

Large Catechism Lesson 19

Part 2: The 3rd Article

Opening Discussion: The Third Article in the Small Catechism

I believe in the Holy Spirit, 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 Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

3rd Article

¶34-39

Sanctification

- What do you think of when you hear that word?
- How does Luther's approach prevent us from thinking in terms of "results".
- What is another term or phrase we could use instead of 'sanctification'?

Luther uses sanctification to refer to the action of the Holy Spirit who causes those results.

- As creatures, we are dependent on the action of our God to save us.

The Holy Spirit works with tools: the Gospel and the Sacraments.

- God always uses means.

¶40-46

What do you think of Luther's description of the church as our mother?

Where is the church present, and where is the church not present?

¶47-5

The communion of saints

¶54-56

Where does Luther find the sacraments in the creed?

- How can that be helpful with our Sacramentarian friends?

Being a Christian is inseparable from the Church.

- How do you react to that statement?

¶57-60

When will there be no more forgiveness of sins?

The resurrection of the flesh/body

-Why is this hope (the resurrection of the body) better than 'dying and going to heaven'?

¶61-70

Where does the Spirit do his speaking and acting?

-How does this help with speaking with our Pentecostal friends?

'the deepest abyss of His fatherly heart'

What are your reactions to the following quote?

"Jesus is a mirror of the fatherly heart, outside of whom we see nothing but an angry and terrible Judge. But we couldn't know anything about Christ either, unless it had been revealed by the Holy Spirit" [II.65]

What are differences between the Commandments and the Creed?

-Who teaches the Creed?

-Why don't the Commandments make one a Christian?

Closing Discussion: Talking about the Trinity

When you think about the Trinity, what comes to mind?

In the Creed, Luther describes the Trinity:

-The Father sends the Son to adopt us as children.

-The Father also sends the Holy Spirit to bring us to Christ.

-By bringing us to Christ, we see a mirror of the Father's heart.

How does that differ from what we may normally think about the Trinity?

Immanent Trinity

-God in himself

-Has nothing to do with us

-We need to keep this language in the back of our heads. Why?

-But the language feels quite abstract.

Economic Trinity

-How does Scripture speak about the Trinity in the story of salvation? (cf. Ephesians 1)

-Arrangement of the household

-How does God deal with us?

-Language of everyday life

God is a community within himself.

-We are in community with God who is in Trinity.

What should be preached on Holy Trinity Sunday?