



March 11, 2017
The Conclusion of the Ten Commandments

Read Exodus 20:1-17

In this conclusion, Luther takes us back to the beginning. The First Commandment is the first commandment because it is the first commandment. “You shall have no other gods,” we read. This comes first and conditions all the other commandments. And it is the primary commandment because all the other commandments flow from it. Every commandment challenges us to “fear, love and trust God above anything else.”

But in this conclusion, we come to a deadly realization. No matter how we try, we are unable to keep even the First Commandment in any way that matters. Sinners are in the business of displacing God, not the business of trusting God. We may be able to use the commandments to manage our lives according to God’s design. But we do not entrust our hearts to God’s grace.

At least, not on our own.

Luther describes the Ten Commandments as the diagnosis of our disease. When we look at ourselves in the mirror of the Commandments, we see that we fall short in every way. We are, as we confess in our worship, captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. When we have come to a full appreciation of our brokenness, then we are ready to fall into the loving arms of Jesus, our Savior.

That is what Luther calls the “proper use” of the Law. We hear the diagnosis, and it is terminal. But wait! There is medicine for our disease that comes from beyond our resources. That medicine hangs on the cross and rises on Easter. His name is Jesus.

So we will move from the dismal diagnosis to the medicine of eternal life. That’s the good news we will hear as we read and internalize the Apostles’ Creed. See you next week!

Let’s pray. Dear God, we cannot even come to you on our own. Send us Your Holy Spirit to convict us of our sin and to carry us to the foot of the cross. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Do something: Prepare for worship tomorrow as we continue our journey toward the cross and resurrection.

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