

LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649746170

Luther's Small Catechism by Martin Luther

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MARTIN LUTHER

**LUTHER'S SMALL
CATECHISM**

NOTE.

IN this edition of the Catechism, the attempt is made to combine some of the most desirable features of the editions that have preceded it. The plan is to give the *standard text of Luther's Catechism*, with such proof-texts as will illustrate each distinct thought. For this purpose the references given in the edition of 1855, have been subjected to a careful revision, and compared with the proof-texts given in the "General Council" Catechism and the edition prepared by Drs. Mann and Krotel. The aim has been to refer only to those proof-passages that ought to be cited, without overburdening the learner.

The edition of 1855 has never been superseded, on account of its valuable *additions*, and the features which made it so popular, with such changes as would enhance their value, are incorporated in the present work. The "*Order of Salvation in 169 Questions and Answers*" is given, with Scripture references printed in full. The "*Examination of Catechumens*" is also given, with such additions as will enable the Pastor to explain to his *Catechumens* the nature of Confirmation and of the vows then made to God. The part, entitled "*The Doctrines and Duties of the Christian Religion, systematically arranged*" is offered as an outline for a three years' course of Catechetical Instruction, or for a course of Catechetical Sermons during week-day services. It endeavors to combine in one table the three analytical tables of the edition of 1855.

Four Appendices have been added, in the first of which is presented a chronological summary of Biblical History, arranged in such a manner that the Holy Bible may be read as one connected history; in the second a short account of the Church Year and Festivals is given, as published in the "General Council" Catechism; in the third we have the Chants and Canticles, as given in the Sunday School Book; and in the fourth there is a selection of fifty-eight Hymns, common to the *Church Book* and the *Sunday School Book*, hymns that ought to be committed to memory by every child of God, and suitable to be sung in the Church, School and Family.

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LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM.

PART I.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

In the plain form in which they are to be taught by the Head of a family.

Exod. 20: 1-17. Deut. 5: 6-21. Matt. 22: 37-40.
Mark 12: 28-31.

The First Commandment.

I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

[Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.]

1 Cor. 8: 4-6. Matt. 4: 10. Ps. 115: 3-8. Isa. 44: 6.
1 John 5: 21.

What is meant by this Commandment?

Answer. We should fear,¹ love,² and trust³ in God above all things.⁴

¹ Eccl. 12: 13. Josh. 24: 14. Matt. 10: 28. ² 1 John 5: 3.
1 John 2: 15-17. ³ Ps. 37: 3-5. ⁴ Matt. 6: 33.

The Second Commandment.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Mal. 2 : 2.

What is meant by this Commandment ?

Answer. We should so fear and love God as not to curse¹, swear², conjure³, lie⁴, or deceive⁵, by his name⁶, but call upon him in every time of need⁷, and worship him with prayer⁸, praise⁹, and thanksgiving¹⁰.

¹ Lev. 24 : 15, 16. Rom. 12 : 14. ² Matt. 5 : 34-37. ³ Deut. 18 : 10-12. ⁴ John 8 : 44. Acts 5 : 3, 8. Gal. 1 : 8. ⁵ 2 Tim. 3 : 5. ⁶ Ps. 50 : 16. ⁷ Ps. 50 : 15. Matt. 7 : 7, 8. ⁸ Eph. 6 : 18. Matt. 6 : 6. 1 Tim. 2 : 1. ⁹ Luke 1 : 68. Ps. 103 : 1-5. ¹⁰ Eph. 5 : 20. Ps. 50 : 14.

The Third Commandment.

Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.

[Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work : but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates : for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.]

Exod. 31 : 14-17. Isa. 58 : 13, 14. Neh. 13 : 17, 18. 1 Cor. 16 : 2. Mark 2 : 27, 28.

What is meant by this Commandment ?

Answer. We should so fear and love God as not to despise his word and the preaching of the gospel¹ but deem it holy², and willingly hear³ and learn it⁴.

¹ John 17: 17. Col. 3: 16. John 5: 39. Deut. 31: 12. Luke 10: 16. ² Luke 4: 16. Heb. 10: 25. 1 Thess. 2: 13. ³ Rom. 10: 17. John 8: 47. Eccl. 5: 1. Prov. 2: 1-5. ⁴ Luke 11: 28. James 1: 21, 22. Acts 17: 11.

The Fourth Commandment.

Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Prov. 23: 22. Eph. 6: 1-3.

What is meant by this Commandment?

Answer. We should so fear and love God as not to despise¹ nor displease² our parents and superiors³, but honor⁴, serve⁵, obey⁶, love⁷, and esteem them⁸.

¹ Prov. 30: 17. Deut. 27: 16. ² Deut. 21: 18-21. ³ 1 Thess. 5: 12, 13. 1 Pet. 5: 5. Tit. 2: 9. ⁴ Luke 2: 51. Lev. 19: 32. ⁵ 1 Tim. 5: 4. ⁶ Col. 3: 2. Prov. 6: 20. Heb. 13: 17. ⁷ Gen. 46: 29. ⁸ Prov. 20: 20.

The Fifth Commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

Matt. 5: 21, 22. 1 John 3: 15.

What is meant by this Commandment?

Answer. We should so fear and love God as not to do our neighbor¹ any bodily harm or injury², but rather assist³ and comfort⁴ him in danger and want⁵.

¹ Luke 10: 29, 36, 37. Matt. 5: 43-45. ² Gen. 9: 6. ³ 1 Pet. 3: 9. Heb. 13: 6. ⁴ Eph. 4: 32. ⁵ 1 John 3: 16-18. Luke 6: 36.

The Sixth Commandment.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Matt. 5: 27-32. Matt. 19: 4-6.

What is meant by this Commandment?

Answer. We should so fear and love God, as

to be chaste and pure¹ in our words² and deeds³, each one also loving and honoring⁴ his wife or her husband⁵.

¹ Phil. 4: 8. Matt. 5: 8. Gal. 5: 19-21. 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20. ² Eph. 4: 29. Eph. 5: 4. ³ Rom. 13: 13, 14. Luke 21: 34. Eph. 5: 18. ⁴ Col. 3: 18, 19. Eph. 5: 33. ⁵ Eph. 5: 22-25.

The Seventh Commandment.

Thou shalt not steal.

Eph. 4: 28. 1 Tim. 6: 6-10. Heb. 13: 5.

What is meant by this Commandment?

Answer. We should so fear and love God, as not to rob our neighbor of his money or property¹, nor bring it into our possession by unfair dealing or fraudulent means², but rather assist him to improve and protect it³.

¹ James 5: 4. Micah 2: 1, 2. ² Jer. 22: 13. Deut. 25: 13-16. ³ Matt. 5: 42. Lev. 25: 35-37. Acts 20: 35. Prov. 19: 17. Phil. 2: 4.

The Eighth Commandment.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Prov. 19: 5. Zech. 8: 16, 17.

What is meant by this Commandment?

Answer. We should so fear and love God as not deceitfully¹ to belie², betray³, slander, nor raise injurious reports against our neighbor⁴, but apologize for him, speak well of him⁵, and put the most charitable construction on all his actions.⁶

¹ Matt. 12: 36. Prov. 24: 28. ² Eph. 4: 25. 1 Pet. 2: 1. ³ Prov. 11: 13. ⁴ James 4: 11. ⁵ Col. 4: 6. Prov. 31: 8, 9. ⁶ 1 Pet. 4: 8.

The Ninth Commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

1 Tim. 6: 9, 10. Rom. 7: 7.

What is meant by this Commandment?

Answer. We should so fear and love God as not to desire by craftiness to gain possession of our neighbor's inheritance or home¹, or to obtain it under the pretext of a legal right²; but be ready to assist and serve him in the preservation of his own³.

¹ Jer. 5: 26-28. ² Isa. 10: 1, 2. ³ Exod. 23: 4, 5.

The Tenth Commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

Matt. 15: 19. Gal. 5: 24.

What is meant by this Commandment?

Answer. We should so fear and love God as not to alienate our neighbor's wife from him¹, entice away his servants², nor let loose his cattle³, but use our endeavors that they may remain and discharge their duty to him⁴.

¹ Matt. 14: 3, 4. ² Tit. 2: 9. ³ Deut. 22: 1. ⁴ 1 Thess. 5: 14, 15.

What does God declare concerning all these Commandments?

Answer. He says: "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Exod. 20: 5, 6.

Nahum 1: 2. Mal. 3: 16-18. Deut. 12: 28. Ps. 103: 17, 18.