



## YOUTH INSTRUCTION CLASS

### LESSON 18: USING THE KEYS - 2

#### Review

What are the *keys*?

How do Christians use the "unlocking" key?

*Where* do Christians use the "unlocking" key?

#### Using the Keys (The Impenitent)

- What does it mean to *repent* of your sins?
- What does it mean to be *impenitent*?
- How do Christian congregations deal with *openly impenitent* sinners in their midst?

##### Matthew 18:15-17

- Verse 15:

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- Verse 16:

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- Verse 17:

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- What is the purpose of this procedure?
- NOTE: If the sin is known only to the individual, then the admonition, at least initially, will be private. If it is a public sin (one that everybody knows about), then the admonition may not be private (see Gal 2:11-14 for an example of a public sin treated in a public way).

##### Impenitent:

A person who

1) is not  
sorry for his  
or her sins;  
and

2) does not  
believe  
[trust] in  
Jesus for  
the  
forgiveness  
of sins

## Excommunication

When someone remains *openly impenitent* after attempts by the Christian congregation to bring them to repentance, they are removed from the congregation by the action of *excommunication*. Excommunication is the "locking" key. In excommunication, a person is told that by their refusal to repent of their sins, they have rejected Jesus and they are not forgiven.

- Review **Question 252** in your catechism (p. 182)
- What is the purpose of excommunication?

**1 Corinthians 5:4-5** (1021)  
**Matthew 18:15** (Q 250)

- Excommunication does not mean that the person cannot come to church. It does mean that he or she will not be able to participate in activities meant for Christian members of the congregation (like the Lord's Supper).

The purpose of removing a person from the "communion" is to show him or her how serious and dangerous it is to be impenitent. We do this in the hope of leading him or her to repent, for a person who dies in impenitence will not have eternal life.

## The Goal Of Excommunication

- We hope that someone who has been excommunicated will eventually repent of their sin and turn back to the Lord. A Christian congregation is happy to receive those who repent of their sins. Such a person is assured of God's and our forgiveness and restored to the "communion."
  - Read **1 Corinthians 5:1-2, 4-5** and **2 Corinthians 2:6-8, 10**. Here is an example of someone who was excommunicated and later repented and returned to the fellowship of the congregation.

## Church and Government

We have learned that Christians and groups of Christians (churches, synods, etc.) have the right from Jesus to use the keys in forgiving or retaining sins. In spiritual matters, God has given authority to Christians.

In earthly matters, God has given the authority to our governments (see Romans 13:1-7).

We should remember what the church's job is and what the government's job is so that we don't confuse the two. The church should not get involved in matters belonging to the government and the government should not get involved in matters belonging to the church.

Understand this further by thinking about the following items. Mark a (+) if there is a mixing of church and state. Mark a (-) if there is not:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ A congregation holds a regular Sunday morning church service
2. \_\_\_\_\_ A church puts a political campaign sign out on its lawn
3. \_\_\_\_\_ A public school teacher leads a prayer in the classroom.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ A church does mission work in the community

## Groups of Congregations (Synods) Using the Keys

The word synod has been mentioned several times over the last couple lessons. A synod is simply a group of congregations that believe the same things and have decided to work together. Redeemer Lutheran Church belongs to a synod called the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). The CLC is made up of about 75 congregations in 24 states. In the United States, about 9,000 people belong to the CLC. The CLC also has missionary stations in Canada, Africa, and India.

**Not every Lutheran church is the same!** Other common Lutheran synods are the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS), the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). We do not participate in religious activities with these synods because they do not teach the same as we do.

## Study Questions

1. To which people has Christ given the ministry (use) of the keys?
2. What is a divine call?
3. When should a Christian use the *locking key*?
4. When should a Christian use the *unlocking key*?
5. Where in the Bible does Jesus give the right to forgive or not forgive sins (list Bible passage)?
6. Whose sins are paid for by Jesus' death on the cross?
7. Name three offices that are established by Jesus for the work of the ministry in Ephesians 4:11.

8. What are the two parts of confession?
9. Which sins should we confess to God?
10. Which sins can we confess to other Christians?
11. What does *absolution* mean?
12. Why do we want to confess our sins?
13. What are the three main ways that the forgiveness of sins is given to us? (Means of Grace)
14. What is a *synod*?
15. What do we mean when we say that Christians should *spread the gospel*?



## Memory Work

Luke 10:16: "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

## Assignment

- Memory Work