

Catechism Terms

The Ten Commandments

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

the Law What we are to do and not to do, the demands of God upon every person, and that which condemns and accuses every sinner. Without this word of God we would have no knowledge of our sin or need for the Gospel of Christ. [1]

sin Rebellion against God, turning away from His Word, unbelief, and every thought, word, and deed which is against God's Law. [2]

The Holy Trinity The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who is the one true and living God. Love is His nature, which He extends to mankind in His works of creation, salvation, and sanctification. This feast day is celebrated on the first Sunday after Pentecost. [3]

a god Whatever a person trusts in or looks to for his greatest good, help, and comfort in life. [4]

idolatry "Wrong faith," or trust in someone or something other than the true God. [5]

fear The awe and reverence of the heart toward God. The honor and respect that a child is to have for his father. The terror of the heart caused by the demands of God's Law. [6]

love To desire the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. [7]

worship The faith or desire to receive from God all the good things He gives in His Word and sacraments, and to return to Him all glory, honor, thanksgiving, and praise. "The service and worship of the Gospel is to receive good things from God, while the worship of the law is to offer and present our goods to God. We cannot offer anything to God unless we have first been reconciled and reborn. The greatest possible comfort comes from this doctrine that the highest worship in the Gospel is the desire to receive forgiveness of sins, grace, and righteousness" (*Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, IV, 155:310). [8]

faith The trust of the heart. Belief in Christ for the forgiveness of sins, life, salvation, and all that we need. Reliance or dependence upon God. That which receives and clings to God's gifts of grace and mercy. [9]

repentance The knowledge of your sin and corruption. To be turned away from your sins, through the preaching of the Law and Gospel, to faith in Christ's word of forgiveness. [10]

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

the name of God The words by which God tells us who He is and by which we call upon Him in trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks. [11]

cursing To condemn, or call down the judgment of God upon someone or something, including the use of profanities and vulgar speech. [12]

swearing To take an oath or use your word in support of lies or deception, including the teaching or condoning of false doctrine. [13]

satanic arts (or witchcraft) Anything that involves the occult or the seeking of knowledge, information, guidance, or pleasure from spirits other than God, including astrology, fortunetelling, séances, palm reading, Ouija boards, etc. [14]

superstition The belief that God's help can be obtained through means other than those to which God Himself has attached His Word and promise, including such things as "white magic," good luck charms, the seeking of signs, etc. [15]

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Sabbath The name of the seventh day of creation that literally means "day of rest." For the Christian, this word refers to the "rest" and "peace" which God now gives, for Christ's sake, through the hearing of His holy Word and the receiving of His sacraments. [16]

to keep holy To devote yourself and anything of your person and life to the hearing and learning of God's Word, including a day, a time, a work, a place, or a thing. [17]

preaching To proclaim the Word of God—calling sinners to repentance and faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sins. [18]

the Word of God (1) The revelation of God to man through the apostles and prophets. Through this prophetic and apostolic revelation, God tells us of Himself, shows us our sin, brings us to faith in Jesus Christ, our only Savior, and gives us His gifts of grace. The prophets and apostles were inspired by the Holy Spirit to preach it in the world and record it in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, in order that it might be preached and taught in the church and throughout the world. (2) The name of the Son of God from eternity. [19]

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

to honor To give respect, reverence, esteem, love, and obedience to those whom God has placed in authority over you. [20]

earthly authorities Those whom God has placed in positions of authority over us to rule and govern in the home and society, to teach what is right and wrong, and to punish evildoers and reward the good. They include fathers, mothers, the government and its officials, teachers, police, etc. [21]