

## Large Catechism Lesson 15

### Part 1: The Close of the Commandments

#### **Opening Discussion: Arranging a Catechism**

Ten Commandments | Creed | Lord's Prayer

-Luther goes with this order.

-You don't have to.

-Any idea of changing the order or why you like the current order?

#### **Close of the Commandments**

¶ 311-312

- The 10 Commandments define what is good.  
-How does the world determine 'good'?

¶ 313-316

- How does Luther see the Creed and Lord's Prayer functioning?

¶ 317-323

- Threats and promises of the Law put us on the spot. They do not save.
- The Law "calls attention to the disorder that occurs within our lives when creation does not function according to God's ordering of it.
- This disorder occurs in all the relationships of the human creature, the vertical with God and the horizontal with neighbor and non-human creation."<sup>1</sup>

¶ 324-329

- What is Luther's point of comparing the 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment and the Close of the to the clasps of a necklace?

*"The First Commandment ultimately provides the key for diagnosing dysfunctional lives, for it goes to the heart of the matter while the other nine commandments assess only the symptoms"*<sup>2</sup>

¶ 330-333

- According to Luther, how present are the commandments to be in our lives?
- How can we make them more present in our lives and situations?

### Part 2: Intro to the Creed

#### **Intro to the Creed**

¶ 1-8

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid, 158.

- The term Creed comes from the word 'Credo' which means 'I believe.'
- Faith is very important to the Creed.
- However, some dangers of faith arise by running to extremes.
  - 1) Faith is only a matter of the head (intellectual knowledge)
  - 2) Faith is only a matter of the heart (sincerity trumps what you believe)
- Luther binds these two extremes together and holds the line in addressing the Creed.
  - 1) God does the verbs of the Creed in Trinity.
    - He is personally and actively involved in our lives
  - 2) Believing facts does not do much good for you unless you believe it is for you.
    - Never mentions faith in the Creed
    - The creed is how faith expresses itself.
      - God has made me, redeemed me, gathers me.

### Closing Discussion: The Arrangement of Catechism

Augustine used the model of faith, hope, and love to arrange the contents

- Faith (Creed) -> Hope (Lord's Prayer) -> Love (Commandments)

Luther arranges his catechism by: Commandments -> Creed -> Lord's Prayer

- This is quite a radical shift of thinking but ties in nicely with Luther's theology.
- Luther understands that his arrangement reflects the "rhythm of the Christian life."
  - This arrangement correlates with Law & Gospel
    - Recognizing the sickness (Ten Commandments)
    - Finding the remedy (The Creed)
    - Appropriating this grace through prayer (Lord's Prayer)

Beginning with the Commandments, Luther shows, "that is where life begins, under the law."<sup>3</sup>

- This order of the catechism is experiential.
- We encounter our relationship both to God and to our neighbor.
- **Moving to the Creed, Christ has broken into the world of law.**
- Sidenote: have you noticed how much time Luther devotes to the Creed vs. the 10 C?

*"And so the Creed teaches us to see that no aspect of our existence remains untouched by God's giving of himself through his gifts. This should not, however, be taken as a sequence of God's actions. All three articles apply to Christians simultaneously so that they represent three aspects of the triune God's work."*<sup>4</sup>

*"Instead of the Ten Commandments giving value to the Creed and Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer provide resources for living according to the Ten Commandments...Luther makes it clear that the Christian life does not abandon the Ten Commandments but leads us back into them as setting forth the shape of the Christian life...the Ten Commandments are dealt with in the context of vocation. By leading the Christian back into the Ten Commandments, Luther affirms that the Gospel send the Christian into the world to live out one's vocation in contradistinction to the Carthusian monks and their humanly devised religious works."*

<sup>3</sup> Charles P. Arand, Robert Kolb, and James A. Nestingen, *The Lutheran confessions: History and Theology of The Book of Concord*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 76.

<sup>4</sup> Arand, *That I May Be His Own*, 160.

*dlkfjldfkjldkfdsfafthe Gosepl the Gospel sends the Christian back into the world to live out one's vocation."*<sup>5</sup>