



# First, Second, Third Commandment

Lesson 2



## MEMORY (pg. 5; green catechism)

### First Commandment

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

*Do not have an other gods besides Me.*

-Exodus 20:3 AAT

*What does this mean?*

We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

### Second Commandment

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.

*Do not use the name of the Lord your God in vain*

*(Do not misuse the name of the Lord, your God)*

-Exodus 20:7 AAT

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

### Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

*Remember to keep the Sabbath day [rest day] holy.*

-Exodus 20:8 AAT

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.



## RESPOND

Psalm	14
Reading	Luke 16:19-31
Catechism Hymn	287:1-4

*All catechism students*

- Catechism Family Devotions
- Attend Divine Service and Sunday School
- Read memory work aloud 3 times in the morning and in the evening every day this week
- Review the lesson on this review sheet

*First year students*

- Complete Lesson 2A Quiz in online classroom

*Second year students*

- Read Questions 1-51 in *A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism* (pg. 39ff)
- Complete Lesson 2B Quiz in online classroom

*Third year students*

- Read *Luther's Large Catechism* pg. 18-36.
- Complete Lesson 2C Quiz in online classroom

QUESTIONS FOR THIS WEEK...

## Review—First Commandment

There is only one, true God: the Triune God.

A god is anything from which you expect all good and in which you take refuge in all distress.

The First Commandment is a commandment regarding faith.



A god means that from which we are to expect all good and in which we are to take refuge in all distress. So, to have a God is nothing other than trusting and believing Him with the heart. I have often said that the confidence and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust is right, then your god is also true. On the other hand, if your trust is false and wrong, then you do not have the true God. For these two belong together, faith and God.

The most common idol (false god) on earth is *Mammon* (money and possessions).

To “have a god” is to have something in which the heart entirely trusts.

Prayers to the saints, a practice of the Roman Catholic Church, are false prayers.

To have God means to cling to Him in your heart, that is, to trust in Him.

There is no such thing as a true atheist; everyone sets up a god and divine worship of some sort.



See, here you have the meaning of the true honor and worship of God, which pleases God, and which He commands under penalty of eternal wrath. The heart knows no other comfort or confidence than in Him. It must not allow itself to be torn from Him. But, for Him, it must risk and disregard everything upon earth. On the other hand, you can easily see and sense how the world practices only false worship and idolatry. For no people have ever been so corrupt that they did not begin and continue some divine worship. Everyone has set up as his special god whatever he looked to for blessings, help, and comfort.

Even God Himself can be turned into an idol if we approach Him with false worship.

The true God is a fountain that flows forth nothing but good.

The First Commandment teaches us to call “good” what God calls “good.”

Each commandment has a terrible threat and a beautiful, comforting promise.



But as terrible as these threatenings are, so much more powerful is the consolation in the promise. For those who cling to God

alone should be sure that He will show them mercy. In other words, He will show them pure goodness and blessing, not only for themselves, but also to their children and their children's children, even to the thousandth generation and beyond that.

The threats of punishment belong to the *Law*; the promises belong to the *Gospel*.

The Law shows our sin (SOS).

The Gospel shows our Savior (SOS).

## Review—Second Commandment

The First Commandment directed the heart and faith to God; the Second Commandment directs the mouth and the tongue to God.



The First Commandment has instructed the heart and taught the faith. This commandment now leads us forward and directs the mouth and tongue to God. For the first things that spring from the heart and show themselves are words.

Faith and speech, heart and tongue go together. Cf. Matthew 12:34; Matthew 15:10-20; Romans 10:8-10.

Misusing God's name is to call upon the Lord God to deceive or do wrong of any kind.

Misuse occurs in worldly business when people make false promises or oaths, such as breaking an engagement.

The greatest abuse is in spiritual matters, when preachers proclaim a lie as if it was God's Word.

A curse is added to this commandment: the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. Cf. Exodus 20:7. To teach falsely in God's name is to sin against the Holy Spirit.

It is human nature to make wickedness appear as godliness, and so God's name is dragged in to the affair for self-justification.

In summary, the name of God is misused whenever a Christian uses it to put forth a lie contrary to God's Word.



Now you understand what it means to take God's name in vain. In sum it means (a) to use His name simply for purposes of falsehood, (b) to assert in God's name something that is not true, or (c) to curse, swear, use spells, and, in short, to practice whatever wickedness one may.

The Second Commandment also expects God's name to be used properly.



So it is natural to conclude that since this commandment forbids using the holy name for falsehood or wickedness, we are, on the other hand, commanded to use His name for truth and for all good, like when someone takes an oath truthfully when it is needed and it is demanded. This commandment also applies to right teaching and to calling on His name in trouble or praising and thanking Him in prosperity, and so on.



Let me tell you this, even though you know God's Word perfectly and are already a master in all things: you are daily in the devil's kingdom. He ceases neither day nor night to sneak up on you and to kindle in your heart unbelief and wicked thoughts against these three commandments and all the commandments. Therefore, you must always have God's Word in your heart, upon your lips, and in your ears. But where the heart is idle and the Word does not make a sound, the devil breaks in and has done the damage before we are aware. On the other hand, the Word is so effective that whenever it is seriously contemplated, heard, and used, it is bound never to be without fruit. It always awakens new understanding, pleasure, and devoutness and produces a pure heart and pure thoughts. For these words are not lazy or dead, but are creative, living words.

We are to use our speech for the support of good and the advantage of our neighbor.

God's name is also effective against the devil, to confuse and restrain him.

God's name should be invoked in the morning, evening, and the blessing of meals.

Children should cross themselves and call on God's name in trouble or fright, and also in thanksgiving for good.

### Review—Third Commandment

The Hebrew word *Sabbath* means *holiday*, or "to rest." It means to cease labor.

The outward obedience to this commandment—resting on the seventh day—was given only to the Jewish people.

The simple meaning is that people need rest, and the freedom and opportunity to attend the Divine Service (liturgy).

No one day is better than another. From ancient times, the Christian Church gathered on Sunday for worship. Cf. Romans 14:5-6; 1 Corinthians 14:40.



So when someone asks you, "What is meant by the commandment: You shall sanctify the holy day?" Answer like this, "To sanctify the holy day is the same as to keep it holy." "But what is meant by keeping it holy?" "Nothing else than to be occupied with holy words, works, and life." For the day needs no sanctification for itself. It has been created holy in itself. But God desires the day to be holy to you. Therefore, it becomes holy or unholy because of you, whether you are occupied on that day with things that are holy or unholy.

God's Word is the true "holy thing" above all other holy things. It is a treasure that sanctifies everything. Cf. 1 Timothy 4:5.

Whenever God's Word is taught, preached, heard, read, or meditated upon, then the person, day, and work are sanctified.

A work is not holy unless the person doing it is holy first.

Some people think that hearing a sermon or two makes them an expert and have no need of hearing God's Word any longer.

### Notes



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