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Interviews with God

•**I ASK:** *'Who is a fool?'*

•**THUS SAITH THE LORD:**

'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.'

'They are without excuse; because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him no as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.' Rom. 1:20-22.

'Fools make a mock at sin.' Prov. 14:9.

•**TO WHICH I RESPOND:** 'Lord, grant me grace to realise that the height of wisdom is to know Thee as the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, and that the depth of folly is to ignore in my plans for life and for death. Implant in my heart that fear of Thee which is the beginning of wisdom. May I constantly grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.'

Studies on Bible Texts Found in the Drewes Catechism

Always Be Students of Luther's Small Catechism



...Luther: 'For this reason alone you should *gladly read, recite, ponder, and practice the catechism*, even if the only advantage and benefit you obtain from it is to *drive away the devil and evil thoughts*. For *he cannot bear to hear God's Word*. And God's Word is not like some idle tale, such as about Dietrich of Bern, but, as St. Paul says in *Romans 1:16*, it is *'the power of God,' indeed, the power of God that burns the devil's house down and gives us immeasurable strength, comfort, and help.*' — The Preface to the Large Catechism.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

The proof passage which the Drewes Catechism uses **to forbid misusing God's holy Name by CURSING** is found in Rom. 12:14, **'Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.'**

In Romans 12 **true believers in Christ** are being addressed as to how they are to *live in order to show their faith and their love for their Lord*. We read in Rom. 12:1, **'I beseech** (I beg of you, please) **you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God** (through the pardon and forgiveness that they possess by faith in Christ), **that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.'**

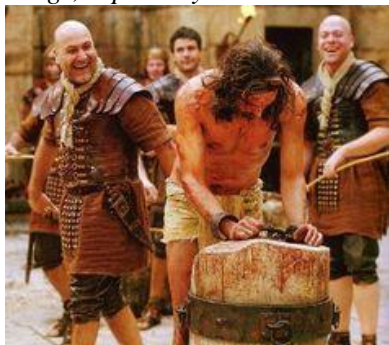
What is one of the ways in which we can show that our whole life is spent in the service of the Lord or how we can lead a sanctified life by faith in Christ?

Rom.12:14 states by **not misusing God's Name by cursing by God's Name**. What is meant by this? *It means to use God's Name to call down upon ourselves or others the punishment of God or even to wish them evil of any kind.* According to the Greek construction there were Christians who had been guilty of 'cursing' but now they are commanded: **'Stop cursing.'** Foolishly people curse when they say: 'Damn you!' or: 'Drop dead!' or: 'May he rot in hell!'



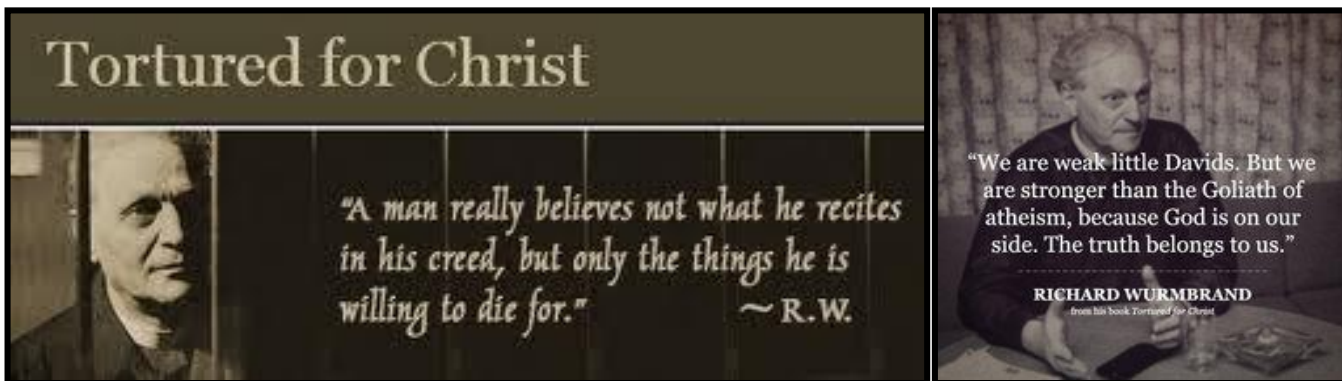
The use of a command here **emphasizes** how important it is for a Christian to follow God's will. If he keeps on sinning in this way and it becomes a habit of life, he is in danger of losing his faith and in bringing much harm on himself and others. Sinful words come from a corrupt heart. But if that heart is cleansed by the blood of Christ, then we will want to control our words in order to please Christ, our loving Saviour. James 3 tells us what destructive harm can be caused by the sinful use of our tongues. Look at how Peter before the High Priest's servants **cursed** when he denied that he knew Jesus his Saviour. God's grace in Christ, or the power of the cross gives us the strength to stop doing this!

But Rom.12:4 stresses that besides 'putting off' like an old dirty garment (Eph.4:22) the sin of 'cursing' we are to 'put on' like a clean, white robe (Eph.4:24) the Godly action of **'blessing'** others. If we believe in Jesus we are to **'bless them which persecute you.'** What does it mean to bless? *It means to wish others all kinds of Biblical good things, especially their salvation.* The Greek scholar Prof. Wuest states: *'to bless our persecutors in the sense of returning kindness and love to those who mistreat us because of our testimony to the Lord Jesus.'*



This is especially important **during times of persecution**, such as often came upon Christians in these times. Because this is the time when even the sinful nature of true Christian like to retaliate with curses and evil words, the Lord for the sake of emphasis repeats this admonition that **believers must be active in blessing their enemies**. Here we have the **wonderful example of our Saviour** before Pilate and on the cross where He even forgave His enemies. Enemies of Christ in general cannot understand it when Christians during fierce persecution even seek their salvation. Many

an enemy of Christ has been led to ask more about the Christian faith by kindness shown to them. We see this in the life of the **persecuted Pastor Wurmbrand** as we learn in his book *'Tortured for Christ'*.



Finally, in the Greek the word **'bless'** is used as a **present imperative which commands an habitual action**. Instead of 'cursing' the redeemed child of God is **lovingly commanded to 'Be constantly blessing.'** This means that 'blessing' **must become a way of life for the true Christian**. If the true Christian can avoid persecution without denying Christ he can. But otherwise he is in faith to confess Christ *'returning kindness and love to those who mistreat us because of our testimony to the Lord Jesus.'* What a power for good would the Christian be if we constantly blessed in our homes, congregations and daily life, for the text in the original reads: **'Be constantly blessing those who are constantly persecuting you; be blessing and stop cursing.'**
—to be continued.

(Next Time: there will be a summary of suggested ways in which Christians can reply to others in defending their faith. This has arisen from recent Bible Studies.)

Brief History of the Church

Life and Deeds of Dr Martin Luther

[Since what the late *Professor Koch* teaches is so true, 'History is a great teacher', let us take note of the following lessons of History and value God's grace in preserving His Word with us.]

CHAPTER V. LUTHER STUDIES AT ERFURT



On the **17th of July, 1501**, Luther, who had now attained the **age of 18 years**, went to the **University of Erfurt**. As he relates, this University was at that time "in such high repute that all others were in comparison looked upon as insignificant. How great was the pomp and glory when Masters were graduated, and torches were borne before them, and honours were showered upon them; I hold that no other temporal joys equalled these. So was there also great splendour when the Doctor's degree was conferred; people rode about the city, dressed and decorated for the occasion. All has passed away now; but I wish that these ceremonies were still practiced."

There the celebrated *John of Wesel*¹, a witness of the truth, whose writings are still esteemed, had taught. Luther says of him 'John Weselia ruled the High School of Erfurt with his works, by the study of which I also was prepared for the **Master's degree**.' Because he had

attacked the corruption of the papacy, he was thrown into prison, where he died after two years of suffering, two years before Luther's birth.

He foretold the Reformation in the words: 'I perceive in the future that our souls shall faint with hunger, unless a star of mercy arise upon us from on high to dispel the darkness from our eyes, which the lies of the leaders have enchanted, and to restore the light, which shall, after so many



¹ He was born in 1400 or 1420, probably the latter year. **John Ruchrath von Wesel, d. 1481**, attacked the hierarchy and indulgences and was charged on his trial with calling in question almost all the distinctive Roman Catholic tenets. He was born in **Oberwesel** on the Rhine between Mainz and Coblenz. **He taught at the University of Erfurt** and, in 1458, was chosen its vice-rector. **Luther bore testimony to his influence** when he said, "I remember how Master John Wesalia ruled the University of Erfurt by his writings through the study of which I also became a master." Leaving Erfurt, he was successively professor in Basel and cathedral preacher in Mainz and Worms. In 1479, Wesel was arraigned for heresy before the Inquisition at Mainz. He was sentenced to imprisonment for life in the Augustinian convent of Mainz, where he died.

years, finally break this yoke of Babylonish captivity.'

His parents supported him from the proceeds of their mine, as he himself says in praise of his father. He supported me, with great love and fidelity, at the high school of Erfurt, and by his arduous labour he aided in bringing me where I now am.'

Among his teachers, *Jodocus Truttvetter* was one of the most esteemed, whom he calls the "first theologian and philosopher" and his "dear teacher and father." **At a later period he reminded him, that from him he first learned the duty of receiving in faith the canonical Scriptures alone**, while all others are subjected to criticism. From another of his teachers, *John Greffenstein*, a learned and pious man, he once heard that Huss had been condemned to death without conviction, and in violation of justice and law, by illiterate tyrants. Among others he also heard *Usingen*, who afterwards became his violent enemy, *John Bigard*, whom he **subsequently recommended to a pastorate**, 'because he was a teacher whom he was under obligations to honour', and *Gerhard Hecker*, **who accepted the Gospel and for this suffered manifold persecution**.

FAITHFUL STUDENT

At first Luther studied the subtle **philosophy** of his times, Logic and Dialectics, then Ethics and Physics. At the same time he **read the best ancient Latin authors**, such as Cicero, Virgil, Livy and Plautus. Nor did he, like the school-boys, read them for the sake of the words, **but for their instructions, and as mirrors of human life**. Therefore **he paid close attention to the doctrines and proverbs of these writers**, and as his **memory was faithful**, most of that which he had read and heard was, always at his command. Although he was naturally a sprightly and jovial youth, **he still every morning commenced his studies with fervent prayer and attendance at Church**², as it was his motto: '**Diligence in prayer is the better half of study**.' He missed no lectures and was **glad to ask his teachers questions, respectfully conversed with them, often reviewed lessons with his companions, and when there were no public lectures he was constantly to be found in the University library**.

LUTHER FINDS THE BIBLE.



At one time, while he was examining the books one after another, that he might become acquainted with those that were good, **he came upon the Latin Bible**, which he had never before seen, though now in his **twentieth year**. He was astonished to find that it contained many more texts, Gospels and Epistles, than were usually explained in the postils³ and on the pulpits. Turning over the pages of the Old Testament, his eye caught **the history of Samuel and his mother Hannah**. This he read with avidity and with great delight, and because all this was new to him, he wished most heartily that God would, at some time, make him the possessor of such a book. **Selnecker**⁴ relates that when he read the words '**The Lord bringeth low and lifteth up; He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the beggar from the dunghill**,' he said 'How well adapted is this text *for* poor scholars, of whom I am one!' These words of

Luther are also remarkable: 'When I was a young man I heard learned men and good grammarians dispute with their opponents and say, that **when we read the prophetic and apostolic writings we find a doctrine quite different from that which ye priests proclaim**.'

LUTHER BECOMES A MONK.

By his **great industry** he attained the **first degree** of academic honours as early as **1503**, and thus secured the right to **deliver philosophical lectures as a bachelor of arts**. Not long afterwards ***he was taken very sick, so***

² But sadly he was still not a true Christian.

³ Scripture readings on which comments were made.

⁴ **Selnecker** (December 5, 1530 – May 24, 1592) was a [German](#) hymn writer and theologian. He is also known as one of the principal authors of the [Formula of Concord](#) along with [Jakob Andreä](#) and [Martin Chemnitz](#). He studied under [Melancthon](#) at the [University of Wittenberg](#), graduating [M. A.](#) in 1554. Later he was a chaplain and musician at the court of [Augustus, Elector of Saxony](#) in [Dresden](#). Additionally he served as a court tutor and supervised education in the court chapel. He was later appointed professor of Theology at [Leipzig University](#).

that he despaired of his life. But an old priest, who visited him, administered consolation, saying: ‘My dear bachelor, be of good comfort; you will not die of this illness. Our God will yet make a great man of you, who shall comfort many people. For upon him whom God loveth, and of whom he would make something blessed, he early imposes the holy cross, and in this school of affliction patient people learn much.’

In that period, about 1593, **another misfortune befell him**. On Tuesday after Easter he was on his way home to visit his parents, with his arms (Sword, TJW) at his side, as was the custom among students. Accidentally **he struck his foot against his sword, when the blade fell out and sundered** (cut, TJW) a **main artery**. He was about half a league⁵ from Erfurt, with but one companion. The blood flowed with alarming copiousness and could not be stanchd; and when he laid himself upon his back, raising his leg and putting his finger upon the wound, his limb swelled frightfully. Finally a surgeon came from the city and dressed the wound. But Luther, when death seemed imminent, cried ‘Mary, help me?’ and in the night, when the wound again opened, so that he fainted, he again called only upon Mary. ‘At that time,’ he said in after years, **‘I should have died relying upon Mary.’**⁶

In the early part of the year **1505, Luther attained the Master's degree**. At his graduation he obtained the second position, and immediately commenced giving lectures upon Aristotelian Physics and Ethics. "Now there can be for me no cessation of study," said he, "if I am not to bring disgrace upon the German Masters." He left nearly the whole academic youth behind him, and **his extraordinary gifts** were now the admiration of the whole University. According to the will of his father, he was now to **devote himself to the law**, for which purpose he was supplied with books. For John Luther did not desire that he should become bishop, priest or monk, and be supported by others in sumptuous living, instead of securing a livelihood by his own exertions." He rather thought that his son should, some day, be an honour to him by gaining temporal offices and dignities. He even thought of marrying him in wealth and honour; **when suddenly Luther's course of life took a different direction.**



The scholastic philosophy which Luther learned in Erfurt **did not satisfy him**. The thought constantly recurred: **‘O when wilt thou become holy and render satisfaction, that God may be gracious?’** ‘The high schools,’ he says, ‘when they would render persons pious, set the judgment before them and render it as hot as possible. **Thus they terrify the people and show them no way to escape from their terror.**’ In Erfurt he twice repeated the vow to become holy and go upon a pilgrimage to Rome. **Frequently he was so beset by such terrors, when he earnestly reflected upon the final judgment, that his life was endangered.** Then one of his best friends, Alexius, was assassinated. And in the summer of **1505**, when he was returning from a visit to his parents, he was overtaken, **between Erfurt and the village of Stotterheim, by a violent thunder storm. The lightning struck at his feet and a terrific crash followed; he fell to the earth, and in his terror he cried: ‘dear Saint Anna, help, and I will immediately become a monk.**’ He would enter a cloister to propitiate [to gain the favour of, TJW] God with masses, and to merit salvation by monastic holiness. ‘I did not willingly become a monk,’ he said at a later period, ‘and least of all thought of pampering the stomach, but, encompassed [surrounded, TJW] with the sudden terror and anguish of death, I made a forced vow.’⁷

⁵ A traditional unit of length of 3 miles or an hour's walk.

⁶ He would have gone to hell, Eph.2:8,9.

⁷ **When we observe what Luther went through here, and if he had died without Christ, we learn how important it is to cling to Jesus Christ as our only Saviour, without our works, by grace alone, every moment of our lives.**

(From *Life And Deeds of Dr. Martin Luther* by Rev. Hermann Fick (an old Missouri pastor) and translated by Prof Loy, pages 21-27. to be continued).

CAN WE PROVE THE BIBLE IS TRUE? SEVEN COMPELLING EVIDENCES CONFIRM THE BIBLE IS TRUE

This article was Adapted from <https://answersingenesis.org/is-the-bible-true/seven-compelling-evidences-confirm-bible-is-true>. It is a continuation of the series titled: “**Seven Compelling Evidences Confirm the Bible Is True.**”

5. Scientific Accuracy

The Bible is clearly unlike any other document in history. Every claim it makes about science is not only true but crucial for filling in the blanks of our understanding about the origin of the universe, the earth, fossils, life, and human beings. The more we study and learn about the world, the more we come to appreciate the Bible’s flawless, supernatural character.

The Bible never claims to be a science textbook. Nevertheless, the Bible claims to be ‘true from the beginning’ ([Psalm 119:160](#)), so every specific reference about science must be accurate.

Thy Word is true from the beginning, and everyone of Thy righteous judgments endureth forever.

Indeed, this is one way the Bible’s authenticity can be tested. Christ Himself, the Word of God who is the author of all Scripture, asserted that we should be able to believe everything He says about earthly things ([John 3:12](#)).

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?

Over the centuries the Bible has been rigorously tested for scientific accuracy, and it has never failed. Not only is God’s Word always true; it has proven to be the key to understanding God’s world today!

Scientists have run into all sorts of interesting questions about the physical and biological processes that produced the world we see today, but they are limited to observing, testing, and experimenting with present processes and creatures. They can only guess about the past based on fragmentary evidence and biased assumptions, which they cannot scientifically prove or disprove because they were not present to observe what happened in the distant past. In other words, they must rely on their preconceived beliefs about the past. Science is a useful tool but limited because humans are fallible and limited observers.

On the other hand, God, our eternal Creator who has all knowledge, was present when He created the universe. He has revealed to us in an eyewitness account, the Bible, what happened in the past to produce what we see in the world today.

The Bible explains when God intervened supernaturally at key points in history in ways that affect what astronomers, geologists, biologists, and anthropologists study. Without this record, we would be in the dark about these events, but with it we can understand the world we see today. (To make this point with questioners, you can point them to readily available creationist materials, including websites such as [answersingenesis.org](#), and [creation.com](#)).

You can share any one of a number of well-known examples where the Bible has made a claim that science is only now beginning to recognize. For example:

ASTRONOMY: The Bible claims the universe had a beginning. Philosophers and scientists rejected that claim for over two thousand years, but now astronomers believe the universe had a beginning, the so-called big bang (though with a very different time frame).

ANTHROPOLOGY: The Bible claims that all humans are “one blood” descended from one man and one woman (Acts 17:26; 1 Corinthians 15:45; Genesis 3:20). Some nineteenth-century biologists argued that different races descended from lower animals, but today genetics has verified that there is only one human race.

BIOLOGY: The Bible claims that God created animals “after their kind.” Nineteenth-century biologists argued that animals evolved from other, very different animals, but today biology confirms that creatures reproduce within their own kind.

GEOLOGY: The Bible claims that God destroyed the earth and the creatures inhabiting it in the worldwide Flood. Nineteenth-century geologists argued that rock layers and the fossils found in them were formed as sediments were deposited slowly, but today geology confirms that many rock layers were deposited catastrophically, burying fossils within only minutes or hours.

So if the Bible proves to be reliable in every earthly thing we can test, why don’t people trust what it says? The issue is not the truth of Scripture, but vain reasoning and wilful ignorance’.

Romans 1:21: *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

2 Peter 3:5: *For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old and the earth standing out of the water and in the water;*

Science in the Bible

The Bible offers many specific examples of amazingly accurate science, and science has uncovered many amazing evidences that the universe and earth are young, as the Bible describes.

Astronomy

- Stars are innumerable (Genesis 22:17; Jeremiah 33:22)
- Stars differ in glory (1 Corinthians 15:41)

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory.

- Stars follow a predictable pattern (Jeremiah 31:35)
- Earth is round, not flat (Isaiah 40:22; Psalms 103:12)

Isaiah 40:22:

It is He that sitteth upon the circle (Hebrew= “globe”) of the earth;

- Earth hangs on nothing (not built on pillars) (Job 26:7)

He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing, (it is suspended in space, held there by His almighty power).

- Scientific evidence of a young universe:
 - 1) Spiral galaxies
 - 2) “Missing” supernova remnants
 - 3) Short-lived comets
 - 4) Moon moving away from Earth

Geology

- Water cycle (Ecclesiastes 1:7; Isaiah 55:10)

Ecc. 1:7:

All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full, (it does not overflow on account of the immense masses of water which it constantly receives); unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again, (in a constant evaporation and condensation, the cycle of ocean, clouds and fog, rain and dew, springs, creeks, and rivers continuing without intermission).

- Sea currents (Psalms 8:8)
- 'Fountains of the deep broken up' (Genesis 7:11)
- Scientific evidence of a young earth:
 - 1) Continents erode too fast
 - 2) Too much mud on the sea floor
 - 3) Too much sodium in the ocean
 - 4) Too rapid decay of earth's magnetic field

Biology

- Blood circulation (Leviticus 17:11)

Scientific evidence of a recent creation:

- 1) DNA programming for irreducibly complex protein sequences
- 2) Lack of missing links in the fossil record
- 3) Dinosaur blood vessels in fossils

