The Creed: Third Article (II)



MEMORY (pg. 10; green catechism)

The Third Article

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith;

Even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith;

In which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers,

And will at the Last Day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life.

This is most certainly true.



...In which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers

RESPOND

All catechism students

 Catechism Family Devotions

FSaiiii	29
Reading	John 15:26- 16:15; Acts 2:1- 42
Catechism Hymn	231

- Attend Divine Service and Sunday School
- Study Memory Work for 10-15 minutes each day

First year students

• Complete Quiz 10A in the online classroom.

Second year students

- Read Questions 175-200 in A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism (pg. 131ff).
- Complete Quiz 10B in the online classroom.

Third year students

- Read *Luther's Large Catechism* pg. 91-95 (beginning at paragraph 47).
- Complete Quiz 10C in the online classroom.



Review—The Creed: Third Article (II)

The Church does not consist of a building or political structure, but is properly understood as a gathering or congregation of people around God's Word and Sacraments.

A *communion* is a sharing of something common. The common possession in the communion of saints is the forgiveness of sins. This is what makes people holy, or "saints."





But this is the meaning and substance of this addition: I believe that there is upon earth a little holy group and congregation of pure saints, under one head, even

Christ. This group is called together by the Holy Spirit in one faith, one mind, and understanding, with many different gifts, yet agreeing in love, without sects or schisms. I am also a part and member of this same group, a sharer and joint owner of all the goods it possesses. I am brought to it and incorporated into it by the Holy Spirit through having heard and continuing to hear God's Word, which is the beginning of entering it. In the past, before we had attained to this, we were altogether of the devil, knowing nothing about God and about Christ. So, until the Last Day, the Holy Spirit abides with the holy congregation or Christendom. Through this congregation He brings us to Christ and He teaches and preaches to us the Word. By the Word He works and promotes sanctification, causing this congregation daily to grow and to become strong in the faith and its fruit, which He produces.



The forgiveness of sins is given in the Christian Church through the Sacraments and Absolution.





Everything, therefore, in the Christian Church is ordered toward this goal: we shall daily receive in the Church nothing but the forgiveness of sin through the

Word and signs, to comfort and encourage our consciences as long as we live here. So even though we have sins, the 'grace of the' Holy Spirit does not allow them to harm us. For we are in the Christian Church, where there is nothing but continuous, uninterrupted forgiveness of sin. This is because God forgives us and because we forgive, bear with, and help one another.

But outside of this Christian Church, where the Gospel is not found, there is no forgiveness, as also there can be no holiness. Therefore, all who seek and wish to earn holiness not through the Gospel and forgiveness of sin, but by their works, have expelled and severed themselves from this Church.



The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit is begun in us, but is not completed until the life to come. Therefore the work of the Holy Spirit is an ongoing work in this life.

On the Last Day, the Lord will raise our bodies, even as He is risen from the dead in His body.

The resurrection of the body determines how we treat

bodies after death—we respect the body and lay it to rest to await the resurrection.

The Holy Spirit reveals Christ.

So the Creed differs from the Ten Commandments, which tell us what we must do. The Creed tells us what God does for us and gives to us.



Notes