

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 28 OCTOBER 2012 EVENING SERVICE

Sing before: Psalm 89:12

Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Psalm of praise: Psalm 19:1, 4

Prayer:

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation of the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

Amen

Scripture Versification 5-4:1, 2, 6

Scripture reading: Psalm 1

Scripture text: Psalm 1:2; and Catechism Sunday 34

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.

(Psalm 1: 2)

It is remarkable that this Psalm collection starts by blessing and cursing.

- The blessing is that there are people enjoying striving to be obedient to the law of the Lord.
- The curse is that there are people putting their lives in service to the sin and eventually dying in the sin.

One thing is certain: It is not enough only doing good.

- You can just as well become lost by only doing good than becoming lost when you sin.
- There is no salvation should what you do good is not done in worship of the Lord and according to His law.

This psalm explains the road of blessing – the style of life followed by somebody serving the Lord. He lives according to the Lord's commandments. He shuns wrong company:

- he does not live with the wicked,
- he does not share his life with sinners
- and he also does not meet with those poking fun at religion and the Lord.

Come let us consider the law of the Lord from the following viewpoints:

- 1. The need to the law.**
- 2. The contents of the law**
- 3. The purpose of the law.**

1. The need to the law

A redeemed congregation cannot exist without the law of their God.

- There is a practical law determining that chaos and disorder can only have one end result, and that is destruction.
- This underlines the need of the church to nullify all matters like confusion, lack of order and arbitrariness because they are all pre runners to chaos.

Something must be directional so that the church of the Lord can know in what direction he must positively strive in aid of existing good and properly as a body of God.

- Therefore there must be a law that is a guideline and a rule for the conduct of church members.
- The law the church needs cannot be something like a governmental act or a moral law, with which people can either agree or differ.

It must be a law with absolute authority: God's law, forcing the authority of God onto mankind. Whoever does not obey will be eternally lost.

The Legislator can be nobody else than God and God alone because the Legislator must be perfectly just and His authority so absolute that He must be able to punish any transgressor.

The church has a need for the following law:

- A law that cannot be excluded.
- A law that reveals sin so that everyone redeemed in Christ can joyfully submit himself to these rules of life.
- The law of the Lord is vital so that everyone redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ can willingly submit him/herself to the grace of God.

2. The contents of the law

The contents of the law is the criterion ruling our relationship with God and our neighbor:

- In all of the Ten Commandments we are put facing God by the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- In all of the Ten Commandments we are led by the Holy Spirit so that we have insight in what the law demands from us and what we must do to responsibly comply with it.
- All of the Ten Commandments deal with the love, but then with the proper way of love, because a wrong way of love will turn around and destroy you.
 - You can only come to fulfillment through the law of the Lord should you execute every law with love for God and your neighbor.

The law of the Lord requires full submission to the Lord and total submission to God the Holy Spirit, because man, through human wisdom, cannot comply with the law of the Lord; also not by tricks or human abilities.

In the law there is a strange relationship in the conduct demanded from us towards the Lord in the heaven and our conduct towards our fellow humans, living with us on earth.

- The strangeness is that the principle requires us to serve and love the Lord with our entire being.
- Literally everything is demanded – nothing remains with us that must not be put to service of the Lord:
37 Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'
38 "This is the first and great commandment.
 (Matthew 22:37, 38)

The principle determining our conduct towards our neighbor puts love as our yardstick:
"And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'(Verse 39)

The four commandments regulating our service and obedience to the Lord work as follows:

- **The first rules worshipping in general.**
 - There is only one God that may be worshipped.
 - This means that here a command is given for us to conduct worshipping services and these services may only be to the glory of the Lord.
- **The second commandment rules the worshipping service in particular.**
 - In our worshipping of the Lord there may be no images. We may not depict angels, animals, fishes or anything in creation and use it in worshipping the Lord.
 - We also may not worship these images or depictions because that is then idolatry.
- **The third commandment deals with the disposition of our hearts.**
 - Misuse of the Name of the Lord can only occur to people lacking love towards the Lord.
 - Or to people scorning or despising the Lord.
 - It simply means that these people have no insight in who is God because they are not living under guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- **The fourth commandment deals mainly with our tongue and our lifestyle.**

- Do you confess the Lord? Then you belong at the worshipping service. This commandment rules the celebration of the Lord's day of rest.
- The Bible teaches that on this day we must not forsake the assembly. Listen very carefully to the words of this letter to the Hebrews:
not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)

The point is just that a distortion, by any one of us, of any of these four commandments should switch on a serious danger sign.

- It means that there is something wrong between us and the Lord – and anybody trying to confront or challenge the Lord will be extremely hurt forever.

The last six commandments rule the relationship with our neighbor. But it is very clear that the Lord is above every commandment.

- The fifth commandment rules the authority of our parents, but over and above the authority of the parents stands the authority (on all territories) of God and His love.
- Above the wedding stands God as the Instituter of the wedding and His purpose of the wedding.
- Higher than the commandment for respect of the property of other people stands the Council of God. He makes the rich and the poor. He grants gifts and means to the people as He likes.
- Above false witness stands the veracity and sincerity of God.
- Elevated above the ban on desires rules the glory and holiness of the Lord ruling what is proper and what is not.

These laws are relevant to all areas of life.

- The commandments are everlasting because the Lord never changes.
- Therefore the Lord's purpose with these commandments is that we must mirror our love and relationship with Him therein.
 - It must reveal us where there is something wrong so that on these points conversion can always take place.
 - The law wants to lead us in becoming more and more versed in faith and also to more and more take our lives to the holy light of the Lord.

3. The purpose of the law.

The Lord gave us the Ten Commandments for the following reasons:

- So that it continually prepares us to understand the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. We all know that we transgress every commandment and that it should not be like that.
- It lets us understand in what amount the personal guilt of everyone of us sitting in church today, has contributed to that the Lord Jesus had to be crucified.
- The law, for our further existence, points us back to the redemption by the Lord Jesus and the forgiving of our sins.

Thus, in a certain way the law is an educator because it teaches us faith-conduct.

- It teaches us to submit ourselves to the guidance of God the Holy Spirit.
- It teaches us to repent our sins and to cut out from our lives people and circumstances leading us to sin. Consider Psalm 1:1:
Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
- The law makes us humble and let us wait, desiring grace, on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- It lets us bow to the guidance of God the Holy Spirit so that we can properly order in our lives, the eternal life we receive from Christ.

The purpose of the law is to institute a permanent and eternal relationship between God and us.

- God gives this law to all people.
- There is not a single human or nation excluded from these laws.

The Lord assures us that He died to our redemption.

- He assures us that redemption means that we will eternally be part of His Kingdom and glory.
- But He also expects from us to, during our earthly life, subject ourselves to His Law.

The Law wants to catch us should we lose our way so that we will not become lost.

Come, let us together read what our confession teaches about this in the Heidelberg Catechism Sunday 34:

Q.92

What is the law of God?

A.

God spake all these words, Exodus 20:1-17 and Denteronomy 5:6-21, saying: I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

1st commandment:

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

2nd commandment:

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing 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 shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

3rd commandment:

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

4th commandment:

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, 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.

5th commandment:

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

6th commandment:

Thou shalt not kill.

7th commandment:

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8th commandment:

Thou shalt not steal.

9th commandment:

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10th commandment:

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Q. 93.

How are these commandments divided?

A.

Into two tables; (a)

the first of which teaches us how we must behave towards God; the second, what duties we owe to our neighbour. (b)

(a)

Exod.34:28 And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.

Deut.4:13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

Deut.10:3 And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand.

Deut.10:4 And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me.

(b)

Matt.22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Matt.22:38 This is the first and great commandment.

Matt.22:39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Matt.22:40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Q. 94.

What does God enjoin in the first commandment?

A.

That I, as sincerely as I desire the salvation of my own soul, avoid and flee from all idolatry, (a) sorcery, soothsaying, superstition, (b) invocation of saints, or any other creatures; (c) and learn rightly to know the only true God; (d) trust in him alone, (e) with humility (f) and patience submit to him; (g) expect all good things from him only; (h) love, (i) fear, (j) and glorify him with my whole heart; (k) so that I renounce and forsake all creatures, rather than commit even the least thing contrary to his will. (l)

(a)

1 John 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

1 Cor.6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

1 Cor.6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Cor.10:7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

1 Cor.10:14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

(b)

Lev.19:31 Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.

Deut.18:9 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

Deut.18:10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

Deut.18:11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

Deut.18:12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

(c)

Matt.4:10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Rev.19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Rev.22:8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

Rev.22:9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

(d)

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

(e)

Jer.17:5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

Jer.17:7 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

(f)

1 Pet.5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

1 Pet.5:6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

(g)

Heb.10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

Col.1:11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

Rom.5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

Rom.5:4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

1 Cor.10:10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

Philip.2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

(h)

Ps.104:27 These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.

Ps.104:28 That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

Ps.104:29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

Ps.104:30 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

Isa.45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

(i)

Deut.6:5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Matt.22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

(j)

Deut.6:2 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

Ps.111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

Prov.1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Prov.9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

Matt.10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

(k)

Matt.4:10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Deut.10:20 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.

Deut.10:21 He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.

(l)

Matt.5:29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Matt.5:30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Matt.10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Acts 5:29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Q. 95.

What is idolatry?

A.

Idolatry is, instead of, or besides that one true God, who has manifested himself in his word, to contrive, or have any other object, in which men place their trust. (a)

(a)

Eph.5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

1 Chron.16:26 For all the gods of the people are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

Philip.3:19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

Gal.4:8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

Eph.2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

1 John 2:23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.

2 John 1:9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

John 5:23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm 119:63

The Lord bless and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you, the Lord turn His countenance to you and give peace.

Amen

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