

Lutheran Confessions

Large Catechism: First Commandment.

You shall have no other gods before Me.

4] Therefore it is the intent of this commandment to require true faith and trust of the heart which settles upon the only true God, and clings to Him alone. That is as much as to say: “See to it that you let Me alone be your God, and never seek another,” *i.e.*: Whatever you lack of good things, expect it of Me, and look to Me for it, and whenever you suffer misfortune and distress, creep and cling to Me. I, yes, I, will give you enough and help you out of every need; only let not your heart cleave to or rest in any other.

5] This I must unfold somewhat more plainly, that it may be understood and perceived by ordinary examples of the contrary. Many a one thinks that he has God and everything in abundance when he has money and, possessions; he trusts in them and boasts of them with such firmness and assurance as to care for no one. 6] Lo, such a man also has a god, Mammon by name, *i.e.*, money and possessions, on which he sets all his heart, and which is also the most common idol on earth. 7] He who has money and possessions feels secure, and is joyful and undismayed as though he were sitting in the midst of Paradise. 8] On the other hand, he who has none doubts and is despondent, as though he knew of no God. 9] For very few are to be found who are of good cheer, and who neither mourn nor complain if they have not Mammon. This [care and desire for money] sticks and clings to our nature, even to the grave.

Large Catechism: Second Petition

57] For just as when the richest and most mighty emperor would bid a poor beggar ask whatever he might desire, and were ready to give great imperial presents, and the fool would beg only for a dish of gruel, he would be rightly considered a rogue and a scoundrel, who treated the command of his imperial majesty as a jest and sport, and was not worthy of coming into his presence: so also it is a great reproach and dishonor to God if we, to whom He offers and pledges so many unspeakable treasures, despise the same, or have not the confidence to receive them, but scarcely venture to pray for a piece of bread.

58] All this is the fault of the shameful unbelief which does not look to God for as much good as will satisfy the stomach, much less expects without doubt such eternal treasures of God. **Therefore we must strengthen ourselves against it, and let this be our first prayer; then, indeed, we shall have all else in abundance,** as Christ teaches [Matt. 6, 33]: *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* For how could He allow us to suffer want and to be straitened in temporal things when He promises that which is eternal and imperishable?

(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 Lord, we implore You, let Your continual pity cleanse and defend Your Church, and because she cannot continue in safety without Your help, preserve her evermore by Your help and goodness; 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 15*)

Word of God: St. Matthew 6:24-34 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

- The first sentence of verse 24 is a fact. The verb “serve” (δουλέω) is not simply the work of an employee or the voluntary serving of one person to another. It is the action of a slave (δουλος) who is owned completely by his lord. Though not good English, we could say, “No one can *continue* to slave for two lords.” How is “slaving for” different from “serving”? (Note: See Rom 6:19-23)
- Is Jesus speaking from the point of view of the slave or the master?
 - Who will hate or love? Who will be devoted or despise?
 - Why would Jesus bring this point up? What were the disciples doing?
- When verse 25 says, “Do not worry...,” it admits that worrying was already going on, thus it means, “Stop worrying...” About what were the disciples worrying?
- Does worrying have something to do with the previous section on “serving two masters?” What is the effect of the “therefore” in verse 25?
- Is there life apart from food? Is there a body apart from clothes?
- Jesus gives an argument from the least to the greatest. If it is true for the least, then the argument goes that it must be true for the greater. What is true about birds/flowers? How are people greater than birds/flowers? Thus, what applies even more to people than to birds/flowers? What is God called in verse 26 for which the birds cannot claim about God?
- Practically speaking, worry/serving two masters can’t add hours to your life (Ps 39:5). In fact, worry (stress) destroys life. What do the pagans (lit. “nations” = Gentiles) seek after? What do they not know about the heavenly Father, that they seek after these things?
- Solomon was the most exquisite Israelite king! How does his dress compare with the clothing that God gives? (Note: Solomon served two masters. Did it work?)
- What does Jesus call his disciples? (v. 30) Ouch! True?
- What do Christians *continue* to seek? (v.33) What does that mean? Also note Matthew 5:6. Though seeking earthly treasures won’t last (Mt 6:19-21), what is the result of the “hunger and thirst for righteousness”?
- Is “seeking” an active or passive thing? How does God’s kingdom come?
- Whose kingdom and righteousness is it? (Romans 3:22)
- What will be given to those disciples who are seeking Christ’s kingdom and righteousness? Will there be any worry?
- If this is a teaching based on the first commandment, what is the answer?

6:30 PM “Learn by Heart”

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn #402, stanza 1
Apostles’ Creed, 1st Article & meaning, p.301
Matthew 6:33

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 6:24-34 (back)

Hymn
“Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us,” #402

Catechesis on... (back)

St. Matthew 6:24-34
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 6:24-34

24“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

25“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

26“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27“Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 28“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29“and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30“Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32“For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. (NKJV)

The Article of Saving Faith

Faith = Believe = Trust

“The faith that justifies, however, is no mere historical knowledge, but **the firm acceptance of God’s offer promising forgiveness of sins and justification.** To avoid the impression that it is merely knowledge, we add

that to have faith means **to want and to accept the promised offer of forgiveness of sins and justification....** Paul clearly shows that faith does not simply mean historical knowledge but is **a firm acceptance of the promise** (Rom. 4:16): “That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may be guaranteed.” For he says that only faith can accept the promise. He therefore correlates and **connects promise and faith....**” (Ap IV, 49, 50).

The Object of Saving Faith

Faith Embraces Christ and His Work

“Scripture contains many pleas for mercy, and the holy Fathers often say that we are saved by mercy. 55 And so at every mention of mercy we must remember that this requires faith, which accepts the promise of mercy. Similarly, at every mention of faith we are also thinking of **its object, the promised mercy.** 56 **For faith does not justify or save because it is a good work in itself, but only because it accepts the promised mercy....** the patriarchs knew the promise of the Christ, that for his sake God intended to forgive sins. As they understood that the Christ would be the price for our sins, they knew that our works could not pay so high a price. Therefore **they received free mercy and the forgiveness of sins by faith, just as the saints in the New Testament.** (Ap IV, 56, 57)

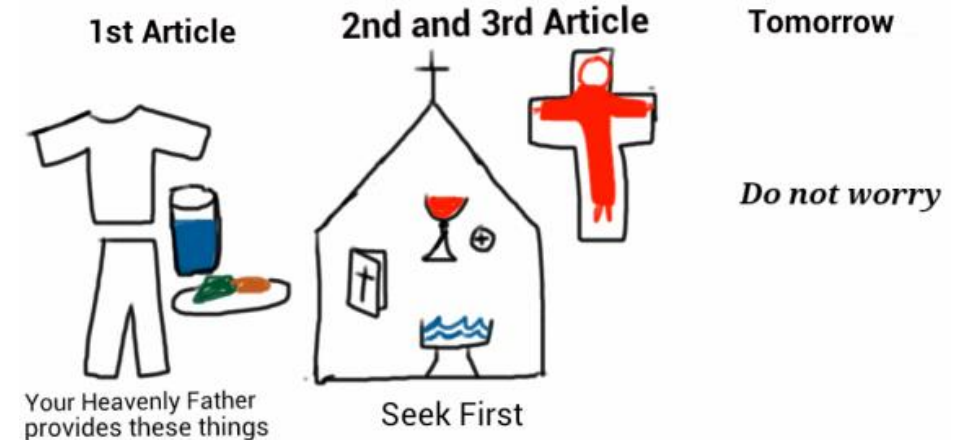
The Fruit of Saving Faith

Faith Produces New Impulses

“**Since faith brings the Holy Spirit and produces a new life in our hearts, it must also produce spiritual impulses in our hearts.** What these impulses are, the prophet shows when he says (Jer. 31:33), “I will put my law upon their hearts.” After we have been justified and regenerated by faith, therefore, we begin to fear and love God, to pray and expect help from him, to thank and praise him, and to submit to him in our afflictions. Then we also begin to love our neighbor because our hearts have spiritual and holy impulses” (Ap IV, 125).

CATECHESIS ON ST. MATTHEW 6:24-34

Do Not Worry



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