

# Fiercely Loyal to God

Dt. 30:11-20 Matt 22:34-40 1 John 4:7-16

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Pastor Dave Bolte



## **We believe that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.**

Our salvation is not dependent on us; it is not dependent on our good works, nor our sincere efforts. Rather, salvation is dependent on the One, True, and Only God: the **Father** who sent His Son **Jesus** to redeem us from our sins, and the **Holy Spirit** who creates and nurtures faith within us through Word and Sacraments.

As **Lutheran Christians**, we believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the **center** of all Christian theology, it is the **center** of the Holy Christian Church, and it is the **center** of our daily Christian lives. The “**good news**” (“*gospel*”) is the most important teaching of the Bible, and ultimately, **everything else** in Holy Scripture points to it.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is message of **forgiveness: your sins are forgiven in Christ’s death and resurrection**. You have been redeemed, “*bought back*”, purchased from sin, guilt, and death; not with gold or silver, but with Christ’s holy, precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death on the cross. The Holy Spirit opens your heart so that you can believe this to be true; the Holy Spirit creates faith so that you know that your very own sins are forgiven, and that you yourself have a home in heaven. **We believe that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.**

God’s brings you into His Kingdom by grace, through faith, as the Gospel works in you; and it is His grace and power that enable you to

live a holy and Godly life. *God's grace leads you to holy living and good works!*

The One, True, and Only God is now at work within you so that you can fear, love and trust in Him above all things. Your life is focused on the Lord and His Kingdom as you live in your family, as you serve others in your vocation, and as you use your gifts to build up the church.

*God's grace leads you to holy living and good works!*

This **focus on the Lord as you live** is taught in a number of ways in Holy Scripture. Here is one of the ways that Jesus teaches it to us:

**Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'**

**This is the first and greatest commandment.**

*Matthew 22:37-38*

When Jesus says that you are to love God with all of your **heart, soul, and mind**, He means that the Lord is your **first priority**; that the One, True, and Only God **permeates your entire life**; that you **focus on the Lord as you live your life**!

There is no place to hide sin in your life. Faith in Christ means that the Lord permeates your **heart, soul, and mind**. There is no place to hide a worldly attitude, or a pagan belief, or a favorite sin, or an illicit affair, or foul language, or pornography on your computer or any other rebellion and immorality!

**If you have areas in your life that you are trying to hide from God, then you are a hypocrite.** A hypocrite “wears a mask” and pretends to be a Christian in one setting (*like here in worship*); and then lives as an unbeliever in another setting (*like in daily life*). The Bible has **strong condemnations** for hypocrisy. If you

are a hypocrite, you will die in the sins you are trying to hide. There is no place for hypocrisy in your life.

By God's grace in Jesus Christ, you are delivered from hypocrisy, and all other sins. Jesus' death and resurrection assures you that God forgives all your sins! *God's grace leads you to holy living and good works!* In Christ, you **'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'** You are consumed with the Lord Jesus Christ and He permeates your entire life. In faith and through the forgiveness of your sins, you are *"fiercely loyal to the One, True, and Only God."*

The order of the 10 Commandments teach us how to live as *fiercely loyal disciples of the One, True, and Only God.*

- † The First Commandment is that of faith: that we are to **fear, love and trust** only in God. **We believe that we are saved by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ** Acts 15:11.

The rest of the commandments teach us how to live that faith in everyday life; they teach us how to **"love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul and mind"**.

- † We learn in the **Second Commandment** that God's Name is to be on our lips as we **wholeheartedly worship Him**, as we **eagerly confess His Name to others**, and as we **fervently pray in Jesus Name**. **Worship, witnessing, and prayer** are God pleasing responses of people saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. **Worship, witnessing, and prayer** shape the words of those who are fiercely loyal to the One, True and Only God.

- † We learn in the **Third Commandment** that **God's Word** is the solid rock on which we stand. We are to hold it sacred and gladly

hear and learn it. By God's grace, we gather around His Word to **worship** Him each week; by God's grace, we have our very own Bibles and we are to study, listen, learn, and obey God's Word. God works through His Word to strengthen your faith and increase your knowledge of the Kingdom of God. God's Word is heard and obeyed in the lives of who are fiercely loyal to the One, True and Only God.

In theology,  
the grace of God in  
Jesus Christ  
leads to holy living;  
if you remember your  
Confirmation days, you  
were taught the  
same thing with these  
doctrinal terms:  
"Justification leads  
to Sanctification."

- † We learn in the **last 7 Commandments** how to serve other people in love. Those fiercely loyal to the One, True and Only God
- **respect other peoples' authority**
  - **protect other peoples' lives**
  - **honor other peoples' marriages**
  - **guard other peoples' possessions**
  - **defend other peoples' reputations**
  - **keep their own hearts from coveting, lust and greed**

We learn in these seven commandments how to serve other people in love. *God's grace leads you to holy living and good works!*

The 10 Commandments teach us what it means to be **disciples** who are **fiercely loyal** to the One, True, and Only God, believers forged by God's grace and power in Jesus Christ.

*God's grace leads you  
to holy living and good works!*

*May you see God's grace at work in your life as you remain fiercely loyal to the One, True, and Only God! Amen!*