

# Back to the Basics: Luther's Large Catechism – The Close of the Commandments

## The Ten Commandments Preach Repentance

The Ten Commandments show us our sin and how much we need a Savior.

- ☐ You shall have no other gods.
- You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
- Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- You shall not covet your neighbor's house.
- You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.



Prayer: These are the holy Ten Commands  
God gave to us by Moses' hands  
When high on Sinai's mount he stood,  
Receiving them for our good.  
Have mercy, Lord! Amen.

These Are the Holy Ten Commands (LSB 581, stanza 1)

### The Six Chief Parts:

1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.

## The Close of the Commandments

### Luther's Explanation from the Small Catechism:

#### What does God say about all these commandments?

He says: "I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments." (Exodus 20:5-6)

#### What does this mean?

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. Therefore, we should also love and trust in Him and gladly do what He commands.

1. Obedience to the Law carries "the promise" of God's grace and blessing.
2. Since all are sinners, the Law threatens everyone with punishment.
3. Therefore, no one can save himself by his works.
4. The Law is fulfilled only in Christ, who lived obediently and suffered punishment for us.
5. Faith in Christ desires to keep the Law.

## The Close of the Commandments:

1. Why is it so important to have the Ten Commandments before us when we talk about good works? [311-313]  
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2. How are the good works God commands not so impressive in the eyes of the world? [314-316]  
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3. What is the purpose of the warning and promise attached to the Commandments? [322-323]  
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4. How does the First Commandment shine and illumine the other commandments? [326-329]  
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5. Why were the Ten Commandments to be everywhere displayed in Old Testament times? Could anything similar be done today for the same purpose? [330-332]  
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6. How do we know that God requires more than external conformity to the Commandments?  
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### Closing Prayer

You have this Law to see therein That you have not been free from sin But also that you clearly see How pure toward God life should be. Have mercy, Lord!

Our works cannot salvation gain; They merit only endless pain. Forgive us, Lord! To Christ we flee, Who pleads for us endlessly. Have mercy, Lord! Amen.

These Are the Holy Ten Commands (LSB 581, stanzas 11-12)

### A Look at the Divine Service

**The Kyrie** is the first of the five great pillars of the Divine Service. It teaches us what true Christian worship really is. It is based on all the prayers for mercy in the Scriptures. It is the prayer of all Christians who believe in Jesus Christ and trust in Him for all that they need: the forgiveness of sins, life, salvation, and all the needs of this body and life. "Kyrie, eleison" means "Lord, have mercy upon us."

*Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.*

### References:

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