

Lutheran Confessions

Augsburg Confession, XI: Of Confession.

1] *Of Confession* they teach that Private Absolution ought to be retained in the churches, although in confession 2] an enumeration of all sins is not necessary. For it is impossible according to the Psalm: *Who can understand his errors?* Ps. 19, 12.

Augsburg Confession, XXV: Confession

1] Confession in the churches is not abolished among us; for it is not usual to give the body of the Lord, except to them that have been previously examined and absolved. And 2] the people are most carefully taught concerning faith in the absolution, about which formerly there 3] was profound silence. **Our people are taught that they should highly prize the absolution, as being the voice of God, 4] and pronounced by God's command.** The power of the Keys is set forth in its beauty and they are reminded what great consolation it brings to anxious consciences, also, that **God requires faith to believe such absolution as a voice sounding from heaven, and that such faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins.** Aforetime satisfactions were immoderately extolled; 5] of faith and the merit of Christ and the righteousness of faith no mention was made; wherefore, on this point, our churches are by no means to be blamed. For this even our adversaries must needs concede 6] to us that the doctrine concerning repentance has been most diligently treated and laid open by our teachers.

7] *But of Confession* they teach that an enumeration of sins is not necessary, and that consciences be not burdened with anxiety to enumerate all sins, for it is impossible to recount all sins, as the Psalm 19, 13 testifies: *Who can understand his errors?* Also Jeremiah, 17, 9: **8] *The heart is deceitful; who can know it?*** But if no sins were forgiven, except those that are recounted, 9] consciences could never find peace; for very many sins they neither see 10] nor can remember. The ancient writers also testify that an enumeration is not necessary. For in the Decrees, Chrysostom is quoted, 11] who says thus: *I say not to you that you should disclose yourself in public, nor that you accuse yourself before others, but I would have you obey the prophet who says: "Disclose thy way before God." Therefore confess your sins before God, the true Judge, with prayer. Tell your errors, not with the tongue, but with the memory of your conscience, etc.* 12] And the Gloss (*Of Repentance, Distinct. V, Cap. Consideret*) admits that Confession is of human right only [not commanded by Scripture, but ordained by the Church]. 13] Nevertheless, on account of the great benefit of absolution, and because it is otherwise useful to the conscience, Confession is retained among us.

(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 almighty and most merciful God, of Your bountiful goodness keep us, we implore You, from all things that may hurt us, that we, being ready, both in body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things that You would have done; 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 19*)

Word of God: St. Matthew 9:1-8 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

1. Why did the men bring the paralytic to Jesus?
2. Whose faith did Jesus "see"?
3. Did Jesus fulfill what they desired with the words, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven"? (Note: Small Catechism on Lord's Supper, 2 says, "Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.")
4. What believer brought you to Jesus' forgiveness? (Note: Hymns #226 st.1-2 and #227 speaks of our bringing others to Jesus by baptism)
5. What does "blaspheming" mean? (See meaning of Second Commandment and First Petition, Lord's Prayer)
6. How did Jesus blaspheme, according to his accusers? (Mark 2:7)
7. How does Jesus prove they were wrong?
8. Which is easier to say and actually accomplish the fact?
9. What authority does Jesus have? (v.6)
10. Why does He call Himself, "Son of Man"?
11. What did the crowd learn about the authority to forgive sins? (v.8)
12. Did the prophets exercise that authority in the Old Testament? 2 Sam 12:13

Summary: Christ has given that authority to his church on earth, to be exercised publicly by the called minister of Christ.

Matthew 18:18 I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. John 20:22-23 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (Also Mt 28:20)

Each member of the church has been called to forgive those who sin against them and to announce Christ's forgiveness within his vocation.

Luke 17:3-4 "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. 4 If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him." (Also Mt 5:23-24, Mt 18:15, Ja 5:16)

6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn #488, stanza 5
Lord's Prayer, Introduction, p.302
John 20:22-23

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 9:1-8 (back)

Hymn

"Sun of My Soul, O Savior Dear" #488

Catechesis on... (back)

St. Matthew 9:1-8
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 9:1-8

¹ So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. ² Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." ³ And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" ⁴ But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" ⁵ "For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?" ⁶ "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." ⁷ And he arose and departed to his house. ⁸ Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men. (NKJV)

The Church, our Mother

"For, in the first place, He has a peculiar congregation in the world, **which is the mother that begets and bears every Christian** through the Word of God, which He reveals and preaches, [and through which] He illumines and enkindles hearts, that they understand, accept it, cling to it, and persevere in it" (LC, II, 42).

"To obtain such faith God instituted **the Office of the Ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments.** Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the Gospel. And the Gospel teaches that we have a gracious God, not by our own merits but by the merit of Christ, when we believe this" (AC IV, 1-3). Also LC, Creed, III, 37

Confession/Absolution Is Practiced!

1] Confession in the churches is not abolished among us; for it is not usual to give the body of the Lord, except to them that have been previously examined and absolved. And 2] the people are most carefully taught concerning faith in the absolution, about which formerly there 3] was profound silence. Our people are taught that they should highly prize the absolution, as being the voice of God, 4] and pronounced by God's command. The power of the Keys is set forth in its beauty and they are reminded what

great consolation it brings to anxious consciences, also, that God requires faith to believe such absolution as a voice sounding from heaven, and that such faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins. AC XXV: Of Confession.

Authority to Forgive given to Man

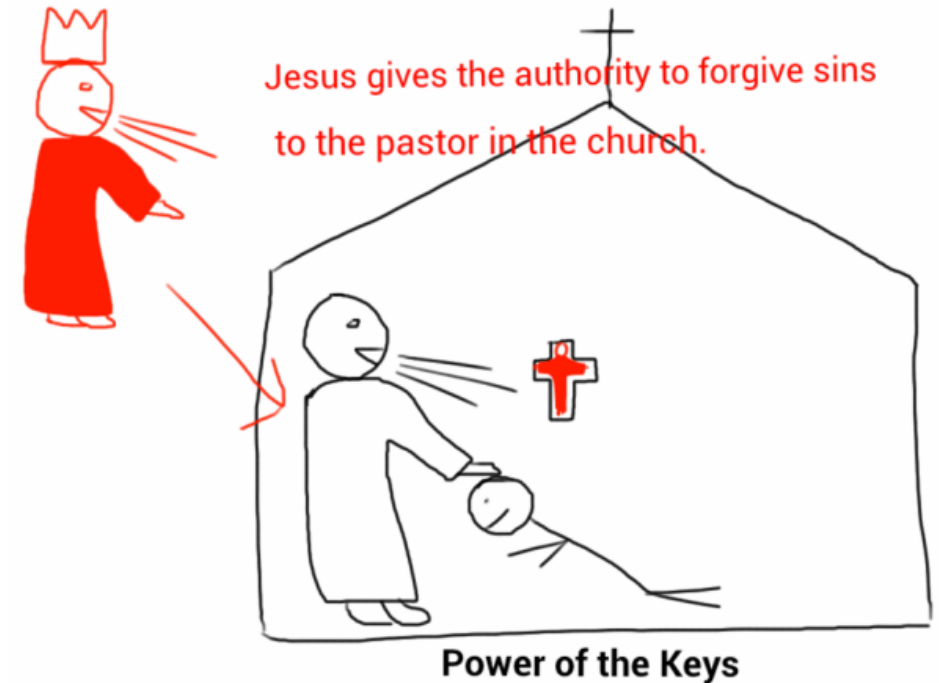
"Moreover, the power of the keys administers and presents the Gospel through absolution, which [proclaims peace to me and] is **the true voice of the Gospel.** Thus we also comprise absolution when we speak of faith, because faith cometh by hearing, as Paul says Rom. 10, 17. For when the Gospel is heard, and the absolution [i.e., the promise of divine grace] is heard, the conscience is encouraged and receives consolation. 40] And because God truly quickens through the Word, the keys truly remit sins before God [here on earth sins are truly canceled in such a manner that they are canceled also before God in heaven] according to Luke 10, 16: He that heareth you heareth Me. **Wherefore the voice of the one absolving 41] must be believed not otherwise than we would believe a voice from heaven.** And absolution [that blessed word of comfort] properly can be called a sacrament of repentance, as also the more learned scholastic theologians speak" (Ap XII, 39-41).

The Power of the Keys Used by Pastors

5] ... the power of the Keys, or the power of the bishops, according to the Gospel, is a power or commandment of God, to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer Sacraments. 6] For with this commandment Christ sends forth His Apostles, John 20, 21 sqq.: *As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.* 7] Mark 16, 15: *Go preach the Gospel to every creature.*

8] This power is exercised only by teaching or preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments, according to their calling either to many or to individuals.

CATECHESIS ON ST. MATTHEW 9:1-8



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The Lord's Prayer, Introduction

“...But that we might know what and how to pray, our Lord Christ has Himself taught us both the mode and the words, as we shall see” (LC III 1).

Father

Although it was not uncommon for the Triune God to call His people by the word, “son,” it was unusual (though not unheard of) when Jesus directed his disciples to address their prayers to the Father. It was common to refer to Abraham as “our father” (Mt 3:9, Luke 16 Lazarus and Rich man, Acts 7:2).

Exodus 4:22-23, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord:

“Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me....”

Hosea 11:1, “When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.”

Deuteronomy 32:6, “ Do you thus deal with the Lord, O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, who bought you? Has He not made you and established you?”

Jeremiah 3:4, “Will you not from this time cry to Me, ‘My father, You are the guide of my youth?’” v. 19b, “And I said: ‘You shall call Me, ‘My Father,’ And not turn away from Me.” (Also see Jer 2:27 for idol worship use of “father”.)

Matthew 5:9, “Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

Father Our, *Pater Noster* (Latin), *Vater Unser* (German)

A. The original order of the words (“our” coming before “father”) was retained, except in the English. The meaning of the address “Father” is not simply a reference to the One who created us (as our earthly father is our procreator), but it does include that. The full weight is seen in our new birth and the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:26-27, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

B. Jesus’ relationship to the Father is as only-begotten from eternity, while our relationship is one of adopted sons through faith in Christ. Through faith in Christ we do receive the full rights of sons.

Romans 8:14-17, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” 16The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit

that we are children of God, 17and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

John 20:17, “Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’”

C. “With these words (the words, “our Father,”) 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.”

Matthew 7:7-11, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”

1 John 2:23-25, 3:1-2, “Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. 24Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.... 1Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Who art in (the) Heaven(s)

“The thought is not that he is only in heaven, yet heaven is his glorious abode” (Lenski. p.265). Thus Luther says, “What do you mean by saying: ‘Our Father who art in heaven?’ Answer: ‘That God is not an earthly, but a heavenly Father, who would make us rich and blessed in heaven’” (German Worship).

Matthew 5:34-35, “But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; 35“nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

Matthew 3:2, “...and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!’”

From the Large Catechism, Introduction to the Lord's Prayer

Therefore God also requires that you lament and plead such necessities and wants, not because He does not know them, but that you may kindle your heart to stronger and greater desires, and make wide and open your cloak to receive much.

28] Therefore, every one of us should accustom himself from his youth daily **to pray** for all his wants, whenever he is sensible of anything affecting his interests or that of other people among whom he may live, as for preachers, the government, neighbors, domestics, and always (as we have said) **to hold up to God His commandment and promise**, knowing that He will not have them disregarded.

30] For this we must know, that **all our shelter and protection rest in prayer alone**. For we are far too feeble to cope with the devil and all his power and adherents that set themselves against us, and they might easily crush us under their feet. Therefore we must consider and take up **those weapons** with which **31]** Christians must be armed in order to stand against the devil.

33] Let this be said as an exhortation, that men may learn, first of all, to esteem prayer as **something great and precious**, and to make a proper distinction between babbling and praying for something. For we by no means reject prayer, but the bare, useless howling and murmuring we reject, as Christ Himself also rejects and prohibits long palavers. **34]** Now we shall most briefly and clearly treat of the Lord's Prayer. Here there is comprehended in seven successive articles, or petitions, every need which never ceases to relate to us, and each so great that it ought to **constrain us to keep praying it all our lives**.