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Doctrinal Theology.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The second sacrament of the Christian church is the Lord's supper, *κυριακὸν δεῖπνον*.¹⁾ It has this in common with all other divine institutions that it is what the Lord God himself made it by the act of institution, nothing more, nothing less. It is not what the church, or the state, or any individual man would make it. It is not what St. Paul made it. Paul, where he is about to state the nature of this sacrament, expressly says: *I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.*²⁾ Marriage as a divine institution is what God made it in Paradise and by his word, just as marriage as an institution of the State of Missouri is what the State of Missouri has made it, and marriage as a civil status in Nebraska is what that state has made it. A union of a man and a woman which, if contracted in Nebraska, would be marriage, may be non-marriage and incest in Missouri, and what may be marriage in this state may be incestuous and void before God. Thus, also, a ceremony established by a Zwinglian church is what that church has made it, and a rite of the Roman church is what that church has made it; and while they both may call their institutions sacraments, the one may be an empty shell and

1) 1 Cor. 11, 20.

2) 1 Cor. 11, 23.

Exegetical Theology.

THE PROOF TEXTS OF THE CATECHISM

WITH A

PRACTICAL COMMENTARY.

(Continued.)¹⁾

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

Is. 5, 8: *Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.*

The ninth commandment, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house*, is a specification of the general precept, *Thou shalt not covet*, as we find it in Rom. 13, 9. It is in the nature of the perverted heart of fallen man to covet, and God would lead us to know that covetousness is sin in his sight. A Greek term for *covetousness*, *πλεονεξία*,²⁾ describes this sin as a craving for MORE possession, *πλέον ἔχειν*. This is the nature of covetousness. The covetous man is never satisfied with what he has. When he has little he longs for more, and when he has more, he craves for still more, and the more he has, the more he desires to have.

1) NOTE.—When, in earlier volumes of the QUARTERLY, vols. II and III, we published a number of instalments under the title here again making its appearance, it was with a view of giving a series of specimens only, according to which others might continue the work and prepare for themselves an exegetical commentary of all the proof texts of the catechism. But from the time when we discontinued our articles to the present day so many requests for a resumption of our humble efforts came to us from individual brethren and entire conferences that we are inclined to take up the series where we left it in 1899 and continue these commentaries for the benefit of such as may have use for them in the service of the Master.

2) Luke 12, 15. Rom. 1, 29. Eph. 4, 19; 5, 3. Col. 3, 5. al.

This is most graphically pictured in our text. Here we have the owner of a house. But having succeeded in obtaining possession of one house, he is not satisfied; he longs for another house, and having acquired that, he longs for still another. Or he is possessed of a field, say eighty acres. But what are 80 acres? He must have 160; the adjoining farm must also be his own; and no sooner is the title to that good in his name, than he craves for still more if it seems at all within his reach. Thus he joins house to house, or lays field to field. How long? When will he be satisfied and cease to crave for more? Never, until there be *no place left*, and he be *placed alone in the midst of the earth*. Such is covetousness, an insatiable longing and craving for *more*. And this is sin, and God says, *Woe unto them* that are covetous, for this morbid appetite is itself an immoral perversion of the enjoyment of what God has given us into a greed for that which God has not given us but allotted to others. And this sinful lust and longing begets a multitude of other sins, as the following texts will show.

Matt. 23, 14: *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.*

This verse is not found in the best codices, α , B, D, L, nor in the ancient versions and the Fathers, and may have been taken over from Mark 12, 40 where it occurs in nearly the same words. It is, therefore, certainly a dictum of our Savior censuring the covetousness of the scribes and Pharisees. These men enriched themselves by gorging themselves with other people's property, taking what they could get by fair means or foul, not even stopping short at the possessions of widows. Under pretense of praying for them, they would take advantage of the credulity and devotion of women whom their husbands had left in possession

of houses, but without a natural supporter and protector. But nothing is sacred to a covetous man. He craves and takes, no matter whence it may come, and is not satisfied until he has all that is to be had. This is indicated by *κατεσθίειν*, *to eat up* (*κατά-ἐσθίειν*), until nothing is left, like the greedy glutton, who, with an insatiable appetite, devours all he can to the very last morsel within his reach. And here, again, covetousness is marked as damnable sin which brings down upon the sinner the righteous wrath of God, not only upon the robber and murderer, but also upon the priest and the Levite, the man of prayer and outward godliness.

1 Tim. 6, 6—10: *But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptations and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

This is a remarkable text. In the verse preceding it, the apostle has spoken of those who *suppose that gain is godliness*, or, more literally, that *godliness is a way of gain*, a *πορισμός*, *ein Gewerbe*, as Luther has it. He refers to those who put on the guise of godliness for filthy lucre's sake, as the scribes and Pharisees of the previous text and the mercenary ministers of whom Paul speaks in Tit. 1, 11. This is a form of covetousness of which the apostle says, "From such withdraw thyself." And now he proceeds, "Ἐστὶν δὲ πορισμὸς μέγας ἢ εὐσέβεια μετὰ ἀνταρχίας, *But indeed a great way of gain is godliness coupled with contentment.* *Ἀνταρχία*, *contentment*, is the very reverse of covetousness. He who is covetous never has enough, is never satisfied. He who is *ἀνταρχής*, Phil. 4, 11, always has enough, is always satisfied. And this is proper and reasonable. *For*

we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. Cf. Job 1, 21. Ps. 49, 17. 18. Eccles. 5, 14. Hence, whatever we have in this world is gain, is more than we brought when we came and more than we shall take with us when we go. Why, then, should we covet what we cannot claim as having brought it with us, nor have and hold to take it with us? *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.* It is really all we need, the means wherewith to sustain and to protect this body and life; and that God will give us this, we assume as a matter of course. If he, in his wisdom and goodness, will give us more, we thank him; if he will give us this and nothing more, we likewise thank him; and in either case we are gainers and rest content. This is the reverse of covetousness, and it is in every way far better to be godly with contentment than covetous. Why? *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.* The apostle does not say, *They that ARE rich*, but *οἱ βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν*, *they that desire to be rich.* Πλοῦτος is derived from the same root with πολῦ, *much*, and πλουτεῖν is *to have much*, more than food and raiment, the necessaries of our station in life. *Οἱ βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν* are simply the *covetous*, who *crave for more*. And this is an evil and, as all sin, leads to evil. This evil lust begets a progeny of other evil and *hurtful lusts*, and the end of this sin as of all other sins is *destruction and perdition*. The wages of sin is death. *Ῥίζα γὰρ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἐστὶν ἡ φιλαργυρία.* There is no article before *ρίζα*. Paul would not here teach what is the root of all evil, but what follows from and grows out of *φιλαργυρία*, *the love of money*, and that is not good, but evil, and nothing but evil, as coming from an evil root, a sinful disposition and propensity, covetousness. And this evil root, this sinful propensity, is not only in the hearts of the ungodly, of unbelievers, but is found side by side with faith, the root of all that is good in us; and there, too, it is

a dangerous thing, as sad experience has shown; for such coveting has caused some to err from the faith and to pierce themselves with many sorrows. Hence the warning following in v. 11 is not superfluous even to such as Timothy, *Thou, O man of God, flee these things!* Beware of covetousness!

Phil. 2, 4: *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*

Σκοπεῖν, *to look*, is also used in the sense of *to pay attention to—, to care for—*, as 2 Cor. 4, 18, and secular authors, as Plato, Thucyd., Herod., use σκοπεῖν τὰ τινοῦς for *to see to the interest or advantage of—*. So here the apostle exhorts the Philippians and all Christians to see not to their own interests but to those of others. The sum of all commandments, the fulfilling of the law, is love. Matt. 22, 39. Rom. 13, 10. 1 Tim. 1, 5. But *charity seeketh not her own*. 1 Cor. 13, 5. Thus coveting, which is the selfish care of one's own profit even to the loss of others, is seen to be the death of love and a root of all manner of violation of the law. To counterpoise this evil propensity, we should not only abstain from and put down our evil craving for advantages to ourselves even to the disadvantage of our neighbor, but *also (καί)* practice a continual care for the interests of our neighbor, even when in doing so we must deny ourselves. The fact, however, that this admonition, as that of the preceding text, is directed to Christians, clearly shows that we, too, are in need of such admonition. Why? Because our hearts, too, are not free from coveting.

Gal. 5, 13: *By love serve one another.*

Coveting tends to make all men and all things subservient to one's own interests regardless of the interests of others or the good will of God. Coveting will even lead to the perversion and abuse of the best and noblest gifts of God for the satisfaction of selfishness. Thus, Christians, as Paul says in the previous context, *have been called unto*

liberty, v. 13, *the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free*, v. 1. But the *flesh*, σάρξ, our natural depravity, the residues of which are still within us, may abuse even this precious gift of God for taking advantage of our brethren by self-aggrandizement and other selfish ends, until those who are brethren and freedmen of Christ, even bite and devour one another, v. 15. Hence the warning, *Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh*. And now follows the admonition, *But by love serve one another*. The Greek word for *serve*, δουλεύετε, connotes submission to another who holds the position of a master, δοῦλος, from the root DA, *to give*, being an inferior who is not his own but belongs to a superior and is bound to serve his master's interests. And this submissive service shall be rendered διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης, *through the love* which Christians bear toward one another, and according to which they do not COVET, but rather deny themselves to serve the brethren.

√ Rom. 13, 9: *Thou shalt not covet*.

St. Paul quotes this commandment as the last in a series comprising four other commandments of the decalogue, given as the sixth, the fifth, the seventh, and the eighth, in our Catechism. The ninth and tenth commandments, both beginning with *Thou shalt not covet*, are, in this selection of St. Paul, evidently quoted as one, ὄχι ἐπιθυμῆσεις. This verb, ἐπιθυμεῖν, the word used in the Septuagint עָבַד and עָבַד, and the noun, ἐπιθυμία, *desire*, do not always stand for *evil desire*, or *lust*. Even our Savior says, Ἐπιθυμία ἐπεθύμησα κ. τ. λ. *With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you*, Luke 22, 15. Hence, when God says, ὄχι ἐπιθυμῆσεις, *Thou shalt not desire, thou shalt not covet*, he clearly indicates that the human heart is depraved and its faculties are perverted. Man was created with a faculty of ἐπιθυμεῖν, of directing his affections upon (ἐπι) objects which God had intended for his use, and all these ordinate desires were holy desires. But when Eve, under temptation, directed

her desire upon the fruit of the forbidden tree, she sinned, and thenceforth her heart was depraved, the seat and source of evil desires, and her progeny inherited from her and her fallen husband a corrupt nature, a seat of impure, unholy desires. Man now covets his neighbor's wife, his manservant and his maid-servant, his cattle, and all that is his neighbor's. And this depraved condition, and these corrupt desires, though the evil deeds of adultery and theft and other sins may not in every case ensue, are in themselves sinful; for God says, *ὄχι ἐπιθυμῆσεις*, *Thou shalt not covet*.

Rom. 7, 7: *I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*

Here the question is answered, How do we know that *ἐπιθυμία*, sinful desire, is *sin*? It is by the law. For the law is the moral norm, and sin is the transgression of the law. And now, the law, not only the Mosaic decalogue, but also the law written in the human heart, the natural law, says, *ὄχι ἐπιθυμῆσεις*. Herodotus and Juvenal and other Gentiles knew that evil desire is itself damnable sin.¹⁾ When Jesus taught the Jews, in his sermon on the mount, Matt. 5, 21 ff., that the evil desires of the heart are damnable before God, this was not extending the law to what it had not comprehended before, but a reassertion of the moral law which had been largely forgotten not only by the Gentiles, but also among the Jews under the influence of Pharisaic traditions and the doctrines of the lawyers. Thus Paul the Pharisee, too, had been in particular need of enlightenment on this subject, not by a new revelation, but by the law written in the Book of the Law and corroborated by the law as written in his heart, saying, *Thou shalt not covet*. And hence, not only as regards this commandment, but because of our proneness to be forgetful or unmindful of all the commandments of God, we are in need of continually

1) See QUARTERLY Vol. III, pp. 278 f.

hearing and learning the law, by which is the *knowledge of sin*, Rom. 3, 20, not only of the sin of *coveting*, but of all sins, as Paul says in the context, Rom. 7, 7: *I had not known sin but by the law.*

James 1, 14. 15: *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

The conjunction, *but*, points back to the previous context, which says that temptation to evil does not proceed from God. On the contrary, the source of evil is in man himself, who is tempted as by his own lust he is ἐξελκόμενος καὶ δελεαζόμενος, *drawn out and allured*. In these verbs man is pictured as a beast in its lair which is, by various means, induced to come forth and roused to action. Thus δελεάζειν is *to allure by a δέλεαρ, a bait* attached to a hook or a trap. Or both verbs may picture lust as a captivating woman who entices and allures men to have lewd intercourse with her. As a natural consequence of such intercourse, lust will conceive and bring forth a progeny of her own nature, sin, actual sins of various kinds; and sin, in its turn also fruitful, ἀποκύει, brings forth that with which it was pregnant, death. And thus it appears that evil desire, which is in *every man's* heart, is not in itself a neutral thing, depending for its moral character or influence from without, but is, in its native state, sin, bringing forth a daughter of like nature, sin, which again bears the fruit of sin, death. What St. James would here teach is not so much the genesis of sin and death, as rather the nature of lust, the enticing sinful mother of an evil progeny.

Lev. 19, 2: *Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.*

These words were spoken to the people of Israel in connection with and at the head of a series of the statutes

which God gave by Moses to his peculiar people. Most of these statutes refer to acts enjoined or prohibited, stating what the people of God should do or forbear. Here, however, the Lawgiver demands more; he utters his will not only as to what they should *do*, but as to how they should *be*: *Ye shall be holy*. Holiness is perfect purity from all ungodliness. And God himself being holy, he cannot but demand holiness of those whose God he would be. It is against the will of God to have a heart defiled with evil propensities and evil desires, and such indwelling sinfulness as truly separates between unholy man and a holy God as any gross act committed in violation of any other commandment of God. For, *Ye shall be holy* is as truly and in the same sense a divine commandment as the commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*, or, *Thou shalt not steal*.

Matt. 5, 48: *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

By *therefore*, οὖν, this text is marked as a conclusion drawn from the previous context, which enjoins love, true love, not toward our friends only, as the publicans may love, but also toward our enemies, doing good to them that hate us, even as our Father in heaven makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. And we are our Father's children; therefore *we* should resemble, not the publicans, but our Father in heaven, who is perfect in his goodness, τέλειος, lacking nothing in quality or quantity. And this is not in our option. Christ is here preaching the law. Hence every imperfection in us is sin and damnable, though it be but a shortcoming in thought or desire.

Ps. 37, 4: *Delight thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

In the preceding verse the psalmist exhorts us to *trust in the Lord and DO GOOD*. All our works should be good,

in conformity with the will of God expressed in his holy law. But not only our works should be holy; our desires and affections *also* should be godly, says the psalmist in our text. Our delight, too, should be in the Lord, and our heart's desires should be directed to those things only which God in his wisdom and goodness would give us. This is again but another form of the commandment, *Thou shalt not covet*. For he who covets does not delight himself in the Lord and is not content with what God gives him, but craves for that which God would not give him, and is displeased with the Lord when He withholds from him what his wicked, covetous heart desires.

THE CLOSE OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

James 4, 12: *There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.*

The text followed by this translation is incomplete. The best manuscripts, as κ, A, B, and most of the ancient versions, add *καὶ κριτῆς, and judge*, after *ὁ νομοθέτης, the lawgiver*. What the apostle says is this: *One* is the lawgiver and judge, and that is He who is able to save and to destroy, i. e., to execute his judgments according to his law. Human justice is imperfect. No human law is fully adequate to secure the ends of justice; for the lawgivers are human and their work can be no better than its makers. Again, the best of human laws may miscarry in the courts because the judges fail to apply the law to the nature and circumstances of the case. Or the ends of human justice may be frustrated at still a later stage; a righteous judgment may prove futile because the sentence cannot be executed. But divine justice is perfect as God himself is perfect, a lawgiver of infinite wisdom and justice, whose laws are true utterances of his holy will, a judge who is never biased or deceived, whose judgments are true and in full conformity with the

law, and an executor of unlimited knowledge and power, whose retribution is, in manner and measure, in full consistency with his judgments. Cf. Matt. 10, 28.

Deut. 27, 26: *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them: and all the people shall say, Amen.*

This is the last of a series of imprecations, eleven of which refer to particular sins, gross offenses against the first, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh commandments of the decalogue. But this closing imprecation invokes a curse upon the transgressors of any commandment of God's holy law. The verb, קָם , means, *he will raise up, establish*. God has laid down the law in his commandments, and man is now called upon to set this law before his eyes as a rule of life, not a part of the law, but *all the words of the law*, not only to know them, but *to do them*, all of them. And such is the stringency of the law, of every word of the law, that the curse of God is here pronounced upon every one who comes short of compliance with this statute, and all the people shall acknowledge this and say *Amen*. Thus is the law the letter that killeth, the ministration of condemnation, 2 Cor. 3, 6. 9, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Rom. 3, 19.

Rom. 6, 23: *The wages of sin is death.*

Sin is here, as also in the previous context, pictured as a mistress or queen ruling over those who serve her; cf. vv. 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22; and in v. 13, where the members of the sinner are spoken of as $\text{\u0395}\pi\lambda\alpha \text{\u0391}\delta\iota\kappa\iota\alpha\varsigma$, *weapons of unrighteousness*, the service of sin is pictured as military service. So also here. For $\text{\u0394}\psi\acute{\omega}\nu\alpha$, as the German *Sold*, denotes the pay of a soldier. The sinner, having undergone the hardships of a campaign with its marches and battles, at last, in consideration of his services, receives his well-earned wages, *death*, temporal and eternal death.

Such is the service and recompense of Sin, the tyrant who rules over generations of slaves and wages war against God and his kingdom.

Ezek. 18, 20: *The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.*

This text might seem to contradict the statement that "God is a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." But both being words of God, there can be no real contradiction, and both must be true. The solution lies in the words, "of them that hate me." *There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8, 1, though their ancestors may have been steeped in iniquity. The godly son shall not bear the iniquity of an ungodly father any more than a godly father shall bear the iniquity of an ungodly son. But to the slave of sin, the wages of sin is death, because he rejects the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6, 23. Even the ungodly, who live and die in their sins, do not suffer death as a penalty of other men's sins, but *the soul that sinneth, it shall die: the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.* Yet God is not unjust, but a righteous judge, when, in meting out *temporal* punishment, as indicated by the words, "unto the third and fourth generation," he visits upon ungodly descendants his rightful wrath excited by the sins of ungodly ancestors, in whose footsteps he sees their children and children's children walk the same ways of iniquity, hating him as their fathers hated him. Thus were the wicked sons of wicked Canaan doomed to servitude, Gen. 9, 25; thus was the innocent blood of Jesus visited in wrath upon the wicked children of his murderers, because they refused to find grace and forgiveness in that blood which might have cleansed them too from *all* sin. Matt. 27, 25. 1 John 1, 7.

Luke 10, 28: *This do, and thou shalt live.*

These words were spoken to a lawyer who had tempted Jesus, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The lawyer ought to have known better than to ask such a question; for inheritance does not come by works, but by virtue of the relation of parent and child or by the testator's will. Yet Jesus enters upon the lawyer's question, *What must I do?* and points out to him a way which, being a way of works, would lead to eternal life those who performed such works. When the lawyer had correctly quoted the sum of the law, Jesus said to him, *Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live.* God, in his goodness, has promised life to those who keep his commandments. Cf. Lev. 18, 5. Rom. 10, 5. Gal. 3, 12. And God would not fail to make good this promise, if any man rendered obedience, perfect obedience, to all commandments of his holy law. But Jesus was so far from teaching that any man may actually obtain eternal life by fulfilling the law, that by his answer he would rather lead the lawyer and others to understand that, being utterly unable to *do* all that the law demands, they cannot by their works obtain eternal life, but, being transgressors of the law, deserve eternal death, according to the word, *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*

1 Tim. 4, 8: *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

This is an exhortation to *godliness*, *εὐσέβεια*, a life in the fear and love of God according to his holy will. In the preceding verse the apostle has admonished Timothy, *Exercise thyself unto godliness.* With the notion of *γυμνάζειν*, to exercise, he associates in his mind the gymnastic exercises and training of the Greeks, of which we read in 1 Cor. 9, 24—27; and he continues in our verse: *For the bodily exercise profiteth little.* Even this bodily training he would

not put down as altogether unprofitable; it may conduce to physical health and may secure a temporal, corruptible crown and transient glory. And in view of these things the aspirants endure hardships and privations and exert their utmost endeavors to win the prize, though it be of comparatively little value. *But*, he continues, *godliness is profitable unto all things*. "God promises grace and every blessing to all that keep his commandments." *Every* blessing. The promises of God hold out to us not only benefits pertaining to this temporal life, as in the promise attached to the fourth commandment, but also blessings of the life to come. Cf. Matt. 19, 20. To what purpose? "That we may love God and trust in him and willingly do according to his commandments."

A. G.