

## Session 3 Leader Guide

### 1. What is chastity and why is it important?

- What does Luther's Small Catechism teach about the Sixth Commandment? *You shall not commit adultery. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life by what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.*
- Why does God give us this commandment? *This commandment is given for the same reason He has given us all the commandments. It is because of His great love for us that He lays down the foundations by which we can know how to live holy lives. By no means can we keep them perfectly on our own, but thanks be to our merciful God, we are accepted as holy through our faith in Jesus Christ, who enables us through the Holy Spirit to become holy and be set apart from the world. The Sixth Commandment specifically addresses the sins of the body. It addresses marriage because of the importance of the state of marriage to procreate and teach the faith. There is no other way to have children than through the union of one man and one woman.*
- How are sexual purity and chastity different from virginity? *One can be an unchaste virgin and one can be a chaste husband or wife and have sexual intimacy regularly. Once lost, virginity cannot be restored. It refers to a mere physical state of abstinence or not ever participating in sexual relations. But chastity, when it is forfeited or lost, can be regained because it goes deeper than physical sex and the body parts involved. Chastity involves the whole self. It has to do with the purity of the heart (and body), which can only be provided by Christ.*
- Why do you think chastity and virginity are often confused with each other? *Answers will vary, but I believe some of it has to do with how we view our own bodies and mistakenly think that any sexual activity is bad or "dirty," even within a marriage. Sometimes our feelings of shame for past experiences involving sexual activity can hamper us from believing that we can become chaste again. The idea of virginity may also be tied to purity because the mother of Jesus was a virgin when she conceived through the Holy Spirit and the church's misguided teachings for centuries about Mary remaining a virgin her entire life. The sexual purity we refer to here and in the Sixth Commandment is about the purity of the heart from our renewal in faith and how it guides the body in future activities.*
- Why is chastity important? What are some of the physical and spiritual benefits of practicing chastity? *Researchers have found that chastity before marriage offers many benefits, including a decreased chance of psychological damage from expressing intimacy without commitment, freedom from sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and unwanted pregnancies, and an increase in marital stability and satisfaction. When being chaste within a*

*marriage (remaining faithful to your spouse), you can enjoy trust and confidence in your family relationships, and you will be blessed with self-control. Those who are chaste are often fully at peace with their bodies and their sexuality.*

1. What does God say about the relationship between our bodies and souls?
  - **Read Matthew 10:28.** “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” What does it teach us about the body and the soul? *The body is distinguished from the soul.*
  - **Read Hebrews 10:39.** “But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.” **1 Peter 1:9:** “...obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” **1 Peter 3:19:** “...in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison...” **Revelations 6:9:** “When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne.” What do these verses teach us about the body and the soul? *The soul can survive the death of the body.*
  - **Read Hebrews 4:12.** “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” What does this teach about the body and the soul? *The human soul is associated with the spirit and yet distinguished from it.*
  - **Read 2 Corinthians 5:3-5.** “...if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.” What do these verses teach about the body and the soul? *It (the human soul) is people's self-conscious inner self in contrast to their physical flesh.*
  - In **Luke 10:20**, Jesus teaches that the disciples’ names are written in heaven. “Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” What does this tell us about who we are? *Our personal identity is fixed not by us but by God.*
  - **Read Isaiah 43:1.** “But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.’” Who names us? *We do not name ourselves. Our parents confer our identity on us by giving us our names. They make us who we are. Ultimately God gives us our names (through our parents) so that He can call us by name, introduce Himself personally to us, and interact personally with us.*

- **Read Revelations 3:5.** “The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.” Whom does this verse say we belong to? *When we are baptized, He registers our names in heaven with all those who belong to Him. As long as our names are written in the Book of Life, we remain living persons and heirs of eternal life.*

Additional discussion questions:

- How can this knowledge help individuals like Harry who struggle with their gender identity? *It should be noted that the heart of the problem for Harry and many others is NOT an issue of gender. It is merely a manifestation of a deeper problem. Individuals struggling with this life issue need our prayers and need the life-affirming care that doctors and therapists can give. Unfortunately, there are too many in the field that teach “gender-affirming care” is the answer. Yet this type of care supplants reality and truth with dangerous lies. Individuals are desperately seeking inclusion into communities and are often led into the wrong communities. Giving them the love and community that affirms their identity in Christ is really the only answer that can give them reality and truth. The Holy Spirit alone can help Harry understand this by putting people in his life who will share this life-affirming news.*
- What can Carol and Mark do to alleviate the guilt they have for the actions of their sons? *It is important for Carol and Mark to remember their past mistakes as events, not a part of who they are. Confession and Absolution is a perfect way to remove the guilt we have over past actions which we know are detrimental to living a chaste life. Regular church attendance provides the spiritual guidance and help we need, but also asking your pastor to do a private Confession and Absolution with you can be very edifying.*
- Are they justified in explaining to their sons that chastity is expected, even when they didn’t practice it when they were younger and unmarried? *They are completely justified in teaching the importance of chastity to their children. This is the duty and calling of parents, regardless of their past mistakes. Parents can be honest about their life and not hide their imperfections. These can provide teaching moments and give an opportunity to apply Law and Gospel to their own lives as an example for their children.*