



19 Minutes with Luther

The First Article

- 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, maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God created me and all that exists, and that he gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind and all my abilities.

And I believe that God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, property and home, spouse and children, land, cattle, and all I own, and all I need to keep my body and life. God also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil. All this God does only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it. For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him.

This is most certainly true.

1. Martin Luther taught us to confess, "I believe that God . . . also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil." What do the following passages tell us about God's protection? Share an example from the Bible, as well as from your own life, when God demonstrated his protection in each of these ways?

"If you make the Most High your dwelling—even the LORD, who is my refuge—then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent" (Psalm 91:9,10).

"Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me" (Psalm 50:15).

2. The Bible tells us that God also protects us by having all things in our lives serve our good. Review the life of Joseph (Genesis 37–50). How did the following events serve Joseph's good or the good of others?

His brothers sold Joseph to slave traders.

Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph.

Pharaoh's cupbearer forgot about Joseph.

3. What good might God have in mind for you in the following situations?

In a matter of days, three major appliances in your home need replacement.

A close friend turns his back on you.

You experience serious health problems.

4. What does the following passage tell us about God's protection? Share an example from the Bible when God demonstrated his protection in this way.

"He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" (Psalm 91:11).

5. Complete this paragraph: We know a great deal about angels from the Bible. We know that there are two kinds of angels: _____

and _____. We know when they were created, namely _____. We know that angels are not human but are _____. We know that they have names (for example, _____, _____) and different ranks (for example, _____, _____, _____). We also know that angels are very powerful and very numerous and that the ministry of God's good angels is to _____.

6. Agree or disagree: It is comforting to know that Satan is an angel.

7. According to Martin Luther's Explanation of the First Article, why has God made us so wonderfully, and why does he preserve and protect us? How does this relate to our salvation? How are we to respond?

Luther said:

"We should learn that our best and most loyal friends are invisible. They are the good angels, who by their faithfulness and benevolence and by their many services of friendship greatly excel our visible friends. . . . If anything good happens, it is brought about entirely through the good angels." (Plass, Vol. 1, 23,24.)

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, evil threatens us every day. We thank you for keeping evil away from us, for delivering us from its harm, for having all things serve our good, and for sending your mighty angels to watch over us. Above all, we thank you for the eternal safety you grant us in Jesus our Savior. Lead us to respond to your goodness and love with lives of service and obedience. Amen.

At home

- Memorize the First Article of the Apostles' Creed and Martin Luther's explanation.
- Read and memorize Romans 8:28.

Helps

(1) God sometimes protects us by keeping evil away from us or by delivering us from its harm. Biblical examples might include God's deliverance of Daniel from the lions' den (Daniel 6), the deliverance of the baby Moses (Exodus 2), and the deliverance of the Israelites at the Red Sea (Exodus 14). (2) Each worked toward the achievement of God's good purpose. The brothers sold Joseph to the slave traders who took him to Egypt. There he was purchased by Potiphar. The lie of Potiphar's wife resulted in Joseph's imprisonment. In prison, Joseph met the cupbearer and interpreted his dream. The cupbearer, however, forgot about Joseph. Rather than being able to return to his homeland, Joseph remained in prison for another two years until the time when he would meet Pharaoh, rise to power, and save many people. (3) Answers will vary. God may simply want to give us greater and better blessings through experiencing loss, or he may want to make us more heavenly minded, more patient, more sympathetic or empathetic toward others who suffer. He may use adversity in our lives to deepen our trust in him. (4) God sends his good angels to protect us, as he did with Daniel in the lions' den (Daniel 6), the three men in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3), and the apostles in prison (Acts 5). (5) We know that there are two kinds of angels: good and evil. We know when they were created, namely on one of the six days of creation. We know that angels are not human but are spirit beings. We know that they have names (for example, Michael, Gabriel) and different ranks (for example, cherub, seraph, archangel). We also know that angels are very powerful and very numerous and that the ministry of God's good angels is to serve and protect God's people. (6) While the Bible warns us to be "self-controlled and alert" (1 Peter 5:8), we must remember that the devil is a created angel. Unlike our loving God, Satan is not omnipotent, omniscient, or omnipresent. (7) God is moved to protect and preserve us by the same thing that moved him to save us: his grace, that is, his undeserved love for us. We respond naturally to God's grace by thanking and praising him and by serving and obeying him.