

3
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 – SECOND COMMANDMENT START

⁵⁰ As the First Commandment has instructed the heart and taught [the basis of] faith, so this commandment leads us forth and directs the mouth and tongue to God. For the first objects that spring from the heart and manifest themselves are words. Now, as I have taught above how to answer the question, what it is to have a god, so you must learn to comprehend simply the meaning of this and all the commandments, and to apply it to yourself.

⁵¹ If, then, it be asked: How do you understand the Second Commandment, or what is meant by taking in vain, or misusing God's name? answer briefly thus: It is misusing God's name when we call upon the Lord God, no matter in what way, for purposes of falsehood or wrong of any kind. Therefore this commandment enjoins this much, that God's name must not be appealed to falsely, or taken upon the lips, while the heart knows well enough, or should know, differently; as among those who take oaths in court, where one side lies against the other. ⁵² For God's name cannot be misused worse than for the support of falsehood and deceit. Let this remain the exact German and simplest meaning of this commandment.

⁵³ From this every one can readily infer when and in how many ways God's name is misused, although it is impossible to enumerate all its misuses. Yet, to tell it in a few words, all misuse of the divine name occurs, first, in worldly business and in matters which concern money, possessions, honor, whether it be publicly in court, in the market, or wherever else men make false oaths in God's name, or pledge their

4
souls in any matter. And this is especially prevalent in marriage affairs, where two go and secretly betroth themselves to one another, and afterward abjure [their plighted troth].

⁵⁴ But, the greatest abuse occurs in spiritual matters, which pertain to the conscience, when false preachers rise up and offer their lying vanities as God's Word.

⁵⁵ Behold, all this is decking one's self out with God's name, or making a pretty show, or claiming to be right, whether it occur in gross, worldly business or in sublime, subtle matters of faith and doctrine. And among liars belong also blasphemers, not alone the very gross, well known to every one, who disgrace God's name without fear (these are not for us, but for the hangman to discipline); but also those who publicly traduce the truth and God's Word and consign it to the devil. Of this there is no need now to speak further.

⁵⁶ Here, then, let us learn and take to heart the great importance of this commandment, that with all diligence we may guard against and dread every misuse of the holy name, as the greatest sin that can be outwardly committed. For to lie and deceive is in itself a great sin, but is greatly aggravated when we attempt to justify it, and seek to confirm it by invoking the name of God and using it as a cloak for shame, so that from a single lie a double lie, nay, manifold lies, result.

⁵⁷ For this reason, too, God has added a solemn threat to this commandment, to wit: For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain. That is: It shall not be condoned to any one nor pass unpunished. For as little as He will leave it unavenged if any one turn his heart from Him, as little will He suffer His name to be employed for dressing up a lie. ⁵⁸ Now, alas! it is a common calamity in all the world that there are as few who are not using the name of God for purposes of lying and all wickedness as there are those who with their heart trust alone in God. (keep reading at

www.bookofconcord.org)