

Everyday FAITH Family Page

Fear, Love & Trust

Law/Gospel

Like Adam and Eve and the Israelites, I reject God's Law, written on my heart and in the Ten Commandments. **In grace, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to keep the Law perfectly in my place and to pay the debt I owe for my sins by suffering and dying in my place and rising again.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I love Him and others.

Bible Words

Love is the fulfilling of the law.
Romans 13:10

From the Catechism Questions 14 and 17

[God] wrote the Law on [people's] hearts. Later He arranged the Law in Ten Commandments, wrote it on two tables of stone, and made it known through Moses. . . . Love is the summary of all the commandments.

Just Joking

Where does the Bible first mention medicine?

Where God gave Moses two tablets (Exodus 31:18)

God Gives the Law

Exodus 19–20

God miraculously freed the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. He led them across the Red Sea on dry ground and crushed their Egyptian pursuers. God faithfully led the people with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night. He met their physical needs with water and daily deliveries of manna and quail.

At Mount Sinai, God tended to their spiritual needs by giving them His Law, the Ten Commandments, inscribed on two stone tablets for Moses.

As He did for the Israelites, our Lord expects us to keep the Law perfectly in every way and at all times. This is not to rob our freedom or pleasure. On the contrary, God gave His good Law to protect us from the consequences of sin and guide us in a rich, full life.

Our inborn sinful nature reacts negatively to God's faithfulness and Law: we grumble, rebel, and fail to keep God's Law in our thoughts, words, and deeds. We sinners cannot and will not comply or submit.

Jesus Christ, God's Son and our Savior, embodies God's Law and fulfills it perfectly. Jesus obeyed God's Law without failure or flaw. He obeyed His Father before all others. He set aside time from His daily work to pray and worship. He honored His earthly parents, never spoke falsely against another, and lived contentedly with what His Father gave Him.

Yet Jesus is more than a mere example; He kept the Law perfectly in our place so that God would count His life in place of our sin-filled lives.

With no sin of His own for which to suffer, Jesus' love for sinners compelled Him to the cross to pay for our sin. Jesus took our sin-soaked record to the cross, bore its shame and death, and died for the sins of all people. In His resurrection, God accepted His payment. Through faith, we receive Jesus' sacrifice and the benefits He won for us: forgiveness of sin and eternal life with Him forever.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for Your sacrifice that set us free from sin and death and gives us new life with You. Amen.

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Law/Gospel

Just as the Israelites sinned by failing to trust in God and instead worshiped an idol, in the same way, I sin by worshiping my own idols over God: money, relationships, success, and everything I put ahead of Him.

The one true God meets all my needs today just as He did for the Old Testament Israelites. Most especially, God tends to my spiritual needs through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, and for His sake, He forgives my sins and gives me eternal life.

Take-Home Point

God commands that I put Him first.

Bible Words

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

Matthew 22:37

From the Catechism The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean?

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

The Golden Calf

Exodus 32:1–20

Despite repeated evidence of God’s love, strength, and faithfulness, the Israelites seemed to put their fear, love, and trust in anything except the Lord. They offered God complaints, impatience, and infidelity.

At Mount Sinai, the people tired of waiting for Moses to return from his mountain-top meeting with the Lord. They asked Moses’ brother Aaron to make a golden calf. He did, and they said, “These are the gods that brought us out of Egypt!” Aaron declared the next day a feast day. The people ate, drank, and partied to honor their new god.

God sent Moses back down the mountain to deal with the people. When Moses saw the revelry, he angrily broke the two stone tablets God inscribed with His Law. He burned the gold calf, ground it to powder, scattered it on water, and made the people drink it. Then Moses called those on the Lord’s side to join him. The sons of Levi, his own tribe, responded. Moses sent them into camp to restore order; 3,000 people died.

Moses confronted the people for their great sin and returned to the Lord to attempt to atone for them. God held the people accountable for their sin and sent a plague, but continued to be with them.

We may judge the Israelite infidelity, but despite more evidence of God’s goodness, we behave no better. The First Commandment says to fear, love, and trust God above all other things. Yet we fear poverty and steal. We perceive our Lord’s love as unsatisfactory and sinfully seek approval from others. We love and covet what God gives to others. Ultimately, we trust ourselves, and we sin by doing what God promised to do for us.

God’s Son, Jesus, loved God above all others. Although God Himself, Jesus feared God by obeying His Father in heaven, even if it displeased others or sent Him to the cross to atone for our sins. Through His sinless obedience and death on the cross, Jesus forgives our sins and frees us to live with God in fear, love, and trust.

Prayer

Lord God, guide us to fear, love, and trust in You alone.

In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

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Law/Gospel

Just as Goliath relied on his own strength and scoffed at David and David's God, so I, too, break the Second Commandment today by cursing and lying, by using God's name in thoughtless ways, and by failing to honor and praise God. **Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, kept the Second Commandment perfectly for me. He never once used vain language, but instead called upon His Father in heaven, trusting in Him at all times, all the way to the cross, where He paid for my sin.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I respect His name.

Bible Words

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Psalm 103:1

From the Catechism The Second Commandment

You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.

What does this mean?

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

David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17:31–50

After the Israelites entered the Promised Land, God faithfully met their needs even though they often failed to trust in Him. For hundreds of years, the Lord sent judges to rule, guide, and protect them.

The hard-hearted Israelites eventually became dissatisfied with judges and demanded a king as the other nations had. The Lord granted their request in Saul. Sadly, once made king, Saul turned from the Lord, so God raised up David, a faithful shepherd boy from Bethlehem.

In the meantime, Saul continued as king and military leader. In one Philistine showdown, the armies stood on opposing mountains. Each day, the Philistine champion Goliath stood in the middle to challenge one Israelite to fight for all. Nine feet tall, attired in bronze armor, and armed with huge weapons, Goliath intimidated the Israelites and mocked God.

Teenage David heard Goliath's taunts while on an errand to bring food to his soldier brothers. He asked "Who is this foreigner who defies the army of the living God?" and volunteered to fight. Saul resisted, but David said the Lord—who protected him from lions and bears that attacked his father's sheep—would deliver him from the Philistine.

Refusing Saul's armor and trusting in God instead, David faced Goliath with a slingshot. David called on the name of the Lord, claimed victory for the Lord, and sank one stone into the giant's forehead; he died.

David trusted God, gave glory to Him before men, and foreshadowed the Messiah, Jesus, who kept the Second Commandment in our stead. How easily Jesus could have cursed His enemies or used sinful words against His cowardly, slow-to-understand disciples. Instead, even when rebuking sinners, Jesus spoke only the truth.

In His death on the cross, Jesus took the punishment for our sins. In His resurrection, He declared victory over our enemies of sin, death, and the devil. He gladly forgives sin and gives salvation to all who trust Him.

Prayer

Jesus, give us courage to call on Your name in every trouble, in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. In Your name we pray. Amen.

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At the dedication of the temple, Solomon prayed that the people would be true to God and obey His Word, for they often failed to listen to God's Word and instead sinfully grumbled against God and worshiped idols. I, too, often fail to hold God's Word sacred and gladly hear and learn it. **Jesus, the Word made flesh, taught and lived God's Word perfectly on my behalf and then went to the cross to suffer and die in payment for my sins. He is the new temple where forgiveness is found.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I learn His Word.

Bible Words

Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! Psalm 95:6

From the Catechism The Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

What does this mean?

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

Solomon Builds and Dedicates the Temple

1 Kings 6–8

As a spiritual and political leader for the people of Israel, King Solomon oversaw the construction and dedication of the Lord's temple. Investing many resources and hours of labor, David's son modeled God-pleasing reverence for the Lord God. At the temple dedication, Solomon exhorted the people to keep God's commandments.

These efforts suggest that Solomon and his people had great fervor and dedication to the Lord. And yet, not so many years later, Solomon let his pagan wives lead him to worship other gods, even those who demanded child sacrifice. And the Israelites, far from making every effort to preach, learn, and support the Word of God, usually put God second at best, or worse, disregarded Him altogether.

We struggle to keep this commandment too. We fail to teach the Bible to our children. We give countless hours to career, friends, and recreation, but fail to take time for Bible study. We participate in worship sporadically, busy with other prioritized tasks. We reflect this same lack of priority in our stewardship of God's gifts of time, talent, and treasure. We feebly support the preaching of the Gospel but invest eagerly in personal pleasures.

Like the Israelites, our efforts pale in comparison to our Lord's redemptive work for us. Jesus did not merely preach the Word; He kept it and fulfilled it for us. More than a perfect High Priest, Christ sacrificed Himself for our sins. He shed His blood to wash sinners clean of sin and to present the Church holy and righteous before God.

Prayer

Lord, give us hunger and thirst for Your Word and Sacraments. Satisfy us with Your holy food and keep us in the one true faith. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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Fear, Love & Trust

Law/Gospel

Joseph's brothers sinned when they sold Joseph into slavery and then lied to Jacob, their father, instead of respecting authority and showing love for their father and brother as Joseph did in Egypt. I, too, break the Fourth Commandment by disobeying my parents and other authorities and failing to honor them. **God's Son, Jesus, perfectly obeyed the Fourth Commandment for me, fulfilling His heavenly Father's plan of salvation by dying on the cross to save me from my sins.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I honor authorities.

Bible Words

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Colossians 3:20

From the Catechism The Fourth Commandment

Honor your father and your mother.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.

Joseph Cares for Jacob

Genesis 46:29–30; 47:7–12

Jacob's family struggled with issues we know too well: conflicted relationships, sibling rivalry, infertility, favoritism, anger, revenge, and hostility. They weren't perfect; neither are we. Yet God graciously loved, cared for, and led Jacob's large family, just as He does you and your family today.

Jacob favored his son Joseph, and this led to resentment from his ten older sons. They sold Joseph into slavery in Egypt, and told their dad that a wild animal killed him. In doing so, the brothers sinned against God and violated the Fourth Commandment about honoring parents. Speaking to their father and expressing their hurt verbally would have been a better solution than this heartbreaking deceit.

Joseph submitted to Egyptian authorities and eventually ascended to his own place of authority as Pharaoh's right-hand man. Seeing God's hand in his circumstances, Joseph extended mercy to his father, brothers, and their families. During a severe famine, he moved them to Egypt to enjoy food and safety. Joseph provides an example of honoring those in authority even in the worst of circumstances.

The sinful nature of every person with authority over us affects their roles as parent, teacher, supervisor, police officer, mayor, senator, and the like. Each fails to live up to our expectations as a caretaker and leader. Nevertheless, God placed them in our lives for our good, to protect, nurture, and provide for us. Therefore, we are bound to honor and obey them. When we fail to do this, we break the Fourth Commandment.

Jesus flawlessly interpreted and fulfilled the Fourth Commandment. He submitted to His earthly parents. He told people to pay taxes to Caesar as the governing authority in Palestine. Nevertheless, He stood up against the Jewish and Roman leaders to fulfill His Father's plan for our salvation, a plan that took Him to the cross where He died to pay for our sins against the Fourth and all Commandments.

Prayer

Dear Lord, guide us to respect and serve those with authority over us as You command. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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Law/Gospel

In the Fifth Commandment, God calls me not only to do no harm to my neighbor but also to make every effort to intentionally promote my neighbor's life and health, just as Abraham did for Lot when enemy kings captured him. Because I am sinful, I too often fail to do this. **Through His ministry on earth—feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and raising the dead—Jesus demonstrated His desire to restore the abundant life that sin destroyed, culminating on the cross and in the empty tomb, when He rescued me from sin, death, and the devil to bring me back to God and give me life with Him forever.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I respect life.

Bible Words

Love your neighbor as yourself.
Matthew 22:39

Abraham Rescues Lot

Genesis 14:1–16

Abraham's nephew Lot became a prisoner when war broke out between kings in his valley. The warring factions destroyed the lives and property of their enemies and innocent noncombatants.

As a caring, God-fearing uncle, Abram employed his own men and resources to rescue Lot, other people, and stolen property. These actions put Abraham and his men in danger, but restored many. By God's grace, Abraham's concern included others besides his kin.

Unjust war is only one example of humanity's willingness to destroy life. The violations against the Fifth Commandment include unjust wars, domestic violence, murder, abortion, and genocide. We break the Fifth Commandment when we encourage an overweight person to overeat, invite an alcoholic to drink, or act carelessly. We sin in what we do and what we avoid, such as failing to care for poor and sick people.

Jesus restored damage caused by our sins against the Fifth Commandment in His earthly ministry. He fed the hungry. He healed, restored health, and brought outcasts back to their communities. He raised the dead and gave loved ones back to families.

Jesus' ministry pointed to His most profound restoration, His suffering and death on the cross and rising again to defeat death itself and give us life with Him forever.

From the Catechism

The Fifth Commandment

You shall not murder.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us value life as a gift from You. Amen.

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Fear, Love & Trust

Law/Gospel

Manifestations of sin against the Sixth Commandment are shown in thought, word, and deed by failing to appreciate God's gift of marriage and by engaging in sex outside of marriage, homosexuality, adultery, use of pornography, and the like. I, too, fail to use my sexuality in ways that please God. **God blessed Isaac with a suitable wife, and He blesses me through His Son, Jesus, who on my behalf resisted temptation to abuse sexuality and then took the punishment for my sins on the cross.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I honor marriage and family.

Bible Words

The LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Genesis 2:18

Prayer

Lord God, bless us with healthy marriages and families that honor You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Isaac and Rebekah

Genesis 24

God miraculously gave hundred-year-old Abraham and ninety-year-old Sarah a son that they loved. This son, Isaac, had not married when Sarah died thirty years later.

Abraham wanted Isaac to have his own wife and family, but not with one of their idol-worshiping neighbors. He wanted to bless Isaac with a God-pleasing union and sexuality. So he sent his most trusted servant to find a wife among his relatives in the faraway city of Nahor.

Abraham's servant asked God to show him the right woman for Isaac. The Lord led him to Rebekah, granddaughter of Abraham's brother (Isaac's second cousin). The servant gave Rebekah precious gifts and told her extended family about Abraham and Isaac. They concurred God had brought them together, and agreed for Rebekah and Isaac to marry.

The servant wanted to leave the next morning; Rebekah agreed. Isaac and Rebekah married soon after she arrived. After twenty years of marriage, God blessed them with twin sons, Esau and Jacob.

God created humans as sexual beings and blesses marriages with joy and, the Lord willing, children. These emotional and spiritual bonds and responsibilities of raising children include accountability to God. Used sinfully, sexuality becomes a source of tremendous, far-reaching trouble.

As a human, Jesus experienced every temptation in a sinful world in thought, word, and deed, yet He never sinned. Jesus offered Himself as the pure, blameless sacrifice on the cross to reconcile sinners to God. Jesus offers the perfect image of marriage as the Groom to His Bride, the Church.

From the Catechism

The Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

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Law/Gospel

Like Achan, who coveted and took items that belonged to another and had been dedicated to the Lord, I also break the Seventh Commandment whenever I am dishonest or fail to help my neighbor protect what is his. **Jesus is God in the flesh, and all that I have belongs to Him. He never broke the Seventh Commandment but instead took my sins to the cross, purging my transgressions.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I respect my neighbor's things.

Bible Words

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have.
Hebrews 13:16

Prayer

Lord God, help us to resist temptation to steal or deceive and to trust You to provide for us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Achan's Sin

Joshua 7:10–26

With Moses' death, God raised up Joshua as a leader. Under his leadership, the army of Israel invaded Canaan and enjoyed many victories as God delivered their enemies. Things went well until they suffered an unexpected defeat. When Joshua asked the Lord why, God said someone had stolen spoils of war that He said to destroy.

Despite God's steadfast and abundant generosity, a man named Achan gave in to temptation and took a beautiful cloak, silver, and gold from a battle. At God's command, Joshua drew lots to find the offender by tribe, clan, family, and individual. Achan confessed his sin and told where he hid the treasure, but paid with his life for offending God and the community with his theft.

God is the giver of all good gifts (James 1:17). He provides all we need to support our bodies and lives. Stealing may show sinful dissatisfaction with the Lord's gifts, laziness, or an unwillingness to work. It results in shame, disappointment, separation from God, and discord with our neighbors. Instead, we should assist our neighbors in keeping and improving their property.

This commandment provides structure and order, just as God gave Joshua instructions for dealing with this sin for the good of the people. Had the sin gone undiscovered and unpunished, people may have doubted God's ability to see or punish sin. Disobedience would have spread.

Although God's response to this sin was just, the Lord demonstrates grace and mercy to sinners in His Son, Jesus, who took on human flesh. Where Achan stole, Jesus gave. The only thing Jesus ever took from us was our sins. He took them to the cross. In exchange, He gave us forgiveness and eternal life.

From the Catechism

The Seventh Commandment

You shall not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

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Law/Gospel

God wants me to speak well of my neighbor and defend him just as Jonathan spoke well of David and tried to protect him from Saul's anger. Because of my sinfulness, I often fail to do this. **Jesus always spoke the truth, even when doing so created inconvenience and danger in His life. He blessed people with the Good News of the kingdom of God, cast out demons with His powerful word, and having suffered and died for my sins, now advocates on my behalf in heaven.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I speak well of others.

Bible Words

[Speak] the truth in love.
Ephesians 4:15

Prayer

Holy Spirit, bless our words and actions so that we may show Jesus' love in all we do. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

David and Jonathan

1 Samuel 18:1–5; 19:1–7

David and Jonathan met at the battlefield when David defeated the giant Goliath. At least ten years older, Jonathan had already proven himself on the battlefield. That day, Jonathan saw a man who loved and served the Lord as he did. (See their shared faith in 1 Samuel 20:42.)

As Saul's oldest son and probable next king, Jonathan might have feared David. Instead, he made a covenant with David and gave him his royal robes, armor, and weapons. With these actions, Jonathan acknowledged David as the next king, and introduced him to the royal life and wealth Saul promised to the man who killed Goliath.

Jonathan and David loved and respected each other. Their friendship withstood all enemies, even Jonathan's father, Saul. Such profound love arises from only one place: the heart of God. We love the Lord and others because God first loves us and gave His Son for us (1 John 4:9, 19).

King Saul grew jealous of David, despised him, lied to him, and tried to kill him in a multitude of ways. We sinners often turn God's good gift of speech into a tool for evil. We speak negatively and spitefully, rehearse hurtful encounters, and speak in sharp tones, sarcastic remarks, or unfair criticisms. Relationships suffer from abusive language and speech. Gossip, lies, and false accusations destroy self-esteem and reputations. Instead, we should use speech to edify, encourage, and bless others.

Only Jesus Christ did this without error. Jesus always used His words in obedience to the Father and for our benefit. Even as He died on a cross of torture, Jesus spoke a prayer of forgiveness to His Father in heaven on behalf of those who crucified Him. Jesus continues to plead for us at the right hand of His heavenly Father as our faithful Advocate.

From the Catechism

The Eighth Commandment

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

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Law/Gospel

Just as Ahab coveted a garden that was not his, I sin when I am dissatisfied with God’s provision and sinfully desire something that belongs to my neighbor or fail to help him keep what belongs to him. **In His love and mercy, my heavenly Father gives me everything I need, especially His Son, Jesus, who set aside what He deserved in order to be my Savior.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I be content.

Bible Words

Be content with what you have.
Hebrews 13:5

From the Catechism

The Ninth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor’s house.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor’s inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

Ahab Covets Naboth’s Vineyard

1 Kings 21:1–16

Once Israel divided into two nations, a series of kings led each country. Some worshiped the one true God; others wickedly worshiped false gods. Few were more wicked than Israel’s King Ahab.

Ahab became obsessed with planting a vegetable garden near his palace in Jezreel. Naboth’s vineyard, right next door, provided a perfect location, so Ahab asked Naboth to trade or sell it. Naboth refused, since people inherited their land and passed it on to their heirs.

This outcome so upset Ahab that he lay in bed and refused to eat. His wicked, yes truly wicked, Queen Jezebel promised to take care of it for him. She executed a sinful, lying plan that ended with Naboth’s wrongful execution. The king then took the land in a legal loophole, the intended outcome of their coveting, theft, and murder.

Like Ahab, much of our coveting comes from listening to the sinful, distracting voices in our heads and in the world. We think we have a right to what we want, even if getting it requires disobeying God. We steal what we have not earned, take revenge or speak ill of those who hurt us, and seek satisfaction outside of godly relationships.

Thankfully, Jesus did not covet. Instead, God’s Son set aside the comforts of His heavenly home, in order to accept His Father’s plan to save sinners through His perfect life, sacrificial death, and victorious resurrection. In Christ, “we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7).

Prayer

Dear Lord, satisfy us with the good gifts You give in Your Word and Sacraments: forgiveness of sin, rich grace, and abundant new life, now and forever. Amen.

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Onesimus was not content to be a slave, so he ran away, perhaps taking with him something that belonged to his master, Philemon. Contentment is a challenge for me, too, as I sinfully resent God for not giving me everything that I want and instead covet what belongs to others. **In Paul's willingness to cover the expense of releasing Onesimus, I see the redeeming work of Jesus Christ, who died on the cross so that I would no longer be a bondservant to sin, but rather a child of my heavenly Father.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I be content.

Bible Words

I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.
Philippians 4:11

Prayer

Lord God, thank You for sending Jesus to pay our debts. Help us to grow in our ability to trust You to care for us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Paul and Philemon

Book of Philemon

St. Paul, the former Pharisee, persecuted the Christian Church before meeting the risen Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus. Changing direction, Paul fervently taught about Jesus while working as a tentmaker.

Later in life, while imprisoned for the Gospel, Paul met a runaway bondservant named Onesimus and became his father in Christ. Onesimus's master, Philemon, was also a Christian and a friend to Paul. Paul wrote to ask Philemon not to punish Onesimus, to accept him back as a brother in Christ, and to release him to the Lord's ministry. This was a substantial request, as Philemon had a financial investment in Onesimus.

We struggle with similar decisions. Covetous desires for riches often lead us into sin and away from a relationship with our Lord. Our heavenly Father graciously gives us all that we need and invites us to pray to Him, asking for the things we want as a child speaks to a father.

There is no sin in making or working toward life goals, such as education, friends, marriage, children, and career. However, when we desire these things more than we love God, or pursue them even though it means disobeying our heavenly Father, we sin.

In his letter, Paul offered to pay the price of Onesimus's freedom, something the bondservant could never do for himself. This points us to the work of Jesus Christ, who willingly paid the price of our freedom. As sinners, we could never free ourselves, but Jesus took our debt upon Himself. Jesus paid our debt in full on the cross, setting us free from the slavery of sin and death and making us children of our heavenly Father.

From the Catechism

The Tenth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.
What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not entice or force away our neighbor's wife, workers, or animals, or turn them against him, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

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Just as the rich man learned that God expects perfect obedience in thoughts, desires, words, and deeds on every point of the Law, so in the Close of the Commandments God shows me how much He wants me to cling to Him alone. Because of my sin, I, too, fall short and deserve nothing but His righteous anger and punishment. **God's Son, Jesus, kept God's Law perfectly in my place and went innocently to the cross. Through Him, God forgives sins, gives eternal life, and promises grace and every blessing to me and all who believe in Jesus.**

Take-Home Point

God commands that I fear, love, and serve Him.

Bible Words

What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6:8

The Rich Young Ruler

Matthew 19:16–26

A rich young man approached Jesus and asked what good deed he must do to have eternal life. Jesus replied, "Why do you ask Me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments" (v. 17).

In these few words, Jesus said that only God is good; queried what the man believed about Jesus and pointed to Himself as God; and reiterated God's command to keep the Law perfectly. The man didn't hear any of that; he asked which commandments to keep. When Jesus listed a few, the man, secure in his self-righteousness, said he kept all of these. What else should he do?

Piercing the man's heart to show his sin and need for a Savior, Jesus said to give everything he owned to the poor and follow Him. Unable to do this, the man left. His wealth, pride, and dependence on his possessions uncovered his sin and inability to trust God for all things.

God's Law is perfect and no sinner can keep it. We want to do what's good, but our sinful nature stops us. We sputter and stall without help from our Lord Jesus Christ, who kept the Law for us, paid for our sins with His death on the cross, and gives us forgiveness of sin and eternal life through faith in Him. Secure in Christ's righteousness, we gratefully follow Jesus, our Savior, Lord, and teacher.

From the Catechism

The Close of the Commandments

God threatens to punish all who break these commandments. Therefore we should fear His wrath and not do anything against them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments.

Prayer

Dear Lord, convict us of our sin and help us trust You to forgive us and give us eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

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Everyday FAITH Family Page

Fear, Love & Trust

Law/Gospel

Like Peter, I may wonder if God loves and forgives me, a sinner, when His Law rightly condemns me for failing in thought, desire, word, and deed to do what God wants me to do. **Just as in Peter's case, God forgives me for the sake of His Son, Jesus, who innocently endured suffering on the cross and death in order to satisfy God's righteous demands for sin.**

Take-Home Point

Jesus has kept God's commands in my place.

Bible Words

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law.
Galatians 3:13

Just Joking

*What determined if Peter was a good fisherman?
His net income.*

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the grace, mercy, and forgiveness You deliver to us in Your Word and Sacraments. Amen.

Peter's Reinstatement

John 21:4–19

On the night He was arrested, Jesus predicted all His disciples would fall away. Peter claimed he would die before betraying Him. Jesus sadly replied that Peter would deny Him three times before morning.

The disciples scattered and hid when Jesus was arrested. Peter was let into the courtyard where Jesus stayed. Three times, people identified Peter as Jesus' disciple, and three times he denied it. A rooster crowed, signaling dawn. Peter remembered Jesus' words and wept bitterly.

The Council of religious leaders took Jesus to Pilate early that morning, and He was condemned to death. At mid-afternoon, Jesus died an agonizing death on the cross. Friends buried His body in a new tomb.

At dawn, three days later, Jesus' disciples found His tomb empty. Angels at the tomb said, "Jesus is alive! Go tell the disciples and Peter!" Different disciples saw the risen Lord that day, including Peter. Later, Jesus appeared to seven disciples fishing on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him. Jesus forgave Peter and told him to care for His sheep, restoring his vocation as an apostle of the Lord.

Peter zealously served the Lord and may have believed he could earn Jesus' love with his actions. This may tempt us too, but every effort to undo sin or earn God's favor mocks God's grace and His Son's suffering and death on the cross.

Jesus perfectly kept the Law for us, and then suffered in our place, paying the debt for our sins on the cross. He endured the death and hell we earned with disobedience. He took our sinful lives and gave us His own innocence. His resurrection demonstrates God's satisfaction with Christ's work for us. Like Peter, through faith, we receive full pardon at Christ's expense.

From the Catechism

Questions 76 and 84

The Law condemns everyone. . . . God offers the forgiveness of sins only in the Gospel, the good news that we are freed from the guilt, the punishment, and the power of sin, and are saved eternally because of Christ's keeping the Law and His suffering and death for us.

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