



Explanation of Luther's Seal

Martin Luther designed the seal above to summarize his Christian faith.

The black cross in the center reminds us that Jesus died to take the punishment for our sins. The red heart reminds us of the love God has for us in sending Jesus to be our Savior. The red of the heart is the color of the blood of Christ, shed for us and for our salvation. The white rose helps us remember the work of the Holy Spirit, who makes us pure and holy in God's sight by bringing us to faith in Jesus and by helping us to live our lives for Him. The sky-blue background pictures the joy of the new life God gives to all who believe and trust in Him. Finally, the golden ring outlining the seal reminds us of our eternal inheritance—a home in heaven where we will enjoy complete joy and happiness in our Savior's presence.

Presented To:

FROM: _____

ON THE OCCASION OF: _____

DATE: _____

Luther's Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Luther's Evening Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

LUTHER'S Small Catechism for Kids



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Introduction

This is the Christian faith: grace freely given in Jesus. Out of His great mercy and love for us, God has done everything! On our own, we can do nothing good—but God is good, and God is love. This is the faith we desire to pass on to our children and to all children in our care: God the Father has given us *everything*—especially forgiveness and new life in Jesus Christ—and the Spirit leads us to respond with thankful love, trust, and devotion to God, as well as with love and service to our neighbor.

Martin Luther saw the need for a guide to teach people the basics of the Christian faith, rooted in God’s Word. In 1529, Luther wrote the Small Catechism as a tool for teaching and learning the Christian faith and life. For centuries, it has been used at home, in schools, and in congregations.

Luther’s Small Catechism for Kids uses age-appropriate, elementary-level language to explain and teach the basics of the faith to children ages 7–11. This resource was developed to help children learn and understand the foundational teachings of our faith and apply them to their lives. Because this resource is based on the text and structure of *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation* (CPH, 2017), it will also provide a foundation for further study of the catechism.

However, this book is more than an instructional guide. It is a description of what it means to live as a baptized child of God, secure in His promise of unconditional love, forgiveness, and grace.

God bless you as you lead children through the catechism on an adventure of faith, discovering more about our great God and what it means to live as His beloved child.

Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that the believer would stake his life on it a thousand times.

—Martin Luther (AE 35:370)

How to Use This Book

Luther's Small Catechism for Kids loosely follows the structure and format of *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017). While the explanation section has been rewritten in elementary-age language, the wording of the Six Chief Parts and Luther's explanation of them has been retained. Similarly, this catechism uses the English Standard Version translation of the Bible. This intentional alignment lays the foundation for further study of the catechism while helping to promote lifelong memorization of God's Word and our Christian beliefs.

The catechism is composed of Six Chief Parts: the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Confession, and the Sacrament of the Altar.

The first half of the catechism examines the teaching of historically essential Christian texts: the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. Through the study of these texts, we learn how God calls us to repentance, faith, and new life in Christ.

The second half of the catechism describes how Christ is actively working in His Church through Baptism, Confession, and the Lord's Supper. The study of these sections clearly shows that Christ is with us to forgive us, renew us, and lead us, now and forever.

There are a variety of ways you can use this catechism to teach the faith.

The framework of the catechism makes it ideal for systematic teaching, one section at a time. You don't need to cover the material within a section all at once. Instead, pick and choose teaching points, questions, Bible illustrations, Scripture passages, and devotional content depending on the age, maturity, and interest of the children.

For example, when using this resource with **younger children**, you might read the main content with Luther's explanation, discuss the Main Idea, then move to the devotional content to connect learning to life.

Older children can dig deeper into the meaning of the main content by reading the bullet points and discussing one or more of the questions. They can also study Scripture passages and add more content as they mature.

Memorizing the chief parts of the catechism and Scripture verses is a wonderful way to instill the truth of God's Word in the heart.

Martin Luther never grew tired of studying the catechism. Although he was a learned preacher and teacher of the Word, he described himself as "a child" who studied and learned from the truth of the catechism daily. This is our prayer for you and the children with whom you share the faith!

Questions and Answers about the Christian Faith

What is the Christian faith?

The Christian faith is the belief that Jesus Christ is the only Savior of the world.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus is true God and true man in one person. He is the eternal Son of the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary to be our Savior and Lord.

John 17:3 This is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

What has the one true God done?

God made all things and loves His creation, especially the people He created. From the time Adam and Eve sinned, every person has been born sinful, lives in sin, and faces death. God the Father sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to become man and to save all people by His death and resurrection. God sent His Spirit to bring people back to Him through faith in Jesus.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

What is a Christian?

A Christian is a person who, by the power and work of the Holy Spirit through God’s Word, believes in and confesses Jesus as Savior and Lord. Through Baptism, a Christian is adopted into God’s family, the Church.

Romans 10:10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

What does it mean to confess (declare) Jesus Christ as my Lord?

To confess Jesus as my Lord means that I trust Him in life and in death as my Savior and my God. His death and resurrection have paid the punishment for all my sins and promise me eternal life. I belong to Jesus and I want to live for Him.

Romans 10:9, 13 If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. . . . For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Where do we learn about Jesus?

We learn God’s truth about Jesus Christ in the Bible. We call this truth the *Gospel* (the Good News), which is the promise of the forgiveness of sins for Jesus’ sake. The Gospel is the main message of the Bible.

John 20:31 But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

What is the Bible?

The Bible is a collection of books written by prophets and apostles over a period of more than a thousand years. Through the Holy Spirit, God gave these writers the thoughts and words they wrote so that the Bible is God’s Word. The Bible is completely true and has no mistakes. The Bible (Holy Scripture) tells us everything we need to know and believe for our Christian faith and life.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Why can we be sure that the Bible is the true Word of God?

God’s promises create faith in Jesus. Jesus tells us that all the Scriptures are God’s own words and are completely true.

- A. Jesus uses the Old Testament Scriptures as God’s Word. He assures us that “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35).
- B. Jesus calls His own words true and says they are “spirit and life” (John 6:63).
- C. Jesus gave others authority to speak His Word (see John 14:26).

What are the two great doctrines (teachings) of the Bible?

Law and Gospel are the two great doctrines of the Bible. The Law teaches what we are to do and not to do; the Gospel teaches what God has done, and still does, in Jesus for our salvation.

Romans 3:20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.



Introduction to the Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments are God's Law, His good and loving will for His beloved people.

- God's will for our lives is to love and trust Him more than anything or anyone else, and to love other people.
- God gave His Commandments because He loves us and He knows what is best for us.
- No one can keep the Commandments perfectly. We are all sinners. But God still loves us. Jesus, the Son of God, came to keep the Ten Commandments perfectly and then die on the cross to take the punishment for all our sins. Because of Jesus, we have forgiveness. God sent His Spirit to guide us and help us obey His commands.



THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean?

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

Understanding the First Commandment

- We keep the First Commandment when we
 - respect God so much that we do nothing against His will;
 - love God more than anything and devote our life to Him; and
 - trust God will take care of all our needs and keep His promises to us.
- We sin against the First Commandment when we
 - worship any other god;
 - love or trust in anything or anyone more than God; or
 - make anything more important than God.
- The First Commandment summarizes all the Commandments. If we could love and honor God perfectly, we would be keeping all the other Commandments.
- No one can keep this or any of the Commandments perfectly. The Holy Spirit causes us to want to keep them, but we sometimes fail because we still have a sinful nature.

THE MAIN IDEA

**There is only
one true God.
God wants us to
put all our trust
in Him for every-
thing we need.**

Learning about the First Commandment

What does it mean to have a god?

To have a god means to put our trust in someone or something to help us and give us all that we need.

Matthew 22:37–38 [Jesus] said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.”

Why doesn't God want us to have any other gods besides Him?

God loves us. He knows He is the only one who can give us all we need for this life and for eternity.

Matthew 4:10 [Jesus said,] “You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.”

What does it mean to fear God?

To fear God means to take God seriously. He is our Creator and Judge. He will judge the sinful world.

Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil.

What does it mean to trust and love God?

We trust and love God when we treasure Him more than anything else and rely on Him to take care of us and keep His promises to us.

Psalms 73:25 Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides You.

Who is the only true God?

The only true God is the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father reveals Himself in Jesus Christ. Jesus shows us the Father. The Father and the Son give us the Holy Spirit, who points to Jesus.

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.



A Bible Illustration

Jesus told a story about a man who put all his trust in his money and the things he owned. Read it in Luke 12:13–34.

Why was the rich man foolish?

Why should we put our trust in God instead of in earthly things or people?

Faith Connections

Think of one thing in this world you absolutely, positively could not live without. Is God more important than that thing (or person)? He should be!

God tells you, “Put Me first in your life.” Why? Because He created you. He loves you. He is the only one who can help you with every single need you have in this life. God sent His Son, Jesus, to pay for your sinfulness and make you His child. He has given you the promise of eternal life. You can trust Him to keep His promises. When you sin and love other things more than God, you can turn to Him for forgiveness. Because Jesus died and rose, you are saved from your sins.



Think and Share

What is God like? How can we describe Him? Look up some of these verses: Psalm 145:9; Isaiah 6:3; 1 John 4:8.

What are some of the things in this world that people put their trust in?

What are some of the ways God takes care of you every day? Make a list.

What’s the most amazing thing God has done for you?



Sing

I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus (LSB 729:1, 4)

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus, Trusting only Thee;
Trusting Thee for full salvation, Great and free.

I am trusting Thee to guide me; Thou alone shalt lead,
Ev’ry day and hour supplying All my need.



Bible Memory Verse

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (Deuteronomy 6:5)



Pray

Dear God, thank You for all the ways You love and care for me. Help me to love and trust in You above all things. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.



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.

Understanding the Second Commandment

- We keep the Second Commandment when we
 - talk to God in prayer, asking good for ourselves and others;
 - call on God in times of trouble;
 - thank and praise Him for His blessings; and
 - speak truthfully about God according to His Word.
- We sin against the Second Commandment when we
 - *swear* (call on God to witness the truth of what we say) thoughtlessly;
 - curse by using God's name in a disrespectful way; or
 - use God's name as a magic charm, to curse others, or to do things that are against His will.

THE MAIN IDEA
When we love and trust God as our Creator, Savior, and Helper, God's names are special to us.

Learning about the Second Commandment

What is God's name?

God's name is every name that He has used to make Himself known. In the Old Testament, we learn God's personal name: *Yahweh*, which means "I am." In the New Testament, we learn a new personal name: *Jesus*, which means "Yahweh saves."

Exodus 3:13–14 "[If] they ask me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Matthew 1:21 She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.

Why did God give us His name?

God gave us His name so we could know who created us and redeems and guides us—so that we could call on Him in prayer and so that we could tell others about Him.

Luke 11:2 [Jesus] said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name.’”

Isaiah 44:24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: “I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by Myself.”

John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

What are some wrong ways to use God’s name?

We misuse God’s name when we speak badly about God, say things about Him that are untrue, use swear words or curse words, and talk about God in a way that does not honor Him.

Leviticus 19:12 You shall not swear by My name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.



A Bible Illustration

When Mary learned she would become the mother of the promised Savior, she sang a song of thanks and praise that we call the *Magnificat* (a Latin word meaning “praise”). Read it in Luke 1:39–56.

What names of God did Mary sing?

How does Mary describe what God has done for her and all people?

Faith Connections

Think about the names or titles that you use when you talk to those who care for you: your parents and caregivers, your teacher, your pastor, your doctor. How do those names and titles show respect and love?

God is our Creator, Savior, and Helper, the one who will always love, forgive, and care for us. When we call on God using the names He has given to us in His Word, the Bible, we show Him love, respect, and thankfulness for all that He has done for us.



Think and Share

Give an example of how someone might use God's name disrespectfully. Give an example of using God's name in a good way.

What are some of your favorite names of God from the Bible? What makes them so special to you?

Write your own prayer or song to God, describing who He is and what He has done for you. Then pray it or teach it to your family to sing together.



Sing

How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds (LSB 524:1, 4)

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds In a believer's ear!
It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds, And drives away our fear.

O Jesus, shepherd, guardian, friend, My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my life, my way, my end, Accept the praise I bring.



Bible Memory Verse

Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.
(Psalm 50:15)



Pray

Dear heavenly Father, Your name is holy! Keep me from using Your name in any way that would dishonor You. Let Your Holy Spirit help me to honor Your name in everything that I think, do, and say. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.