

# Do You Have the Answers?

Sunday, 7/1 at 8:00 & 10:45 and Monday, 7/2 at 7 PM

Sixth after Pentecost, Fifth after Trinity – 2018

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Since questions will arise, *it is important for us to have the answers!* Many good answers can be found in the 2017 edition of Luther's Small Catechism! This series, *which began in December of last year and included 13 different sermons and 9 different Bible studies*, concludes with this sermon!

1. **The Time Between the Testaments** (pages 360-361): As we might prepare for a trip by getting a haircut and packing our luggage, *so God prepared many things before He sent His Son into the world to take away our sins!*
  - a. What political forces bridged the testaments as God set the world's stage for the coming of Jesus? During the **Persian Period** (430-332 BC), *many of the scattered Jews returned to the Promised Land*; **Greek Period** (332-167), *much of the world began to speak Greek*; **Hasmonean Period** (167-63), *many Jews were persecuted*; and **Roman Period** (63 to the time of Christ), *the Romans conquered Jerusalem and Herod rebuilt the temple.*
  - b. What Holy Scriptures and other writings were God's people reading during this period? **The Septuagint** – *the Hebrew OT translated into Greek*, and **the Apocrypha** – *books written during the 400 years before Christ*; the Apocryphal books contain much history, but they ✦are not in the Hebrew OT, ✦were not quoted by Jesus, and ✦are not the inspired Word of God.

- c. What language did people speak in the Holy Land when Jesus was born? “Aramaic gradually replaced Hebrew as the language commonly spoken in Palestine.”
  - d. Who were the religious groups that figured prominently in the NT? **The Sanhedrin** – *a.k.a. the Jewish Council*, which included Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes.
  - e. Where did the people worship in the NT world? In the temple, synagogues, and homes.
  - f. What features made the world in which Jesus was born ready to receive the world’s Savior? A common language – *Greek*; Roman roads – *which aided travel and communication*; and dispersed Jews, who “provided strategic mission contacts.”
2. **The Church Year** (377-382): We are familiar with the seasons of spring, summer, fall, and winter; **the church year has six seasons, which keep us focused on Jesus!** These are some ways to understand the church year:
- a. Two halves: The festival half – *the seasons of Advent through Easter*, and the non-festival half, *which includes the Sundays after the Day of Pentecost*.
  - b. Three times: The time of Christmas, the time of Easter, and the time of the Church.
  - c. Six seasons:
    - i. **Advent**: *Jesus is coming*; the color is blue – for hope, anticipation!
    - ii. **Christmas**: *Jesus is born*; the color is white – for purity, the Son of God is sinless!

- iii. **Epiphany:** *Jesus is God*; the colors are white and green – white on some weeks and green on others, *or it can be white for the whole season!*
- iv. **Lent:** *Jesus received our punishment*; the color is purple – for Jesus' suffering!
- v. **Easter:** *Jesus is risen*; the color is white; His rising proves His victory over sin, death, and the devil!
- vi. **Pentecost:** *Live for Jesus*; the color is green – for life and growth!

3. **Terms Relating to Worship and God's House** (pages 383-386): Here are some examples (*see catechism for more*):

- a. **Agnus Dei:** Latin for "Lamb of God"; Jesus is the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world (John 1:29)!
- b. **Alleluia:** Hebrew for "praise the Lord."
- c. **Narthex:** The room at the entrance of the nave.
- d. **Nave:** Latin for "ship"; the place where people gather to hear, respond, sing, and pray.
- e. **Chancel:** The front of our worship area, including the altar, lectern, and pulpit.
- f. **Epistle:** Greek for letter.
- g. **Hosanna:** Hebrew for "save us now."
- h. **Invocation:** Latin for "to call upon"; when we gather, we call upon the LORD to bless us!
- i. **Pax Domini:** Latin for "peace of the Lord"; we have such peace through Jesus and His finished work!

4. **Symbols and Their Meanings** (pages 387-393): Here are some examples (*see catechism for more*):

- a. **Circle:** God is eternal, and we have eternal life through Jesus; *see the back of the altar crucifix.*

- b. Crown of thorns: Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate, *bearing the punishment we all deserve.*
  - c. IHS: The first three CAPITAL Greek letters of the name Jesus; *see the center of our large cross.*
  - d. Lamb with flag: Jesus is the Lamb of God; by faith we share in His victory; *see our stained glass window.*
  - e. Shell and three drops of water: We were baptized in the name of the Triune God; *see the front of our baptismal font.*
5. **Catechism Glossary** (pages 394-398): To grasp what we read, *we must understand the words*; as you read unfamiliar words in your catechism, go to the Catechism Glossary to find the meanings of 85 words or phrases that are *less common or more difficult.*
  6. **Scriptural Index** (pages 399-421): If we are wondering if the catechism makes reference to a certain Bible verse, we can quickly discover the answer by looking in the Scriptural Index.
  7. **Index of Topics** (pages 422-429): Finally, if we are wondering if the catechism addresses a certain topic, we can easily find the answer by looking in the Index of Topics. However, take note: The numbers after each topic are *question numbers*, rather than *page numbers*.

**Let Us Pray**: Dear Father in heaven, we thank you for Your Son, Your Word, and the 2017 catechism! For those who have read it, *bless them*; for those who have not, *let them accept the challenge to begin their reading today!*

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Podcast: Benefit from the Bible | Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230