

The Small Catechism

By Martin Luther

Contents

Forward

Preface

I. The Ten Commandments

II. The Creed

III. The Lord's Prayer

IV. Baptism

V. Confession

VI. The Lord's Supper

Daily Prayers

Table of Duties

Forward

Every church, every pastor, and every Christian needs a catechism. We who believe in Jesus Christ should know what we believe, and how to articulate it. As the Bible instructs us, we must always be ready to give an account, to anyone who asks, of the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:15). Martin Luther composed this Small Catechism in a masterful way, in order to promote the teaching and knowledge of fundamental Christian teaching among all Christians, from the Pastors to the smallest children.

The Ten Commandments teach us how we should live as Christians, and they show us our failures, to point us to our need for Christ our Saviour. The Creed teaches us about God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; what we should believe God has done, and continues to do for us. The Lord's Prayer teaches us how to pray, as our Lord taught his disciples. The parts of the Catechism about Baptism, Confession, and the Lord's Supper teach us how God forgives us through his means of grace. Finally, Luther's morning and evening prayers, and the Table of Duties, a compilation of Bible passages for different stations in life, give further invaluable guidance in how we ought to live in a manner that is pleasing to God.

How should we use this catechism? Martin Luther also teaches this clearly. In every family, the head of the household should teach it to his wife, children, and servants. In every congregation, the Pastor should teach it to the people. And every private individual for his part should remember, recite, and confess the words of the Catechism before God. Although the teachings of the Small Catechism are basic, we cannot remind ourselves too often about these life-giving words.

Martin Luther discovered the great need for a Catechism in his own day, when he made personal visits to the congregations. In his preface, he wrote about his observations on these visits: 'The common man, especially in the villages, knows practically nothing of Christian doctrine, and many of the pastors are almost entirely incompetent and unable to teach. Yet all the people are supposed to be Christians, have been baptized, and receive the Holy Sacrament even though they do not know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments'. Without a Catechism, the Church will most certainly return to such a deplorable state. God forbid that this should happen! Truthfully, without exaggeration or doubt, I can honestly say that if only Luther's Small Catechism were known and followed in our congregations and in our homes, we would hardly see a single cause of any strife, envy or division, and our churches would shine as a marvelous light in this dark world, so that all men would be attracted to its warmth and comfort. May God produce such a good work in us!

It gives me great pleasure, therefore, to publish this edition of Luther's Small Catechism, for the benefit of all Christians, and most especially for my fellow Lutherans. I hope they will find this translation to be faithful, yet also clear, easy to understand, and a source of constant edification. By God's grace, the light of Christ may yet shine through the darkness of this present age. Let us pray that it may be so.

Edward Arthur Naumann. LCMS Theological Educator, South Asia

Preface of Dr. Martin Luther

To all faithful, pious parish pastors and preachers, Martin Luther sends grace, mercy, and peace in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The deplorable, miserable condition which I discovered lately when I was conducting visitations has forced and urged me to prepare and publish this Catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small, plain, simple form. Help me, dear almighty God! What great disaster I witnessed there! The common man, especially in the rural areas, has no knowledge at all about Christian doctrine, and unfortunately, many pastors are completely incapable and incompetent at teaching. It is a shame to say it. And yet, they are all called Christian, baptized, and together with us enjoy the use of the holy Sacraments, even though they do not know the meaning of, and cannot even recite the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, or the Ten Commandments. In short, they live no differently than the brute beasts; and now that the Gospel has come, they have mastered the art of abusing all Christian liberty.

You bishops, whatever will you say to Christ, for having so shamefully neglected the people, allowing them to wander, and never for a moment fulfilling your duty, which God entrusted to your care, but doing everything other than what your office required of you? You are to blame, and this ruin of the Christian religion is due to you alone. May all misfortune flee you—I hope nothing bad happens to you! Is this not the highest form of impiety and impudence, that you command the Sacrament in one form only, and insist on your human traditions, and yet at the same time you do not care at all whether the people know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, or any part of the Word of God? Woe, woe, to you!

Therefore I entreat and adjure you all for God's sake, my dear sirs and brethren, who are pastors or preachers, to devote yourselves whole-heartedly to your office, 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. And those of you who cannot do better—if any of you are so unskilled that you have absolutely no knowledge of these matters—do not be ashamed to take these tables and forms, and impress them, word for word, on the people, as follows.

In the first place, let the preacher above all carefully avoid many different or various texts and forms of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Sacraments, but choose one form to which he adheres, and which he inculcates all the time, year after year. I give this advice, however, because I know that young and simple people must be taught by uniform, settled texts and forms, otherwise they easily become confused when the teacher today teaches them one way, and in another year some other way, as if he wished to make improvements, and thus all effort and labor which has been expended in teaching is lost.

Also 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 imitate

their diligence and be at pains to teach the young and simple people these parts in such a way as not to change a syllable, or set them forth and repeat them one year differently than in another, no matter how often we teach the Catechism.

Hence, choose whatever form you please, and adhere to it forever. But when you preach in the presence of learned and intelligent men, you may exhibit your skill, and may present these parts in as varied and intricate ways and give them as masterly turns as you are able. But with the young people stick to one fixed, permanent form and manner, and teach them, first of all, these parts, namely, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and so on, according to the text, word for word, so that they, too, can repeat it in the same manner 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, neither should they be admitted to the Sacrament, accepted as sponsors at baptism, nor exercise any part of Christian liberty, but should simply be turned back to the Pope and his officials, indeed, to the devil himself. Moreover, their parents and employers should refuse them food and drink, and they would also do well to notify them that the prince will drive such rude people from the country!

For although we cannot and should not force any one to believe, yet we should insist and urge the people to know what is right and wrong with those with whom they dwell and wish to make their living. For whoever wants 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 secretly and privately a rogue and a knave.

In the second place, after they have learned the text well, then teach them the meaning also, so that they know what it means, and again choose the form of these tables, or some other brief uniform method, whichever you like, and stick to it, and do not change a single syllable, as was just said regarding the text; and take time over it. For you do not need to teach all the parts at once, but one after the other. After they understand the First Commandment well, then take up the Second, and so on, otherwise they will be overwhelmed, so as not to be able to retain any well.

In the third place, after you have thus taught them this Small Catechism, then take up the Large Catechism, and give them also a richer and fuller knowledge. Here explain at greater length every commandment, article, petition, and part with its various works, uses, benefits, dangers, and injuries, as you find these abundantly stated in many books written about these matters. And emphasize especially whichever commandment or part suffers the greatest neglect among your people. For instance, the Seventh Commandment, concerning stealing, must be strenuously urged among mechanics and merchants, and even farmers and servants, for among these people many kinds of dishonesty and thieving prevail. So too you must urge well the Fourth Commandment among the children and the common people, that they may be quiet and faithful, obedient and peaceable, and you must always supply many examples from the Scriptures to show how God has punished or blessed such people.

Especially should you here urge magistrates and parents to rule well and to send their children to school, showing them why it is their duty to do this, and what a damnable sin they are committing if they do not. For by such neglect they overthrow and destroy

both the kingdom of God and that of the world, acting as the worst enemies both of God and of men. And make it very clear to them what dreadful harm they are doing if they will not help to train children to be pastors, preachers, secretaries, and so on, and that God will punish them terribly for it. For such preaching is needed. Honestly, I do not know of any other topic that deserves to be treated as much as this. Parents and magistrates are now sinning unspeakably in this respect. The devil too is plotting something cruel because of these things.

Lastly, since the tyranny of the Pope has been abolished, people are no longer willing to go to the Sacrament, and they despise it as something useless and unnecessary. Here again we must urge them, but with this understanding: We are to force no one to believe, or to receive the Sacrament, nor fix any law, nor time, nor place for it, but are to preach in such a manner that, of their own accord, without our law, they will urge themselves and, as it were, compel us pastors to administer the Sacrament. This is done by telling them: Whoever does not seek or desire the Sacrament at least some four times a year, it is to be feared that he despises the Sacrament and is no Christian, just as he is no Christian who does not believe or hear the Gospel. For Christ did not say, 'This omit,' or, 'This despise,' but, 'This do, as often as you drink it'. The truth is that He wants it to be done, and not entirely neglected and despised. 'This do!' He says.

Now whoever does not highly value the Sacrament thereby shows that he has no sin, no flesh, no devil, no world, no death, no danger, no hell; that is, he does not believe any such things, although he is in them over head and ears and is doubly the devil's own. On the other hand, he needs no grace, life, Paradise, heaven, Christ, God, nor anything good. For if he believed that he had so much that is evil, and needed so much that is good, he would not neglect the Sacrament, by which such evil is remedied and so much good is bestowed. Neither will it be necessary to force him to the Sacrament by any law, but he will come voluntarily running and racing, and will force himself and urge you that you must give him the Sacrament.

Hence, you must not make any law in this matter, as the Pope does. Only set forth clearly the benefit and harm, the need and 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, let them go and tell them that such belong to the devil as do not regard nor feel their great need and the gracious help of God. But if you do not urge this, or make a law or a bane of it, it is your fault if they despise the Sacrament. How could they be anything other than slothful if you are sleepy and silent? Therefore see to it, you pastors and preachers! Our office has now become a different thing from what it was under the Pope; it has now become serious and salutary. Accordingly it now involves much more trouble and labor, danger and trials, and, in addition, it receives little reward and gratitude in the world. But Christ himself will be our reward if we labor faithfully. To this end may the Father of all grace help us, to whom be praise and thanks forever through Christ, our Lord! Amen.

I. The Ten Commandments

How the head of the household should teach them in a very simple way to his family.

The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself a carved image—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; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.

What does this mean?

Answer:

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

The Second Commandment

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

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we do not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by his name, but call upon it in every time of need, pray, praise, and give thanks.

The Third Commandment

You shall keep the Sabbath day holy.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we do not despise preaching and his Word, but consider it to be sacred, and gladly hear and learn it.

The Fourth Commandment

You shall honour your father and your mother, so that it may be well with you, and you may live long upon the earth.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we do not despise or anger our parents and masters, but treat them with honour, serve, obey, and hold them in love and high esteem.

The Fifth Commandment

You shall not kill.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but befriend him, and help him in all the needs and trials of his body and life.

The Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we lead chaste and decent lives in words and deeds; and spouses love and honor one another.

The Seventh Commandment

You shall not steal.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we do not take money or goods away from our neighbour, nor get them for ourselves by fraudulent deals or deception, but help him to improve and increase his goods and business, and do our best to preserve his wealth, and make his condition better.

The Eighth Commandment

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we do not level false, intentional lies against our neighbour, nor betray, defame, or slander him, but defend him, think and speak well of him, and understand and interpret everything in the best way.

The Ninth Commandment

You shall not covet thy neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we do not craftily take our neighbor's inheritance or house, and get it for ourselves on the pretense of justice and legal right, but help and be of service to him in keeping his fortunes undiminished.

The Tenth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is his.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We should fear and love God, so that we do not alienate, abduct, or entice our neighbor's wife, servants, or cattle away from him, but urge them to stay and do their duty with care.

What does God say in summary about all of these Commandments?

Answer:

He speaks this way in Exodus 20:5-6:

'For I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generations of those who hate me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments.'

What does this mean?

Answer:

God threatens to punish all who transgress and violate these commandments. Therefore we should fear and dread his anger, and do nothing 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 zealously and diligently order our entire life according to his commandments.

II. The Creed

How the head of the household should teach it in a very simple way to his family.

The First Article.

Of Creation.

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

What does this mean?

Answer:

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 sustains them; that in addition to these, he has given me clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and homestead, wife and children, fields, cattle, and all my goods; that he provides me richly and daily with all I need to support this body and life; that he protects me from all danger, and guards me and preserves me from all evil; and all this out of his pure, fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any of my merits or worthiness; and that for all these things, I rightly ought to give thanks to him, praise him with a loud voice, serve, and obey him. This is most certainly true.

The Second Article.

Of 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 shall come to judge the living and the dead.

What does this mean?

Answer:

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 and delivered me, a lost and condemned creature, 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, so that I may be entirely his, and live under him and serve him in his kingdom, in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to eternity. This is most certainly true.

The Third Article.

Of Sanctification.

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

What does this mean?

Answer:

I believe that I cannot in any way believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, nor come to him and reach him by my own reason or strength; but that the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and 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 her in Jesus Christ through the one true faith. In this Christian Church he kindly forgives me and all believers for all our sins each day; and on the last day, he will raise all of us from death, and give everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true.

III. The Lord's Prayer

How the head of the household should teach it in a very simple way to his family.

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

Answer:

God lovingly invites us in this little introduction to truly believe that he is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we will call upon him more confidently with perfect trust, just as we see dear children confidently asking their parents for something.

The First Petition

Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean?

Answer:

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

How is this done?

Answer:

When the Word of God is taught purely and sincerely, and when we also lead holy lives in accordance with it, as children of God should. Grant that this may be so, and help us, dear Father in heaven! But whoever teaches or lives contrary to what God's Word teaches profanes the name of God among us. But that this may not happen, do prevent it, Heavenly Father!

The Second Petition

Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean?

Answer:

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

How is this done?

Answer:

When our heavenly Father gives us his Holy Spirit, to bring it about by his grace that we believe his holy Word, and lead godly lives, both here in time and then afterwards for eternity.

The Third Petition

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

What does this mean?

Answer:

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

How is this done?

Answer:

When God breaks and hinders every wicked plan, will, and effort, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh, which would prevent us from hallowing the name of God, and prevent his kingdom from coming to us; then when he strengthens and keeps us steadfast in his Word and in faith until the end of our life. This is his good and gracious will.

The Fourth Petition

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

Answer:

God certainly gives daily bread to everyone, also without our prayer, even to wicked men; but we pray in this petition that we may acknowledge this blessing, and so receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread?

Answer:

It means everything that pertains to the needs and preservation of our life, namely food, drink, clothes, shoes, house, homestead, fields, cattle, money, wealth, a good wife, good children, honest servants, honest and faithful magistrates, stable government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honour, good friends, faithful neighbours, and other things like this.

The Fifth Petition

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

What does this mean?

Answer:

We ask in this petition that our Father in heaven would not inspect and examine our sins, and reject our prayer because of them; for we are not worthy of any of the things we ask for, neither can we earn them. We ask, however, that he would be willing to give us everything out of his grace and goodness; for every day, we sin in many ways, and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. In turn, so will we for our part also forgive from our heart, however others have sinned against us, and also gladly return good for evil.

The Sixth Petition

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

Answer:

God certainly tempts no one. But we pray in this petition that God would guard and preserve us, so that Satan, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us, nor seduce us from the true faith and throw us into superstition, unbelief, despair, and other great crimes and vices; and that, especially when we are afflicted by temptations like this, we may not be defeated, but finally overcome them, and win the victory.

The Seventh Petition

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

Answer:

We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from all evils and dangers of body and soul, goods and honours; and that finally, when the hour of death comes, he would grant us a blessed end of life, and out of his gracious goodness take us from this vale of tears to himself in heaven.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever.

Amen.

What does this mean?

Answer:

'Amen' means that I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and heard by him; for he himself has commanded us to pray this way, and has promised that he will hear us. 'Amen, Amen', that is: 'Truly, certainly, may it be so.'

IV. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

How the head of the family should teach it in a very simple way to his household.

First

What is Baptism?

Answer:

Baptism is not simply plain water, but it is water comprehended in God's command and connected to the Word of God.

What is that Word of God?

Answer:

Where our Lord Jesus Christ says in Matthew 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'.

Second

What does Baptism give or profit?

Answer:

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

What are those words and promises of God?

Answer:

Where our Lord Jesus Christ says in Mark 16:16:

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

Third

How can water do such great things?

Answer:

The water certainly does not do such great things, but the Word of God, which is in and with the water; and faith, which trusts in this Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is plain water and not a baptism. But with the Word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus 3:4-7:

'But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.'

Fourth

What does this baptism with water signify?

Answer:

It signifies that the old Adam still within us should, through daily mortification and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and again, that the new man should daily come forth and arise, to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

Answer:

St. Paul says in Romans 6:4:

‘Therefore we were buried with him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.’

V. Confession

How the simple people should be instructed.

What is Confession?

Answer:

Confession includes two parts: the first is the confession of sins, and the second is receiving absolution or forgiveness from the confessor or preacher of the Gospel, as from God himself, and not doubting, but firmly believing that sins are forgiven before God in heaven through that absolution.

What sins should we confess?

Answer:

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we do not know about, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. Before the confessor, however, we should confess only those sins that we know about, and which we feel in our hearts.

Which are these?

Answer:

Here let each person consider his station in life according to the Ten Commandments: whether you are a father, a mother, a son, a daughter, a master or lady of the house, or a servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, or negligent; whether you have hurt anyone by words or deeds; whether you have stolen, neglected, or wasted anything, or done any harm to anyone.

A Short Form of Confession for Simple People

You should speak to the confessor like this:

Reverend father, I ask you to hear my confession, and pronounce forgiveness to me for God's sake.

Proceed:

I, a poor sinner, confess before God that I am guilty of all sins; especially I confess before you that I am a servant (or a maid, etc.), but I serve my master unfaithfully; for in this

and that I did not do, and do not do, what he commanded me; I have provoked them, and caused them to curse; I neglected many things, and caused damage (etc.); I was shameless in words and deeds, I was impatient, I quarreled with my equals, I grumbled and swore at the house lady (etc.). For all this I am sorry, and I beg for grace. I want to do better.

A master or lady of the house may say something like this:
In particular I confess before you that I was not diligent in faithfully educating and training my family—my wife, children, and servants—to the glory of God; I cursed; I misused the name of God; I set a bad example by rude words and deeds; I harmed my neighbours, and injured them in many ways; I used false weights and measures; I tricked my neighbour when I sold him goods.

And whatever else happened contrary to God's Commandments, in each person's vocation, let them confess.

But if any one does not feel that he is burdened with sins like these, or weightier ones, he should not be anxious about it, or search for and invent other sins, and thereby make confession a torture, but mention one or two sins that he knows about, like: In particular I confess that I abused God's name one time; again, I used improper words once; I once neglected this or that, etc. Let this be enough, and this way let the soul be at peace.

But if you are not aware of any at all (which should be practically impossible), then you should also mention nothing in particular, but receive forgiveness after you make a general confession, which you pronounce to the confessor in the presence of God.

Then shall the confessor say:

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

He should also ask the person making confession:

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

Answer: Yes, father.

Then let him say to the accepting believer:

Let it be done to you as you believe. And at the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you for your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Depart in peace.

As for those who suffer from greatly afflicted consciences, temptations, or despair, the confessor will know how to comfort them with further passages of Scripture, which will serve to increase their faith. The form of confession that we just laid out is just a childish, common form for simple, uneducated people.

VI. 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?

The Sacrament of the Altar 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?

Answer:

The holy evangelists (Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22, Luke 22:19), and St. Paul (1 Corinthians 11:23), write as follows:

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 his disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this for my remembrance.'

In the same way also, after he had supper, he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, 'Take, drink from this, all of you. This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. Do this as often as you drink it, for my remembrance.'

But what is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

Answer:

This is indicated to us by these words: 'Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins'; namely, that forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given to us through these words in the Sacrament. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

How can this bodily eating and drinking do such great things?

Answer:

The eating and drinking certainly do not accomplish these things, but those words that are put here, namely, 'Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins'. These words, together with the bodily eating and drinking, are the centre and summation of this Sacrament; and he who believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

Who, then, receives or makes use of this Sacrament worthily?

Answer:

Fasting and preparing one's body is certainly good external training. But he is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: 'Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins'.

But whoever does not believe these words, or who doubts them, is unworthy and unprepared, because the words 'for you' require every heart to believe.

Daily Prayers

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

Morning Prayer

In the morning, when you rise, you shall bless yourself with the holy cross and say:

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

Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may, in addition, 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, keep me this day from sin and all evil, so 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 with joy, singing a hymn, as the Ten Commandments, or what your devotion may suggest.

Evening Prayer

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

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

Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may, in addition, 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, forgive me for 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 children and servants shall go to the table with folded hands and reverently, and say:

The eyes of all look to you, O Lord; and you give them their meat in due season; you open your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Note:

To 'satisfy the desire' means that all animals receive so much to eat that they are on this account joyful and of good cheer; for care and avarice hinder such satisfaction.

Then say the Lord's Prayer, and the following 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 reverently and with folded hands say:

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever. He gives food to all flesh; He gives to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delights not in the strength of the horse; He takes not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy.

Then say the Lord's Prayer and the following prayer:

We thank you, Lord God, our Father, for all Thy benefits, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

Table of Duties

Certain passages of scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities.

For Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers

'A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.' 1 Timothy 3:2-7.

'For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.' Titus 1:7-9.

What the Hearers Owe to Their Pastors

'Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.' 1 Corinthians 9:14.

'Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.' Galatians 6:6.

'Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."' 1 Timothy 5:17-18.

'Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.' Hebrews 13:17-18.

Concerning Civil Government

'Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring

judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.' Romans 13:1-4.

What Subjects Owe to the Magistrates

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

'Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.' Rom. 13:5-7.

'Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.' 1 Tim. 2:1-2.

'Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.' Titus 3:1-2.

'Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men'. 1 Peter 2:13-15.

For Husbands

'Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.' 1 Peter 3:7.

'Husbands, love your wives, and do not be bitter toward them.' Colossians 3:19.

For Wives

'Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as to the Lord.' Ephesians 5:22.

'Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands ... as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.' 1 Peter 3:1, 6.

For Parents

'And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.' Ephesians 6:4.

For Children

'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.'" Ephesians 6:1-3.

For Male and Female Servants, Hired Men, and Laborers

'Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.' Ephesians 6:5-8.

See also Colossians 3:22-24.

For Masters and Mistresses

'And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.' Ephesians 6:9.

'Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.' Colossians 4:1.

For Young Persons in General

'Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.'

1 Peter 5:5-6.

For Widows

'Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.' 1 Timothy 5:5-6.

For All in Common

'Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Romans 13:8-9.

'I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.' 1 Timothy 2:1.

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