



19 Minutes with Luther

The Third 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 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 thinking or choosing 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 fully forgives all sins to me and 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.

1. According to the following passages, what happens to a person's body and soul when he dies?

"The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side" (Luke 16:22,23).

2. Read the following passages. What will happen to people when Jesus returns on the Last Day? On what basis will these things happen?

"A time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned" (John 5:28,29).

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

3. When they are raised on the Last Day, the bodies of believers will be transformed; *“they will be like [Christ’s] glorious body”* (Philippians 3:21). Not so with the bodies of unbelievers. Use the underlined words in the following passage to explain the difference between the bodies in which believers live on earth and those in which they will live for eternity. In addition, list at least six problems or frailties common to our bodies that will no longer be present in eternity.

“The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body” (1 Corinthians 15:42-44).

4. Because sin and its effects will be gone forever in heaven, *“there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain”* (Revelation 21:4). List at least six other sin-caused troubles (perhaps from your own life) that will not be found in heaven.
5. Why can we be absolutely certain that we will be raised and will live eternally? Why do each of the three persons of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—deserve our praise for this blessing?

Luther said:

“St. Paul makes death and the grave signify nothing but the taking off, and the flinging away, of an old, torn coat, and the resurrection the putting on of a beautiful, new coat called immortality, wrought and woven for us by the victory of Christ” (Plass, Vol. 3, p. 1218.)

Closing Prayer

Holy Spirit, it is because of your work alone that we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and are certain that, like him, we too will rise and live forever. Through your Word and sacrament, preserve our faith. Amen.

At home

- Memorize the Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed and Martin Luther’s explanation.
- Jot down what you would like for your own funeral service (hymns, Scripture readings, text for the sermon), keeping in mind the sure hope of the resurrection that you would like shared with the people present.

Helps

(1) When a person dies, his body goes into the grave and his soul goes either to heaven or hell. (2) When Jesus returns, all the dead will be raised. Unbelievers, whose lives were marked by evil, will be eternally condemned in hell. Believers, whose good works gave evidence of their faith, will live eternally in heaven. (3) Our present bodies, without exception, perish. They are weak (especially in our declining years) and are very dishonorable at the time of and following death. After the resurrection, our bodies will no longer be subject to death. In addition, they will be similar in glory and power to Christ’s resurrected body. Our resurrected bodies will no longer need hearing aids, eyeglasses, dentures, and wheelchairs. (4) Answers will vary. Possible answers are quarrels, wars, sickness, depression, and irritations. (5) We can be absolutely sure of our salvation because it does not depend on anything we do but depends entirely on what Christ our Savior has done. The Father deserves our praise because in eternity he planned our salvation, and in time he promised and sent his Son to redeem all people. The Son deserves our praise because he carried out the Father’s plan. Jesus Christ lived a perfect life in our place and suffered for sin as our substitute. The Holy Spirit deserves our praise because he has called us to faith in Christ. By faith we receive the eternal benefits of Jesus’ work.