

Martin Luther said that of all his many writings, only two deserved to survive to posterity; i.e., “Luther’s Small Catechism With Explanation,” and, “Free Will A Slave,” or, “De Servo Arbitrio.” Everyone should make himself familiar with these two works by this genius who was also a Bible scholar. He lived 1483 to 1546, at a time when the Catholic heads began for filthy lucre’s sake to sell indulgences to finance the Vatican and all the huge projects that had come to a standstill because of out of control costs. He came out from them and spoke against them. Let us spend some time with Luther’s Small Catechism. We will begin to look at The Ten Commandments. What does God say about all these commandments? 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 shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”(Ex. 20:5-6)

The head of the family, should teach “The Commandments” and “The Creed” and “The Lord’s Prayer” etc. in a simple way to his household.

“Now These are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, and keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”(Deut. 6:1-9)

The First Article, CREATION “*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.*” What does this mean? I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

The Second Article, 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 does this mean? 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 person, purchased 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, that I may be His own and live under

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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, 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 does this mean? 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. In the same way 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 He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

Now looking at The Lord’s Prayer:

“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.” (Matt. 6:9-13.)

The Introduction *“Our Father who art in heaven.”* What does this mean? With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.

The First Petition *“Hallowed be Thy name.”* What does this mean? God’s name is certainly holy in itself, but we pray in this petition that it may be kept holy among us also. How? God’s name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God’s Word profanes the name of God among us. Protect us from this heavenly Father!

The Second Petition *“Thy kingdom come.”* What does this mean? The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also. How? God’s kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

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 done even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also. How? God’s will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God’s name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die. This is His good and gracious will.

The Forth Petition *“Give us this day our daily bread.”* What does this mean? God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God will lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving. Our daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support of our needs of the body, such as, food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout spouse, peace, health, self-control and the like, according to his will.

We will look at Martin Luther and this work, more later.

I love you. Amen.

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In the preface to his *Small Catechism*, Luther expresses a sober doctrinal motivation for publishing the work: “*The deplorable, miserable condition which I discovered lately when I, too, was a visitor, has forced and urged me to prepare [publish] this Catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small, plain, simple form. Mercy! Good God! What manifold misery I beheld! The common people, especially in the villages, have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and, alas! Many pastors are altogether incapable and incompetent to teach [so much so, that one is ashamed to speak of it]. Nevertheless, all maintain that they are Christians, have been baptized and receive the [common] holy Sacraments. Yet they [do not understand and] cannot [even] recite either the Lord's Prayer, or the Creed, or the Ten Commandments; they live like dumb brutes and irrational hogs; and yet, now that the Gospel has come, they have nicely learned to abuse all liberty like experts. O ye bishops! [to whom this charge has been committed by God,] what will ye ever answer to Christ for having so shamefully neglected the people and never for a moment discharged your office? [You are the persons to whom alone this ruin of the Christian religion is due. You have permitted men to err so shamefully; yours is the guilt; for you have ever done anything rather than what your office required you to do.] May all misfortune flee you! [I do not wish at this place to invoke evil on your heads.] ...you do not care in the least [while you are utterly without scruple and concern] whether the people know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or any part of the Word of God. Woe, woe, unto you forever...therefore I entreat [and adjure] you all for God's sake, my dear sirs and brethren, who are pastors or preachers, to devote yourselves heartily to your office, to have pity on the people who are entrusted to you, and to help us inculcate the Catechism upon the people, and especially upon the young...Our office is now become a different thing from what it was under the Pope...it now involves much more trouble and labor, danger and trials, and, in addition thereto, little reward and gratitude in the world. But Christ Himself will be our reward if we labor faithfully...*”

The continual teaching, meditating upon, and placing of God's commandments in the forefront of our minds, and those of our children, is an oft-repeated exhortation: “*And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*” (Eph. 6:4) “*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*” (Pr. 22:6) “*But his (that is, the righteous man's) delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*” (Ps. 1:2), and:

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes; And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.” (Deut. 6:4-9)

However, as we examine the first part of the *Small Catechism: I. The Ten Commandments*, we are privy to the first glaring heresy of the Catholic monster revealed in this work. The generally accepted catholic numbering of the commandments given to Moses by God at **Ex. 20:3-17** (and restated at **Deut. 5:1-21**), has been attributed to St. Augustine's fifth century A.D. work, *Questions of Exodus*, and has since been officially adopted at the Council of Trent – 1545-1563. In the catholic version of the laws The Lord gave Moses in Mt. Sinai that we refer to as the ‘Ten Commandments,’ the second commandment is nowhere to be found, to wit:

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing 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.”
(Ex. 2:4-6)

The catholic monster commits a great heresy of omission, here. Don't make any graven images – period. This doesn't just mean the making of an Ashtaroth statue, or a Molech statue (in both cases, the idolatry predates the image, as those pagan deities were already thought of as gods prior to the images being made); it also means don't make any images of Christ, or of Mary, or of the Saints, or of the finger of God reaching down from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel to touch Adam's finger, for use in any form of religious worship. No crosses, no crucifixes, no stained glass windows, of anyone or anything in heaven, earth, or the sea. This is a great heresy. ***“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”*** (Rev. 22:18-19) Of course, the pernicious, evil nature of the omission is further underscored by the rounding out of this folly, in that the catholics then perform a little heretical mitosis – by splitting the tenth commandment, given at Ex. 20:17, into two distinct laws – making for their own perverted list both the ninth and tenth commandments: ***“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.”*** (Ex. 20:17) Luther's Small Catechism expresses the ninth and tenth commandments thusly: 9. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife*, and 10. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house*. Since the law given to Moses by God had been commonly known as the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, ever since the time of the penning of the Pentateuch, or the Books of Moses, the catholics couldn't just eliminate one without replacing it – the 'nine commandments' would cast too obvious a pall over the matter. And while we cannot lay at Luther's feet the origination of the heresy – *that* is commonly owed to St. Augustine's Questions of Exodus (though catholics call it no heresy at all), we can certainly tag Luther with the promulgation of this dangerous heresy – this outright perversion of God's holy word. And this is not just evidenced by its inclusion in his *Small Catechism*, as a doctrinal oversight; for Luther himself translated the Bible from its original Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Septuagint into German – publishing the *Luther Bible* in 1540 (which was, by then, able to be widely circulated at a far lower cost than when the Gutenberg press first fired up in 1450). He had to translate Ex. 20:4-6 himself! Rampant religious imagery was certainly a mainstay of catholicism by Luther's day (though in all fairness probably much less so when St. Augustine had written, over 1000 years earlier); the Vatican was being built, designed for maximum opulence, to stir religious fervor in the masses of reprobate men who could not be stirred to shame and a sincere fear and love of The Lord by the powerful, irresistible grace of Almighty God, since He had never foreordained it unto them. By Luther's day, catholicism had indeed become full-on, rampant idolatry of every stripe – steeping every man, woman and child in the vile sin of idol worship from the cradle. ***“Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.”*** (1Cor. 10:14) ***“Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”*** (1Jo. 5:21)

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.”(Rom. 1:21-23)

Indeed, we must glorify God as God, and be thankful. Cleaving to His word – not perverting it.

I love you. Amen.

TEN COMMANDMENTS

CATHOLIC TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing 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.

3. 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.

4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, 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 manservant, nor thy maidservant, 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 sabbath day, and hallowed it.

5. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

1. I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.

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

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day

4. Honor your father and your mother

5. You shall not kill

6. You shall not commit adultery

7. You shall not steal

8. You shall not bear false witness

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods