

Lutheran Confessions

² In this controversy the main doctrine of Christianity is involved; when it is properly understood, **it illumines and magnifies the honor of Christ and brings to pious consciences the abundant consolation that they need.** We therefore ask His Imperial Majesty kindly to hear us out on this important issue. ³ **For since they understand neither the forgiveness of sins nor faith nor grace nor righteousness, our opponents confuse this doctrine miserably, they obscure the glory and the blessings of Christ, and they rob pious consciences of the consolation offered them in Christ.** ...

⁵ All Scripture should be divided into these two chief doctrines, the law and the promises. In some places it presents the law. In others it presents the promise of Christ; this it does either **when it promises that the Messiah will come and promises forgiveness of sins, justification, and eternal life for his sake, or when, in the New Testament, the Christ who came promises forgiveness of sins, justification, and eternal life.** ⁶ By “law” in this discussion we mean the **commandments of the Decalogue**, wherever they appear in the Scriptures....

²¹ Thus our opponents teach nothing but the **righteousness of reason or of law**, at which they look as the Jews did at the veiled face of Moses. ³ **In smug hypocrites**, who think that they are keeping the law, they arouse presumption, a vain trust in works and a contempt for the grace of Christ. **Timid consciences**, on the other hand, they drive to despair because in their doubt they can never experience what faith is and how effective it is. And at last they despair utterly....

¹³⁶ Therefore **we also hold that the keeping of the law should begin in us and increase more and more.** But we mean to include both elements, namely, the inward spiritual impulses and the outward good works. Our opponents slanderously claim that we do not require good works, **whereas we not only require them but show how they can be done.** ¹³⁷ The results show that hypocrites who try to keep the law by their own strength cannot achieve what they set out to do. ¹³⁸ For human nature is far too weak to be able by its own strength to resist the devil, who holds enthralled all who have not been freed by faith. ¹³⁹ **Nothing less than Christ’s power is needed for our conflict with the devil. We know that for Christ’s sake we have a gracious God and his promise.** ...

¹⁴⁰ We teach, furthermore, not only how the law can be kept, but also that God is pleased when we keep it — not because we live up to it but because we are in Christ, as we shall show a little later. So it is clear that we require good works. ¹⁴¹ In fact, we add that **it is impossible to separate faith from love for God, be it ever so small.** For through Christ we come to the Father; and having received the forgiveness of sins, we become sure that we have a gracious God who cares about us, we call upon him, give thanks to him, fear and love him. So John teaches in his first epistle (4:19); “We love,” he says, “because he first loved us,” that is, because he gave his Son for us and forgave us our sins. **So he indicates that faith precedes while love follows.** (Apology, Article IV: Justification)

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

Grant, O Lord, we implore You, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Your governance, that Your Church may joyfully serve You in all godly quietness; 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 the Fourth Sunday after Trinity*)

Word of God: St. Luke 6:36-42 (on back)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

This reading is from Jesus’ Sermon on the Plain(Lk.6:20-49). By means of beatitudes and woes, the first section expounds the two ways: life and death. The second section contains 16 commands in which the catechumen(6:27) is exhorted to be a disciple.

1. What is the motivation for Jesus’ command, “Be merciful?” God is merciful(Ex 34:6, Dt. 4:31, Joel 2:13, Jonah 4:2). If the merciful Father sent Jesus who mercifully forgave sins, then we who are united with Christ...(Ep 5:1, 1Co 11:1)?
2. “Judge not/Condemn not” – does not refer to all judging/condemning, but that judging which is hypocritical/false judging(as illustrated in verses 41-42) or harsh/merciless condemning. The opposite of judge and condemn is forgive and give. According to verse 37-38, what is the motivation for godly living?
3. How generous is God with His gifts? (v. 38)
4. How does God’s word “measure” us? (Luke 5:31-32; 6:46-49)
 - A. ...according to the law? (Romans 3:22-23)
 - B. ...according to the Gospel? (Luke 7:23, 47, Mark 16:16, John 3:16)
5. According to what do Christians “measure” themselves and others? (v. 38)
6. Verse 39: Who is the blind man? How is he blind? (Luke 10:22-23) What does this have to do with hypocritical and merciless judging?
7. The early church called catechesis and baptism “enlightenment.” Why?
8. Verse 40: A fully trained disciple is ...? What is Jesus, our Teacher, like?
9. Who claimed to be greater than Jesus? (Luke 6:2, 4:28-30, 5:21, 6:2, 7-8)
10. How do we today claim to be greater than Jesus and His teaching?

Context: Jesus gives three parables/stories.

- A. **Verse 41-42:** The log and speck in order to show “blind” sight and its result.
 - B. The tree and its fruit((43-45) to show the connection between teaching and action.
 - C. The house on the rock(46-49) is the man who hears Jesus’ words and does them.
11. What needs to be done before we can help our brother with his speck? What is the log in our eye? How do we take the log out?
 12. What does the man with the speck need?
 13. What is a hypocrite? Answer: Someone who doesn’t follow his own advice.

6:30 PM “Learn by Heart”

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn “**Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Highest Good!**” ASBH #42
2nd Commandment & meaning
Luke 6:38c, “For with the measure...

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. Luke 6:36-42 (back)

Hymn

“**Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Highest Good!**”
(Augustana Service #42, insert)

Catechesis on... (back)
St. Luke 6:36-42
Liturgy
Catechism

+ The Suffrages insert
from ASBH Prayer Office Supplement
Kyrie
Lord’s Prayer
Versicles
Psalm 130 or Psalm 51
Versicles
Collects
Collect for Peace
Benedicamus
Benediction
R. AMEN

Catechesis on St. Luke 6:36-42

³⁶ “Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. ³⁷ “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” ³⁹ And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? ⁴⁰ “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. ⁴¹ “And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? ⁴² “Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that *is* in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that *is* in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye. (NKJV)

Even the Saints are Saved by Mercy

205] Scripture also often inculcates the same. In Ps. 143, 2: *And enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. This passage denies absolutely, even to all saints and servants of God, the glory of righteousness, if God does not forgive, but judges and convicts their hearts....* 209] Jonah 2, 8 also says: *They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy, i.e., all confidence is vain, except confidence in mercy; mercy delivers us;* our own merits, our own efforts, do not.... Thus Daniel teaches us in praying **to lay hold upon mercy, i.e., to trust in God’s mercy, and not to trust in our own 211] merits before God....** Thus, therefore, **prayer relies upon God’s mercy,** when we believe that we are heard for the sake of Christ, the High Priest, as He Himself says, John 14, 13: *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. In My, name, He says, because without this High Priest we cannot approach the Father”* (Apol. IV III 205, 209-212).

Judge or Judge Not

Therefore, to avoid this vice we should note that **265] no one is allowed publicly to judge and reprove his neighbor,**




although he may see him sin, unless he have a command to judge and to reprove. 266] For there is a great difference between these two things, judging sin and knowing sin. You may indeed know it, but you are not to judge it. I can indeed see and hear that my neighbor sins, but **I have no command to report it to others.** Now, if I rush in, judging and passing sentence, I fall into a sin which is greater than his. But if you know it, do nothing else than turn your ears into a grave and cover it, until you are appointed to be judge and to punish by virtue of your office.

274] Thus you see that it is summarily forbidden to speak any evil of our neighbor, however, **the civil government, preachers, father and mother excepted,** on the understanding that this commandment does not allow evil to go unpunished. Now, as according to the Fifth Commandment no one is to be injured in body, and yet Master Hannes [the executioner] is excepted, who by virtue of his office does his neighbor no good, but only evil and harm, and nevertheless does not sin against God’s commandment, because **God has on His own account instituted that office; for He has reserved punishment for His own good pleasure,** as He threatens in the First Commandment,—just so also, although no one has a right in his own person to judge and condemn anybody, yet **if they to whose office it belongs** fail to do it, they sin as well as he who would do so of his own accord, without such office. (Pastoral judgment SA III VII. Of the Keys, “The keys are an office and power given by God to the Church for binding and loosing sin, ...For it is not in our power, but belongs to God alone, to judge which, how great, and how many the sins are..”)

Hypocritical Judging

15] We, therefore, profess that it is necessary that the Law be begun in us, and that it be observed continually more and more. And at the same time **we comprehend both spiritual movements and external good works** [the good heart within and works without]. *Therefore the adversaries falsely charge against us that our theologians do not teach good works while they{our theologians} not only require these, but also show how they can be done* [that the heart must enter into these works, lest they be mere, lifeless, cold works of hypocrites]. **16]** The result convicts **hypocrites, who by their own powers endeavor to fulfil the Law, that they cannot accomplish 17] what they attempt.** [For are they free from hatred, envy, strife, anger, wrath, avarice, adultery, etc.? Why, these vices were nowhere greater than in the cloisters and sacred institutes.] (Apol. IV III 15-17).

Catechesis On St. Luke 6:36-42

	LAW demands	GOSPEL gives	FRUITS
<i>Hypocritical/False Judging</i>	 <p>outward works "I'm saved; I kept the law!"</p>	<i>no gospel</i>	<i>no fruits</i>
<i>Timid/Guilty Conscience</i>	 <p>Spiritual impulses & outward works "I'm not saved; oh, despair."</p>	<i>no gospel</i>	<i>no fruits</i>
<i>Good Conscience</i>	 <p>thoughts, words, & deeds reveals sinfulness</p>	forgiveness & faith reveals salvation	good works of love
		"I'm saved by Jesus!"	

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