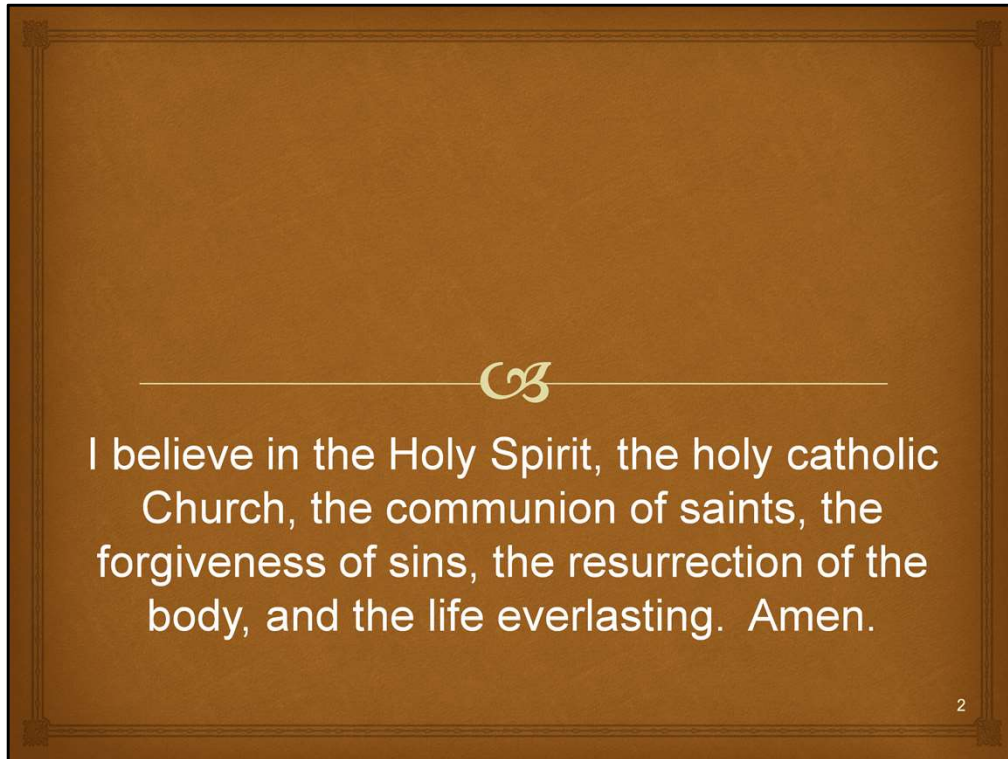




Today we are going to talk about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article of the Apostles' Creed. This part to me is the most exciting part of the Creed. In fact, Martin Luther suggested the Creed is presented in reverse, for without the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article, we cannot believe what we declare in the first two.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> Article we declared God's creating of us & everything. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Article we acknowledge God's Son sent to die for us. Both are very humbling aren't they? I mean WE and ALL good things were intentionally made! So intentionally made and created that God sent his Son to show us himself in the form of man. If that wasn't enough, that Godly man was crucified for US! That's a big deal!

But what about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article? Let's leave behind the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Articles which declare what is and what has been done. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Article is all about the Holy Spirit.



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Article. Does anyone have this one down? (AMANDA?)

[repeat] I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

We are a society of living in the moment. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Article is our life. It is the present. It is our hope. It is the future. It's our life here on earth and even beyond that, it's our life in heaven! We could say the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article is the heart of our FAITH.

We acknowledge that we need God's help; we cannot come to Christ on our own. It is the Holy Spirit—God himself—who calls, enlightens, sanctifies & keeps. Why is faith important? Apart from FAITH Christ is not our Lord. Without Christ, we are in bondage to sin & the devil; the old Adam. Without Christ we have no future. So in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article we have hope.

# I believe in....



1. The Holy Spirit
2. The holy catholic church, the communion of saints
3. The forgiveness of sins
4. The resurrection of the body
5. Life everlasting

3

So let's look at the words in this Article. The words we recite week after week. What do they mean?

1. **1. I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.** The Holy Spirit is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person of the trinity, promised and sent by Jesus Christ. John 14:16 says "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever...", and jumping to verse 26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."

But this isn't the first time we hear about the Holy Spirit, is it? The Holy Spirit isn't a new entity at this point. The Holy Spirit is mentioned more than 90 times in Matthew Mark and Luke alone! The first depiction of the Holy Spirit was the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River.

And, all the way back in [GENESIS 1:2](#) we hear "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." The Holy Spirit has been around a long time! Longer than this earth as we know it!

2. **2. I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.** These two get a little confusing. In most contexts, the holy catholic church and the communion of saints are used interchangeably. The communion

of saints was actually an addition to the catechism and described as a gathering of believers, much as the holy catholic church referred to the entire body of believers.

So I did a little searching and a lot of reading. Why was communion of saints an addition? Perhaps it is to emphasize the importance of gathering as an active sport. The body of believers seems to represent a passive group. It doesn't explicitly give us a picture of action. The communion of saints, however, really paints a picture of action. It's not a club to be members of and hold a membership card in our wallets and a certificate on our wall. It is something to be engaged in. To participate in. It's meant to be our passion and our driving force.

EPHESIANS 2:19-22 "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit."

Now would be a good time to pull out your study questions for this week.

This passage points out that we are a work in progress through growth and building by the Holy Spirit. If apart from God the creator we are nothing and can do nothing, what respect must we give the church; the mother? In the church we learn God's Word, seek prayer, partake in the sacraments. Through these we receive mercy & grace. (*Study Question 8*)

- 3. I BELIEVE IN THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.** Ephesians 1:7 says "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace". The forgiveness of sins is the benefit of what we declare in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Article. Without forgiveness of sins, we are not sanctified (made holy). "For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life & salvation". Where have we heard this?! The Sacrament of Holy Communion! (BRYAN-what are the benefits we receive in the Sacrament of Holy Communion?) "The benefits of this sacrament are pointed out by the words given and shed for your for the remission of sins. These words assure us that in the sacrament we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation." Later we will learn that forgiveness of sins is not just forgiveness of sins, but the gateway to LIFE and SALVATION!

In THE BOOK OF CONCORD 438, line 54 "Further we believe that in this Christian community we have the forgiveness of sins, which takes place through the holy sacraments and absolution as well as through all the comforting words of the entire gospel." (*Study Question 11*) and paragraph 56 "Outside this Christian

community, however, where there is no gospel, there is also no forgiveness, and hence there also can be no holiness.” (*Study Question 12*) So forgiveness is more than it first appears! It is our gift towards life and salvation.

4. **I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.** Where do we learn this? Acts 24:15 “having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.”

1 Corinthians 6:14, “And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.”

Matthew 25:34, “And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.”

John 5:28 says “Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out...”

Here we learn that resurrection isn’t just the story of Jesus being raised from the dead, but a promise for us as well. This is us being freed from death.

5. And continuing reading verse 29 takes us to #5. **I BELIEVE IN LIFE EVERLASTING**, verse 29 says, “those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”

Matthew 25:46 speaking of those on his left, the unjust, says “And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” This is our heaven or hell promise.

There’s a lot in these 5 declarations already! But let’s look at Luther’s explanations in the small catechism.

# Called & Enlightened



✧ I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith.

**CALLS**  
2 Thessalonians 2:14  
Romans 10:17  
2 Timothy 3:15  
Acts 2:38

**ENLIGHTENS**  
Ephesians 1:7  
Romans 15:13  
Isaiah 32:7

4

**“I BELIEVE THAT I CANNOT BY MY OWN UNDERSTANDING OF EFFORT BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST MY LORD OR COME TO HIM. BUT THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS CALLED ME THROUGH THE GOSPEL, ENLIGHTENED ME WITH HIS GIFTS, AND SANCTIFIED AND KEPT ME IN TRUE.”**

We start with ‘I believe that I cannot believe’. This points out how much we NEED the Holy Spirit to believe in God the Father and God the Son. It is through the Holy Spirit that we feel drawn to church, to God’s word, to even taking classes such as this.

So what is the Holy spirit doing to us and in us?

How does the Holy Spirit call us? ANY IDEAS? 2 Thessalonians 2:14, “To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

and Romans 10:17, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

2 Timothy 3:15 “and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”

And Acts 2:38 talking about the coming of the Holy Spirit, “And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.””

We are called through God’s Word.

ENLIGHTENED ME WITH HIS GIFTS. What does enlightened mean? (anyone?)  
To be freed from ignorance and misinformation. To expand your understanding. To explain clearly.

What are some of God’s gifts? (SUGGESTIONS?)

Ephesians 1:7 promises forgiveness of sins.

Romans 15:13, joy, peace & hope.

Isaiah 32:7, Peace, quietness & confidence forever.

Doesn’t this sound like a place we should be hanging out! Last week I had a quick trip to deliver ponies, and was able to visit a good friend that I see every few years. As we were relaxing in our motel room, sometimes not even talking, she commented to me how nice it is to just soak in our friendship and our presence. That just being together was such a peaceful and satisfying feeling. The peace, hope, quietness of God is exponentially that of a good friend and something we should seek out.

# Sanctified & Kept



✧ I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith.

SANCTIFIES  
2 Thessalonians 2:13  
1 Corinthians 6:11  
2 Corinthians 5:17  
Ephesians 2:10

KEEPS  
Titus 2:14  
1 John 2:15  
Galations 5:17  
Isaiah 41:10  
1 Peter 1:5  
1 Peter 5:10

5

The work of the Holy Spirit is called sanctification. The Book of Concord on page 435 #35, says “To this article, as I have said, I cannot give a better title than ‘Being Made Holy’.” (*Study Question 1*)

2 THESSALONIANS 2:13 tells us “But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.”

1 CORINTHIANS 6:11 says “.... But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

The Holy Spirit sanctifies us when he brings us to faith in Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says we are made “a new creation”,

and Ephesians 2:10 “we are God’s workmanship created in Jesus which God prepared”.

Titus 2:14 says the Holy Spirit leads us to hate sin and to be eager to live a holy life. So...sanctification EMPOWERS us by Christ, MOTIVATES us by Christ’s sacrifice for us and God’s intentions for us, and GUIDES us by God’s Word.

Where are we sanctified? (BOOK OF CONCORD p435, p37) “Just as the Son



obtains dominion by purchasing us through his birth, death, and resurrection, etc., so the Holy Spirit effects our being made holy through the following: the community of saints or the Christian church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. That is, he first leads us into his holy community, placing us in the church's lap, where he preaches to us and brings us to Christ." (*Study Question 3*)

How does the Holy Spirit keep us in true faith? What is true faith? The devil, the world, and our sinful selves (human nature) are constantly trying to weaken our faith and keep us from doing good...doing God's will.

The devil is intentionally trying to pull us away from God. To convince us that we can take care of ourselves; that we don't need God. The world and human nature do the same thing. 1 John 2:15 warns us "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

and Galatians 5:17 explains "For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do."

The Holy Spirit is here to help us overcome these. In Isaiah 41:10 we are promised that God will strengthen us and help us; he will uphold us with his righteous right hand.

1 PETER 1:5 says we "who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

and in 1 PETER 5:10, "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."

The Holy Spirit STRENGTHENS our faith and INSPIRES us to do God's will with a promise of heaven. The Holy Spirit keeps us on the right path....in 'true faith'. Real faith. We could say true to God's will.

# Sanctified by the Holy Spirit



Called

out of the unbelieving world  
& to be holy by faith in Jesus

through the gospel

in the word &  
in the sacraments

by means of grace

6

I like how this shows the work of the Holy Spirit. This chart shows us how we are called through the gospel by means of grace.

We are called OUT of the world to be holy by faith in Jesus Christ, through the gospel, by means of the word & sacraments, with God's grace.

## The Holy Spirit in the church



☞ In the same way, he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it united with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

Luke 17:20-21  
Romans 12:4-5

☞ In this Christian church day after day he fully forgives my sins and the sins of all believers.

Romans 3:23-26  
Ephesians 2:8-9

7

**“In the same way, he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it united with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.”**

Here we go on to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit not only does this in us as individuals, but in the whole church. Suddenly the church seems a lot more dynamic, doesn't it?

And so we're back to the point of being a Christian not being an individual sport. It's a team sport and we need the church, both our local church and the whole church of God on earth. It is not just a building or a group, it is *within us*. LUKE 17:20-21 says “Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, “The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.”” The King James Translation says “the kingdom of God is within you.”

This church is holy because it is made up of holy people (saints). According to the Augsburg Confession the holy Christian church is found where “the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered.” It is Christian because it is Christ-centered.

Romans 12:4-5 says “For as in one body we have many members, and the

members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”

The whole Christian church is called a communion because by faith in Christ the Holy Spirit gathers all believers into one spiritual body. The church is important because in it we learn the gospel, and receive the sacraments. We will learn later about how confession is such an important part of church and our faith.

What else do we gain from our church body? Fellowship? Praying with one another and encouraging each other. Working together, teaching together, learning together.

**“IN THIS CHRISTIAN CHURCH DAY AFTER DAY HER FULLY FORGIVES MY SINS AND THE SINS OF ALL BELIEVERS.”**

In the Christian church, God declares guilty sinners to be righteous because Jesus served as their substitute and paid for our sins in full. ROMANS 3:23-26 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 tells us “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” It is the Holy Spirit who works faith in us so that we do not trust our own works but on the righteousness God gives us in Christ by grace.

# Resurrection & Eternity



☞ On the last day he will raise me and all the dead, and give me and all believers in Christ eternal life.

Resurrection  
Acts 24:15  
John 6:40

Eternity  
Mark 16:16  
Revelation 20:15  
Matthew 22:10-13  
Isaiah 66:24  
Revelation 7:15-17  
Revelation 21:4  
Psalm 16:11  
2 Thessalonians 2:13

8

## **“ON THE LAST DAY HE WILL RAISE ME AND ALL THE DEAD”**

Acts 24:15 says “... that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.”

and in John 6:40, “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.” On the last day God will raise all people from the dead.

## **“AND GIVE ME AND ALL BELIEVERS IN CHRIST ETERNAL LIFE.”**

Here is where judgement comes. Mark 16:16 “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

Revelation 20:15 promises “ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” Believers will be taken by Christ to be with him forever in heaven, while unbelievers will be separated from God to suffer eternally in the fires of hell.

Hell is certainly painted as a pretty miserable place with “weeping and gnashing of teeth” in Matthew 22:10-13, and loathsome in Isaiah 66:24.

So what about heaven? Revelation 7:15-17 promises freedom from every trouble and sorrow of life on earth. And in Revelation 21:4 there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. With God in heaven we will live in GLORY! We will have joy forever!

Psalm 16:11 “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

We can look forward to the last day because of the Holy Spirit bringing us faith. Remember 2 Thessalonians 2:13 that we mentioned earlier? “...because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.” Chosen from the beginning!

# The Holy Spirit: Unlocking Our Faith



- Our key to realizing God the Father and God the Son
- Our key to understanding God's Word
- Our key to receiving God's gifts
  
- Our faith & hope unveiled.

9

The Holy Spirit then is our Key to Unlocking our Faith.

Our key to realizing God the Father and God the Son  
Our key to understanding God's Word  
Our key to receiving God's gifts

Our faith & hope unveiled.

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Article of the Apostles' Creed



This is most certainly true.  
(Plainly taught in the bible  
and we are to firmly believe it.)

10

I hope that I have shown you the excitement and hope that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article reveals to us. In closing I have two discussion questions to pose. The first is, which Article of the Creed speaks most to you and why?

And one last study question as we wrap up the Apostles' Creed. (*Study Question 17*) What distinguishes the Creed from the 10 Commandments?

The 10 commandments are the DEFINITION of holiness; what to do and what not to do.

The Creed shows how God gives himself to us to help us to keep the commandments. The Creed reveals the one KEY to KEEPING the commandments; by God the Holy Spirit.