

Lutheran Confessions

Apology of Augsburg Confession, Article IV: Justification, *Of Love and the Fulfilling of the Law* Bente, Art. III:1-8/ Tappert 122-129

...Before we reply to this, **we must first declare what we believe concerning love and the fulfilling of the Law.**

2] It is written in the prophet, *Jer. 31, 33: I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* And in *Rom. 3, 31*, Paul says: *Do we, then, make void the Law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the Law.* And Christ says, *Matt. 19, 17: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* Likewise, *1 Cor. 13, 3: If I have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* **3] These and similar sentences testify that the Law ought to be begun in us, and be kept by us more and more [that we are to keep the Law when we have been justified by faith, and thus increase more and more in the Spirit].**

Moreover, we speak not of ceremonies, but of that Law which gives commandment concerning the movements of the heart, namely, the Decalog. **4] Because, indeed, faith brings the Holy Ghost, and produces in hearts a new life, it is necessary that it should produce spiritual movements in hearts.** And what these movements are, the prophet, *Jer. 31, 33* shows, when he says: *I will put My Law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* **Therefore, when we have been justified by faith and regenerated, we begin to fear and love God, to pray to Him, to expect from Him aid, to give thanks and praise Him, and to obey Him in afflictions. We begin also to love our neighbors, because our hearts have spiritual and holy movements** [there is now, through the Spirit of Christ a new heart, mind, and spirit within].

5] These things cannot occur until we have been justified by faith, and, regenerated, we receive the Holy Ghost: first, because the Law cannot be kept without [the knowledge of] Christ; and likewise the Law cannot be kept without the Holy Ghost. But the Holy Ghost is received by faith, according to the declaration of Paul, *Gal. 3, 14: That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.* **7] Then, too, how can the human heart love God while it knows that He is terribly angry, and is oppressing us with temporal and perpetual calamities? But the Law always accuses us always, shows that God is angry. [Therefore, what the scholastics say of the love of God is a dream.] 8] God therefore is not loved until we apprehend mercy by faith. Not until then does He become a lovable object.**

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

1 John 4:8, 19, “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. We love Him because He first loved us.

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, forasmuch as without You we are not able to please You, mercifully grant that Your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; 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 18*)

Word of God: St. Matthew 22:34-46 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

It was Tuesday in Holy Week (Mt 21:23-46). The law-focused Pharisees, who believed in the resurrection, were delighted that Jesus had refuted the morally-loose Sadducees, who did not (22:23-33). As a result, some Pharisees came to Jesus (most likely in the Temple courts) to see if Jesus might be useful to them.

1. Why is it so appropriate for a Pharisee to ask, “Which is the great commandment in the Law?” (Note: This question is not asking so much for “which is the greatest?” but “Which kind of commandment is great?”)
2. Jesus could have spoken of the sacrificial commands, or the Sabbath law commands, or the moral commands that required death if disobeyed. Instead, which kind of command does Jesus hold up as great? See Mark 12:28-34, especially v.33 for the questioners response to Jesus’ answer.)
3. For the first part of his answer, Jesus quotes the Jewish *Shema*, from Dt. 6:4-5. Which of the Ten Commandments does this correspond?
4. For the second part of his answer, Jesus quotes the end of Leviticus 19:9-18. Which of the Ten Commandments does this correspond?
5. What does Jesus say about both of these statements (v.40)?
6. What is the Law and the Prophets? Why “all” the Law and the Prophets? Is it Law (Rom 13:8-10), Gospel (Jer 31:33-34, Mt 24:12) or both (1 John 4:19)?
7. For Matthew, love is required for believers (Mt 6:24, 10:37).
8. The Pharisees are impressed with Jesus’ answer (Mk 12:32-33). About what does Jesus question them? (v. 42) Why that kind of question around the Pharisees?
9. Everyone knew that the “Christ” or Messiah would be a descendant of whom?
10. What point is Jesus making about the Christ with “David...calls him Lord?” If David was the king and no one could have been his “master,” then, what?
11. Furthermore, if the Christ is God, then who is the 2nd “Lord?”
12. Was Jesus a descendant of David (Mt 1)? Was it well known (Mt 13:55-56)?
13. Jesus asked the question about the Christ in Mt 16:13-16 and Peter answered correctly. Why do they refuse to answer Him here? to speak further with Him? Note: The Pharisee don’t debate the Trinitarian talk, they deny Jesus is God.
14. What does it mean “to sit at God’s right hand?” (Josh 10:24, Eph 1:20-23)
15. What does it mean when Jesus quotes Psalm 110 and says, “in the Spirit?”
16. What does St. Matthew record the Centurion saying after Jesus’ death? (27:54)

6:30 PM “Learn by Heart”

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn #402, stanza 4
Apostles’ Creed, 2nd Article & meaning, p.301
1 John 4:8 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 22:34-46 (back)

Hymn

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

Catechesis on... (back)

St. Matthew 22:34-46

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 22:34-46

34But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” 37Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38“This is the first and great commandment. 39“And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40“On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

41While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?” They said to Him, “The Son of David.” 43He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying:

44 ‘The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,

Till I make Your enemies Your footstool” ’?

45“If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?”

46And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore. (NKJV)

Two Tables of the Law

Now in the Scriptures, **righteousness** comprises not only the second table of the Decalog [regarding good works in serving our fellow-man], but the first also, which teaches concerning **17]** the fear of God, concerning faith, concerning the love of God. (Ap II, 16-17).

The adversaries consider only the precepts of **the Second Table which contain civil righteousness** that reason understands. Content with this, they think that they satisfy the Law of God. In the mean time they do not see **the First Table which commands that we love God, that we declare as certain that God is angry with sin, that we truly fear God, that we declare as certain that God hears prayer.** (Ap IV, 34-35).

The Law and the Prophets

Matthew 5:17-18, “Do not think that I came to destroy **the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill**” (See v. 18 also).

Luke 24:44-47, “...**all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.**’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus **it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day...**”

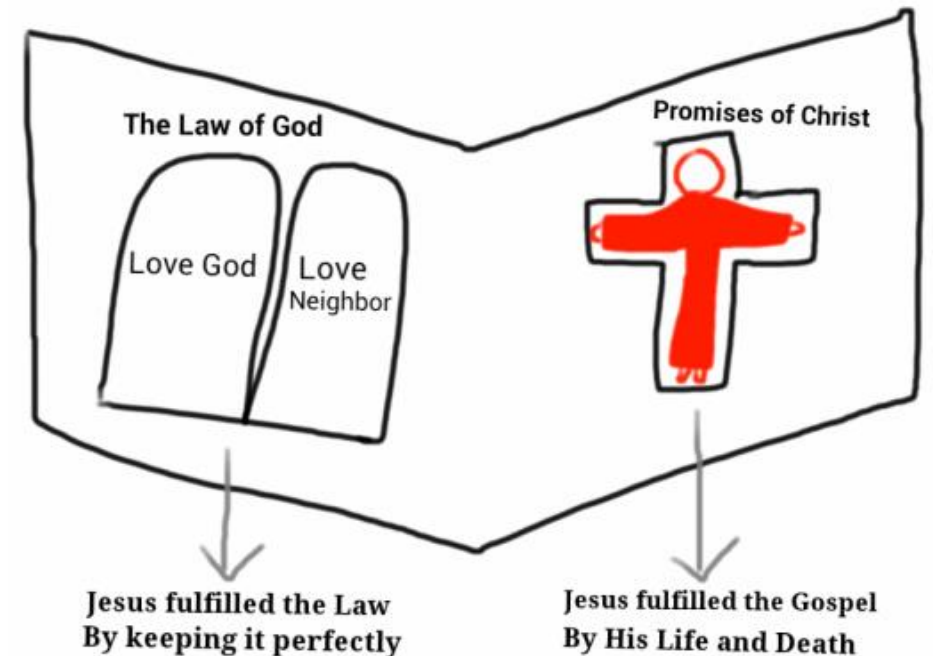
The Christ

“I believe that Jesus Christ, **true Son of God**, has become my Lord. But what is it to become Lord? It is this, that **He has redeemed me from sin, from the devil, from death, and all evil.**” (LC II, 27) See Genesis 3:15, “He shall bruise your head...” Matthew 16:16, “Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’” Colossians 2:9, “For in Him {Jesus} dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;”

Justified by the Christ

“Therefore let these pharisaic opinions of the adversaries be rejected, namely, that we do not receive by faith the remission of sins, but that it ought to be merited by our love and works; **that we ought to oppose our love and our works to the wrath of God. Not of the Gospel, but of the Law is this doctrine**, which feigns that man is justified by the Law before he has been reconciled through Christ to God, since Christ says, John 15, 5: Without Me He can do nothing; likewise: I am the true Vine; ye are the branches. But the adversaries feign that we are branches, not of Christ, but of Moses. **For they wish to be justified by the Law, and to offer their love and works to God before they are reconciled to God through Christ, before they are branches of Christ.** Paul, on the other hand [who is certainly a much greater teacher than the adversaries], contends that the Law cannot be observed without Christ.... **And we must apprehend the promise of the remission of sins before we do the works of the Law** (Ap XII, 85-87).

CATECHESIS ON ST. MATTHEW 22:34-46



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