

3
LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me that the Evil Foe may have no power over me. **AMEN.**

OR

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the Evil Foe may have no power over me. **AMEN.**

Large Catechism

The Sacrament of the Altar

⁷³ For if you would wait until you are rid of such burdens, that you might come to the Sacrament pure and worthy, you must forever stay away. For in that case He pronounces sentence and says: ⁷⁴ If you are pure and godly, you have no need of Me, and I, in turn, none of thee. Therefore those alone are called unworthy who neither feel their infirmities nor wish to be considered sinners.

⁷⁵ But if you say: What, then, shall I do if I cannot feel such distress or experience hunger and thirst for the Sacrament? Answer: For those who are so minded that they do not realize their condition I know no better counsel than that they put their hand into their bosom to ascertain whether they also have flesh and blood. And if you find that to be the case, then go, for your good, to St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, and hear what sort of a fruit your flesh is: Now the works of the flesh (he says [Gal. 5:19ff]) are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like.

4
⁷⁶ Therefore, if you cannot feel it, at least believe the Scriptures; they will not lie to you, and they know your flesh better than you yourself. Yea, St. Paul further concludes in Rom. 7:18: I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. If St. Paul may speak thus of his flesh, we do not propose to be better nor more holy. ⁷⁷ But that we do not feel it is so much the worse; for it is a sign that there is a leprous flesh which feels nothing, and yet [the leprosy] rages and keeps spreading. ⁷⁸ Yet, as we have said, if you are quite dead to all sensibility, still believe the Scriptures, which pronounce sentence upon you. And, in short, the less you feel your sins and infirmities, the more reason have you to go to the Sacrament to seek help and a remedy.

⁷⁹ In the second place, look about you and see whether you are also in the world, or if you do not know it, ask your neighbors about it. If you are in the world, do not think that there will be lack of sins and misery. For only begin to act as though you would be godly and adhere to the Gospel, and see whether no one will become your enemy, and, moreover, do you harm, wrong, and violence, and likewise give you cause for sin and vice. If you have not experienced it, then let the Scriptures tell you, which everywhere give this praise and testimony to the world.

⁸⁰ Besides this, you will also have the devil about you, whom you will not entirely tread under foot, because our Lord Christ Himself could not entirely avoid him. Now, what is the devil? ⁸¹ Nothing else than what the Scriptures call him, a liar and murderer. A liar, to lead the heart astray from the Word of God, and to blind it, that you cannot feel your distress or come to Christ. A murderer, who cannot bear to see you live one single hour. ⁸² If you could see how many knives, darts, and arrows are every moment aimed at you, you would be glad to come to the Sacrament as often as possible. But there is no reason why we walk so securely and heedlessly, except that we neither think nor believe that we are in the flesh, and in this wicked world or in the kingdom of the devil. ⁸³ Therefore, try this and practise it well, and do but examine yourself, or look about you a little, and only keep to the Scriptures. If even then you still feel nothing, you have so much the more misery to lament both to God and to your brother.