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THE CORPUS CHRISTI FESTIVAL AND ITS DOCTRINE.

“*Semper eadem!*” — Ever the same! — that is the proud boast of the Church of Rome. And in one respect we yield her the truth of this boastful assertion. From the time that St. Paul wrote: “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work,” to the spiritual darkness and shadow of death of the fifteenth century; from the time that the Augean filth of popery was swept out of the temple of the Church by the pure Alphaeus of God’s Word, guided by that blessed servant of God, Martin Luther, to this day, when by hypocrisy and deceit Romanism is usurping the very power of the government in our country; from the time that Bishop Boniface III of Rome arrogated to himself the title of Pope to this day, when the doctrine of infallibility has been promulgated, and the dogmatization of the assumption of the Virgin Mary is only a question of time, Rome has been *ever the same* in her hatred of Christ the Savior, the one Redeemer of the world, and His blessed Gospel.

In every other respect, however, we most emphatically repudiate Rome’s claim to the title: *Semper eadem*. Her doctrine of justification by works, her fasting and mechanical praying, her doctrine of purgatory, her canonization of hosts of saints, her mass and her eucharist, her formalism and her festivals, have been developed by a slow process, in the course of many centuries, and Rome, even on mere historical grounds, has not the least shadow of a reason for her proud boast. This will be found true especially of the doctrine of transubstantiation and the establishment of the Corpus Christi festival with its procession.

MATERIALS FOR THE CATECHIST.

THIRD OUTLINE.

I. The First of the Chief Parts of the Catechism.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Qu. 7—12.

So far our study has been introductory. What we have learned about the Catechism and the Bible has acquainted us:—

1. With the divine source from which we draw all knowledge that we shall gather during this study: not our reason or any other man's reason, but the written revelation of God, briefly restated by Luther;

2. With the divine character of the things which we are to

study: not earthly things and human affairs, but heavenly matters and eternal interests;

3. With the divine method which we must adopt for this study: not seeing and comprehending with our natural understanding, but believing with the heart;

4. With the divine purpose which we pursue in our study: not to learn how to make a living, but how to live so as to please God, and to continue living with God after we die;

5. With the divine blessings that shall come to us through our study: not eating and drinking, wealth, ease, and fame among men, but a good conscience toward God, peace of mind, moral strength, joy and comfort in the Holy Ghost.

We shall now take up, one by one, the matters which Luther has collected out of God's Book for our study, and that, in the order in which they were named in Qu. 6.

I. The Position of the Ten Commandments in the Body of Christian Doctrine.

A. The Wrong View.—As a rule, we regard that as being of the greatest necessity, or of the highest importance, or as yielding us the surest advantages, which we name first in a series of things. This is not the reason why our Catechism places the Ten Commandments first among its chief parts.

In our previous study about the whole Bible, of which the Commandments are only a part, we learned that only those persons search the Scriptures aright who find Jesus in them, and only those learn the Scriptures properly who are, through them, made wise unto salvation which is by faith in Christ Jesus. Now, there is not a word said in the Ten Commandments about Jesus, about salvation, and about believing in Jesus for our salvation. These matters, however, are undoubtedly the most necessary, the most important, and the most beneficial in the Bible. If, then, that which is greatest and best in the Bible is not found at all in the Ten Commandments, these cannot be the greatest or best things which God wants those to know for whom He had the Bible written.

There are many people who take out of the Bible nothing but the Commandments, and either disregard, or slight, or reject all the rest of the Bible. This is the most grievous mistake which a person can commit in his religion. This view of the Ten Commandments will lead a person, not to heaven, but to hell.

B. The Right View.—The true reason why the Ten Commandments are studied first is:—

1. Because they refer to the oldest communication which God has made to men. They come first in point of time when we consider what revelations God has made of Himself;

2. Because they apply to man in his original state, when he was perfectly holy and righteous. They show what kind of a being God had intended man to be, and what perfection God still looks for in man;

3. Because they are to prepare man for Jesus and His salvation. No person ever came to Jesus as his Savior who had not first learned from the Commandments that he needed a Savior.¹⁾ Accordingly, we shall study the Commandments both for their own sake, and for what shall follow after them.²⁾

1) "Dulcia non sentit, qui non gustavit amara," runs a Latin saying, *i. e.*, "No one appreciates sweet things who has not first tasted the bitter." The Christian way of salvation is such a bittersweet.

2) In his earliest views of what matters should be put into the Catechism, and how these matters should follow one after the other, Luther thinks only of the Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. This is Luther's "catechetical trilogy." (X, 8 ff. in the Preface; 29 ff. in the body of the volume.) In his "Brief Form for Studying the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer," which Luther published in 1520, he gives the following reasons for the sequence of the first three parts: "Three things a person needs to know in order to be saved. First, he must know what to do, and what not to do. Secondly, when he observes that he is not able by his own strength to do or not to do those things, he must know whence to take, where to seek and find the ability for doing or not doing those things. Thirdly, he must know how to seek and fetch this ability, even as a sick person needs to know, first, what his sickness is, what he is, or is not, able to do or to forbear doing. Next, he needs to know where the medicine is that can help him do, or forbear doing, what a person in good health would do or forbear doing. In the third place, he must desire the medicine, must seek and fetch it, or have it brought to him. Thus the Ten Commandments teach man to know that he is sick; they cause him to see and feel what he is able to do or not to do, to forbear doing or not to forbear doing. As a result, the person acknowledges that he is a sinner and a bad man. Next, the Creed sets before him and teaches him where to find the medicine, grace, which is to help him to become godly and to keep the Ten Commandments. It shows him God and His mercy, revealed and offered us in Christ. In the third place, the Lord's Prayer teaches him how to desire, fetch, and convey to himself the medicine, *viz.*, by orderly, humble, and comforting

II. *The Character of the Ten Commandments.* Qu. 7. 9—11.

A. *They Are from God.* Qu. 7.

Since the Ten Commandments are a part of the Bible, they share divine origin with all the rest of the Bible. However, God is not only connected with the divine record of the Ten Commandments in Ex. 20, and elsewhere in the Bible, as He is connected with every other matter recorded in the Bible, but He is also the very Speaker of the Ten Commandments. He published them by speech and in writing before there was a Bible.—In our Catechism, p. 65, certain words are treated at the end of all the Commandments because they apply to them all; but God spoke them at the very head of the Commandments, *viz.*, these words: “*I the Lord, thy God,*” etc., Ex. 20, 2. To these introductory words all the Commandments are attached. When Moses taught the people of Israel the Ten Commandments, he told them that “*the Lord, their God,* commanded” them, Deut. 6, 1. Many years later the prophet Micah reminded the same people of “what *the Lord* required of them,” Micah 6, 8.

In the Ten Commandments we hear the voice, not of our parents, or teachers, or our employers and bosses, or our government, in fact, not of any man or body of men, no matter how great they are, not even of an angel, but of Almighty God Himself. The Ten Commandments are words of the highest authority, that cannot be changed or superseded by any other authority.

B. *They Are Orders.* Qu. 7.

1. The Commandments differ a) from mere statements of fact, such as, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” or, “Death is the wages of sin”; b) from a wish or request, such as, “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean”; c) from a promise, such as, “I will come and see him.” Commandments are orders, such as, “Fear God!” “Speak not evil!” “Be ye merciful!” A commandment does not state what is, or is not, or may be; nor does it suggest something with which we may comply or not, at our own discretion; nor does it propose something that somebody will do for us; but it “*requires*” something from us, Micah 6, 8.³⁾ Com-

prayer, by which the medicine is given him, and he is led to fulfil the Ten Commandments, and saved. These are the three things that constitute the entire Scriptures.” (X, 150. Comp. Large Cat., Part III, §§ 1. 2; X, 100, or Jacobs’ Ed., p. 448.)

3) דָּרַשׁ, with accusative of thing, and מָן = “to ask for, demand, require.” (*Gesenius.*) *Luther:* “fordern.”

mandments state what must be. Commandments create duties; they put a constraint on our conscience. They trouble us until we have done them.

2. Behind every command there is the will of the party commanding. In the Ten Commandments God expresses His will regarding us. He governs our will. We are not to do what we want, but what God wants. By His Commandments God proposes to set up His rule in our hearts. Deut. 6, 6: "These words which *I command thee shall be in thine heart.*" Commandments are tests of obedience. We must listen to them with respect, and show our respect by yielding our will to God and making our will to agree with God's will.⁴⁾ The contrary would be disobedience, on which God frowns. Hence, the Israelites had to "teach the Commandments diligently to their children," lest they should disobey God from ignorance,⁵⁾ Deut. 6, 7.

3. The Commandments are, therefore, God's Law. They are something that has been definitely settled, once for all time, and dare not be changed.⁶⁾

4. This Law of God is quite plain. God has "shown" man His will in the Commandments, so that there can be no misunderstanding of what He wants, and no excuse for not obeying Him, Micah 6, 8. Commandments that cannot be understood are useless; for they defeat their own purpose. The Law of God is "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path," Ps. 119, 105. "Through its precepts men get understanding," Ps. 119, 104; it causes men to see and understand duties of which they would remain ignorant without the Law.⁷⁾

4) "Obedience" in English and "Gehorsam" in German have the same derivation: they signify "hearing with deference."

5) Luther's rendering of **שִׁנְנִים** is exact; for the word in its *Piel* form, with the accusative of the thing and the dative of the person, means "to sharpen in [German, *einschaerfen*], i. e., to inculcate." (*Gesenius*.)

6) The English "law" is traced to the Anglo-Saxon "lagian," "to lay down"; the German "*Gesetz*," to "*setzen*" = "*festsetzen*." (Compare "*Satzung*.")

7) **הִנִּיר**, in Micah 6, 8, is from **נָגַד**, "to be in sight, to be clear, manifest," and means in its *Hiphil* form "to bring to light." (*Gesenius*.) We have here the *illuminatio legis* indicated, the effect of which on sinful man Paul names Rom. 3, 20 (*ἐπιφωτισ ἀμαρτίας*).

C. They Are a Holy Rule for Our Conduct. Qu. 7. 9—11.

1. The general quality of the Commandments. Qu. 7.

a. Micah says that all that the Lord requires of man is "good." A person is good when he is as the Commandments want him to be. In His Law "God tells us how we are to be."

But does Micah not speak of *doing* good rather than of *being* good? Yes; but doing good presupposes being good. A person does not become good by good actions, but in order to do good actions he must be good. No truly good act can come out of a bad person, just as little as we can gather grapes from thistles. A corrupt tree bears corrupt fruit; only a good tree brings forth good fruit. The Law was originally given to human beings that were perfectly good, and all its precepts are reminders of the high state of perfection from which man has fallen. When fallen man now finds that he cannot *do* what the Law requires of him, that is proof positive that he no longer *is* as the Law requires him to be. Our Catechism is right in saying that the first thing which God tells us in the Law is "how we are to be."⁸⁾

b. The goodness which the Law requires is illustrated by Micah, saying that the Lord requires of man nothing but these things:—

a. "To do justly,"⁹⁾ *i. e.*, to act so that nobody is wronged by any word or deed of ours, that we are fair and equitable in all our dealings with men.¹⁰⁾

8) The modern advocates of the "Be-good-religion," which is nothing but a relash of pagan ethics served on a Bible platter, should be confronted with this text and asked to declare how they view the connection of doing good to being good. Are they not assuming that eggs are being laid before there is a hen to lay them?

9) Luther's rendering for עֲשׂוּת מִשְׁפָּט, "Gottes Wort halten," is not a slip. Luther, in both commentaries on Micah, renders the Hebrew text correctly: "*ut facias judicium.*" He defends the translation which has been received into his German Bible thus: "Since the prophet in this passage has undertaken to preach a general sermon of repentance, the word '*judicium*' must be taken in a somewhat wider meaning. For it is well known that this word often stands for God's Word, as Ps. 119, 13. 30. 39. 62 proves. The reason is, because the Word judges men by condemning what is evil, and by teaching what is holy and truth. Accordingly, in this place '*judicium facere*' means to heed the Word, to comply with it, obey it, not fight against the Word, not hate it, but accept it with thanks, not undertake anything without the Word, zealously execute what it commands, etc." (XIV, 1117 f.)

10) Luther: "*justa agere.*" (XIV, 1117.) "This commandment involves that I harm no one, that I render to each his due, leave him keep what is his, etc." (XIV, 1317.)

b. "To love mercy," *i. e.*, to be guided in our conduct by kindness and pity, and to do good to men even when they do not deserve it, merely for the sake of doing good.¹¹⁾

c. "To walk humbly with God," *i. e.*, to be conscious of the presence of God in all our actions, and hence, to go at every action with humility and in a spirit of obedience. "The patriarchs are said to have 'walked with God,' denoting that they lived as conscientiously under His eye, and referred all their actions to Him." (Deane, in *Pulp. Comm.*)

Hence, in the Law God tells us "what we are to do or not to do."

c. All the lessons which the Commandments set before us express God's holiness and aim at our holiness. The Ten Commandments, accordingly, "are the holy will of God."

2. The principal duties which the Commandments lay upon us. Qu. 9. 10.

a. Micah indicated requirements of the Law that relate to our dealings with our fellow-men ("to do justly, and to love mercy"), and such as relate to our attitude toward God ("to walk humbly with thy God"). The Law of God has two aspects: one side faces heavenward, the other earthward. It aims to regulate our relation to God and man.

b. This was visibly indicated when God wrote the Ten Commandments on two tables of stone.¹²⁾ "It is uncertain how the Ten Commandments were divided between the two tables, but quite possible that the first four" (three, since the commandment regarding images belongs to the first) "were written on one table, and the last six [seven] on the other. In that case the material division would have exactly corresponded to the spiritual." (Rawlinson, in *Pulp. Comm.*)¹³⁾

11) Luther's rendering for אֲהַבֶּתָּ חֶסֶד, "Liebe ueben," is excellent. For mercy in this place is something that God "requires" of man, not something that man expects from God; hence = active sympathy and love. Luther grants that the Hebrew phrase literally means "*diligere misericordiam.*" (XIV, 1118. 1317 f.)

12) The history of the tables can be traced by means of these texts: Ex. 24, 12; 31, 18; 32, 15. 16; 34, 28. 29; Deut. 4, 13; 5, 22; 9, 10. 11. (2 Cor. 3, 3.)

13) On the various numerations of the Commandments see Riehm, *Handwoerterb. d. bibl. Altertums*, s. v. "Gesetz," I, 516 f. The matter itself is of no moment, and the catechist need not waste any time on it before his classes; but because of the fanaticism of the sects he should be prepared to show that there is no divinely ordained distribution of

c. Our Lord has summed up the teaching of the Commandments in two statements, which express the gist of the two tables.

a. Our duties toward God He expresses thus: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind," Matt. 22, 37. God is placed before us in the Ten Commandments as the primary and great object of our affection. "Love to God must fill the whole *heart*, the entire inner sphere in which all the workings of the personal consciousness originate, the whole *soul*, the whole faculty of feeling and desire, and the whole *understanding*, all the powers of thought and will, and must determine their operation. We have thus an enumeration of the different elements that go to make up 'the necessity of loving God with all the heart, that is, the devoting oneself to Him with all the portions and powers of the heart' (*Theophylact*), the complete harmonious self-dedication of the entire *inner* man to God, as to its highest good." (Meyer.)¹⁴ *Luther*: "A proper love of God . . . is when a person thinks thus in his heart, and also professes with his lips: 'Lord God, I am Thy creature. Do with me as Thou likest. It is all the same to me; I am Thine nevertheless. That I know. If Thou shouldest choose that I must die this very hour, or suffer some other calamity, I would submit with all my heart. I do not want to esteem my life, honor, goods, or anything that I possess more highly than Thy will. To do that shall be my highest pleasure throughout my life.' However, you will not find any persons who live according to this Commandment in every respect; for your entire life which you live in your body with its five senses, and whatever you do in the body, must all be made to tend to the praise

the Commandments between the two tables nor a divinely ordained numeration. All that the Bible says about the matter is that there were "ten commandments," neither more nor less, and that these were written on both sides of two tables.

14) It may, however, be justly doubted whether our Lord intended any such nice psychological distinction as Meyer exhibits. To the average man the distinction is worthless. We very much incline to the view of Williams: "The expressions mean generally that God is to be loved with all our powers and faculties, and that nothing is to be preferred to Him. It is difficult to define with any precision the signification of each term used, and much unprofitable labor has been expended in the endeavor to limit their exact sense. 'Quum,' as Grotius says, 'vorum multarum cumulatio nihil quam intensius studium designat' (= 'inasmuch as the heaping of many terms signifies only a rather intense desire')." (*Pulp. Comm.* So Luther.)

of God, as this Commandment requires. . . . As if Christ were to say: If you love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind, you cannot fail to have some sensations of it in your outward life, *viz.*, [by observing] that whatever you do, whether you are asleep or awake, at work or at leisure, whether you eat or drink, it is all instituted from cordial love of God. Likewise, your mind and thoughts will be wholly turned to God, that is, you will not permit anything to give you pleasure, unless you know that it is pleasing to God. Alas! where are the people that are doing these things?" (XI, 1695 f.)

b. Our duties toward our fellow-men He expresses thus: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," Matt. 22, 39. These words direct us to embrace our fellow-man with as much affection as ourselves, and to cherish his interests as sincerely as we would our own.¹⁵⁾ *Luther*: "Everybody knows this teaching; however, he carries it pointed backward as yeomen carry their pikes. A person need hear it but once, and forthwith he knows it all. There is nothing the matter with this teaching, except that it is so easy. When you hear his teaching, reflect and say, Let us make our lives harmonize with this teaching. And when you are alone, reflect again and ask yourself this question, True, I hear this teaching, but am I doing what I am taught? Where is there an instance in my life? It would certainly be good to have this teaching painted on every wall, etc. It has been published often enough, but everybody is content with the mere hearing of it. This teaching wants to be incorporated in our living, not glibly talked about. Consider how often you have loved your neighbor as yourself. You will find that your record is rather slim." (VII, 2458 f.)

3. All the Commandments meet in one: love. Qu. 11.

a. In summarizing the contents of both tables of the Law, our Lord twice declares that love is enjoined by both. The verb *ἀγαπήσεις*, which the Lord employs both times, "implies, not mere animal or worldly affection (*φιλέω*), but love from the highest moral considerations, without self-interest, holy. The Latins indicated this difference by *amo* and *diligō*." (Williams, in *Pulp. Comm.*) *Luther*: "True, when a lord does a kind act to some one, the party benefited

15) In summing up the Second Table, our Lord does not mention two objects of our love: self and other men, but only the latter. Self-love is not commanded, but its existence is assumed, and used to illustrate the altruism of God's holy Law. *Bengel*: "He that loves God will love himself, in a proper degree, without selfishness." (On Eph. 5, 28.)

by that act will love him for it. When he does a kindness to a servant, the servant will thank him for it. That is worldly love." "It is no great feat when a young man loves a pretty maiden, and *vice versa*. Such love has been found also among the heathen." (VII, 2454 f.)

b. Accordingly, the manifold injunctions and prohibitions which the Commandments contain must in each instance be understood as exercises of love. We are told 1 Tim. 1, 5: "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart."¹⁶ Here, as in 1 Cor. 13, "love" is a better rendering for *ἀγαπή* than "charity." Love "out of a pure heart," out of a heart that has been purged from selfishness,—for love "seeketh not her own," 1 Cor. 13, 5,—is the sum total of all demands of the Law. And in Rom. 13, 10 love is declared to be "the fulfilling (*πλήρωμα*) of the Law," that is, there is no way to comply with anything that the Law enjoins except the way of love. No mere outward performance of an act prescribed in the Law is a real fulfilling of the Law, if the actor is not prompted by love, and means to express love by his action. *Luther*: "Any person who fails to take up the [tasks of the] Law with the heart and spirit will surely leave it unfulfilled." "God regards the heart and not the action, 1 Sam. 16, 7." "There must first be love in the heart, then you may do works pleasing to God. For all the works of the Law tend to the manifestation of the love which a person bears in his heart toward God. Before all else love is demanded and exacted by the Law." "All the works of the Law have been commanded, not for the sake of having merely those works performed. No, no! For if God had even issued more commandments, He would

16) Hofmann, Meyer, and most modern exegetes deny that this text has anything to do with the Ten Commandments. Hofmann refers it, however, to "the evangelic law, which forms the external rule for the conduct of Christians." His "evangelic" law, in the last analysis, will turn out to be, not the Gospel of the forgiveness of sin, which would be altogether out of place in this passage, but what we commonly call the Law. That *παρρηγορία* here is used in the sense of legal instruction can be shown from the immediate context: the apostle shows v. 7 ff. that the "teachers of the Law" (*νομοδιδάσκαλοι*) have not understood the Law. He shows the true meaning in this text.—Meyer also rejects the old signification which Luther had assumed for *τέλος*: it is "neither 'fulfilment' nor 'chief sum,' but 'goal, *scopus ad quem tendit παρρηγορία*.'" But does it not seem a strained view to look upon love as something that you achieve after struggling through the Law? Does not our Lord in Matt. 22, 37. 39 pronounce *ἀγαπᾶν* our very activity under the Law?

not have them observed to the injury and damage of love. Yea, when commandments are contrary to love of our neighbor, He wants us to tear them to pieces and overthrow them." "If the Law urges something contrary to love, it ceases to be a law, and shall no longer be regarded as a law." (XI, 1687—91.)

III. The Persons to Whom the Ten Commandments Are Addressed. Qu. 8. 12.

A. The Mosaic Decalog. Qu. 8 b.

1. The Ten Commandments were first addressed to the people of Israel after their departure from Egypt. They were "published through Moses" after the people had heard Jehovah speak them amid terrifying signs and wonders out of a dark thundercloud from the top of Mount Sinai in the Arabian Desert. By publishing the Ten Commandments in this solemn and awe-inspiring manner, God established a covenant with the people of Israel. The Ten Commandments thus published might be called articles of agreement between Jehovah and the Israelites, by which the latter became God's peculiar people, "the elect nation," and God their "covenant God." In the erection of this covenant Moses, the divinely appointed leader of the Israelites, acted as mediator, or go-between. He carried the tables on which the Commandments had been written by God to the people, and received from them the solemn assurance that they would obey God. For a perpetual memorial of this covenant the two tables were afterwards placed in the ark of the covenant, the greatest sanctuary of the people of Israel, and were carried about on all the wanderings of the people, until they finally found a permanent place, together with the ark, in the temple of Solomon.

2. The Ten Commandments in the form published at Sinai are about four thousand years old, and in the form in which they were published then and there they are addressed only to the Israelites. Some statements in this publication, f. e., Ex. 20, 2. 12, can only refer to the Israelites.

3. For the further instruction of His chosen people God not only explained and expanded the ten brief lessons in the Decalog in many discourses which Moses delivered to them (chiefly in Deuteronomy), but He also gave to this peculiar people an entire code of laws for the regulation of their worship (Ceremonial Law, chiefly in Leviticus) and of their secular affairs (Political Laws, scattered throughout Exodus to Deuteronomy and Joshua).

4. Hence, the persons addressed in the Ten Commandments are, first, the children of Israel.

B. The Natural, or Moral, Law. Qu. 8 a.

1. Before the Ten Commandments were published from Mount Sinai, the Israelites knew that the things which it forbade were wrong, *e. g.*, Moses fled Egypt after slaying an enemy of his people, and that the things which it enjoined were right, *e. g.*, Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, had left his home country because of the idolatry practised there; he also demanded of his steward Eliezer the swearing of an oath; Lot knew the wickedness of the people of Sodom, and spoke to them about it. Yea, before the Flood righteous Noah and his wicked contemporaries, with whom God was angry, could tell right from wrong. Cain knew that murder was against God's will.

2. Paul, therefore, calls attention to a very remarkable fact: There are people in this world who "have not the Law," *i. e.*, the written law of the Ten Commandments, and yet "do the things contained in the Law," Rom. 2, 14. He calls them "the Gentiles." This word really means "the nations" (*τὰ ἔθνη*), and is the name which the Bible gives to all races and peoples outside of the Israelites. "The Gentiles" means all mankind minus the Jews. What the Israelites were told to do or not to do by a written Law, that all men do "by nature." Also the heathen know that such things as murder and theft are wrong, and that chastity, kindness, etc., are right. Our missionaries find this to be a fact when they come to the heathen. We can prove it to be a fact from books written by heathen. You can prove it by speaking to any person who is not a Christian and a Bible-reader. You can prove it by yourself: did you not know that you must not steal before you learned the Seventh Commandment?

3. Hence, Paul says that people like the Gentiles may not have been given the written code of the Law, and yet be "a law unto themselves." They are created so as to know what to do, and what not to do, without being told. Their nature tells them these things. And so, by doing naturally things which are mentioned in the Ten Commandments, they "show the work of the Law written in their hearts," Rom. 2, 14. 15. God did not print a set of written characters on their heart as He did on the tables which He gave to Moses, but He put the significance and force of the things mentioned in the Commandments in men's hearts.¹⁷⁾ He did this when He created

17) *Barnaby*: "What is meant by *τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου*, said to be 'written in their hearts'? *Τὸ ἔργον* cannot be pleonastic, as supposed by Tholuck. One view is that it is equivalent to *τὰ ἔργα τοῦ νόμου*, which is an expression frequently used elsewhere (ch. 3, 27. 28; 9, 32; Gal. 2, 16; 3, 2. 5. 10); and the singular number has been explained as *collective*,

the first man. Adam was made so as to know right from wrong. And all men since have received the same nature. This internal knowledge of right and wrong is called the Natural Law, because every person possesses it by nature and from his birth, or Moral Law, because it regulates men's morals, *i. e.*, their habitual way of living.

4. Moreover, Paul says that in all men there is "a conscience bearing witness," and there are "thoughts accusing or excusing one another." These "thoughts" and this "conscience" are the same things; and the "witness-bearing" of the conscience is the same thing as the accusing or excusing of the thoughts. While the Law written in men's hearts prescribes the works that must be done, lays down the divine rule for right action, the conscience is, so to speak, the censor, or judge, who determines whether the person has acted, is acting, or will act according to the rule of right and wrong within him. Men have, or can have, a feeling within them as if some one were approving or disapproving of their doings. Or we might say, while the Law has to do with the deed, the conscience has to do with the doer. The conscience has been rightly called God's voice in man's heart, applying the universal rule of right to every individual and to each action of every individual.

5. What the Gentiles and all men know of the Law is indeed very defective. Sin has perverted the good knowledge which man originally had regarding right and wrong. Nor does the conscience

as in 1 Cor. 3, 13; Gal. 6, 4, and v. 7 above (so Meyer), or as 'applying to each of the particular cases supposed in the *διὰν . . . ποιῶσιν*' (so Alford). The objection to this view is that it is not the *works* of the Law that can be said to be *written*, but rather the Law itself from which the works proceed. Seeing that *γραπτόν* implies evident reference to the tables of the Law, it seems best to take *ἔργον* as denoting the *efficacy* of the Law, as opposed to the *letter*, which alone was written on the tables. So, in effect, Bengel: 'The Law itself, with its operation. It is opposed to the letter, which is a circumstance.'—How do they show (*ἐνδείκνυνται*) this *ἔργον νόμου*? Evidently, from the context of v. 14, by doing *τὰ τοῦ νόμου*, *i. e.*, doing them (as is, of course, implied) as being the right things to do, and approving them. The very possibility of their doing this is evidence of an innate moral sense in the human heart, which, however it may often be obscured or perverted, remains as a characteristic of humanity, and is more or less operative in all communities; 'for no race has ever laid aside humanity to such a degree that it did not keep itself within some laws.' For it is an undoubted fact that certain notions of justice and uprightness, which the Greeks term *προσλήψεις*, are inborn in the hearts of men." (*Pulp. Comm.*)

in fallen man discharge its accusing or excusing function unerringly in each instance. But it is a remarkable fact that what the Ten Commandments require is readily acknowledged by all men to be right. Hence the Decalog of Moses is but a repetition and codification of the Natural Law,¹⁸⁾ and, therefore, applies not only to the Jews, but to all men in general. Luther has brought out this fact amongst other things by leaving out of the text of the Ten Commandments such phrases and terms as applied only to the Jews. Hence, the Ten Commandments apply "to all men."

6. However, God chooses to deal with men, not in masses or groups, — though His commands are issued to mankind in its universality and totality, — but as single individuals. Hence, the address in each Commandment is in the second person singular ("thou"), in order that each human being may know that he is personally addressed, and consider his personal relation to God ("thy God").

Let each of us, accordingly, use all care and diligence in learning the holy lessons which each Commandment shall set before us. Each Commandment will make us very much ashamed of ourselves; but this humiliation is very necessary if we wish to know and esteem Jesus aright.