

Theodore G. Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. (Philadelphia: Mühlenberg Press, 1959).

Sep. 3 Trinity 12 / Pentecost 13

God's Commandments can only be profitably followed if we believe in God's grace through Jesus. Otherwise the Commandments only remind us of our sin and God's wrath.

LARGE CATECHISM, I. [THE CONCLUSION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS] ³²² Now, as we said before, these words contain both a wrathful threat and a friendly promise, not only to terrify and warn us but also to attract and allure us. These words, therefore, ought to be received and esteemed as a serious matter to God because he himself here declares how important the commandments are to him and how strictly he will watch over them, fearfully and terribly punishing all who despise and transgress his commandments; and again, how richly he will reward, bless, and bestow all good things on those who prize them and gladly act and live in accordance with them... Thus he demands that all our actions proceed from a heart that fears and regards God alone and, because of this fear, avoids all that is contrary to his will, lest he be moved to wrath; and, conversely, trusts him alone and for his sake does all that he asks of us, because he shows himself a kind father and offers us every grace and blessing.

Sep. 10 Trinity 13 / Pentecost 14

Christian prayer is constantly necessary because we sinners are constantly in need to God's grace and aid.

SMALL CATECHISM, III. [THE LORD'S PRAYER] ¹ "Our Father who art in heaven." What does this mean? Answer: Here God would encourage us to believe that he is truly our Father and we are truly his children in order that we may approach him boldly and confidently in prayer, even as beloved children approach their dear father.

LARGE CATECHISM, III. [THE LORD'S PRAYER] Mankind is in such a situation that no one can keep the Ten Commandments perfectly, even though he has begun to believe. Besides, the devil, along with the world and our flesh, resists our efforts with all his power. Consequently nothing is so necessary as to call upon God incessantly and drum into his ears our prayer that he may give, preserve, and increase in us faith and obedience to the Ten Commandments and remove all that stands in our way and hinders us from fulfilling them. That we may know what and how to pray, our Lord Christ himself has taught us both the way and the words, as we shall see.

Sep. 17 Trinity 14 / Pentecost 15

In praying to keep God's name "hallowed" or holy among us, we are also praying that God condemn all false teachers.

LARGE CATECHISM, III. [THE FIRST PETITION] "*Hallowed be thy name.*"... So you see that in this petition we pray for exactly the same thing that God demands in the Second Commandment: that his name should not be taken in vain by swearing, cursing, deceiving, etc., but used rightly to the praise and glory of God... This petition, then, is simple and clear as soon as we understand the language, namely, that "to hallow" means the same as in our idiom "to praise, extol, and honor" in word and deed. See, then, what a great need there is for this kind of prayer! Since we see that the world is full of sects and false teachers, all of whom wear the holy name as a cloak and warrant for their devilish doctrine, we ought constantly to cry out against all who preach and believe falsely and against those who attack and persecute our Gospel and pure doctrine and try to suppress it, as the bishops, tyrants, fanatics, and others do. Likewise, this petition is for ourselves who have the Word of God but are ungrateful for it and fail to live according to it as we ought.

Sep. 24 Trinity 15 / Pentecost 16

As we pray for God's kingdom, we pray that He bless us as members of His spiritual kingdom on earth—the Church, and that He bring us at the end to His heavenly kingdom.

LARGE CATECHISM, III. [THE SECOND PETITION] *“Thy kingdom come.”*... This we ask, both in order that we who have accepted it may remain faithful and grow daily in it and in order that it may gain recognition and followers among other people and advance with power throughout the world. So we pray that, led by the Holy Spirit, many may come into the kingdom of grace and become partakers of salvation, so that we may all remain together eternally in this kingdom which has now made its appearance among us. God's kingdom comes to us in two ways: first, it comes here, in time, through the Word and faith, and secondly, in eternity, it comes through the final revelation. Now, we pray for both of these, that it may come to those who are not yet in it, and that it may come by daily growth here and in eternal life hereafter to us who have attained it.

Oct. 1 Trinity 16 / Pentecost 17

Because the will of the devil and the world is to suppress and destroy the Gospel and all believers, we pray that we are persevered and sustained through these tribulations according to God's holy will.

LARGE CATECHISM, III. [THE THIRD PETITION] *“Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”*⁶⁵ Therefore we who would be Christians must surely count on having the devil with all his angels and the world as our enemies and must count on their inflicting every possible misfortune and grief upon us. For where God's Word is preached, accepted or believed, and bears fruit, there the blessed holy cross will not be far away. Let nobody think that he will have peace; he must sacrifice all he has on earth—possessions, honor, house and home, wife and children, body and life... Therefore, there is just as much need in this case as in every other case to pray without ceasing: *“Thy will be done, dear Father, and not the will of the devil or of our enemies, nor of those who would persecute and suppress thy holy Word or prevent thy kingdom from coming; and grant that whatever we must suffer on its account, we may patiently bear and overcome, so that our poor flesh may not yield or fall away through weakness or indolence.”*

Oct. 8 Trinity 17 / Pentecost 18

“Daily bread” doesn't just include food but the fields where the crops grow and everything else in God's creation which He uses to preserve us.

LARGE CATECHISM, III. [THE FOURTH PETITION] *“Give us this day our daily bread.”*... When you pray for “daily bread” you pray for everything that is necessary in order to have and enjoy daily bread and, on the contrary, against everything that interferes with enjoying it. You must therefore enlarge and extend your thoughts to include not only the oven or the flour bin, but also the broad fields and the whole land which produce and provide for us our daily bread and all kinds of sustenance. For if God did not cause grain to grow and did not bless and preserve it in the field, we could never take a loaf of bread from the oven to set on the table... Now, our life requires not only food and clothing and other necessities for our body, but also peace and concord in our daily business and in associations of every description with the people among whom we live and move—in short, everything that pertains to the regulation of our domestic and our civil or political affairs.

Oct. 15 Trinity 18 / Pentecost 19

Because we sin much, we ask God to forgive much. We also pray that God strengthen us as we forgive our neighbors just as Christ forgave us.

LARGE CATECHISM, III. [THE FIFTH PETITION] “*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*” ... For the flesh in which we daily live is of such a nature that it does not trust and believe God and is constantly aroused by evil desires and devices, so that we sin daily in word and deed, in acts of commission and omission. Thus our conscience becomes restless; it fears God’s wrath and displeasure, and so it loses the comfort and confidence of the Gospel. Therefore it is necessary constantly to turn to this petition for the comfort that will restore our conscience... Meanwhile, a necessary but comforting clause is added, “as we forgive our debtors.” God has promised us assurance that everything is forgiven and pardoned, yet on the condition that we also forgive our neighbor. Inasmuch as we sin greatly against God everyday and yet he forgives it all through grace, we must always forgive our neighbor who does us harm, violence, and injustice, bears malice toward us, etc. If you do not forgive, do not think that God forgives you. But if you forgive, you have the comfort and assurance that you are forgiven in heaven.

Oct. 22 Trinity 19 / Pentecost 20

Because temptation will always be with us, we ask God to deliver us from it by giving us the strength to endure it through His Word and Sacraments.

LARGE CATECHISM, III. [THE SIXTH PETITION] “*And lead us not into temptation.*”...This, then, is “leading us not into temptation” when God gives us power and strength to resist, even though the tribulation is not removed or ended. For no one can escape temptations and allurements as long as we live in the flesh and have the devil prowling about us. We cannot help but suffer tribulations, and even be entangled in them, but we pray here that we may not fall into them and be overwhelmed by them. To feel temptation, therefore, is quite a different thing from consenting and yielding to it. We must all feel it, though not all to the same degree; some have more frequent and severe temptations than others.

Oct. 29 Reformation

We pray that God deliver us from evil by preserving us in the true faith throughout our whole lives until He brings us to heaven with Him.

SMALL CATECHISM, III. [THE SEVENTH PETITION] “But deliver us from evil.” “But deliver us from evil.” What does this mean? Answer: We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our Father in heaven may deliver us from all manner of evil, whether it affect body or soul, property or reputation, and that at last, when the hour of death comes, he may grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to himself in heaven.

SMALL CATECHISM, III. [CONCLUSION] “Amen.” What does this mean? Answer: It means that I should be assured that such petitions are acceptable to our heavenly Father and are heard by him, for he himself commanded us to pray like this and promised to hear us. “Amen, amen” means “Yes, yes, it shall be so.”