

Lutheran Confessions

Preface to the Augsburg Confession, 8

“Wherefore, in most humble and obedience to Your Imperial Majesty, we offer and present a confession of our pastors’ and preachers’ teachings as well as of our faith, setting forth on the basis of the divine Holy Scripture what and in what manner they preach, teach, believe, and give instruction in our lands, principalities, dominions, cities, and territories. (Kolb)

Large Catechism, Apostles’ Creed, Article III, 36-37

But the Spirit of God alone is called Holy Ghost, that is, He who has sanctified and still sanctifies us. . . . so also the Holy Ghost effects our sanctification by the following parts, namely, by the communion of saints or the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting; that is, He first leads us into His holy congregation, and places us in the bosom of the Church, whereby He preaches to us and brings us to Christ.

38] For neither you nor I could ever know anything of Christ, or believe on Him, and obtain Him for our Lord, unless it were offered to us and granted to our hearts by the Holy Ghost through the preaching of the Gospel. The work is done and accomplished; for Christ has acquired and gained the treasure for us by His suffering, death, resurrection, etc. But if the work remained concealed so that no one knew of it, then it would be in vain and lost. That this treasure, therefore, might not lie buried, but be appropriated and enjoyed, God has caused the Word to go forth and be proclaimed, in which He gives the Holy Ghost to bring this treasure home and appropriate it to us. **39]** Therefore sanctifying is nothing else than bringing us to Christ to receive this good, to which we could not attain of ourselves.

The Large Catechism, Lord’s Prayer, Preface

5] And the first matter is to know that it is our duty to pray because of God’s commandment. For thus we heard in the Second Commandment: *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain*, that we are there required to praise that holy name, and call upon it in every need, or to pray. For to call upon the name of God is nothing else than to pray. **6]** Prayer is therefore as strictly and earnestly commanded as all other commandments: to have no other God, not to kill, not to steal, etc. . . . **8]** But praying, as the Second Commandment teaches, is to call upon God in every need. This He requires of us, and has not left it to our choice. But it is our duty and obligation to pray if we would be Christians, as much as it is our duty and obligation to obey our parents and the government; for by calling upon it and praying the name of God is honored and profitably employed.

(Bente, F., *Concordia Triglotta*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House, 1997).

Put it into Practice

These questions have been put together to help you as you extend and apply tonight’s Scripture to your life.

Prayer

O God, who by the leading of a star did manifest Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we, who know You now by faith, may after this life enjoy the fullness of Your glorious Godhead; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **AMEN** (*Collect for the Epiphany of Our Lord*)

Word of God: Matthew 2:1-12 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

- When it says “after Jesus was born” just how long after was it?
 - At eight days old Jesus was (Luke 2:21) probably at home.
 - At 40 days Jesus was (Luke 2:22f) at the temple in Jerusalem.
 - Since King Herod gives the order to kill the children in Bethlehem 2 or under (Mt. 2:16), Jesus was older than 40 days and younger than 3.
- Who are these “wise men” or magi(μάγοι) who seem to be astronomers and know about the King of the Jews? The study of the stars had been actively pursued by Gentiles in Babylon. Their knowledge of the Jewish King(Messiah) could be attributed to Daniel who was over the company of wise men 600 years earlier when he was exiled in Babylon(Dan. 2:48).
- When they showed up in Jerusalem looking for the “King of the Jews” how did the Jerusalem people respond(v.3)? Why?
- When King Herod the Great(apx. 37 to 4 B.C.) got wind of these wise men and their search for a Jewish King, how did he respond(v.3)? Why?
- What three things did Herod do?
 - First: _____ verses 4-6. What Prophet did the Sanhedrin cite to answer Herod’s question(Micah 5:2)?
 - Second: _____ verses 7. (Note: The wise men didn’t meet Herod, until he called them.) What did Herod want to find out from the wise men(v.7)? Why does he meet with them secretly?
 - Third: _____ verse 8. What did Herod tell them was his intention? Was it really his intention?
- Is it surprising that neither the Sanhedrin nor Herod go with the wise men?
- After their meeting with Herod, the star again appears. Their response?
- Where is Jesus when they find him? (v.11). (Note: not in a manger!)
- What did the wise men do? What gifts did they give him? (v.11)
- Gold is “money.” How would this poor family use the money? (v.13-15)
- For what is frankincense(Ex 30:7-8) and myrrh(Jn 19:39) used?
- It is only about a 2 hour journey from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. When would Herod have found out that he was tricked by the wise men?
- After what message did Joseph depart for Egypt? At what time?
- What prophesy did this action fulfil (Hosea 2:15)? What other “son” was brought up out of Egypt(Ex 4:22-23)?

6:30 PM “Learn by Heart”

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn TLH #116, stanza 1
Holy Baptism, Part One
Ephesians 3:10

7:00 PM “Catechesis”

+ Opening Verses
“O Lord, open my lips...” p.224

+ Ascription of Praise
“Praise to you, O Christ. Alleluia.” p.225

Reading

St. Matthew 2:1-12 (back)

Hymn

“To The Name of Our Salvation”
(Insert)

Catechesis on... (back)

St. Matthew 2:1-12

Liturgy

Catechism

--prayer based on reading

+ Responsive Prayer for Catechesis
(insert)

Ten Commandments
Lord’s Prayer
Apostles’ Creed

Psalm 1

Collect of the Day
Prayers based on the text
The Collect for Peace
Benedicamus
Benediction

Catechesis on St. Matthew 2:1-12

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

³When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

⁶“But you, Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.”

⁷Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found *Him*, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”

⁹When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.

¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. ¹¹And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹²Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. (NKJV)

Old Testament Prophecies of Christ

A King from Judah’s tribe

Genesis 49:10, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

Numbers 24:17, “I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.”

From David’s Line in the town of Bethlehem

Jeremiah 23:5, “Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord, ‘That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.”

Micah 5:2, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”

John 7:42, “Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?”

Revealed to be God Incarnate

Augsburg Confession, Art. III: Of the Son of God.

1] Also they teach that *the Word*, that is, *the Son of God*, did assume *the human nature* in 2] the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human, inseparably enjoined in one Person, one Christ, true God and true man, who was born of the Virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and 3] buried, that He might reconcile the Father unto us, and be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men” (1-3).

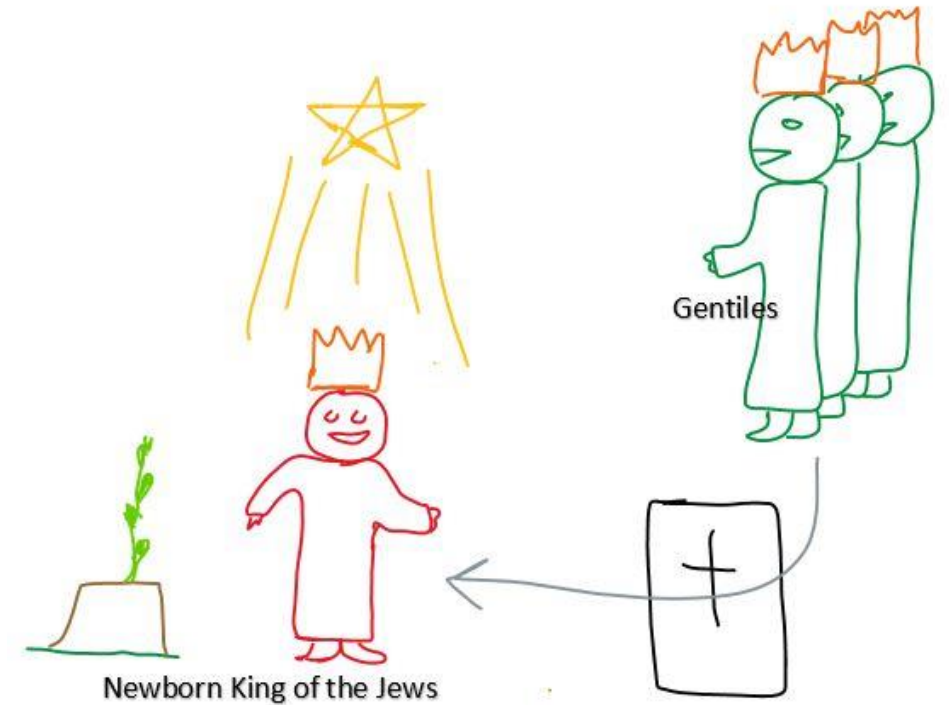
Formula of Concord, Ep, VIII The Person of Christ

1. That the divine and human natures in Christ are personally united, so that there are not two Christs, one the Son of God, the other the Son of man, but that one and the same is the Son of God and Son of man, Luke 1, 35; Rom. 9, 5.

2. We believe, teach, and confess that the divine and human natures are not mingled into one substance, nor the one changed into the other, but that each retains its own essential properties, which [can] never become the properties of the other nature....

7. Hence we believe, teach, and confess that Mary conceived and bore not a mere man and no more, but the true Son of God; therefore she also is rightly called and truly is the mother of God.... 10. Hence we believe, teach, and confess that the Son of Man is realiter, that is, in deed and truth, exalted according to His human nature to the right hand of the almighty majesty and power of God, because He [that man] was assumed into God when He was conceived of the Holy Ghost in His mother’s womb, and His human nature was personally united with the Son of the Highest. (5-6, 12, 15)

CATECHESIS ON ST. MATTHEW 2:1-12



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Holy Baptism, 1

“Besides these we have yet to speak of our two Sacraments instituted by Christ, of which also every Christian ought to have at least an ordinary, brief instruction, because without them there can be no Christian... But, in the first place, we take up Baptism, by which we are first received into the Christian Church” (LC IV 1-2).

The Element: Water

“From this now learn a proper understanding of the subject, and how to answer the question what Baptism is, namely thus, that it is not mere ordinary water, but water comprehended in God’s Word and command, and sanctified thereby, so that it is nothing else than a divine water; **not that the water in itself is nobler than other water**, but that God’s Word and command are added” (LC IV 14). (Also see SA III 5, 2)

John 3:5-6, “Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of **water** and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’”

Ephesians 5:26, “...that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of **water by the word**...”

The Command

Jesus gave the command to baptize in Matthew 28:18-20.

Matthew 28:18-20, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”

There are many references in the book of Acts which describe the Apostles baptizing people. These references are not prescriptive (telling us what words to use in Baptism as in Mt 28:19) but are descriptive of what benefits were given in Baptism. Having been baptized “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” that person is united with Jesus.

Acts 2:38, “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized **in the name of Jesus Christ** for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”

Acts 10:48, “And he commanded them to be baptized **in the name of the Lord**.”

Acts 19:5, “... they were baptized **in the name of the Lord Jesus**.”

Romans 6:3-4, “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 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.”

The Application of Water

“Baptism can be performed by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling, because Βαπτίζειν merely denotes the application of water, without any implication as to the way it is applied” (Christian Dogmatics, v.3, p.256). Furthermore

Luke 11:38, “When the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not first washed (ἐβαπτίσθη) before dinner.”

Mark 7:3-4, “For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash (νίψωνται) their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. 4 When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash (βαπτίσωνται). And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing (βαπτισμοῦς) of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.”

The following passages are teaching the effect of baptism, not the particular mode or method of application.

Romans 6:3-4, “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 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.”

Acts 22:16, “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

Hebrews 10:22, “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

The Old Testament

Ezekiel 36:24-28 (29-33), “For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. 25 “Then **I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean**; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 “**I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.** 27 “**I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.** 28 “**Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God....**”

2 Kings 5:14, “So he went down and dipped (ἐβαπτίσαστο, LXX) seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

1 Corinthians 10:1-2, “Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were **baptized into Moses** in the cloud and in the sea...” (Ex 14:19-20).