



# 19 Minutes with Luther

## The Second 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 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. Jesus said, *"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16). According to Jesus' words, how does the salvation that he won for us become our own. Can you think of other Bible passages that confirm what Jesus says?
  
2. Salvation becomes ours through faith in Jesus Christ. Our natural spiritual condition, however, makes it impossible for us on our own to believe. What do the following passages tell us about our natural spiritual condition?

*"The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God"* (2 Corinthians 4:4).

*"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins"* (Ephesians 2:1).

*"The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so"* (Romans 8:7).

3. The Bible tells us that by nature we are spiritually like corpses in a casket. Explain.

4. By nature people are spiritual enemies of God. How do they demonstrate this in their lives and actions? in their attitudes toward God's plan of salvation?

5. What does Saint Paul tell us about faith in Jesus in the following passage?

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

6. Until Christians get to heaven, they will not be completely freed from the spiritual blindness in which they were born. Share some truth of the Bible that you still find difficult to accept. What is God's will for you in regard to this matter?

7. "Decision theologians" claim that people have the natural ability to make a spiritual decision for Christ, that is, to choose to believe in him as their Savior. How does this theology oppose the truth of Scripture? How does it rob God of his glory? deny his grace? endanger a person's salvation?

### Luther said:

"The redemptive work has taken place and is finished. . . . But if that saving action stays hidden and no one knows about it, then it would all be for nothing, wasted. In order that this treasure might not remain buried but be taken up and enjoyed, God has let his Word go forth and be proclaimed. In the Word he has given us his Holy Spirit to lay the treasure of redemption on our hearts and make it our very own." (Tappert, p. 415.)

### Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, by nature we are spiritual corpses—dead! We are not inclined, we do not desire, we are not able to come to faith in Jesus our Savior. We therefore thank and praise you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Through his work in our hearts, Jesus is ours and we are yours eternally. All glory to your name. Amen.

### At home

- Memorize the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed and Martin Luther's explanation.
- Read Ezekiel chapter 37 (a vivid picture of the Spirit's work in dead souls).

### Helps

(1) Salvation is ours by faith in Jesus Christ. See Acts 16:30,31 and Ephesians 2:8,9. (2) By nature we are spiritually blind, spiritually dead, and enemies of God. (3) By nature, we are spiritually dead. We do not have the ability or desire to bring ourselves to spiritual life, nor do we have the power to respond to and accept the message of salvation. (4) Answers will vary. People demonstrate their enmity through disobedience and rejection of God's will for their lives, as well as through a rejection of his plan for their salvation through Jesus Christ. (5) Only by the work of the Holy Spirit can we come to faith in Jesus Christ. (6) Answers will vary. God's will is that we accept his Word as truth and that we understand that his wisdom and thoughts are far superior to ours. It is also God's will that we study his Word so that, by the Spirit's power, we grow in our understanding and faith. (7) Decision theology is at odds with the Bible's teachings concerning people's natural spiritual condition. It robs God of his glory by giving at least some of the credit for salvation to people. This, in turn, denies the Bible's teaching that salvation is by God's grace alone. Finally, this false teaching, as is the case with any false teaching, endangers one's salvation by leading people to rely on themselves rather than on Jesus alone.