

## LEARN, PRAY AND TEACH

Please learn, pray and teach the catechism this week.

### *The first commandment*

**You shall have no other gods.**

*What does this mean for us?*

We are to fear, love and trust in God above anything else. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'A god is whatever a person looks to for all good things and runs to for help in trouble.'  
(Luther's Large Catechism)

### *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 upon him in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'But the greatest misuse [of God's name] is in religious matters that involve the conscience, when false preachers get up and pass off their lying rubbish as God's word.' (Luther's Large Catechism).

### *The third commandment*

**Remember the Sabbath day to keep 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. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'Above all, there is a rest day, so that people will take the time and opportunity to go to the divine service.' (Luther's Large Catechism)

### *The fourth commandment*

**Honour your father and 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. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'God has given a special position of honour to the estate of father and mother, higher than all other estates under him.' (Luther's Large Catechism)

### *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 neighbour in any way but help in all his physical needs. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'At this point we leave our home, and go out among our neighbours to find out how we should live with one another.' (Luther's Large Catechism)

### *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 honourable and husband and wife love and respect each other. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'Then they [the commandments] go on to speak of the person closest to him, the most important thing to him after his own life, that is, his marital partner who is united with him as one flesh and blood.' (Luther's Large Catechism)

*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 neighbour'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. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'He [God] won't allow anyone to deprive or strip others of what they own.' (Luther's Large Catechism)

*The Eighth Commandment*

**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.**

*What does this mean for us?*

We are to fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander or lie about our neighbour, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain his actions in the kindest way. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'We have one more valuable asset: our honour and reputation.' (Luther's Large Catechism)

*The Ninth Commandment*

**You shall not covet your neighbour's house.**

*What does this mean for us?*

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

'Nobody may take it into his head or plan to get hold of what belongs to someone else'. (Luther's Large Catechism)

*The Tenth Commandment*

**You shall not covet your neighbour's wife or his manservant or his maidservant or his cattle or anything that is your neighbour'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 neighbour his wife or his workers, but encourage them to remain loyal. (Luther's Small Catechism)

'These commandments go on to bar you from luring anything away from another person, even when you can do so without losing your integrity in the public eye'. (Luther's Large 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. (Small Catechism)

So there we have the Ten Commandments, a model of God's teaching on what we are to do so that our whole life pleases God. (Large Catechism)

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 times 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. (Small Catechism)

'The Creed tells us everything we are to expect and receive from God. In short it teaches us to know him completely.' (Large Catechism)

### **The Second Article**

**And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from thence he will come to judge the living 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. (Small Catechism)

'We learn how God has completely spent himself on us and kept nothing back, but has given us everything.' (Large Catechism)

### **The Third Article**

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

*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. (Small Catechism)

'The Holy Spirit makes us holy.' (Large Catechism)

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

The Introduction

**Our Father 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. (Small Catechism)

'So what we need most of all is to keep on pestering God with our prayers, and to ask him to give, keep on providing, and develop in us faith and power to do what the Ten Commandments expect.' (Large Catechism)

*The First Petition*

**Hallowed be your 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 dishonours God's name among us. Keep us from doing this, heavenly Father! (Small Catechism)

'What should concern us most here is the great need to give his name proper respect and to keep it holy and majestic, to look on it as our greatest treasure and the most holy thing we have.' (Large Catechism)

*The Second Petition*

**Your 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. (Small Catechism)

'We ask that God's kingdom may take hold among us, and in us, so that we too, may be among those who keep his name holy and in whom his kingdom flourishes.' (Large Catechism)

*The Third Petition*

**Your will be done, on earth as 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. (Small Catechism)

'Now the essential thing is to hold to all this [God's holy name and his kingdom], and not let ourselves be torn away from it.' (Large Catechism)

*The Fourth Petition*

**Give us today 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, favourable weather, peace and health, a good name, and true friends and neighbours. (Small Catechism)

'Here we think of the ordinary breadbox – our daily physical and material needs.' (Large Catechism)

*The Fifth Petition*

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin 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. (Small Catechism)

‘We can’t carry on without sinning...because we live in a world among people who harm us and give us reason to be impatient and angry, to look for revenge and so on.’ (Large Catechism)

*The Sixth Petition*

**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. (Small Catechism)

‘Life is such that we can stand today and fall tomorrow.’ (Large Catechism)

*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. (Small Catechism)

‘This petition seems to refer to the Devil, as if to compress everything into the one idea that the sum total of all our prayer should be aimed at this main enemy of ours.’

*The Doxology*

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for 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. (Small Catechism)

‘Say “Amen” to it too. This means not to doubt that God hears our prayer and that what we ask for will come about.’ (Large Catechism)

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM**

The nature of Baptism

*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.’** (Small Catechism)

‘Notice first of all that God commands and establishes Baptism by means of these words.’ (Large Catechism)

The Benefit of Baptism

*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.’** (Small Catechism)

'The power, effect, benefit, fruit, and aim of Baptism is that people have eternal joy.' (Large Catechism)

#### The Power of Baptism

How can water do such 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.

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 Saviour, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life. The saying is sure.' (Small Catechism)

'In other words, faith and only faith, makes the person entitled to receive this healing, divine water for his good.' (Large Catechism)