# **HOW TO USE MY SMALL CATECHISM**

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

EXPLANATION OF SMALL CATECHISM

### - The Fourth Commandment

Honor your father and your mother.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.



### The Central Thought

God gives parents a unique task that serves the well-being of all society.

What makes parents unique among all other people in our lives?

Read John 19:25–27. Note how Jesus honored His mother as He was dying.

As Christians, we give parents special honor as God's representatives on earth—gifts of God through whom He gave us the gift of life.

How can I show that I honor and cherish my parents as gifts of God and as His representatives on earth?



## A Closer Reading of the Small Catechism

54. Why does this commandment focus on parents and other authorities?

A. A mother and father uniquely serve as God's representatives through whom He bestows and nurtures human life on earth.

B. Other authorities (legal guardians, pastors, teachers, employers, government officials) also serve as God's representatives for the support and protection of our life on earth.

55. How do we fear and love God in keeping the Fourth Com-

We fear and love God by not despising our parents, guardians, or other authorities. Despising means A. looking down upon them or making fun of them;

142 Proverbs 23:22 Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

B. disobeying or rebelling against their God-given authority.

143 Proverbs 15:20 A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother.

Read Deuteronomy 21:18-21; 1 Samuel 2:12-25; and 2 Samuel 15:10-11.

We fear and love God by receiving and recognizing parents and authorities as His representatives. We do this by

A. honoring them;

Read Mark 7:10-12, where Jesus condemns those who used man-made religious traditions as an excuse for not honoring their father and mother.

B. serving and coming to the aid of our parents;

144 John 19:25–27 Standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Read Genesis 47:11-12, about how Joseph cared for his father and brothers.

C. obeying our parents, pastors, teachers, employers, and government authorities;

- 145 Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."
- 146 Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will
- Get a little familiar with your table of contents at the front of your Small Catechism. You'll notice:
  - The first 42 pages are the actual *Small Catechism*. This Martin Luther's original catechism. It is a summary of basic Christian teachings. He also included questions so that the head of the household could teach his family what it meant to be Christians through these central teachings.
  - The rest of the book is what we call the "Explanation to the Small Catechism." Over time, we've added Bible verses, notes, and references next to the original Small Catechism as a way to reinforce what we've been taught in the Bible and what we believe as Christians. You'll spend most of your time in this section of the catechism.
- Within the Explanation portion of the catechism, you'll find three subheadings for each section:
  - o The Central Thought guides you through simple Bible study and reflection questions
  - o A Closer Reading of the Small Catechism helps you dig deeper into the wording of the Small Catechism.
  - o Connections and Applications relates Scripture to important issues in today's culture.
- You'll also notice that the entire Catechism is divided into questions. Notice the <u>red arrows</u> pointing to those numbers in the <u>picture above</u>. Those are referring to questions 54 and 55. Whenever your journal asks you to look up a question in the *Small Catechism*, you are looking for these maroon numbers. There are a total of 374 questions, so don't get worried if the numbers seem high as you're looking them up!

# **HOW TO USE MY BIBLE**

- The Bible is actually a collection of **books** rather than one book (you'll learn more about this in Unit 1). When you open your Bible to its table of contents, you'll see a list of all of those books. This is a good place to go when you aren't sure where to find a book. It will give you the page number where it starts!
- Once you turn to a book of the Bible, you'll notice that it's broken down into **chapters**. You can tell when a chapter begins and ends because there will be large numbers that tell you which chapter you're in. For instance, below you will see a picture of the book of 2 Timothy (pronounced "Second Timothy") and you'll notice there are two chapters: chapter 1 and chapter 2.
- Within each chapter, we have verses. Verses are indicated by smaller numbers at the beginning of a sentence.
   This helps us when we need to quickly reference a certain part of the Bible. For example, if I wanted to find 2
   Timothy 1:2, that means turning to the book of "2 Timothy," looking for the first chapter (1), and the second verse (2). There I find these words, "To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord."

CHAPTER

The number on this side of the colon tells me what chapter to look for.

Here's a quick reference guide if you ever find yourself confused:

воок =

The first part tells me the book. Sometimes it has numbers, sometimes it doesn't.

2 Timothy 1:2

VERSE

The number on this side tells me what verse (or verses) to find.

825

2 TIMOTHY 2:17

present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

19In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming

byeard for teaching, reput inc. correcting an

age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, 21 which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith.

Grace be with you.

# 2 Timothy

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

<sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my dear son:

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Encouragement to Be Faithful

Heart God, whom I serve, as my forefa-

17On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me. 18May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus.

mode boly used at the Master and

2 You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. <sup>3</sup>Endure hardship