

**Life in Christ - Christian Morality – Part I & II Feb 2, 2016**

Chapters 23 & 24 of Catholic Catechism of the U.S.

**RECAP OF CATECHISM ALREADY COVERED IN CLASS**

**First Pillar of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* presents the  
Creed – What we believe....**

**Second Pillar of the *Catechism* presents**

**How We Worship** . We talked about **Liturgy** and about the **Sacraments** .

(We still have two more sacraments to explore: *SACRAMENTS OF HOLY ORDERS AND ANNOINTING OF THE SICK*)

**TONIGHT....**We will start the **Third Pillar of the Catechism** (Chapters 23 and 24)

- **Explores our life in Christ.**                      Morality
- Through Revelation, God revealed to us **the ways we are to respond to God's divine love** through our **personal and social moral behavior**.
- Tonight, Mary Ann and I will talk about **what God has revealed to us** on how to live a Christian life **and the help** He has given us to live that type of life

**BEFORE WE START, I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT...**

**REMINDE OURSELVES:**    **Why God created us... Remember our Purpose**

God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next

REMEMBERING **WHY WERE CREATED, REMINDS US OF OUR ULTIMATE GOAL.**

**WANT TO START** by setting the stage for the next few weeks when we talk about the commandments.

**Want to talk about HOW WE VIEW THE COMMANDMENTS** and how our view of the commandments **CAN HAVE AN IMPACT ON LIVING A CHRISTIAN LIFE. A LIFE IN CHRST.**

**Are they helping or restricting...?**

- 10 Commandments a great gift from God. **A GPS on** how to live a life pleasing to
- They are the **Foundation of Living a Christian Moral Life**
- *“Commandments are revealed law best understood as divine **help** to a humanity wounded by sin.” (in the handout on The Law it says”*
- First 3 commandments prescribe our relationship with God: love of God, respect for God, and worshipping God
- Last 7 commandments prescribe love of neighbor
- 10 Commandments are found in both OT and NT
- In the OT the **formal list** occurs 2 times. First Exodus 20 and Deut Chapt 5
- After Moses has this encounter with God, he is given the 10 Commandments.

**READ: EXODUS CHAPER 20**

- Let’s look at the **NT**, and see how Jesus confirms the importance of the 10 commandments.

**READ: MATTHEW 19:16-24 The Rich Man**

Now someone approached him and said, “Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?”<sup>17</sup> He answered him, “Why do you ask me about the good? There is only One who is good.<sup>18</sup> If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.”<sup>18</sup> He asked him, “Which ones?” And Jesus replied, “ ‘You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness;<sup>19</sup> honor your father and your mother’; and ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”<sup>20</sup>

- In another chapter of Matthew, Jesus sums the law up in Two Great Commandments.

**READ MATTHEW 22:36-39 Pharisees question Jesus**

“Teacher,<sup>36</sup> which commandment in the law is the greatest?”<sup>37</sup> He said to him,<sup>38</sup> “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.<sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and the first commandment.<sup>39</sup> The second is like it:<sup>39</sup> You shall love your neighbor as yourself.<sup>40</sup> The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.”

- **SO we see Jesus did not abolish the 10 commandments, He CONFIRMED THEM.**
- Most importantly, they are from the lip

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- \*Catholic Church as do other Christian denominations place great importance on the 10 commandments

- **What are some of the things we think of when we say things like, law, rule, regulation, command?** \_\_\_\_\_

- Commands make us think of being **less free, being restricted; think of them as an imposition.**
- In our society/culture there is a sense of resistance to things that restrict us. And this view of society is very harmful.

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- **Things people say:**

When people hear you are a Catholic or Becoming Catholic, they may ask or say:

- *“Why do you want to submit to all those rules?”*
- *“Catholicism has all the rules- accumulated from 2000 years ago.”*
- *“I think of Catholics with celibate men, and nuns with rulers telling us what not to do”*

- So in our culture there is a general negativity when we talk about commands

- But as Christians, If we don't already, we to think about the 10 commandments as something that **produces joy.** We should embrace them as good.

**Let do an analogy using a river to see how we should view the 10 Commandments.**

- If we could presume **that a river has a personality, a will,** where would the river want to go?  
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- Ultimately it wants to go to the sea. Ultimate goal: Mississippi River to Gulf of Mexico.
- River Banks help

- If you presume that there is **NO DESIRE** to get to the sea, **NOW** what are the river's banks? The banks restrict the river right? Border it in? Keep it restrained?

- I say my river wants to be free, **THEN GET RID OF THOSE BANKS.**

**What happens then? Pause**

- ....it is free, it goes anywhere. It goes everywhere.
- It may make its way to the sea **eventually.** **But not certain** of it.
- It goes off course. **Certainly not the fastest,** quickest way to get to the sea.
- **SO If the goal of the river is not to get to the sea,** then those banks are indeed a restriction. If it is not heading anywhere....the banks restrict its freedom. Should be done away with.

- This is what happens as a person / a culture **LOSES ITS VISION ON ITS PURPOSE – TO GET TO HEAVEN. THEY CONSIDER LAWS OF GOD TO BE RESTRICTIVE.**

## GOAL TO GET TO THE SEA

- **SO NOW LETS LOOK AT IF** the river's GOAL is to get to the sea, then what are the banks now?

(The River banks are **guides, protection, not getting in the way of the river; they help** the river get where it wants to go.)

- The banks don't restrict Freedom, **THEY ACTUALLY MAKE THE RIVER FREE. THEY HELP THE RIVER GO WHERE IT WANTS TO GO.**
- **SO OUR goal** is not the Gulf of Mexico, our goal is Heaven.
- **When WE focus on that goal**, when that goal of Heaven is in place in a Christian's heart, in a Christian culture, then LAW, RULE, COMMANDMENT is no longer restrictive of freedom, **but a SURE PATH. IT BECOMES A WAY THAT IS SECURE!**
- That is exactly the way the CCC explains it:
- CCC: 89 READ *"Dogmas are lights along the path of faith, illuminating it and making it secure."* Repeat it again **HOME**
- SO LET ME REPEAT WHAT I JUST SAID: If we understand WE UNDERSTAND OUR GOAL, the re not restrictive **BUT frees us** and gives us a **sure path.**
- For me, freedom for me is knowing that I don't have to figure it out myself.

**Let's look at a simple example - how easily we can view commandments as restrictive**

**Putting most of our focus with our children's success in the world:** Want them to get into good schools so they can be successful. Sports -- getting scholarships. Play sports all the time. We begin to place more emphasis on sports. Less time for the spiritual.

In this situation **we could find that the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandments become a restriction.** An obstacle and not helpful to our goal.

**Commandment 1. I the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.**

**Commandment 3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day**

- When we get our priorities in order—Heaven being our goal, **the law becomes what it should be:**

### A SOURCE OF JOY – OUR WAY TO GOD

PARAPHRASE ---In the commandments, it is the Lord saying "I am going to tell you how **not to get lost and show you how to have a secure, sure path to me.** " **I want you to have a secure, safe path to Joy (PEACE)**

- **Psalms: Rhapsody; praise of God's law**

- In one of the longest chapters in the bible in one of the longest books of the bible, the Book of Psalms Chapter 119, we hear the full and complete joy of God's law.
- The whole psalm is about **loving God's law.**
- *"With all my heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments "*
- *"I delight in your commandments, which I dearly love.*
- *"My heart is set on fulfilling your statutes; they are my reward forever."*

- This is how the Jews felt about the law even before Jesus came.

- **Jesus makes more clear that the law as a path to joy.**

- **In John 15:10-12,**

**READ:** Let's read John 15

If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.<sup>a</sup> 11 "I have told you this so that **my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.**<sup>b</sup> 12 This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.<sup>i</sup> 13\* No one has greater love than this,<sup>i</sup> to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you.

- **SO ON THE LAST NIGHT OF HIS LIFE, JESUS – tells us to keep his commands so our joy may be complete.**

SO over the next few weeks let's challenge ourselves when we begin talking about the commandments ...

- let's challenge ourselves to look the Commandments as a **PATH TO JOY**
- Let's challenge ourselves to look at the Commandments as our **SECURE PATH TO HIM.**
- Let's challenge ourselves to see how following the commandments can
  - **deepen our relationship with Jesus**
- Let's challenge ourselves to see how following the commandments
  - **we can become the delight his heart.**

**Now I will pass it over to Mary Ann** who will talk about the Beatitudes and how they relate to a Life in Christ and other elements of morality.

## LIST OF COMMANDMENTS

### Catholic Church 10 Commandments

1. I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord God in vain
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day
4. Honor your father and your mother
5. You shall not kill
6. You shall not commit adultery
7. You shall not steal
8. You shall not bear false witness
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods

In the Protestant Churches, they are as follows:

1. You shall have no other gods but me.
2. You shall not make unto you any graven images
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain
4. You shall remember the Sabbath and keep it holy
5. Honor your mother and father
6. You shall not murder
7. You shall not commit adultery
8. You shall not steal
9. You shall not bear false witness
10. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor