

THIS WE KNOW

PART TWO:
THE
CATECHISM

THE LESSON: DEUTERONOMY 6+10

What do you think of when you hear the word “Catechism”? Perhaps you have not had much exposure to it before. Would it surprise you to be told that it is both *foundational* and *relevant*? There’s a reason why young believers are traditionally given this particular instruction as they are setting out on their journey of faith. Learning the Catechism isn’t going to furnish you with *all* you need, but it *will* equip you with a very solid grounding.

If you’ve taken a Catechism class in the Prayer Book tradition, then you know that it requires you to learn: the Apostle’s Creed, the Ten Commandments (through the lens of Christ’s teaching), the Lord’s Prayer, as well as the significance of Baptism and Holy Communion. Phew! But the course not only requires students to regurgitate some ancient words, rather you must understand *how they relate to you personally*. So, for example, not only must we learn the “I believe” of the Creed, but we must also understand the personal relationship to which it points. That’s what is going on when the Catechism states that through the creed “I learn to have faith in the one true God: in God the Father, *who made me* and all the world; in God the Son, *who redeemed me* and all mankind; and in God the Holy Spirit, *who sanctifies me* and all the people of God” (BCP p. 545).

As you’re getting started in the Christian life, the Church wants to ensure that you have a crash course in right belief (Creed), right help (Lord’s Prayer), and right living (Ten Commandments). If you have never taken a Catechism course or worked through the material in the Prayer Book, it is well worth the time. (*If you don’t have a prayer book of your own, you can find the Catechism here: <http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/catechism/>*).

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It has always been important for God’s people to know what is true and right; to take this wholly in – not just into their minds, but into their hearts also, allowing it to inform every aspect of life. Take a look at what we find in the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy. This section of scripture forms part of “The Law”, given by God through Moses to the people of Israel.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer/))

During this unit, we’re going to take some of the prayers that come from the liturgies of Baptism and Confirmation and pray them for one another as a reminder and a renewal of commissioning.

Spend some time reflecting on and praying with the words of this prayer:

Almighty and everliving God, who is able to regenerate thy servants by Water and the Holy Spirit, and to grant forgiveness for all their sins: Confirm and strengthen these persons, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Spirit the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and might; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever. Amen.

(ADAPTED FROM THE CONFIRMATION SECTION OF THE MINISTRATION OF HOLY BAPTISM TO SUCH AS ARE OF RIPER YEARS, BCP PAGE 538)

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DEUTERONOMY 6+10: **HEART, SOUL, MIGHT**

6 ⁴Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

10 ¹²And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I am commanding you today for your good? ¹⁴Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. ¹⁵Yet the Lord set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. ¹⁶Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn. ¹⁷For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. ¹⁸He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.