

Lutheran Confessions

Augsburg Confession: XXVIII The Power of Bishops

Again, according to the Gospel or, as they say, by divine right, there belongs to the bishops as bishops, that is, to those to whom has been committed the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, **no jurisdiction except to forgive sins, to judge doctrine, to reject doctrines contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the communion of the Church wicked men, whose wickedness is known, and this without human force, 22] simply by the Word. Herein the congregations of necessity and by divine right must obey them, according to Luke 10, 16: *He that heareth you heareth Me.* 23] But when they teach or ordain anything against the Gospel, then the congregations have a commandment of God prohibiting obedience, Matt. 7, 15: *Beware of false prophets; 24] Gal. 1, 8: *Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed; 25] 2 Cor. 13, 8: *We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.*** (See Also Apology, VII and VIII, 47-50)**

Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, IV. Good Works

8] Nor is there a controversy as to how and why the good works of believers, although in this flesh they are impure and incomplete, are pleasing and acceptable to God, namely, for the sake of the Lord Christ, by faith, because the person is acceptable to God. For the works which pertain to the maintenance of external discipline, which are also done by, and required of, the unbelieving and unconverted, although commendable before the world, and besides rewarded by God in this world with temporal blessings, are nevertheless, because they do not proceed from true faith, in God's sight sins, that is, stained with sin, and are regarded by God as sins and impure on account of the corrupt nature and because the person is not reconciled with God. *For a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, Matt. 7, 18, as it is also written Rom. 14, 23: *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.** For the person must first be accepted of God, and that for the sake of Christ alone, if also the works of that person are to please Him.

9] **Therefore, of works that are truly good and well-pleasing to God, which God will reward in this world and in the world to come, faith must be the mother and source; and on this account they are called by St. Paul true fruits of faith, as also of the Spirit.**

(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

Grant to us, Lord, we implore You, the Spirit to think and do always such things as are right, that we, who cannot do anything that is good without You, may by You be enabled to live according to Your will; through 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 Trinity 8*)

Word of God: St. Matthew 7:15-23 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

1. A Prophet is someone who speaks forth God's Word. (Note: A prophet does not simply foretell, but applies God's Word to past, present and/or future.) How are we to treat...
 - A. ...false prophets? (v.15, also see Romans 16:17)
 - B. ...true prophets? (see Luke 10:16, Heb 13:17)
2. From the outside, what can't we see or determine? (Ps 44:21)
3. How can we recognize true and false prophets? (v.16, 20)
4. "Prophets" can refer to all God's people(Mal 2:7, Acts 2:17-18) or those with particular calls to preach(Eph 4:10-12, Jn 20:22-23). Read the First Petition of the Lord's Prayer and its meaning(LW, p.302).
5. What are the "fruits"?
 - A. Not "signs and wonders." (v. 22) See Mt 24:24, Dt 13:1-3
 - B. Not an outwardly holy life. (See Mt 23:1-3). Though people and especially pastors, are required to live in a godly way, only those works are good, which are done in faith(Heb 11:6) and which flow from the fruits of faith: love(Mt 22:37-40).
 - C. The only true "fruit" is teaching! Isaiah 8:19-20 (If they do not speak according to this word...); Jer 23:31 (the prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, 'the Lord declares.');
6. Compare "They come to you"(v.15) with "Called and ordained."(Jer 23:32).
7. What is the will of the heavenly Father? Read 3rd Petition of Lord's Prayer and it's meaning (LW, p.302)
8. God's will includes not only repentance worked by the Law, but also faith worked by the Gospel! "Repent and believe/be baptized" (Acts 2:38)
9. Are we saved by our own self-determined means? (Mt 15:9 Their teachings are but rules taught by men; Is 29:13) or apart from faith. Mal 2:13-18)

6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn #187, stanza 1
4th Commandment & meaning, p. 300
5th Commandment & meaning, p. 300
Malachi 2:7

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 7:15-23 (back)

Hymn

"When All The World Was Cursed"
#187

Catechesis on... (back)

St. Matthew 7:15-23
Liturgy
Catechism

--prayer based on reading

+ Recite Word by Word insert

Ten Commandments
Lord's Prayer
Apostles' Creed
Sacrament of Holy Baptism
Matthew 28:19
Mark 16:16
Confession & Absolution
John 20:22-23
Sacrament of the Altar
Words of Institution

Collect of the Day
--prayer based on reading
R. AMEN
Benediction
R. AMEN

Catechesis on St. Matthew 7:15-23

False Prophets and Fruits

15“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”

21“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ 23And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (NKJV)

Our Doctrine and Practice

--Our Lord Jesus calls certain men out of their vocation into **the Office of the Ministry**(Augsburg Confession V) in order that they will devote themselves to **providing the Gospel and the Sacraments**, the means through which the Holy Spirit works justification through faith in Christ(AC IV). Although we do hold to the necessity of a divine call into the Pastoral Office before we receive a minister(AC XIV), the call itself does not insure orthodoxy. “**We should forsake wicked teachers** because **they no longer function in the place of Christ**, but are antichrists. Christ says (Matt. 7:15), “Beware of false prophets. (Tappert). *Apology of Augsburg Confession, VII and VIII* --We know that someone is a false teacher **by examining their teaching(fruits)**. “²¹According to divine right, therefore, it is the office of the **bishop to preach the Gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn doctrine that is contrary to the Gospel, and exclude from the Christian community the**

ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifest. All this is to be done not by human power but by God’s Word alone. ²² On this account parish ministers and churches are bound to be obedient to the bishops according to the saying of Christ in Luke 10:16, “He who hears you hears me.” ²³ On the other hand, **if they teach, introduce, or institute anything contrary to the Gospel**, we have God’s command not to be obedient in such cases, for Christ says in Matt. 7:15, “Beware of false prophets” (AC XXVIII. The Power of Bishops).

Absolution

Prior to the words of forgiveness(p. 158) the pastor says, “As a called and ordained servant of the Word...” in order to show that he is an occupant of the Pastoral Office, acting in Christ’s stead, and one who God desires to use to create and strengthen faith.

Salutation

--At the beginning of the Service of the Word(before the collect of the day, p.164) and the Service of Lord’s Supper(preface, p. 170), as well as before the prayers in the order of Matins(p.219) and Vespers(p.231), is the Salutation:

P. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you. (And with your Spirit)

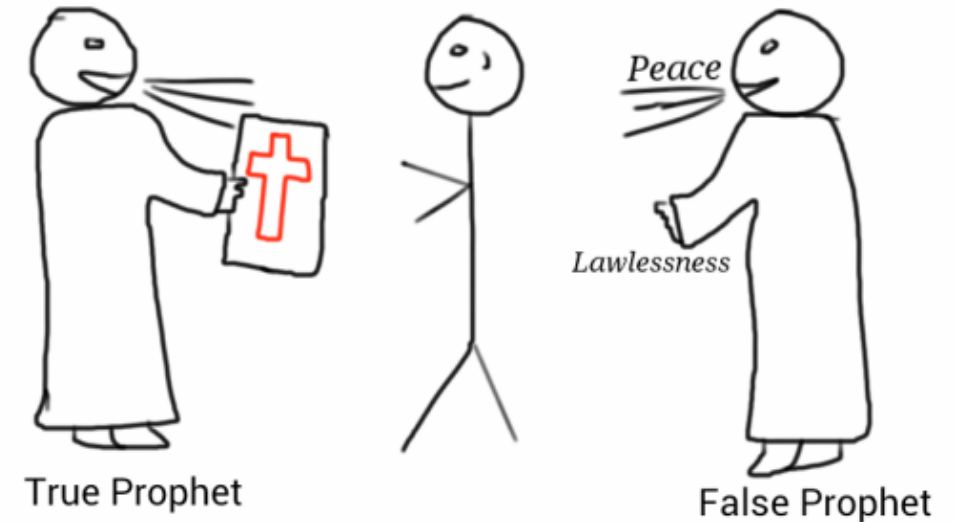
--“The Lord be with you” is not just an empty greeting, but a present reality and an encouragement to faith. The Lord is not dead, he is risen from the dead. For those who believe and are baptized Jesus Christ is with you. When the Lord is with you, you have a mighty fortress, a trusty shield and weapon.

--The response of God’s people to the called minister, saying, “And with your Spirit,” is the word of faith saying, “**You are the called minister. Through His call, the Lord has poured out his Spirit on you so that you might teach us God’s Word. Pray to the Lord on our behalf.**”

The Catechism

--The 1st Petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Hallowed be Thy Name” draws a distinction between the teaching of true prophets, by which we ought to lead holy lives, and the teaching of false prophets, which produces lives contrary to God’s Word. --The Office of the Keys(LW, p.305) highlights the importance of the called ministers of Christ, and the Table of Duties list the responsibilities for “Bishops, Pastors, and Preachers,” and “What Hearers Owe Their Pastors.”

Catechesis On St. Matthew 7:15-23



Trinity Lutheran Church & Early Childhood Learning Center

1000 North Park Avenue, Herrin, IL 62948
Church 942-3401, Learning Center 942-4750

www.trinityh.org

Pastor Michael D. Henson · Deacon Gary K. Harroun

*Pr. Henson and Dcn. Harroun are members of the
Evangelical Lutheran Diocese of North America (Eldona.org)*

The Fourth Commandment

Honor

“To this estate of fatherhood and motherhood God has given the special distinction above all estates that are beneath it that He not simply commands us to love our parents, but to honor them. For with respect to brothers, sisters, and our neighbors in general He commands nothing higher than that we love them, so that He separates and distinguishes father and mother above all other persons upon earth, **and places them at His side.** For it is a far higher thing to honor than to love one, inasmuch as it comprehends not only love, but also modesty, humility, and deference as to **a majesty there hidden,** and requires not only that they be addressed kindly and with reverence, but, most of all, that both in heart and with the body we so act as **to show that we esteem them very highly, and that, next to God, we regard them as the very highest.** For one whom we are to honor from the heart we must truly regard as high and great” (LC I 105-107).

All authority is derived from Parenthood

“For all authority flows and is propagated from the authority of parents. **For where a father is unable alone to educate his [rebellious and irritable] child, he employs a schoolmaster to instruct him; if he be too weak, he enlists the aid of his friends and neighbors; if he departs this life, he delegates and confers his authority and government upon others who are appointed for the purpose. Likewise, he must have domestics, man-servants and maid-servants, under himself for the management of the household, so that all whom we call masters are in the place of parents and must derive their power and authority to govern from them. Hence also they are all called fathers in the Scriptures, as those who in their government perform the functions of a father, and should have a paternal heart toward their subordinates. As also from antiquity the Romans and other nations called the masters and mistresses of the household *patres- et matres-familiae*, that is, housefathers and housemothers. So also they called their national rulers and overlords *patres patriae*, that is, fathers of the entire country, for a great shame to us who would be Christians that we do not likewise call them so, or, at least, do not esteem and honor them as such** (LC I 141-142).

Temporal Promise (and Punishment)

“Over and above all this, another great reason that should incite us the more [to obedience to this commandment] is that God attaches to this commandment **a temporal promise** and says: *That thou mayest live long upon the land which the Lord, thy God, giveth thee.*

Here you can see yourself how much God is in earnest in respect to this commandment, inasmuch as He not only declares that it is well pleasing to Him, and that He has joy and delight therein; but also that **it shall be for our prosperity and promote our highest good;** so that we may have a pleasant and agreeable life, furnished with every good thing. Therefore also St. Paul greatly emphasizes the same and rejoices in it when he says, Eph. 6, 2. 3: *This is the first commandment with promise: That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.* For although the rest also have their promises contained in them, yet in none is it so plainly and explicitly stated.

Here, then, you have the fruit and the reward, that whoever observes this commandment shall have **happy days, fortune, and prosperity;** and on the other hand, the punishment, that whoever is disobedient shall the sooner perish, and never enjoy life. For to have long life in the sense of the Scriptures is not only to become old, but **to have everything which belongs to long life, such as health, wife, and children, livelihood, peace, good government, etc.,** without which this life can neither be enjoyed in cheerfulness nor long endure. If, therefore, you will not obey father and mother and submit to their discipline, then obey the hangman; if you will not obey him, then submit to the skeleton-man, *i.e.*, death [death the all-subduer, the teacher of wicked children]. For on this God insists peremptorily: Either if you obey Him, rendering love and service, He will reward you abundantly with all good, or if you offend Him, He will send upon you both death and the hangman.

But the godly and obedient have this blessing, that they live long in pleasant quietness, and see their children’s children (as said above) to the third and fourth generation.” (LC I 131-137).

The Fifth Commandment

Murder

“This commandment is simple enough. We hear it explained every year in the Gospel, Matthew 5, where Christ himself explains and summarizes it: We must not kill, either by hand, heart, or word, by signs or gestures, or by aiding and abetting. It forgives anger except, as we have said, to persons who occupy the place of God, that is, parents and rulers. Anger, reproof, and punishment are the prerogatives of God and his representatives, and they are to be exercised upon those who transgress this and the other commandments” (LC I 182).

Thought – 1 John 3:15, “Whoever **hates his brother** is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

Word -- Matthew 5:21-22, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ “But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And **whoever says** to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But **whoever says**, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire.

Deed – Genesis 9:6, “Whoever **sheds man’s blood**, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, “Or do you not know that **your body** is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own**? For you were bought at a price; **therefore glorify God in your body** and in your spirit, which are God’s” (NKJV)

2 Corinthians 7:1, “Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates **body** and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God (NIV).