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# What We Believe

## Session 2: "Know and Enjoy"

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### WORSHIP

1) Weekly worship has always been the habit of \_\_\_\_\_ Christians.

*"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment)*

*Hebrews 10:25, "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another..."*

- Over the course of a week we have been distracted from His grace and truth.
- It connects us into a community of people who also have as their focus meeting the true God through His Word and Sacraments.
- It connects us into the wider community of believers where we can experience the presence of Jesus more powerfully.

2) What is worship?

- Worship happens when we meet God and are touched by Him so deeply that our spirit seeks to rise up and express its love, thanks, and commitment back to Him. *(Anything less is just talk and activity.)*

# THE TRINITY

## GOD THE FATHER

### We confess Him in "The Apostles' Creed "

*found on Page 15, 102 in Small Catechism*

*(The Apostles of Jesus did not write the Apostles' Creed. It is an ancient Creed of the Church, which reflects accurately what the Apostles and the Bible teach. It is used around the world by Christians even today.)*

### Who is God the Father?

1) God the Father \_\_\_\_\_ the universe.

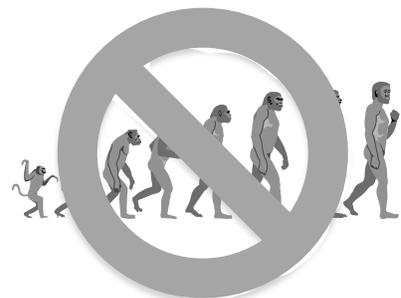
*Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

a) God created the universe in six \_\_\_\_\_ hour days.

*Genesis 1:31, "And there was evening, and there was morning - the sixth day."*

**"If you cannot understand how God could create the world in six days, then at least grant the Holy Spirit the honor of being more learned in this matter than you." - Martin Luther**

b) It is by \_\_\_\_\_ that we believe the universe was created by God. However, it is also by faith that the evolutionist believes the universe has evolved.



# GOD THE SON

## We confess Him in "The Apostles' Creed"

found on Page 119, Small Catechism

### Who is God the Son?

- 1) God the Son is \_\_\_\_\_ God, co-equal with the Father. He is not God, Jr.

*John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

- 2) God the Son was born as a \_\_\_\_\_ who was named Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah/Christ. (*Messiah is from the Hebrew, Christ is from the Greek, both mean "anointed one".*)

*John 1:14, "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us."*

### Why was God the Son born as a human being?

- 1) Because God is beyond us, He made Himself \_\_\_\_\_ to us personally in Jesus.

*John 14:9, "Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father."*

- 2) Because we could not save ourselves, God came to do it \_\_\_\_\_ as a fellow human being.

### So, is Jesus God or Human?

- 1) He is \_\_\_\_\_!

- Jesus is fully God and fully human

## 2) How do we confess that?

- Jesus is one \_\_\_\_\_, but with two \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus is "True God and True Man"

*Colossians 2:9, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form..."*

## 3) Why did Jesus have to be true God?

- He couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ being God!  
*God the Father said in Mark 1:11, "You are My Son..."*

- So He could be born \_\_\_\_\_, without sin.  
*Luke 1:35, "So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God."*

## 4) Why did Jesus have to be true Man?

- God could not pay the price for mankind's sin. Only a human could, because it was a human who had broken God's law and earned the sentence of death.

*Hebrews 2:17, "For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that He might... make atonement for the sins of the people."*

## Why is the cross the heart of Jesus' work on earth?

The Answer: At the cross, Jesus offered Himself in our place.

*1 Timothy 1:15, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners..."*

- 1) At the cross, Jesus took our \_\_\_\_\_ for our sin.

*Isaiah 53:5, "But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed."*



2) At the cross, Jesus took our \_\_\_\_\_.

*Matthew 27:46, "Jesus cried out, 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?'"*

3) At the cross, Jesus made \_\_\_\_\_ between God and us.

*Romans 5:1, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

4) At the cross, Jesus broke the power of \_\_\_\_\_ over us.

*1 John 3:8, "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."*

5) Because of the cross, we are \_\_\_\_\_.

## Who do you say that I am?

Ultimately, the most important question any of us can answer about Jesus is this: "Who do you say that I am?"

It is popular to deny that Jesus was the Son of God but to instead hold Him up as a wise, revolutionary spiritual guru. They would say that Jesus never called Himself the Son of God, that His disciples said it of Him later, and then invented stories in which they have Jesus claiming such divinity. However such a view is hopelessly naïve.

Why did Jesus get nailed to a cross? It wasn't because Jesus taught people to love one another. The ruling authorities didn't crucify Mr. Rogers. They crucified Jesus because He claimed to be God and it infuriated them. Therefore, there are only three answers we can give with intellectual integrity to the question of Jesus' identity:

## EITHER:

1) Jesus is a \_\_\_\_\_.

- In other words, He wasn't who He said He was and knew it.
- However, does the evidence of His life indicate that He was a liar?
- And what liar when faced with slow, tortuous death maintains the lie? He drops the pretense and seeks to be spared... which is all Jesus would have had to do before Pilate. However, Jesus willingly goes to the cross *because* He is who He says He is.

## OR:

2) Jesus is a \_\_\_\_\_.

- In other words, He wasn't who He said He was but didn't know it.
- However, does the evidence of His life indicate that He was a lunatic?
- He demonstrates composure under the most intense emotional conditions.

## OR:

3) Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_.

- In other words, He is who He said He is.
- Again, is there evidence from His life to indicate that He is God in the flesh?
- There were the miracles.
- There were the prophecies fulfilled by Jesus.
- There is the resurrection.
- If Jesus is who He says He is, this has profound implications. It means everything - all history, all lives, all things - really do revolve around Him and are subject to Him.

**So, who do you say that He is?**

# GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

## We confess in "The Apostles' Creed"

*found on Page 147, Small Catechism*

## Who is God the Holy Spirit?

- 1) The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son. He is no lesser God.

*Matthew 28:19, "...baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*

- 2) The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ us to faith in Jesus.

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

- 3) The Holy Spirit enables us to \_\_\_\_\_ the blessings of salvation and a personal relationship with God.

*1 Corinthians 2:9-10, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed it to us by His Spirit."*

- 4) The Holy Spirit enables us to live \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Philippians 2:13, "For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose."*

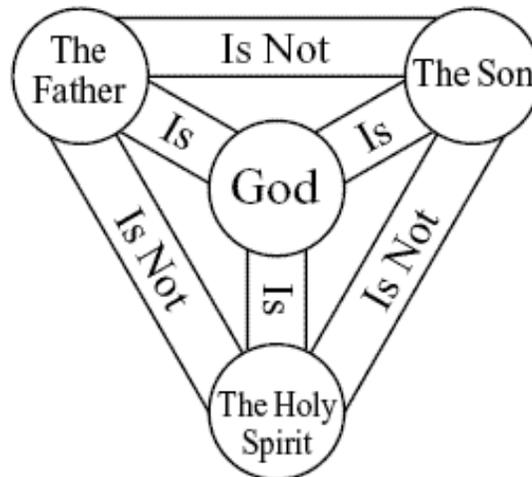
- 5) The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ to use to benefit others in Jesus' name.

*1 Corinthians 12:7,11, "Now to each one the manifestations of the Spirit is given for the common good... All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He gives them to each one, just as He determines."*

# THE HOLY TRINITY

The mystery of God's nature is a deep one. No human ever fully understands it. Yet the Bible does teach us enough to know that God is three distinct persons while being only one God.

- 1) He is Three Persons but One God: Tri-unity or Trinity.



## One God:

*Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord your God, the LORD is one."*

## Three Persons:

*Matthew 28:19, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*

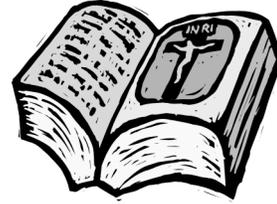
# The Sacraments

## 1) What is a *Sacrament*?

Page 202, Small Catechism

### a) It is something...

- commanded by God in the Bible
- connected to a physical object
- through which God delivers the forgiveness of our sins  
*(i.e., it is a "means of grace.")*



### b) It is a visible expression of the Gospel.

### c) It is another way to know *the* Gospel in *my* Gospel.

## 2) What are the two Sacraments?

### a) Baptism

*(Baptism is commanded by Jesus, connected to water, and God promises the forgiveness of your sins through it).*



### b) The Lord's Supper

*(The Lord's Supper is commanded by Jesus, connected to bread and wine, and God promises the forgiveness of your sins through it).*



## 3) Why do other church bodies have more Sacraments than Baptism and the Supper?

- By their own decision, they attach forgiveness to participation in certain additional rites. They have no word or promise from God to do so though.

# Baptism

## WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Page 204, Small Catechism

What the Bible teaches:

### 1) Matthew 28:19-20

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."*



- New believers/devoted followers are made by baptizing and teaching.
- In Baptism we are marked with the name of God.

### 2) John 3:1-6

*Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night... Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit."*

- Through Baptism we are born again, not of our body but of our spirit.
- This happens not *because* of the water but *because* of the Holy Spirit. However, God has chosen that this new birth happens *with* water by the Holy Spirit.



3) Acts 2:36-39

*"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "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. The promise is for you and your children..."*

- Through Baptism, we receive from God the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- This promise of gifts from God through Baptism is for adults and children.

4) Galatians 3:26-27

*"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."*

- Through Baptism we are officially adopted into the family of God.
- Through Baptism we are covered in the grace and forgiveness of Jesus.

## SUMMARY:

What happens to us in Baptism?

- 1) The \_\_\_\_\_ of God is placed on us.

*Matthew 28:19, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."*

2) The \_\_\_\_\_ of God is placed in us.

*Acts 2:38, "Peter replied, '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.'"*

3) The \_\_\_\_\_ of God is spread over us.

*Acts 22:16, "And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His name."*

## IMPLICATIONS OF BEING BAPTIZED

It is power for daily living.

1) We are God's \_\_\_\_\_, therefore, we have God's

\_\_\_\_\_.

•Does that mean nothing bad will ever happen to us?

*Romans 8:28-29, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son..."*

- What is *the good* which God is working all things toward for us? Making us happy? Giving us an easy life? No hassles, no troubles? No. The good is our being \_\_\_\_\_ or transformed to the spiritual and character likeness of Jesus.

2) We can always know \_\_\_\_\_ we are, and where we

\_\_\_\_\_, no matter where we end up. (*Luke 15, the lost son*)



Why must we baptize babies, too?

- a) God tells us to.
- b) All people are born sinful by nature, and are in need of salvation.

*Psalm 51:5, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."*

- c) The example of Old Testament circumcision at eight days old.
  - Circumcision marked the child as God's child. God did not wait for the child to grow up and claim Him. He claimed the child, and commanded the parents to then raise the child up knowing their Heavenly Father.

- d) Babies can receive a blessing whether they ask for it or not.

*Luke 18:15-17, "People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have Him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these..."*

- e) Babies can have faith even if they cannot yet express it on their own because faith comes from God not us.

*Psalm 22:9, "Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother's breast."*

# The Lord's Supper



## WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER? Page 231, Small Catechism

What the Bible teaches:

Matthew 26:26-28

*While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

*Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.*

## SUMMARY

# IS

1) The importance of the word

a) The Biblical view: "is" simply means "\_\_\_\_\_", we can't explain *how* Jesus is present with His body and blood, just *that* He is present!

b) The Catholic view: Transubstantiation (*the changing of substances*)

c) The Reformed view (*i.e., most of the rest of the Protestants*):

"The finite cannot bear the infinite." Therefore, the Supper is only symbolic or representative of Jesus' body and blood.

(*But Colossians 2:9 says, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form." If Jesus can do that, He can do the Supper!*)

d) The Lord's Supper is not a placebo.

## 2) What happens in the Lord's Supper?

a) Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ Himself for us.

(*Like the burning bush in Exodus .3*)

- He comes to where we are.

b) We receive the \_\_\_\_\_ of sins.

- Notice who is gathered around Jesus that night... (*St. Peter?*)
- The Supper is for \_\_\_\_\_. If you are one, then come!

c) We are invited to \_\_\_\_\_ (*or commune*) at His table.

- In the biblical times, to eat at someone's table was to announce a desire to be friends with them, to be in community with them. This is why Jesus kept getting in trouble with the authorities, because He ate at the table of "sinners".



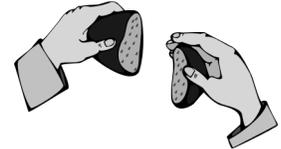
- Likewise, Jesus reaches out to us in grace and forgiveness, and invites us to accept His friendship (*John 15:15*) by eating at His table.
- This is where the term "communion" comes from.

d) We are all joined together as \_\_\_\_\_.

- We are the Body of Christ as we partake of the Lord's Supper together.
- We dare not look down on the others that Jesus has invited to His table.

e) There is a responsibility of \_\_\_\_\_ that comes along with the privilege of receiving this Supper.

*1 Corinthians 11:23-29 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.*



- Whoever eats or drinks in an *unworthy* manner
- One ought to *examine* himself
- Anyone who eats or drinks *without recognizing* the body of the Lord
- In order to eat and drink in a worthy manner, we are to examine ourselves for what? A \_\_\_\_\_ of the presence of the Lord. This happens through simply *believing* that what **Jesus has said is true!**

### 3) When is a person rightly prepared to receive this Sacrament?

"Fasting and other outward preparations serve a good purpose. However, that person is well prepared and worthy who believes these words: *given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins*. But anyone who does not believe these words, or doubts them, is neither prepared nor worthy, for the words *for you* require simply a believing heart." Martin Luther, Small Catechism

The above implies a belief that we *need* forgiveness because we are sinners. So it is important to confess and repent of our sins as part of our preparation for the Lord's Supper. (If we don't have sins that need to be forgiven we don't need Jesus or His Supper.) But if we have sins (and we do!) then we need to repent of them. *However such preparations are not a way of making ourselves worthy!* Only faith in the words of Jesus created by the Holy Spirit can make us worthy. Rather these preparations simply prepare our hearts and minds to benefit from the Supper in the best way.

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## SHARPENING MY SWORD



Each week you will be given a sentence or verse of the Bible to put to memory. The Bible calls God's Word "the sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17). We want you to have a big, sharp sword!

So far:

Ephesians 2:8-9

"Jesus died on the cross and rose again for the forgiveness of my sins."

This week:

"Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13