

Name: _____

Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church Confirmation

The Second Commandment

After completing the lesson, the student will be able to:

- Know what the 2nd Commandment is.
- Be able to describe what the 2nd Commandment means in our daily lives.
- Be able to describe what the phrase “fear and love God” means.
- Be able to describe and give examples of the right use of God’s holy name.
- Know what God’s will is regarding our language, conversation, and speech.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

1. Use your catechism to write in the following information about the Second Commandment. Please copy it word for word below.

What is the Second Commandment?

What does this mean?

A name is a precious thing. A Christian is a person who has been saved by Jesus Christ and has come to love Him because of His love for us and His forgiveness of our sin. Therefore, the name of Jesus is most precious to a Christian, and we would not want to misuse His name in anyway. Let’s now open up our Catechism’s and look deeper into the meaning of the Second Commandment.

First, you will notice that all the explanations of the Commandments begin with the phrase “*we should fear and love God...*” Why is that? Most simply, because the fulfillment of all the Commandments comes not from the hands as much as from one’s heart. The true fulfillment of all the Commandments can only come from a heart that fears and loves Him. God is not satisfied with a mere external obedience to the letter of the Law, but our obedience must flow from the right motive: a heart that fears and loves God. If we attempt to keep the commandments only to avoid punishment or to earn glory, we are doing so for the wrong reasons. To fear the Lord does not mean cowering before God out of fear He will strike at us in anger or wrath; rather, to fear means to have a deep respect and reverence for an holy, righteous, and almighty God. As we consider who God is we should naturally respond by fearing Him and also loving

Him for sending His one and only Son to die in our place. We should ask God to help us not only love Him, but also fear (i.e. have reverence) for Him.

It is amazing how “fear” and “love” work together in our daily lives. Consider an analogy of a parent/child relationship. When a child is faced with the opportunity to do something they know will upset their parents, the best possible situation is that they will choose not to do the act because of the love they have for their parents. However, sometimes they are not always motivated by love for their parents; in these situations, children will often not do what they know is wrong because of the fear/reverence they have for their parents authority. Our relationship with God is very similar.

2. Read the following Bible passages. What do they tell us about one’s heart?

1 Samuel 15:22

Hosea 6:6

3. What does the right fear and love of the Lord cause us to do?

God’s Name is all by which He makes Himself known to us. This includes the Bible (the written Word) and Jesus Christ (the incarnate Word—the Word became flesh). It includes all His attributes and characteristics as well as the proper names He is given in the Bible. A good summary of His name can be remembered as including three things—that by which He is called and known; that which describes Him; that which stands for Him. Some of the personal names the Bible gives to God are Jehovah, LORD, Almighty, Christ, Savior, Comforter, Lord God Almighty, the Holy One, and God.

In the Second Commandment, we find that vain use of God’s name is no small matter. God takes it very seriously! Think of it in this way—no one likes their name, their character, or their abilities mocked or made fun of. In like manner, when we use God’s name in a thoughtless or mocking way, we are actually mocking God and ruining His reputation. When we use His name in a useless or careless way we are actually breaking the Second Commandment. Knowing this, what do you think of some very common phrases such as “Oh God,” “Jesus,” “Oh My God,” “Gosh Darn”, “By Golly”, or “Jeez”? Would these all be examples of using His name thoughtlessly or in vain? Remember, God forbids us to use His name in a careless way, or as a by-word in a conversation, or to curse/damn someone or something else.

Just for fun, take a few minutes and find a dictionary and look up “golly” and “gosh” and find the origin of each word. You will be surprised what you find! Depending on the dictionary, you will most likely see something similar to this: “A euphemistic substitute for God” ; a “softened form of God and used as a mild oath”. Obviously, these disguised forms of cursing should also be avoided by God’s children.

Although we are not using His name in the literal sense, can there be any doubt that His name is intended even in this abbreviated or substituted use?

It is also interesting to consider that included here would also be the vain or worthless repetition of songs or of prayer. If one merely recites the Lord's Prayer out of habit without even thinking about what they are saying, are we not taking His name in vain? Or how about singing a hymn or praise song, but without meaning and feeling from the heart? Would not this too be using His name in vain? We also take His name in vain when we wrongly attribute or blame God for things or falsely/wrongly interpret Scripture, for in both of these cases we are giving a wrong accounting of God's true nature.

4. When is the name of God taken in vain & how is this done? (Catechism, page 41)

5. What is it to curse by the name of God? (Catechism, page 42)

6. What is it to swear by the name of God? Can this ever be done appropriately? (Catechism, page 42)

7. What do the following passages teach us regarding swearing by God's name?

Genesis 24:2-3

Deuteronomy 6:13

2 Corinthians 1:23

Most of us have either swore, cursed, cussed, or whatever one might call it. Somebody posts a bad picture of you on Facebook and you let out a word like _____; you drop your can of Mountain Dew, and you let out a word like _____; you receive a D on a test you studied hard for, and you let out a word like _____; your iPhone gets stolen, and you let out a word like _____.

Get the picture? Sometimes it is argued that we are free to use a few curse words as long as we do not use the Lord's name in vain. What do you think of that? More importantly, what does God think of that?

8. Read the following Bible verses. What does God say regarding cursing or about our language/conversation in general?

Leviticus 24:13-16

Matthew 12:36

Ephesians 4:29

Ephesians 5:1-5

9. What is it to conjure by the name of God? (Catechism, page 43)

10. How do we lie and deceive by the name of God? (Catechism, page 43)

11. What are we to expect if one uses God's name vainly? (Exodus 20:7 & Mt. 12:36)

In the above section we have focused a great deal on what is forbidden regarding God's name. Yet, in our explanation, Martin Luther provides also what is permitted, even required regarding God's name and its use amongst His people. God's will is that you use His name with devotion and with reverence, sincerely calling upon Him in every time of need, and worshiping Him with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. We use His name rightly when we call upon Him in prayer, seeking His help, guidance, and care. We use His name rightly when we praise Him for what He has done, who He is, and what He will do. We praise Him when we acknowledge His gracious provision and mighty power. Finally, we use His name rightly when we offer Him thanks for our many blessings. Beginning with our own salvation and the gift of eternal life, there are countless things in which we can thank our God for.

12. Look at these Scripture passages and indicate how this is a right use of God's name, either in Prayer, Praise, or Thanksgiving.

Numbers 12:13

Psalms 100:4

Psalms 135:3

Philippians 4:6

Hebrews 13:15

Student & Parent Questions: *for the student and a parent to discuss and answer together*

1. Review the 2nd Commandment from Luther's Small Catechism. On a scale from 1-10, how well does your family do at NOT cursing or using God's name in vain?
2. On a scale of 1-10, how often DO you speak of God in your home and thank, praise, and pray to Him?

STUDENT & PARENT SIGNATURE:

By signing below, we affirm (1) this lesson is complete and that (2) we completed the "Student & Parent Questions" section together

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____