

Enchiridion The Small Catechism

Dr. Martin Luther

The Lutheran Reformation Anniversary Edition



The Evangelical Lutheran Church of England
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**The Small Catechism is presented here as an exposition of the faith of
the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church,
and is a gift of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England
to English-speaking Christianity.**

**Martin Luther,
for Parish Pastors and Preachers**

Preface by Dr. Martin Luther

Martin Luther to all faithful and godly pastors and preachers:

Grace, mercy, and peace in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The deplorable, miserable conditions which I discovered during a recent visitation of the parishes has forced and pressed me to prepare this catechism, or statement of Christian doctrine, in very brief and simple terms. God help us! What miseries I beheld! The ordinary people, especially in the villages, know nothing at all of Christian doctrine, and, alas, many pastors are altogether inept and incompetent to teach. Nevertheless, all maintain that they are Christians, have been baptised and receive the holy Sacraments. Yet they know neither the Lord's Prayer nor the Creed or the Ten Commandments; they live like mere cattle and irrational hogs. And now that the Gospel has come, they have finely mastered the abuse of every kind of freedom.

You bishops, how will you answer to Christ for having neglected the people so shamefully and never for a moment discharged your office? May you avoid all misfortune! You command the Sacrament in one kind only and insist on your human laws. Yet at the same time you do not care in the least whether the people know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or any part of the Word of God. Woe to you forever!

Therefore, I plead with you all for God's sake, my dear sirs and brother pastors and preachers: devote yourselves whole-heartedly to your office, have pity on the people entrusted to you, and help us instil the Catechism in the people, and especially in the young. And those of you who cannot do better, at least take these charts and forms and impress them on the people, word for word, as follows:

First, the preacher should above all beware of and avoid a variety of changing wordings and forms of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Sacraments, etc. Instead, he should choose just one form, keep to it, and keep using it year after year. For young and uneducated people must be taught by single, settled texts and forms. Otherwise, they are easily confused when the teacher teaches them one way today, and next year in some other way, as if to make improvements—and in this way all the effort and labour is wasted.

Our blessed fathers understood this well; for they all used the same form of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. Therefore, we too should teach the young and uneducated people these parts without changing a syllable, or presenting and repeating them differently from year to year.

Therefore, choose whatever form you please, and always keep to it. But when you preach in the presence of learned and intelligent men, you may demonstrate your skill and present these parts with as colourful and masterly turns of phrase as you are able. But with the young people, stick to one fixed, permanent form and wording. Teach them, first of all, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, etc., according to the text, word for word, so that they, too, can repeat it after you and commit it to memory.

But those who are unwilling to learn it should be told that they deny Christ and are not Christians. They should not be admitted to the Sacrament, accepted as sponsors at baptism, or exercise any part of Christian liberty, but should simply be sent back to the Pope and his officials, indeed, to the devil himself. Moreover, their parents and employers should refuse them food and drink, and let them know that the prince is minded to drive such rude people from the country, etc.

For although we cannot and should not force anyone to believe, yet we should insist and urge the people towards the knowledge of what is right and wrong according to those among

whom they live and wish to make their living. For whoever desires to reside in a town must know and observe the town laws, the protection of which he wishes to enjoy, no matter whether he is a believer or a rogue or scoundrel at heart.

Secondly, after they have learned the text well, teach them also its meaning, so that they understand what they are saying. Again, use these charts or some other brief, uniform method—whichever you choose—and keep to it. Do not change a single syllable, just as with the text. And take your time with it. It is not necessary that you deal with all the parts at once, but rather one at a time. After they understand the First Commandment well, then take up the Second, and so on. Otherwise, they will be overwhelmed, and will not be able to retain anything.

Thirdly, after you have thus taught them this short Catechism, take up a larger catechism to give them a richer and fuller understanding. Explain every commandment, petition and article together with the various works, uses, benefits, dangers, and hurts connected with it. You will find plenty of material in many books written about these matters. And emphasise especially the commandment or part that is most neglected among your people. For example, the Seventh Commandment, concerning stealing, must be strenuously emphasised among craftsmen and merchants, and even farmers and servants, for among these people there are all kinds of dishonesty and thieving. Likewise, among the children and ordinary people you must really emphasise the Fourth Commandment, so that they are quiet and faithful, obedient and peaceable, and you must always point out many examples from the Scriptures to show how God has punished or blessed such persons.

Here, you should especially urge magistrates and parents to rule well and to send their children to school. Show them why they are obliged to do so, and what a damnable sin they are committing if they fail to do it. For that makes them the worst enemies of both God and humanity, because by such neglect they overthrow and destroy both the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. Make it very clear to them what awful harm they are doing if they will not help to train children to be pastors, preachers, clerks, and such like, and that God will punish them terribly for it. There is a great need for preaching about these things. Parents and magistrates are now sinning unspeakably in this matter. The devil, too, has something dreadful in mind.

Finally, because the tyranny of the Pope has been abolished, people are no longer willing to go to the Sacrament but despise it. Here again, exhortation is needed, though with the understanding that no one is to be forced to believe or to receive the Sacrament. Nor should we set any law concerning it, or set a fixed time or place for it. Rather, we should preach in such a way that, of their own accord and without any law of ours, people will urge themselves, and indeed compel us pastors to administer the Sacrament. This is done by telling them: it is to be feared that anyone who does not seek or desire the Sacrament at least four times a year despises the Sacrament and is no Christian, just as whoever does not believe or hear the Gospel is no Christian. For Christ did not say, “Omit this”, or, “Despise this”, but rather, “This do, as often as you drink it, etc.”. He certainly does want it done, and not completely neglected and despised. “This do”, is what He says.

Now, if people do not value the Sacrament highly, that is a sure sign that they have no sin, no flesh, no devil, no world, no death, no danger, no hell. In other words, they believe in none of these things, even though they are up to their ears in them and are the devil’s own twice over. Then again, they need no grace, life, paradise, the kingdom of heaven, Christ, God, or anything good. For if they believed that they were experiencing so much evil, and needed so much that is good, they would not so neglect the Sacrament, where there is help against such evil and so much good is given. It will not be necessary to compel them by some law to come the Sacrament. Instead, they will come running and rushing and compel themselves, demanding that you must give them the Sacrament.

Therefore, you must not set up any law about this like the Pope does. Just set out clearly the benefit and the harm, the need and the use, the danger and the blessing connected with this Sacrament, and the people will come of themselves without your compulsion. But if they do not come, then let them go their way and tell them that people who do not appreciate or feel their great need and the gracious help of God belong to the devil. But if you do not urge this, or if you make a law and a poison out of it, it is your fault that they despise the Sacrament. How

could they not be lazy if you sleep and keep silence? Pay attention, therefore, pastors and preachers! Our office has now become something different from what it was under the Pope; it has now become serious and wholesome. Therefore, it now involves much more toil and labour, danger and trials, and, moreover, little reward and gratitude in the world. But Christ Himself will be our reward if we labour faithfully.

The Father of all grace help us do that. To Him be praise and thanks for-ever through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Ten Commandments

As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to his household*

The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods.

What is this?

We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.

The Second Commandment

You shall not misuse the name of your God.

What is this?

We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, practise witchcraft, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

The Third Commandment

You shall sanctify the day of worship.

What is this?

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

The Fourth Commandment

You shall honour your father and your mother.

What is this?

We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents or those in authority over us, but honour them, and serve and obey, love and value them.

The Fifth Commandment

You shall not kill.

What is this?

We should fear and love God so that we do not physically hurt or harm our neighbour, but help and support him in every bodily need.

The Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit adultery.

What is this?

We should fear and love God so that we live chastely and decently in our words and actions, and everyone loves and honours their spouse.

The Seventh Commandment

You shall not steal.

What is this?

We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbour's money or possessions, or get them by deception or dishonesty, but help him to improve and protect his property and income.

* The Ten Commandments are found in Exodus 20:1-14. However, the wording of the commandments in the Small Catechism is not a precise repetition of the biblical text. The first four commandments are abbreviated, probably following a common catechetical practice in the Middle Ages. Luther also re-worded the third commandment. His reason for this change is found in the Large Catechism, I:80-84.

The Eighth Commandment

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

What is this?

We should fear and love God so that we do not lie about our neighbour, betray him, slander him, or give him a bad reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.

The Ninth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbour's house.

What is this?

We should fear and love God so that we do not seek to get our neighbour's inheritance or house by deceit, or take it by a pretence of justice, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

The Tenth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, servants, animals, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

What is this?

We should fear and love God so that we do not alienate, force or entice away our neighbour's wife, servants, or cattle, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

*What does God Say about
all these commandments?*

He says, "I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

What is this?

God threatens to punish all who break these commandments. Therefore, we should fear His wrath and not do anything contrary to these commandments. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. Therefore, we should also love and trust in Him, and gladly do what He commands.

The Creed

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household

The First Article

On Creation

I believe in God the Father Al-mighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What is this?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my limbs, my reason and all my senses, and still looks after them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and everything I own. He richly and daily supplies me with everything I need to support this body and life. He shields me from all danger, and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does out of pure fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this I am owe it to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

The Second Article

On Redemption

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, died, and was 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 is this?

I believe that Jesus Christ—true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary—is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, bought me, and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death; in order that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

The Third Article

On Sanctification

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

What is this?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; just as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church, He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the last day will raise me and all the dead and give everlasting life to me and to all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

The Lord's Prayer

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household

Our Father who art in heaven.

What is this?

Here God tenderly urges us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that we may ask Him confidently and with full conviction, as dear children ask their dear father.

The First Petition

Hallowed be Thy name.

What is this?

God's name is certainly holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may become holy among us also.

How is this done?

When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God also lead holy lives in accordance with it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven!

But anyone who teaches and lives in any other way than what God's Word teaches defiles the name of God among us. Preserve us from this, Heavenly Father!

The Second Petition

Thy kingdom come.

What is this?

The kingdom of God comes by itself even without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it would come to us also.

How is this done?

When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life here in time and there in eternity.

The Third Petition

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

What is this?

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

How is this done?

When God breaks and hinders every evil counsel and intention which would not let us hallow the name of God nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until our end. This is His gracious and good will.

The Fourth Petition

Give us this day our daily bread.

What is this?

God gives daily bread, even without our prayer, to all evil people; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to recognise this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread?

Everything that belongs to the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, property, land, animals, money, goods, a devout spouse, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honour, good friends, faithful neighbours, and other such things.

The Fifth Petition

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

What is this?

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor refuse our petitions because of them; for we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them. Instead, we pray that He would grant them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much, and we truly deserve nothing but punishment. In the same way, on our part, we will also sincerely forgive and willingly do good to those who sin against us.

The Sixth Petition

And lead us not into temptation.

What is this?

God certainly tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice; and that, though they attack us, we would finally overcome and win the victory.

The Seventh Petition

But deliver us from evil.

What is this?

We pray in this petition, in summary, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from every kind of evil of body and soul, property and honour; and that finally, when our last hour comes, He would give us a blessed end and graciously take us from this valley of tears to Himself into heaven.

Amen.

What is this?

I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and that he hears them; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way, and has promised that He will hear us. "Amen, Amen," that is, "Yes, yes, it shall be so."

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household

First

What is Baptism?

Baptism is not only plain water, but it is the water set in God's command and joined to God's Word.

Which is that word of God?

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Matthew: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." [Matthew 28:19]

Second

What is the gift or benefit of Baptism?

It brings about forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Which are these words and promises of God?

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: "Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

[Mark 16:16]

Third

How can water do such great things?

Of course it is not the water that does them, but the word of God, which is in and with the water, and the faith that trusts this word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is just water and no baptism. But with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a water of life rich in grace, and a washing of new birth by the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus chapter three:

"He saved us ... by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy." [Titus 3:5-8]

Fourth

What does such baptising with water signify?

It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily remorse and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new person should daily come forth and arise, to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

St Paul says in Romans chapter six: "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." [Romans 6:4]

Confession

How Christians should be taught to confess

What is Confession?

Confession consists of two parts. One is that we confess our sins. The other is that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the confessor, as from God Himself, by no means doubting but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

Which sins should we confess?

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those of which we are unaware, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. But before the confessor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

Which are these?

Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife or servant? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, lazy, angry, rude or quarrelsome? Have you hurt anyone by words or actions; have you have stolen, neglected or wasted anything, or done any harm?

Please give me a brief form of Confession

Say to the confessor:

Dear sir, I ask you to hear my confession and to pronounce forgiveness in accordance with God's will.

I, a poor sinner, confess before God that I am guilty of all sins. In particular, I confess before you that I am a servant, a maid, etc. Alas, I serve my master unfaithfully; for in this and in that I have not done what they commanded me; I have provoked them, and caused them to curse, have been negligent and have allowed damage to be done. I have also been shameless in words and deeds, have quarrelled with my equals, have grumbled and sworn at my mistress, etc. For all this I am sorry, and I pray for grace. I want to do better.

A master or lady of the house may say this:

In particular I confess before you that I have not faithfully trained my children, servants and wife to honour God. I have cursed and set a bad example by rude words and deeds. I have done harm to my neighbour and spoken evil of him. I have overcharged, sold shoddy goods, and used false weights and measures.

The penitent should add anything else he has done against God's commandments and his own position in life.

If anyone does not find himself burdened with these or greater sins, he should not trouble himself, searching for or inventing other sins. That would make confession a torture. Instead, he should mention one or two that he knows. For example: "In particular I confess that I have cursed, or that I have used obscene words, or that I have neglected this or that, etc." Let this be enough.

But if you know of no sins at all (which is surely impossible), then mention none in particular, but receive forgiveness upon your general confession which you make before God to the confessor.

Then the confessor shall say:

God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith. Amen.

Furthermore: Do you believe that my forgiveness is God's forgiveness?

Answer: Yes, dear sir.

Then let the confessor say:

"Let it be done for you as you believe." And by the command 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. Depart in peace.

The confessor will know other passages of Scripture to comfort and encourage those who have great burdens upon their consciences, or who are distressed and tempted.

This is only a general form of confession for ordinary people.

* Matt. 8:13.

*What is the Office of the Keys?**

The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent.

What do you believe according to these words?

I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself.

Where is this written?

This is what St John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty:

“The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.’”†

**The last three questions in this section may not have been written by Luther himself, but they do reflect his teaching and were included in editions of the Small Catechism in his lifetime.

† John 20:22–23

The Sacrament of the Altar

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

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

Where is this written?

The holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul, write:

“Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: ‘Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.’

“In the same way 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 for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ ”

[Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:–23–25]

What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

These words, “Given, and shed for you, for the forgiveness of sins,” show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?

Indeed, it is not the eating and drinking that does them, but rather these words: “Given, and shed for you, for the forgiveness of sins.” These words, along with the eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament; and whoever believes these words has what they say, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

Who, then, receives this Sacrament worthily?

Fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a fine outward discipline; but that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.”

But whoever does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and ill-prepared; for the words “For you” require nothing but believing hearts.

Daily Prayers

How the head of the family should teach his household to pray morning and evening

Morning Prayer

In the morning, when you get up, bless yourself with the holy cross and say:

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

Then, kneeling or standing, say the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

If you choose, you can also say this little prayer:

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 evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go to your work joyfully, singing a hymn, such as the Ten Commandments, or whatever your devotion suggests.*

Evening Prayer

In the evening, when you go to bed, bless yourself with the holy cross and say:

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

Then, kneeling or standing, say the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

If you choose, you can also say this little prayer:

I thank You, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray You to 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 evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go to sleep promptly and cheerfully.

How the head of the family should teach his household to ask a blessing and return thanks

Asking a Blessing

The family shall go to the table reverently and with folded hands, and say:

The eyes of all look to You, O LORD, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.*

Then shall follow the Lord's Prayer and this prayer:

Lord God, heavenly Father, bless us and these Your gifts which we receive from Your bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Returning Thanks

Likewise also after the meal they shall say reverently and with folded hands:

Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever. He gives food to all flesh. He gives to the beasts their food, and to the young ravens that cry. His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man, but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.**

Then shall follow the Lord's Prayer and this prayer:

We thank You, Lord God, heavenly Father, for all Your benefits, who live and reign forever. Amen.

* Luther's catechism hymn on the 10 Commandments, "These are the holy Ten Commands" (TLH 287 / LW 331 / LSB 581 / ELH 440).

* Ps. 145:15-16.

** Ps. 136:1, 25; 147:9-11.

A Table of Household Responsibilities

Certain passages of Scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their obligations and responsibilities

To Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers

Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive.

1 Tim. 3:2-4

He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.

1 Tim. 3:6

He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Tit. 1:9

What the Hearers Owe Their Pastors

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

One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

Gal. 6:6-7

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The labourer deserves his wages."

1 Tim. 5:17-18

We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labour among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

1 Thess. 5:12-13

Obeys your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Heb. 13:17

Of Civil Government

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgement. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

Rom. 13:1-4

Of Citizens

Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.

Matt. 22:21

It is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him:

If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour.

Rom. 13:5-7

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

This is good and pleases God our Saviour.

1 Tim. 2:1-3

Remind the people to be subject to rules and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good.

Titus 3:1

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. **1 Pet. 2:13-14**

To Husbands

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. **1 Pet. 3:7**

Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. **Col. 3:19**

To Wives

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. **Eph. 5:22**

They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. **1 Pet. 3:5-6**

To Parents

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. **Eph. 6:4**

To Children

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honour your father and your mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." **Eph. 6:1-3**

To Workers of All Kinds

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favour when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. **Eph. 6:5-8**

To Employers and Supervisors

Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favouritism with Him. **Eph. 6:9**

To Youth

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. **1 Pet. 5:5-6**

To Widows

The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. **1 Tim. 5:5-6**

To Everyone

The commandments ... are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbour as yourself" **Rom. 13:9**
I urge ... that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone. **1 Tim. 2:1**

*Let each his lesson learn with care,
And all the household well shall fare.*

Christian Questions with Their Answers

Prepared by Dr. Martin Luther* for those who intend to go to the Sacrament

After confession, and instruction in the Ten Commandments, Creed, Lord's Prayer, and the sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, the confessor may ask, or you may ask yourself:

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner?

Yes, I believe it: I am a sinner.

2. How do you know this?

From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.

3. Are you also sorry for your sins?

Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

4. What have you deserved from God because of your sins?

His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation.**

5. Do you also hope to be saved?

Yes, that is my hope.

6. In whom, then, do you trust?

In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Who is Christ?

The Son of God, true God and man.

8. How many Gods are there?

Only one; but there are three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

9. What, then, has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?

He died for me, and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

10. Did the Father also die for you?

No; for the Father is God only, as is the Holy Spirit. But the Son is true God and true man. He died for me and shed His blood for me.

11. How do you know this?

From the holy Gospel and from the words of the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the Sacrament.

12. How do these words read?

“Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: `Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me!’ “In the same way 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 for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

13. Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament?

Yes, I believe it.

* The “Christian Questions with Their Answers”, designating Luther as the author, first appeared in an edition of the Small Catechism in 1551, five years after Luther's death.

** See Romans 6:21, 23.

14. What persuades you to believe this?

The word of Christ: "Take, eat, this is My body; drink of it, all of you, this is My blood."

15. What should we do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and in this way receive the pledge?

We should proclaim and remember His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: "This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

16. Why should we remember and proclaim His death?

So that we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins except Christ, true God and man; and so that we may learn to be horrified by our sins, and to regard them as serious; and to find joy and comfort in Him alone, and thus be saved through such faith.

17. What was it that moved Him to die for your sins and make satisfaction for them?

His great love for His Father, for me, and for other sinners, as it is written in **John 13:31, 15:13, Romans 5:8, Galatians 2:20** and **Ephesians 5:2**.

18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament?

That I may learn to believe that Christ, out of great love, died for my sin, as has already been said; and that I may also learn from Him to love God and my neighbour.

19. What should admonish and encourage Christians to receive the Sacrament frequently?

With regard to God, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord should move them; and also their own troubles that burden them, on account of which this command, encouragement and promise are given.

20. But what should you do if you are not aware of such trouble, and feel no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament?

To such people no better advice can be given than that, first, they put their hand to their body and feel whether they still have flesh and blood, and that they by all means believe what the Scriptures say of the flesh in **Galatians 5:19 ff.** and **Romans 7:18 f.**

Secondly, they should look around to see whether they are still in the world, and keep in mind that there will be no lack of sin and trouble, as the Scriptures say in **John 15:18–19** and **16:20**, and **1 John 2:15–16** and **5:19**.

Thirdly, they will certainly have the devil also around them, who with his lying and murdering day and night will let them have no peace within or without, as the Scriptures picture him in **John 8:44, 1 Peter 5:8–9, Ephesians 6:11–12** and **2 Timothy 2:26**.

Note:

These questions and answers are no child's play, but are drawn up with great earnestness of purpose by the venerable and devout Dr. Luther for both young and old. Let each one pay attention and consider it a serious matter; for St. Paul writes to the Galatians in chapter six: "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked."