

Sign Post

**July – August
2020**

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It is the newsletter for:

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In the same way let your light shine in front of people. Then they will see the good that you do and praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

The rules are different in every house. When I was growing up, we wore our shoes in the house. In my home today, we take our shoes off when we come inside. You can probably think of other examples of families having different rules in their homes.

Who makes the rules for our country and for the world? Who decides what is right and wrong in the U.S.? Federal, state and local governments can (and should) make laws about stealing, paying your taxes, and how to drive. But what about how you talk about people? What about your relationships with people, or if you always have to tell the truth? Who makes rules about what you can post on Facebook? Who decides what is right and what is wrong?

This month, we continue thinking about how Christians and non-Christians see the world very differently. How we see “right” and “wrong” is a very major difference.

First of all, who decides what is right and wrong? For Christians, that is an easy answer. God decides. God gave us His Law, which we see most clearly in the Ten Commandments. His Word is the authority that tells us right and wrong. If we want to know, we look to His Word.

For the non-Christian, right and wrong are very difficult ideas because they think people decide themselves what is right and what is wrong. That doesn’t work very well. If I decide to have a big party with lots of people who run around in my neighbor’s yard and trample his flowers, I might think that is okay but my neighbor doesn’t like it. Or maybe you want to stay healthy and you wear a mask to go to the grocery store but many other people don’t wear masks.

So what is right and wrong? Christians say God teaches us that, but non-Christians say they can decide themselves. For many years, maybe most of your life, non-Christians in the U.S. accepted many of God’s Laws and what He said was right and wrong. But that has slowly been changing for many years. Today, more and more people say they don’t want God’s Law.

(p. 1 continued)

They want to make up their own rules. That is leading to more disagreement and conflict between Christians and non-Christians. What can Christians do about this?

I will explain three ways Christians can respond. The first way is that Christians can follow what the world says. God says sexual sin, loving money, and gossiping about people is wrong. The world says those things are fun and good. So some Christians think they can forget what God said and follow the world. Then unbelievers will like us and we can all get along better. That is wrong! Don't do that! But some churches do that. Understand, they insult God and leave Him. Christians should never give up what God says and follow the world's ways. We should NOT respond to the world this way.

The second response is a little more complicated. We can fight the world about rules and try to force all people to accept God's Law. But what good will that do? Then they will think that Christianity is a bunch of rules and nothing more. The Gospel is lost. All that will happen is a war about rules. We don't want that. But there are some places we need to stand up and speak out. When people are being hurt or the family suffers – abortion, domestic violence, racism, homosexuality, then the church needs to boldly say what God says about right and wrong. We have a responsibility to speak the truth in love. We have a responsibility to defend people and protect life and health.

The third response is one we can always do: we live the way God says. We can't control other people, but we can still do what is right. Our lives are a witness, showing what God says is right and wrong. Our actions every day will show how we love God and love other people. Our actions will show that we don't join other people in their sin. They might make fun of you because you don't sin with them (see 1 Peter 4:4), but our lives will show them that God's ways are better than their ways.

Other people will fight in Washington, D.C., and in your state capitol about who gets to make the laws and what those laws will be. We will speak up there when necessary. But the place you have the most influence is in your daily life. Don't fight to make unbelievers follow God's Law. Be an example in your life. Most important, show that we have a Savior who obeyed God's Law for us and He forgives us. Show how God made you free in Jesus, and now it is a joy for you to live as God says.

Pastor Eckert

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Dive Into God's Word

Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism to teach the Christian faith. The catechism has six parts: the Ten Commandments, Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Lord's Supper, and Confession & Absolution. The Ten Commandments is where God tells us how He wants us to live. Answer these questions about what the commandments mean for us. Use your Small Catechism, the section on the Ten Commandments, to help you answer these. *Answers on page 7.*

1. God uses the Law in three ways. What are these?
 - a. Curb – the Law stops terrible sin in the _____.
 - b. Mirror – the Law shows all people that we _____.
 - c. Guide – the Law shows Christians how God wants us to _____.
2. The “curb” use of the law is for:
 - a. All people
 - b. Only unbelievers
 - c. Only Christians
3. The “mirror” use of the law is for:
 - a. All people
 - b. Only unbelievers
 - c. Only Christians
4. The “guide” use of the law is for:
 - a. All people
 - b. Only unbelievers
 - c. Only Christians
5. The first three commandments tell us (1) not to have any other god, but to fear, love and trust the true God more than anything else, (2) to honor God's name and not use His name in a wrong way, and (3) to remember the worship day and keep that day holy. Those three commandments describe our relationship with who?
6. Read Matthew 22:37. Jesus explained how we follow those three commandments. What did He say?
7. The other seven commandments tell us about (4) honoring our parents and other authorities, (5) respecting God's gift of life, (6) honoring marriage, (7) respecting and protecting people's property and possessions, (8) respecting people's reputations and the truth, (9 and 10) not wanting people's possessions for our own. These commandments describe our relationship with who?
8. Read Matthew 22:39. Now Jesus explained how we follow the other commandments. What did He say?
9. Read Matthew 5:17-19. Many people today think God's word is not very important. Even some Christians think we can change God's Law. They think God's Law is old fashioned. So when our culture comes up with new ideas, we can follow those new ideas. What did Jesus say about how long God's word is true?

The Ten Commandments

From www.armoredpenguin.com/wordsearch

Everyone knows the Ten Commandments, right? Actually, many people know there are Ten Commandments, but most people don't know what they are. And fewer people know what they mean. This word search will help you see again what the commandments are. The "Dive Into God's Word" study will help you remember what the commandments mean.

R O R L O H I S O U R A S R T
 O R N O O T H E R G O D S I R
 S U O U R R H I G I D L A Y W
 U G S B R E D R U M G O A E T
 N E N R H O N O R I R D B E F
 S D G O E G B T E O P E O R D
 S T E A L E I S R I D S R E D
 E E Y O I E R E H T A F B R R
 N R H D R R B S N I H B L M L
 D H O N M M R L N R D O B S H
 R H H S E O P A A S R A T R W
 A O T M W T Y F M H G T N I O
 G L E O E H S P E H S E S S I
 R R D W R E U S E M O Y S E L
 S R R M O R S E O O T D N G I

- 1) You must have no other gods except (only) Me.
- 2) You must not use the name of the Lord your God in wrong ways.
- 3) You remember the Sabbath day (worship day) to keep it holy.
- 4) You honor your father and mother, then you will live well and long.
- 5) You must not murder.
- 6) You must not do adultery (break marriage).
- 7) You must not steal.
- 8) You must not tell false stories about your neighbors.
- 9) You must not want your neighbor's house.
- 10) You must not want your neighbor's wife or his servants, or his cattle, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

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Thanks to Miriam (See Exodus 20:1-21) 05-06-2003

IS THERE ANY CHANCE THAT WE CAN VOTE ON SOME OF THESE?

July 2020

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|---|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|--|
| | | | 1 7:00 WL – Worship | 2 | 3 | 4 10:00 QC – Worship/Study |
| 5 * See below for worship and Bible study times. | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 10:00 QC – Worship/Study |
| 12 * See below for worship and Bible study times. | 13 | 14 | 15 7:00 WL – Study | 16 | 17 | 18 10:00 QC – Worship/Study |
| 19 * See below for worship and Bible study times. | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 1:00 MU – Worship | 25 10:00 QC – Worship/Study |
| 26 * See below for worship and Bible study times. | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

BR – Burlington. Concordia Lutheran Church, 2901 Cliff Rd., Burlington. 4th Sunday worship at 3:00 p.m.
 CR – Cedar Rapids. Word of God Lutheran Church Deaf, 1515 - 29th St. NE, Cedar Rapids. Every Sunday, Bible Study at 10:00 a.m., Worship at 11:00 a.m.
 QC – Quad Cities. Trinity Lutheran Church, 1122 W. Central Park Ave., Davenport. Every Saturday, Worship at 10:00 a.m., Study at 11:15 a.m.
 WL – Waterloo/Cedar Falls. Immanuel Lutheran Church, 4820 Oster Parkway, Cedar Falls. 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
 DU – Dubuque. Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 2145 John F. Kennedy Rd., Dubuque. No meeting this month.
 MU – Muscatine. Our Savior Lutheran Church, 2611 Lucas St., Muscatine. Talk to Pastor Eckert to confirm meeting location and time.

August 2020

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|---|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|---|
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 7:00 WL – Worship | 6 | 7 | 1/8 10:00 QC – Worship |
| 9 * See below for worship and Bible study times. | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 10:00 QC – Worship/Study 1:00 DU – Study |
| 16 * See below for worship and Bible study times. | 17 | 18 | 19 7:00 WL – Study | 20 | 21 1:00 MU – Worship | 22 10:00 QC – Worship/Study |
| 23 * See below for worship and Bible study times. | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 10:00 QC – Worship/Study |
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Everyone Is Meeting Again

Finally! The coronavirus continues to spread, but we are all meeting again. It is good to get out of the house and together again with God's word. We will continue to be careful when we meet. We still social distance, wear masks, wash our hands, etc. You may have seen that the number of infections is going up again in some states. We will watch what happens in Iowa. Hopefully we can continue to meet. Remember, you can always find recorded worship services at www.youtube.com/deaflutheran. We also have short Bible studies and vlogs there, or at www.iowaeastdeaf.org. You can also ask questions on our website for Pastor Eckert to answer. Share those links with your friends!

Racism and Black Lives Matter

Everyone has seen a lot in the news recently about George Floyd, Black Lives Matter, racism, riots, and protests. Some of it is confusing and you may not know what to think. Other people have very strong opinions. What should we think? Pastor Eckert posted a vlog on this topic on our website. You can visit that to see more, but here are the main points from that post.

1. Recognize that people have suffered discrimination. That is wrong, and there is no reason for us to pretend it doesn't happen.
2. Examine yourself for sinful attitudes, wrong actions and hurtful words. Repent, receive God's forgiveness, change and do the right thing. But don't feel guilty just because someone said you are guilty. Look at God's word and see what He says about your behavior, words and attitude. Trust His forgiveness and live the new life He gives you.
3. When you see other people saying or doing things that hurt someone, say something. Remind them that God loves all people and we should also love all people.
4. The government is responsible and has the right to stop and arrest people who are breaking the law. We should support the government and police in that work. But if they go too far and harass innocent people, or they hurt people for no reason, then people have the right to protest that.
5. People are protesting because they want everyone to be treated equally, and that is fine. They aren't breaking any government law, and a simple protest isn't breaking God's law. But people who are fighting, destroying things, and threatening people, they are doing wrong. God wants us to protect and respect people's lives and property. Peaceful protest is okay. Causing damage is wrong and sinful.
6. Above all, our responsibility is to love each other as God says, especially in the church, but also in society. If people are strong, good for them, let them take care of themselves. If people are not strong, such as people who get discriminated against, people with hard lives, people who suffer, then we show mercy to them, love them, protect them, help them.

That has always been God's message in the Bible. That has always been what the true Christian church teaches and preaches. Maybe we haven't always followed that teaching very well. This is a time to remember that teaching and do it.

A word of warning about Black Lives Matter: Christians want to speak up for people who are being oppressed or abused (Proverbs 31:8-9), so that can also mean that we speak up to defend Black people and their rights. But we don't want to say "Black Lives Matter." Why not? "Black Lives Matter" is the name of an organization that is very anti-Christian. The Black Lives Matter organization hates God's teaching. We can support Black people, but we will not support Black Lives Matter.

Higher Things Devotions

Do you want daily devotions in ASL? Go to our website, www.iowaeastdeaf.org. There is a link on the home page to the daily devotions. You can also go to higherthings.org/content-subscription to sign up to get daily reminders in text or e-mail about the devotions.

Prayers

Please remember these people in your prayers:

- ✦ Pray for the church. As the world changes and people go farther and farther away from God, they need Him more and more. Ask God to make us strong and bold in our life and witness. Lord, make us shine Your light in this dark world, so everyone can see the hope and life that You give.
- ✦ Thank God for the faithful people fighting the coronavirus – the medical staff who take care of all people who are sick, the politicians and other leaders who have to make difficult decisions, and others involved in helping or protecting people. Lord, give them wisdom and safety.
- ✦ Pray for people who have (or still do) discriminate against people because of the color of their skin, that they will see that God made all people. Pray for people who have suffered from discrimination, that they can forgive. Pray for all people to learn to show love and respect for everyone.
- ✦ The many people who are unemployed now, that God will take care of them and give them what they need. Also pray for the people who are still working but are around people all day and are at higher risk of getting sick.
- ✦ Ask God to bless people with trust and health: Mollie Schmitz, Doris Harris, Lorri Green, Shirley Green, Barbara Zimmerman, Tracy Shepard, James Weber, Jerry Hanson, Joan Mass, Kathy Anderson, Rosie Glime, Vicki Hoover, Kris Baltzer, Larry Plumb, Sharon Pope, Paula Slavin, Jeanette Kern, Bonnie Lou Huffman, Terry Ann Check, and many family members and friends.
- ✦ Thank God that Pat Monroe is selling her parents' house this Summer. Pray that she can find work and a place to live in Iowa.
- ✦ Pray for Andy Petajan as he studies to become a pastor and for Becky Jungklaus as she studies to become a deaconess.
- ✦ Pray for our partner churches in Kenya and India. COVID-19 is causing problems for us here, but they are facing even more challenges.
- ✦ All shut-ins to keep strong faith in Christ Jesus.



Answers to Dive Into God's Word

1. Curb – the Law stops terrible sin in the world. The Law threatens punishment if you break the Law. People are afraid of punishment, and that stops most people from doing terrible sins.
Mirror – the Law shows all people that we sin. When we look at the Law and look at our lives, we see that we break the Law, we see that we sin.
Guide – the Law shows Christians how God wants us to live. The Law shows what kind of life pleases God. As Christians, we want to live the way He wants.
2. a. The “curb” is for all people. All people feel temptation to sin, and the Law is there to stop all people, Christians and unbelievers, from terrible sin.
3. a. The “mirror” is for all people, because all people need to see that they are sinners.
4. c. The “guide” is only for Christians. Unbelievers can't follow God's law. We can use God's Law the right way only because we live in Jesus. Because Jesus made us clean and holy, the Law can show us how to live.
5. The first three commandments describe our relationship with God. We honor Him above everything else, we honor His name, and we worship Him.
6. Jesus said we love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. When you love God with everything, then you will perfectly obey God's Law. If you don't love God with everything, then you will love and serve other things, and you will not love and serve God.
7. The other seven commandments describe our relationship with our neighbor. Our neighbor means everyone around us – family, friends, coworkers, enemies, strangers, etc.
8. Jesus said we love other people the same as we love ourselves. How much do you love yourself? Love other people the same way. What things do you do to take care of yourself or be good to yourself? Do those same things for other people. That is how you love them.
9. Jesus said the Law and Prophets aren't going away. His word will continue as long as the earth and sky continue. Jesus also said that no one should say His word is not important or set it aside. So we can't say God's Law changes and we should follow the culture instead. God's Law is always true.