



19 Minutes with Luther

The Second Article

The Knowledge of God
Law and Gospel
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The Conclusion
The Gospel & the Nature of God
The Apostles' Creed (Faith)
1st Article (Creation)
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1st Article (The Fall into Sin)
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2nd Article (Christ's Office)
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► **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)
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Baptism (Part 1)
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Introduction to the Lord's Prayer
The Address
1st Petition
2nd Petition
3rd Petition
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The Doxology

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.

All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.

This is most certainly true.

1. The Bible speaks about Christ's state of humiliation, that is, when the Son of God did not always or fully use his divine power and glory. According to the Apostles' Creed, what were the six stages of Christ's humiliation?
2. In Philippians 2:5-8, Saint Paul wrote: *"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"* According to Paul's words, why did Jesus humble himself?
3. Jesus' humiliation did not mean that during his 33-year earthly life, he ceased to be God; rather, he simply chose not to make full use of his divine nature. List several events from Jesus' earthly life that prove he did not cease to be God.

4. Jesus humbled himself so that he might be our Redeemer. Beside each of Jesus' divine characteristics listed below, state how Jesus, who is "in very nature God," humbly chose to take the "nature of a servant" instead.

| Divine Characteristic | Nature of a Servant |
|-----------------------|---|
| omniscient | The boy Jesus <i>grew in wisdom</i> (Luke 2:52) |
| self-sustaining | _____ |
| omnipotent | _____ |
| holy | _____ |

5. Agree or disagree: Even if Jesus had not humbled himself, he could have been the Messiah.

6. Saint Paul wrote, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). What things in us and others make it difficult for us to follow Christ's example? What is the solution?

7. How will following Christ's example of humility benefit a marriage? a friendship? life in a congregation?

Luther said:

"It is an unspeakably great glory and honor for mankind to have been raised so high by [Christ], not merely to heaven among the holy angels and arch-angels, who are certainly great and excellent princes and lords, but to the level of direct equality with God Himself. How could the High Majesty become humbler than by honoring this sorry flesh and blood and exalting it through His divine honor and authority? He descends to the level of our nature and becomes a member of the human race! It is an honor which no angel in heaven shares." (Plass, Vol. 2, p. 883.)

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, Son of God, you humbled yourself to become our Suffering Servant and Savior. Destroy our pride. By your Spirit, lead us to follow you—to love and humbly serve others—to your glory. Amen.

At home

- Memorize the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed and Martin Luther's explanation.
- Memorize Philippians 2:5-8.

Helps

(1) The Son of God was conceived and born, he suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried. (2) Jesus humbled himself so that he might be "a servant" and, for the sake of our salvation, become "obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (3) Answers will vary. Jesus' miracles, his transfiguration, and his baptism prove that Jesus did not cease to be God. (4) Although self-sustaining, Jesus humbly became dependent on others to supply his needs. Although omnipotent, Jesus bore the weaknesses of man and allowed himself to be taken captive and crucified. Although holy, Jesus willingly took upon himself the sin and guilt of all people. (5) If Jesus had not humbled himself, the people of the world would have been amazed, but not saved. Jesus could not have been the kind of Messiah God promised: one who would redeem the world from its sins. (6) Sinful pride leads us to see ourselves as better and greater than others and keeps us from following Christ's example. Christians may overcome sinful pride through repentance and faith. Through the means of grace, the Holy Spirit works Christlike humility in Christians. (7) Examples will vary. Humility and self-sacrificing love produce peace, harmony, and cooperation.