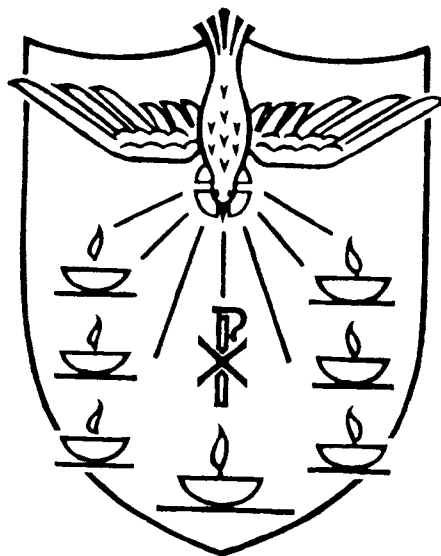


GOD ANSWERS FROM HIS WORD

H. C. ABRAM



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THE SMALL CATECHISM by Martin Luther

IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

PART ONE

The Ten Commandments

I am the Lord your God.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear, love, and trust God above anything else.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

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

What does this mean for us?

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

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear and love God so that we do not neglect His Word and the preaching of it, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Honor your father and your mother.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and others in authority, but respect, obey, love, and serve them.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not kill.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear and love God so that we do not hurt our neighbor in any way, but help him in all his physical needs.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear and love God so that in matters of sex our words and conduct are pure and honorable, and husband and wife love and respect each other.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not steal.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or property,

or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his property and means of making a living.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, or lie about our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain his actions in the kindest way.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear and love God so that we do not desire to get our neighbor's possessions by scheming or by pretending to have a right to them, but always help him keep what is his.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his manservant or his maidservant or his cattle or anything that is your neighbor's.

What does this mean for us?

We are to fear and love God so that we do not tempt or coax away from our neighbor his wife or his workers, but encourage them to remain loyal.
What does God say of all these commandments?
He says:
"I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments."

What does this mean for us?

God warns that He will punish all who break these commandments; therefore we are to fear His wrath and not disobey Him. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments; therefore we are to love and trust Him, and gladly do what He commands.

PART TWO

The Apostles' Creed

THE FIRST ARTICLE

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

What does this mean?

I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He has given me and still preserves

my body and soul with all their powers. He provides me with food and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all I need from day to day.

God also protects me in time of danger and guards me from every evil.

All this He does out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it.

Therefore I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

THE SECOND ARTICLE

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 does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ—true God, Son of the Father from eternity, and true man, born of the Virgin Mary—is my Lord.

At great cost He has saved and redeemed me, a lost and condemned person.

He has freed me from sin, death, and the power of the devil—

not with silver or gold, but with His holy and precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

All this He has done that I may be His own,

live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness,

just as He is risen from the dead and lives and rules eternally.

This is most certainly true.

THE THIRD ARTICLE

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

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.

But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel,

enlightened me with His gifts,
and sanctified and kept me in true faith.
In the same way He calls, gathers,
enlightens, and sanctifies
the whole Christian church on earth,
and keeps it united with Jesus Christ
in the one true faith.
In this Christian church day after day
He fully forgives my sins
and the sins of all believers.
On the last day He will raise me
and all the dead
and give me and all believers in Christ
eternal life.
This is most certainly true.

PART THREE *The Lord's Prayer*

THE INTRODUCTION

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

Here God encourages us to believe
that He is truly our Father
and we are His children.
We therefore are to pray to Him with
complete confidence
just as children speak to their loving
father.

THE FIRST PETITION

Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean?

God's name certainly is holy in itself,
but we ask in this prayer
that we may keep it holy.

When does this happen?

God's name is hallowed
whenever His Word is taught in its
truth and purity
and we as children of God live in
harmony with it.
Help us to do this, heavenly Father!
But anyone who teaches or lives
contrary to the Word of God
dishonors God's name among us.
Keep us from doing this, heavenly Father!

THE SECOND PETITION

Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean?

God's kingdom comes indeed
without our praying for it,
but we ask in this prayer
that it may come also to us.

When does this happen?

God's kingdom comes
When our heavenly Father gives us His
Holy Spirit,
so that by His grace we believe
His holy Word
and live a godly life on earth now and
in heaven forever.

THE THIRD PETITION

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

What does this mean?

The good and gracious will of God
is surely done without our prayer,
but we ask in this prayer
that it may be done also among us.

When does this happen?

God's will is done when He hinders
and defeats every evil scheme
and purpose
of the devil, the world, and our
sinful self,
which would prevent us from keeping
His name holy
and would oppose the coming of
His kingdom.
And His will is done
when He strengthens our faith
and keeps us firm in His Word as long
as we live.
This is His gracious and good will.

THE FOURTH PETITION

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

God gives daily bread, even without
our prayer, to all people, though sinful,
but we ask in this prayer
that He will help us to realize this
and to receive our daily bread
with thanks.

What is meant by "daily bread"?

Daily bread includes everything needed
for this life,
such as food and clothing, home
and property,
work and income, a devoted family,
an orderly community, good government,
favorable weather, peace and health,
a good name, and true friends
and neighbors.

THE FIFTH PETITION

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

What does this mean?

We ask in this prayer
that our Father in heaven would not hold
our sins against us
and because of them refuse to hear
our prayer.
And we pray that He would give us
everything by grace,
for we sin every day
and deserve nothing but punishment.
So we on our part will heartily forgive
and gladly do good to those who sin
against us.

THE SIXTH PETITION

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

God tempts no one to sin,
but we ask in this prayer that God
would watch over us and keep us
so that the devil, the world, and our
sinful self may not deceive us
and draw us into false belief, despair,

and other great and shameful sins.
And we pray that even though we are
so tempted
we may still win the final victory.

THE SEVENTH PETITION

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

We ask in this inclusive prayer
that our heavenly Father would save us
from every evil to body and soul,
and at our last hour would mercifully
take us
from the troubles of this world to Himself
in heaven.

THE DOXOLOGY

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

What does "Amen" mean?

Amen means *Yes, it shall be so.*

We say *Amen* because we are certain
that such petitions are pleasing to
our Father in heaven and are heard
by Him.

For He Himself has commanded us
to pray in this way
and has promised to hear us.

PART FOUR

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

1

What is Baptism?

Baptism is not water only,
but it is water used together with God's
Word and by His command.

What is this word?

In Matthew 28 our Lord Jesus Christ says:
"Go therefore and make disciples of all
nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

2

What benefits does God give in Baptism?

In Baptism God forgives sin,
delivers from death and the devil,
and gives everlasting salvation to all who
believe what He has promised.

What is God's promise?

In Mark 16 our Lord Jesus Christ says:
"He who believes and is baptized will
be saved;
but he who does not believe will be
condemned."

3

How can water do such great things?

It is not water that does these things,
but God's Word with the water and our
trust in this Word.
Water by itself is only water,
but with the Word of God it is a life-giving
water

which by grace gives the new birth
through the Holy Spirit.

St. Paul writes in Titus 3:

"He saved us . . . in virtue of His

own mercy,
by the washing of regeneration and renewal
in the Holy Spirit,
which He poured out upon us richly
through Jesus Christ our Savior,
so that we might be justified by His grace
and become heirs in hope of eternal life.
The saying is sure."

4

What does Baptism mean for daily living?
It means that our sinful self, with all its evil
deeds and desires,
should be drowned through daily
repentance;
and that day after day a new self should
arise
to live with God in righteousness and
purity forever.
St. Paul writes in Romans 6:
"We were buried therefore with Him
by Baptism into death,
so that as Christ was raised from the dead
by the glory of the Father,
we too might walk in newness of life."

PART FIVE

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

1

What is Holy Communion?
Holy Communion is the body and blood of
our Lord Jesus Christ given with bread
and wine, instituted by Christ Himself
for us to eat and drink.

Where do the Scriptures say this?
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul say:
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 He took
the cup after supper,
and when He had given thanks,
He gave it to them, saying,
"Drink of it, all of you;
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 you drink it,
in remembrance of Me."

2

What benefits do we receive from this sacrament?
The benefits of this sacrament are pointed
out by the words,
given and shed for you for the remission of sins.
These words assure us that in the sacrament
we receive forgiveness of sins, life,
and salvation.
For where there is forgiveness of sins,
there is also life and salvation.

3

How can eating and drinking do all this?
It is not eating and drinking that does this,
but the words, *given and shed for you for
the remission of sins.*

These words, along with eating and
drinking, are the main thing in
the sacrament.
And whoever believes these words
has exactly what they say, forgiveness
of sins.

4

*When is a person rightly prepared to receive
this sacrament?*
Fasting and other outward preparations
serve a good purpose.
However, that person is well prepared
and worthy who believes these words,
*given and shed for you for the remission
of sins.*
But anyone who does not believe these
words, or doubts them,
is neither prepared nor worthy,
for the words *for you* require simply
a believing heart.

PART SIX

The Office of the Keys

What is the "Office of the Keys"?
It is that authority which Christ gave
to His church
to forgive the sins of those who repent
and to declare to those who do not repent
that their sins are not forgiven.

What are the words of Christ?
Our Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples:
"Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive
the sins of any, they are forgiven;
if you retain the sins of any, they
are retained." (John 20:23)
"Truly, I say to you, Whatever you bind
on earth shall be bound in heaven,
and whatever you loose on earth shall
be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 18:18)

Confession

What is private confession?
Private confession has two parts. First,
we make a personal confession of sins
to the pastor, and then we receive
absolution, which means forgiveness as
from God Himself. This absolution we
should not doubt, but firmly believe
that thereby our sins are forgiven
before God in heaven.

What sins should we confess?
Before God we should confess that we
are guilty of all sins, even those which
are not known to us, as we do in the
Lord's Prayer. But in private confession,
as before the pastor, we should confess
only those sins which trouble us in
heart and mind.

What are such sins?
We can examine our everyday life according
to the Ten Commandments—for example,
how we act toward father or mother,
son or daughter, husband or wife,
or toward the people with whom we

work, and so on. We may ask ourselves
whether we have been disobedient
or unfaithful, bad-tempered or dishonest,
or whether we have hurt anyone by
word or deed.

How might we confess our sins privately?
We may say that we wish to confess our
sins and to receive absolution in God's
name. We may begin by saying, "I, a
poor sinner, confess before God that
I am guilty of many sins." Then we
should name the sins that trouble us.
We may close the confession with
the words, "I repent of all these sins
and pray for mercy. I promise to do
better with God's help."

What if we are not troubled by any special sins?
We should not torture ourselves with
imaginary sins. If we cannot think
of any sins to confess (which would
hardly ever happen), we need not name
any in particular, but may receive
absolution because we have already
made a general confession to God.

How may we be assured of forgiveness?
The pastor may pronounce the absolution
by saying, "By the authority of our Lord
Jesus Christ I forgive you your sins in
the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."
Those who are heavily burdened in
conscience the pastor may comfort and
encourage with further assurances from
God's Word.

Morning Prayer

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

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through
Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have
kept me this night from all harm and danger;
and I pray that You would keep me this day
also from sin and every evil, that all my
doings and life may please You. For into
Your hands I commend myself, my body
and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel
be with me, that the wicked Foe may have
no power over me. Amen.

Evening Prayer

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

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through
Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have
graciously kept me this day; and I pray that
You would forgive me all my sins where
I have done wrong, and graciously keep me
this night. For into Your hands I commend
myself, my body and soul, and all things.
Let Your holy angel be with me that the
wicked Foe may have no power over me.
Amen.

The Bible

1. What is the Bible?

2 Tim. 3:16. *All Scripture is inspired by God.*

Mark 7:10, 11, 13. *Jesus said, "For Moses said. . . But you say. . . making void the Word of God through your tradition."*

1 Thess. 2:13. *And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God.*

The entire Bible — the Old Testament, written by Moses and the prophets, and the New Testament, written by the evangelists and the apostles — is the Word of God. (Other names for the Bible are Holy Scripture, Holy Writ, the Book of Books, the Word of God.)

IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE: The Old Testament was written by Moses and the prophets in the Hebrew language. The New Testament was written by the apostles and the evangelists in the Greek language. The first book of the Bible was written about 1500 BC. The last book of the Bible was written about 100 AD. There are 39 books in the Old Testament, 27 books in the New Testament. The heart of Scripture — both Testaments — is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of the world. The Old Testament foretells the coming of Christ, the Messiah; the New Testament reveals the Christ promised by God. Martin Luther referred to Scripture as "the cradle of the Christ" and "the swaddling cloths of Jesus." Luther wrote, "If the Scriptures themselves, as a whole, claim to be the Word of God, they can be this only if they are, as a whole, interpreted in terms of Christ . . . Christ is Lord of the Scriptures." (Translation by Tappert) We do not worship Scripture but Scripture's Lord!

2. Why is the Bible the Word of God although it was written by men?

2 Pet. 1:21. *Men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*

2 Tim. 3:16. *All Scripture is inspired by God.*

1 Cor. 2:13. *And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit.*

John 17:17. *Thy Word is truth.*

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

The sacred writers wrote the Bible "by inspiration of God." God the Holy Spirit moved the men to write and put into their minds the very words which they wrote and the very thoughts which they expressed (verbal inspiration). Because all Scripture is inspired by God it is true and without error. The Bible contains all that we need to know about the way to salvation and what God would have us to do. We should not base our religious faith on any source other than Scripture such as reason or tradition.

3. For what purpose did God give us the Bible?

John 5:39. *You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to Me.*

2 Tim. 3:15. *The Sacred Writings are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

1 Pet. 2:2. *Like new born babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation.*

Luke 11:28. *Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.*

Titus. 1:9. *He must hold firm to the sure Word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it.*

Acts 4:20. *For we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.*

God gave us the Bible to “instruct us for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” and to train us for holy living. God gave us the Bible so that, holding to His sure Word, we may remain sound in doctrine and beware of false teachings and false teachers. We should diligently and reverently read and study the Bible, listen attentively when it is read and explained, believe it, and speak of it to others.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. What does the Bible teach about inspiration?
2. How much of the Bible is inspired?
3. In what languages was the Bible originally written?
4. What is the main purpose of the Bible?
5. How are we to use the Bible?

ANSWERS

1. The Bible teaches that it was verbally inspired by God in the languages in which the sacred writers wrote.
2. The entire Bible — from Genesis to Revelation — “all Scripture” is inspired by God.
3. The Old Testament was originally written in the Hebrew language. The New Testament was written in the Greek language.
4. The main purpose of the Bible is to show us the way to heaven through Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.
5. We should read the Bible, study it, hear it preached, believe it, live according to it, and bring its blessed teachings to others.

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Historical Books

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
First Samuel
Second Samuel
First Kings
Second Kings
First Chronicles
Second Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

Poetical Books

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon

Prophetical Books

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

THE NEW TESTAMENT

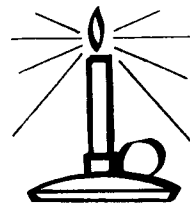
Historical Books

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
The Acts of the Apostles
Epistles

Romans
First Corinthians
Second Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
First Thessalonians
Second Thessalonians
First Timothy
Second Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
First Peter
Second Peter
First John
Second John
Third John
Jude

Prophetical Book

The Revelation of St. John



The Triune God

1. How do we know that there is a God?

Gen. 1:1. In the beginning God . . .

Ps. 14:1. The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds.

Heb. 3:4. For every house is built by some one, but the builder of all things is God.

Ps. 19:1. The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims His handiwork.

Rom. 2:15. They (the Gentiles) show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them.

All men may know that there is a God from the existence of the world and from the testimony of their own conscience (natural knowledge of God). The Bible calls a man a fool who says, "There is no God" (atheism, agnosticism). Since nature and conscience do not reveal who the true God is or how man may be saved, God has clearly revealed Himself to us in the Holy Scriptures (revealed knowledge of God).

2. What is God?

John 4:24. God is a spirit.

Luke 24:39. A spirit has not flesh and bones.

John 1:18. No one has ever seen God.

God is a spirit, that is, a personal being endowed with mind and will but without a body, and therefore invisible. The attributes of God best reveal Him to us. God is: ETERNAL (without beginning and without end) Ps. 90:1, 2; UNCHANGEABLE, Ps. 102:27; OMNIPOTENT (almighty, all-powerful) Matt. 19:26; OMNISCIENT (all-knowing) John 21:17; OMNIPRESENT (present everywhere) Jer. 23:24; HOLY (sinless and hating sin) Lev. 19:2; JUST (fair and impartial) Deut. 32:4; FAITHFUL (keeping His promises) 2 Tim. 2:13; BENEVOLENT (good, kind, desiring our welfare) Ps. 145:9; MERCIFUL (full of pity) Ps. 145:9; and GRACIOUS (showing undeserved kindness, forgiving) Ex. 32:6, 7.

3. Who is the only true God?

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

Matt. 28:19. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2 Cor. 13:17. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Matt. 3:16, 17. And when Jesus was baptized, He went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on Him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

The only true God is the Triune God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three distinct Persons in one Divine Being, or Essence (the Holy Trinity). The Father created all things and gave His only-begotten Son to be our Savior; the Son redeemed us by His suffering and death on the cross; the Holy Spirit creates faith in our hearts and sanctifies us in Jesus Christ.

4. How are we to understand the doctrine of the Holy Trinity?

1 Cor. 2:11. For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

1 Tim. 6:16. (God) dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen.

John 1:18. *No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has made Him known.*

It is impossible for us to understand the doctrine of the Trinity. It is unreasonable for us to try to fully understand our great God or to reject Him because we cannot fathom His Being. God has clearly revealed Himself to us in the Bible as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Triune God. We must humble ourselves before the mystery of the Trinity and accept God with an unquestioning faith.

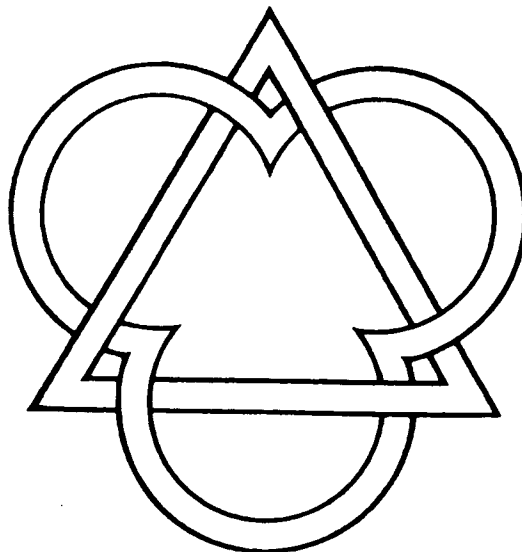
TO BELIEVE IN GOD, HOWEVER, REQUIRES MORE THAN JUST HEAD KNOWLEDGE. To really believe in God means that on the basis of the Scriptures I personally, **IN MY HEART**, know God as my gracious God in Christ Jesus (**KNOWLEDGE**); accept as true what He says and promises (**ASSENT**) and, trust in Him and rely on Him with firm confidence (**CONFIDENCE**).

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. How do we know there is a God?
2. What does it mean to believe in the Triune God?
3. Can we understand the mystery of the Trinity?

ANSWERS

1. From nature and his own conscience man has a natural knowledge of God. This is why nearly all men worship something. Since the natural knowledge of God is insufficient, God clearly revealed Himself to man in the Holy Scriptures.
2. Triune means three in one and one in three. We believe that God is a Triune God, namely, three distinct persons in one divine essence, the persons of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They are co-equal in majesty and power. The only true God is the Triune God.
3. No; but we believe it because the Bible teaches it.



The symbol for the Holy Blessed Trinity.

The Origin Of The World And Man

1. Why do we call God "Almighty" and "Maker"?

Gen. 1:1. *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

Gen. 1:3. *And God said, "Let there be . . .!"* (see also Gen. 1:6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24.)

Heb. 11:3. *By faith we understand that the world was created by the Word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear.*

Ex. 20:11. *In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them.*

Gen. 1:5. *And there was evening and there was morning, one day.* (see also Gen. 1:8, 13, 19, 23, etc.)

We call God "Almighty" and "Maker" because by His almighty Word He made all things out of nothing. God created "heaven and earth"; that is, everything in the universe and all creatures, visible and invisible. The Lord made heaven and earth in six days.

2. What is the foremost visible creature?

Gen. 2:7. *Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

Gen. 2:18-25. *(The creation of woman. Please read this passage.)*

Gen. 1:26, 27. *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

Col. 3:10. *. . . and put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator.*

Eph. 4:24. *. . . and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

The foremost visible creature is Man, because in the beginning God Himself especially formed his body of dust from the ground. God gave to man a rational soul and made him ruler over all the earth. He created man in His image which consisted in this, that man knew God and was perfectly happy in such knowledge, and that man was perfectly holy and blessed.

3. What does God still do for all His creatures?

Heb. 1:3. *. . . upholding the universe by His Word of power.*

Gen. 1:28. *And God blessed them (Adam and Eve), and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it."*

Ps. 145:15, 16. *The eyes of all look to Thee, and Thou givest them their food in due season. Thou openest Thy hand, Thou satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*

Ps. 91:10. *. . . no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.*

God preserves all things by His almighty Word. He provides us with all that we need to support this body and life. He guards and protects us from all evil.

4. What do we owe our Father in heaven for all this?

Gen. 32:10. *I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness which Thou hast shown to Thy servant. (Jacob)*

Ps. 139:14. *I praise Thee, for Thou art fearful and wonderful. Wonderful are Thy works. Thou knowest me right well.*

Ps. 118:1. *O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His steadfast love endures forever!*
 1 Peter 5:7. *Cast all your anxieties on Him; for He cares about you.*

Since God created us “out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy,” and still preserves us though we “do not deserve it,” it is our duty to thank and praise Him as long as He gives us life and breath.

FROM LUTHER’S SMALL CATECHISM: *The First Article of the Apostles’ Creed*

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

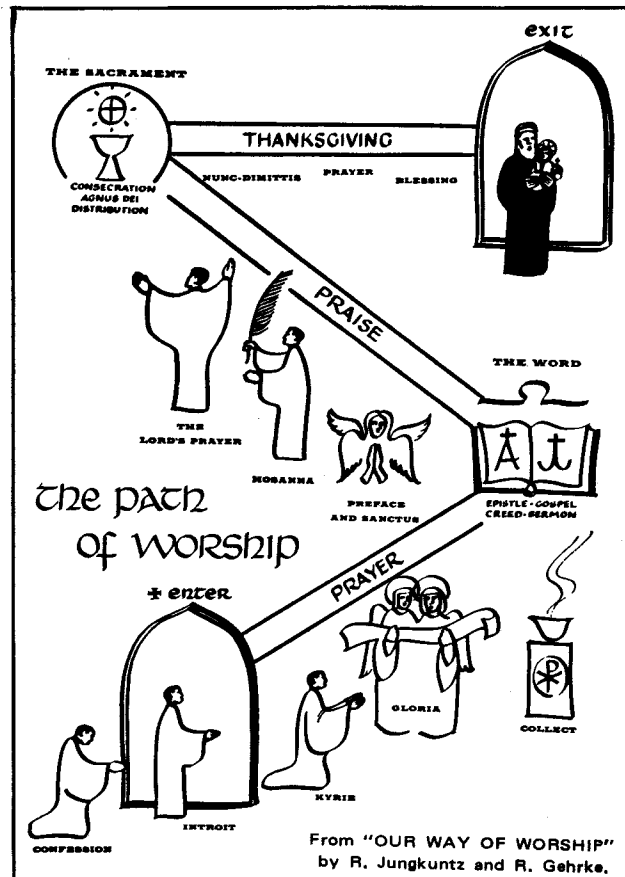
What does this mean? I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He has given me and still preserves my body and soul with all their powers. He provides me with food and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all I need from day to day. God also protects me in time of danger and guards me from every evil. All this He does out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it. Therefore I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. How did the world come into existence?
2. What is meant by “created in the image of God”?
3. How should we react to God’s providential care?

ANSWERS

1. Not by evolution but by the creative act of almighty God who made heaven and earth out of nothing by His almighty Word.
2. This means that man was made without sin and enjoyed perfect righteousness and holiness.
3. Dr. Luther says, “Therefore I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.”



Angels, Fall Of Man, Sin

1. When did God create the angels?

The Bible doesn't say expressly, however, since Ex. 20:11 mentions that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them," we must assume their creation to have taken place within that period of time. Of course, since everything God created was very good and holy (Gen. 1:31) there were in the beginning no evil angels.

2. What does the Bible tell us about the good angels?

Matt. 25:31. When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

Ps. 103:20, 21. Bless the Lord, O you His angels, you mighty ones who do His word, hearkening to the voice of His word! Bless the Lord, all His hosts, His ministers that do His will!

Ps. 91:11, 12. For He will give His angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

The good angels are holy spirits, confirmed in their bliss; are of great number and great power. They praise God, carry out His commands, and serve especially God's children.

3. What does the Bible tell us about the evil angels?

2 Peter 2:4. For God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of nether gloom to be kept until the judgment.

Eph. 6:11, 12. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness.

Matt. 13:25, 39. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat . . . and the enemy who sowed them is the devil.

1 Peter 5:8, 9. Be sober, be watchful! Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith.

The evil angels were created holy, but sinned and are forever rejected by God. They and their leader, called the devil or Satan, are cunning, powerful and of great number. They are enemies of God and of man and endeavor to destroy the works of God.

4. What does the Bible say about the Fall of man?

Gen. 2, 3. (The fall of Adam and Eve into sin. Read these chapters.)

1 John 3:4. Sin is lawlessness.

1 John 3:8. He who commits sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning.

Rom. 5:12. Sin came into the world through one man and death through sin and so death spread to all men because all men sinned.

The devil, in the form of a serpent, tempted man to transgress God's Law and thus to sin. Man of his own free will yielded to the temptation of the devil and sinned.

5. How has this affected the human race?

Gen. 5:3. Adam. . . became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image.

Ps. 51:5. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

John 3:6. Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh!"

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

1 Cor. 2:14. *The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

Eph. 2:1. *You were dead through the trespasses and sins.*

Rom. 8:7. *For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God.*

Rom. 6:23. *For the wages of sin is death.*

Matt. 7:17. *So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit.*

All men being descendants of Adam are conceived and born in sin and bear their sinful father's image. All men are by nature spiritually blind, dead, and are enemies of God. This natural condition of all men is called "original sin." Thus all men by nature are therefore subject to God's wrath and doomed to eternal death and damnation. Original sin causes us to commit all kinds of actual sins (sins of omission and commission).

6. Where alone can we find salvation from sin?

Gen. 3:14, 15. *The Lord God said to the serpent, ". . . I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."*

John 1:29. *Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*

Rom. 1:16. *For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.*

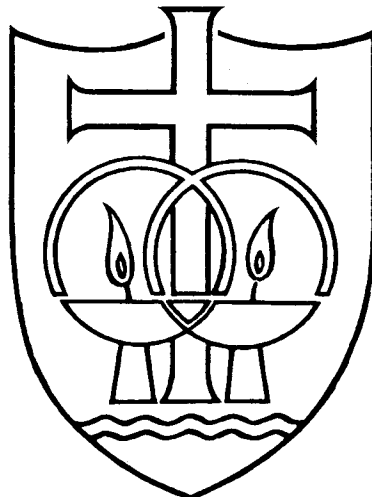
We find salvation only in the Gospel of Jesus Christ which tells us that Jesus fulfilled the Law and suffered and died for our sins. God spoke this Gospel to our first parents when He promised them a Savior as they were put out of paradise. Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and men of all ages are saved only by faith in Him.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. How did sin enter the world?
2. Does man still bear the divine image?
3. Does man ever regain the divine image?

ANSWERS

1. God is not the source or author of evil. The devils made themselves evil. We do not know how or why, but we do know that many angels fell away from God and led by Satan they now tempt man to sin.
2. No! Since the fall of Adam and Eve all human beings are conceived and born in sin.
3. After his conversion the divine image is partially restored in the true believer when his sins are forgiven, but only in heaven will the divine image be fully restored.



The symbol for Holy Matrimony.

The Law And The Gospel

1. What is the Law?

Lev. 19:2. *You shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy.*

Ex. 20:3, 7, etc. *You shall . . . You shall not. (The Ten Commandments)*

The Law is that doctrine of the Bible in which God tells us how we are to be, and what we are to do and not to do.

2. What is the Gospel?

1 John 4:9. *In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.*

John 3:16. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Rom. 1:16. *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.*

The Gospel is that doctrine of the Bible in which God tells us the good news of our salvation in Jesus Christ.

3. What is the difference between the Law and the Gospel?

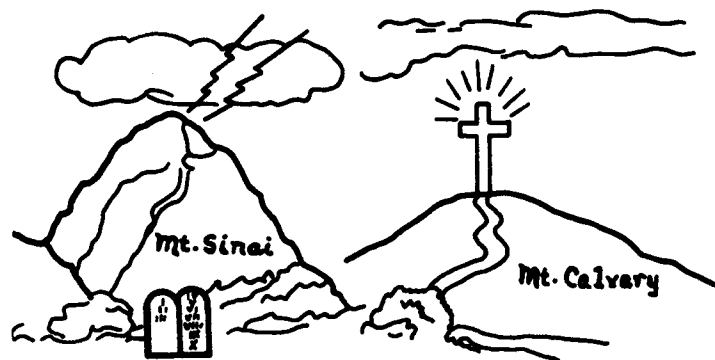
Luke 10:28. *Do this, and you will live. LAW*

John 19:30. *It is finished! (The words of Jesus on the Cross). GOSPEL*

Eph. 2:8. *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God — not because of works, lest any man should boast.*

Rom. 3:20. *For no human being will be justified in His sight by works of the Law, since through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.*

The Law tells us what we are to do and not to do; the Gospel teaches what God does for our salvation. The Law shows us our sins and God's wrath; the Gospel shows us our Savior and God's grace. The Law must be preached to all men, but especially to impenitent sinners; the Gospel must be preached to sinners who are troubled in their minds because of their sins.



The Ten Commandments

(One To Three)

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

"You Shall Have No Other Gods Before Me" (Ex. 20:3)

1. What is the meaning of this commandment?

Is. 42:8. I am the Lord, that is My name; My glory I give to no other, nor my praise to graven images.

John 5:23. All may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

Eph. 5:5. No one who is covetous (that is, an idolator) has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Matt. 22:37. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.

God FORBIDS us to have other gods instead of Him or beside Him (idolatry). Men have other gods when they regard and worship any creature as god (gross idolatry); when they believe in a God who is not the Triune God; and when they fear, love or trust in any person or thing as they should fear, love and trust in God alone (fine idolatry). God REQUIRES in the first commandment that we fear, love and trust in Him above anything else.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

"You Shall Not Take The Name Of The Lord, Your God, In Vain" (Ex. 20:7)

2. What does God FORBID and REQUIRE in the Second Commandment?

Ex. 20:7. The Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

Rom. 12:14. Bless and curse not.

Lev. 19:12. You shall not swear by My name falsely.

Lev. 19:31. Do not turn to mediums or wizards; do not seek them out, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.

Jer. 23:31. Behold, I am against the prophets, says the Lord, who use their tongues and say, "Says the Lord."

Matt. 15:8. This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.

Matt. 10:32. So everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before My Father who is in heaven. (Cf. Rom. 10:9, 10)

1 Thess. 5:17. Pray constantly! (Cf. Luke 18:1)

Ps. 103:1. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name.

In the second commandment God FORBIDS us to use His name in vain by: CURSING — speaking evil of God, mocking Him, asking Him to damn a person or thing. SWEARING — taking an oath thoughtlessly or in sinful, uncertain, or unimportant matters (an oath is permissible when it is necessary for the glory of God or the welfare of our neighbor). SUPERSTITION — using God's name to perform supernatural things with the help of the devil (conjuring, fortunetelling, consulting the dead). LYING AND DECEIVING — teaching false doctrine and saying that is is God's Word. Covering up an unbelieving heart or a sinful life by a show of piety (hypocrites). In the second commandment God REQUIRES that we use His name to pray, praise, and give thanks.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT
"Remember The Sabbath Day To Keep It Holy" (Ex. 20:8)

3. What does the Third Commandment teach about the Sabbath, Sunday, and Holy Days?

Matt. 12:8. For the Son of man is Lord of the sabbath.

Col. 2:16, 17. Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in question of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath. These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

Gal. 4:10, 11. You observe days, and months, and seasons, and years! I am afraid I have labored over you in vain.

Acts. 2:42. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

The Sabbath and other Holy Days were mandatory to Old Testament believers, however God Himself has abolished the Sabbath laws in the New Testament. God did not command us Christians to observe any special day. We observe Sunday and other Church Festivals in order to have time and opportunity for public worship.

4. What is the meaning of the Third Commandment in the New Testament sense?

John 8:47. He who is of God hears the words of God; the reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.

Luke 10:16. He who hears you hears Me, and he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.

Is. 66:2. But this is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at My word.

Ps. 26:8. O Lord, I love the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwells. (Cf. Ps. 27:4)

Col. 3:16. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.

Gal. 6:6. Let him who is taught the Word share all good things with him who teaches.

Mark 16:15. Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation.

The Third Commandment FORBIDS us to neglect the preaching and teaching of God's Word and the observance of the sacraments Christ has instituted. It REQUIRES that we hold preaching and the Word of God sacred; that we gladly hear it, learn it, and meditate upon it, that we honor and support the preaching and teaching of the Word of God; and that we diligently spread the Word of God through our mission work.

NOTE. The first three commandments (THE FIRST TABLE OF THE LAW) demand from every one of us love for God. *Matt. 22:37. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.* The last seven commandments (THE SECOND TABLE OF THE LAW) demand from every one of us love for all of our fellowmen. *Matt. 22:39. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* The fulfillment of all commandments must flow from the fear and love of God.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM:

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

You Shall Have No Other Gods.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear, love, and trust God above anything else.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

You Shall Not Take The Name Of The Lord Your God In Vain.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that we do not use His name superstitiously or use it to curse, swear, lie, or deceive, but call on Him in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Remember The Sabbath Day, To Keep It Holy.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that we do not neglect His Word and the preaching of it, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Honor Your Father And Your Mother.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and others in authority, but respect, obey, love and serve them.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

You Shall Not Kill.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that we do not hurt our neighbor in any way, but help him in all his physical needs.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

You Shall Not Commit Adultery.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that in matters of sex our words and conduct are pure and honorable, and husband and wife love and respect each other.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

You Shall Not Steal.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or property, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his property and means of making a living.

THE EIGHT COMMANDMENT

You Shall Not Bear False Witness Against Your Neighbor.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, or lie about our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain his actions in the kindest way.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor's House.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that we do not desire to get our neighbor's possessions by scheming, or by pretending to have a right to them, but always help him keep what is his.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor's Wife, Or His Manservant, Or His Maidservant, Or His Cattle, Or Anything That Is Your Neighbor's.

What does this mean for us? We are to fear and love God so that we do not tempt or coax away from our neighbor his wife or his workers, but encourage them to remain loyal.



The Ten Commandments

(Four To Ten)

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

**"Honor Your Father And Your Mother, That Your Days May Be Long
In The Land Which The Lord Your God Gives You. (Ex. 20:12)**

1. What does God FORBID and REQUIRE of us in the Fourth Commandment?

Prov. 30:17. The eye that mocks a father and scorns to obey a mother will be picked out by the ravens of the valley and eaten by the vultures.

Rom. 13:1, 2. Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God. . . he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed and those who resist will incur judgment.

Col. 3:20. Children obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. (Cf. Eph. 6:1)

Matt. 22:21. Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.

Acts 5:29. We must obey God rather than men. (Cf. Acts 4:19, 20)

God FORBIDS us to despise our parents and all superiors who by God's ordinance are placed over us in the home, in the state, at school, and at the place where we work. He REQUIRES that we honor our parents and other superiors by regarding them as God's representatives and that we serve and obey them in all things in which God has placed them over us.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

"You Shall Not Kill" (Ex. 20:12)

2. What does God FORBID and REQUIRE in the Fifth Commandment?

Gen. 9:6. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in His own image.

Matt. 26:52. Jesus said, "All who take the sword will perish by the sword."

Rom. 13:4. He (the government) does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute His wrath on the wrong-doer.

1 John 3:15. Any one who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

Eph. 4:32. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you. (Cf. Col. 3:12, 14)

God FORBIDS us to take the life of a fellowman (murder) or our own life (suicide). God FORBIDS us to hurt or harm our neighbor by doing or saying anything which may destroy, shorten, or embitter his life. He even FORBIDS us to bear anger and hatred in our hearts against our neighbor. God REQUIRES that we help our neighbor in all his physical needs, and that we are merciful, kind, and forgiving towards our neighbor.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

"You Shall Not Commit Adultery" (Ex. 20:14)

3. What is marriage?

Gen. 2:18-24.

Mark 10:7. Jesus said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one. So they are no longer two, but one." (Cf. Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31)

Gen. 1:28. And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply."

- Gen. 2:18. *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.*
 1 Cor. 7:2. *Because of the temptation to immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. (Cf. vv. 3-5)*
 Rom. 7:2. *A married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives. (Cf. vv 2b, 3)*
 Eph. 5:24, 25. *As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for it. (Cf. vv. 22, 23)*

Marriage was instituted by God and is the lifelong union of one man and one woman into one flesh. The purpose of marriage is the rearing of children, loving companionship, and the prevention of adultery. Married people are to love and honor each other, the husband his wife as his God-given helpmeet, and the wife her husband as her God-given head.

4. What does God FORBID and REQUIRE in the Sixth Commandment?

- Matt. 19:6. *What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.*
 Matt. 19:9. *Whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery.*
 Matt. 5:28. *But I (Jesus) say unto you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*
 Ps. 51:10. *Create in me a clean heart, O God.*

God FORBIDS the breaking of the marriage vow by unfaithfulness or desertion. He permits the innocent party to procure a divorce when the other party is guilty of fornication. God also FORBIDS all indecent and unclean thoughts, desires, words, and deeds. He REQUIRES that we should lead a pure and decent life in thoughts, desires, words, and deeds. We should fight to overcome all impure thoughts and desires with God's Word and prayer, work and temperance; and we should flee and avoid every opportunity for unchasteness. (Joseph resisted the temptation of Potiphar's wife and fled from her. Gen. 39:7-12)

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT "You Shall Not Steal" (Ex. 20:13)

5. What does God FORBID and REQUIRE in the Seventh Commandment?

- Jer. 22:13. *Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice; who makes his neighbor serve him for nothing, and does not give him his wages.*
 2 Thess. 3:10. *If any one will not work, let him not eat.*
 1 Pet. 4:10. *As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.*

God FORBIDS every kind of robbery, theft, and fraud, as well as sinful longing for anything that belongs to our neighbor. He REQUIRES that we help our neighbor to improve and protect his property and business, help him in every need, and rejoice when we see him prosper. We are only stewards of our possessions and we must use what God has entrusted to us to the glory of God and the benefit of our fellow-man.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT "You Shall Not Bear False Witness Against Your Neighbor" (Ex. 20:16)

6. What does God FORBID and REQUIRE in the Eighth Commandment?

- Prov. 19:5. *A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who utters lies will not escape.*
 Prov. 11:13. *He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a thing hidden.*
 James 4:11. *Do not speak evil against one another, brethren.*
 Zech. 8:17. *Do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.*
 Prov. 31:8, 9. *Open your mouth for the dumb, for the rights of all who are left desolate. Open your mouth, judge righteously, maintain the rights of the poor and needy.*
 1 Pet. 4:8. *Love covers a multitude of sins.*

God FORBIDS us to make any untrue statement against our neighbor in court. He FORBIDS us to lie about our neighbor or lie to him, or withhold the truth from him in order to harm him. God FORBIDS

us to betray or slander or defame our neighbor and thus injure or destroy his good name. We should not even think evil thoughts against our neighbor. God **REQUIRES** that we defend our neighbor against false accusations, speak well of him, and cover up his faults and explain in his favor whatever can be so explained.

THE NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS

"You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor's House" (Ex. 20:17)

"You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor's Wife, Or His Manservant, Or His Maidservant, Or His Ox Or His Ass, Or Anything That Is Your Neighbor's"

7. What does God FORBID and REQUIRE in the Ninth and Tenth Commandments?

Rom. 7:7. *I should not have known what it is to covet if the Law had not said, "You shall not covet."*

1 Tim. 6:8, 10. *If we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs.*

Ps. 37:4. *Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

In the last two commandments God **FORBIDS** coveting, that is, having a sinful desire for anything that belongs to our neighbor. In God's sight, every evil desire is sin and merits punishment. God **REQUIRES** that our hearts be filled with holy desires, that we are content with such things as He gives us, and that we help our neighbor and be of service to him in keeping his property.

WHO CAN KEEP THE TEN COMMANDMENTS PERFECTLY?

We often hear people say, "I believe that if I do what's right, that is sufficient. God will be satisfied, I will be saved."

Of course that is sufficient, but here's the problem. Can they do what's right — right according to God's standard in the Ten Commandments?

You have just finished studying the Ten Commandments. Do you think you can keep them perfectly? Even if you try very hard? Even if you lock yourself up in a cell the rest of your life? Please remember that even if you succeed in keeping the whole Law but transgress just one little commandment you would be guilty of all. Read James 2:10 and the first question in the next lesson.

When people say, "I believe if I do what's right, that is sufficient — I will be saved — I don't need Christ," they make the mistake of comparing themselves with other people. Because they are as good as, or even better than some people they know, they become very self-satisfied. If they would — as they are supposed to — compare themselves with God and His holiness, then with the Publican in the Temple they would cry out, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!"

A lighted match in a dark room seems very bright, but in the sunlight you can scarcely see it. Our good works done in this dark world seem bright, but in the light of God's holiness they are "like a polluted garment".

The answer to that tremendously important question above is: **NO ONE CAN KEEP GOD'S LAW PERFECTLY!** Our only hope for salvation is in accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior. He kept the Law perfectly for us and suffered and died for our sins.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM:

WHAT DOES GOD SAY OF ALL THESE COMMANDMENTS? He says: "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments."

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US? God warns that He will punish all who break these commandments. Therefore we are to fear His wrath and not disobey Him. But he promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. Therefore we are to love and trust Him, and gladly do what He commands.

The Fulfillment And Purpose Of The Law

1. How does God want us to keep His commandments?

Matt. 5:48. You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Cf. Lev. 19:2)

Jas. 2:10. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

Gal. 3:10. It is written, "Cursed be every one who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."

Rom. 6:23. For the wages of sin is death.

God wants us to keep His commandments perfectly in thoughts, desires, words, and deeds. God threatens all who transgress His commandments with His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation.

2. Can man keep God's commandments as He wants us to keep them?

Ps. 14:3. They have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt; there is none that does good, no, not one.

Is. 64:6. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.

Phil. 3:12. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect.

Ps. 143:2. Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for no man living is righteous before thee.

Since the fall into sin, natural man cannot keep the Law of God at all. Even Christians can keep it only imperfectly.

3. Can anyone, then, be saved by the Law?

Gal. 3:11. No man is justified before God by the law.

No one can be saved or get to heaven by means of the Law.

4. What, then, is the purpose of the Law?

1 Tim. 1:9. The law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient.

Rom. 3:20. For no human being will be justified in His sight by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Rom. 7:7. I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."

The purpose of the Law is three fold: first, the Law checks to some extent the coarse outbursts of sin and thereby helps to keep order in the world (a curb). Secondly, the Law shows us our sins (a mirror); this is the chief purpose. Thirdly, the Law serves as a guide for holy living (a rule). The Lutheran Confessions say, "The Law is always accusing us" (*Lex semper accusans*). The Law does not make bad people good. The Law is like a muzzle on a dog. The muzzle controls to some extent the dog's behavior, but it doesn't change the dog's disposition. Only the Gospel, the Good News of God's great love and forgiveness through Christ, changes the sinful heart of people and enables them to please God.

The Gospel tells us that Christ, as our Substitute, fulfilled the Law perfectly for us, and suffered and died for our transgressions of the Law. Rom. 10:4 says, "*Christ is the end of the Law, that everyone who has faith may be justified,*" and Gal. 3:13 says, "*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.*"

The Deity Of Jesus Christ

1. Did the Savior (Messiah) promised in the Old Testament really come?

Luke 2:11. *For to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ, the Lord.*

John 4:25, 26. *The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming, He who is called Christ; when he comes, He will show us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."*

Luke 24:44. *Everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.*

Matt. 1:21. *She will bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.*

Acts 4:12. *And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*

Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, or the Christ, and He is the only Savior of all mankind. (Other names for Jesus Christ are: Lord, Redeemer, Savior, The Word, Son of God, Son of Man, Emmanuel.)

2. What does God answer from His Word concerning the deity of Jesus Christ?

1 John 5:20. *This is the true God, and eternal life.*

Titus. 2:13. . . . *awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. (See also 2 Peter 1:1 and Hebrews 1:8, 9.)*

John 20:28. *Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!"*

Rom. 8:32. *He (God) who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all. (See also John 3:16 and 1 John 4:9 "Only Son" and Matthew 17:5 "My beloved son".)*

John 1:1. *In the beginning was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him.*

Heb. 13:8. *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (UNCHANGABLE)*

Matt. 28:20. *Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age. (OMNIPRESENCE)*

John 21:17. *Lord, you know everything! (OMNISCIENCE)*

Matt. 28:18. *All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. (ALL-POWERFUL)*

John 5:23. *He who does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father who sent Him.*

Heb. 1:6. *Let all God's angels worship Him.*

Jesus Christ is true God because the Scriptures ascribe to Him divine names, divine attributes, divine works, and divine honor and glory.

3. Why do we believe that Jesus Christ is also true Man?

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

Luke 24:39. *See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have.*

Matt. 26:38. *My soul is very sorrowful, even to death.*

Luke 2:7. (Jesus was born) Mark 4:38. (Jesus slept) Matt. 4:2. (Jesus hungered) John 19:28. (Jesus thirsted) John 11:35. (Jesus wept)

Matt. 27, 28. (Jesus suffered and died)

Jesus Christ is also true Man because the Scriptures expressly call Him Man, ascribing to Him a human body and soul and human feelings and actions.

4. What two natures then are united in Christ?

Matt. 16:13, 16. *Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

1 Tim. 2:5. *"... the Man Christ Jesus."*

Col. 2:9. *In Him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily. (Cf. Phil. 2:5-11)*

The divine and the human natures are united in Christ, both natures together forming one undivided and indivisible person (personal union).

5. Why was it necessary for our Savior to be true Man?

Gal. 4:4, 5. *But when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*

Heb. 2:14. *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is the devil.*

Our Savior had to be true Man so that He might take our place under the Law, and that He might be able to suffer and die in our stead.

6. Why was it necessary for our Savior to be true God?

Rom. 5:19. *By one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.*

Mark 10:45. *For the Son of Man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.*

1 Cor. 15:55, 57. *O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Cf. Heb. 2:14 above)*

Our Savior had to be true God so that His fulfilling of the Law might be sufficient for all men; that His life and death might be a sufficient ransom for our redemption; and that He might be able to overcome death and the devil for us.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM: *The Second Article of the Apostles' Creed*

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.

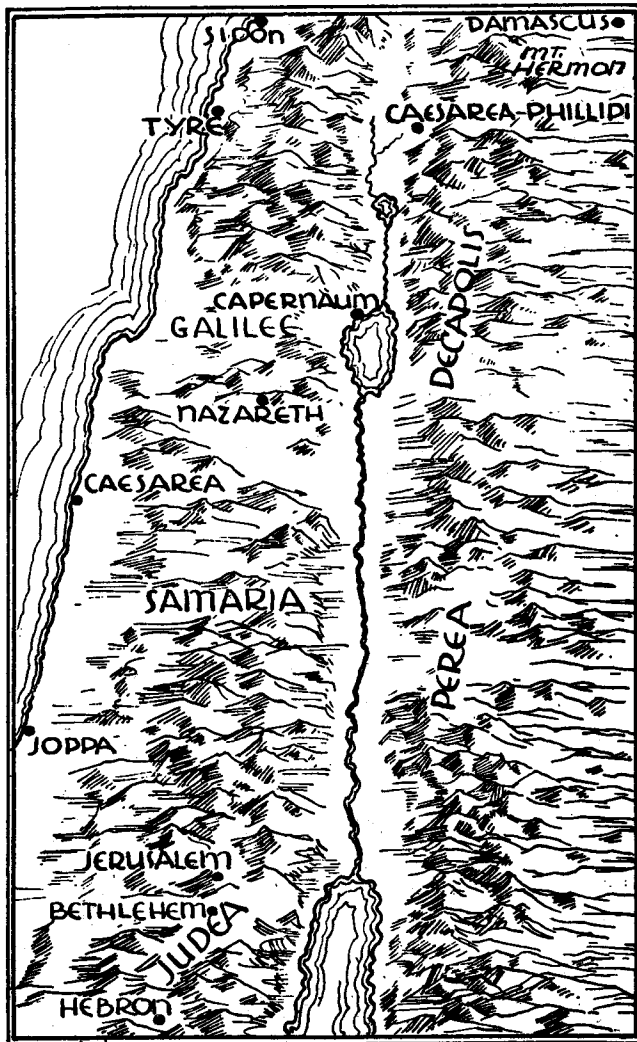
What does this mean? I believe that Jesus Christ — true God, Son of the Father from eternity, and true man, born of the Virgin Mary — is my Lord. At great cost He has saved and redeemed me, a lost and condemned person. He has freed me from sin, death, and the power of the devil — not with silver or gold, but with His holy and precious blood and His innocent suffering and death. All this He has done that I may be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead and lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

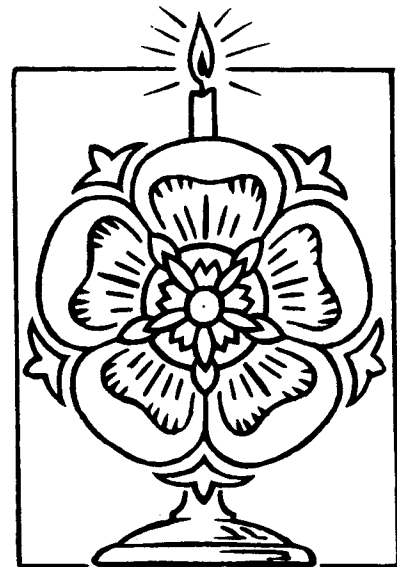
1. Who is Jesus Christ?
2. What two natures are united in Him?
3. Why do you believe that Jesus Christ is true God?
4. Why do you believe that Jesus Christ is true man?
5. Why was it necessary for our Savior to be true God?
6. Why was it necessary for our Savior to be true man?
7. What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?

ANSWERS

1. Jesus Christ is true God and true man, my Savior.
2. The divine nature and the human nature.
3. He was begotten of the Father from eternity.
4. He was born of the Virgin Mary.
5. That He might overcome sin, death, and the power of the devil.
6. That He might be under the Law, and suffer and die in my stead.
7. He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.



A Map of Palestine at the time of Christ.



The Messianic Rose, a symbol for the Promised Messiah.

Our Savior In His Humiliation

1. What do we mean by Christ's State of Humiliation?

Phil. 2:5-8. . . .Christ Jesus, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

Christ's State of Humiliation consisted in this, that according to His human nature, He did not always and fully use the divine power and majesty which He possessed. The words of the Second Article describing His State of Humiliation are: "Conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried."

2. What do the Scriptures teach of the conception and birth of Christ?

Luke 1:35. The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

Matt. 1:20. Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Matt. 1:18. . . .His mother Mary. . . .was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures teach that by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit, Christ, the Son of God, received His human body and soul in the Virgin Mary; He was born of the Virgin Mary a true man.

3. What do the Scriptures teach of the suffering and death of Christ?

Is. 53:3. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.

2 Cor. 8:9. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich.

John 19:1-3. Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and arrayed Him in a purple robe; they came up to Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck Him with their hands.

John 19:16-18. Then he handed Him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha. There they crucified Him.

Matt. 27:46. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice. . . "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (He suffered the tortures of the damned in hell.)

John 19:30. When Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, "It is finished"; and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

The Scriptures teach that during His earthly life Christ suffered poverty, contempt, and persecution. Under Pontius Pilate Jesus suffered extreme agony of body and soul. He died on the accursed tree of the cross. Christ's body was laid in the grave and remained there to the third day, but without seeing corruption or decay.

4. For what purpose did Christ humble Himself?

Rom. 5:19. By one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Is. 53:5. He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; . . . and with His stripes we are healed.

2 Cor. 5:21. For our sake God made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

Gal. 3:13. *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.*
2 Tim. 1:10. *Christ abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.*
1 John 3:8 *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.*

Christ humbled Himself to redeem lost and condemned mankind. He has redeemed us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. Jesus has taken away all our guilt and suffered all our punishment. He has freed us from the slavery of sin. He has conquered death so that now we need not fear temporal death, since eternal death has no power over us. He has conquered the devil and now with His help we can overcome the temptations of the devil.

5. How does Christ's work of redemption benefit us?

1 John 2:2. *Jesus Christ. . . is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*
2 Peter 2:1. *They deny the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.*
John 3:16. *Whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

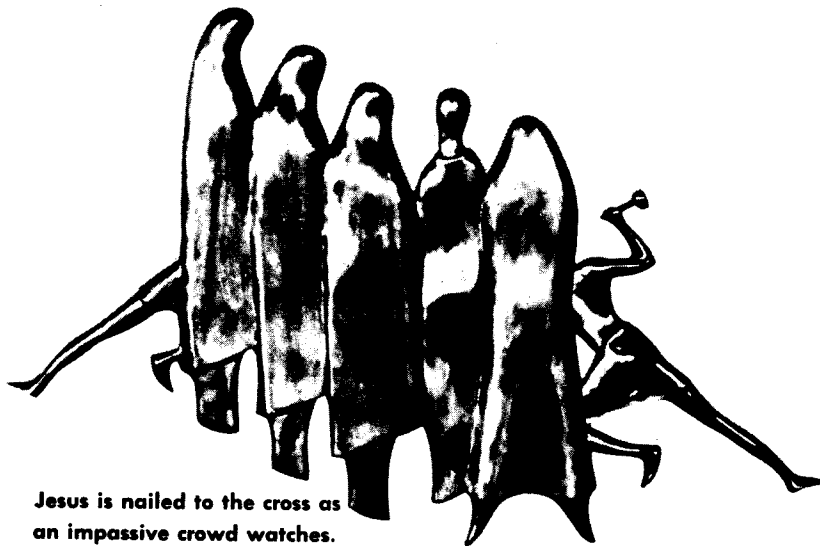
Christ redeemed the whole world, all human beings, without a single exception. Only those benefit, however, who accept Christ as their personal Savior by faith. Christ suffered all that He did as man's Substitute. He has atoned, or made satisfaction, for our sins by paying the penalty of our guilt.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. From what has Jesus redeemed you?
2. What price did Jesus pay for your redemption?
3. For what purpose has Jesus redeemed you?

ANSWERS

1. From the dominion and punishment of sin, the sting of death, and the ownership of Satan.
2. His holy, precious blood.
3. That I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.



Jesus is nailed to the cross as an impassive crowd watches.

From Robert Dunlap's Passion sculptures, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Millinocket, Maine

Our Savior In His Exaltation

1. What is meant by Christ's State of Exaltation?

Phil. 2:9-11. Therefore God has highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Christ's State of Exaltation consists in this that, according to His human nature, He always and fully uses the divine attributes which He possesses. The words of the Second Article which speak of the State of Exaltation are: "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.

2. What do the Scriptures teach of Christ's descent into hell?

1 Pet. 3:18, 19. Christ was put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; in which He went and preached to the spirits in prison.

Christ, having been made alive in His grave, descended into hell, not to suffer but to proclaim His victory over His enemies.

3. What do the Scriptures teach of Christ's resurrection?

1 Cor. 15:4-8. He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared also to me.

Jesus Christ victoriously rose from the grave on the third day and showed Himself alive to His disciples. During the forty days following His resurrection Christ appeared at least eleven times to individuals and groups of disciples, thereby convincing them beyond a doubt that He was risen indeed.

4. Why is the resurrection of Christ of such importance and comfort to us?

Rom. 1:4. He was designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead.

John 2:19, 21. Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" . . . He spoke of the temple of His body.

1 Cor. 15:17. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. (See also 14-15, 18-20)

Rom. 4:25. Christ was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

John 14:19. Because I live, you will live also.

John 11:25, 26. I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.

Christ's resurrection definitely proves: 1. HE IS THE SON OF GOD. 2. It proves that His doctrine is the truth. 3. It proves that God the Father has accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world. 4. It proves that all believers shall rise unto eternal life.

5. What do the Scriptures teach of Christ's ascension into heaven?

Luke 24:50, 51. He led them out as far as to Bethany, and lifting up His hands, He blessed them. While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven.

Acts 1:9-11. *And when He had said this, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven."*

Eph. 4:10. *He who descended is He who also ascended far above all the heavens.*

John 14:3. *I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also.*

Christ, according to His HUMAN NATURE, visibly ascended to heaven and entered into the glory of His Father as our Forerunner.

6. What do the Scriptures teach of Christ's sitting at the right hand of God the Father?

Eph. 1:20, 22. *God made Him sit at His right hand in the heavenly places . . . and has put all things under His feet and has made Him the Head over all things for the church.*

1 John 2:1. *If any one does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Rom. 8:34. *Christ Jesus . . . is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.*

Matt. 22:44. *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit at My right hand till I put Thy enemies under Thy feet.*

The Scriptures teach that Christ, also according to His human nature, now rules and fills all things with divine power and majesty; sends men to preach the Gospel of redemption; intercedes (pleads) for His Church, and as the Head of the Church rules the world in the interest of the Church.

7. What is the purpose of Christ's entire work of redemption?

Rev. 5:9. *For Thou wast slain and by Thy blood didst ransom men for God.*

2 Cor. 5:15. *And He died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised.*

Luke 1:74, 75. *That we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.*

John 3:16. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

The purpose of Christ's entire work of redemption is that we might be His own; serve Him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life; and that we might have eternal life with Him in heaven.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. What was Jesus' reason for descending into hell?
2. Why is Easter an especially happy day for me?
3. Why did Jesus ascend into heaven?
4. Shall we ever see Jesus?
5. Why are we happy to know that Jesus will come again?
6. Which prayer do you say for His return?

ANSWERS

1. He wished to show Himself to hell as its conqueror.
2. I know that Jesus the risen Christ has saved me from sin, death, and the power of the devil.
3. To take possession of His glory; to be our Advocate with His Father; to prepare a place for us.
4. Yes; we shall see Him on the Last Day.
5. Because then we shall live and reign with Him to all eternity.
6. "Thy kingdom come!"



The Holy Spirit And His Work

1. What took place on the day of Pentecost?

Acts 2:1-4. When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The exalted Christ fulfilled His promise and poured out the Holy Spirit upon His disciples.

2. Who is the Holy Spirit?

Matt. 28:19. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person in the Holy Trinity, true God with the Father and the Son. (Other names for the Holy Spirit are: Spirit of God, Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, and Holy Ghost.)

3. What is the work of the Holy Spirit?

Acts 16:31. Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.

1 Cor. 12:3. No one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit brings us to faith in Jesus Christ, our savior, and imparts to us the blessings of Christ's redemption.

4. Why is it necessary that the Holy Spirit create faith in us?

1 Cor. 2:14. The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

Eph. 2:1. You were DEAD through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked.

Rom. 8:7. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God.

Eph. 2:8, 9. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God — not because of works, lest any man should boast.

We are by nature spiritually blind, dead, and enemies of God, and therefore cannot bring ourselves to faith in Christ, or even help along in doing so.

5. How does the Holy Spirit create faith in us?

2 Thess. 2:14. He called you through our Gospel.

Rom. 10:17. So faith comes from what is heard . . . by the preaching of Christ.

Rom. 1:16. For I am not ashamed of the Gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.

John 3:7. (Jesus said) You must be born anew. (Cf. v. 3-6)

The Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel, inviting us to partake of the blessings of Christ's redemption which are offered in the Gospel. The Holy Spirit, by the same powerful Gospel, works in our hearts that faith by which we accept Christ and His salvation. This work of the Holy Spirit is called conversion, or regeneration (new birth).

6. How may a person know whether he is converted?

Acts 16:29-31. And . . . trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

We learn from the story of the jailor of Philippi that a person is converted (1) if he is sorry for his sins and (2) if he believes and trusts in Jesus for his salvation.

OTHER TASKS THE SPIRIT PERFORMS . . .

The Holy Spirit also sanctifies us; that is, He renews our hearts by faith so that we can now overcome sin and do good works. (2 Cor. 5:17. *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Eph. 2:10. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works. Cf. 1 Thess. 4:3*) A good work in the sight of God is everything that a child of God does, speaks, or thinks in faith according to the Ten Commandments to the glory of God and for the benefit of his neighbor. (John 15:5. *I am the Vine, and you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. Heb. 11:6. Without faith it is impossible to please Him.*) The Holy Spirit, by the Gospel, also KEEPS us in the true faith. (1 Pet. 1:5; Phil. 1:6)

The Holy Spirit seriously desires to bring all men to salvation. (Ezek. 33:11. *As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and live. 1 Tim. 2:4. (God) desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*) However, most men stubbornly resist the Word and Spirit of God and thus are lost by their own fault. (Acts 7:51; Matt. 23:37) We are saved WHOLLY by God's grace or lost WHOLLY by our own fault.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM: *The Third Article*

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

What does this mean? I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it united with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church day after day He fully forgives my sins and the sins of all believers. On the last day He will raise me and all the dead and give me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. Who is your Guide to Jesus?
2. Who is the Holy Spirit?
3. What is the pathway through which the Holy Spirit leads you to Jesus?
4. Why can you not find Jesus by yourself?
5. What has the Holy Spirit done to bring you to Christ?
6. Is the Holy Spirit willing to work this in everyone who hears the Gospel?
7. Why, then, are many people lost?
8. If then these people are lost, whose fault is it?
9. On the other hand, if a person is saved, who receives all the credit?

ANSWERS

1. My Guide to Jesus is the Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.
3. The Word of God. (audible and visible)
4. By nature I am spiritually blind, dead, and an enemy of God.
5. He has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.
6. Yes.
7. They resist the Holy Spirit.
8. Their own fault.
9. The Holy Spirit.

The Church

1. What is the holy Christian Church?

Eph. 2:19-22. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Rom. 12:4, 5. For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Rom. 8:9. But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you. Any one who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to Him.

The holy Christian Church (or the communion of saints) is the whole number of believers in Christ; for all believers, and only believers, are members of this Church (the invisible Church).

2. Why, in the Creed, do we confess "I believe" in the Church?

Luke 17:20, 21. Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Lo, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

2 Tim. 2:19. But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His."

Matt. 16:18. And I (Christ) tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it.

We confess "I believe" in the Church because the Church is invisible, since no man can look into another's heart and see whether he believes. However, we are assured by the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit at all times maintains and preserves a congregation of believers.

3. How many churches are there?

Eph. 4:3-6. (Endeavor) to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Col. 1:18. He is the Head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything He might be pre-eminent.

1 Cor. 3:11. For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

There is only one holy Christian Church; for all believers are a communion of saints, or one spiritual body, whose one and only head is Christ. It is called the Christian Church because it is build upon Christ, its one and only foundation. This holy Christian Church is found wherever the Gospel is in use; for according to God's promise His Word shall not be preached in vain. (Is. 55:10, 11)

4. What is the visible Church and which one should I join?

Matt. 13:47, 48. The kingdom of heaven is like a net which was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind; when it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into vessels but threw away the bad.

Matt. 28:20. Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, to the close of the age.

Matt. 15:9. In vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.

The visible Church is the whole number of those who use the Word of God and profess the Christian faith, but among whom, besides the true Christians, there are also hypocrites. That denomination is the true visible Church which has, teaches, and confesses the entire doctrine of the Word of God and administers the Sacraments according to Christ's institution.

5. When do we use the doctrine of the Church properly?

2 Cor. 13:5. *Examine yourselves, to see whether you are holding to your faith.*

Matt. 10:32, 33. *So everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before My Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny before My Father who is in heaven.*

John 8:31. *If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples.*

Acts 2:42. *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

Acts 8:4. *Those who were scattered went about preaching the Word.*

1 Cor. 9:14. *The Lord commanded that those who proclaim the Gospel should get their living by the Gospel.*

Matt. 7:15. *Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.*

Rom. 16:17. *I appeal to you brethren, to take note of those who create dissensions and difficulties, in opposition to the doctrine which you have been taught; avoid them!*

We must make certain that we are members of the invisible church through a true and sincere faith in Christ, our Redeemer. We must join and faithfully adhere to the church which teaches the Word of God in purity. We must do all in our power to maintain, promote, and extend this church by prayer, personal mission work, service, and financial support. We must avoid all erring churches and all organizations that profess a false religion. (2 Cor. 6:14-18)

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. What is the Church?
2. Who are members of the Church?
3. Why is the Church invisible to us?
4. How many visible churches are there?
5. Which must be the true visible church?
6. What are the fundamental teachings of the Lutheran Church?

ANSWERS

1. The Church is the communion of saints or the whole number of believers in Christ.
2. All who have faith in Christ.
3. We cannot look into another's heart and see whether he believes.
4. There are hundreds of them.
5. The Church-on-the-Bible.
6. (1) The Bible is the Word of God. (2) Jesus is the only Savior. (3) We are saved by believing in Jesus and being baptized.



The Forgiveness Of Sins

1. Why, in the Creed, do we say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins?"

Ps. 51:5. *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

Ps. 19:12. *Who can discern his errors? Clear thou me from hidden faults.*

Is. 59:2. *Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God.*

Ps. 130:4. *There is forgiveness with Thee.*

Ps. 103:2. *Bless the Lord, O my soul . . . who forgives all your iniquity.*

The Bible assures us that God daily and richly forgives all sins to all believers. Man desperately needs the forgiveness of sins because he is conceived and born in sin; because even after his conversion he continues to falter under the demands of the Law; and because our sins, left unforgiven, will keep us out of heaven.

2. How does God forgive our sins?

2 Cor. 5:21. *For our sake He (God) made Him (Christ) to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.*

1 John 2:2. *He is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

1 Cor. 5:19. *God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them. (Cf. 2 Cor. 5:5; John 1:29)*

God no longer charges our sins to us, but declares us righteous or just. (JUSTIFICATION) God charged the sins of the whole world to Christ, man's Substitute. When Christ died He rendered full satisfaction to God for all sins, and God declared the whole world to be righteous. (GENERAL JUSTIFICATION) GOD OFFERS US THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS EARNED BY CHRIST IN THE GOSPEL, THROUGH THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.

3. How does the sinner accept the forgiveness of sins?

Rom. 3:28. *We hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of Law.*

Gen. 15:6. *(Abram) believed the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.*

Rom. 1:17. *He who through faith is righteous shall live.*

The sinner accepts the forgiveness of sins and is justified when he personally, in his heart, believes the Gospel promise. (INDIVIDUAL JUSTIFICATION)

4. What, then, in brief do the Scriptures teach of the forgiveness of sins?

Rom. 3:22-24. *For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, they are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.*

We receive forgiveness and are justified before God, not by our works, but by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith. We should therefore daily repent and pray for forgiveness of sins.

5. Why can and should we be certain of the forgiveness of our sins and our salvation?

Rom. 8:38, 39. *For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Every believer can and should be sure of the forgiveness of his sins and of his salvation because God's promise is sure.

PLEASE NOTE! The Church must always firmly maintain this doctrine of the justification of the sinner before God, by His grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, because:

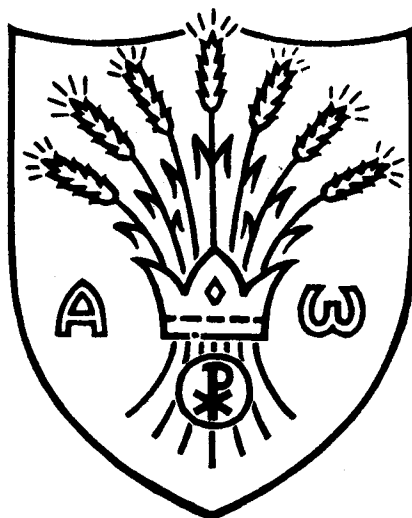
1. It is the chief doctrine of the Christian religion.
2. It distinguishes the Christian religion from all false religions which all teach justification by works.
3. It is the only doctrine that can give enduring comfort to poor sinners.
4. Only in completely maintaining this doctrine does God alone receive all honor and glory for our salvation.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. Is there anything in or about you to deserve forgiveness?
2. For whose sake does God forgive us our sins?
3. What has Jesus done for you?
4. For whom has Jesus won forgiveness?
5. Where does God tell us that He has forgiven us?
6. What then is the central teaching of the Gospel?

ANSWERS

1. No, I receive forgiveness according to the riches of God's grace.
2. For Jesus' sake.
3. He has lived and died for me.
4. For all men.
5. In the Gospel.
6. This, that all who believe receive forgiveness of sins and are justified before God, not by works, but by grace, for Jesus' sake, through faith.



The symbol for All Saints. The Harvest of the Lord mentioned in His parables (Matthew 13:30 & 39).

The Sacrament Of Baptism

1. Who instituted Holy Baptism?

Matt. 28:18-20. *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."*

Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. (By a SACRAMENT we mean (1) a sacred act, instituted by God Himself; (2) in which there are certain external means (3) connected with His Word; (4) and by which God offers, gives, and seals unto us the forgiveness of sins which Christ has merited. There are only two such sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.)

2. What does it mean to baptize?

Matt. 3:11. *I baptize you with water.*

Matt. 28:19. *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

To baptize means to apply water in any manner in the name of the Triune God. Where the doctrine of the Trinity is denied, there is no Baptism. (The use of the Greek word *baptizein* in the New Testament clearly indicates that it need not be interpreted exclusively to mean immersion.)

3. Through whom does the Church administer Baptism?

1 Cor. 4:1. *This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

The Church administers Baptism through the called ministers of Christ. (In cases of emergency and in the absence of the pastor any Christian should baptize. Simply speak the person's name and apply water saying, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.")

4. Who is to be baptized?

Matt. 28:19. *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them.*

All nations, that is, all human beings, young as well as old, are to be baptized.

5. How do you prove that infants, too, are to be baptized?

Matt. 28:19. *Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them.*

Acts 2:38, 39. *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children.*

John 3:5. *Jesus said, "Unless one is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."*

Mark 10:13-16. *And they were bringing children (Greek "paidia" which can mean "little children" — Luke 18:15 uses the Greek word "ta brephee" which means "babes" or "sucklings". RSV translates Luke 18:15 "even infants") to Him that He might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it He was indignant, and said to them, "Let the children come to Me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them.*

Matt. 18:6. *Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.*

The Scriptures clearly teach that little children should be baptized because they are included in the words *all nations*; because Holy Baptism is the only means by which infants, who must also be born again to enter the kingdom of God, can ordinarily be regenerated and brought to faith; and, because Jesus plainly states that little children can believe in Him. (Baptism has taken the place of circumcision, which was administered to infants when they were eight days old. Col. 2:11, 12. The apostles baptized whole families. Acts 16:15, 33. Acts 18:8. 1 Cor. 1:16.)

6. What distinction is to be made in baptizing?

Acts 2:41. *Those who received his word were baptized.*

Acts 8:26-39. Philip baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch.

Acts 16:25-33. Paul and Silas baptize the family of the jailor of Philippi.

Those who can receive instruction are to be baptized AFTER they have been instructed in the principal doctrines of the Christian religion and after they have confessed their faith in Christ. Little children should be baptized when they are brought to Baptism by those who have authority over them. (Sponsors have been introduced in order that they may (1) testify that the children have been properly baptized, (2) assist in caring for their Christian education and training, and (3) pray for them.)

7. How are forgiveness and salvation obtained by Baptism?

Gal. 3:27. *As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

Acts 2:38. *Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.*

Acts 22:16. *Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins.*

Mark 16:16. *He who believes and is baptized will be saved.*

John 3:5. *Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*

Titus. 3:5-7. *He saved us . . . by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by His grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.*

1 Pet. 3:21. *Baptism . . . now saves you.*

Baptism is a MEANS OF GRACE through which the Holy Spirit bestows the blessings of Christ's redemption, namely forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, and eternal life. BAPTISM regenerates infants, creating in them the faith which accepts these great blessings. BAPTISM seals salvation to already believing adults (Cf. Philip's baptism of the Ethiopian in Acts 8:35-39) giving them added assurance that their sins are forgiven and that they are God's dear children and heirs of heaven. BAPTISM gives blessings to all who believe. We have the blessings of Baptism only as long as we believe. It is therefore of utmost importance that after their Baptism children be instructed in the Word and that adults continue steadfastly to hear the Gospel and to receive the Lord's Supper for the strengthening and preservation of their faith (Sunday School, Bible Classes, church attendance). If a person after Baptism loses his faith, he loses the benefits of Baptism, but he does not lose Baptism itself. He need not be re-baptized if later he turns back to God; he need only lay hold again on the promise originally made to him in his Baptism (Cf. Is. 54:10 and 2 Tim. 2:13).

8. Can anyone be saved without Baptism?

Mark 16:16. *He who does not believe will be condemned.*

Luke 7:30. *But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.*

Luke 23:42, 43. *And he (the malefactor on the Cross) said, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingly power." And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."*

It is only unbelief that damns. However, saving faith cannot exist in the heart of one who despises or refuses Baptism. It can exist when for some reason Baptism cannot be obtained. (The Bible says nothing about the fate of infants who die without Baptism. We hope that God has some way of saving them without the MEANS OF GRACE. We should remember that while He has BOUND US to the use of

Baptism, He has not BOUND HIMSELF. However, we have no definite assurance on the matter. God wisely withheld this information from us so that we might not neglect to baptize our infants as soon as possible.)

9. When should we renew our baptismal vow?

Gal. 3:26, 27. For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Rom. 6:4. We were buried therefore with Him by Baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

We should daily remember our Baptism, for this will strengthen us in the faith that in Christ all our sins are forgiven, and that we are the children of God. It will also admonish us that, as the children of God, we should shun all sin and serve God by a Christian life day by day. (At Baptism, infants, through their sponsors, renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways, and promise to serve the Triune God, and Him only. Later, as children or adults, they renew this vow with their own lips and make a public confession of their faith. This we call confirmation. Confirmation is not a divine institution, but a God-pleasing custom of the Church. The instruction which precedes confirmation is of primary importance.)

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM: *The Sacrament of Holy Baptism*

WHAT IS HOLY BAPTISM? Baptism is not water only, but it is water used together with God's word and by His command.

WHAT IS THIS WORD? In Matthew 28 our Lord Jesus Christ says: "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*"

WHAT BENEFITS DOES GOD GIVE IN BAPTISM? In Baptism God forgives sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe what He has promised.

WHAT IS GOD'S PROMISE? In Mark 16 our Lord Jesus Christ says: "*He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*"

HOW CAN WATER DO SUCH GREAT THINGS? It is not water that does these things, but God's word with the water and our trust in this word. Water by itself is only water, but with the Word of God it is a life-giving water which by grace gives the new birth through the Holy Spirit.

St. Paul writes in Titus 3: "*He saved us . . . in virtue of His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, so that we might be justified by His grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life. The saying is sure.*"

WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN FOR DAILY LIVING? It means that our sinful self, with all its evil deeds and desires, should be drowned through daily repentance; and that day after day a new self should arise to live with God in righteousness and purity forever.

St. Paul writes in Romans 6: "*We were buried therefore with Him by Baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*"

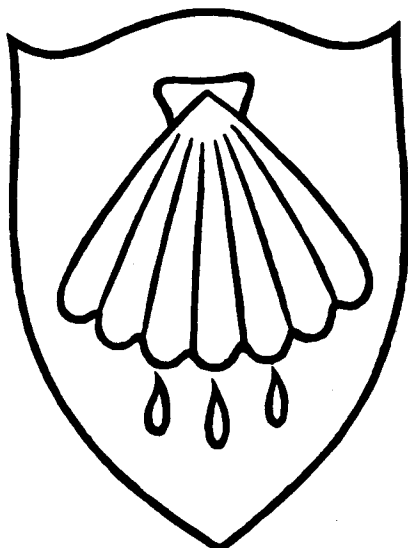
Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. What is Baptism?
2. How is Baptism administered?
3. How may water be applied in Baptism?
4. What answer should be given to those who deny that children are to be baptized?
5. Who receives the blessings of Baptism?
6. How should your Baptism make you feel?

ANSWERS

1. Baptism is forgiveness-water.

2. By applying water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
3. By washing, pouring, sprinkling, or immersing.
4. Children are to be baptized because: (1) Children are included in *all nations*. (2) Children are born sinful and need Baptism for the washing away of their sins. (3) Children can, as far as we know, be brought to faith and receive forgiveness of sins only through Baptism. (4) Children, too, can believe.
5. All who believe.
6. It should make me feel very happy at all times. Through Baptism I have become a child of God, a member of the Church, and an heir of heaven.



The symbol for Holy Baptism.

CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS

The Lutheran Church has nine creeds and confessions which set forth its doctrinal position.

The Ecumenical (or Universal) Creeds are:

1. The Apostles' Creed.
2. The Nicene Creed.
3. The Athanasian Creed.

The Confessions of The Lutheran Church are:

1. The Augsburg Confession.
2. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession.
3. The Smalcald Articles.
4. The Small Catechism of Luther.
5. The Large Catechism of Luther.
6. The Formula of Concord.

These six Confessions and the Ecumenical Creeds form the Book of Concord, first published in 1580.

Prayer

1. What is prayer?

Ps. 19:14. *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

Ps. 10:17. *Lord, Thou wilt hear the desire of the meek.*

Prayer is an act of worship wherein we talk to God with our hearts and lips and offer up praise and thanksgiving to Him.

2. What constitutes a proper prayer?

Matt. 4:10. *You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.*

Is. 63:16. *For Thou art our Father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us.*

John 16:23. *If you ask anything of the Father, He will give it you in My name.*

Matt. 6:7. *And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words.*

James 1:6, 7. *But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that a double-minded man will receive anything from the Lord.*

1 John 5:14 *And this is the confidence which we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us.*

Luke 22:42. *Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done.*

(1) We should pray only to the true God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Prayers addressed to anyone else or anything else are not heard nor answered. (2) We should pray in the name of Jesus, that is, with faith in Him as our Redeemer, and trusting firmly that God, for Jesus' sake, will hear and answer our prayer. Unless we expect an answer, we are asking in vain. (3) When praying for spiritual blessings, we should ask unconditionally; when praying for other gifts, we should ask that God grant them to us if it is His will.

3. What should move us to pray?

Matt. 7:7. (Jesus says) *Ask, and it will be given you.*

Ps. 50:15. *Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.*

We should be moved to prayer by the Lord's command and His promise to hear our prayers; and, by our own and our neighbor's need and gratitude for blessings received.

4. For whom should we pray?

1 Tim. 2:1. *I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men.*

Matt. 5:44. *Pray for those who persecute you.*

Heb. 9:27. *It is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment.*

Matt. 6:6. *When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

Ps. 26:12. *In the great congregation I will bless the Lord.*

1 Thess. 5:17. *Pray constantly.*

Ps. 50:15. *Call upon Me in the day of trouble.*

We should pray for ourselves and for all other people, even for our enemies; but not for the souls of the dead. We should pray everywhere, especially in private (that is, when we are alone), in the family circle, and in public worship. We should pray at all times and especially in time of trouble. **GOD ANSWERS EVERY PROPER PRAYER, BUT IN HIS OWN TIME AND IN HIS OWN WAY.** (See prayers of Abraham, Moses, Paul, and Mary.)

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. What is prayer?
2. To whom should we pray?
3. In whose name do we pray?
4. For whom should we pray?

ANSWERS

1. Prayer is a heart to heart talk with God.
2. We should pray to the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We pray in the name of Jesus.
4. For all men; for ourselves, our dear ones; our church, school, and country; even for our enemies.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM: *The Lord's Prayer (The Introduction)*

OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN.

What does this mean? Here God encourages us to believe that He is truly our Father and we are His children. We therefore are to pray to Him with complete confidence just as children speak to their loving father.

The First Petition

HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

What does this mean? God's name certainly is holy in itself, but we ask in this prayer that we may keep it holy.

When does this happen? God's name is hallowed whenever His Word is taught in its truth and purity, and we as children of God live in harmony with it. Help us to do this, heavenly Father! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to the Word of God dishonors God's name among us. Keep us from doing this, heavenly Father!

The Second Petition

THY KINGDOM COME.

What does this mean? God's kingdom comes indeed without our praying for it, but we ask in this prayer that it may come also to us.

When does this happen? God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and live a godly life on earth now and in heaven forever.

The Third Petition

THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

What does this mean? The good and gracious will of God is surely done without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it may be done also among us.

When does this happen? God's will is done when He hinders and defeats every evil scheme and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful self, which would prevent us from keeping His name holy and would oppose the coming of His kingdom. And His will is done when He strengthens our faith and keeps us firm in His Word as long as we live. This is His gracious and good will.

The Fourth Petition

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

What does this mean? God gives daily bread, even without our prayer, to all people, though sinful, but we ask in this prayer that He will help us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanks.

What is meant by "daily bread"? Daily bread includes everything needed for this life, such as food and clothing, home and property, work and income, a devoted family, an orderly community, good government, favorable weather, peace and health, a good name, and true friends and neighbors.

The Fifth Petition

AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US.
What does this mean? We ask in this prayer that our Father in heaven would not hold our sins against us and because of them refuse to hear our prayer. And we pray that He would give us everything by grace, for we sin every day and deserve nothing but punishment. So we on our part will heartily forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

The Sixth Petition

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.
What does this mean? God tempts no one to sin, but we ask in this prayer that God would watch over us and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful self may not deceive us and draw us into false belief, despair, and other great and shameful sins. And we pray that even though we are so tempted we may still win the final victory.

The Seventh Petition

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.
What does this mean? We ask in this inclusive prayer that our heavenly Father would save us from every evil to body and soul, and at our last hour would mercifully take us from the troubles of this world to Himself in heaven.

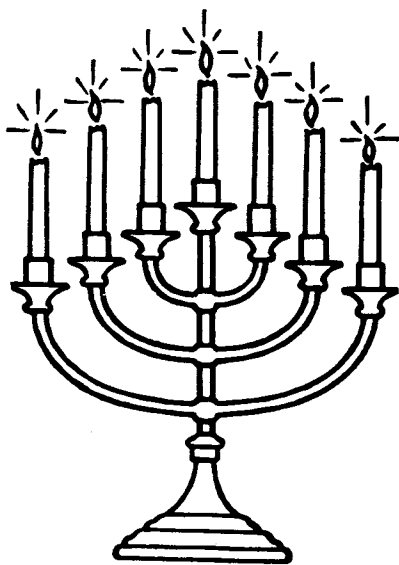
The Doxology

**FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER.
AMEN.**

What does "Amen" mean? Amen means Yes, it shall be so. We say Amen because we are certain that such petitions are pleasing to our Father in heaven and are heard by Him. For He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way and has promised to hear us.

NOTE:

The Lord's Prayer is the most excellent of all prayers, first of all, of course, because our Lord Himself taught us to pray it, and also because it places proper emphasis on our spiritual needs.



The candle stick with seven branches can symbolize the gifts of the Holy Spirit: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Might (moral), Knowledge, Godliness (spiritual), The fear (respect) of the Lord.

The Office Of The Keys And Confession

1. What is the Office of the Keys?

Mark 16:15. *And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation."*

Matt. 28:18-20. *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (The Great Commission to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments.)*

John 20:22, 23. *He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."*

The Office of the Keys is the power or authority given by Christ to the Church here on earth (1) to preach the Gospel; (2) to administer the Sacraments; (3) and to forgive and to retain sins.

2. Why is this power called the Office of the Keys?

Matt. 16:19. *I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*

The power is called the Office of the Keys because it opens the door to heaven by forgiving sins, or closes heaven by retaining sins. The sins of penitent sinners, that is, of sinners who are sorry for their sins and believe in Jesus Christ the Savior for forgiveness — their sins are to be forgiven. The sins of the impenitent sinners are to be retained.

3. To whom has Christ given this power?

Matt. 18:17, 18, 20. *If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven . . . For where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I in the midst of them.*

Christ has given this power to His Church on earth, and more particularly, to every local congregation.

4. How does the local congregation publicly administer the Office of the Keys?

1 Cor. 4:1. *This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

Acts 20:28. *Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians, to feed the church of the Lord which He obtained with His own blood.*

According to God's will the Christian congregation chooses and calls men as ministers, who in the name of Christ publicly perform the functions of the Office of the Keys. (The holy ministry is the only office instituted by Christ. A congregation may, however, create auxiliary offices to assist the minister in his work, such as day school teachers, elders, deacons, or Sunday School teachers, etc.)

5. What do the Scriptures teach of Church Discipline and Excommunication?

Matt. 18:15-17. *If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to*

the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.
1 Cor. 5:13. *Drive out the wicked person from among you.*
Matt. 18:18. *Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.*

A sinner must be admonished privately. Then if this proves unsuccessful, by two or three fellow members; and, finally, if he is still impenitent, by the congregation. (Church Discipline). If he neglects to hear the congregation and remains impenitent, he must be put out of the congregation, and the pastor must carry out the resolution of the congregation by excluding him from all the rights and privileges of a Christian, except from the right to hear the Word of God. (Excommunication). This action of the congregation and pastor is as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ, our Lord, acted and dealt with that person Himself. If the excommunicated person should later confess his sin and ask for forgiveness, the congregation should through the pastor forgive his sin and receive him again as a brother. THE ONLY PURPOSE OF EXCOMMUNICATION is to make the sinner see the greatness of his sin and to bring him to repentance.

6. What do Scriptures teach of confession?

2 Sam. 12:13. *David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die."*
Ps. 19:12. *Clear thou me from hidden faults.*
James 5:16. *Confess your sins to one another.*
Matt. 5:23, 24. *If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*
Matt. 9:2. *Take heart, My son; your sins are forgiven!*

Confession consists of two parts, namely, the confession or acknowledgment of our sins, and then the absolution or forgiveness pronounced upon him that confesses. We should daily confess all our sins, known and unknown, to God, who offers absolution or forgiveness in the general Gospel promise. We should confess to our neighbor the sin with which we have offended him. The absolution is spoken by the neighbor when he forgives us. We should confess our sins, with the congregation in the General Confession in which we plead guilty before God of all sins and ask Him for complete forgiveness. The absolution is spoken every Sunday in the Worship Service (at the beginning) by the pastor and is God's own absolution. We may confess a particularly burdensome sin in private confession before the pastor, and receive the comfort of the individual absolution spoken by him. (The pastor is under solemn obligation not to reveal anything confided to him in private confession.)

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM: *The Office of the Keys and Confession*

WHAT IS THE "OFFICE OF THE KEYS"? It is that authority which Christ gave to His church to forgive the sins of those who repent and to declare to those who do not repent that their sins are not forgiven.

WHAT ARE THE WORDS OF CHRIST? Our Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples, "*Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.*" John 20:23. "*Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*" Matthew 18:18.

WHAT IS PRIVATE CONFESSION? Private confession has two parts. First, we make a personal confession of sins to the pastor, and then we receive absolution, which means forgiveness as from God Himself. This absolution we should not doubt, but firmly believe that thereby our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

WHAT SINS SHOULD WE CONFESS? Before God we should confess that we are guilty of all sins, even those which are not known to us, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. But in private confession, as before the pastor, we should confess only those sins which trouble us in heart and mind.

WHAT ARE SUCH SINS? We can examine our everyday life according to the Ten Commandments — for

example, how we act toward father or mother, son or daughter, husband or wife, or toward the people with whom we work, and so on. We may ask ourselves whether we have been disobedient or unfaithful, bad-tempered or dishonest, or whether we have hurt anyone by word or deed.

HOW MIGHT WE CONFESS OUR SINS PRIVATELY? We may say that we wish to confess our sins and to receive absolution in God's name. We may begin by saying, "I, a poor sinner, confess before God that I am guilty of many sins." Then we should name the sins that trouble us. We may close the confession with the words, "I repent of all these sins and pray for mercy. I promise to do better with God's help."

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. When the pastor forgives sins, in whose name does he do so?
2. How certain is his absolution?
3. Is private confession obligatory?
4. What added benefit does one receive from private confession?

ANSWERS

1. In the name of Christ.
2. It holds true in heaven also.
3. No; but it is good for the soul.
4. The comfort of individual absolution for particular sins.



This is a picture of a sand sculpture by the self-taught Temecula, California, artist, Howard T. Conibear. It weighs twenty tons and took three years to complete.

The Sacrament Of The Altar

1. What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

Matt. 26:26-28. Mark 14:22-24. Luke 22:19, 20. 1 Cor. 11:23-25. 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 He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; 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 you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

The Sacrament of the Altar, or the Lord's Supper, was instituted by Christ, the Son of God, on the evening before His death. It is intended for His Christians who are to celebrate this Sacrament often in remembrance of Him. In the Sacrament we eat and drink the bread and wine which have been consecrated by the words of institution. As we receive the bread and wine, we also receive, in a manner which we cannot explain or understand, the true body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (REAL PRESENCE) Other names for the Sacrament of the Altar are the Lord's Supper, Holy Communion, the Lord's Table, the Breaking of Bread, and the Eucharist.

2. Why do we believe in the REAL PRESENCE of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper?

Matt. 26:26, 28. This IS My Body . . . This IS My Blood.

1 Cor. 10:16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

1 Cor. 11:27. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the Body and Blood of the Lord.

Mark 14:24. This is My blood of the covenant.

Gal. 3:15. No one annuls even a man's will, or adds to it, once it has been ratified.

We believe in the REAL PRESENCE of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper because (1) Jesus says, "*This is My body which is given for you . . . this is My blood which is shed for you.*" (2) The Bible states that the cup is a *participation* in the blood of Christ and the bread is a *participation* in the body of Christ. (3) The Bible states that unworthy communicants are guilty, not of the bread and wine, but of the body and blood of Christ. (4) This is Christ's last will and testament and we should not change one letter of its meaning, just as we would not tamper with a man's last will and testament.

THE BREAD AND WINE ARE NOT CHANGED INTO the body and blood of Christ (TRANSUBSTANTIATION) for 1 Cor. 11:26-28 and 1 Cor. 10:16 clearly show that we eat bread and drink wine in the Sacrament even though the body and blood are also present.

THE BODY AND BLOOD of Christ in the Sacrament are only given, according to Scripture, to eat and to drink, and (Mark 14:23) all communicants should receive the wine as well as the bread. We ARE NOT TO ADORE the bread and wine in the Sacrament! Also, the idea that the Sacrament is a real, though unbloody, sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead is contrary to the Word of God which teaches (Heb. 10:14, 18) that Christ's one sacrifice has made full atonement for the world's sin.

3. Why should we receive the Lord's Supper frequently?

1 Cor. 11:25, 26. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

Acts 2:42. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of

bread and the prayers.

Matt. 26:28. *For this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*

Matt. 11:28. *Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

We should receive the Lord's Supper frequently because Christ commands, "Do this in remembrance of me." Christ also promises to bestow upon us His blessing in the Sacrament, particularly the blessing of forgiveness. We need the forgiveness of sins and the strength from above offered in the Sacrament to successfully resist the devil, the world, and our flesh.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM: *The Sacrament of Holy Communion*

WHAT IS HOLY COMMUNION? Holy Communion is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given with bread and wine and instituted by Christ Himself for us to eat and drink.

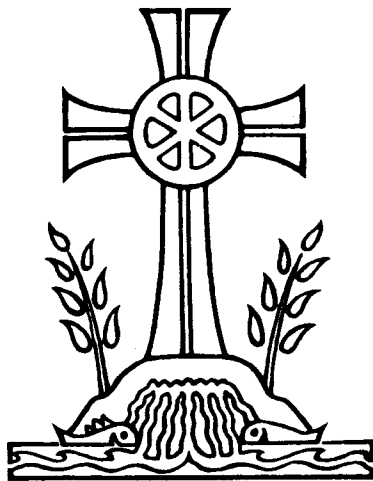
WHERE DO THE SCRIPTURES SAY THIS? Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul say: Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is My body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me." After the same manner also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; 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 you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. Who instituted the Lord's Supper?
2. What two kinds of elements are present?
3. What are the visible elements?
4. What are the invisible elements?
5. In what manner do you receive the bread and wine?
6. In what manner do you receive the body and blood?
7. What is this union of the bread with the body, of the wine with the blood, called?

ANSWERS

1. Christ our Lord.
2. The visible and the invisible elements.
3. Bread and wine.
4. The body and blood of Christ.
5. In a natural manner.
6. In a supernatural manner.
7. A sacramental union.



The symbol of the blessed Sacraments.
The living water flows from the rock of
our salvation.

The Sacrament Of The Altar (II)

1. What do we receive when we come to the Lord's Table?

Matt. 26:28. For this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

In this Sacrament Christ gives to every communicant, as a pledge of the forgiveness of sins, that same body and blood with which He earned for us the forgiveness of sins.

2. For what purpose then do we approach the Lord's Table?

Matt. 26:28. For this is My blood . . . poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

2 Cor. 5:15, 17. He died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised. If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation.

1 Cor. 11:26. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

1 Cor. 10:17. Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

We approach the Lord's Table (1) chiefly to receive the forgiveness of our sins and to be strengthened in our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; (2) to obtain strength for a holier life (in strengthening our faith in Christ the Sacrament gives us the power and the incentive to live a holier life); (3) to confess the crucified Christ before men and witness to the unity of the Christian faith.

3. What is an unworthy communicant?

1 Cor. 11:29. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself.

Heb. 11:6. Without faith it is impossible to please Him.

An unworthy communicant is a person who does not believe these words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." Forgiveness of sins has been placed into the Sacrament by the Word and promise of Christ. By means of His Word He offers, gives, and seals forgiveness to all communicants. However, we receive the blessings of the Sacrament only by believing these words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins."

4. How should we therefore examine ourselves before partaking of Communion?

1 Cor. 11:28, 29. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself.

Ps. 51:17. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Mark 1:15. Repent, and believe in the Gospel.

John 5:14. Jesus said, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you."

Before communing we should examine ourselves to see (1) whether we truly repent of our sins; (2) whether we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and firmly believe in the real presence of His body and blood in the Sacrament; (3) whether we have the good and earnest intent, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, henceforth to amend our sinful life.

5. May believers whose faith is weak commune at the Lord's Table?

Mark 9:24. *The father cried out, "I believe; help my unbelief!"*

Is. 42:3. *A bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench.*

John 6:37. *Him who comes to Me I will not cast out.*

Believers whose faith is weak should indeed come to the Lord's Supper that their faith may grow stronger.

6. To whom must the Lord's Supper be denied?

1 Cor. 11:29. *Any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself.*

Acts 2:42. *They DEVOTED themselves to the apostles' teaching . . . the breaking of bread.*

Rom. 16:17. *I appeal to you, brethren, to take note of those who create dissensions and difficulties, in opposition to the doctrine which you have been taught; AVOID THEM.*

Matt. 5:23, 24. *If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*

1 Cor. 11:28. *Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.*

The Lord's Supper must be denied (1) to those who are known to be unbelievers and impenitent; (2) to those who have given offense and have not removed it; (3) to those who are not able to examine themselves, such as children and adults who have not been fully instructed, and persons who are unconscious; (4) to those of a different faith, since the Lord's Supper is a testimony of the unity of faith.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM:

WHAT BENEFITS DO WE RECEIVE FROM THIS SACRAMENT? The benefits of this sacrament are pointed out by the words, *given and shed for you for the remission of sins*. These words assure us that in the sacrament we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

HOW CAN EATING AND DRINKING DO ALL THIS? It is not eating and drinking that does this, but the words, *given and shed for you for the remission of sins*. These words, along with eating and drinking, are the main thing in the sacrament. And whoever believes these words has exactly what they say, forgiveness of sins.

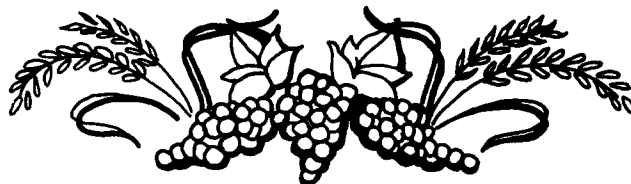
WHEN IS A PERSON RIGHTLY PREPARED TO RECEIVE THIS SACRAMENT? Fasting and other outward preparations serve a good purpose. However, that person is well prepared and worthy who believes these words, *given and shed for you for the remission of sins*. But anyone who does not believe these words, or doubts them, is neither prepared nor worthy, for the words *for you* require simply a believing heart.

Questions You Should Be Able To Answer

1. What questions should a communicant ask himself before receiving Communion?
2. What rite does the church observe, in order to enable its members to examine themselves?
3. What in brief, is the vow you make at confirmation?

ANSWERS

1. (1) Am I sorry for my sins? (2) Do I believe in Christ? (3) Am I resolved to turn over a new leaf?
2. The rite of confirmation.
3. To remain faithful to God and His Church unto death.



Judgment Day And Eternity

1. What happens to us when we die?

Eccl. 12:7. The dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

2 Cor. 5:8. We would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

Luke 23:43. Truly, I say to you, TODAY you will be with Me in Paradise.

Rev. 14:13. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth.

Matt. 25:41. Then He will say to those at His left hand, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Cf. Luke 16:19-31)

When a man dies his immortal soul leaves his mortal body. The soul of the believer is received immediately into heaven. The soul of the unbeliever immediately finds itself in hell.

2. What do the Scriptures teach of Christ's coming to Judgment?

Acts 1:11. This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.

Rev. 1:7. Behold He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him.

Matt. 25:31. When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

Acts 17:31. God has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness.

Mark 13:32. But of that day or that hour no one knows.

2 Pet. 3:10. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up.

2 Cor. 5:10. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

John 12:48. The Word that I have spoken will be his judge on the Last Day.

(Concerning the signs of Christ's coming see Matt. 24; Luke 21; 2 Thess. 2; 2 Tim. 3:1-4.)

Christ will return visibly and in glory. He will come on the Last Day which is appointed by God but unknown to man. He will then judge the world in righteousness by His Word.

3. What do the Scriptures teach of the resurrection of the body?

John 5:28, 29. For the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.

Job 19:25-27. For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last He will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God.

Phil. 3:21. Christ will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power which enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.

Matt. 10:28. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul, rather fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Is. 66:24. Their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

Mark 16:16. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

The Scriptures teach that on the Last Day God will raise up all the dead so that our bodies, the same bodies that have died, shall be made alive. The believers will rise with glorified bodies to everlasting life in heaven. The unbelievers will rise to eternal death, that is, to everlasting shame, contempt, and torment in hell. (Those living on the Last Day will be changed. 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.)

4. What do the Scriptures say about eternal life in heaven?

1 John 3:2. *Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

1 Cor. 13:12, 13. *For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood.*

Rev. 21:4. *God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.*

Ps. 16:11. *In Thy presence there is fulness of joy, in Thy right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Rom. 8:18. *I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

The Scriptures teach that at the time of death the soul of the believer is received at once into the presence of Christ. At the Last Day the soul is reunited with the body and the believer will live with Christ, according to body and soul, in eternal joy and glory. Then the divine image lost by our first parents will be fully restored to each of us and we shall live with God, see Him as He is, and enjoy personal righteousness and holiness. We will be delivered from all earthly evils and live in eternal joy and glory.

5. To whom will God give eternal life?

John 3:16. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Matt. 24:13. *But he who endures to the end will be saved.*

John 3:36. *He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him.*

GOD WILL GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO ALL BELIEVERS IN CHRIST, BUT BELIEVERS ONLY!

6. What then must be the main purpose in our lives?

Acts 16:31. *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.*

Rev. 2:10. *Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

Matt. 24:14. *And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; AND THEN THE END WILL COME.*

Mark 16:15. *Go . . . and preach the Gospel to the whole creation.*

The main purpose in our lives must be to BELIEVE in Jesus Christ as our Savior and remain faithful to Him to the end; and, to PREACH His Gospel of salvation to our fellowmen.



The symbol for Heaven. The crown of glory, the palms of victory and the stars of heaven.

The Life Of Martin Luther

Martin Luther was born of humble parents, Hans and Margareta Luther, in the little town of Eisleben, Germany, on November 10, 1483, nine years before Columbus discovered America.

Young Martin began preparing for law, but at the age of twenty-two a thunderstorm and the death of a friend led him to make a vow to enter the quiet life of the monastery. Ordained a priest in the Augustinian Monastery at Erfurt, his unusual gifts led to a call to teach at the University of Wittenberg.

While he was working for his theological degree he found the statement recorded by Paul in Romans 1:17 that "*The Just Shall Live by Faith.*" He noted the great difference between this Bible statement and the theology he had learned, and let this passage bring the message of the entire Bible into focus in the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

During a journey to Rome in 1511, he became disgusted and alarmed by the laxity and impurity of many of the Roman priests, but his support of the Roman church was still unchanged. He received the Doctor of Theology degree in 1512 at the age of twenty-nine and then lectured on the Bible at the University of Wittenberg for the next five years. By 1515 he became District Vicar of the Augustinian Order.

Then on October 31, 1517, Luther posted his famous Ninety-Five Theses on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg. His statements were aimed chiefly at the practice of the Church in granting the forgiveness of sins upon the purchase of indulgences or forgiveness papers sold by the Monk, John Tetzel.

In the first Thesis he said: "Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in saying: 'Repent ye' etc., intended that the whole life of believers should be penitence."

Thesis 62 reads: "The true treasure of the Church is the holy Gospel of the glory and grace of God."

During the following years, the Pope ordered Luther to recant and placed him under "suspicion of heresy." There were discussions with Cardinal Cajetan and the Papal emissary, John Eck, and others. At one point, Luther actually promised to cease his criticism of the Roman church in the hope that its abuses would be corrected. But when he was attacked for his firm stand on the Bible as the sole authority in the church he spoke forth again.

The Pope excommunicated him in June, 1520, and on December 10, 1520, Luther publicly burned the Papal Bull, ordering his excommunication.

Upon the call of Emperor Charles V, Luther came to the Diet, or Assembly, at Worms to answer certain charges. Asked simply to take back everything that he had written against the Roman church, he replied: "Unless you can prove from the Bible that I have made wrong statements and have spoken contrary to God's Word, I refuse to recant. My conscience is bound in the Word of God. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen."

Upon leaving Worms, his friend, Elector Frederick, a high official of the empire, had him taken to the Wartburg Castle, and while in seclusion there Luther began and completed the translation of the New Testament into the language of the common man. Upon publication of the New Testament in 1522, the Reformation Movement gathered momentum.

In 1529 he published the Small Catechism, a summary of Christian teaching for both children and adults.

In 1530 the Lutheran laymen and theologians gave the world the Augsburg Confession, a series of twenty-eight declarations of the Christian faith that to this day is considered the chief confession by all Lutherans. Largely written by Philip Melancthon, it breathes the spirit of Luther.

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