

Are Horoscopes Harmless?

Christians will be more than cautious about horoscopes and astrology. In *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, published by Concordia Publishing House, the Second Commandment is presented: "You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain. *What does this mean?* We should fear and love God, so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks. *Question 32:* What is using satanic arts by God's name? Using satanic arts by God's name is using God's name in order to perform supernatural things with the help of the devil, such as casting spells, calling up a spirit, fortune-telling, consulting the dead, or other occult practices. See Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

Ancient people worshipped gods in nature. They believed in the power of nature. God revealed Himself to His people as the God who created the things that others worshipped. Through Moses, God reported: *God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good* (Genesis 1:14-18).

Christians will use creation as God intended. The stars and the planets give us light. They help us keep track of time. While the stars might help us find our directions, they do not control our lives. Those who sincerely practice astrology sin against the First and Second Commandments.

We give thanks to God for a day when the sun turned black. It was the time when darkness ruled (Luke 22:53). God put His Son on a cross. God imputed to Jesus the sins of all people of all time. The Creator of heaven and earth died in payment of all sin. God, thereby, declared us to be forgiven, justified in His sight. By faith in Jesus, we are eternal. We know and believe that He guides our way. God directs our future (read Psalm 31:15 and Ecclesiastes 7:14). Jesus' gracious sacrifice extends also to those who believe in and practice astrology, as long as they repent.

Christians who believe that these matters are harmless should remember the power of Satan. A Christian might occasionally read the horoscope for its humour value. What one does in the privacy of one's home might be harmless. And yet, Satan's schemes are never harmless.

Christians who subscribe to a daily horoscope should remember the effect that even a seemingly innocent activity might have on others. In 1 Corinthians 10:14-33, St. Paul wrote about eating meat sacrificed to idols. Meat sacrificed to idols is meat sacrificed to nothing since idols are nothing. Yet, some people took issue with eating such meat. "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Corinthians 10:31-33).

God will take care of us. Instead of relying on a daily horoscope, remember the promises God makes to take care of us until Jesus returns.