

New Year's Eve
2021
Friday, 12/31
6:00 PM



Basis: Christian Questions with Their Answers, Luther's Small Catechism

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: God ♡ loves us, ♡ knows everything about us, and ♡ wants to hear our confession and assure us of His forgiveness. This sermon focuses on Dr. Luther's Christian Questions with Their Answers and includes ➡ my comments.

L: **(1)** Do you believe that you are a sinner?

C: Yes, I believe it. I am a sinner.

➡ David: "...I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Ps. 51:5 NIV).

L: **(2)** How do you know this?

C: From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.

➡ Think about Dr. Luther's explanations: *The meaning of each commandment is more than the actual words.*

L: **(3)** Are you sorry for your sins?

C: Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

➡ The Bible: "...the sorrow that is according to *the will of God* produces a repentance without regret, *leading to salvation*; but the sorrow of the world produces death" (2 Cor. 7:10

NAS). What is godly sorrow? ♡ I have sinned against God, ♡ I am sorry, ♡ I desire to turn from my sins, and ♡ I am trusting in Jesus for God's forgiveness!

L: **(4)** What have you deserved from God because of your sins?

C: His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation.

➡ The Bible: "...the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23 NAU).

L: **(5)** Do you hope to be saved?

C: Yes, that is my hope.

➡ Bible hope is certainty; *God's promises cannot fail!*

L: **(6)** In whom then do you trust?

C: In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

➡ All faith is **in something**; we trust **in Jesus** for heaven!

L: **(7)** Who is Christ?

C: The Son of God, true God and true Man.

➔ Dr. Luther: “I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.”

L: **(8)** How many Gods are there?

C: Only one, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

➔ The Athanasian Creed: “For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Holy Spirit is another. But the Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.”

L: **(9)** What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?

C: He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

➔ Dr. Luther: “He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. Not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death.”

L: **(10)** Did the Father also die for you?

C: He did not. The Father is God only, as is the Holy Spirit; but

the Son is both true God and true man. He died for me and shed His blood for me.

➔ Jesus: “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep” (John 10:11 NAU).

L: **(11)** How do you know this?

C: From the holy Gospel, from the words instituting the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the sacrament.

➔ Our Words of Institution are a *summary of Jesus’ words* from Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; and 1 Corinthians 11.

L: **(12)** These are the words of institution: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “*Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.*”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “*Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.*”

L: **(13)** Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the sacrament?

C: Yes, I believe it.

➔ Faith is believing *without seeing*: “Now faith is the assurance of *things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*” (Hebrews 11:1 NAU).

L: **(14)** What convinces you to believe this?

C: The word of Christ: Take, eat, this is My body; drink of it, all of you, this is My blood.

➔ J. T. Mueller: “The Lutherans... take the words [of Jesus] in their simple meaning... and trust that Christ, who made the promise, is able also to fulfill it. In this they follow the time-honored [interpretation] rule that we must not depart from the literal meaning of the text unless the text itself compels us to do so. The Lutheran doctrine therefore rests on Scriptural ground...” (521).

L: **(15)** What should we do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and in this way receive His pledge?

C: We should remember and proclaim His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: *This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.*”

➔ We remember, yes, but we also receive His body and blood, which gives us greater assurance of God’s forgiveness!

L: **(16)** Why should we remember and proclaim His death?

C: First, so we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins. Only Christ, true God and true Man, could do that. Second, so we may learn to be horrified by our sins, and to regard them as very serious. Third, so we may find joy and comfort in Christ alone, and through faith in Him be saved.

➔ Sin is powerful to eternally condemn, *but Christ has defeated sin, death, and Satan; so, in Christ, we are saved!*

L: **(17)** What motivated Christ to die and make full payment for your sins?

C: His great love for His Father, for me, and for other sinners.

➔ Jesus said: “*Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends*” (John 15:13 NAU).

L: **(18)** Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament?

C: That I may learn to believe that Christ, out of great love, died for my sin, and also learn from Him to love God and my neighbor.

➔ The Bible: “We love, because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19 NAU). As God took action to take away our sins, *so we take action to help people in need!*

L: **(19)** What should admonish and encourage a Christian to receive the Sacrament frequently?

C: **First, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord. Second, his own pressing need, because of which the command, encouragement, and promise are given.**

➔ Jesus said: *Do this in remembrance of Me and for the forgiveness of sins. Knowing we sin often, let us desire to receive often!*

L: **(20)** But what should you do if you are not aware of this need and have no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament?

C: **To such a person no better advice can be given than this:**

Conclusion: Now that we have confessed and received God’s forgiveness, let us be ♦thankful, ♦unafraid, ♦certain of heaven, and ♦ready to live unto God’s glory in the New Year!

Let Us Pray: Father in heaven, *TYSM for Your gift of forgiveness through Jesus and Your countless gifts in 2021.* Now, as we step into 2022, ♦draw us close, ♦fill us with Your Spirit, ♦guide us through Your word, and ♦help us to seek, know, and follow Your will for our lives.

First, he should touch his body to see if he still has flesh and blood. Second, he should look around to see whether he is still in the world, and remember that there will be no lack of sin and trouble. Third, he will certainly have the devil also around him, who with his lying and murdering day and night will let him have no peace, within or without.

➔ Seeing our sin and our spiritual battle, let us *gladly and frequently* receive!

L: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

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