



19 Minutes with Luther

The Apostles' Creed

- The Knowledge of God
- Law and Gospel
- Introduction to the Law
- 1st Commandment
- 2nd Commandment
- 3rd Commandment
- 4th Commandment
- 5th Commandment
- 6th Commandment
- 7th Commandment
- 8th Commandment
- 9th & 10th Commandments
- The Conclusion
- The Gospel & the Nature of God
- **The Apostles' Creed (Faith)**
- 1st Article (Creation)
- 1st Article (Preservation)
- 1st Article (Protection)
- 1st Article (The Fall into Sin)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Person)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Office)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Work)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Humiliation)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Exaltation)
- 2nd Article (Christian Life)
- 2nd Article (Saved by Faith)
- 3rd Article (The Holy Spirit)
- 3rd Article (Calls)
- 3rd Article (Enlightens)
- 3rd Article (Sanctifies)
- 3rd Article (Keeps in Faith)
- 3rd Article (Invisible Church)
- 3rd Article (Visible Church)
- 3rd Article (Forgiveness)
- 3rd Article (Eternal Life)
- Baptism (Part 1)
- Baptism (Part 2)
- Holy Communion (Part 1)
- Holy Communion (Part 2)
- Keys & Confession (Part 1)
- Keys & Confession (Part 2)
- Keys & Confession (Part 3)
- Introduction to the Lord's Prayer
- The Address
- 1st Petition
- 2nd Petition
- 3rd Petition
- 4th Petition
- 5th Petition
- 6th Petition
- 7th Petition
- The Doxology

I *believe* in God the Father almighty. I *believe* in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
I *believe* in the Holy Spirit.

1. According to the following passages, what does it mean when Christians say, "I believe"?

"How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?"
(Romans 10:14).

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3).

"When you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God"
(1 Thessalonians 2:13).

"[Abraham] did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised" (Romans 4:20,21).

2. What do the following two passages tell us about the source of faith?

"No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3).

"Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17).

3. Agree or disagree:

No one can believe in God without having heard God's Word.

Doubting God when he promises daily care and protection is a sign of unbelief.

There are believers in hell.

An agnostic will not be damned because he does not deny the existence of God; he simply is not sure about it.

Babies should not be baptized because it is impossible for them to believe; at their young age, they simply don't have the mental ability to do so.

4. True faith not only knows the true God, accepts his Word, and trusts his promises; it also demonstrates itself in outward actions. Identify the different components in Noah's faith. How did his faith demonstrate itself? Identify these same components in the people of your congregation. How is faith demonstrated there?
5. The sole basis of our faith is God's Word. Roman Catholicism bases faith on God's Word, but also on the word of the papacy and the teachings of the church. What is the danger in doing so?
6. The sole basis of our faith is God's Word. The Reformed churches base faith on God's Word but also on human reason. What is the danger in doing so?
7. What are the everyday blessings of a strong faith?

Luther said:

"Faith is the yes of the heart, a conviction on which one stakes one's life. On what does faith rest? On Christ." (Plass, Vol. 1, p. 466.)

Closing Prayer

We thank you, Father, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, you have granted us the faith to know you as the only true God, to accept your Word and promises, and to trust you alone for salvation and every good thing. Sustain our faith so that we may know your blessings now and forever. In our Savior's name, we ask it. Amen.

At home

Read Hebrews chapter 11.

Helps

(1) A believer has heard and knows God's revelation of himself found in the Bible, accepts God's Word and promises, and trusts God and his promises. (2) The Holy Spirit alone can work saving faith in our hearts. He does so through the gospel. (3) All people have a natural knowledge of God, but this is not enough for salvation. To believe involves all three: scriptural knowledge of the true God, acceptance of God's revelation, and trust in God and his Word. Agnostics fall far short of faith, denying God's revelation of himself in the Bible. Those in hell, like the demons, believe there is one God and shudder (James 2:19), but don't place their trust in him. Doubting God's promises of daily care and protection may indeed be a sign of unbelief, or it may be the sign that a Christian's faith is weak and needs strengthening. Intellectual understanding and faith are not synonymous. Babies can believe and should be brought to faith through the Sacrament of Baptism. (4) Discuss Noah's faith—his knowledge of God, his unquestioning acceptance of God and his promise regarding a flood, and his trust in God's message and promise of salvation. Noah believed what might be called ridiculous, and his faith moved him to obedience and action. Discuss these same components as you see them in your congregation. Examples will vary. (5) This leads people to give equal status to man's word and the Word of God and to place trust for salvation in someone or something other than Jesus Christ. (6) This subjects the message of the Bible to human reason (saying that Scripture's message is to be accepted only if it is logical), and the Bible and human reason are often at odds. (7) A strong faith enables us to deal lovingly, kindly, and gently with others, to face every situation in life with joy, to be filled with peace, and to wait patiently for our heavenly home. (See Galatians 5:22,23.)