

Large Catechism Lesson 6

Part 1: The Third Commandment

Opening Discussion: Movement of the Catechism

Throughout the Large Catechism, Luther will reveal the movements of his catechism. These take place between major units like Commandments to Creed or even here, from commandment to commandment.

-1st Commandment | Reveals God

-2nd Commandment | Identifies God by name

-3rd Commandment | Provides training in his Word which unpacks the name of God for us

-God | His Name | His Word

3rd Commandment

¶78-82

-To whom was the commandment given?

-Read Exodus 20:8-11 & Colossians 2

-Reason for Sabbath

1) Rest and be refreshed (animals too)

2) Sanctify the holy day.

¶83-86

-Does the day matter?

-But why Sunday?

-Why do we keep the Sabbath?

1)

2)

-What about unavoidable work?

¶87-95

-How does the day become holy or unholy?

-How do Christians in church not keep a holy day in true holiness?

“God’s Word is the true ‘holy thing’ above all holy things” [I.91].

-What is the role of God’s Word on a Tuesday?

-How is every day now a day of rest?

-Why do we still set aside a day?

¶96-102

-What are times that it is ok to get up during church?

-What is happening during the different parts of Divine Service?

“They think that they know all that well enough and need no more instruction” [I.99].

-Where do we live daily? What is the setting of the Narrative?

-Huge theme of the catechisms: the devil is the enemy who is out to destroy you.

**Excursus: "How Christians Should Regard Moses" 1525
(Luther's Works AE 35: Word and Sacrament I)**

As Christians, how are we to handle Moses (the Pentateuch; Genesis-Deuteronomy)?

Luther begins his essay by citing two polar passages: Exodus 19-20 and Acts 2:2-4

- One is of Law and the other Gospel
- One is the work of man the other of God

Who is Luther combating in this essay? The Enthusiasts

- Enthusiasts try to find God in any place other than his Word or Sacraments.
- Specifically, they use the Mosaic Law to say that there something more than the gospel.
 - "They minimize faith, contrive something new, and boastfully claim that it comes from the Old Testament" (164).*
 - They were going so far as to encourage political rulers to use Moses for laws.
 - "If I were to accept Moses in one commandment, I would have to accept the entire Moses...Moses is dead. His rule ended when Christ came. He is of no further service" (165).*

Exodus 20:1 tells us why Moses does not apply to us.

"This text makes it clear that even the Ten Commandments do not pertain to us. For God never led us out of Egypt, but only the Jews. The sectarian spirits want to saddle us with Moses and all the commandments. We will just skip that. We will regard Moses as a teacher, but we will not regard him as our lawgiver – unless he agrees with both the New Testament and the natural law" (165).

Luther then points to the 3rd Commandment to prove his point.

- Colossians 2:16; Matthew 12:1-12; John 5:16; 7:22-23; 9:14-16; Isaiah 66:23!

Q/A Why then do you preach about Moses if he does not pertain to us?

1) An example, a model for statutes and laws

- Even rulers should rule according to Moses' example for good government
 - ex. tithing -> taxes
- What do you do with Exodus 20:3-17?

"Should we not keep these commandments? You reply: Nature also has these laws. Nature provides that we should call upon God. The Gentiles attest to this fact...As St. Paul also shows in Romans 2[:14-15], the Gentiles, who have no law, have the law written in their heart" (168).

"Therefore it is natural to honor God, not steal, commit adultery, not bear false witness, not murder; and what Moses commands is nothing new. For what God has given the Jews from heaven, he has also written in the hearts of all men. Thus I keep the commandments which Moses has given, not because Moses gave commandment, but because they have been implanted in me by nature, and Moses agrees exactly with nature, etc. But the other commandments of Moses, which are not [implanted in all men] by nature, the Gentiles do not hold...Now this is the first thing that I ought to see in Moses, namely, the commandments to which I am not bound except insofar as they are [implanted in everyone] by nature [and written in everyone's heart]" (168).

2) Promises of Christ are recorded all over Moses.

- These promises sustain the faithful.
- Gen. 3:15; 22:18; Deut. 18:15-16

"It is all God's word. But let God's word be what it may, I must pay attention and know to whom God's word is addressed...One must deal cleanly with the Scriptures. From the very beginning the word has come to us in various ways. It is not enough simply to look and see whether this is God's word, whether God has said it; rather we must look and see to whom it has been spoken, whether it fits us. That makes all the difference between night and day...The word in Scripture is of two kinds: the first does not pertain or apply to me, the other kind does. And upon that word which does pertain to me I can boldly trust and rely, as upon a strong rock. But if it does not pertain to me, then I should stand still. The false prophets pitch in and say, 'Dear people, this the word of God.' That is true; we cannot deny it. But we are not the people. God has not given us the directive" (170).

"Thus we read Moses not because he applies to us, that we must obey him, but because he agrees with the natural law and is conceived better than the Gentiles would ever have been able to do. Thus the Ten Commandments are a mirror of our life, in which we can see wherein we are lacking, etc" (173).

3) Moses contains beautiful examples of faith, love and the cross

-The Old Testament contains examples of both faith and unfaith.

-Many of the woodcuts in the Small Catechism are from a number of Old Testament stories to help aid and teach the catechism. *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions* contains those woodcuts.

Application

1) Why can Luther use the 10 Commandments for his catechisms?

2) What is another way to describe God's law? (FC SD VI 6)

3) When discussing difficult topics of the Faith with people, be careful which passages you select and how you use them.

-i.e. Don't go to Leviticus for discussing homosexuality.

4) We discussed the movement of commandments 1-3. What movement will take place as we embark on commandments 4-10?