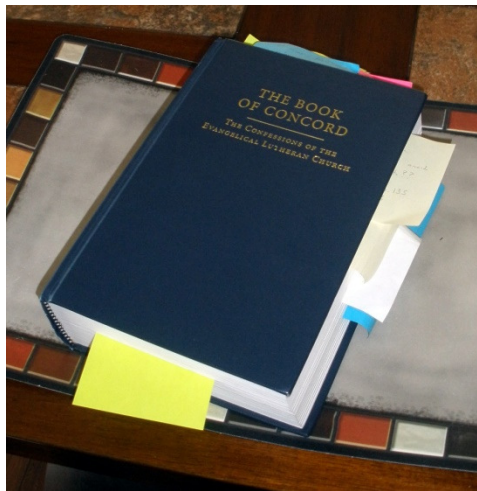


Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings from the parsonage! Finally, a week without rain! Harvesting can continue, our Reformation service can take place—and the even larger one at Immanuel, Altamont, and then we arrive in November. I was not prepared for so much rain in autumn, but then, I haven't been sure what to expect from the weather this year. A heavy winter, mild summer, and then rain in the fall! Some think that this winter will be heavy, others—myself included—hope that it will be milder than the last. Either way, though, we should be prepared: prepared for a heavy winter, should it come; prepared for the end of the Church year, as we prepare for our end, whether at the end of our lives, or when Christ returns with all the company of heaven; and you should be prepared, because it's time to dig into the Book of Concord again!



Last month we heard from the preface Luther wrote concerning his large catechism. This month, we'll continue to look at it, focusing on both the Ten Commandments and the Chief Articles of Faith. In Luther's preface, you'll see that the Ten Commandments section is just that, the commandments. You'll note, though, that there are a couple footnotes, which are worth reading. The first footnote reminds us where Luther got these commandments: from Exodus chapter twenty at Mount Sinai, and again in Deuteronomy (the second-giving of the Law) chapter five.

The second footnote concerns the Third Commandment. The English translation describes the day we hallow as "the day of rest." In the footnote, it is termed as the German *Feiertag*, which more

literally translates to “day of celebration (p.384).” Perhaps the reason for this is because of the change of date. The Sabbath in Old Testament times was on Saturday, but following Jesus’ coming, death, and resurrection, we have worship services on the eighth day, that is, the second first day of the week—Sunday. More than that, our services on Sundays are celebrations where we rejoice in what God has done for us in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is “the feast of victory for our God, Alleluia!”

The final footnote about the commandments regards their numbering. Some of you may have seen plaques and the like which have a different command than we’re used to seeing. According to our footnote, that is because those plaques follow the “numbering of the Hebrew Bible (p.384).” “Ulrich Zwingli and other Reformed theologians...used the prohibition of images (which Luther viewed as an expansion of the first commandment pertaining to the Israelites) to justify their iconoclasm and their rejection of Christ’s real presence in the Lord’s Supper (p.384).” “Luther,” on the other hand, “follows the traditional numbering of the Vulgate (p.384).” So it is for the sake of both preventing misunderstanding about the Lord’s Supper—that it is truly the Lord’s true body and true blood which we eat and drink—and to keep with tradition that Luther continued with this numbering.

The next section is “The Chief Articles of Faith.” As you read this section, you’ll note that it is none other than the Apostle’s Creed. A footnote here clarifies another question that you may have had: why do we say “one holy Christian church” instead of “one holy catholic church?” Apparently, it was even “common in fifteenth-century German ecclesiastical use to translate the Latin *ecclesia catholica* by *christliche Kirche*, and Luther follow(ed) the customary wording (p.384).”

It seems that these brief summaries will continue for a short time before we get into the meat of the Commandments, Creed, and so forth. In the meantime, I encourage you to read ahead if you want, and see if you can learn any other interesting explanations. In the meantime, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you as we conclude this church year and head into the next!

Your brother and under-Shepherd in Christ,

Pastor Josh