

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 #402, stanza 5
Apostles' Creed, 3rd Article & meaning, p.301-302
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
"Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us," #402

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

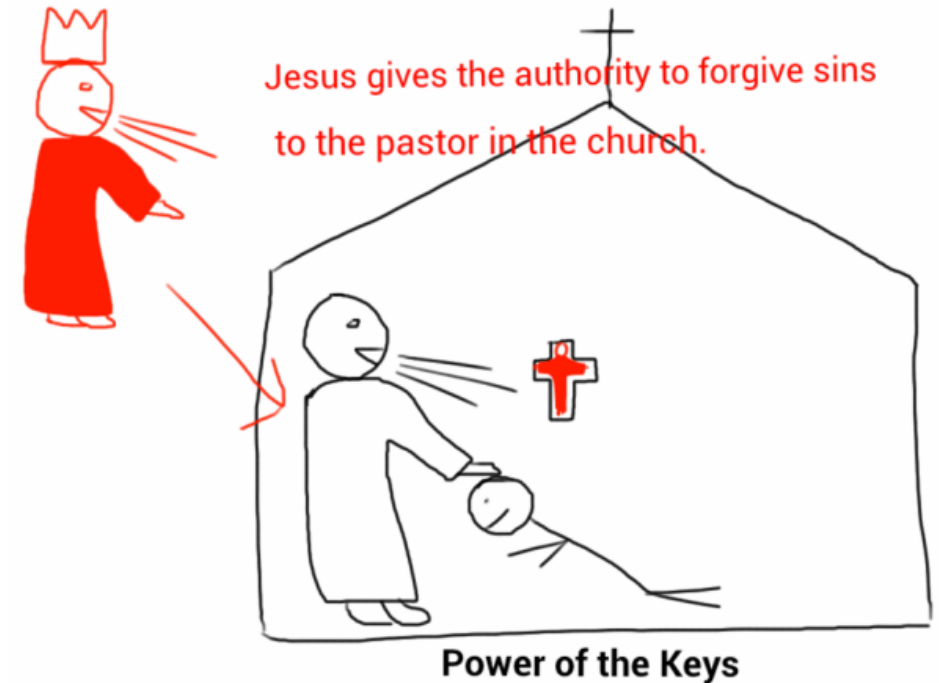
"Moreover, the power of the keys administers and presents the Gospel through absolution, which [proclaims peace to me and] is **the true voice of the Gospel.** Thus we also comprise absolution when we speak of faith, because faith cometh by hearing, as Paul says Rom. 10, 17. For when the Gospel is heard, 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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