a *peculiar, holy* water of it. The baptism is also the water

connected with God's Word, that is, that water *in which* and *with which* the Word of God is each time present. So not only is the water of baptism used because the Lord Jesus has once commanded it, but also it is never used, unless the Word of God be *at the same time* connected with it.

The Word of God which is always used at baptism reads: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." And the command, by which we Christians are bound, *once for all*, to the water of baptism, is recorded in the last chapter of Matthew and reads: "Go ye and teach all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," or, more correctly, according to the original Greek: *Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.*" (Revised version.) This is Christ's great missionary command given to His disciples on earth, and the baptismal commission is contained therein. All nations are to be made disciples of Jesus by *baptizing* and teaching.

Baptize: The Greek word, from which our English baptize is derived, signified, at the time of the apostles, all purifications, whether by pouring or by immersing. (Ecclesiastes 34:30. Mark 7:4. Luke 11:38. Heb. 9:10.) It is therefore *wrong*, when Baptists insist upon immersion and say: No immersion, no baptism.

Baptize into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, that is, ingraft in the communion of the Triune God, implant into the Triune God, as a tree is planted into the soil, so that one rests in God.

All nations are to be made disciples of Christ by baptizing and teaching. In "all nations" *children* also are included.

Moreover, the Lord says, "*Baptizing* them and teaching them." He mentions baptizing *before* teaching, hence it is not necessary that teaching *precede* baptism, as Baptists say. Teaching, however, must *necessarily* follow baptizing, and therefore the Lutheran Church lays such great stress upon the instruction and *Christian training* of baptized children, and permits no one, *unless* thus instructed, to partake of the Lord's Supper.—Baptism was to be *administered* by the apostles. At the present time their successors in the ministry, the called pastors and missionaries, administer baptism. In case of extreme *necessity*, any Christian who has been baptized and instructed may administer it, but such *lay-baptism* ought to be confirmed by the church.

Secondly.

What *benefits* does baptism confirm? **It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe what the words and promises of God declare.**

Which are those words and promises of God? **Those which 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.”**

*The second section of the Fourth Part tells me what **benefits** baptism confers.* Since it ingrafts into communion with the triune God, baptism is the entrance to *all* Heavenly gifts. All that Christ, my Lord, has purchased for us, baptism bestows upon me as my own.

1. It works forgiveness of sins, that is, baptism imparts to each one individually the forgiveness which Christ has purchased, so that *each individual* may say with certainty: “The forgiveness concerns *me* too. For Christ’s sake, God no more looks upon *my* sins. *I am* in the state of grace.”

Moreover, baptism works forgiveness of *all* sins. It imparts forgiveness not only of *Original Sin*, but all *subsequent* sins during our *whole* life. For at baptism the Heavenly Father extends His opened arms towards us and *ever after* keeps them open for us, so that after every sin we may return to them in contrition and faith and always be re-assured of forgiveness.

2. It delivers from death and the devil, that is, by baptism Christ imparts to *each one individually* the deliverance from death and the devil which He has purchased, so that each individual may say with assurance: “Death and the devil no more can harm me. For me death has become the entrance into everlasting life. And, though the devil can still tempt me, I have been translated into the kingdom of Christ and belong to my Lord and Savior. He will give me strength to overcome the devil.”

3. It gives everlasting salvation, for where there is forgiveness of sins and deliverance from death and the devil, there is also salvation. Salvation, then, begins with baptism and finds its consummation only in eternity.

But baptism confers all these gifts and benefits only on **all who believe**, that is, whose hearts have been opened to these gifts and benefits and who lay hold on them.

That believers really receive in baptism forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death and the devil, and everlasting salvation, is clearly declared by the

words and promises of God which 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."

**313. 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. Acts 2:38.

**314. Who hath *delivered us from the power* of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Col. 1:13, 14.

**315. For ye are all *the children of God* by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ *have put on Christ*. Gal. 3:26, 27.

**316. According to His mercy He *saved us*, by the washing of regeneration. Tit. 3:5

Note: The *Baptists* reject Infant Baptism. They say that children cannot believe, and without faith baptism is of no avail. But remember: Children, it is true, cannot believe by their own reason or strength anymore than adults can, for they also are dead in sin (original sin). The Holy Ghost alone can bestow faith. In the word of baptism, however, the Holy Ghost is present. He opens the child's heart, so He can put His gifts into it. These the child keeps in its own way, and in the course of Christian training it embraces them with ever increasing consciousness and conviction. *Even as those children* (Mark 10:16) *were able to receive the blessing of the Lord Jesus, so also can children receive the blessing of baptism*. Hence they **may** be baptized.

Moreover, they also should be baptized; for

1. *All nations* are to be baptized, and these include children too.
2. In the time of the apostles *whole households* were baptized (Acts 16:15 and 33), and again these include children.
3. In Eph. 6:1 the apostle admonishes *children*, just as he does the other members of the Christian congregation. A person was received into the Christian congregation by baptism, hence, the children in those congregations had been baptized. (During the following centuries it was the rule in Christian houses to baptize infants. In the third century it was called an *apostolic* usage, and the only question was as to whether it was proper to put off baptism till the eighth day or to administer it earlier.)

4. Baptism is the New Testament antitype of circumcision (Col. 2:11, 12), and that took place on the eighth day.
5. Baptism is the entrance to all heavenly gifts (Acts 2:38. Gal. 3:27. Tit. 3:5. John 3:5, 6). But children also are to partake of the heavenly kingdom; yea, the Lord Christ is even displeased with those who would forbid them. (Mark 10:13, 14.)

Hence, it is the *duty* of Christian parents to present their children to the Lord in baptism as soon as possible. If they refuse, they will have to account therefor before *God*.

*317. Suffer the little children to come unto me, and *forbid them not*; for of such is the kingdom of God. Mark 10:14.

*318. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, 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*. John 3:5, 6.

Thirdly.

How can water do such great things ? **It is not water indeed that does it, but the Word of God, which is in and with the water, and faith which trusts this Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is simply 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 3:5-8:**

“According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed upon 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.

Since the human eye sees nothing but water at baptism, man reasons: “How can water do such great things as to work forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death and the devil, even everlasting salvation?” *To this question of third section of the Fourth Part gives answer.*

Certainly it is not the *water* that does these great things; but it is

1. **the Word of God, which is in and with the water**, that is, the word: “I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,” which, because of the command to baptize, is connected with the water at every baptism;

2. **and faith which trust this Word of God in the water**, that is, that faith which does not cleave to the water, but firmly relies on the Word of God, according to which we are at baptism to be received into communion with God, and to become heirs of all heavenly gifts.

The Word of God puts these gifts into the baptism with water, and faith lays hold on them. Thus the *word* of the prophet once put healing powers into the waters of Jordan and when Naaman *believed*, he was cleansed of his leprosy by them. Without the *Word* of God the water is simply common water, nothing but *water*, and no *baptism*. Only by the Word of God is this water distinguished from all other waters; with the Word of God it is a *baptism*, that is,

1. **a gracious water of life:** a water, into which God has put all His *grace*, and hence it works life, that is, life eternal, everlasting blessedness;
2. **a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost:** a washing, by means of which the Holy Ghost effects an entirely new life in us. By birth we have entered this *mortal, earthly* life. But baptism is our *Pentecost*. Here the Holy Ghost is poured out upon us, as He once was upon the disciples. At baptism the same Spirit effects a *new birth* or *regeneration* in us, for He translates us to the *spiritual, eternal life*. In this state we are for Christ's sake absolved and acquitted from our sins, God is our Father, we have strength for all that is good and are heirs of all heavenly gifts. Therefore of the Apostle Paul in the third chapter of the Epistle to Titus expressly calls baptism: "The washing of *regeneration* and the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*."

Fourthly.

What does such baptizing with water *signify*? **It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily sorrow 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 says, Romans 6:4: "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 fourth section of the Fourth Part reminds us of an important duty that every Christian should perform daily. As baptized Christians we have the duty

1. **that the old Adam in us should daily die**, that is, that the old heart should no more *rule* in us. It is still present even in the baptized, just as it is in all children of Adam, from their birth. It would also still rule in the baptized, outwardly, by grievous *sins*, and inwardly, by all is *evil lusts*. But we should let it *rule* no more, but must struggle against it. This we must do *daily*, by *contrition*, that is, sorrow and pain because of sin, and by *repentance*, that is, turning from sin and to Christ;
2. **that a new man should daily come forth and arise**,* that is, from the hour of baptism, in the place of the old heart a new heart and a new life should more and more have power over us; a life, indeed, that is lived *before God in righteousness and purity*. After having received forgiveness we should outwardly live according to God's commandments and inwardly keep our hearts pure from all evil lusts.

This life will be *perfect* only when, by the grace of God, we shall live before God *forever*, but here on earth we must strive *daily* to perform this great duty of our Christian life. To this the apostle exhorts us in the sixth chapter of Romans. But he also tells us whence we derive the *strength* for such a new life; namely, in baptism. So closely have we been united with Christ by baptism that with Him we have died unto sin and have been raised unto newness of life.

†319. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the *old* man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the *new* man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. 4:22-24.

*Baptism always reminds us of a duty, whether it is performed by pouring or immersing. When it is performed by immersing, the duty is also exhibited in the outward form, for the immersing typifies that the old Adam in us should be drowned and die; and the arising, that a new man should daily come forth and arise. When baptism is performed by pouring, the blessing, which we receive in baptism, is exhibited rather than the duty. For, as the water is poured over the child, so God in baptism pours out His Holy Spirit upon it. Tit. 3:6. cf. above.

†320. Let not *sin* therefore *reign* in your mortal body, that ye should *obey it* in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness *unto sin*; but yield yourselves *unto God*, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of *righteousness unto God*. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the *law*, but under grace. Romans 6:12-14.

321. I live; yet not *I*, but *Christ* liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. Gal. 2:20.

†322. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Jesus Christ. Phil. 3:12.

At baptism our sponsors, having answered the baptismal questions: “Dost thou renounce the devil, and all his works, and all his ways? Dost thou believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost? Wilt thou be baptized into this Christian faith?” by saying “yes,” have promised in our name of the performance of this great Christian duty. At **confirmation**, however, we promise this *ourselves*, in a particularly solemn way, when we affirmatively answer these questions, to wit; “Do you renounce the devil, and all his works, and all his ways? Do you believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost? Will you continue steadfast in the true Christian belief, as confessed by our Evangelical Lutheran Church, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ by a godly life, even unto the end?” And what we do with peculiar solemnity at confirmation before the whole congregation, we are *daily* to promise God anew. Thus we renew our *baptismal vows*, and if we really yield ourselves to God in contrition and faith we always return again to the *grace of baptism*, that is, to the arms of our God which have been open to us since our baptism. After confirmation we again do this in a particularly solemn way at *confession*, for confession is also a return to the Grace the baptism.

Note 1. The *sponsors* are our *God-parents*. It is their duty to make answer as the representatives of the child when the baptismal covenant is being made; to pray for the baptized child; to bear witness that the child has been rightly baptized; to assist in providing for the child's Christian training. At the baptismal service the sponsors are solemnly admonished to perform the last-named duty especially.

Note 2. Confirmation was not instituted by Christ, but has been appointed by the *Church*. The church has done this in order to make sure that her grown up children have received the necessary *instruction* (Matt. 28:20) and have thus been enabled rightly to *examine* themselves (1 Cor. 11:28, 29) before going to the Lord's Supper. The *examination* in the principal parts of Christian faith and life is therefore the main part of confirmation. Then follow the solemn *confession* of faith, the *promise* to continue *steadfast* in that faith, and the *bestowal of the divine blessing* on the part of the Church. The laying on of hands is generally connected with this last.—The *confirmed* have received the *right* to partake of the Lord's Supper, to act as sponsors, and as soon as they have attained the proper age, to cast a vote in the deliberations of the congregation. The confirmed have also assumed the *duties*, faithfully to make use of the Word and sacraments; to unite, whenever they change their dwelling place, with a congregation having a *pure* confession, to contribute according to their ability toward the support of their congregation and to participate faithfully in all church-work.

Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, etc.—see No. 132.

*323. Fight the good *fight of faith*, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a *good profession* before many witnesses. 1 Tim. 6:12.

†324. But *continue* thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of. 2 Tim. 3:14.

**325. Be thou *faithful* unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2:10.

326. *Fear* thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for *I* am thy God: I will *strengthen* thee; yea, I will *help* thee; yea, I will *uphold* thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Is. 41:10.

327. Lord, *Increase* our faith. Luke 17:5.

The Intermediate Part: Of Confession.

This intermediate part explains to me the churchly service of confession and absolution.

Confession also is a sacred act, but it is not a sacrament as baptism is, since it lacks the express institution by Christ, as well as the external element. This

intermediate part is divided into three sections, each consisting of a question and an answer.

1. What is confession? Confession embraces two parts; one, 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 through it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

The first section tells me what confession is.

Confession is a churchly act consisting of two parts; namely,

- 1. that we confess our sins** before the pastor, who, as the called minister of Christ, hears the confession;
- 2. that we receive absolution or forgiveness of our sins from him.**

Such forgiveness we are to receive from him as from God himself, for it is declared in the name and by command of *God*. The bearers of the New Testament ministry are called of God through the congregation, in order to proclaim the Word of God, to administer the sacraments, and thereby to guide and direct the congregation in the *name* and by *command of God*. However, an essential part of the proclamation of the Divine Word is to declare the *forgiveness* of God to all those who confess their sins in the service of confession and absolution. The pastors here act as the messengers and instruments of God. We should therefore in no wise doubt, but *firmly* believe, that when *they* declare the absolution or forgiveness to us, our sins are forgiven before *God* in heaven.

†328. The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples, and saith unto them; Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye *remit*, they are *remitted* unto them; and whose soever sins ye *retain*, they are *retained*.

John 20:22, 23.

**329. Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of *Christ*, and stewards of the mysteries of *God*. 1 Cor. 4:1.

**330. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though *God* did beseech you by us. 2 Cor. 5:20.

It is also the office of the New Testament ministry, in the name of the congregation to exclude manifest and impenitent sinners from the Christian congregation, and again, to absolve and restore those who repent of their sins and are willing to amend (see page 18). The solemn exclusion from the Christian congregation is a serious and sacred procedure, for apart from the Christian congregation there is no

salvation. Such a course is taken out of love to the sinner on the one hand, for to him it is a most earnest call to repentance and on the other hand out of respect for the sacred ordinances of the Christian Church, which cannot be administered to those who disgrace the name of Christ and of His congregation.—In Matthew, chapter eighteenth, the Lord Himself tells us what must precede the exclusion.

Moreover, 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. Matt. 18:15-17.

2. What sins should we confess? **Before God we should acknowledge ourselves guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not discern; 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.**

*The second section of the intermediate part tells me what sins we should confess before **God** and what ones in particular before the **pastor**.*

Before *God* we should acknowledge ourselves guilty of *all* sins, for He searches the heart and knows even *those* things which we do not discern. This we do, when we pray the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer. This we do on every Sunday, when we recite the confession of sins (see Church Book, page 2) together with the whole congregation. This we also do in *Public Confession* (the service of Confession and Absolution, which is held in church for *all* communicants before going to the Lord's Supper), when we answer the confessional questions (see catechism, page 20) by saying "yes."

Before the *pastor* we should confess *those* sins especially which we know and *feel* in our hearts, that is, those sins which weigh heavily upon our hearts and on account of which we do not find true rest and peace, so that the pastor may declare to us the forgiveness of *these* sins in particular. This we call *Individual* or *Private Confession*. It is a very salutary ordinance, for to confess by name such particular sins frees us to a degree from sin, and the positive declaration of forgiveness of such sins restores peace and quiet to our hearts. Moreover, the pastor's advice may keep us from falling anew into many a sin. The pastor is forbidden to make public those sins which have been confided to him in Private Confession. With him they are sacredly confidential.

*331. 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. 32:5.

**332. He that *covereth* his sins shall not prosper: but whoso *confesseth* and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Prov. 28:13.

†333. If we say that we have *no* sin, we *deceive* ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we *confess* our sins, He is faithful and just to *forgive* us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:8, 9.

*334. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from *secret* faults. Ps. 19:12.

*335. The sacrifices of God are a *broken* spirit: a *broken* and *contrite* heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. Ps. 51:17.—Learn Ps. 51.—Read 2 Sam. 12:13 and Mark 1:5.

3. Which are these? Here consider your station in the light of the Ten Commandments, whether you be a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant; whether in these relations you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have wronged anyone by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, wasted aught, or done any harm.

The third section of the intermediate part tells me of the mirror into which I must look before going to confession, in order to know my sins.

I can *confess* only *those* sins which I *know*. The Ten Commandments are the mirror. I must carefully look into them and at every commandment I must honestly inquire, whether I have kept it or not. Nor must I forget my peculiar station and the *particular* duties which it imposes upon me and must inquire, whether I have performed them all or not. Being a child, I must consider the *fourth* commandment especially.

Then I will find a great plenty of sins in thought, word and deed, which I must confess in true *contrition* before God and before the pastor, naming them. And if I also cling in true *faith* to Jesus Christ, who died for all my sins, I may be sure that the absolution is effective also for *me*, and that *my* sins also are forgiven before God in heaven.

By the *law* is the *knowledge* of sin. Rom. 3:20.

†336. *Search* me, O God, and know my heart; *try* me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any *wicked* way in me, and lead me in the way *everlasting*. Ps. 139:23, 24.

Since in Confession and absolution I always return to the grace of baptism, it is at the same time the best preparation for the Lord's Supper .

Part 5

The Sacrament of the Altar.

The Fifth Part explains that sacred act by which the Lord Jesus repeatedly and in an impressive way holds communion with me and all His own, and strengthens us in our relation as children of God.

This act is called a *sacrament* in the heading, because, like Baptism, it is a sacred act, instituted by Christ, by which, in virtue of the Divine Word, by means of visible, earthly elements (bread and wine), an invisible heavenly gift (the body and blood of Christ) is granted to us.

This act is called the Sacrament of the *Altar*, because it is administered at the altar.

Note. The Roman Catholic Church has five additional sacraments besides Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Eucharist); namely, Confirmation, Penance, Matrimony, Orders and Extreme Unction. These acts, however, are not equivalent to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They lack either one, two, or all the three conditions which are found in Baptism and the Lord's Supper; namely, 1. the institution by our Lord Jesus Christ; 2. the earthly element; 3. the heavenly gift of grace.

The Fifth Part, like the fourth one, is divided into four sections.

First.

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

Where is this written? **The holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, together with Saint Paul, write thus: Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the 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, when He had supped, He took the cup, 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 and for many, for the remission of sins; this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

The first section of the Fifth Part tells me what the Sacrament of the Altar is. It is the **true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine.** As our eyes see nothing but common water in the Sacrament of Baptism, even so in the Sacrament of the Altar, they see nothing but bread (unleavened bread in the form of wafers) and common wine. But as the water of baptism becomes a *gracious* water of life, a washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost by the Word and command of God, so we also have *more* than common bread and common wine in the Sacrament of the Altar.

The Word of God connected with it, tells us that we receive the *body* and *blood* of our glorified Lord and Savior *under*, or *in and with* the bread and wine. Moreover, the *true*, that is, the real body and the *true*, that is, the real blood of Christ, and not only the *symbol* or sign of it, nor only a *power* of Christ, as a Reformed teach. *Under the bread and wine* the body and blood of Christ are distributed, for bread and wine are still present in the sacrament; they are not *changed* into body and blood, as the Roman Catholic Church teaches. The body and blood of Christ are *united* in a mysterious way with bread and wine, so that in and with the bread we receive the body at the same time, and in and with the wine we receive the blood of Christ. Now this wonderful Sacrament was **instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.** The Sacrament of the Altar, like the Sacrament of Baptism, was instituted by Christ Himself. This sacred act therefore is God's *own* ordinance, not only a churchly one. And it was instituted by Christ for *this purpose*: That we Christians should come to the sacred act, and there eat and drink what He gives us to eat and drink.

If the Lord Jesus had not thought that the Lord's Supper was *necessary* and *salutary* for us, He would not have instituted it, nor would He twice have said at the institution: “This do.” He therefore, who does not often come to the Lord's Supper, despises the express command and the clear ordinance of Christ. He thereby declares that he may truly remain a child of God and find the way of

salvation indeed, not needing the strengthening which Christ has graciously intended for His own, through the eating and drinking of His body and blood.

This *institution* by Christ is recorded by the Holy evangelists, Matthew (26:26-28), Mark (14:22-24), Luke (22:19, 20), and the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 11:23-25). Accordingly, it was instituted in the *night* in which He was betrayed (Maundy Thursday), and that in very close connection with the Old Testament passover-meal. Like the passover-supper it was to be a *meal of communion*, but of communion between Christ and His own, as well as of His own among themselves. In the Holy Supper all disciples of Jesus are to renew their communion with their heavenly Lord, and before all the world to confess themselves as *Christ's* congregation. Because it was instituted in the *night* or late in the *evening*, it is called the Lord's *Supper*.

The institution took place in this wise: The Lord Jesus took the unleavened bread, which they were wont to eat at the passover-meal, gave thanks, brake it,—for the bread of the passover-meal came in the form of large, flat or thin cakes,—and handed it to His disciples, who reclined with Him around the table. While He was handing it to them, He spake these words:

“Take, eat; this is My Body, which is given for you,” that is, eat of this bread; as you eat of it, you will at the same time receive, *with and under the bread*, My *Body* which is given unto death for you. When He had supped (after the passover-meal) the Lord Jesus took the cup filled with wine, gave thanks to God and gave it also to His disciples, that they might pass it around. While He was giving the cup to them, He spake these words:

“Drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in My Blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins,” that is, drink ye all of this cup; as you drink of it, you will at the same time, *with and under the wine*, drink of My *Blood*, by which, when it is shed upon the cross for the forgiveness of sins, the new covenant between God and man will be made.

Note. The *Old Testament* or *Old Covenant* was made between God and the people of Israel on Mt. Sinai and was confirmed by the blood of beasts (Ex. 24:8). The *New Testament* or *New Covenant* was made between God and all mankind on Mt. Calvary by the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. This forgiveness is offered in the Lord's Supper.

Both times the Lord closed by saying: “This do in remembrance of Me.” With these words He would remind us that we also should celebrate the Lord's Supper as He has instituted it. And as often as we celebrate it, we should commemorate the death which He suffered for us and heartily thank Him for it.

†337. 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? For we being many are *one* bread, and *one* body: for we are all partakers of that *one* bread. 1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

338. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do *show the Lord's death* till He come. 1 Cor. 11:26.

Note 1. In the *Reformed Church Zwingli* taught: bread and wine are only signs and symbols of the body and blood of Christ; and the words “This is” mean “This signifies” . *Calvin* taught: The soul must be elevated to heaven and there receives in a spiritual way a power which proceeds from Jesus. On earth, however, we receive only bread and wine. *We Lutherans* believe and firmly adhere to the words of our Savior: This is My Body, this is My Blood. We have such confidence in His divine *omnipotence* as to believe that He can give us His body *in* and *with* the bread and His holy blood *in* and *with* the wine.

Note 2. The *Roman Catholic Church* teaches, that by the blessing of the priest, bread and wine are *changed* into the body and blood of Christ, so that after the change bread and wine are no longer present but Christ only.—She teaches that this Christ is daily being offered in an unbloody manner by the hands of the priest in what she calls the sacrifice of the mass, and that this *sacrifice of the mass* has the same power as the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.—In the Catholic Church the changed bread is *adored* and carried in procession on Corpus Christi day.—Again, the priests alone receive the *cup* and not the laity.—*All this is contrary to God's Word.* In 1 Cor. 10:16, 17 the apostle expressly speaks of *bread* that is broken, and not of the body.—The sacrifice of Christ was offered only *once*, He having thereby obtained *eternal* redemption for us. (Heb. 9:12; 10:14.) Now we have sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving only—Jesus gave the bread to be *eaten*, not to be adored.—Giving the cup He expressly said, Drink ye *all* of it.—It is a grievous sin not to give heed to the words of the *testament* of Jesus. According to the Reformed doctrine, the earthly is *separated* from the heavenly in the Lord's Supper; according to the Roman Catholic doctrine, the earthly is *changed* into the heavenly; according to Lutheran doctrine, both are *united*, but united only for the

purpose and duration of the eating and drinking. Without the eating and drinking, there is only bread and wine.

Note 3. The *distribution* to the communicants is accompanied by these words: "Take and eat; this is the body of Christ given for thee." "Take and drink; this is the blood of the New Testament, shed for thy sins." "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ and His precious blood strengthen and preserve you in true faith unto everlasting life."

Secondly.

Of what use is such eating and drinking? **It 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.**

The Lord Jesus instituted this sacrament for us to eat and to drink. *The second section of the Fifth Part tells us of what use such eating and drinking is.*

We are here referred to the words of institution where it is said: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." Under their bread and wine we eat and drink the body and blood of Christ, which He gave unto death for us in order to purchase forgiveness; hence, the eating and drinking of the Lord's Supper now works **forgiveness of sins.** Forgiveness of sins is the *one* great gift, which at once includes all others. If therefore the eating and drinking of the Lord's Supper works forgiveness of sins in us, it will also work

life and salvation. *Life* in communion with God, which also embraces the power to walk according to the commandments of God, which power flows from Jesus, the true vine unto us, His branches. *Salvation* which has its beginnings here on earth in peace with God.

In Holy Baptism God has indeed already bestowed these gifts on us, but as we have so often sinned again since that time, and thus have been deprived of so much divine blessing, He *restores* them to us in the Lord's Supper and would thus make our Christian life *complete*.

He also bestows these gifts upon us in His Word. But here He deals with His own *individually* and in so striking a manner that even the faintest can take courage and declare: As surely as the Lord has invited me to His table, so surely will He also be merciful to *me*. Should not so great a blessing impel us to come to the table of the Lord often, full of longing for salvation?

†339. *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.* John 15:5.

†340. For My flesh is meat *indeed*, and My blood is drink *indeed*. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, *dwelleth in Me*, and I in him. John 6:55, 56.

Thirdly.

How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things? **It is not the eating and drinking indeed that does it, but the words which stand here: “Given and shed for you, for the remission of sins.” These words, together with the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words, has what they say and mean, namely the forgiveness of sins.**

The third section of the Fifth Part tells me how the eating and drinking of the Lord's Supper can do such great things as to work forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.

It is not the eating and drinking in itself that does this, as little as it is the water that does it in Baptism. Here as well as there it is the *Word* of God. We owe it to the Word alone that the eating and drinking of the Lord's Supper becomes a peculiar eating and drinking and effects so great a blessing. It is through the words of institution, especially the most beautiful and important part of them, “Given and shed for you, for the remission of sins,” that bread and wine and body and blood are united and the forgiveness of sins conveyed to us through them. In a sense therefore these words are the chief things in the sacrament. Add to it the eating and drinking, and the sacrament is complete. Where this Word and the eating and drinking are together present, there are also the body and blood. ‘Tis true, however, that only he receives the *forgiveness*, who on his part and *in truth faith* relies on the Word with which Christ instituted the Lord's Supper. *No faith, no forgiveness.*

Fourthly.

Who then receives this Sacrament worthily? **Fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a good outward discipline; 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 who believes not these words, or doubts, is unworthy and unprepared; for the words, “For you,” require truly believing hearts.**

*The fourth section of the Fifth Part explains how we must prepare ourselves, in order to receive the sacrament **worthily**, that is , to our lasting benefit.*

Preparation is of two kinds,—outward and inward. The *outward* preparation consists of fasting and many other preliminaries which pertain to the *body*. Such preparation is indeed a good discipline which we may undertake, since the true reverence which we have must also appear in our dress, gait and deportment. But as this preparation is only *outward*, it is *insufficient*. We will be truly prepared only when we have *faith* in these words: “Given and shed for you, for the remission of sins,” that is, when we firmly believe that we receive forgiveness of sins through the body and blood. But we shall not have such faith, unless we are heartily sorry for our sins and resolved to forsake them, nor so long as we remain unreconciled with our neighbor and are not resolved to lead a *better* life.

We are *unworthy* and *unprepared* to partake of the Lord's Supper, when we do *not* believe, or *doubt* these words of Christ; for by so doing we show that we distrust the words of the Savior and regard the Holy Supper as a *common* eating and drinking.

If we come to the table of the Lord *without* such faith and *with* such doubt, we indeed receive the body and blood of Christ; not unto forgiveness, however, but unto *condemnation*, that is, unto the hardening of our hearts. But if we feel the great burden of our doubts, struggle against them and would fain throw them off, we may come to the Lord's Supper confidently, for Christ has instituted it for the very purpose that we may be strengthened in our faith and be established in our relation as children of God. He would make us *cheerful* and blessed children of God, who are *sure* of their salvation.

†341. *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.* 2 Cor. 13:5.

†342. For *godly* sorrow worketh repentance to salvation *not* to be repented of. 2 Cor. 7:10.

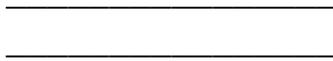
†343. The sacrifices of God are a *broken* spirit: a *broken* and a *contrite* heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. Ps. 51:17.

344. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught 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. Matt. 5:23, 24.

**345. Jesus said unto him, Behold Thou art made *whole: sin no more*, lest a *worse* thing come unto thee. John 5:14.

346. 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 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. 1 Cor. 11:27-29.

Jesus, Bread of Life. I pray Thee,
Let me gladly here obey Thee,
Never to my hurt invited,
Be Thy love with love requited;
From this banquet let me measure,
Lord, how vast and deep love's treasure:
Through the gifts Thou here dost give me
As Thy guest in heaven receive me.



Supplement.

1. Brief Instruction concerning the Bible.

The salutary doctrine which the Bible contains is briefly comprehended in the catechism.

The title-page of our English Bible reads: "The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues, and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, by His Majesty's special command." (This is known as the Authorized Version of 1611.) A revision was later made by English and American scholars. (This is known as the Revised Version of 1881.) Bible means book. Now, since the Holy Scripture is the most important of all books, it is simply called: "*The Bible*", or, "*The Book*."

The Bible is divided into *two parts*, the Old and the New Testaments, or the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Covenants. The Old Testament contains those sacred books which were written by *Moses* and the *Prophets* in the time of the *Old Covenant*, made on Mt. *Sinai*. The New Testament contains those sacred books which were written by the *Apostles* in the time of the *New Covenant*, made on Mt. *Calvary*.

The books of the Old Testament are sometimes divided into Historical books (because *history* prevails in them), Doctrinal [Poetical] books (because *doctrine* [poetry] prevails) and Prophetical books (because *prophecy* prevails).

1. *The Historical books* are: The five books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.

The *five books of Moses* tell us the story of *mankind* up to the dispersion of nations; the story of the *patriarchs* up to the time of Joseph's death; the story of the *people of Israel* from the deliverance out of Egypt and the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai up to the death of Moses.

Note especially: Gen. 1:1; 3:15; 12:3; 15:6; 32:10, 26. Num. 6:24-26. Deut. 18:18.

The *remaining Historical books* tell us the story of the people of Israel from their entrance into the land of Canaan to the return from the Babylonian Captivity and the rebuilding of the walls of the city of Jerusalem.

Note especially: Josh. 24:15. 1 Sam. 16. 2 Sam. 7. 1 Kings 17:17, 18. 2 Kings 25. Ezra 6. Neh. 9.

2. *The Doctrinal [Poetical] books* are: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon. The most important of these is the *Book of Psalms*. This was Israel's prayerbook and hymnal. Christians also esteem it very highly. The whole book is often called "*The Psalter of David*," because 73 of the 150 Psalms it contains are ascribed to David in the headings, and because the singing of Psalms was introduced by David.

Among the most familiar Psalms are the *Didactic* Psalms: 1, 14, 19; the *Penitential* Psalms: 32, 51, 130; *Psalms of Praise and Thanksgiving*: 32, 103, 146; *Psalms of the Cross and Consolation*: 42, 91, 126; *Prophetical* Psalms: 2, 72, 110.

3. *The Prophetical books* are divided into two parts: the Greater and the Minor Prophets. The Greater Prophets are: Isaiah, Jeremiah with Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel, in all five books. The twelve Minor Prophets are: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

The Office of the Prophets was two-fold. They were Israel's preachers of repentance and righteousness, who remonstrated with the people because of their defection from God and His law. They also pointed to the coming Messiah and Redeemer. *Isaiah* in particular did this. He spoke as clearly of the future salvation, as though he were standing at the manger and under the cross. He is also called: *The Evangelist of the Old Testament*.

Note especially: Isaiah Chaps. 6, 9, 11, 40, 53, 60. Isaiah (Chaps. 7 and 9) and Micah (Chap. 5) prophecy concerning the *birth* of Jesus. Isaiah (Chaps. 42 and 61) concerning His *office of prophet*. Zechariah (Chap. 9) of His *entrance* into Jerusalem and (Chap. 11) of the *betrayal*. Isaiah (Chap. 53) of Christ's great *suffering* and His everlasting life and Kingdom.

Note: The *Apocrypha* form an appendix to the Old Testament. The Apocryphal books, though useful and good to read, are not to be regarded as the Word of God.

The sacred books of the New Testament are also divided into Historical, Doctrinal and Prophetical books.

1. The historical books are the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

The four Gospels were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They tell us the sacred story of Jesus Christ; namely, His birth, His life (especially His teachings and miracles), His sufferings and death, His resurrection and ascension. The first three Gospels greatly resemble one another. Luther called the fourth Gospel, "The true, tenderest, chief Gospel." In the clearest manner it testifies that Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son.

Note especially: Matthew Chap. 2 (the wise men from the east), Chaps. 5-7 (the sermon on the mount), Chap. 13 (parables of the kingdom), Chap. 16 (Christ's church imperishable), Chaps. 24 and 25 (prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the second coming of Christ and the last judgement); *Luke* Chaps. 1 and 2 (story of the birth of John and Jesus), Chap. 15 (parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver and the prodigal son), Chap. 18 (the Pharisee and the publican), Chap. 19 (the story of Zacchaeus), Chap. 23 (of the penitent thief); *John* Chap. 1 (the introduction concerning the eternal Word, that is, the Son of God), Chap. 2 (the miracle at Cana), Chap. 11 (the raising of Lazarus), Chaps. 14-16 (Jesus' last discourses), Chap. 17 (the sacerdotal prayer).

The Acts of the Apostles, written by Luke, tell the story of the *Church* of Jesus Christ; first, its establishment among the *Jews*, especially by Peter (Chaps. 1-12); and then, its establishment among the *Gentiles*, through the missionary journeys of Paul (Chaps. 13-28).

2. *The Doctrinal books* of the New Testament consist of *Epistles* or *Letters* written by Apostles, or men with apostolic authority, to Christian congregations or to individual Christians.

The *Apostle Paul* wrote the first thirteen. They are addressed to the congregations at *Rome* (Italy), at *Corinth* (Greece), in the province of *Galatia* (Asia Minor), in the vicinity of *Ephesus* (Asia Minor), at *Philippi* (Macedonia), at *Colossae* (Asia Minor), at *Thessalonica* (Macedonia), to his co-laborers and disciples *Timothy* (two) and *Titus*, as well as to an individual member of a congregation by the name of *Philemon*. The most important of the Epistles of Paul is his Epistle to the *Romans*. Paul here imparts noble instruction concerning Christian faith and life and proves that we are justified and saved *by grace alone, for Christ's sake, through faith*.

Note especially: Rom. 3:21-28 (of justification by grace alone, through faith in Christ); Rom. 8:1-39 (of adoption, of consolation amid the sufferings of this present time, of the certainty of our salvation); 1 Cor. 13 (of the excellency of love); 1 Cor. 15 (of the resurrection); 2 Cor. 5:14-21 (of the atonement); Eph. 6:10-17 (of the Christian's armor).

One letter is addressed to the *Hebrews* (Jewish Christians), but we are not certain as to its author. Of other Apostles we have one epistle by *James*, two by *Peter*, three by *John* and one by *Jude*, the last of the Doctrinal books.

Note especially: Heb. 11:1-12. Jas. 1:12, 22; 2:14-17. 1 Peter 2:21-25. 1 John 2:1, 2, 15-17; 3:1; 4:8, 9, 19; 5:4.

3. The Revelation of St John is the *Prophetical book* of the New Testament. It portrays the *struggles* which the Church of Jesus Christ will have to undergo until the end of the world, but also the great *victory* to which Christ will lead His Church. He will lead her to the new heaven and to the new earth, where she may be with Him always (Chaps. 21 and 22).

2. Important Facts about the Church Year.

When the Holy Ghost had been poured out upon the disciples of Jesus, He impelled them to proclaim the wonderful works of God. They bore witness especially to the *death* and *resurrection* of Jesus, for these are the greatest of all the wonderful works of God. Soon they also began to observe *Sunday* in memory of the resurrection and commemorated this great work on this day. We find the disciples gathered together eight days after the resurrection, that is, on a *Sunday*, and the Lord appears in their midst. On a *Sunday* the congregation at Philippi came together (Acts 20:7). On every *Sunday* the Corinthians were to lay by a gift (1 Cor. 16:2). On the *Lord's Day* the Apostle John was in the spirit (Rev. 1:10). And as they observe Sunday as the *weekly* commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, Easter soon became the *yearly* one (1 Cor. 5:7, 8). Taking Easter, the festival of the resurrection, as the central point, the church looked *backward* to the first coming of Christ into the world and *forward* to the second coming at the last day. As a result, a well arranged circle of Sundays and

festival days was perfected, which was annually observed in the Christian congregation. Thus the *Church Year* came into being with its Sundays and festival days, appointed by the Church; and for all of these fixed Scripture lessons from the gospels and epistles (Gospel and Epistle *Pericopes*) were appointed.

The Church Year is divided into two parts, the *festival* and the *non-festival*. The festival part embraces three festive cycles: 1. *Christmas*, the festival of the Father, who sent His only-begotten Son into the world. 2. *Easter*, the festival of the Son, who redeemed us by His death and resurrection. 3. *Pentecost*, the festival of the Holy Spirit, who would sanctify us. This is followed by the festival of the Holy Trinity.

The Christmas cycle. Christmas is preceded by the *season of Advent*. Advent means coming. At this time the Christian Church prepares for the festival of the coming of Jesus in the flesh. There are four Sundays in Advent. Then comes the *Christmas-festival*, which is observed on December 25 and 26, being immediately preceded by *Christmas Eve* on December 24. At Christmas we commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. We hear the sweet Gospel: "Unto you is born this day a Savior" and sing:

"All praise, Lord Jesus Christ, to Thee,
Who condescendest man to be!"

The festival of the birth of Jesus is followed a week later by the festival of His circumcision, when He also received His name. This falls upon January 1st, the beginning of the secular year, hence, it is also observed as *New Years' Day*. It is preceded by New Years' Eve, or *Sylvester*.

On January 6, the *festival of the Epiphany*, or the manifestation of Christ, is observed. On this day we are reminded of how the glory of Jesus was made manifest to the Gentiles, the wise men from the East. The festival of the Epiphany is followed by the Epiphany season, which embraces from two to six Sundays. The number of Sundays varies according to the early or late date of Easter. During the whole Epiphany season the Christian Church commemorates the glory of the Lord, which is made manifest to the whole world, reveals itself in His words and miracles and casts its brightness upon the congregation. For this reason all the gospel lessons of the season treat of the manifestation of the glory of Christ.

The Easter Cycle. The Sundays called, *Septuagesims*, *Sexagesima* and *Quinquagesima* (*Esto Mihi*) form the transition to the Easter cycle. Their Latin names

denote the seventieth, the sixtieth and the fiftieth day (though not exactly computed) before Easter. The Wednesday after Quinquagesima Sunday is Ash Wednesday.

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Lenten or *Passion Season* of forty days. This is a quiet and serious time, in which we commemorate the great suffering which are Lord underwent for our sake. In special services we meditate upon the passion history and the congregation sings:

“A Lamb bears all the guilt away.”

The six Sundays in Lent bear these Latin names: *Invocavit*, *Reminiscere*, *Oculi*, *Laetare*, *Judica*, *Palmarum*. *Palm Sunday* is the beginning of Holy Week. *Maundy Thursday*, commemorating Christ’s institution of the Lord’s Supper, and *Good Friday*, on which Christ died for us on the cross, are prominent days of this week. We then stand before the cross of Jesus and sing:

“O sacred head now wounded.”

After the quiet Lenten season follows *Easter*, the joyous festival of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It always falls upon the first Sunday after the spring full moon. On Easter-day voices of gladness resound in the Christian congregation, for the resurrection is the sure seal of our redemption, and we jubilantly sing:

“Christ, the Lord, is risen today,
Sons of men and angels say.
Raise your joys and triumphs high;
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply. Hallelujah.”

Following Easter comes a forty days’ time of gladness, embracing the Sundays, *Quasimodogeniti*, *Misericordias Domini*, *Jubilate*, *Cantate*, *Rogate*. The festival of the *Ascension* of Christ, on the fortieth day after Easter, closes this time of gladness as well as the whole Easter Cycle.

The Pentecost Cycle embraces the preparatory time of ten days, including *Exaudi* Sunday, and the festival of Pentecost itself. In this time believers prepare and wait for the coming of the Spirit. *Pentecost* is the festival of the Holy Spirit, and He would again enter into the hearts of all. It is always celebrated on the fiftieth day after Easter. At this time the congregation sings beseechingly:

“O Holy Spirit, enter in,
Among these hearts Thy work begin,

Thy temple deign to make us.”

A week later the festival of the *Holy Trinity* follows. On this day the congregation contemplates the three wonderful works; namely, the coming of the Son, sent by the *Father*, the redemption through the *Son* and the sanctification through the *Holy Spirit*, and praises God for having revealed Himself to us as the Divine Being in three Persons.

After Trinity Sunday the *non-festival* part of the Church Year begins. The Sundays are counted as Sundays after Trinity. There are from twenty-four to twenty-seven Sundays after Trinity. The number varies according to the time of Easter. During this time the *Harvest-festival* and *Reformation-day* are also observed. The latter is celebrated on the Sunday following October 31 and reminds us of the work of God done by His servant, Dr. Martin Luther, when he renewed the Church and cleansed it from false doctrine. We also celebrate the *Mission-festival* during this time. We then contemplate the wonderful work God is doing even to this day for the extension of His kingdom, and are urged to co-operate heartily.

3. Important Events in the History of the Christian Church.

1. The Gospel among the Jews. Beginning with the day of Pentecost, the birthday of the Christian Church, the Apostles proclaimed the Gospel to their countrymen with great zeal. A great number of the Jews also believed their preaching, so that Jewish-Christian congregations were gathered in Palestine as well as beyond its borders. But the majority of the people hardened their hearts. In A.D. 35, Stephen was stoned, and the Christians were expelled from the temple and the city of Jerusalem. In A.D. 44, James, the son of Zebedee, was beheaded, Peter imprisoned and later Paul was also taken. In A.D. 66, James the Just was killed. Since the Jews rejected their Lord, He also rejected them. *Titus*, the Roman general, advanced against Jerusalem and compassed the city about on all sides. Indescribable distress resulted within the walls by reason of a city being overcrowded with visitors to the Paschal-feast, together with the animosity existing amongst their leaders. At last Titus conquered the city by assault. *The temple was burned and the walls of Jerusalem made level with the ground.* More than a million Jews had suffered death and about

100,000 were taken captive. *This occurred in A.D. 70.* The blood of Christ had come upon them in a terrible manner.

2. The Gospel among the Gentiles until A.D. 325. The proclamation of the Gospel among the *Gentiles* was attended with greater success. When Paul, the great missionary to the Gentiles, was beheaded in Rome (A.D. 67), faith in Jesus Christ was already widely spread in the Roman Empire. Congregations were in existence in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy and Spain. Later on flourishing congregations were organized in Arabia, Egypt, North Africa, Southern France, on the River Rhine and the Danube, and in Brittany. About A.D. 300 there was hardly a district in the Roman Empire which had not been affected by Christianity. In these first times every Christian was actually a missionary, bearing witness of his Savior by word and deed. Nor was the Christian Church allowed to spread so widely without a struggle. There were ten bloody *persecutions of the Christians*. The first occurred in the reign of Nero in Rome (A.D. 64). The Christians, having been sewed in the hides of wild beast, were thrown before dogs, or, having been coated with wax and pitch, were fastened to high poles in the garden of the Emperor and set on fire in order to illuminate the darkness of night as “living torches”. At other times the Christians in France, Egypt, North Africa and Asia Minor were cruelly tortured and persecuted. The last but most atrocious persecution occurred under Emperor Diocletian. But all the power and cunning of heathendom could no longer destroy the Christian Church. The Christians cheerfully lay down their lives for the sake of their faith. Untold numbers died as martyrs. When the aged Bishop *Polycarp* was asked to curse Christ, he answered: “Eighty and six years I have served Christ, and He never did me wrong; how can I curse my King who will save me!” The most atrocious sufferings were inflicted upon *Blandina*. She was tortured, scourged and lacerated, placed upon a red hot iron chair and at last thrown to wild beasts. In spite of all she confessed and denied not: “I am a Christian; and among us no evil is committed.” *Perpetua*, twenty years of age, a lady of rank, was tied to the horns of a wild cow. Though her heathen father on his knees implored and charged her to deny Christ, she remained steadfast, saying: “I am a Christian.” New confessors at once took the place of those that were killed, being won to the faith by the courageous faith of the Christians and their cheerfulness in dying. Thus the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church. At last Emperor *Constantine* submitted to the divine power of the Gospel. He called a halt to the persecutions, permitted the adoption of the Christian faith, and in *A.D. 325 acknowledged the Christian religion as the religion of the Roman Empire.*

3. Internal Conflicts of the Church and further external enlargement. Hardly had the Church won its victory over the heathen world, before it was deeply agitated by *internal* conflicts. These conflicts were about *pure doctrine*. A man by the name of *Arius* denied the *eternal* Godhead of Jesus Christ, saying that the Son of God also had a *beginning*, that He was a *creature* of God. At the General Council held at Nicaea in A.D. 325, this false doctrine of Arius was indeed rejected and the Nicene Creed adopted, which reads regarding Jesus Christ: “God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, *not made*, *Being of one substance with the Father*,” but the conflict still raged. *Athanasius* was the foremost champion of the true doctrine. Later on *Pelagius* arose and denied the doctrine of original sin. He taught, that man by his *own* power could do good works and merit eternal salvation. This doctrine pronounced the work of Christ and of the Holy Ghost superfluous. Over against this *Augustine* emphasized the biblical doctrine, that the natural man is totally incapable of good. He taught, and rightly so, that we are converted and do truly good works alone by the *grace* of God. Notwithstanding these internal conflicts the Church expanded rapidly. The Christian Church won these nations especially, which, coming from the North and Northwest, entered the Roman empire during the Migration of Nations. To *Germany* the Gospel spread by way of Ireland and England.

In the seventh and eighth centuries the Christian Church lost large portions of Asia and North Africa to the Mohammedans, who eradicated the Christian religion and introduced their false religion, called Islam. During this time also the sacred places of Palestine were taken from the Christians.

4. Monks and Monasteries. When a worldly spirit more and more took possession of the Church, many pious men and women sought refuge in solitude from the turmoil of the world. Here, they thought, they could lead a life more pleasing to God. And since they separated themselves from the multitude and lived *solitary* lives, they were called “Monks.” When the number of monks grew, they united into communities and built themselves common dwelling places, called *monasteries*. In order that they might lead solitary lives in these buildings, each monk was given a separate cell. The superior of the monastery was called the abbot (father). About A.D. 500, Benedict, an Italian, laid down specific rules for the monastic life. Every candidate must undergo a year’s probation. Then he must promise to live in *perfect poverty*, *lifelong celibacy* and *unconditional obedience* to his superiors. Such was the monastic vow. According to monastic rules the monks were obliged to attend common prayer

and divine services, to study the Scriptures diligently, to cultivate the land, to instruct the youth and to visit the poor and the sick. Thus the monasteries became places of blessing to the Church. But gradually they deteriorated. Enriched by donations, a life of luxury, often even of immorality, was the result. Still the monastic life was regarded as the true Christian life, standing high above the common life and meriting life everlasting. Hence, many noble men and women, who sought rest and peace for their souls and strove after the kingdom of God, entered the monasteries.

5. The Papacy. In the ancient time of the Christian Church the separate congregations were led by Elders (Presbyters). Gradually the presiding officers of the college of presbyters were called "Bishop." Among the bishops again, those of Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria attained to greater prominence. They were called "Patriarchs." Among these again, the bishops of *Rome* succeeded in obtaining the highest position. They claimed that Peter was the Rock upon which Christ meant to build His Church, and that Peter was bishop of Rome. Hence, they called themselves: "Successors to the See of Peter." Rome was at this time the most important city of the known world. The bishops at Rome also wisely decided many questions in the controversy submitted to them by other parts of the Church. Relying upon all this, they finally arrogated to themselves the supremacy over the whole Church and demanded that all their decisions be obeyed. As early as the sixth century they received the name of "*Pope*" (father). The Bishop of Constantinople alone refused to submit. Later (A.D. 1054) this led to the *separation of the Greek-Catholic from the Roman-Catholic Church*. Pope Gregory VII. (A.D. 1073) especially strengthened the power of the papacy. He forbade the priests to marry, in order to completely separate them from the state and bind them to himself. He forbade the secular princes to invest abbots and bishops and even claimed not to be subject to any ruler, and to have power to remove and appoint emperors. About A.D. 1200 the papacy had attained to its greatest power. This is shown in the *crusades*, which were undertaken by Western princes and the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, in order to wrest Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre from the Mohammedans.

Together with the power of the papacy, the *power of error and darkness* increased in the Christian Church. Christ was relegated to the background. His representative on earth, the pope, took the foreground. Among the doctrines it was taught: That man could not stand before God, unless the pope, or the saints, especially Mary, the mother of our Lord, interceded for them; that the priests offered a sacrifice in atonement for the sins of the quick and dead in the Lord's Supper (sacrifice of the

mass); that we are not saved by grace, for Christ's sake, but must *merit* salvation by works; that the priests can prescribe the works by which we can make satisfaction for our sins; that with money we can release ourselves from the punishments of the Church (*indulgences*). They even permitted the people to believe that the forgiveness of sins could also be obtained by money. Through the frequent celebration of the mass the souls of the dead can be saved so much sooner from purgatory, into which all must enter after death for their purification. The *pope* is of *higher authority than Holy Scripture*, for he alone can truly explain this dark book.

6. Martin Luther and the Reformation of the Church. Many a good man had already perceived the corruption of the Church and had fought against it (Peter Waldus in France, John Wiclif in England, John Huss in Bohemia and Savonarola in Italy), but it was by Dr. Martin Luther that the Reformation, that is, the renewing of the Church, came about.

Martin Luther, the son of a poor miner, was born on the 10th day of November, 1483, at Eisleben, Thuringia. He attended the schools at Mansfield, Magdeburg and Eisenach, and entered the University of Erfurt at the age of 18 to study law. Although he was a jovial lad, he began his daily studies by devout prayer and attendance at services. As a motto for his whole life he had selected: "Diligent prayer is the half of study." The time for recreation he often spent in the libraries of the University. There he found a copy of the Latin Bible, and to his great astonishment he found that it contained more than the Gospels and Epistles of the Church Year. His great desire now was to possess, some time, so precious a book. Once, when he fell seriously ill, great fear concerning the salvation of his soul took possession of him. And when, besides, a dear friend of his was suddenly killed and he himself overtaken by a violent thunder storm on his journey, he entered the convent (A.D. 1505). He hoped thus to find a gracious God and peace of heart.

But, though he was very diligent in penitential exercises in the convent, his anguish of soul only increased. He wasted himself to skin and bones, for he desired to *merit* his salvation. Once, when he was overwhelmed with despair, an aged monk cheered him by saying: "My son, you must cling to the Apostles' Creed in all simplicity. I *believe* the forgiveness of sins. You must believe that God will *grant* it for *Christ's* sake, not only to David and Peter and others, but also to you". His superior, Staupitz, directed him to the merits of Christ. Especially in the Epistle to the Romans he found great comfort. There Luther learned, that we are saved and justified before God, not

by our own works, *but alone by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith* (Rom. 3:28). In this faith he found forgiveness and peace of heart.

In the year 1508 Luther was called away from the convent to a professorship at the University of Wittenberg. Two years later he journeyed to Rome, and with his own eyes he beheld the great corruption of the papal church. Here he again realized how truly the Scriptures teach: "The just shall live by *faith*." Soon after his return he was made a Doctor of Theology. He was obliged to promise on oath to make the Scripture his life-long study, to preach it and to defend it against every error. The oath was a source of great consolation to him when afterwards he was obliged to arise against the false doctrines of his own church. And this was soon to come to pass.

Pope Leo X. in 1517 commanded a general *indulgence* to be preached, in order to finish St Peter's at Rome with the proceeds. Tetzl, one of the indulgence vendors, came into the vicinity of Wittenberg. Now, when Luther insisted in the confessional upon sincere repentance, as he had always done, many of the penitents declared that they did not need to repent, since they had *purchased* indulgences. *Thereupon Luther, on the 31st day of October, 1517, nailed 95 theses against indulgences to the Castle Church at Wittenberg.* In these he taught, that true repentance consists in a change of *heart*, and that the forgiveness of sins cannot be bought with money, but must be received through repentance and faith in God's grace. These thesis were copied and printed. In two weeks' time they spread through all Germany, and in four weeks' time through all Europe, as though the very angels had been the messengers. This was the *beginning of the Reformation.*

Luther now proceeded on his course, exposed the pernicious errors and the whole corruption of the papal Church, committed the pope's bull of excommunication to the flames, and forever renounce his allegiance to the pope. By many works he defended the truth of the Gospel. When at the Diet of Worms, A.D. 1521, he was asked before the emperor and the princes to renounce whatever he had written against the pope and the church, he courageously answered: "Unless I am convinced by testimonies of the Scriptures, I can not and will not retract anything. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise; God help me. Amen." After the emperor had declared him an outlaw, he was secretly brought to the Wartburg by the friendly elector of Saxony. Here Luther began his *translation of Holy Scripture into the German language.* After this he introduced German in place of Latin services, issued a small hymn book, insisted upon the formation of German schools, and in 1529 prepared his *Small Catechism* for the young and common people, and his *Larger Catechism* for teachers

and preachers. Students in large numbers came to Wittenberg to be prepared as faithful preachers of the pure Gospel by him and his faithful co-laborer, Melanchthon. The church and school of Germany, as well as of the surrounding countries, thus had been renewed.

7. The good confession at Augsburg. Charles V., the German emperor, tried by all means to suppress this preaching of the Gospel. The princes, who at Speier protested against his acts, were therefore called "*Protestants*." At the Diet of Augsburg they prepared a short confession of their Evangelical belief. It consisted of twenty-eight articles and was written by Melanchthon. The chief doctrines of the Evangelicals are presented in the first twenty-one articles, and the abuses of the Catholic Church in the last seven. Because this confession was presented at Augsburg, it is called *The Augsburg Confession*. It is the most important confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. On June 25, 1530, it was publicly read before the emperor and princes. Hence, this is the birthday of our church.

8. Zwingli and Calvin, the Founders of the Reformed Church. In Switzerland, Ulrich Zwingli preached the Gospel, emboldened by Luther's works. It is to be regretted that he did not follow God's Word in every particular, especially that he denied the true presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper. For this reason Luther could not agree with him (Marburg A.D. 1529). After Zwingli's death (A.D. 1531), Calvin in Geneva became the central figure of the Reformation in Switzerland and France. A noble, learned and God-fearing man, he still did not give all honor to Holy Scripture in the doctrine of the Word and sacraments. He was also the chief defender of a false doctrine of election, teaching that God, from eternity, has predestined a part of mankind to salvation and the other part to condemnation, without regard to their living (but see 1 Tim. 2:4). Zwingli and Calvin are fathers of the *Reformed Church*, which spread from Switzerland and France to some parts of Germany, to Holland, England and Scotland. In our country the Reformed Church is represented by the Presbyterian and the Congregational Church, and so far as *doctrine* is concerned, the Episcopal Church also. The Methodists, the Baptists and most of the other denominations have sprung from it.

9. The Thirty Years' War. At the Council of Trent the Catholic Church had pronounced the Evangelical Church anathema. Through the influence of the *Jesuits*, the Protestants were often cruelly persecuted. In 1618 an open religious war broke out between the Catholic and the Protestant church, which lasted thirty years. In Germany the church and school were well-nigh destroyed, and the whole country was brought to

the verge of ruin. In 1648, chiefly through the courageous intervention of the *Swedes* (King Gustavus Adolphus and his chancellor, Oxenstierna), the *Treaty of Westphalia* was concluded, which recognized and confirmed the rights of the Evangelical Church.

10. Rebuilding of the Lutheran Church. After the Thirty Years' War many noble men united in their labors to rebuild the prostrate church. Among the most prominent are: Duke Ernest, of Gotha, Paul Gerhardt, Philip Spener and his pupil, August Hermann Francke. Francke founded the first orphans' home, constantly labored for the education of children in well-regulated schools and for the distribution of the Bible among the people. He also sent the first missionaries to the heathen. His son was very much concerned about the Germans who had immigrated to America. In 1742 he sent to them Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, who is rightly called the Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America. And when during the last century thousands of immigrants settled in the great West of our country and where spiritually destitute, faithful men of Germany again remembered us in our distress and helped us to build the Lutheran Church in the western portion of our great country. May this always be remembered by the Lutheran Church in America.

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