

## Lutheran Confessions

### The Formula of Concord, Epitome

#### III. OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH BEFORE GOD.

1. Against both the errors just recounted, we unanimously believe, teach, and confess that Christ is our Righteousness neither according to the divine nature alone nor according to the human nature alone, but that it is the entire Christ according to both natures, **in His obedience alone**, which as God and man He rendered to the Father even unto death, and thereby merited for us the forgiveness of sins and eternal life, as it is written: *As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous*, Rom. 5, 19.

2. Accordingly, we believe, teach, and confess that our righteousness before God is [this very thing], that God forgives us our sins out of pure grace, without any work, merit, or worthiness of ours preceding, present, or following, that He presents and imputes to us **the righteousness of Christ's obedience**, on account of which righteousness we are received into grace by God, and regarded as righteous.

3. We believe, teach, and confess that faith alone is the means and instrument whereby we lay hold of Christ, and thus in Christ of that righteousness which avails before God, for whose sake this faith is imputed to us for righteousness, Rom. 4, 5.

4. We believe, teach, and confess that this faith is not a bare knowledge of the history of Christ, but such a gift of God by which we come to the right knowledge of Christ as our Redeemer in the Word of the Gospel, and trust in Him that **for the sake of His obedience alone** we have, by grace, the forgiveness of sins, are regarded as holy and righteous before God the Father, and eternally saved.

5. We believe, teach, and confess that according to the usage of Holy Scripture the word justify means in this article, to absolve, that is, to declare free from sins. Prov. 17, 15: *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the righteous, even they both are abomination to the Lord.* Also Rom. 8, 33: *Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

(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

Lord of all power and might, the Author and Giver of all good things, graft into our hearts the love of Your name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Your great mercy keep us in the same; 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 6)*

### Word of God: St. Matthew 5:17-26 (on back)

### Questions to Ponder in Prayer

- Note: Here the term "Law and the Prophets"(v.17), and "Law"(v.18), and later "commandments"(v.19) refer to the Holy Scriptures (not works God directs man to do: Law as opposed to Gospel).
- Why did Jesus come to us (that is take on human flesh)?
  - To abolish the Scriptures(Law and Gospel)?
  - To fulfill the Scriptures(Law and Gospel)?
- How important are these commandments(Law and Gospel)?
  - Should a believer set aside the "least of these commandments," and teach others to do the same, what is the declaration?
  - Should a believer practice and teach God's Word, what is the declaration?
- When we speak of OUR self-made righteousness, how good do we have to be? (See James 2:10, Ecclesiastes 7:20, Matthew 22:37-39)
- When Jesus preaches the law, does He make it doable?
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment(v. 21-23)
  - Summary of commandments 4 through 10(v. 24-24) Matthew 22:39,
- How then are we saved? Answer: Jesus fulfilled the Holy Scriptures.
  - Jesus perfectly kept the Law in our place (Active obedience). See Romans 5:19.
  - Jesus died to take our punishment(Passive obedience). See 1 Cor 15:3
  - Jesus fulfilled all the Gospel promises of a Savior. See 2 Cor 1:20.
- How are our matters settled before God?
  - Our adversary was God! He settled things by His Son. See Romans 5:6-10
  - We believe that God's settlement is true. See Romans 10:4

### 6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"

*Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...*

Hymn #331, st. 5-6  
4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment & meaning,  
p. 300  
St. Matthew 5:19

### 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 5:17-26 (back)

Hymn  
"Here is the Tenfold Sure Command" #331

Catechesis on... (back)  
St. Matthew 5:17-26  
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 5:17-26

<sup>17</sup>“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup>“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. <sup>19</sup>“Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup>“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>21</sup>“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.’ <sup>22</sup>“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.

<sup>23</sup>“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>“leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

<sup>25</sup>“Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup>“Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny. (NKJV)

### Scribal and Pharisaical Righteousness

“Let us, therefore, in all our encomiums upon works and in the preaching of the Law retain this rule: that **the Law is not observed without Christ**. As He Himself has said: *Without Me ye can do nothing*. Likewise that: *Without faith it is impossible to please God*, Heb. 11, 6. For it is very certain that the doctrine of the Law is not intended to remove the Gospel, and to remove Christ as Propitiator. And let **the Pharisees, our adversaries, be cursed, who so interpret the Law as to ascribe the glory**

**of Christ to works**, namely, that they are a propitiation, that they merit the remission of sins. It follows, therefore, that works are always thus praised, namely, that **they are pleasing on account of faith, as works do not please without Christ as Propitiator** (Ap IV III 148)

### Pharisees Sent back to the Law

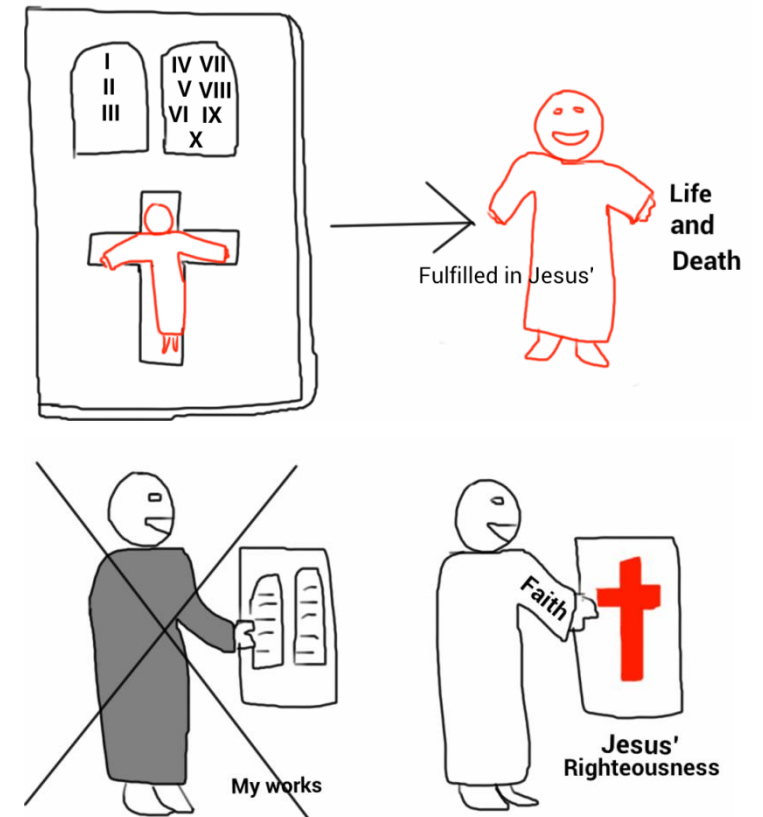
“And **human wisdom gazes at the Law, and seeks in it justification**. Accordingly, also the scholastic doctors, great and talented men, proclaim this as the highest work of the Law, and ascribe to this work justification. But deceived by human wisdom, **they did not look upon the uncovered, but upon the veiled face of Moses**, just as the Pharisees, philosophers, Mahometans. 109] But we preach the foolishness of the Gospel, in which **another righteousness** is revealed namely, that for the sake of Christ, as Propitiator, we are accounted righteous, when we believe that for Christ’s sake God has been reconciled to us.” Ap IV III 108-109).

“7. As to the revelation of sin, **because the veil of Moses hangs before the eyes of all men** as long as they hear the bare preaching of the Law, and nothing concerning Christ, and therefore **do not learn from the Law to perceive their sins aright**, but either become **presumptuous hypocrites [who swell with the opinion of their own righteousness] as the Pharisees**, or despair like Judas, Christ takes the Law into His hands, and explains it spiritually, **Matt. 5, 21ff** ; Rom. 7, 14. And thus the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all sinners [Rom. 1, 18], how great it is; by this means they are directed [sent back] to the Law, and then first learn from it to **know aright their sins**—a knowledge which Moses never could have forced out of them” (FC SD V 8).

“...but it is their own fault, as **they have heard the Word in such a manner as not to learn**, but only to despise, blaspheme, and disgrace it, and have resisted the Holy Ghost, who through the Word wished to work in them, **as was the case at the time of Christ with the Pharisees and their adherents**” (FC Ep XI 78).

“[When there were such, I say,] These did not need repentance. For of what would they repent, since they had not indulged wicked thoughts? What would they confess [concerning words not uttered], since they had avoided words? For what should they render satisfaction, since they were so guiltless of any deed that they could even sell their superfluous righteousness to other poor sinners? Such saints were also **the Pharisees and scribes in the time of Christ**” (SA III III 29).

## Catechesis On St. Matthew 5:17-26



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## 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).

# The Sixth Commandment

## God's Institution of the Gift of Marriage

**The life-long union of a man and a woman in the closest fellowship of body and life.**

Matthew 19:4-6, "And Jesus answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' {*Gen 1:27*} and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? {*Gen 2:24-25*} So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore **what God has joined together**, let not man separate."

Matthew 19:9, "And I say to you, whoever **divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality**, and marries another, **commits adultery**; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

1 Corinthians 7:39, "A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but **if her husband dies**, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord."

1 Corinthians 7:15, "But **if the unbeliever departs**, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace."

## 1. For the Procreation of Children (and their upbringing)

Genesis 1:27-28, "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; **male and female He created them**. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, '**Be fruitful and multiply**; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

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

## 2. For Help and Comfort (in doing God's Will)

Genesis 2:20-25, "So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found **a helper comparable to him**. 21And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22Then the rib which the Lord had taken from man He made into a woman, **and He brought her to**

**the man**. 23And Adam said:

**"This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh;**

She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."

24Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Proverbs 31:30, "Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But **a woman who fears the Lord**, she shall be praised.

## 3. For the Avoidance of Fornication (after the Fall)

1 Corinthians 7:2-5, "Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. 3Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

Hebrews 13:4, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge."

## Marriage is a figure of Christ and the Church

Ephesians 5:21-33, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

23For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24Therefore, **just as the church is subject to Christ**, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25Husbands, love your wives, **just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her**.... 31'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' 32**This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church**. 33Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

1 Corinthians 6:15-20, "Do you not know that **your bodies are members of Christ?** Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! 16Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." 17But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. 18**Flee sexual immorality**. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19Or 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? 20For you were bought at a price; therefore **glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's**."

## Avoid All Temptations to Sexual Sin

Titus 2:11-12, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, **denying ungodliness and worldly lusts**, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age....”

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should **abstain from sexual immorality**; 4that each of you should know how to **possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor**, 5**not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God**; 6that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. 7For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. 8Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.”

## Impure Thoughts

Matthew 5:27-30, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28But I say to you that **whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart**. 29‘If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30‘And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

Philippians 4:8, “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—**meditate on these things**.”

## Impure Words

Ephesians 5:3-4, “But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; **4neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting**, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

## Homosexuality

Romans 1:24-32, “Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. **For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.** 28And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11, “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.** Neither fornicators, **nor idolaters**, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, **10nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners** will inherit the kingdom of God. **11And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.**”