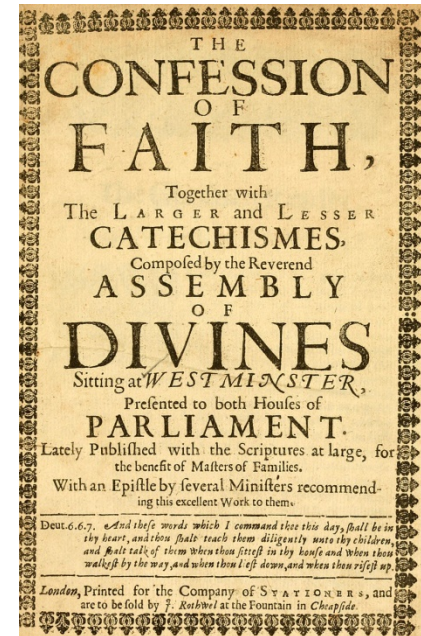


# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 22: Moral Law



*Presbyterian Catechising*  
John Phillip 1847



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# WLC Q91

**Q. What is the duty which God requires of man?**

**A. The duty which God requires of man, is obedience to his revealed will.**

# WLC Q91

- **Scripture References:**

- Romans 12:1-2

- The duty of conformity to the will of God

- Micah 6:8

- God requires obedience to his revealed will

- 1 Samuel 15:22

- Without sincere obedience to God's will, worship is vain

- John 7:17

- Willingness to do God's will is key to knowledge of God's truth

- James 1:22-25

- Hearing Word of God, without being willing to do God's will, is useless

- James 4:17

- Failing to do God's will, when we know what it is, is sinful

# WLC Q91

- **Why do we owe a duty to God?**
  - God is our Creator and we are his creatures
    - we are under moral obligation to love and serve him
  - Christians are under added obligation
    - Love and serve God, because he has redeemed us from sin and hell
- **What groups deny we owe a duty to God?**
  - Atheists, who do not believe that there is a God
  - Humanists, who believe our highest loyalty must be to our fellow-men, or to humanity
    - Usually regard God as existing for benefit of humanity or God and man exist for mutual benefit of each other
    - Religion is means to an end, for promoting human progress and welfare

# WLC Q91

- **Why is it wrong to say our highest loyalty should be devotion to humanity's welfare?**
  - Humanistic attitude, extremely common & popular
  - Idolatry--puts creature in place of Creator and amounts to deifying and worshipping mankind
- **Is serving our fellow men not a noble way of serving God?**
  - Depends on our motive for serving our fellow men
    - If real motive is desire to serve God, then may be truly serving God, if we act in accord with his revealed will
    - If motive is merely desire to help humanity
      - We serve our fellow men for their own sake
      - We are idolaters, not truly serving God, even though we may be doing some of the things commanded in God's Word

# WLC Q91

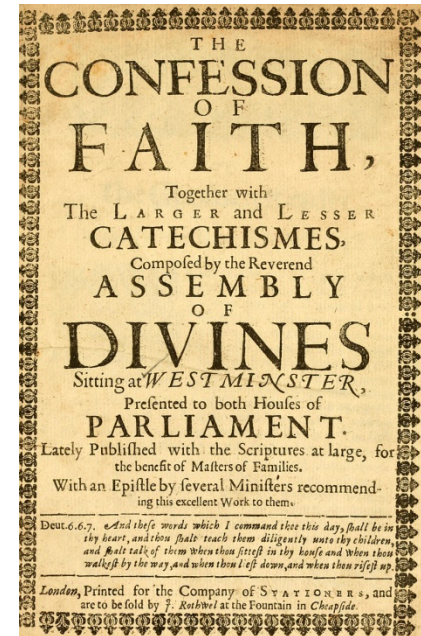
- **Do we have a right to choose whether we will obey God's revealed will or not?**
  - God does not force or compel obedience
    - No person has a right to choose to disobey God
    - Disobedience to God's will is rebellion against our Creator
- **Why does God not consult our wishes before imposing his will on us?**
  - God does not manage His universe as democracy
    - He has total, absolute and unchallengeable authority over all His creatures
    - We must obey God's law whether we like them or not
    - Placing God on same level with us, as if he were responsible to us, or as if we could criticize or question his requirements, is irreverent, irreligious and wicked

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 22: Moral Law



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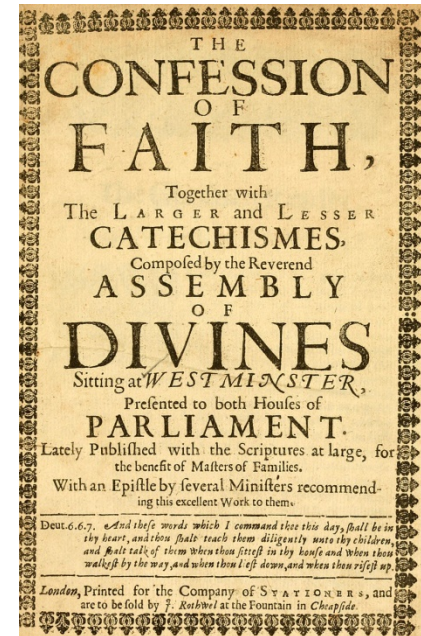


# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 23: Moral Law



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# WLC Q92

**Q. What did God at first reveal unto man as the rule of his obedience?**

**A. The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him, besides a special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the moral law.**

# WLC Q92

- **Scripture References:**

- Genesis 1:26-27

- Mankind created in the image of God, with a moral nature

- **Romans 2:14-15**

- Law of God written on the human heart by God's natural revelation

- Romans 10:5

- Standard of righteousness is the moral law of God

- Genesis 2:17

- God's special command to Adam not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

# WLC Q92

- **What do we call condition before Fall into sin?**
  - The estate of innocence
- **What special command did God give to mankind in the estate of innocence?**
  - Not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
    - Formed the condition of the Covenant of Works
- **How was this special command given?**
  - By special revelation from God
    - Adam and Eve unmistakably recognized as a declaration of the will of God (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:3)

# WLC Q92

- **Apart from this, what rule of obedience did God give to mankind?**
  - God gave man moral law as the rule of obedience
- **How was the moral law given to mankind in the estate of innocence?**
  - By God's natural revelation in the human heart
    - Not necessary for God to address Adam and Eve with a special revelation of the moral law, for the moral law was already written by God in their own nature
    - No special revelation of the moral law was needed so long as mankind had not fallen into sin

# WLC Q92

- **Do people have the moral law written on their hearts by natural revelation today?**
  - Yes; written by God's natural revelation upon heart of every human being in the world
    - But writing terribly darkened and distorted by sin
    - Natural revelation no longer adequate as guide for human conduct
    - Since Fall light of God's special revelation is necessary
    - Apart from light of Scripture, men inevitably change truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator (Romans 1:25)



# WLC Q92

- **Why did God not reveal the Ten Commandments to Adam and Eve?**
  - Before Fall no need for detailed list of commands
    - Simple moral law of God on human heart was sufficient
      - Told them highest obligation was to love God for his own sake
      - Next highest obligation was to love each other for God's sake
    - Only when sin had entered did specific detailed commandments become necessary
      - Such as “Do not steal”, “Do not kill”, “Do not bear false witness against your neighbor”, etc.
      - In state of innocence, such specific commandments would have been meaningless as well as unnecessary

# WLC Q93

**Q. What is the moral law?**

**A. The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding everyone to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he owes to God and man: promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it.**

# WLC Q93

- **Scripture References:**

- Deut. 5:31-33, **Deut. 5:1-3**
  - God's law is revelation of God's will requiring obedience
- Luke 10:26-27, 1 Thess. 5:23
  - Moral law requires conformity of whole man to God's will
- Galatians 3:10
  - Law of God requires total and perfect obedience
- Luke 1:75
  - Law requires holiness & righteousness in serving him
- Acts 24:15-16
  - God's law includes duties owed to God and men
- **Romans 10:5**, Galatians 3:12
  - God promises life upon the fulfilling of his law
- Galatians 3:10, Genesis 3:17-19
  - Death is penalty involved in the breach of God's law

# WLC Q93

- **How does Catechism define moral law?**
  - “The declaration of the will of God to mankind”
    - Moral law is not human discovery, but divine revelation
    - Moral law is not a force or principle inherent in the universe, but a revelation of the will of God
    - God is not simply “the best in humanity”, but a supreme Person, with a will He reveals to his creatures
- **Who is subject to the moral law of God?**
  - Every human that ever lived or ever shall live
- **Does moral law bind those who know nothing of the Bible?**
  - Yes. Apart from the Bible the moral law of God is written on their hearts by God’s natural revelation

# WLC Q93

- **Does God's moral law bind atheists who do not believe in God?**
  - Yes. At Judgment Day they'll answer for denial of God's existence as well as for all their other sins
    - As long as they do not believe in God, even their "good deeds" are really wicked
    - Rejection of God cannot cancel authority of God's law over their lives
- **Does moral law of God bind Christians?**
  - Certainly it does. Christ saves us unto a life of obedience to God's moral law



# WLC Q93

- **Does God's moral law ever change, or is it always the same?**
  - Although real meaning is always the same
    - Particular form it was revealed in changed over time
    - Chiefly by addition of more detailed commandments
- **Does God's moral law change now, in our own time?**
  - No. Since completion of the Bible, revelation of God's will to man is complete and unchangeable
    - Will stand in this fixed form till the end of the world

# WLC Q93

- **What do many think of unalterable moral law & how should we answer objections?**
  - “Modern” thought calls it “narrow” and “static”
    - Absurd that detailed commandments given 2000+ years ago can be adequate for needs of modern age
  - They do not think of moral law as God’s revelation
    - If laws in the Bible are really man-made or -discovered, then might as well make or discover our own today
  - But if laws are God-given, they are equally adapted to the needs of all ages
    - God is not limited by the passing of time, and he was able to give laws which would last until the end of the world
    - When rightly interpreted, moral law of God is exactly suited to condition of humanity in any period of human history since the Fall

# WLC Q93

- **What kind of obedience does God's moral law require of mankind?**
  - Absolute obedience and conformity of the whole man to the whole law through his whole life
    - Absolute perfection in thoughts, words and deeds, as well as in the state of our heart, through our entire life
- **What kind of duties does God's moral law obligate us to perform?**
  - Duties of holiness and righteousness which we owe to God and man

# WLC Q93

- **What is the difference between “duties of holiness” and “duties of righteousness”?**
  - “Duties of holiness” are religious duties
  - “Duties of righteousness” are moral duties
- **What is the difference between duties owed to God and duties owed to man?**
  - Strictly speaking, all duties are owed to God
    - No duty owed to man which is not owed to God also; that is, it is owed to man for God's sake.
    - Some duties owed to God solely and directly
      - Reverence God's name and refrain from taking it in vain
    - Other duties owed to God indirectly, by reason of our relation to our fellow men
      - To love our neighbor as ourself

# WLC Q93

- **Can eternal life be obtained in any other way than by fulfilling of God's moral law?**
  - Absolutely not. There is and can be no other way
    - God's standard has never been changed or lowered
  - Adam and Eve could have obtained eternal life by personally fulfilling God's moral law
    - After Fall no one can adequately fulfil God's moral law
  - God has provided 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, Lord Jesus Christ
    - Perfectly fulfilled God's moral law on our behalf
  - Should be careful to avoid error that Gospel lowers terms on which we can obtain eternal life
    - Gospel does not involve a lowering of the terms
    - Involves substitution of person complying with terms
    - God graciously accepts Christ's fulfillment of the moral law as if it were our own, and imputes it to us
- **What penalty came upon mankind because of the breach of God's moral law?**
  - The penalty of death. Romans 5:12; 6:23. 19. What is the meaning of "death" as the penalty for breaking the moral law of God? "Death" as "the wages of sin", or the penalty for the breach of God's moral law, means death in the most inclusive sense, including (a) alienation of the person from God's favor; (b) by the death of the body, and its return to dust; (c) eternal separation from God's love and favor, called in the Bible "hell" or "the second death".



# WLC Q94

**Q. Is there any use of the moral law to man since the fall?**

**A. Although no man, since the fall, can attain to righteousness and life by the moral law; yet there is great use thereof, as well common to all men, as peculiar either to the unregenerate, or the regenerate.**

# WLC Q94

- **Scripture References:**

- **Romans 8:3**, Galatians 2:16

- Since the Fall, no man can attain righteousness and life by personal obedience to the moral law

- 1 Timothy 1:8

- The law is good in itself, but must be rightly used

# WLC Q94

- **What popular error concerning the moral law does this question of the Catechism guard against?**
  - That sinful human beings can save themselves by their “good works” or “good character”
    - Not possible for sinners adequately to obey moral law
    - Must recognize and reject that commandments can really be kept
- **If the moral law is of no use in attaining righteousness and life, of what use is it?**
  - Moral law is affirmed to be of great use to
    - Mankind in general
    - Unregenerate sinners
    - Regenerate persons

# WLC Q95

**Q. Of what use is the moral law to all men?**

**A. The moral law is of use to all men, to inform them of the holy nature and will of God, and of their duty, binding them to walk accordingly; to convince them of their disability to keep it, and of the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives; to humble them in the sense of their sin and misery, and thereby help them to a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and of the perfection of his obedience.**

# WLC Q95

- **Scripture References:**

- **Leviticus 11:44-45**, 20:7-8; Romans 7:12
  - Moral law is expression of holy nature and will of God
- Micah 6:8, James 2:10-11
  - Moral law reveals duty as creatures to obey God
- Psalm 19:11-12, Romans 3:20, Romans 7:7
  - Law convicts of sinful & spiritually helpless nature
- Romans 3:9, 23
  - Moral law humbles by convincing of sin and misery
- **Galatians 3:21-22**
  - Moral law serves to help men to gain a clearer insight into their need of Christ as Savior from sin.
- Romans 10:4
  - Moral law serves to give men high idea of character and righteousness of Christ, who fulfilled it perfectly

# WLC Q95

- **How is the moral law a revelation of truth concerning God?**
  - Because it is expression of his holy nature & will
    - That which is right is right not because it is right of itself, but because God's own holy nature demands it
    - Nature of God determines what is right
    - God's will imposes this on mankind as moral obligation
- **How is the moral law a revelation of man's moral obligation to God?**
  - As will of God, comes to man with a demand for absolute and total obedience
    - Bible-based not utilitarian considerations
    - To be obeyed as our duty as God is our Creator and we are his creatures

# WLC Q95

- **How does moral law convince men of their utterly sinful condition by nature?**
  - Places before man an absolute moral standard
    - Harder he tries to conform, the more convinced in his conscience that he cannot really attain it
  - Sinful human heart rebels against holy moral law
    - Provokes sinful, corrupt nature into actual transgressions as they rebel against it
  - Humbles men because of their sin and misery
    - More keenly they realize their failure and inability to keep the law, more they are humbled by sinful condition
  - Gives a sense of need as well as a sense of sin
    - Schoolmaster to bring men to Christ
    - Personal failure to conform to the moral law should convince men of their deep need of a Savior

# WLC Q95

- **How does the moral law of God help men toward a right estimate of the matchless character of Christ?**
  - Christ himself lived under the law (Galatians 4:4)
    - Perfectly fulfilled all the requirements of the moral law
    - Conformed totally to absolute standard God set for man
    - If we realize Christ fulfilled the moral law for sinners, then the deeper insight we have into the real character of the moral law, the greater will be our appreciation of the matchless character of Christ



# WLC Q96

**Q. What particular use is there of the moral law to unregenerate men?**

**A. The moral law is of use to unregenerate men, to awaken their consciences to flee from wrath to come, and to drive them to Christ; or, upon their continuance in the estate and way of sin, to leave them inexcusable, and under the curse thereof.**

# WLC Q96

- **Scripture References:**

- 1 Timothy 1:9-10

- Moral law of God applicable to wicked men

- Galatians 3:24

- Moral law is useful to drive sinners to Christ for salvation

- Romans 1:20 compared with Romans 2:15

- Moral law leaves sinners without excuse

# WLC Q96

- **What is the ordinary condition of the consciences of unregenerate people?**
  - Asleep, therefore need to be awakened or aroused
- **How does the moral law serve to awaken the consciences of unsaved sinners?**
  - Declares wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness
    - Consciences stirred up to be afraid of coming judgment
- **Does moral law provide escape from wrath?**
  - No, only pronounces God's judgment on human sin
    - Drives sinner to Christ, who is the only way of escape

# WLC Q96

- **Do all unsaved know of moral law?**
  - Yes. Even those entirely ignorant of the Bible, have some knowledge from God's natural revelation in the human heart
- **Why does not the moral law drive all sinners to Christ for salvation?**
  - Moral law of itself alone is powerless to drive any sinner to Christ for salvation
    - Only when knowledge of moral law is accompanied by supernatural work of God the Holy Spirit that the sinner is really driven to Christ

# WLC Q96

- **What is the effect of the moral law in the case of sinners who never come to Christ?**
  - “Leave them inexcusable, and under the curse thereof”
- **What is the place of the moral law of God in a Scriptural program of evangelism?**
  - “Evangelism” means “proclamation of the gospel”
    - Gospel means good news
    - Good news of salvation from sin
    - Sin is transgression of law
    - Without conviction of being transgressors of the law, people will feel no need of the gospel
    - Without knowledge of the moral law of God, people will not feel themselves to be transgressors of the law
  - Gospel is meaningless without the law

# WLC Q97

**Q. What special use is there of the moral law to the regenerate?**

**A. Although they that are regenerate, and believe in Christ, be delivered from the moral law as a covenant of works, so as thereby they are neither justified nor condemned; yet, besides the general uses thereof common to them with all men, it is of special use, to show them: How much they are bound to Christ for his fulfilling it, and enduring the curse thereof in their stead, and for their good; and thereby to provoke them to more thankfulness, and to express the same in their greater care to conform themselves thereunto as the rule of their obedience.**

# WLC Q97

- **Scripture References:**

- Romans 8:14, Romans 7:3-6, Galatians 4:4-5
  - Regenerate are not under law as a covenant of works
- Romans 3:20, Galatians 5:23, **Romans 8:1**
  - Regenerate are not justified by obedience to, nor condemned because of violation of, the moral law
- Romans 7:2, 25; **8:3-4**; Galatians 3:13-14
  - Moral law shows Christian how much he owes Christ, who fulfilled law's requirements, and bore its penalty
- Luke 1:68-69, 74-75
  - Moral law incites Christian to thankfulness to God for the redemption provided in Christ
- Romans 7:22, Romans 12:2, **Titus 2:11-14**
  - Moral law is Christian's standard of obedience, not to earn eternal life by obeying it, but to express his gratitude to God for the free gift of salvation

# WLC Q97

- **When a person becomes a Christian, how does his relation to the moral law change?**
  - Instantly and forever delivered from
    - Useless labor of trying to save himself by obedience
    - Condemning power of the law
- **What type of religion seeks to earn eternal life by personal obedience to moral law?**
  - Legalism, also called Moralism
- **What is wrong with Legalism?**
  - It is “too little, and too late”
    - Too little, because God demands perfect obedience, whereas the sinner renders a very imperfect obedience
    - Too late, because the possibility of earning eternal life by law-obedience ceased in Eden ages ago



# WLC Q97

- **What is the remedy for Legalism?**
  - Realization of utter failure and futility of Legalism
  - Deeper understanding and personal experience of the Bible teaching of salvation by grace
- **Should a Christian be afraid to sin?**
  - Yes
- **Because of danger of eternal condemnation?**
  - No. 1 John 4:18
- **Then why?**
  - Right to fear that which is contrary to God's holiness, and will offend God
    - Even though in the case of the Christian it involves no danger of eternal condemnation
- **How does the moral law enable the Christian to appreciate Christ?**
  - The moral law enables the Christian to appreciate Christ by showing him how much he owes to Christ, that is, how much Christ has done for him in perfectly keeping the whole law and bearing its penalty on the Christian's behalf.
- **How does the moral law provoke the Christian to thankfulness?**
  - The moral law provokes the Christian to thankfulness by giving him an appreciation of Christ's work and sufferings on his behalf.
- **Instead of thankfulness, what state of mind does a legalistic type of religion tend to produce?**
  - A legalistic type of religion cannot lead to an attitude of real thankfulness to God, but on the contrary leads to a self-righteous spiritual pride.
- **How should a Christian express his thankfulness to God?**
  - A Christian should express his thankfulness to God not only in words of prayer and praise, but also in taking care to live according to God's moral law as the rule of obedience.
- **Since the Bible teaches that the Christian is not under the law but under grace (Romans 6:14), how can he be under the moral law as the rule of obedience?**
  - The Christian is freed from the penalty of the law, but not from the precept of the law as the standard of right living.

# WLC Q97

- **How does the moral law enable the Christian to appreciate Christ?**
  - By showing him how much he owes to Christ
  - By giving him an appreciation of Christ's work and sufferings on his behalf
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# WLC Q97

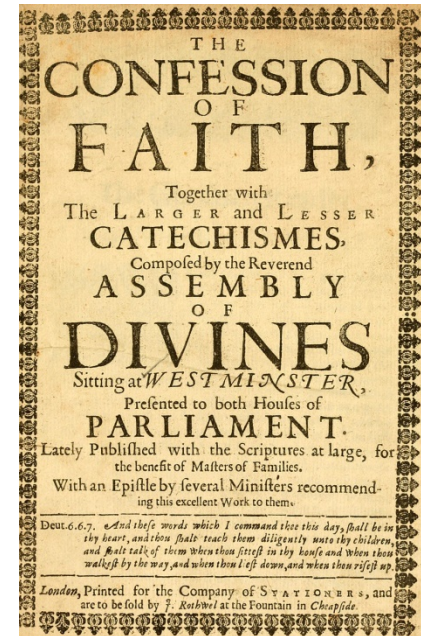
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  - Christian is freed from the penalty of the law, but not from the precept of the law as the standard of right living

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 23: Moral Law



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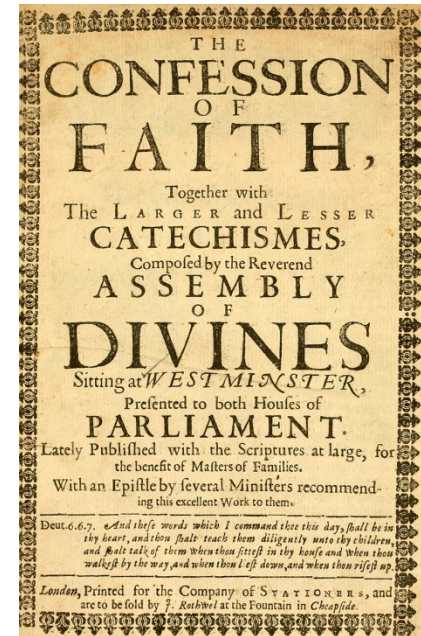
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 24: Ten Commandments



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# WLC Q98

**Q. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?**

**A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments, which were delivered by the voice of God upon Mount Sinai, and written by him in two tables of stone; and are recorded in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. The four first commandments containing our duty to God, and the other six our duty to man.**

# WLC Q98

- **Scripture References:**

- Exodus 34:1-4, Deut. 10:4

- Ten Commandments divinely revealed and written by God on two tables of stone

- Matthew 22:37-40

- Moral law summarized by Christ as requiring total love for God, and to love our neighbor as ourself

# WLC Q98

- **Are 10 Commandments all the moral law?**
  - Not complete statement in detail of the moral law, but rather a summary of the moral law
    - Rightly interpreted, they can include every moral duty
    - However the more detailed statements of God's will are needed for a right interpretation and application
    - Only by study of other parts of the Bible can we learn what it includes and frame a correct definition of it
- **How are 10 Commandments commonly divided?**
  - Following Christ's analysis of moral law, commonly divided into two "tables"
    - First 4 commandments containing our duty to God
    - Last 6, our duty to ourselves and our fellow men



# WLC Q98

- **Do not all ten deal with our duty to God?**
  - Yes. Last six not simply a matter between us and our fellow men
    - First four concern duty we owe directly to God
    - Last six concern duty we owe indirectly to God
      - Duty we owe to God involving ourselves and our fellow men
- **Why do last six concern our duty to God in connection with our fellow men?**
  - God, not man, is the Lord of the conscience
    - God is our Creator; to God we are morally responsible; by God we will be judged at the Last Day
    - It is only because of our moral responsibility to God that we owe any duties at all to our fellow men

# WLC Q99

**Q. What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?**

**A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments, these rules are to be observed: That the law is perfect, and binds everyone to full conformity in the whole man unto the righteousness thereof, and unto entire obedience forever; so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin. That it is spiritual, and so reaches the understanding, will, affections, and all other powers of the soul; as well as words, works, and gestures.**

# WLC Q99

- **Scripture References:**

- **Psalm 19:7**

- God's law is perfect

- Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 33-34, 37-39, 43-44

- God's law requires absolute moral perfection, and cannot tolerate the slightest deviation from perfect and total righteousness

- Matthew 5:48

- God's own perfection demands that man, his creature and image-bearer, be perfect

- Romans 7:14

- Moral law is spiritual in nature

- Deut. 6:5 compared with **Matthew 22:37-40**

- Moral law requires conformity of all faculties of our mind or soul

# WLC Q99

- **Why do we need rules for right understanding of Ten Commandments?**
  - Not complete application or details of moral law
    - Only a comprehensive summary
- **What does God's moral law is perfect mean?**
  - Moral law is perfect revelation of God's will for man
    - We are bound to fulfill it perfectly
- **Is God unreasonable in demanding what is impossible for us to attain or achieve?**
  - As created, could've had absolute moral perfection
    - Man fell into sin by his own fault
    - But God could not lower the demands of his law as it is expression of God's own character and unchangeable

# WLC Q99

- **What does “spiritual” mean here?**
  - Pertaining to or concerning spirit of man
    - Moral law concerns not only outward actions, but spiritual life, thoughts, emotions, desires and will
- **Are human laws “spiritual”?**
  - Human laws enacted by government are not spiritual
    - Make no claim to govern spiritual or mental life
    - Authority to demand outward conformity of conduct only, not thoughts, desires, beliefs, emotions, etc
      - Totalitarian governments attempt to control people
      - Such attempts are an iniquitous usurpation of the prerogatives of God, and are destructive of the liberties of men

# WLC Q99

- **How did the Pharisees misunderstand the scope of the moral law of God?**
  - Overlooked spiritual character
    - Wrongly supposed it claimed jurisdiction only over outward conduct
- **What error concerning the moral law is just the opposite of that of the Pharisees?**
  - Some Christians say inward spiritual conformity is all that is necessary
    - Need not bother to conform our outward life and conduct to requirements of the law
    - Fail to realize outward life is expression of spiritual life
    - If God's law is really engraved upon our hearts it must inevitably be expressed in outward life and conduct

# WLC Q99

- **What does moral law reaches understanding, will, affections & soul's “other powers” mean?**
  - Intellect is subject to moral law of God
    - Sin to believe what is false, to reject what is true
    - Responsible for our thinking just as we are for actions
  - Power to make decisions subject to moral law
    - Sin to make a choice contrary to law of God
    - Sin to fail to make a choice according to law of God
    - Sin to make our decisions by wrong, sinful motives
  - Emotions are subject to the moral law of God
    - Wrong feelings, or emotions contrary to law, is sinful
  - Memory and artistic senses subject to moral law
    - Including producing or appreciating beautiful music, pictures, poetry, literature, etc
    - All these capacities of human spirit subject to moral law

# WLC Q99

**Q. What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?**

**A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments, these rules are to be observed: ...That one and the same thing, in divers respects, is required or forbidden in several commandments. That as, where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden; and, where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded: so, where a promise is annexed, the contrary threatening is included; and, where a threatening is annexed, the contrary promise is included.**



# WLC Q99

- **Scripture References:**

- Col. 3:5
  - Covetousness is idolatry, hence forbidden
- Amos 8:5
  - Same sinful desire violated both 4<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> commandment
- Prov. 1:19
  - Same sin may involve both covetousness and murder
- 1 Tim. 6:10
  - Love of money also involves many other kinds of sin
- Isaiah 58:13
  - Negative and positive aspects of sabbath observance
- Deut. 6:13 with Matt. 4:9-10
  - Positive and negative aspects of fearing God
- **Matt. 15:4-6**
  - Positive and negative aspects of fifth commandment

# WLC Q99

- **What do we mean by positive & negative aspects of the Ten Commandments?**
  - Requirement of conformity to the law of God, that is, doing whatever God requires
  - Prohibition of transgression of the law of God, or doing something which God has forbidden
- **What does Catechism say of positive and negative aspects of Ten Commandments?**
  - Imply each other, even though only one is stated
    - Where duty is commanded, contrary sin is forbidden
    - Where sin is forbidden, it is implied that the contrary duty is commanded
    - Same principle applies to threatenings and promises

# WLC Q99

- **Which of these aspects is more prominent in the Ten Commandments?**
  - Negative aspect is more prominent
    - Eight commandments begin with “You shall not” or similar words
    - Only two are positive in form (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>)
- **Does this negative emphasis mean God’s moral law is negative rather than positive?**
  - No. Only form is largely negative
    - Meaning, properly interpreted, is both negative and positive, with equal emphasis on both
    - Interpretation warranted by comparing Commandments with Christ’s summary of the moral law
    - Requiring us to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength is positive in form

# WLC Q99

- **Which commandments contain threatenings and promises?**

- 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> contain threatenings; 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> contain promises
  - Interpreting commandments aright, realize both threatening and promise are involved

2. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image ... For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me**, **but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.**
3. “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, **for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.**
5. “Honor your father and your mother, **that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.**

# WLC Q99

**Q. What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?**

**A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments, these rules are to be observed:  
... That what God forbids, is at no time to be done; What he commands, is always our duty; and yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times. That under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded; together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto.**

# WLC Q99

- **Scripture References:**

- Job 13:7-8, Rom. 3:8
  - Notion of doing evil that good may come is perverse
- Job 36:21, Heb. 11:25
  - We should choose rather to suffer than to commit sin
- **Deut. 4:8-9**
  - What God commands is always our duty
- **Matt. 12:7**
  - Sometimes one duty has priority over another
- Eccl. 3:1-8
  - Every particular duty is not to be done at all times
- Matt. 5:21-22, 27-28
  - Under one sin or duty all of same kind are included
- 1 Thess. 5:22, Jude 23
  - Christian must abstain from every form of evil

# WLC Q99

- **What great ethical principle does Catechism give concerning what God forbids?**
  - That what God forbids, is at no time to be done
- **What popular notion contradicts this?**
  - Utilitarianism--“the end justifies the means”
    - Right or wrong depends on purpose for which it is done
    - May be right to do something which God forbids, provided we do it for a good purpose
- **Why is this notion perverse?**
  - Breaks down distinction between right and wrong
    - “Let us do evil that good may come” amounts to saying “Let us do right by doing wrong”.
    - Biblical distinction between right and wrong is absolute

# WLC Q99

- **Why is not every particular duty to be done at all times?**
  - Impossible and absurd to attempt to do every particular duty at all times
    - While God's law presents unattainable ideal, does not present an absurdity
    - Some duties are specifically limited to certain times
    - Others are not/cannot be done all at once
      - Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep, but not both at the same time



# WLC Q99

- **What are included under each sin or duty mentioned in the Ten Commandments?**
  - Under each sin or duty are included all others of the same class
    - E.g., 9<sup>th</sup> commandment forbids bearing false witness against our neighbor
      - Specifically mentions only this one form of untruthfulness, but rightly understood to prohibit all forms of untruthfulness
  - **Commandments not to be taken alone**
    - Must be taken in their context of the whole Bible
    - Must take entire Word of God into account in deciding true and proper meaning of the Ten Commandments

# WLC Q99

- **What danger must we guard against in applying these rules of interpretation?**
  - Including things not specifically mentioned in a commandment
    - Must take greatest care to not read our own thoughts, preferences or prejudices into the Ten Commandments
    - Must take care it is really based on teaching of God's Word and not just our own human idea or opinion
      - E.g., claimed 6<sup>th</sup> commandment forbids capital punishment and defensive warfare, but a study of the Bible as a whole shows that such an interpretation is not legitimate
      - 6<sup>th</sup> also claimed to forbid eating meat, and requires a vegetarian diet, is entirely unwarranted
      - Such claims merely reading own prejudices into Ten Commandments

# WLC Q99

**Q. What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?**

**A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments, these rules are to be observed:  
...That what is forbidden or commanded to ourselves, we are bound, according to our places, to endeavor that it may be avoided or performed by others, according to the duty of their places.  
That in: What is commanded to others, we are bound, according to our places and callings, to be helpful to them; and to take heed of partaking with others in: What is forbidden them.**

# WLC Q99

- **Scripture References:**

- Exodus 20:10, Lev. 19:17, Gen. 18:19, Josh. 24:15, **Deut. 6:6-7**
  - It is our duty to encourage righteousness and discourage sin on the part of others
- 2 Cor. 1:24
  - We are under obligation to try to help others do right
- 1 Tim. 5:22, **Eph. 5:11**
  - It is our duty to keep ourselves clear of participation in the sins of others

# WLC Q99

- **What is general scope of last two rules for right understanding of Commandments?**
  - Responsibility for moral welfare of our neighbor
  - Righteousness is not merely an individual matter, but involves concern for others too
    - Each individual must give his own account to God
    - Part accounting will be effect on other's moral well-being
- **What does “according to our places” mean?**
  - Our position in society, and relationship to others, must be taken into account
    - Responsibility of parent for a child is far greater than that of a child for a parent
    - Minister or elder has greater responsibility for members
    - Yet in each case a certain responsibility exists

# WLC Q99

- **Is it right to arrange for someone else to do something that we will not do ourselves because we believe it to be wrong?**
  - Certainly not. If it's wrong, we must neither do it ourselves, nor arrange for anyone else to do it
    - This principle is frequently violated in practice
      - Christian should not keep his store or office open on sabbath, and should not employ someone else to keep it open for him
      - If a book or magazine is not fit to read, ought not only to refrain from reading it ourselves, but giving or selling it to others
    - No difference if other persons are Christians or not
      - God's moral law is the same for all people
      - Does not provide one standard of life for Christians and another for non-Christians
      - Perverse that Christian, who would not do certain things, may engage or employ non-Christian to do them for him

# WLC Q99

- **How are we to endeavor that others practice righteousness and avoid sin?**
  - Should help others practice righteousness
    - By showing a good example ourselves
    - By seeking to persuade them, as we have opportunity
    - By what measure of authority God has committed to us
    - 1<sup>st</sup> 2 methods by all Christians; 3<sup>rd</sup> limited to those whom God has committed authority in family, Church and State
  - All Christians set example of sabbath observance
    - Parent has authority to forbid children to violate sabbath
  - Civil official promotes honesty by example & testimony
    - Also his duty to exercise authority by prosecuting those guilty of theft
  - Exercise of authority limited by authority granted by God and nature of relation to persons involved

# WLC Q99

- **How should we try to be helpful to others in doing their duty?**
  - Many ways which change with circumstances
    - Trying to understand difficulties and temptations others must cope with, and maintaining a sympathetic attitude
    - Avoid unduly critical spirit, even when it is our duty to reprove someone for wrongdoing
      - Kindness and Christian love, not in bitter, harsh or self-righteous spirit
    - If someone is facing a hard battle against sin, temptation and discouragement
      - Should do what we can in word and deed, to encourage & help
    - Should never rejoice in iniquity, or take a secret delight in some other person's wrongdoing
    - Avoiding petty gossip about sins and failures of others will go long way toward healing sore spots in Church



# WLC Q99

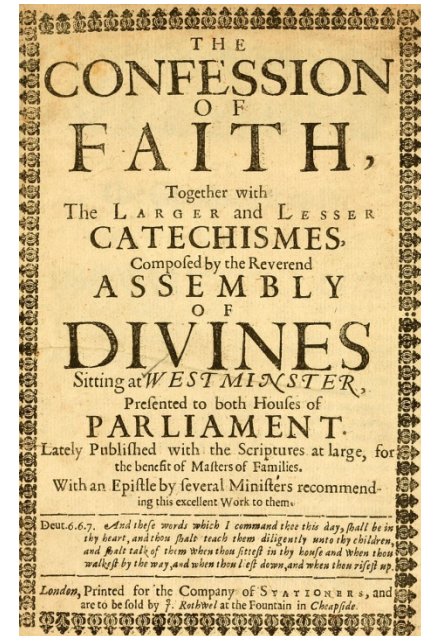
- **Why should we “take heed of partaking with others in what is forbidden them”?**
  - Participating in what is forbidden encourages wrongdoing, and thus incurs a share in their guilt
    - Even if matter in question is not forbidden to ourselves
  - E.g., wrong to accept ride in a stolen car if we know that the car is stolen
    - Accepting a ride is not wrong, but in this case we would be participating in the wrongdoing of another person
  - If child is forbidden by parents to leave and go to ball game at particular time, but disobeys
    - Wrong for another child, knowing circumstances, to accompany him
    - Would encourage him in his disobedience to parental authority

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 24: Ten Commandments



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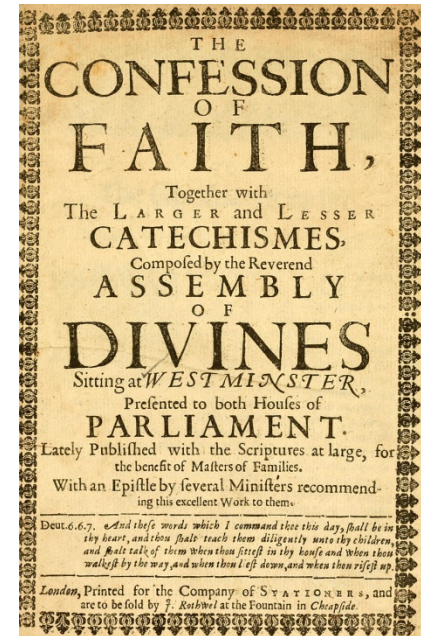
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 25: 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q100

**Q. What special things are we to consider in the ten commandments?**

**A. We are to consider, in the ten commandments, the preface, the substance of the commandments themselves, and several reasons annexed to some of them, the more to enforce them.**

# WLC Q100

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q100

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q101

**Q. What is the preface to the ten commandments?**

**A. The preface to the ten commandments is contained in these words, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Wherein God manifests his sovereignty, as being JEHOVAH, the eternal, immutable, and almighty God; having his being in and of himself, and giving being to all his words and works: and that he is a God in covenant, as with Israel of old, so with all his people; who, as he brought them out of their bondage in Egypt, so he delivers us from our spiritual thralldom; and that therefore we are bound to take him for our God alone, and to keep all his commandments.**

# WLC Q101

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son



# WLC Q101

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q102

**Q. What is the sum of the four commandments which contain our duty to God?**

**A. The sum of the four commandments containing our duty to God is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind.**

# WLC Q102

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q102

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q103

**Q. Which is the first commandment?**

**A. The first commandment is, Thou shall have no other gods before me.**

# WLC Q103

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q103

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q104

**Q. What are the duties required in the first commandment?**

**A. The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.**



# WLC Q104

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q104

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q105

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the first commandment are, atheism, in denying or not having a God; idolatry, in having or worshiping more gods than one, or any with or instead of the true God; the not having and avouching him for God, and our God; the omission or neglect of anything due to him, required in this commandment; ignorance, forgetfulness, misapprehensions, false opinions, unworthy and wicked thoughts of him; bold and curious searching into his secrets; all profaneness, hatred of God; self-love, self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things, and taking them off from him in whole or in part; vain credulity, unbelief, heresy, misbelief, distrust, despair, incorrigibleness, and insensibleness under judgments, hardness of heart, pride, presumption, carnal security, tempting of God; using unlawful means, and trusting in lawful means; carnal delights and joys; corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal; lukewarmness, and deadness in the things of God; estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God; praying, or giving any religious worship, to saints, angels, or any other creatures; all compacts and consulting with the devil, and hearkening to his suggestions; making men the lords of our faith and conscience; slighting and despising God and his commands; resisting and grieving of his Spirit, discontent and impatience at his dispensations, charging him foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us; and ascribing the praise of any good we either are, have, or can do, to fortune, idols, ourselves, or any other creature.**

# WLC Q105

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q105

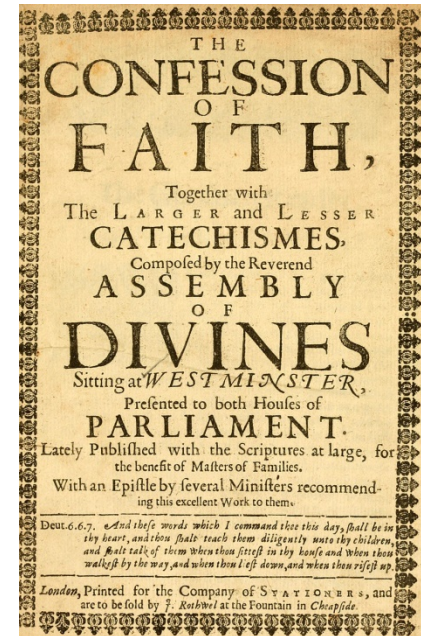
- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 25: 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment



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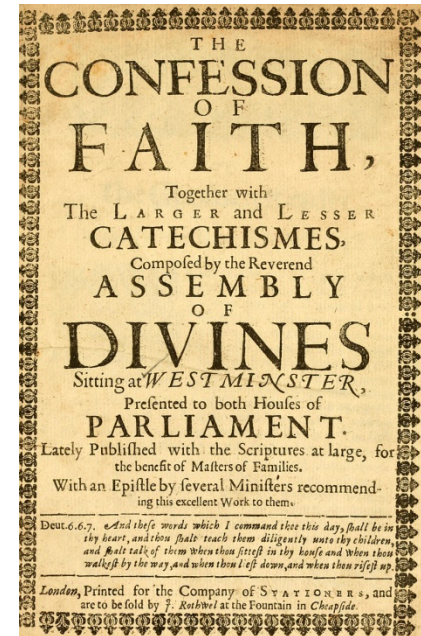
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 26: 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q106

**Q. What are we specially taught by these words before me in the first commandment?**

**A. These words before me, or before my face, in the first commandment, teach us, that God, who sees all things, takes special notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God: that so it may be an argument to dissuade from it, and to aggravate it as a most impudent provocation: as also to persuade us to do as in his sight,: Whatever we do in his service.**



# WLC Q106

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q106

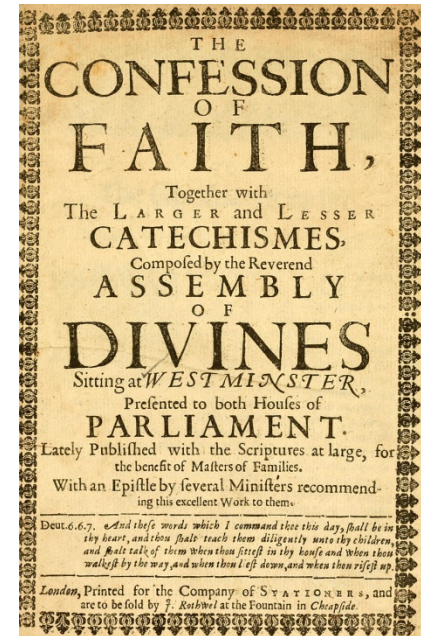
- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 26: 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment



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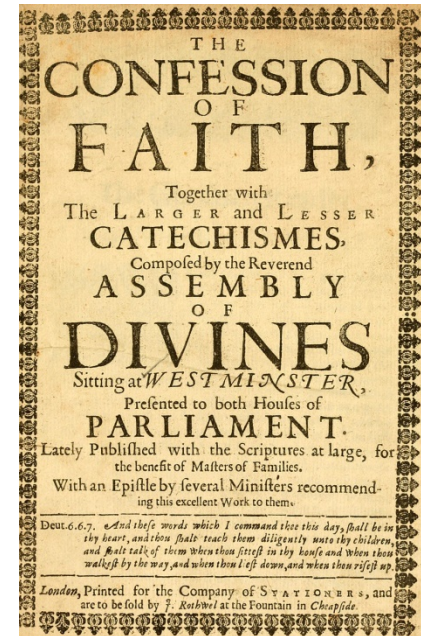
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## Lesson 27: 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q107

**Q. Which is the second commandment?**

**A. The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.**

# WLC Q107

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q107

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q108

**Q. What are the duties required in the second commandment?**

**A. The duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God has instituted in his Word; particularly prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ; the reading, preaching, and hearing of the Word; the administration and receiving of the sacraments; church government and discipline; the ministry and maintenance thereof; religious fasting; swearing by the name of God, and vowing unto him: as also the disapproving, detesting, opposing, all false worship; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry.**



# WLC Q108

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q108

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q109

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counseling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself; tolerating a false religion; the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature: Whatsoever; all worshiping of it, or God in it or by it; the making of any representation of feigned deities, and all worship of them, or service belonging to them; all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretense: Whatsoever; simony; sacrilege; all neglect, contempt, hindering, and opposing the worship and ordinances which God has appointed.**

# WLC Q109

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q109

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q110

**Q. What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it?**

**A. The reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it, contained in these words, For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments; are, besides God's sovereignty over us, and propriety in us, his fervent zeal for his own worship, and his revengeful indignation against all false worship, as being a spiritual whoredom; accounting the breakers of this commandment such as hate him, and threatening to punish them unto divers generations; and esteeming the observers of it such as love him and keep his commandments, and promising mercy to them unto many generations.**

# WLC Q110

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q110

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

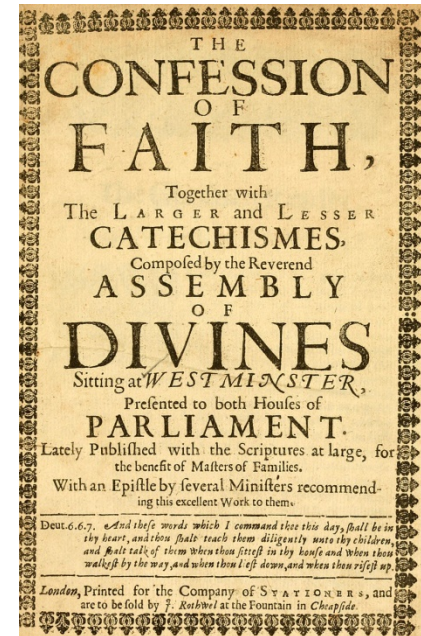


# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 27: 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment



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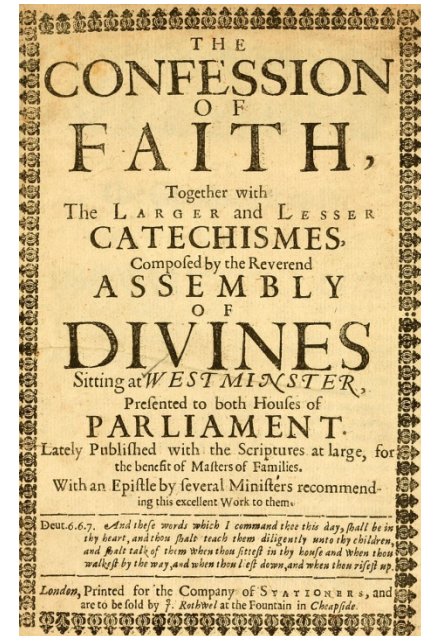
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 31: 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment



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# Introduction

- PCA Constitution
  - Westminster Confession
    - Form of Government
  - Westminster Larger & Smaller Catechisms
    - Rules of Discipline
  - Book of Church Order
    - Directory for Worship
  - All subject & subordinate to Scripture
- 2014 Westminster Confession
- Spring 2017 Nicene Creed
- 2018 Westminster Larger Catechism

# Westminster Assembly

- *Westminster Shorter & Longer Catechisms*
  - Larger Catechism to assist ministers in teaching Reformed faith to congregations
  - Shorter Catechism based on Larger Catechism for teaching the faith to children
  - Written 1646-47
  - Intended to be “more exact and comprehensive”  
Systematic exposition of Reformed theology
    - In Q&A format
    - Confession generally states basics of doctrine...
    - WLC focuses more on specifics and detailing practical aspects of doctrine
- Not just what we should believe... But, why and how

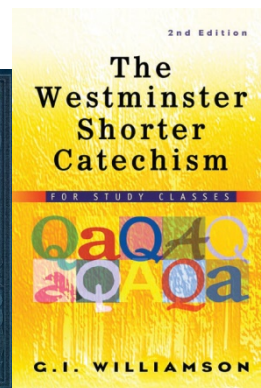
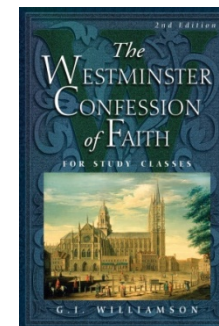
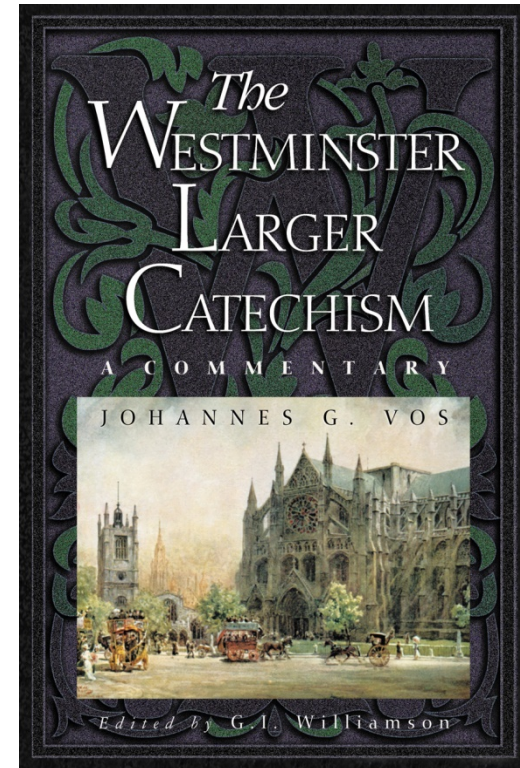
# Larger Catechism

- Two main parts of WLC
  - What Man Ought to Believe
    - Foundational doctrines & Who God is (Q1-11)
    - God's decrees, creation, & providence (Q12-20)
    - God's Covenants with man (Q21-35)
    - Mediator of the Covenants & His works (Q36-56)
    - Benefits of the Mediator's work (Q57-90)
  - What Duty God Requires of Man
    - Obedience to God's revealed will (Q91-99)
    - God's will with direct reference to Himself (Q100-121)
      - Ten Commandments—Commandments 1-4
    - God's will in our duty to Others (Q122-149)
      - Ten Commandments—Commandments 5-10
    - Our condition, repentance, faith, & Word (Q150-160)
    - Sacraments (Q161-177)
    - Prayer & Lord's Prayer (Q178-196)



# Larger Catechism

- Johannes G. Vos
  - Quarterly newsletter *Blue Banner Faith and Life*
  - Weekly lessons on WLC
    - January 1946-August 1949
    - Detailed Scripture references
    - Q&A's for each Catechism Q&A
    - Meaning of Catechism, reasons behind it & practical applications
  - 2002, republished in book form
    - Part of set on Westminster Standards
- <https://bluebanner.org/download/faithandlife>



# Larger Catechism

- Our study based on this
  - Catechism Q&A
  - Scripture references
  - Vos's Q&A for discussion
    - Edited for length
    - Edited for relevance
      - 1940s anti-Communist & anti-Japanese
- Currently studying Ten Commandments
  - Convey God's Will and our duty
  - Positive commands & negative prohibitions include all related aspects
    - Implies prohibition & requirement of contrary aspects

# Schedule—Fall 2019

31.	3rd Commandment (LORD's Name in vain)	Q111-114	11-Aug
	Northern Ireland Report		18-Aug
32.	5th Commandment (Father & Mother)	Q122-128	25-Aug
33.	5th Commandment (Superiors)	Q129-133	01-Sep
34.	7th Commandment (Adultery)	Q137-139	08-Sep
35.	6th Commandment (Murder)	Q134-136	15-Sep
36.	8th Commandment (Stealing)	Q140-142	22-Sep
37.	10th Commandment (Covetousness)	Q146-149	29-Sep
38.	9th Commandment (False witness)	Q143-145	06-Oct
39.	Sin	Q150-151	13-Oct
40.	Repentance, Faith, & the Word	Q152-157	20-Oct
41.	Preaching of the Word	Q158-160	27-Oct
42.	Sacraments	Q161-164	03-Nov
43.	Covenant Theology		10-Nov
44.	Baptism	Q165-167	17-Nov
	Thanksgiving—No Class		24-Nov
45.	Lord's Supper	Q168-171	01-Dec
46.	Lord's Supper	Q172-177	08-Dec
47.			15-Dec



# WLC Q111

**Q. Which is the third commandment?**

**A. The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain.**

# WLC Q112

**Q. What is required in the third commandment?**

**A. The third commandment requires, That the name of God, his titles, attributes, ordinances, the Word, sacraments, prayer, oaths, vows, lots, his works, and: Whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, be holily and reverently used in thought, meditation, word, and writing; by an holy profession, and answerable conversation, to the glory of God, and the good of ourselves, and others.**

# WLC Q112

- **Scripture References:**

- Ex 20:7

- Third commandment

- Matt 6:9; Deut 28:58; Psa 29:2, 68:4; Rev 15:3-4

- Name of God is to be treated with reverence

- Mal 1:14, Eccl 5:1

- God's ordinances to be regarded with reverence

- **Psalm 138:2**

- God's Word to be reverently used

- 1 Cor 11:24-29

- Sacraments to be carefully observed

- 1 Tim 2:8; Jer 4:2; Eccl 5:2-6; Acts 1:24, 26

- Prayer, oaths, vows and lots, being ways God makes himself known, are to be used with reverent care

# WLC Q112

- **Scripture References:**

- Job 36:24

- God's self-revelatory works to be regarded reverently

- Mal 3:16; Psa 8:1,3-4,9, 105:2,5, 102:18; Col 3:17

- God's "Name" or self-revelation to be used reverently in thought, meditation, speech and writing

- 1 Pet 3:15, Micah 4:5

- God's name to be honored by a holy profession

- Phil 1:27

- God's name to be honored by a consistent life

- 1 Cor 10:31

- God's name to be honored to the glory of God

- Jer 32:39, 1 Pet 2:12

- God's name to be honored to good of ourselves and others

# WLC Q112

- **What does it mean by the “name” of God?**
  - Not only actual word “God”, and other divine names such as “Lord”, “Yahweh”, etc.
    - God's self-revelation in its manifold fullness
    - Often used in Hebrew of revealed character & essence
    - To know the name of God is to witness the manifestation of those attributes and apprehend that character which the name denotes
- **What does the “name” of God include?**
  - All forms of God’s self-revelation
    - General revelation and special revelation
    - Including all appointed ordinances of divine worship such as sacraments, prayer, oaths, vows, etc.

# WLC Q112

- **What do we mean by a holy and reverent attitude toward God's name?**
  - Sober, serious, respectful attitude
    - Keeps us treating God's self-revelation lightly/flippantly
  - Worshipful attitude, impressed with God's infinite majesty and greatness, filled with awe & wonder
- **How is our daily life to be affected by our attitude toward God's name?**
  - Real reverence for God's name requires a true profession of faith and a consistent, godly walk

# WLC Q112

- **What should be our aim or purpose in honoring God's name?**
  - Glory of God (which is also our chief end in life)
  - For “the good of ourselves, and others”
    - Loving God, ourself and our neighbor, all require God's name be honored and regarded with reverence
- **Who can really honor & revere God's name?**
  - Only true Christians really know God and really see God's self-revelation in its true meaning

# WLC Q113

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the third commandment are, the not using of God's name as is required; and the abuse of it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious, or wicked mentioning, or otherwise using his titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, by blasphemy, perjury; all sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful; and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful; murmuring and quarreling at, curious prying into, and misapplying of God's decrees and providences; ...**



# WLC Q113

- **Scripture References:**

- **Mal 2:2**

- Neglecting to use God's name aright
  - Acts 17:23, Prov 30:9; Mal 1:6-7,12; Mal 3:14
    - Ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane abuse of God's name
  - 1 Sam 4:3-5; Jer 7:4-10, 14, 31; Col 2:20-22
    - Superstitious misuse of God's name
  - 2Ki 18:30,35; Ex 5:2; Psa 50:16-17,139:20; Isa 5:12
    - Misuse of God's titles, attributes, ordinances or works
  - 2 Kings 19:22, Lev 24:11
    - The sin of blasphemy
  - Zech 5:4, 8:17
    - The sin of perjury
  - 1 Sam 17:43, 2 Sam 16:5, Jer 5:7, 23:10
    - Sinful cursings and oaths

# WLC Q113

- **Scripture References:**

- Deut 23:18, Acts 23:12-14
  - Sinful misuse of vows
- Esther 3:7, 9:24; Psalm 22:18
  - Sinful misuse of the lot
- Psalm 24:4, Ezek 17:16-19
  - The sin of violating lawful oaths and vows
- Mark 6:26; 1 Sam 25:22, 32-34
  - The sin of fulfilling unlawful oaths and vows
- Rom 9:14, 19-20
  - Murmuring & quarrelling at decrees & providences
- Deut. 29:29
  - Curious prying into God's decrees and providences
- **Rom 3:5-7, 6:1-2**; Eccl 8:11, 9:3; Psalm 39
  - Misapplying God's decrees and providences

# WLC Q113

- **What is the meaning of the words “vain” and “vanity” in the Bible?**
  - “Vain” in commandment means primarily falsehood
    - Forbids use of God’s name for anything false or wrong
- **In addition to the actual names of God, what else are we forbidden to take in vain?**
  - His titles, attributes, ordinances and works
    - All ways God has revealed his nature and character
    - Expressions like “Lord,” “goodness!”, “gracious!”, “mercy!”, “Holy smoke, “Good grief!”
    - Some of these are so common even Christians use them without realizing what they are doing

# WLC Q113

- **What is blasphemy?**
  - Wicked language directed against God
  - To challenge goodness or power of God
- **What is perjury?**
  - Making false statements under oath
    - Taking God as a witness that we are speaking the truth, when as a matter of fact we are speaking falsehood
- **What is meant by “sinful cursings”?**
  - Sinful cursing directed at some person
    - Wish for calamity or destruction upon person cursed, supported by an appeal to God, or some false divinity
    - Wish for calamity or destruction not always sinful; right to wish for judgment upon God’s incorrigible enemies

# WLC Q113

- **When are vows sinful?**

- Thing vowed is

- Forbidden in God's Word
    - Something that would hinder duty commanded in Word
    - Something not in the person's power to perform, and for which God has not promised any ability
    - Made to any creature or false divinity

- **Why is it wrong to murmur and quarrel at God's decrees and providences?**

- Spirit of rebellion against sovereignty of God

- Assumes we are competent to sit in judgment on God's decrees and acts, and call God to account

- Lack of faith in God's goodness and love

- Not willing to wait patiently for God

# WLC Q113

- **What is “curious prying into, and misapplying of God’s decrees and providences”?**
  - Motivated by curiosity rather than by reverence
    - Refuses to recognize essential mystery of God & Works
    - Denies transcendent mystery and infinitude of God, and seeks to place God on the same level with humanity
  - Drawing wrong inferences from them, or using them as excuses for wickedness of any kind
    - “If God has predestinated me to eternal life I am sure to receive it, so I need not accept Christ or live a Christian life”
    - “I know people who work seven days a week, and have become rich; God has prospered them; this shows God does not expect people to keep the Sabbath”

# WLC Q113

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the 3rd commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the third commandment are... misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the Word, or any part of it, to profane jests, curious or unprofitable questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines; abusing it, the creatures, or anything contained under the name of God, to charms, or sinful lusts and practices; the maligning, scorning, reviling, or anywise opposing of God's truth, grace, and ways; making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by unconformable, unwise, unfruitful, and offensive walking, or backsliding from it.**

# WLC Q113

- **Scripture References:**

- Matt 5:21-28

- It is sinful to misinterpret any part of God's Word

- Ezek 13:22, 2Pet 3:16, Matt 22:24-31, Isa 22:13, Jer 23:34-38

- It is wrong to misapply or pervert God's Word to profane jests, absurdities or false doctrines

- 1 Tim 1:4-7, 6:4-5,20; 2 Tim 2:14; Tit 3:9

- Misuse of God's Word in support of false doctrines, "strifes of words", "vain babblings", etc., is wicked

- Deut 18:10-14, **Acts 19:13,15-16**

- All misuse of any form of God's self-revelation in connection with superstitious practices is wrong

- 2Tim 4:3-4, Rom 13:13-14, 1Ki 21:9-10, Jude 4

- Abuse of God's self-revelation for sinful lusts & practices



# WLC Q113

- **Scripture References:**

- Acts 4:18, 13:45-46,50, 19:9; 1Jo 3:12; Psa 1:1; 2Pet 3:3; 1Pet 4:4; 1Thess 2:16, Heb 10:29
  - Maligning, scorning, scoffing at, reviling, or opposing God's truth, grace, ways
- 2 Tim 3:5; Matt 6:1-5,16, 23:14
  - Hypocritical or insincere profession of religion
- Mark 8:38
  - The sin of being ashamed of Christ and the gospel
- Psalm 73:14-15, 1 Cor 6:5-6, Eph 5:15-17
  - Shame to gospel by unconformable or unwise walking
- Isa 5:4, 2 Pet 1:8-9, Rom 2:23-24
  - Shame to gospel by unfruitful and offensive walking
- Gal 3:1-3, Heb 6:6
  - Shame to gospel by backsliding from profession of it

# WLC Q113

- **What is meant by “misapplying” and “perverting” God’s Word?**
  - Use of it apart from its true meaning and proper purpose as the revelation of God’s will to man
    - Teaching the Bible merely for its moral lessons or as great literature, apart from its revelation of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ the Mediator
    - Studying the Bible in order to try to prove it untrue
- **What is meant by “charms”?**
  - Controlling superhuman powers or forces for their own purposes or benefit
    - Magic, divination (fortune telling), contact with dead, use of devices to bring “good luck”, etc.

# WLC Q113

- **What is meant by “curious or unprofitable questions” and “vain janglings”?**
  - Questions which by their nature cannot be determined with certainty (“fables”)
  - Matters of no value even if they could be definitely decided (“endless genealogies”)
  - Controversies having to do merely with concepts of human philosophy, not with truths revealed in God’s Word (“oppositions of science falsely so called”)
  - Disputes about Jewish traditional interpretations of, and additions to, the Old Testament law (“strivings about the law”)

# WLC Q113

- **What is “maligning”, “scorning”, or “reviling” God’s truth, grace and ways?**
  - Malign: to falsely and maliciously to speak evil of
    - Actively opposing the gospel by speaking evil of it
    - Truly knowing the gospel really is true
  - Scorn: to regard or treat with contempt
    - Regard gospel not merely false, but foolish, ridiculous, unworthy of acceptance by intelligent people, etc
  - Reviling: abusive, scandalous denouncement
    - Usually directed against the gospel of Christ in the persons of its adherents, that is, Christian people

# WLC Q113

- **What is meant by “making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends”?**
  - Making profession insincerely with pretended faith
    - Real motives are not glory of God or salvation of his soul, but financial gain, social respectability, etc.
- **How do professing Christians sometimes become a shame to the gospel of Christ?**
  - By “unconformable, unwise, unfruitful and offensive walking, or backsliding from it”
    - “Christian people are the only Bible the world will read”
    - World gets its idea of Christianity largely from observing the lives and conduct of Christians
    - Christians guilty of scandalous and wicked practices, make gospel appear contemptible in the world’s eyes

# WLC Q114

**Q. What reasons are annexed to the third commandment?**

**A. The reasons annexed to the third commandment, in these words, The Lord thy God, and, For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain, are, because he is the Lord and our God, therefore his name is not to be profaned, or any way abused by us; especially because he will be so far from acquitting and sparing the transgressors of this commandment, as that he will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment, albeit many such escape the censures and punishments of men.**

# WLC Q114

- **Scripture References:**

- Lev 19:12, **Ezek 36:21-23**, Deut 28:58-59,  
Zech 5:2-4

- Because of the sovereignty, majesty and holiness of God, His name is not to be profaned or misused

- **1 Sam** 2:12, 17, 22, 24, compared with **3:13**

- Those who dishonor the name of God will surely be punished by God, even though they may escape the judgment of men

# WLC Q114

- **What is meant by affirming God is the Lord?**
  - God is sovereign, self-determined and unlimited by anything outside of himself
  - Because God is what He is, His name must be handled reverently
- **What is meant by “thy God” in the third commandment?**
  - Special covenant relation between God & His people
    - It is wrong for anyone to take God’s name in vain
    - But for God’s people to do so is much more wicked sin



# WLC Q114

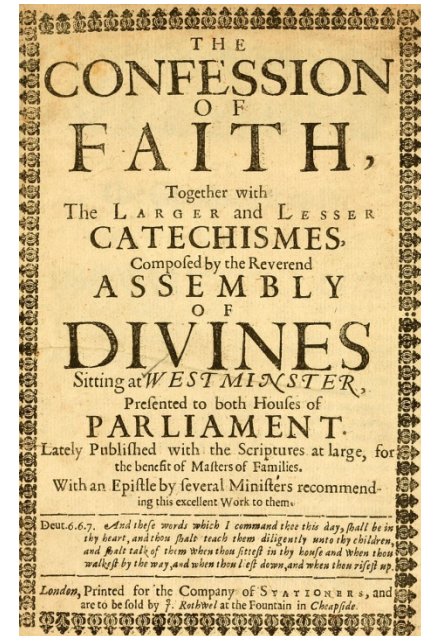
- **Why will those who break this commandment not escape His righteous judgment?**
  - All who break any of Ten Commandments will face His righteous judgment
  - Taking God's name in vain especially concerns God's own honor and authority
- **Do they commonly escape the censures and punishments of men?**
  - No longer any strong public opinion against profane swearing or taking God's name in vain
  - Christian veneer of modern culture is gone

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 31: 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment



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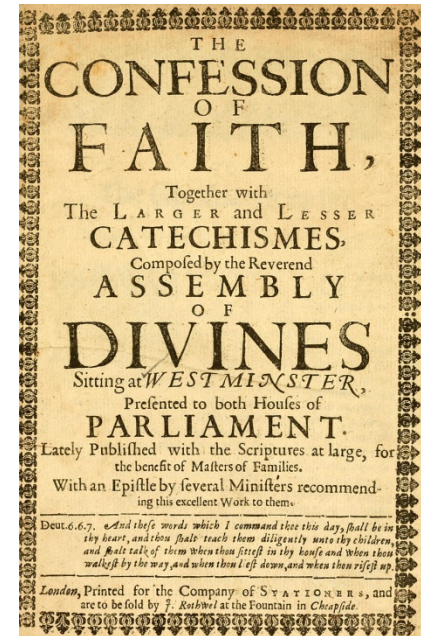
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 29: 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q115

**Q. Which is the fourth commandment?**

**A. The fourth commandment is, Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.**

# WLC Q115

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q115

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q116

**Q. What is required in the fourth commandment?**

**A. The fourth commandment requires of all men the sanctifying or keeping holy to God such set times as he has appointed in his Word, expressly one whole day in seven; which was the seventh from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week ever since, and so to continue to the end of the world; which is the Christian sabbath, and in the New Testament called the Lord's day.**

# WLC Q116

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son



# WLC Q116

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q117

**Q. How is the sabbath or the Lord's day to be sanctified?**

**A. The sabbath or Lord's day is to be sanctified by an holy resting all the day, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful; and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to betaken up in works of necessity and mercy) in the public and private exercises of God's worship: and, to that end, we are to prepare our hearts, and with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose and seasonably dispatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day.**

# WLC Q117

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q117

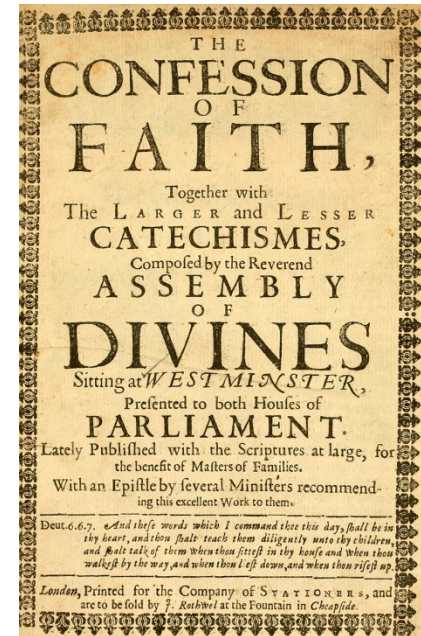
- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 29: 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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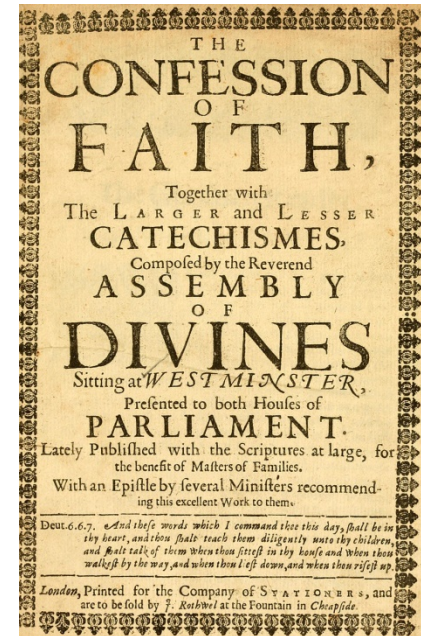
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## Lesson 30: 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q118

**Q. Why is the charge of keeping the sabbath more specially directed to governors of families, and other superiors?**

**A. The charge of keeping the sabbath is more specially directed to governors of families, and other superiors, because they are bound not only to keep it themselves, but to see that it be observed by all those that are under their charge; and because they are prone oftentimes to hinder them by employments of their own.**

# WLC Q118

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son



# WLC Q118

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q119

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the fourth commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the fourth commandment are, all omissions of the duties required, all careless, negligent, and unprofitable performing of them, and being weary of them; all profaning the day by idleness, and doing that which is in itself sinful; and by all needless works, words, and thoughts, about our worldly employments and recreations.**

# WLC Q119

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q119

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q120

**Q. What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, the more to enforce it?**

**A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, the more to enforce it, are taken from the equity of it, God allowing us six days of seven for our own affairs, and reserving but one for himself, in these words, Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: from God's challenging a special propriety in that day, The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: from the example of God, who in six days made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: and from that blessing which God put upon that day, not only in sanctifying it to be a day for his service, but in ordaining it to be a means of blessing to us in our sanctifying it; Wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.**

# WLC Q120

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q120

- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# WLC Q121

**Q. Why is the word Remember set in the beginning of the fourth commandment?**

**A. The word Remember is set in the beginning of the fourth commandment, partly, because of the great benefit of remembering it, we being thereby helped in our preparation to keep it, and, in keeping it, better to keep all the rest of the commandments, and to continue a thankful remembrance of the two great benefits of creation and redemption, which contain a short abridgment of religion; and partly, because we are very ready to forget it, for that there is less light of nature for it, and yet it restrains our natural liberty in things at other times lawful; that it comes but once in seven days, and many worldly businesses come between, and too often take off our minds from thinking of it, either to prepare for it, or to sanctify it; and that Satan with his instruments much labor to blot out the glory, and even the memory of it, to bring in all irreligion and impiety.**



# WLC Q121

- **Scripture References:**
  - 1 John 5:20, Isaiah 6:3-8 with John 12:41
    - Divine names ascribed to the Son

# WLC Q121

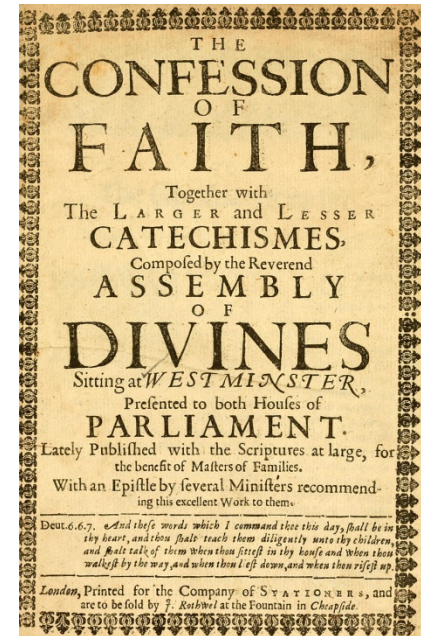
- **How many Gods are there?**
  - Only 1—This is consistent teaching of entire Bible

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 30: 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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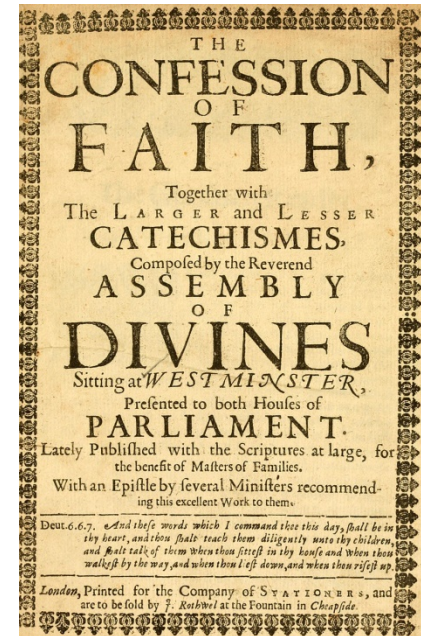
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 32: 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q122

**Q. What is the sum of the six commandments which contain our duty to man?**

**A. The sum of the six commandments which contain our duty to man is, to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to do to others: What we would have them to do to us.**

# WLC Q122

- **Scripture References:**

- Matt 22:39

- Second table of the law as summarized by Christ

- Matt 7:12

- The “Golden Rule” given by Christ as a summary of our duty to our fellow men

# WLC Q122

- **What attitude toward our neighbor is required in the second table of the law?**
  - Love to our neighbor
  - We are to love our neighbor as ourselves
- **Is it wrong to love ourselves?**
  - Self-love is sinful only when it becomes inordinate
  - Love of self subordinate to love for God and co-ordinate with love for our neighbor is really a duty
- **What action toward our neighbor is required in the second table of the law?**
  - Attitude of love to our neighbor must be translated into action for our neighbor's welfare

# WLC Q122

- **Was Christ's "Golden Rule" something new and previously unknown?**
  - Meaning and substance contained in OT
    - Jesus: "for this is the law and the prophets"
- **How is the "Golden Rule" misused?**
  - Many say Golden Rule is all the religion they need
    - No consciousness of sin, no need of a Savior
    - Confident can save themselves by their own good life
    - Such an attitude is the height of spiritual pride, and must be extremely offensive to God, as it despises His free grace in Jesus Christ



# WLC Q123

**Q. Which is the fifth commandment?**

**A. The fifth commandment is, Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God gives thee.**

# WLC Q124

**Q. Who are meant by father and mother in the fifth commandment?**

**A. By father and mother, in the fifth commandment, are meant, not only natural parents, but all superiors in age and gifts; and especially such as, by God's ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or commonwealth.**

# WLC Q124

- **Scripture References:**

- Ex 20:12—The fifth commandment
- **Prov 23:22, 25**; Eph 6:1-2
  - “Father” and “mother” include our natural parents
- **1 Tim 5:1-2**
  - Superiors in age included under “father” and “mother”
- Gen 4:20-22, 45:8
  - Superiors in gifts included under “father” and “mother”
- 2 Kings 5:13
  - “Father” and “mother” include all over us in authority in the family
- 2 Kings 2:12, 13:14; Gal 4:19
  - “Father” and “mother” include authorities in Church
- Isa 49:23
  - “Father” and “mother” include authorities in the State

# WLC Q124

- **Is meaning of fifth commandment limited to duties owed to our natural parents?**
  - “Father” and “mother” in the Bible indicate a wider scope, including the various classes of persons mentioned in the Catechism.
- **What is meant by “superiors in age”?**
  - This means those who are older than a person
- **What is meant by “superiors in gifts”?**
  - Those endowed by God with special ability or skill in particular area

# WLC Q124

- **What is meaning of “God’s ordinance”?**
  - God's appointments for exercise of authority
    - For example, it is God’s ordinance that the Church be governed by ministers and elders chosen by the people but receiving their authority from Christ
- **In what spheres of life does God’s ordinance especially provide for the exercise of authority?**
  - Three divine institutions which exist in the world, namely, the Family, the Church and the State

# WLC Q125

**Q. Why are superiors styled father and mother?**

**A. Superiors are styled father and mother, both to teach them in all duties toward their inferiors, like natural parents, to express love and tenderness to them, according to their several relations; and to work inferiors to a greater willingness and cheerfulness in performing their duties to their superiors, as to their parents.**

# WLC Q125

- **Scripture References:**

- Eph 6:4; 2Cor 12:14; 1Thess 2:7-8,11;  
Num 11:11-12

- Obligation of parents to express love and tenderness to their children

- 1 Cor 4:14-16, 2 Kings 5:13

- Inferiors, regarding their superiors as parents, are to perform their duties with love and cheerfulness

# WLC Q125

- **What truth concerning positions of authority is taught by this question?**
  - All positions of authority are like the position of parents, and that certain obligation is involved
- **What obligation rests upon persons occupying positions of authority?**
  - To exercise authority with love, tenderness, and consideration toward those subject to authority



# WLC Q125

- **Why does the Catechism add the phrase “according to their several relations”?**
  - Obligations of love and consideration by authorities does not cancel all other obligations
    - Does not imply that judge may never punish criminal or compel people to pay their legal taxes
    - Not substitute for performance of duties, but attitude and manner with which they are to be carried out
- **What obligation rests upon those subject to the authority of others?**
  - Performing their duties as to their own parents with willingness and cheerfulness.
    - Obeying legitimate authority with a willing and cheerful attitude of mind, because of our devotion to God

# WLC Q126

**Q. What is the general scope of the fifth commandment?**

**A. The general scope of the fifth commandment is, the performance of those duties which we mutually owe in our several relations, as inferiors, superiors, or equals.**

# WLC Q127

**Q. What is the honor that inferiors owe to their superiors?**

**A. The honor which inferiors owe to their superiors is, all due reverence in heart, word, and behavior; prayer and thanksgiving for them; imitation of their virtues and graces; willing obedience to their lawful commands and counsels; due submission to their corrections; fidelity to, defense and maintenance of their persons and authority, according to their several ranks, and the nature of their places; bearing with their infirmities, and covering them in love, that so they may be an honor to them and to their government.**

# WLC Q127

- **Scripture References:**

- Eph 5:21, 1 Pet 2:17, Rom 12:10
  - Various reciprocal obligations in human society
- Mal 1:6; Lev 19:3, 32; Prov 31:28; 1 Kings 2:19
  - Superiors to be regarded with due reverence
- 1 Tim 2:1-2
  - Duty of prayer & thanksgiving for authorities over us
- Heb 13:7; Phil 3:17
  - Imitate virtues and good deeds of authorities over us
- Eph 6:1-2,5-7; 1 Pet 2:13-14; Rom 13:1-5; Heb 13:17; Prov. 4:3-4, 23:22; Ex 18:19,24
  - Willing obedience to lawful commands and counsels
- Gen 16:6-9; Heb 12:9; 1 Pet 2:18-20
  - Submission to corrections of those in authority over us

# WLC Q127

- **Scripture References:**

- Tit 2:9-10; 1Sam 26:15-16; 2Sam 18:3; Est 6:2; Matt 22:21; Rom 13:6-7; 1Tim 5:17-18; Gal 6:6; Gen 45:11, 47:12
  - Duties of loyalty, defense and support of those in authority over us
- 1 Pet. 2:18; Prov 23:22
  - Duty of patience toward the faults of those in positions of authority
- Psalm 127:3-5; Prov 31:23
  - It is God's will that we should be an honor to the government of those in authority over us

# WLC Q127

- **What attitude should we have toward those in authority over us?**
  - “Due reverence”, that is, proper respect
  - Not merely attitude of heart and mind, but shown by “word and behavior”
- **What duty of religious worship is involved in honoring those in authority over us?**
  - The duty of prayer and thanksgiving for them
- **What should be our attitude toward authorities’ commands and counsels?**
  - Willing obedience provided they are lawful

# WLC Q127

- **What attitude should we have to the corrections of those in authority over us?**
  - “Due submission” acknowledging faults rather than resentful & stubbornly maintaining we’re right
- **What duties do we owe “persons and authority” of those set over us by God’s providence?**
  - Loyalty, defense and support
    - Precise nature and degree of these duties being determined by nature of the relationship in each case
      - Loyalty a child owes to a parent is not the same as that which a citizen owes to the State
      - Defense and support due to a parent not same as due State

# WLC Q127

- **What should be our attitude toward authorities' faults and failings?**
  - Patience, “bearing with their infirmities”
  - Love, “covering them in love”
    - Concealing and disregarding their faults, so far as may legitimately be done
  - Thus we “may be an honor to them and to their government”
    - Must not be taken that all faults or wrongdoing must be concealed and patiently endured
    - Higher loyalty may impose duty of protesting and exposing wrongdoing on the part of authorities
      - Duty to report wrongdoing to Church or State authorities
    - “Infirmities” does not mean flagrant wrongdoing
      - Faults or weaknesses of character such as should be borne with patience and covered by love

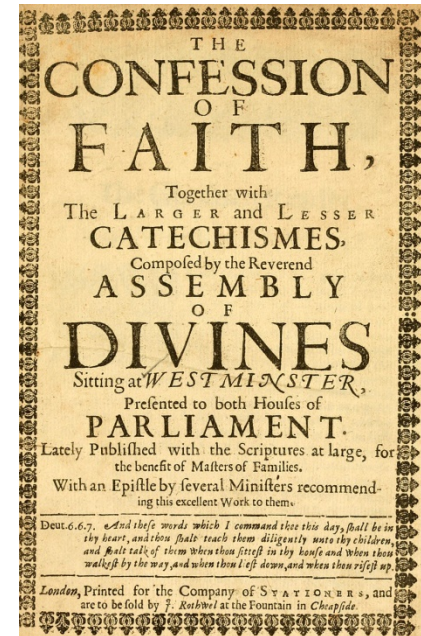


# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 32: 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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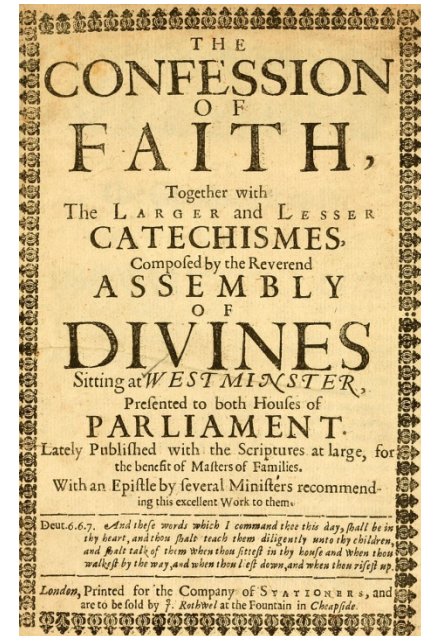
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 33: 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q128

**Q. What are the sins of inferiors against their superiors?**

**A. The sins of inferiors against their superiors are, all neglect of the duties required toward them; envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against, their persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands, and corrections; cursing, mocking, and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.**

# WLC Q128

- **Scripture References:**

- **Matt 15:4-6**

- It is sinful to neglect our duty toward those in authority over us

- Num 11:28-29; 1Sam 8:7; Isa 3:5; 2Sam 15:1-12

- The sins of envy, contempt and rebellion on the part of those subject to the authority of others

- Ex 21:15; 1 Sam 10:27, 2:25; Deut 21:18-21

- Sinning against the persons and places of those in authority over us, in relation to their lawful counsels, commands and corrections

- **Prov 30:11,17; 19:26**

- The sins of cursing, mocking and other scandalous conduct against those in authority over us

# WLC Q128

- **What is sin of envying at the persons and places of those in authority over us?**
  - Resent that God in His providence has given them something which He has not given to us
    - Envy is really finding fault with God's providence
- **What is meant by the sin of contempt?**
  - Looking down on or despising someone, and consequently disregarding his authority
    - For example: "contempt of court"
- **What is meant by the sin of rebellion?**
  - Contempt carried to downright repudiation of the authority which we ought to recognize and honor
    - No longer claims or pretends to recognize authority

# WLC Q128

- **What is meant by cursing, mocking, etc.?**
  - Wishing or praying that evil may come upon the person cursed
    - Whether or not name of God is not actually mentioned
  - Making them or their commands, corrections, etc., butt of laughter, ridicule, sarcasm, or regarding them otherwise than with seriousness and respect
  - Conduct which proclaims disregard or contempt
    - May never utter a wrong word, yet may curse and mock his parents, or other authorities, by perverse and incorrigible conduct and manner of life
  - All these evil tendencies bring shame and dishonor upon authorities and their government



# WLC Q129

**Q. What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?**

**A. It is required of superiors, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand, to love, pray for, and bless their inferiors; to instruct, counsel, and admonish them; countenancing, commending, and rewarding such as do well; and discountenancing, reproving, and chastising such as do ill; protecting, and providing for them all things necessary for soul and body: and by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God, honor to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God has put upon them.**

# WLC Q129

- **Scripture References:**

- Col 3:19; Tit 2:4; **1 Sam 12:23**; Job 1:5; 1 Kings 8:55-56; Heb 7:7; Gen 49:28
  - Duty of superiors to love, pray for, and bless
- Deut 6:6-7; Eph 6:4
  - Duty of superiors to instruct, counsel and admonish
- 1 Pet 3:7, 2:14; Rom 13:3; Esther 6:3
  - Duty of countenancing, commanding and rewarding
- Rom 13:3-4; Prov 29:15; 1 Pet 2:14
  - Duty of discountenancing, reproof and chastising
- **Job 29:12-17**; Isa 1:10,17; Eph 6:4; 1 Tim 5:8
  - Bound to protect and provide, spiritually and materially
- 1 Tim 4:12; Tit 2:3-5, 1 Kings 3:28; Tit 2:15
  - Set a good example, thus glorifying God
  - By good example, gain honor, and maintain authority



# WLC Q129

- **What is the principle set forth in this question of the Catechism?**
  - Authority involves responsibility
    - Legitimate authority has corresponding responsibility
    - Greater the authority, the greater the responsibility
    - Those entrusted with authority are responsible to God for the right exercise of their authority
- **What attitude ought superiors to have toward those under their authority?**
  - Sincere good-will, with love, prayer and blessing
    - True interest in & earnest effort to procure their welfare

# WLC Q129

- **What is responsibility of superiors toward those under their authority who do well?**
  - “Countenancing, commending and rewarding”
    - Regarding actions with approval, commending their actions in words, rewarding them in a suitable manner
  - Encouraging them in their effort to do what is right
- **What is responsibility of superiors toward those who commit wrong?**
  - “Discountenancing, reproof, and chastising”
    - Withholding approval of their actions, expressing reproof in words, and, if necessary, correcting them for their wrongdoing by suitable penalties

# WLC Q129

- **Why should superiors set a good example to persons under their authority?**
  - They will glorify God, obtain honor for themselves, maintain authority God has committed to them
  - Without consistently good example, authorities will not be respected nor will their instructions, counsels, etc., be heeded and obeyed
    - Government official who is himself guilty of lawbreaking cannot influence citizens to obey the laws
    - Minister who compromises with sin cannot have influence toward godly living among Church members
    - Parent who lies, swears and loses temper cannot teach his children to be truthful, reverent and self-controlled
    - Bad example may result in contempt for authority by those who are subject to the authority of others

# WLC Q130

**Q. What are the sins of superiors?**

**A. The sins of superiors are, besides the neglect of the duties required of them, an inordinate seeking of themselves, their own glory, ease, profit, or pleasure; commanding things unlawful, or not in the power of inferiors to perform; counseling, encouraging, or favoring them in that which is evil; dissuading, discouraging, or discountenancing them in that which is good; correcting them unduly; careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger; provoking them to wrath; or any way dishonoring themselves, or lessening their authority, by an unjust, indiscreet, rigorous, or remiss behavior.**

# WLC Q130

- **Scripture References:**

- Ezek 34:2-4
  - Sinful neglect of duty toward those under authority
- Phil 2:21; John 5:44, 7:18; Isa 56:10-11; Deut 17:17
  - Selfish attitudes or conduct on the part of superiors
- Dan 3:4-6; Acts 4:17-18; Ex 5:10-18; Matt 23:2,4
  - Commanding things unlawful, or not powered to perform
- Matt 14:8 vs Mark 6:24; 2 Sam 13:28; 1 Sam 3:13, John 7:46-49; Col 3:21; Ex 5:17
  - Counselling, encouraging, favoring, influencing inferiors in doing what is wrong or against what is good and right
- 1 Pet 2:18-20; Heb 12:10; **Deut 25:3**
  - Excessive or immoderate correction of inferiors

# WLC Q130

- **Scripture References:**

- Gen 37:28; **Gen 13:12-13**; Acts 18:17
  - Careless exposing of inferiors to wrong, temptation and danger
- Eph 6:4
  - Provoking inferiors to wrath by unreasonable demands or requirements
- Gen 9:21; 1 Kings 12:13-16, 1:6; 1 Sam 2:29-31
  - Sinfulness of all conduct which results in the breaking down of respect for authority on the part of inferiors

# WLC Q130

- **Why is neglect of superiors' duties sinful?**
  - Fail to recognize or take seriously God-given responsibility which accompanies their authority
    - Exercising authority without recognizing and accepting corresponding responsibility is irresponsible and sinful
- **What wrong attitude is source of much wrongdoing on the part of authorities?**
  - Selfishness
    - If not checked and controlled inevitably leads to unjust exploitation of persons under the authority of others
  - Authority is not for own selfish enjoyment
    - Duty to those under their authority
    - Must give account to God for their exercise of authority
  - All selfish use of authority is abuse of authority

# WLC Q130

- **Why is undue, excessive or immoderate correction of inferiors wrong?**
  - Unjust, out of proportion to offence or wrongdoing
    - Counteracts proper effect of correction, by feeling of injustice and resentment in the person corrected
- **What is provoking inferiors to wrath?**
  - Unreasonable requirements
  - Harsh, unloving and unduly critical attitude
  - Extreme strictness about minor matters
    - Expecting child to perform task as perfectly as adult
    - Threatening disproportionate punishments
  - Provoking persons under authority to wrath and discouragement



# WLC Q131

**Q. What are the duties of equals?**

**A. The duties of equals are, to regard the dignity and worth of each other, in giving honor to go one before another; and to rejoice in each other's gifts and advancement, as their own.**

# WLC Q131

- **Scripture References:**

- 1 Pet 2:17

- Our duty to respect and love our fellow men

- Rom 12:10

- The duty of Christian love and mutual regard

- Rom 12:15-16; Phil 2:3-4

- We are to find joy and satisfaction in honor and advancement that come to others, as well as to ourselves

# WLC Q131

- **What is meant by “equals”?**
  - Same level of authority
  - Neither possessing authority over the other
- **What is our general duty toward those who are our equals in human society?**
  - We are to regard their “dignity and worth”
    - Persons created in the image of God and therefore to be honored and respected because we fear God

# WLC Q131

- **Why should we rejoice in others' attainments & gifts as much as our own?**
  - God is glorified by these attainments and gifts, regardless of whether they are ours or other's
    - We should regard everything in life, not from a selfish standpoint, but from the standpoint of God's glory
- **What sin tends to prevent our rejoicing in other people's gifts and advancement?**
  - Envy, which causes us actually to be unhappy over the success attained or honors received by someone else
    - True Christian love and sympathy for others will overcome the sin of envy in our lives

# WLC Q132

**Q. What are the sins of equals?**

**A. The sins of equals are, besides the neglect of the duties required, the undervaluing of the worth, envying the gifts, grieving at the advancement of prosperity one of another; and usurping preeminence one over another.**

# WLC Q132

- **Scripture References:**

- Rom 13:8

- The duty of mutual Christian love

- 2 Tim 3:3

- It is wrong to despise those that are good

- Acts 7:9; Gal 5:26

- The sin of envy at the gifts of others

- Num 12:2; Esther 6:12-13

- The wickedness of grieving at the prosperity or success of others

- 3 John 9; Luke 22:24; 1 Pet 4:15

- The sin of usurping pre-eminence over others

# WLC Q132

- **What is effect of envy on envious person?**
  - Inevitably has spiritually and psychologically destructive effect upon the person
    - Personality becomes corroded by envy until he becomes either sour or bitter
    - Such a person will be suspicious, resentful, easily offended, difficult to deal with, and a “problem” to his friends and associates.
    - Scripture calls envy “rottenness of the bones” (Prov 14:30)
  - Only the almighty power of God can save a person from such a pitiable state of spiritual bondage

# WLC Q132

- **What does “usurping pre-eminence one over another” mean?**
  - Grasping of authority which does not properly belong to a person
    - Seeks to dominate others with whom he is really on a plane of positional equality
    - “Domineering” or “bossy” person
    - When one church member tries to have his own way, and dictate to the rest, that is “usurping pre-eminence”
  - Closely related to meddling in other’s matters
    - Forbidden in 1 Pet. 4:15, “But let none of you suffer. . . as a busybody in other men’s matters”.
      - The Greek word translated “busybody in other men’s matters” literally means a bishop over others
      - That is, a self-constituted supervisor of other people’s affairs



# WLC Q133

**Q. What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment, the more to enforce it?**

**A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment, in these words, That thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God gives thee, is an express promise of long life and prosperity, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good, to all such as keep this commandment.**

# WLC Q133

- **Scripture References:**

- Deut 5:16

- The promise of long life and prosperity to those who obey the fifth commandment

- 1 Kings 8:25

- God's promise to David concerning the perpetual kingship of his descendants

- Eph 6:2-3

- The promise of the fifth commandment reaffirmed in the New Testament

# WLC Q133

- **What promise of God is attached to the fifth commandment?**
  - A promise of long life and prosperity to those who faithfully keep this commandment
- **What is the effect upon human society of obedience to the fifth commandment?**
  - Generally requires respect for legitimate authority
    - Where this commandment is obeyed, conditions which make for long life and prosperity will exist
    - Where respect for authority is lacking, lawlessness will prevail shortening life and interfering with prosperity.
  - In God's providence, obedience brings general increase of length of life and prosperity in society

# WLC Q133

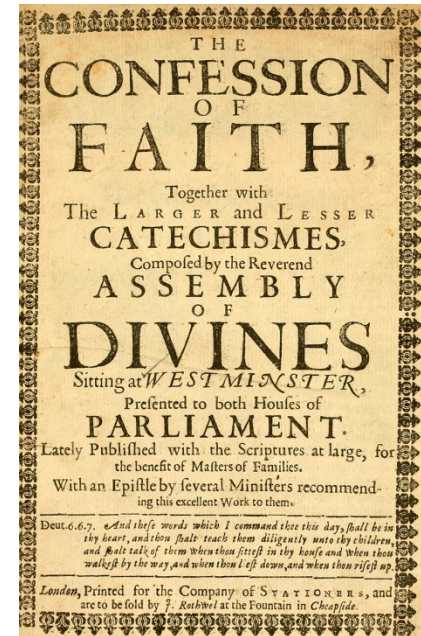
- **Is it right to seek and pray for long life and material prosperity?**
  - Provided they are not regarded as our chief aim
    - In subordination to God's kingdom and righteousness
    - Sought only in humble submission to the will of God
- **Do those who obey this command always live long and attain material prosperity?**
  - Carefully note qualification: “as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good”
    - While generally true, does not imply these blessings are bestowed on every individual
    - Must remember every child of God has something even better: eternal life and a heavenly inheritance as joint-heir with Christ and inheritor of the kingdom of heaven

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 33: 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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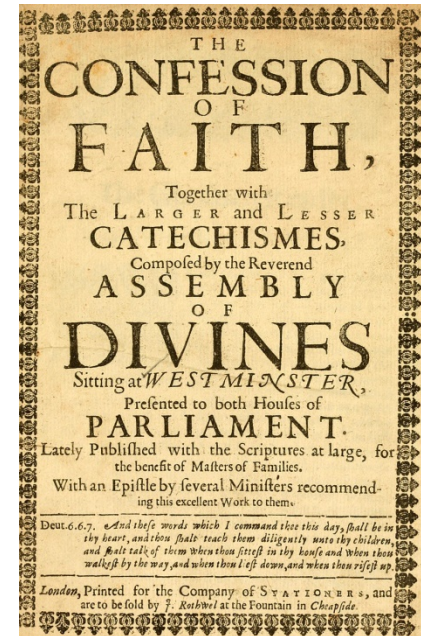
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 34: 6<sup>th</sup> Commandments



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# WLC Q134

**Q. Which is the sixth commandment?**

**A. The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.**

# WLC Q135

**Q. What are the duties required in the sixth commandment?**

**A. The duties required in the sixth commandment are, all careful studies, and lawful endeavors, to preserve the life of ourselves and others by resisting all thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions, and avoiding all occasions, temptations, and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any; by just defense thereof against violence, patient bearing of the hand of God, quietness of mind, cheerfulness of spirit; ...**



# WLC Q135

- **Scripture References:**

- Ex 20:13
  - The sixth commandment
- Eph 5:28-29
  - The duty of preserving our own life
- 1 Kings 18:4
  - The duty of preserving the life of others
- Jer 26:15-16, Acts 23:12-27
  - It is our duty to resist all thoughts and purposes which tend to the unjust destruction of human life
- Eph 4:26-27, 2 Sam 2:22, **Deut 22:8**, Matt 4:6-7, Prov 1:10-16
  - Passions, occasions, & temptations tending toward unjust destruction of life are to be subdued & avoided

# WLC Q135

- **Scripture References:**

- 1 Sam 24:12, 26:9-11; Gen 37:21-22
  - All unjust taking away of the life of any human being is wicked
- Psalm 82:4, **Prov 24:11-12**, 1 Sam 14:45
  - The sixth commandment requires a just defense of human life against destruction by violence
- James 5:7-11, Heb. 12:9
  - The Sixth commandment requires patient submission to the will of God as disclosed by God's providence
- 1 Thess. 4:11, 1 Pet 3:3-4, Psalm 37:8-11, Prov 17:22
  - A serene mental attitude and cheerful spirit are required of us by the sixth commandment

# WLC Q135

- **What is the meaning of “kill” here?**
  - “Commit murder”
    - Hebrew accurately translated “You shall do no murder”
  - Doesn't forbid killing as such, but unjust taking away the life of any person;
    - This is correct definition of the sin and crime of murder
- **What is meant by “careful studies to preserve the life of ourselves and others”?**
  - Research and planning for preservation of life
    - Investigation of the causes and prevention of diseases
    - Chemistry directed toward discovering drugs/medicine
    - Plans for preventing traffic accidents on the highways
    - Agricultural research to increase soil productivity

# WLC Q135

- **What is meant by “lawful endeavors to preserve the life of ourselves and others”?**
  - All efforts aimed at preserving human life
    - Excepting such efforts as may be wrong because forbidden by God’s moral law
    - Duty to try to preserve our own and our neighbor’s life, but not by doing evil
- **In addition to the actual, literal crime of murder, what must we avoid?**
  - All tending toward unjust destruction of human life
    - No list could be complete, adequate or permanently valid
      - Dueling, bullfighting, shooting Niagara rapids in a barrel, ...
    - Catechism lays down principle, leaves precise application to sanctified common sense of the Christian

# WLC Q135

- **What is included in the just defense of human life against violence?**
  - Duty of nation to protect its people against unjust violence of all enemies, foreign and domestic
  - Duty of every individual to defend himself & others against violence by lawbreakers of all kinds
  - Right and duty of defensive warfare and of the power of the police in enforcing law and order
  - Right and duty of defending oneself and others against criminal violence whenever occasion may require

# WLC Q135

- **Why does the sixth commandment require “patient bearing of the hand of God”?**
  - Necessary for our true mental, spiritual and physical well-being
    - Impatience or rebelliousness is essentially self-destructive
    - Only in submission to God’s will, and in harmony with Him, can our welfare be secured
- **Why are “quietness of mind” and “cheerfulness of spirit” required?**
  - They tend toward good health and long life
    - Worry, anxiety and pessimistic attitude cause much needless wear and tear on the human personality
    - Christian’s should face life serenely and cheerfully to glorify God in their body and spirit

## WLC Q135

**Q. What are the duties required in the sixth commandment?**

**A. The duties required in the sixth commandment are, ... a sober use of meat, drink, physic, sleep, labor, and recreations; by charitable thoughts, love, compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness; peaceable, mild and courteous speeches and behavior; forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient bearing and forgiving of injuries, and requiting good for evil; comforting and succoring the distressed, and protecting and defending the innocent.**

# WLC Q135

- **Scripture References:**

- Prov 25:16, 27; 1 Tim 5:23
  - Sober use of meat and drink
- Isa 38:21
  - Medicine for relief of suffering and prolongation of life
- Psa 127:2; 2Thess 3:10-12; Prov 16:26; **Ecc 3:4, 11, 5:12**
  - Proper & temperate use of sleep, work, & recreation
- 1 Sam 19:4-5, 22:13-14; Rom 13:10; Luke 10:33-34; Col 3:12-13; Jam 3:17; 1 Pet 3:8-11; Prov 15:1; Judg 8:1-3
  - Kindness and love in thought, word & deed required
- Matt 5:24. Eph 4:2, 32. Rom 12:17, 20-21
  - Patient, forgiving and unresentful spirit required
- **1 Thess 5:14**; Job 31:19-20; Matt 25:35-36; Prov 31:8-9
  - Duty to help and comfort those in distress, and protect and defend the innocent from injustice



# WLC Q135

- **What is meant by a “sober use of” ...?**
  - Conscientious, careful, temperate use
    - To not have harmful effect on health or mental acuity
  - Bible says gluttony and drunkenness are sinful
- **What is the meaning of the word physic?**
  - Medicine & all means to relieve suffering/prolong life
- **Is it wrong to use medicine or treatments to relieve suffering or cure disease?**
  - Faith in God not contrary to use of legitimate means
    - God mitigated curse by giving things for man to discover to alleviate human suffering and prolong life
    - Faith requires us to use the proper means which His providence has placed at our disposal

# WLC Q135

- **What attitude should a Christian have toward sleep, work, and recreation?**
  - All are necessary to human life
    - Provide healthy body and alert mind
  - Must be kept in balance with each other
  - Laziness and slothfulness are sinful, ...  
but so is immoderate & idolatrous addiction to work, or devotion of excessive time to recreation
    - Partying all night so unable to work is sinful...
    - So is modern American worship of speed, luxury and financial success
  - Christian should cultivate an attitude of conscientious carefulness about all these matters, realizing he is a steward of God

# WLC Q135

- **What is meant by “forbearance”?**
  - Willing to suffer wrong rather than insisting upon our rights and justice for ourselves
- **Why “readiness to be reconciled” and patiently bear and forgive injuries?**
  - Because by the amazing love and grace of God the Christian has himself been reconciled to God
  - Therefore he should be willing, and even eager, to be reconciled to his fellow men as far as possible

# WLC Q135

- **What is our duty toward the distressed?**
  - To do what we can to comfort and relieve them
    - Neighbor is one in need whom we have power to help
    - Especial duty to fellow Christians anywhere in the world
- **What is our duty toward the innocent?**
  - By “the innocent” the Catechism means
    - Innocent persons in danger of being treated as guilty
    - Those already suffering as if guilty of some wrong
  - Our duty to protect others against injustice so far as it is in our power to do so
    - True in small matters as well as great, in all spheres of human society, including family, Church and State

# WLC Q136

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the sixth commandment are, all taking away the life of ourselves, or of others, except in case of public justice, lawful war, or necessary defense; the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life; sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge; all excessive passions, distracting cares; immoderate use of meat, drink, labor, and recreations; provoking words, oppression, quarreling, striking, wounding, and: Whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.**

# WLC Q136

- **Scripture References:**

- **Gen 9:6**; Num 35:31,33

- Death penalty for the crime of murder commanded by God in the Old Testament

- Rom 13:4

- The death penalty confirmed in the New Testament

- **Jer 48:10**; Deut 20:1 ff

- War is sometimes legitimate, and under some circumstances it may be our God-given duty to participate in it

- Ex 22:2-3

- Taking the life of another in necessary self-defense is always lawful

**Note:** Since a large part of Q136 covers same ground as Q135, we shall limit discussion of Q136 largely to questions of rightfulness of capital punishment, participation in war, and self-defence.

# WLC Q136

- **Why are many opposed to the death penalty for murder?**
  - Abandonment of belief that civil government and jurisprudence is divinely ordained institution
    - Jurisprudence founded on human agreement or custom
    - Justice is merely what society has found for general welfare
  - Death penalty for murder is merely human custom which has come down from primitive times
    - If it is only a human custom, then of course society can change it and substitute some other penalty for it
    - If it is divine command, and if justice is based on law of God, then human society has no light to change it

# WLC Q136

- **What reason is given for the ordinance of capital punishment in Gen. 9:6?**
  - “For in the image of God made he man”
    - Death penalty commanded for murder, not simply because it is contrary to general welfare of human race
    - Murder affronts God by destroying sacred imagebearer
  - Real dignity and worth of human life consists in man’s bearing the divine image
    - Most heinous element in sin of murder is its contempt for God in the destruction of a human life which bears His image
  - Of course, punishment must always be meted out justly
    - System must be ordered to ensure justice and prevent injustice



# WLC Q136

- **Does the Bible, or the teachings of Jesus, forbid Christians to engage in war?**
  - OT does not forbid just and necessary war
  - “Pacifism” claims NT forbids what OT sanctioned
    - Sermon on the Mount and “Golden Rule” often cited
      - Takes Jesus’ teachings out of context in whole Bible and interprets them by themselves or in opposition to other parts
      - Does not take all Jesus’ teachings into account, but only parts regarded as favorable to pacifist position
      - But... Jesus’ teachings are in perfect harmony with rest of Bible, and standard of faith and life is not simply “the teachings of Jesus”, but entire Word of God from Genesis to Revelation
    - Catechism adopts principle that war can be lawful & just
      - Not every war is legitimate, nor all practices just
    - Catechism does not sanction militarism
    - Under some circumstances it is not inconsistent with Christian duty to participate in war

# WLC Q136

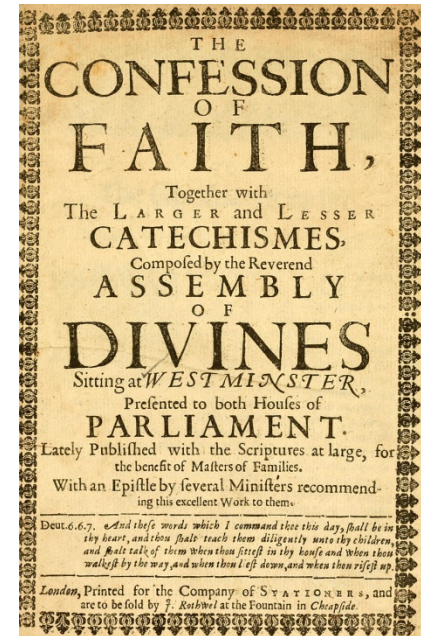
- **Why is it right to defend ourselves against unlawful violence?**
  - Self-defense against unlawful violence is always legitimate and is a moral obligation
  - Our life is not our own; it belongs to God
    - As stewards of God's possessions we are obligated to preserve our and others' life from violent destruction
  - Scripture commands a person to love his neighbor as himself
    - Love for one's neighbor is to be kept in balance with a proper love for one's self (and others)
    - Person who will let himself (or others) be murdered, without attempting self-defense, loves his neighbor too much, and does not love himself (or others) enough

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 34: 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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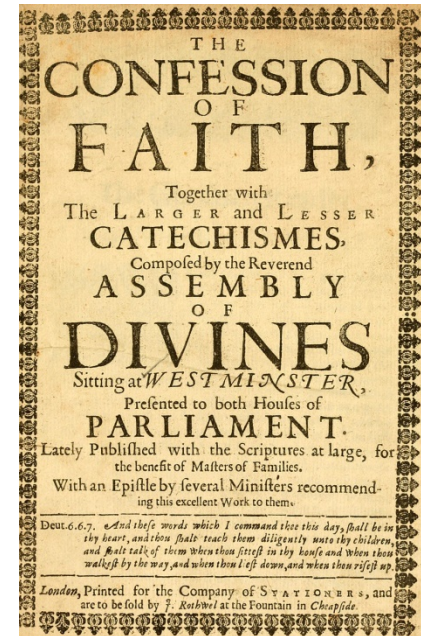
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 35: 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q137

**Q. Which is the seventh commandment?**

**A. The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery.**

# WLC Q138

**Q. What are the duties required in the seventh commandment?**

**A. The duties required in the seventh commandment are, chastity in body, mind, affections, words, and behavior; and the preservation of it in ourselves and others; watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses; temperance, keeping of chaste company, modesty in apparel; marriage by those that have not the gift of continency, conjugal love, and cohabitation; diligent labor in our callings; shunning all occasions of uncleanness, and resisting temptations thereunto.**

# WLC Q137

- **Scripture References:**

- Ex 20:14
  - The seventh commandment
- Deut 22:13-23:14
  - Sins of the seventh commandment
- 1 Thess 4:2-8
  - The duty of purity in heart and life
- Job 31:1, **Matt 5:27-28**
  - The seventh commandment requires “watchfulness over the eyes, and all the senses”
- **Prov 2:16-20**, 5:8; Gen 39:10
  - The duty of avoiding unchaste company
- 1 Tim 2:9
  - Duty of wearing modest and inconspicuous clothing



# WLC Q137

- **What is relation of 7<sup>th</sup> commandment to 6<sup>th</sup>?**
  - 6<sup>th</sup> requires respect for the sanctity of life
  - 7<sup>th</sup> requires respect for sanctity of sex, by which human life is propagated and continued
- **What is general scope of 7<sup>th</sup> commandment?**
  - “Preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior”
- **What is cause of 7<sup>th</sup> commandment violation?**
  - Real, basic cause is spiritual
    - Corrupt, sinful condition of the human heart: Matt 15:19



# WLC Q138

- **What is meant by “modest apparel”?**
  - No precise definition can be given
    - Varies by cultural time and place
    - Matter for conscientious decision of every Christian
  - Generally immodest, if it fails to cover body decently
    - Likely to occasion impure thoughts in others
    - Intended to publically display sexual image or state
    - Q139 groups with wanton looks, impudent or light behavior
  - Immodest apparel is emphatically condemned in the Bible: 1 Tim. 2:9; Prov. 7:10, 13
    - Also condemns excessively costly, luxurious or conspicuous clothing: Isaiah 3:16-26; 1 Pet 3:1-4
  - While religion is matter of heart, not clothing
    - Christianity will affect even outward apparel, bringing a person's attire into subjection to the Word of God

# WLC Q139

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the seventh commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are, adultery, fornication, rape, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts; all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections; all corrupt or filthy communications, or listening thereunto; wanton looks, impudent or light behavior, immodest apparel; prohibiting of lawful, and dispensing with unlawful marriages; ...**

# WLC Q139

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment?**

**A. ... allowing, tolerating, keeping of stews, and resorting to them; entangling vows of single life, undue delay of marriage; having more wives or husbands than one at the same time; unjust divorce, or desertion; idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, unchaste company; lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays; and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others.**

# WLC Q139

- **Scripture References:**

- Eph 5:3-4

- The duty of purity in speech and conversation.

- Matt 15:19

- Sins against purity proceed out of the heart

- 1 Tim 4:3, Mark 6:18, Mal 2:11-12

- May not forbid lawful marriages or permit unlawful ones

- Mal 2:14-15, Matt 19:5

- Monogamy is divine ordinance of marriage

- Mal 2:16, Matt 5:32

- Divorce is contrary to divine institution of marriage, and never to be permitted but on Scriptural grounds

- Rom 13:13-14, 1 Pet 4:3

- God's Word requires avoidance of all uncleanness, and separation from occasions and temptations

# WLC Q139

- **What modern influence has contributed greatly to violation of 7<sup>th</sup> commandment?**
  - Acceptance of psychology & philosophy stressing “self-expression” or “being true to oneself”
    - Has become highest good or point of life
    - Unrestrained indulgence of natural impulses, regardless of prohibitions of God’s law and ordinance of marriage
    - Used as convenient excuse to indulgence in impure lusts
    - General decrease of opposition to sins of fornication, adultery, unscriptural divorce and re-marriage, etc
    - Leads to obsession with “identity”
  - These sins aren’t new
    - But today are defended, and declared to be not sinful, by many “respectable” people...even “Christians”
    - Seen not as a moral question subject to the law of God, but merely as a matter of personal preference

# WLC Q139

- **What can be done to remedy the divorce evil in America today?**
  - Divorce situation in America is extremely serious,
  - Seek to bring civil law into harmony with God's law
    - Eliminate unscriptural grounds, like “incompatibility”
  - Church should clearly and emphatically proclaim the teachings of God's Word on this subject
    - Even some Church members do not know what Bible teaches about marriage and divorce
    - Importance of Biblical pre-marital counseling
  - Church must faithfully enforce discipline for members who have divorced unscripturally
    - Church must seek satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment of their life
    - Support those who are penitent or Scripturally divorced

# WLC Q139

- **What attitude should a Christian take toward movies & entertainment?**
  - Christians should adopt a serious and conscientious attitude toward entertainment
    - Many movies as they exist today, are bad in their effect, especially upon young people
    - Some Christians totally abstain from movies at all times
    - Others see no problem with almost any entertainment
  - Movies are not necessarily evil
    - Conscientious Christian should ascertain character of movie before viewing
    - Christians should always pay heed to the teachings of God's Word about questions of this kind
    - Should also take care not to become a stumbling-block to any Christian brother

# WLC Q139

- **Why are perpetual celibacy vows wrong?**
  - Such “entangling vows of single life”, are taken by members of many “religious” orders
  - Sinful because they are vows to do something
    - Not commanded in the Word of God
    - For which we have no promise of help from God
  - Celibacy is not more holy form of life than marriage
    - Remaining unmarried may be will of God for particular person, but no one has right to vow never to marry
    - Medieval Church reacted strongly against extreme licentiousness of Roman Empire
      - Opposite extreme of asceticism and celibacy as Christian ideal
      - Celibacy as a higher and holier estate than marriage
    - Marriage is normal life of adult humans (Gen. 2:18, 24)
      - Celibacy is the exception rather than the rule



# WLC Q139

- **May we allow or tolerate brothels (stews) & prostitution if we stay away? Why?**
  - Allowing or tolerating sinfulness is itself sinful
    - Prevent temptation for brothers & sisters
    - Prevent exploitation of others
    - Duty to others, society, and culture as a whole
  - Love for neighbor requires limiting sin opportunity
    - We must be truthful about sin and its effects
    - Must not tolerate or enable sinfulness within our power to affect

# WLC Q139

- **Why does Bible focus so much on sex?**
  - First, it doesn't as much as it's accusers allege
    - Those for whom that's their focus, see nothing but that
    - But it does treat it as extremely serious matter
  - Designed as method for procreation
    - Act of secondary, delegated creation
    - Part of natural order of creation
    - Part of what makes woman suitable and fit for the man is her ability to fulfill the creation mandate of Gen 1:28
  - Sex is designed as ultimate act of intimacy
    - Mirrors part of intimacy within Trinity
    - Act by which couple becomes complete & one flesh
  - God is owner of body as well as soul
    - Has right to command that both should be kept pure and holy for Himself

# WLC Q139

- **What is important about gender?**
  - Part of designed, created nature of humankind
    - Both bear image of God, but in distinct ways
    - Both are required to fully image God
  - Men and women are designed differently
    - Physically distinct and different
    - Generally different roles, giftings, & approaches
  - Men and women are complements for each other
    - Man was incomplete without woman
    - Procreation requires exactly one man and one woman
    - Neither greater nor lesser than one another

# WLC Q139

- **What is important about marriage? When was it instituted? By whom?**
  - God instituted in creation (Gen 2:24 & Matt 19:4-6)
    - Part of natural order & God's design for humanity
  - Not just union but reunion of man and woman
    - Only one man and one woman does this
  - Covenant between man, woman, and God
    - God and His Church as witnesses
    - Declarations & vows to God
  - Images relation between Christ & Church
  - Not a sacrament—sign, but not seal
    - God given to help all men, not just Church, in this age
    - Not an eternal mark separating His redeemed people

# WLC Q139

- **What is fornication?**
  - Sex between 2 people not married to each other
    - Adultery if one or both is married
  - Greek word *porniea*
    - Modern translations usually use “sexual immorality”
    - Encompasses all sexual activity outside marriage
    - Unlawful satisfaction of the sex urge
  - Condemned throughout Scripture
    - Jerusalem Council’s Apostolic Decree (Acts 15)
    - “Will not inherit the kingdom of God” (1Cor 6:18)

# WLC Q139

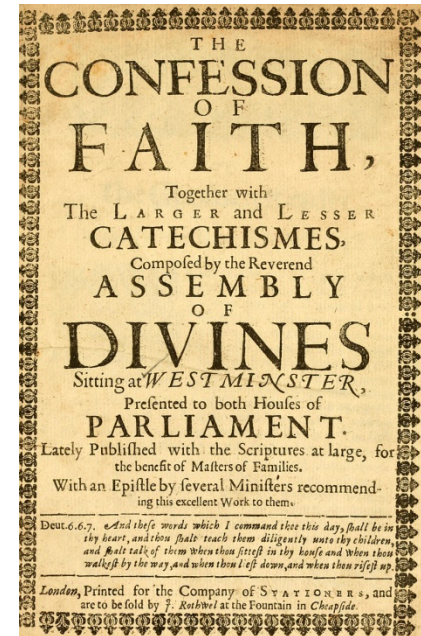
- **Are only actual acts prohibited?**
  - *...all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections; ...*
  - Looking with lust, is adulterous (Matt 5:27-28)
    - Righteousness touches all parts of life
    - Desiring that which is sinful is itself sinful

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 36: 7<sup>th</sup> Commandments



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# WLC Q139

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# WLC Q139

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment?**

**A. ... allowing, tolerating, keeping of stews, and resorting to them; entangling vows of single life, undue delay of marriage; having more wives or husbands than one at the same time; unjust divorce, or desertion; idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, unchaste company; lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays; and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others.**

# WLC Q139

- **What is meant by “unnatural lusts”?**
  - Sex acts and desires which violate the natural design of God’s divinely ordered creation
    - Act of rebellion against God
    - Examples given are fornication, adultery, rape, incest, sodomy
  - “Lusts” clearly includes desires, not just acts

# WLC Q139

- **What does Scripture say of homosexuality?**
  - Both have committed an abomination...be put to death...their blood shall be upon them (Lev 20:13)
  - Will not inherit the kingdom of God (1Co 6:9-10)
  - ...uncleanness...dishonor their bodies...worshiped creature over Creator...vile passions...against nature...shameful...deserving of death along with those who approve of their actions (Rom 1:24-32)
  - Uniformly declares it an extremely grievous sin
    - Never referred to in positive terms
  - More verses condemning it in NT than OT

# WLC Q139

- **What about celibate homosexuality?**
  - “Gay Christians” or “Side-B” homosexuals
    - Embrace same sex attraction & gay identity
    - Reject homosexual acts & gay “marriage” as sinful
  - However, not just actions are sinful...
    - Lust (Matt 5:27-28), passions (Rom 1:26), approvers of evil-doers (Rom 1:32), desires (John 8:44) also sinful
  - To identify with a sin is inherently sinful
  - Identifying Christ or Church with sin rejects holiness
  - We are called to flee sexual immorality (1Cor 6:18) and lusts (2Tim 2:22)
    - Identifying with sin, remaining in sin culture, or surrounding with temptations will almost certainly result in sinning
    - We must seek the truth of Scripture rather than the doctrine of our desires (2 Tim 4:3, 1 Tim 8-11)

# WLC Q139

- **Does Scripture deal with transgenderism?**
  - Gen 1 & 2: God created man and woman
    - One or the other, not both, and not one then the other
  - Men may not act sexually as women
    - See discussion on homosexuality
  - Deut 22:5: Men dressing as women is abomination
  - 1Cor 11:14-15: Disgraceful for man to express womanly identity
  - 1Cor 6:9: Two Greek words translated homosexual
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> is active homosexual partner (lit. male bedder)
    - 1<sup>st</sup> is passive homosexual partner (lit. soft man)
      - Often used for effeminate man—acts or dresses like woman
        - » Common use in Greek and Roman writing
  - References to men as women also women as men
  - Defiance of God's created design and intent

# WLC Q139

- **What constitutes transgenderism or effeminacy?**

- Obviously any alteration to body to change gender
  - Physical, surgical, hormonal
  - Alters & rejects God's physical design—act of rebellion
- Any change to appearance to change gender
  - Culturally varies with time, place, and circumstance
  - Men
    - Long hair (Civil War?), skirts (kilt?), makeup (news anchor?)
  - Women
    - Trousers, short hair (buzz cut?), neckties
- Actions to appear as other than correct gender
  - Affectations for purpose of stereotype of wrong gender
    - Woman who wears a buzzcut, wears leather, tattoos, ...
- Natural exceptions exist due to the Fall (intersex)
  - Exceptions should not dictate the rule

# WLC Q139

- **Can unlawful & unnatural desires be overcome or are we stuck with them?**
  - No sin is beyond ability of Holy Spirit to defeat
    - ...Neither **fornicators**, idolaters, **adulterers**, **homosexuals**, **sodomites**, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, or extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. **And such were some of you**. But you were washed, sanctified, justified ...by the Spirit of our God. 1Co 6:9-11
    - And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Gal 5:24
  - Claim that unlawful & unnatural desires are permanent part of person or identity
    - Rejects sanctifying power of Holy Spirit
    - Sin is more important than God's design
    - Identifies with sin over or alongside God

# WLC Q139

- **What is God's solution to unlawful desire?**
  - *...each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. ...It is good if they remain even as I am; but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion. 1Co 7:7-9*
  - Some are given gift of celibacy
    - Able to control natural desire & temptation toward sin
    - Some for a time, some for lifetime
  - Marriage
    - For those without gift of celibacy, marriage is God's solution to control desire & temptation rather than sin



# WLC Q139

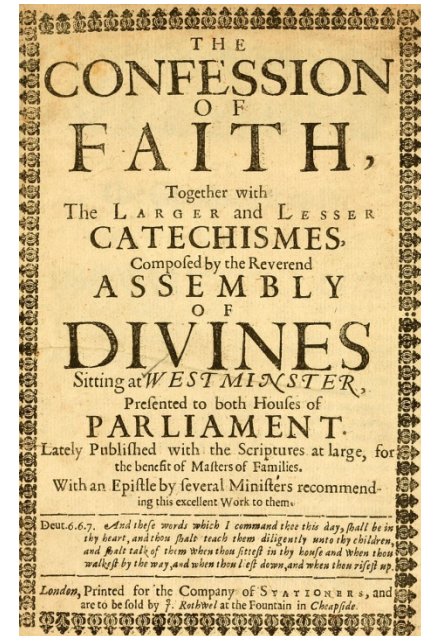
- **What is God's solution to unlawful desire?**
  - But most of all: His Spirit and Church
    - We must rest in the power of His Spirit
      - Only the power of the Spirit can overcome sin nature
    - Be in prayer for ourselves & others
    - Seek support in and support others through His Church
    - Gospel focus not just on sin & law, but freedom through faith & grace
      - Grace without law is meaningless (grace for what...)
      - Law without grace leads to hopelessness
      - This needs to be the message of the Church and His people

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 36: 7<sup>th</sup> Commandments



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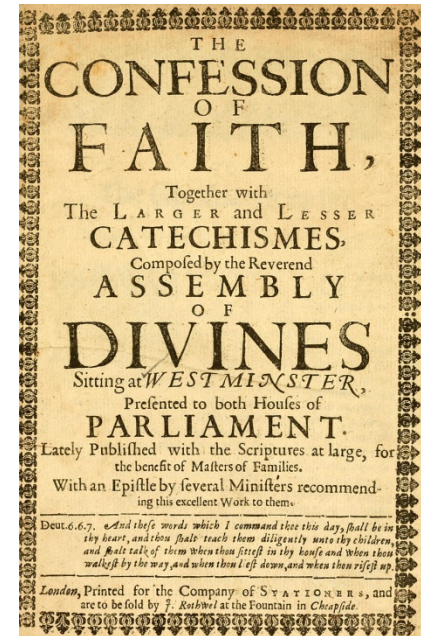
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 37: 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q140

**Q. Which is the eighth commandment?**

**A. The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.**

# WLC Q141

**Q. What are the duties required in the eighth commandment?**

**A. The duties required in the eighth commandment are, truth, faithfulness, and justice in contracts and commerce between man and man; rendering to everyone his due; restitution of goods unlawfully detained from the right owners thereof; giving and lending freely, according to our abilities, and the necessities of others; moderation of our judgments, wills, and affections concerning worldly goods; a provident care and study to get, keep, use, and dispose these things which are necessary and convenient for the sustentation of our nature, and suitable to our condition; a lawful calling, and diligence in it; frugality; avoiding unnecessary lawsuits and suretyship, or other like engagements; and an endeavor, by all just and lawful means, to procure, preserve, and further the wealth and outward estate of others, as well as our own.**

# WLC Q141

- **Scripture References:**

- Ex 20:15
  - The eighth commandment
- Psalm 15:2, 4; Zech 7:4, 10; Zech 8:16-17
  - Justice and honesty in business dealings and contracts
- Rom 13:7
  - To fail to render to every man his due is stealing
- Lev 6:2-5 compared with Luke 19:8
  - Restitution of wealth wrongly acquired or retained
- Luke 6:30, 38; 1 John 3:17, Eph 4:28, Gal 6:10
  - Giving and lending as able to help others in need
- 1 Tim 6:6-9, Gal 6:14
  - Moderation in attitudes & actions toward worldly wealth
- 1 Cor 7:20; Gen 2:15, 3:19; Eph 4:28; Prov 10:4
  - Duty of legitimate occupation and work regularly at it

# WLC Q141

- **Scripture References:**

- 1 Tim 5:8, Prov 27:23-27, Eccl 2:24, 3:12-13;  
1 Tim 6:17-18; Isa 38:1; Matt 11:8
  - Requires industrious efforts to obtain, keep & use means of sustaining our life in situation God's providence places us
- John 6:12, Prov 21:20
  - Thrift is a Christian duty
- 1 Cor 6:1-9
  - Unnecessary lawsuits are to be avoided
- Prov. 6:1-6, 11:15
  - Christian should avoid the entanglement of suretyship
- Lev 25:35; Deut 22:1-4; Ex 23:4-5;  
Gen 47:14,20; Phil 2:4; Matt 22:39
  - Duty to try, by just and lawful means, to promote material prosperity both of ourselves and others

# WLC Q141

- **What is general scope of 8<sup>th</sup> commandment?**
  - Respect for the sanctity of property
  - Property or wealth created by God
    - Entrusted to man for his use in glorifying & serving God
    - Stewardship committed to man, and must be respected
  - Requires not only refrain from stealing neighbor's property but acquire and take care of our own
- **Does Bible sanction private ownership?**
  - Necessary for a life that can glorify and enjoy God
  - Founded on moral law not mere human custom
    - “You shall not steal” is meaningless unless there is divine ordinance of private ownership back of it
  - Evils arise not from private ownership itself, but from abuses of private ownership



# WLC Q141

- **Is Socialism contrary to Christianity?**
  - “Socialism” is used with varying meanings
    - Marxian socialism, root of communism, is certainly contrary to Christian religion
  - Limited form of socialism not contrary to God’s Word
    - E.g., government run postal service is form of socialism
      - Not sinful for the State to engage in this enterprise
      - May be wise or unwise, but not contrary to the Bible
  - Line has to be drawn somewhere
    - Wrong for State to take over or operate all commerce
    - Activities essential to all and where cheapness and efficiency require nation-wide monopoly
    - Maintain conditions for private business to operate
    - Regulate private business in interests of justice
    - God instituted civil government to promote welfare & maintain justice not to compete with its own citizens

# WLC Q141

- **Why is wastefulness sinful?**
  - Sin which is especially characteristic of Americans
    - Prodigal habit can no doubt be partly explained by the comparative wealth of our country
      - But that does not excuse wastefulness
    - Even if there is plenty more available, wrong to waste anything that will sustain or enrich human life, or that has cost natural resources and human effort to produce
  - Possessions not ours to use or waste as we please
    - Stewardship entrusted to us by God, for which we will have to give Him an account

# WLC Q142

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the eighth commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the eighth commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are, theft, robbery, manstealing, and receiving anything that is stolen; fraudulent dealing, false weights and measures, removing land marks, injustice and unfaithfulness in contracts between man and man, or in matters of trust; oppression, extortion, usury, bribery, vexatious lawsuits, unjust enclosures and depopulations; engrossing commodities to enhance the price; ...**

# WLC Q142

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the eighth commandment?**

**A. ... unlawful callings, and all other unjust or sinful ways of taking or withholding from our neighbor: What belongs to him, or of enriching ourselves; covetousness; inordinate prizing and affecting worldly goods; distrustful and distracting cares and studies in getting, keeping, and using them; envying at the prosperity of others; as likewise idleness, prodigality, wasteful gaming; and all other ways whereby we do unduly prejudice our own outward estate, and defrauding ourselves of the due use and comfort of that estate which God has given us.**

# WLC Q142

- **Scripture References:**

- James 2:15-16, 1 John 3:17
  - Neglect of the duties enjoined in 8<sup>th</sup> commandment
- Eph 4:28, Psalm 62:10, 1 Tim 1:10
  - Sinfulness of theft, robbery and man-stealing
- Prov 29:24, Psalm 50:18
  - Knowingly receiving stolen goods is party to the theft
- 1 Thess 4:6; Prov 11:1, 20:10; Amos 8:5
  - Fraudulent dealing and false weights and measures
- Deut 19:14, Prov 23:10
  - Removing landmarks by private action
- Psalm 37:21, Luke 16:10-12
  - Dishonesty, injustice and unfaithfulness in fulfilling contracts or matters of trust are sinful

# WLC Q142

- **Scripture References:**

- Lev 25:17; Matt 23:25; Ezek 22:12, 29; Psa 15:5
  - All forms of oppression, or taking advantage of the helplessness of others for our profit, are forbidden
- Job 15:34, Amos 5:12, 1 Sam 8:3, Psalm 26:10
  - Bribery, as dishonest and unjust, is always wrong
- 1 Cor 6:6-8, Prov 3:29-30
  - Unjust and unnecessary lawsuits
- Isa 5:8, Mic 2:2, Prov 11:26
  - Monopolies of means of human subsistence is wicked
- Acts 19:19, 24-25
  - Occupations which are in themselves unlawful

# WLC Q142

- **Scripture References:**

- Job 20:19, James 5:4, Prov 21:6
  - All ways of enriching ourselves by taking or withholding from others what is rightly theirs, are sinful
- Luke 12:15; 1 Tim 6:5; Col 3:2; Prov 23:5; Psalm 62:10; Matt 6:25, 31, 34; Eccl 5:12
  - Wrong attitudes toward material wealth
- Psalm 73:3; Psalm 37:1, 7
  - Wrong to envy the material prosperity of others
- 2 Thess 3:11; Prov 18:9, 21:17, 23:20-21, 28:19; Eccl 4:8, 6:2; 1 Tim 5:8
  - All laziness, idleness, wastefulness and carelessness concerning the acquiring, retaining and expending of material wealth are sinful

# WLC Q142

- **What are the common sins obviously forbidden by the eighth commandment?**

- Theft, robbery, burglary, larceny, embezzlement, receiving stolen goods, using or tolerating unjust weights and measures, and the like
  - Wrong, not only by Bible, but by God's natural revelation
  - We shall focus on some of less easily recognized forms

- **What is meant by “man-stealing”?**

- Kidnaping persons to be held for ransom
- Stealing human beings to be held as slaves, or to be sold into slavery
- Forced labor which exists in totalitarian countries

- **How does modern advertising violate the law of God?**

- Modern advertising is so permeated with dishonesty that we may wonder how a Christian can participate in some of its common forms. We listen to a radio broadcast and hear a familiar voice telling us all the reasons why a certain brand of coffee, macaroni or aspirin is the best on the market, superior to other brands, the most for our money, characterized by “extra” advantages and “special” features, etc., etc., and then two hours later we hear the same familiar voice telling us all the reasons why another brand of coffee, macaroni or aspirin is the kind we should buy and use with confidence. Of course the broadcaster is only reading a script prepared for him by the advertisers. But the whole process is so obviously shot through with exaggeration, insincerity and half-truth that the listener becomes hardened to this sort of thing and does not take any of it at face value. The same extravagant type of over-statement is prevalent in magazine and newspaper advertising. In America, it would seem, a thing can hardly be offered to the public as “good” and “worth the price”. It must be termed “super”, “colossal”, “magnificent”, “marvellous”, etc., etc.
- Of course there are advertising claims that are downright false. But what is most common is not outright fraud, but exaggeration, half-truth and subtly misleading statements. All advertising which is calculated to produce any other impression in the public mind than that of strict, objective truth concerning the qualities and value of what is offered for sale, is dishonest and therefore sinful. When a common brand of aspirin is advertised with the statement, repeated interminably, that “no other brand of aspirin is purer or gives faster relief”, the impression is created that this brand is purer or faster than others; whereas the real truth is that aspirin is aspirin, being controlled by the Federal Food and Drug Act, and among legally sold brands of aspirin, one brand is as pure and as speedy as another. No doubt many Christian people are connected in one way or another with such dishonest advertising practices; they should consider seriously whether their occupation involves violation of the moral law of God.
- There is, of course, a legitimate field for advertising. Legitimate advertising (a) will tell the real truth about what is offered for sale, avoiding exaggeration and deception; (b) will not try to create the impression that a product is better than that offered by competitors, unless it really is shown by fairly conducted tests; (c) will not put forth imaginary claims which take advantage of the credulity of the public, such as that a brand of tooth-paste is better than others because it contains a “special” ingredient (which has a high-sounding name but is unknown to the science of chemistry), or that the flavor of a brand of coffee is enhanced by a “special” secret process, known only to the firm that offers it for sale. Radio, newspaper and magazine advertising is a



# WLC Q142

- **How is modern advertising sinful?**
  - Modern advertising is permeated with dishonesty
    - Filled with exaggeration, insincerity and half-truth
    - Target becomes hardened and doesn't take any at face value
  - Advertising producing anything but truth of quality & value of product is dishonest and therefore sinful
    - Aspirin A: “nothing is purer or gives faster relief”
      - Aspirin is aspirin, regulated by FDA—no brand is purer than another
  - Legitimate advertising
    - Tells real truth avoiding exaggeration and deception
    - Doesn't create impression product is better than others, unless really shown by fairly conducted tests
    - No imaginary claims taking advantage of public's credulity
      - “Special” ingredient or “special” secret process
      - Europeans use it; sex appeal; shiny, happy people...

# WLC Q142

- **What are “unjust enclosures and depopulations”?**
  - Common or public land taken for private use
    - 17<sup>th</sup> c. England owned by lord of manor but others had legal right for pasturage
    - Enclosures unjust if rights of those who were entitled to use the “common” land were disregarded
  - Depopulations is buying up large tracts of land to form great estate, and removing tenants who had been living on it
    - Form of injustice known in Old Testament times and condemned in Isa. 5:8 and Micah 2:2

# WLC Q142

- **What does Catechism say of monopolies?**
  - Not every form of monopoly is necessarily wrong
  - “Engrossing commodities to enhance the price” is sinful
    - Monopoly with purpose of raising prices by “cornering” the total available supply of a product
    - Eliminates competition and prevents normal commerce
    - Artificial shortage so they can name their own price
    - Especially of the necessities of life are clearly unjust
  - Patent laws guaranteeing inventor temporary monopoly are permissible
    - Legitimate purpose to encourage invention
    - Purchasing patent rights to not manufacture article and offer it to public, but to prevent it being manufactured and sold by anyone is sinful

# WLC Q142

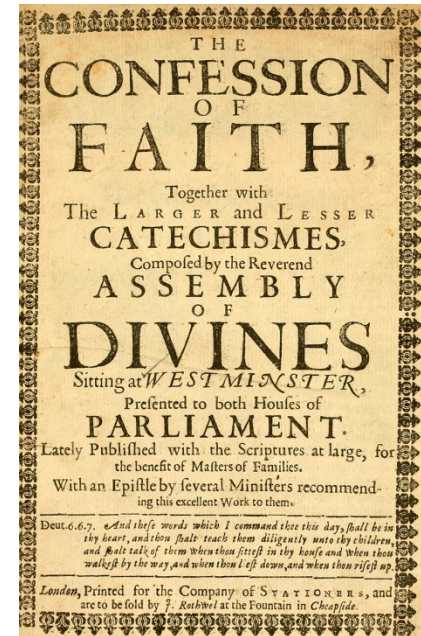
- **What is “wasteful gaming”; why is it wrong?**
  - All forms of gambling involve attempt to gain wealth without rendering equivalent value in return
    - Winning is stealing; losing is wasting Lord’s property
    - Even with agreement to transfer money as determined by “chance” fall of dice, etc., does not make it legitimate
      - Contract to do something sinful is itself sinful

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 37: 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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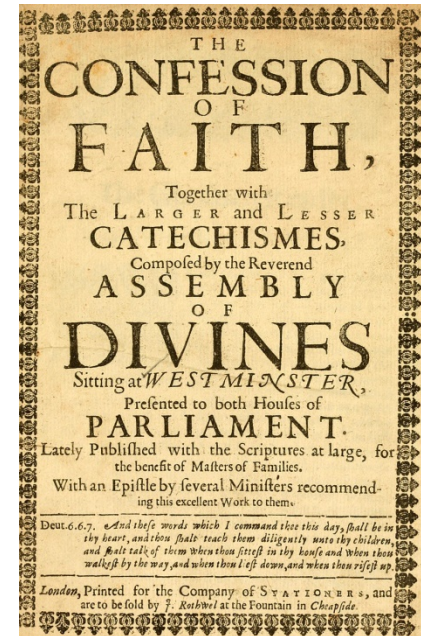
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 38: 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q143

**Q. Which is the ninth commandment?**

**A. The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.**

# WLC Q144

**Q. What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?**

**A. The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting of truth between man and man, and the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own; appearing and standing for the truth; and from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully, speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in all other things: Whatsoever; a charitable esteem of our neighbors; loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name; ...**



# WLC Q144

**Q. What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?**

**A. ... sorrowing for, and covering of their infirmities; freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces, defending their innocency; a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging talebearers, flatterers, and slanderers; love and care of our own good name, and defending it when need requires; keeping of lawful promises; studying and practicing of: Whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.**

# WLC Q144

- **Scripture References:**

- Ex 20:16

- The ninth commandment

- Zech 8:16

- The duty of maintaining truth between man and man

- 3 John 12

- Preserving the good name of our neighbor

- Prov 31:8-9, 14:5,25; Psalm 15:2; 2 Chron 19:9; 1Sam 19:4-5; Josh 7:19; 2Sam 14:18-20; Lev 19:15; 2Cor 1:17-18; Eph 4:25

- Speaking truth in all matters, especially in public justice

- Heb 6:9, 1Cor 13:7, Rom 1:8, 2John 4, 3John 3-4

- Charitable esteem of others, concern for their good name

- 2 Cor 2:4, 12:21; Prov 17:9; 1 Pet 4:8

- Sorrow for and seek to cover infirmities of others

# WLC Q144

- **Scripture References:**

- 1 Cor 1:4-7; 2 Tim 1:4-5; 1 Sam 22:14;

- 1 Cor 13:6-7; Psalm 15:3; Prov 25:23

- The duty of maintaining a right attitude toward the good qualities of others, defending them against injustice, and being unwilling to believe an evil report about them

- Prov 26:24-25, Psalm 101:5

- Flatterers and slanderers are dealers in untruth

- Prov 22:1, John 8:49

- Duty to defend our own good name in case of need

- Psalm 15:4

- Lawful promises must be kept

- Phil. 4:8

- It is our duty to study and practice whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely and of good report

# WLC Q144

- **What is 9<sup>th</sup> commandment's general scope?**
  - Sanctity of truth and honesty in human society
  - Duty of maintaining our & neighbor's good name
- **Why is truth to be regarded as sacred?**
  - Attribute of God and feature of character of God
    - God cannot lie (Titus 1:2); God is “Lord God of truth” (Psa 31:5); “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” (1Jo 1:5); His “Word is truth” (Jo 17:17); Christ Himself is “THE truth” (Jo 14:6)
    - Because God is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His truth, truth must be regarded as sacred by all His rational creatures (angels and men)

# WLC Q144

- **How can we explain the prevalence of untruth in the world?**
  - Just as God is source of truth, Satan is of untruth  
Father of lies (John 8:44) propagates kingdom of untruth
    - Those dominated by lies are citizens of Satan's kingdom
    - Christians who deal in untruth are handling weapons of Satan's kingdom

# WLC Q145

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbors, as well as our own, especially in public judicature; giving false evidence, suborning false witnesses, wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, outfacing and overbearing the truth; passing unjust sentence, calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked; forgery, concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calls for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful and equivocal expressions, to the prejudice of truth or justice; ...**

# WLC Q145

- **Scripture References:**

- 1 Sam 17:28; 2 Sam 1:9-10, 15-16, 16:3
  - Prejudicing truth and good name of selves or others
- Lev 19:15, Hab 1:4
  - Great sin of prejudicing truth in public justice matters
- Prov 6:16, 19, Prov 19:5, Acts 6:13
  - Giving false evidence, or arranging for it to be given
- Jer 9:3, 5; Acts 24:2, 5; Psalm 12:3-4, 52:1-4
  - Great wickedness of knowingly opposing the truth
- Prov 17:15, 1 Kings 21:9-14
  - Sin of passing unjust sentence, or delivering an unjust verdict, in the administration of justice
- Isa 5:20-23, **Prov 17:15**, Amos 5:7
  - All breaking down of the absolute distinction between right and wrong is morally perverse

# WLC Q145

- **Scripture References:**

- Job 13:4; Psalm 119:69; Luke 16:5-7, 19:8
  - Sin of forgery
- **Lev 5:1**, Deut 13:8, Acts 5:3-9, 2 Tim 4:16
  - Concealing truth, and undue silence in a just cause
- 1 Kings 1:6, Lev 19:17, Isa 59:4
  - Remaining silent when it is our duty to speak or complain to constituted authorities of Church or State
- Prov 29:11
  - Speaking truth unseasonably
- 1 Sam 22:9-10, compared with Psalm 52:1-5
  - Speaking truth maliciously to wrong end
- Psalm 56:5, John 2:19 comp with Matt 26:60-61
  - Perverting truth to a wrong meaning
- Gen 3:5, 26:7,9
  - Doubtful or equivocal expressions, to prejudice truth



# WLC Q145

- **What is the general scope of the sins forbidden by the ninth commandment?**
  - Whatever is contrary to the truth and to the good name of any person
- **Why is it a sin to act in such a way as to injure our own good name?**
  - To love our neighbor as ourself, implies proper love of self is divinely imposed duty
    - As each bears image of God and was created to glorify God, legitimate good name of all must be preserved
    - Must be kept in balance with a conscientious concern for the good name of our neighbor, and subordinated to a supreme zeal for the honor and glory of God

# WLC Q145

- **What special form of falsehood is especially wicked?**
  - Opposing truth, by word, deed or silence, in matters of “public judicature”
    - In administration of justice in courts of State or Church
- **What is “suborning false witnesses”?**
  - Engage, employ, or arrange for, persons to appear in a court of justice to give false evidence
    - So guilty may escape punishment, innocent suffer punishment, or that civil lawsuit be decided contrary to what the true facts would require

# WLC Q145

- **Why is “wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause” wrong?**
  - To make guilty appear innocent or wrong, right
    - If lawyer knows client’s guilt, may not try to prove innocent
    - Lawyer has duty to see even guilty person not deprived of the protection and civil rights which law guarantees
- **What is “out-facing and over-bearing” truth?**
  - Stubborn, persistent, perverse effort to oppose and defeat what heart & conscience know is true
    - Often arises from deep prejudice against person or institution standing up for truth
    - May also arise from envy of gifts, talents or attainments of persons who are standing up for the truth

# WLC Q145

- **Is concealing the truth always a sin?**
  - No. Sometimes may be duty to conceal from those who have no right to know it
    - Concealing truth is a sin when we conceal a matter from those who have a right to know it
    - For example, to keep vital military information from enemies of our country is not wrong
- **What is “undue silence in a just cause”?**
  - Remaining silent, for private or selfish reasons when duty is to speak for truth and justice
    - Moral responsibility to God and duty to neighbor and society, to see truth and justice prevail
    - Personal feelings or convenience must not stand in the way of the vindication of truth and justice

# WLC Q145

- **What is “speaking the truth unseasonably”, and why is it wrong?**
  - Speaking truth at wrong time when wisdom or common sense wait until more suitable time
    - If someone is rushing out door, we should not choose that particular time to talk to him about salvation
    - More tactful and sensible to choose time when able to give his attention to the matter
- **What is “speaking the truth maliciously, to a wrong end”?**
  - Speaking truth with wrong motive and purpose
    - E.g., speaking truth with intention of injuring someone’s reputation, or of stirring up anger against someone else

# WLC Q145

- **Why is it wrong to pervert truth to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful and equivocal expressions, etc.?**
  - Intended to deceive people
    - Intentionally using expressions that can be understood in two different ways to deceive, is lying
    - For example, the minister who was reported to have said “I believe in the divinity of Christ”, and then later explained to someone else that he believed in the divinity of Christ because he believed in the divinity of all human beings, was guilty of the sin of breaking the ninth commandment

# WLC Q145

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?**

**A. ...; speaking untruth, lying, slandering, backbiting, detracting, tale bearing, whispering, scoffing, reviling, rash, harsh, and partial censuring; misconstructing intentions, words, and actions; flattering, vainglorious boasting, thinking or speaking too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others; ...**

# WLC Q145

- **Scripture References:**

- Isa 59:13, Lev 19:11, Col 3:9
  - The sin of speaking untruth
- Psalm 15:3, 50:20
  - The sins of slander and backbiting
- James 4:11, Jer 38:4
  - “Detracting”, or unjustly speaking evil of another
- Lev 19:16, **Rom 1:29-30**
  - Tale-bearing and whispering condemned as sinful
- Gen 21:9, Gal 4:29, 1 Cor 6:10
  - The sins of scoffing and reviling.
- Matt 7:1, Acts 28:4, Gen 38:24, Rom 2:1
  - Sins of rash, harsh, and partial censuring of others



# WLC Q145

- **Scripture References:**

- Neh 6:6-8, Rom 3:8, Psa 69:10, 1 Sam 1:13-15, 2 Sam 10:3
  - Misrepresenting others' intentions, words and actions
- Psalm 12:2-3
  - The sin of flattery
- 2 Tim 3:2
  - The sin of vain-glorious boasting
- Luke 18:9-11, Rom 12:16, 1 Cor 4:6, Acts 12:22, Ex 4:10-14
  - It is wrong to think or speak too highly, or not highly enough, of ourselves or others

# WLC Q145

- **What are “slandering” and “backbiting”?**
  - *Slander* injures by maliciously uttering false reports
  - *Backbiting* is aggravated by secretly uttering false reports, behind person’s back
- **What does “detracting” mean ?**
  - *Disparaging*—speaking evil to detract from person’s influence or good reputation
- **What is “tale-bearing” and “whispering”?**
  - *Gossip*—spreading of reports of sins and failings of others to derive some personal satisfaction
  - *Whispering* is circulating stories or rumors secretly
    - Difficult or impossible to trace to their source to correct

# WLC Q145

- **Is it always wrong to tell what we know about wrongdoing committed by others?**
  - Duty to report wrongdoing to proper authorities
    - Reporting to authorities is not talebearing or whispering
    - Motive is not gossip, or delight in others' faults, but proper desire that wrong stopped and justice performed
- **What are *scoffing* and *reviling*?**
  - *Scoffing* is mocking or ridiculing persons as a way of injuring them or making them unhappy
    - Christians laughed at for faith and profession
  - *Reviling* is to oppose and injure by calling hard and evil names, contrary to truth, justice and love
    - Christians when they are improperly called hypocrites

# WLC Q145

- **What is “rash, harsh, and partial censuring”?**
  - Censuring is judging or finding fault with someone
    - “Rash” censuring is judging when not our duty to do so
    - “Harsh” censuring goes beyond what evidence warrants, or “jumping to conclusions” in judging another
    - “Partial” censuring is judging unfairly, or showing partiality, by being prejudiced for or against someone
    - All these are contrary to justice and to love for neighbor
- **Why is misrepresenting intentions, words and actions of others sinful?**
  - Same as telling lies about them
    - Prominence in good cause does not mean selfish ambition
    - Opposition to particular method of accomplishing good purpose does not mean opposed to the good purpose and in favor of corresponding evil

# WLC Q145

- **What are *flattering* & *vain-glorious boasting*?**
  - *Flattering*—praising someone too highly, in order to please them and gain some favor from him
  - *Vain-glorious boasting*—praising ourselves too highly, beyond what truth and justice warrant
  - Both deal in untruth, instead of depending on the strict truth for accomplishing our purposes
- **Why is it wrong to think or speak too highly or meanly of ourselves or others?**
  - We have duty to others, ourselves, and truth
    - Wrong to have or express opinion too high or too low
    - Some have false humility, always speak evil of, or represent themselves as extremely unworthy
      - Disparages graces and gifts of God which have been given them
    - Should think and speak according to real truth of matter

# WLC Q145

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?**

**A. ... denying the gifts and graces of God; aggravating smaller faults; hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins, when called to a free confession; unnecessary discovering of infirmities; raising false rumors, receiving and countenancing evil reports, and stopping our ears against just defense; evil suspicion; envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any, endeavoring or desiring to impair it, rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy; scornful contempt, fond admiration; breach of lawful promises; neglecting such things as are of good report, and practicing, or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering: What we can in others, such things as procure an ill name.**

# WLC Q145

- **Scripture References:**

- Job 4:6, 27:5-6
  - The sin of denying the gifts and graces of God
- Matt 7:3-5
  - It is wrong to aggravate smaller faults of others
- Prov 28:13, 30:20; Gen 3:12-13, 4:9; Jer 2:35; 2Ki 5:25
  - Hiding or excusing sins, we should confess
- Gen 9:22, **Prov 25:9-10**
  - Unnecessarily telling faults or failings of others
- Ex 23:1, Prov 29:12
  - Raising false rumors or countenancing evil reports
- Acts 7:56-57, Job 31:13-14
  - Refusing to pay attention to just defense
- 1 Cor 13:5, 1 Tim 6:4
  - Sin of harboring evil suspicions concerning others

# WLC Q145

- **Scripture References:**

- Num 11:29, Matt 21:15
  - The sin of envying at the deserved credit of others
- Ezra 4:12-13
  - Seeking to damage the good reputation of others
- Jer 48:27, 1 Cor 13:6
  - The sin of being glad of the sins or disgrace of others
- Psa 35:15-16, 21; Matt 27:28-29, Jude 16, Acts 12:22
  - Scornful contempt, fond admiration and flattery
- Rom 1:31, 2 Tim 3:3
  - The sin of breaking lawful promises or vows
- 1 Sam 2:24; 2 Sam 13:12-13; **Prov 5:8-9**, 6:33
  - Neglecting such things as are of good report, and involvement in things as procure a bad reputation



# WLC Q145

- **What is “denying the gifts and graces of God”?**
  - Stubbornly unwilling to recognize as true and real God’s gifts and graces given to ourselves or others
    - When certain person claims a profession of faith, reluctance to believe sincerity or real conversion
- **What is “aggravating smaller faults?”**
  - Represent small faults or failings as more serious and more important than they really are
    - Must not speak of faults as virtues, or not faults at all
    - Wrong to represent little faults as great & serious matters
    - Matt 7:3-5—We all have serious faults of our own, which should have our attention before we undertake to correct the smaller faults in the lives of others

# WLC Q145

- **How do people sin by “receiving and countenancing evil reports”?**
  - Not necessarily always wrong
    - Official duties to receive evil reports and countenance them at least temporarily (law enforcement)
  - Wrong without official responsibility to welcome and eagerly listen to evil reports of others
    - Form of sin of rejoicing in iniquity
- **What induces people to stop their ears against anyone’s just defense?**
  - Blind, violent prejudice
    - Not merely result of ignorance or misunderstanding
    - Arises from the deep wickedness and ingrained depravity of the sinful human heart

# WLC Q145

- **What is meant by “evil suspicion”?**
  - Does not mean a legitimate suspicion, supported by reasonable evidence
  - Suspicion not based on evidence but “wishful thinking”, too-great readiness to believe ill
    - Sinful heart puts worst interpretation on other’s conduct
    - Actual facts may be explained in more charitable way
- **What is “envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any?”**
  - Being highly displeased at others’ honor, praise or recognition that we would like to have ourselves
    - Results in nursing a secret grudge or dislike against the person whose success is envied
    - Proud and selfish dissatisfaction with God’s providence

# WLC Q145

- **Why is it wrong to wish or attempt to injure honor or good reputation of others?**
  - Contrary to truth
    - Displeasing to God, whose nature is truth
  - Contrary to love to our neighbor
    - Their true honor and welfare should be an occasion of rejoicing to us, as if it were our own honor and welfare
- **How do Christians rejoice in iniquity?**
  - Gossip about sins committed by others
    - Claim to be scandalized by wrong, yet obviously taking a great satisfaction in telling about it
  - Others ashamed to do this openly, take secret satisfaction in hearts, rejoicing in others' sins and shame

# WLC Q145

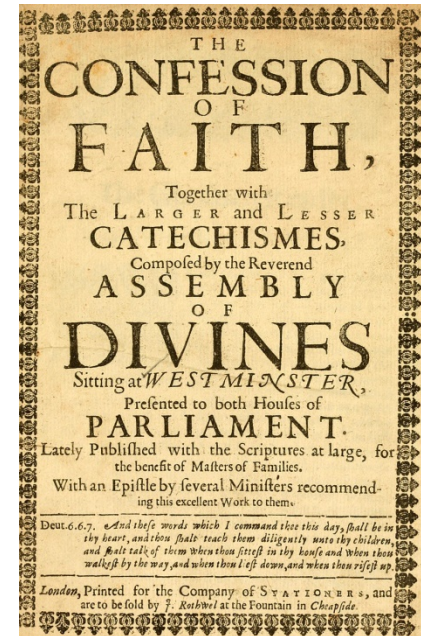
- **What is “scornful contempt”?**
  - Treating or regarding others in way which ignores natural human dignity as created in image of God
    - Can be done in word, thought or deed
    - When directed against our Christian brethren it is a greatly aggravated sin
- **What is “fond admiration”?**
  - Blind, foolish devotion to some person
    - Extravagant praise and honor beyond what is really deserved, regardless of real facts of that person’s life
  - Attitude of the mind
    - Leads to sin of flattery, or expressing of foolish and extravagant praise of some person

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 38: 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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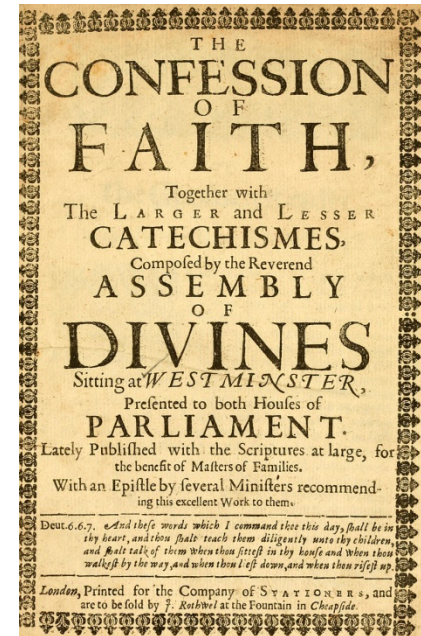
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 39: 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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# WLC Q146

**Q. Which is the tenth commandment?**

**A. The tenth commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.**



# WLC Q147

**Q. What are the duties required in the tenth commandment?**

**A. The duties required in the tenth commandment are, such a full contentment with our own condition, and such a charitable frame of the whole soul toward our neighbor, as that all our inward motions and affections touching him, tend unto, and further all that good which is his.**

# WLC Q147

- **Scripture References:**

- Ex 20:17

- The tenth commandment

- Phil 4:11, Heb 13:5, 1 Tim 6:6

- The Christian duty of contentment

- Job 31:29, Rom 12:15, Psa 122:7-9, 1 Tim 1:5, Esther 10:3, 1 Cor 13:4-7

- The duty of a right attitude toward our neighbor and all this is his

# WLC Q147

- **What is meant by contentment?**
  - Willingness to accept condition in which God's providence has placed us
    - Without murmuring, complaining, or being envious at the blessings or prosperity of others
- **Does duty of contentment imply it's wrong to try to improve our condition in life?**
  - Duty to be content as long as it is our condition
    - Not wrong to try to change or improve condition, by right and lawful means and methods
    - Contentment not an excuse for laziness, lack of ambition, or neglect of industrious work
    - While working to improve our condition, must always regard God and God's kingdom as our true riches

# WLC Q147

- **What attitude toward our neighbor is required by the tenth commandment?**
  - “A charitable frame of the whole soul”
    - Love our neighbor so we will be glad and thankful for his true welfare and prosperity, as if it were our own
- **What is meant by “our inward motions and affections” with regard to our neighbor?**
  - Thoughts, desires and motives of our hearts
    - Spring from character & determine outward life and conduct
  - We should have right thoughts, desires and motives concerning our neighbor, and all this is his

# WLC Q147

- **Why must our lives “tend unto, and further” the welfare of our neighbor?**
  - God’s plan and purpose that human beings shall be dependent on one another for their welfare
    - In a true sense we are our brother’s keeper
    - Lives must be directed toward prosperity and welfare of others as well as our own
- **What is relation of tenth commandment to the right of owning private property?**
  - In speaking of neighbor’s possessions, divinely sanctions right of private ownership of property
    - Under a truly consistent communist system impossible to speak of coveting “anything that is thy neighbor’s”, for all property would be collectively owned

# WLC Q148

**Q. What are the sins forbidden in the tenth commandment?**

**A. The sins forbidden in the tenth commandment are, discontentment with our own estate; envying and grieving at the good of our neighbor, together with all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his.**

# WLC Q148

- **Scripture References:**

- 1 Kings 21:4, Esther 5:13, 1 Cor 10:10
  - The sin of discontentment with our own estate
- Gal 5:26, James 3:14-16
  - The sin of envy
- Psalm 112:9-10, Neh 2:10
  - It is wrong to grieve at the good of others
- Rom 7:7-8, 13:9; Col 3:5; Deut 5:21
  - The sin of having a wrong attitude toward anything that is our neighbor's

# WLC Q148

- **Why it is sinful to be discontented?**
  - It involves dissatisfaction with God's providence
    - Discontented really feels God is not treating him right
    - Really a form of irreverence, and unbelief in the goodness and love of God
- **What is envying, and why is it wrong?**
  - Selfish and unfriendly grudging in view of what another possesses or enjoys
    - If we do not have the same blessings as our neighbor, we are not willing for him to have them either
  - Proceeds from sinful selfishness
    - Person who is really unselfish cannot be envious at the same time



# WLC Q148

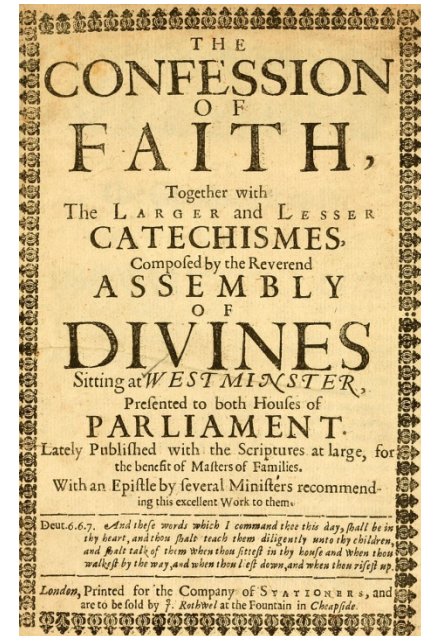
- **What causes us to grieve at neighbors' good?**
  - People's sinful hearts
    - Should rejoice in all blessings, whether material or spiritual, enjoyed by others
    - Sinful hearts take more satisfaction knowing neighbor has committed some sin or suffered loss, than thinking of the blessings that God has bestowed on him
- **How do wrong attitudes of the mind violate the tenth commandment?**
  - Violated by “all inordinate motions and affections” to anything that is our neighbor's
    - Wrong to desire that which is the property of others
    - Not only outward actions that are sinful, but also even thoughts, desires, motives and mental attitudes

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 39: 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment



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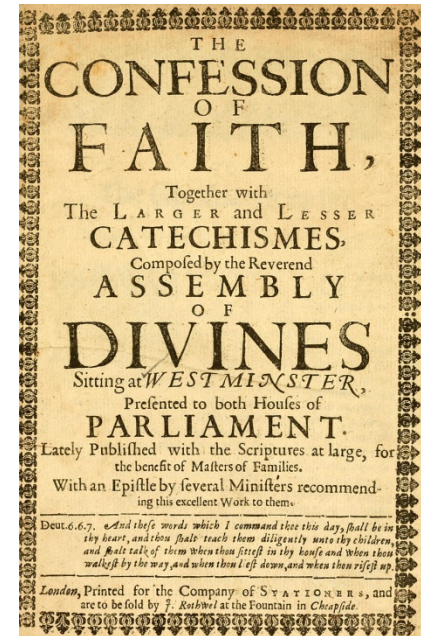
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# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 40: Sin



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# WLC Q149

**Q. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?**

**A. No man is able, either of himself, or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but does daily break them in thought, word, and deed.**

# WLC Q149

- **Scripture References:**

- James 3:2, John 15:5, Romans 8:3
  - No one can perfectly keep God's commandments
- Eccles 7:20; 1 John 1:8, 10; Galatians 5:17, **Romans 7:18-19**
  - No one can keep God's commandments perfectly, even by God's grace and Holy Spirit's help, in present life
- Genesis 6:5, 8:21; Romans 3:9-19, James 3:2-13
  - Everyone breaks God's commandments daily in thought, word and deed

# WLC Q149

- **Why can no one perfectly to keep God's commandments?**
  - All born with sinful “heart” or nature—original sin
    - Results in their committing all kinds of sins constantly
    - Determines moral quality of person's life and actions
    - Being born again of Holy Spirit only subdues corruption of original sin, does not eradicate it
- **Is “original sin” generally accepted today?**
  - Popular idea today is everyone is mostly good
    - Enough good to overcome the evil
    - Modern thought optimistic about human nature
  - Original sin and total depravity are taught in God's Word with unmistakable clearness
    - Bible is pessimistic about man's natural moral condition

# WLC Q150

**Q. Are all transgressions of the law of God equally heinous in themselves, and in the sight of God?**

**A. All transgressions of the law of God are not equally heinous; but some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.**



# WLC Q150

- **Scripture References:**

- John 19:11, Ezek 8:6, 13, 15

- Degrees of sinfulness in actions contrary to God's law

- 1 John 5:16

- Sin “not unto death” and sin “unto death”

- Psalm 78:17, 32, 56

- Sin rendered more heinous in God's sight by reason of various aggravating factors



# WLC Q150

- **What is the meaning of “heinous”?**
  - “Extremely wicked” or “atrocious”
- **Are all sins heinous, or extremely wicked, in God’s sight?**
  - There is no such thing as a sin that does not matter
    - Even littlest sin is a sin against infinite and holy God, and therefore even the smallest sin is infinitely evil
    - No such thing as a sin that does not count against a person, or a sin that can be disregarded

# WLC Q150

- **Are all sins equally wicked in God's sight?**
  - Even least sin is an offence against the holy God, and therefore absolutely evil, but...
    - Some sins are in themselves more wicked than others
    - Some sins by reason of aggravating factors are more wicked in God's sight than others
- **What does “some sins in themselves” are more heinous than others mean?**
  - Apart from any special circumstances, some sins are more heinous than others
    - Sin of murder is more heinous than the sin of theft
    - Sin of theft is more heinous than idleness or laziness

# WLC Q150

- **How does Catholic Church misuse this teaching?**
  - False distinction between “mortal” and “venial sin”
    - “Mortal sin” is “grievous offence against the law of God” bringing “everlasting death and damnation on the soul”
    - “Venial sin” is “slight offence against the law of God”, lessens love of God in our heart, makes us less worthy of His help, weakens our power to resist “mortal sin”
  - Bible teaches that every sin, even the least, deserves God’s everlasting punishment
    - Wages of *all* sin is death (Rom. 6:23)
    - No sin is only “a slight offence against the law of God”
    - No sinner is worthy of God’s help at all

# WLC Q151

**Q. What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?**

**A. Sins receive their aggravations, From the persons offending: if they be of riper age, greater experience or grace, eminent for profession, gifts, place, office, guides to others, and whose example is likely to be followed by others. From the parties offended: if immediately against God, his attributes, and worship; against Christ, and his grace; the Holy Spirit, his witness, and workings; against superiors, men of eminency, and such as we stand especially related and engaged unto; against any of the saints, particularly weak brethren, the souls of them, or any other, and the common good of all or many. ...**

# WLC Q151

- **Scripture References:**

- Jer 2:8; Job 32:7, 9; Eccles 4:13; 1 Kings 11:4, 9
  - Those with special responsibility for exemplary and godly living, persons of riper age, greater experience, and more blessings of God's grace than others
- **2 Sam 12:14**, 1 Cor 5:1
  - Sin by Christians with public profession of faith more serious than same sin by without such profession
- James 4:17, Luke 12:47-48, Jer 5:4-5
  - Greater privileges or places of prominence in society
- 2Sam 12:7-9, Ezek 8:11-12, Rom 2:17-24, Gal 2:11-14, Matt 21:38-39
  - Church or State officer others' guides
- 1Sam 2:25; Acts 5:4; Psa 51:4; Rom 2:4; Mal 1:8,14
  - Sin directly against God, His attributes and worship

# WLC Q151

- **Scripture References:**

- Heb 2:2-3, 12:25, 10:29, 6:4-6; Matt 12:31-32; Eph 4:30
  - Sin against Christ/His grace or Spirit/His witness & works
- Jude 8, Num 12:8-9, Isa 3:5, Prov 30:17, 2 Cor 12:15, Psalm 55:12-15
  - Against persons due special honor and respect or those closely related or specially obligated to
- Zeph 2:8-11, Matt 18:6, 1 Cor 6:8, Rev 17:6, 1 Cor 8:11-12, Rom 14:13, 15, 21
  - Against Christians especially weaker brethren
- Ezek 13:19, **1 Cor 8:12**, Rev 18:12-13, Matt 23:15
  - Imperils souls of others, or works against their salvation
- 1 Thess. 2:15-16, Josh 22:20
  - Involves others, or which interferes with true welfare of all or many

# WLC Q151

- **What is the meaning of “aggravations”?**
  - Any factor or circumstance that makes that sin more serious or wicked
- **What general truth is taught by the first part of the answer to Q. 151?**
  - Same sin by different persons involves different degrees of guilt
    - According to special responsibilities of those concerned
    - Sin always involves guilt, but various factors and circumstances may increase the guilt

# WLC Q151

- **Why are sins aggravated when by those of riper age or greater experience?**
  - Opportunity to learn will of God, experience His grace & salvation and learn to overcome temptation
    - Greater our experience of the grace of God, the less excuse we have for falling into sin
    - Experience of grace means progress in holiness
- **How does official position in Church or State affect a person's responsibility?**
  - Those in official positions are looked up to by ordinary citizens or Church members
    - Expected to set a good example of righteous conduct
    - Failing to do so aggravates their guilt



# WLC Q151

- **How does responsibility for moral welfare of others affect the seriousness of sins?**
  - Responsibility for our sins is not only by in actual sins themselves, but by their influence on others
    - Leaders, guides to others, and examples likely to be followed by others, have added responsibility
    - Sinful conduct leading others into sin has double sin to account for

# WLC Q151

- **Why are sins against Christ, and His grace, especially heinous in God's sight?**
  - Christ is Himself truly God, just as the Father is
    - Sin against Christ is the same as to sin against God
  - Christ's grace is gift of God's love to guilty sinners
    - Sin against Christ's grace is sinning against love and mercy of God, which should lead him to repentance
- **Why is sin against witness and workings of Spirit especially heinous in God's sight?**
  - Holy Spirit is given by God's love and grace to dwell and work in the hearts of His people
    - Sin against inward witness and workings of the Holy Spirit treat this gracious gift of God with contempt

# WLC Q151

**Q. What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?**

**A. Sins receive their aggravations, ...From the nature and quality of the offense: if it be against the express letter of the law, break many commandments, contain in it many sins: if not only conceived in the heart, but breaks forth in words and actions, scandalize others, and admit of no reparation: if against means, mercies, judgments, light of nature, conviction of conscience, public or private admonition, censures of the church, civil punishments; and our prayers, purposes, promises, vows, covenants, and engagements to God or men; ...**

# WLC Q151

- **Scripture References:**

- Prov 6:30-33

- Nature and quality of the offence committed

- Ezra 9:10-12, 1 Kings 11:9-10

- Offences against the express letter of God's law

- Col 3:5, 1 Tim 6:10, Prov 5:8-12, Josh 7:21

- Breaking several commandments or committing many sins

- James 1:14-15, Matt 5:22, Micah 2:1

- Sin conceived in the heart, which breaks forth into words and actions is of aggravated seriousness

- Matt 18:7, Rom 2:23-24

- Sin which scandalizes others

- Matt 11:21-24, John 15:22, Isa 1:3, Deut 32:6

- Sins in spite of means used by God which should restrain sin or in spite of God's special mercies

# WLC Q151

- **Scripture References:**

- 2 Sam 12:7-10

- Sin which admits of no reparation

- Amos 4:8-11, Jer 5:3

- Sin against God's judgments

- **Rom 1:26-27**, 1 Cor 11:14-15

- Especially sinful to do what nature, even apart from Scripture, shows to be wrong

- **Rom 1:32**, Dan 5:22, Titus 3:10-11

- Sin in spite of the conviction of their own conscience

- Prov 29:1, 27:22; 23:35; Titus 3:10; Matt 18:17

- Sin committed in spite of warning or reproof, censures of Church discipline, or civil penalties

- Psa 78:34-37; Jer 2:20; 42:5-6, 20-21; Ecc 5:4-6; Prov 2:17, 20:25; Lev 26:25; Ezek. 17:18-19

- Sins in spite of our promises, vows, covenants, etc

# WLC Q151

- **What is meant by “nature and quality of the offence”?**
  - Inherent character of an offence, considered apart from all questions of persons and circumstances
    - Murder is more heinous than theft, regardless of who murderer or thief are, who victims are, time, place, etc
- **Which is more wicked, to harbor sin in the heart, or to express it in actual conduct?**
  - Sin in actual conduct is much more wicked
    - Even to conceive a sin in heart is sinful in God’s sight
    - Sin expressed in actual conduct is even more wicked, as it is a fuller development of rebellion against God

# WLC Q151

- **What is meant by an offence which admits of no reparation?**
  - In our relation to our fellow-men some sins admit of reparation, and other do not
    - Theft admits of reparation: money can be returned
    - Murder and adultery cannot be undone
- **What is sinning against God's judgments?**
  - God's judgments should lead person to repentance, submission and obedience to God
    - Continued sinning in spite of divine judgments greatly increases people's guilt before God

# WLC Q151

- **What is meant by the “light of nature”, and how do people sin against it?**
  - Knowledge of God and moral obligation from general revelation in nature and conscience
    - Apart from God’s special revelation in Scripture
    - Teaches there is a God, it is our duty to worship and honor Him, and that certain things are wrong
      - Thus the light of nature leaves men without excuse
      - Certain sins, such as murder, atheism, dishonesty, and homosexuality are wrong
  - Sins against the light of nature are against the law of God written in the constitution of our own being
    - Violates not only God’s revelation but our own makeup



# WLC Q151

**Q. What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?**

**A. Sins receive their aggravations, ...if done deliberately, wilfully, presumptuously, impudently, boastingly, maliciously, frequently, obstinately, with delight, continuance, or relapsing after repentance. From circumstances of time and place: if on the Lord's day, or other times of divine worship; or immediately before or after these, or other helps to prevent or remedy such miscarriages: if in public, or in the presence of others, who are thereby likely to be provoked or defiled.**

# WLC Q151

- **Scripture References:**

- Psalm 36:4, Jer 6:16, Num 15:30, Ex 21:14
  - Deliberate, willful and presumptuous sinning
- Jer 3:3, Prov 7:13, Psalm 52:1, 3 John 10
  - Impudent, boastful, and malicious sinning
- Num 14:22, Zech 7:11-12, Prov 2:14, Isa 57:17
  - Stubbornness, persistence, delight & other characters
- 2 Kings 5:26, Jer 7:10, Isa 26:10
  - Aggravated by circumstances of time and place
- Ezek 23:37-39, Isa 58:3-5, Num 25:6-7, Jer 7:8-10, 1Cor 11:20-21, Prov 7:14-15, John 13:27,30
  - Aggravated on Lord's day, or other divine worship times
- **Ezra 9:13-14**
  - Aggravated directly after experiencing God's chastisements
- 2 Sam 16:22, 1 Sam 2:22-24
  - Committed publicly, or in way which scandalizes others

# WLC Q151

- **What is meant by sinning “deliberately, willfully, presumptuously”?**
  - Closely related meaning in connection with sin
    - *Deliberately* is to sin after some consideration of the matter in one’s mind
    - *Willfully* is to sin with attitude of being bent on having one’s own way, no matter whether it is right or wrong
    - *Presumptuously* is to sin intentionally, counting on God’s grace to bestow forgiveness for sin afterwards
    - Contrasted with unintentional sin, sin from weakness or sudden temptation, and sin resulting from ignorance or a faulty understanding of requirements of God’s law
  - Clearly all deliberate, presumptuous and willful sinning is heinous and highly offensive to God

# WLC Q151

- **What is meant by sinning “impudently, boastingly, maliciously”?**
  - *Impudently* is to sin boldly, without any feeling of shame because of our sin
    - Makes no attempt to conceal his sin
  - *Boastingly* is proud of sinning, and brags about it to others; his glory is in his shame (Phil 3:19)
  - *Maliciously* is to sin with spite or enmity against God or God’s people
- **Why does sin on Sunday, aggravate guilt?**
  - Involves not only the guilt of the sin in itself, but added guilt of profanation of the Lord’s day or other ordinances of divine worship

# WLC Q151

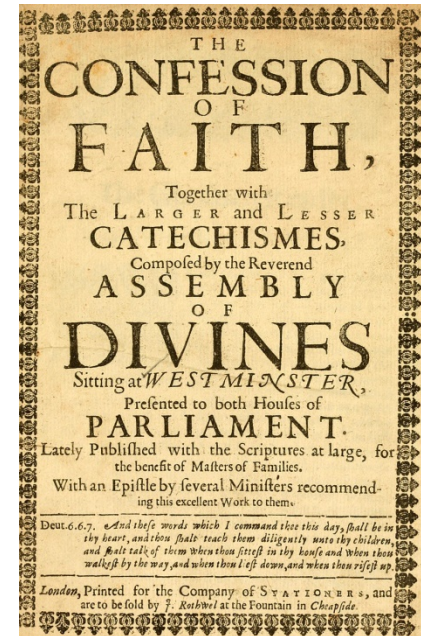
- **Why are sins committed publicly, or in such a way as to have a bad influence on others, specially wicked in God's sight?**
  - We have a moral responsibility for our neighbor as well as for ourselves
    - We are in a way each our brother's keeper
  - Private sin, or known only to a few persons, is wrong and offensive to God
  - Public sin must inevitably have bad effect on many others, so involves added guilt before God
  - Public sin by Christians also brings ill repute and charges of hypocrisy on the Church and Christ

# The Westminster Larger Catechism

## Lesson 40: Sin



*Presbyterian Catechising*  
John Phillip 1847



1658 edition of the Westminster  
Standards