

Lesson 4 – Ten Commandments

All page references are for Luther's Small Catechism, the 2017 edition.

- I. Speaking on doctrine versus its use in practice [important distinction regarding pastoral practice]
- II. The Ten Commandments
 - A. The First Commandment [p.58]

You shall have no other gods.

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

- 1. What does it mean to have a god? [p.58]
 - 1. Luther defines a "god" as *"...that to which we look for all good and in which we find refuge in every time of need. To have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe him with our whole heart. As I have often said, the trust and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust are right, then your god is the true God. For these two belong together, faith and God. That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself is, I say really your God"*—Martin Luther, *Large Catechism on the 1st Commandment*
 - 2. READ Isaiah 45:20 and Matthew 10:37
 - 3. READ The Augsburg Confession, Article I. Concerning God
- 2. What are some examples of false gods?
- 3. Can anyone really be a true atheist? READ 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
- 4. What does it mean to fear, love and trust in God above all things?
[p.61]
 - 1. What about...
 - a. Human achievement?
 - b. Human goodness or devotion?
 - c. Money or possessions?
 - d. Pleasures of life?
 - e. Family?
 - 5. What are some examples of the 1st commandment being used as a curb, mirror, or guide?

- B. The Second Commandment [p.67]

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks.

1. What is the relationship between the _____ and the “tongue”?
READ Luke 6:43-45 and James 3:1-10
2. How is God’s name misused? [p.69]
 1. Thoughtlessly (meaninglessly)—Exodus 20:7
 2. _____ – Leviticus 24:16
 3. False swearing – Leviticus 19:12
 4. Satanic arts – Leviticus 19:31
 5. _____ – Jeremiah 23:12
 6. _____ – Matthew 7:21
3. How is God’s name honored? See Psalm 50:15
 1. Note how we use God’s name in the liturgy. What are some examples that come to mind?
4. Give examples of the Second Commandment’s use as a curb, a mirror, and a guide.

C. The Third Commandment [p.74]

Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

1. What is God’s purpose for this commandment?
2. What is the significance of the Sabbath for the Church today? READ Colossians 2:16-17 [p.77]
 1. We still need physical rest
 2. We still need spiritual rest from the burdens of sin (sabbath as a sign pointing to Jesus)
 3. We still need regular engagement with God’s word by which we the Holy Spirit sanctifies.
3. Why is gathering together for worship vital? [p.78]

1. God is present through the proclamation of His Word and administration of His sacraments. READ 1 Corinthians 10:16,
 2. How do we understand this commandment in an age of digital technology and online attendance? [good, better, best; unwise or sinful?]
4. What is valuable about liturgical worship (remember this is not a style term!)? [p.79]
1. What does this require of us in worship?
 2. What does it not require of us in worship?