

The Apostles' Creed,

(with explanations from Luther's Small Catechism)

The First Article *(Of Creation)*

I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God created me and all that exists, and that he gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind and all my abilities.

And I believe that God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, property and home, spouse and children, land, cattle, and all I own, and all I need to keep my body and life. God also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil.

All this God does only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it. For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him. This is most certainly true.

The Second Article *(Of Redemption)*

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 to hell. The third day 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 truly 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 sufferings 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.

The Third Article *(Of Sanctification)*

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?

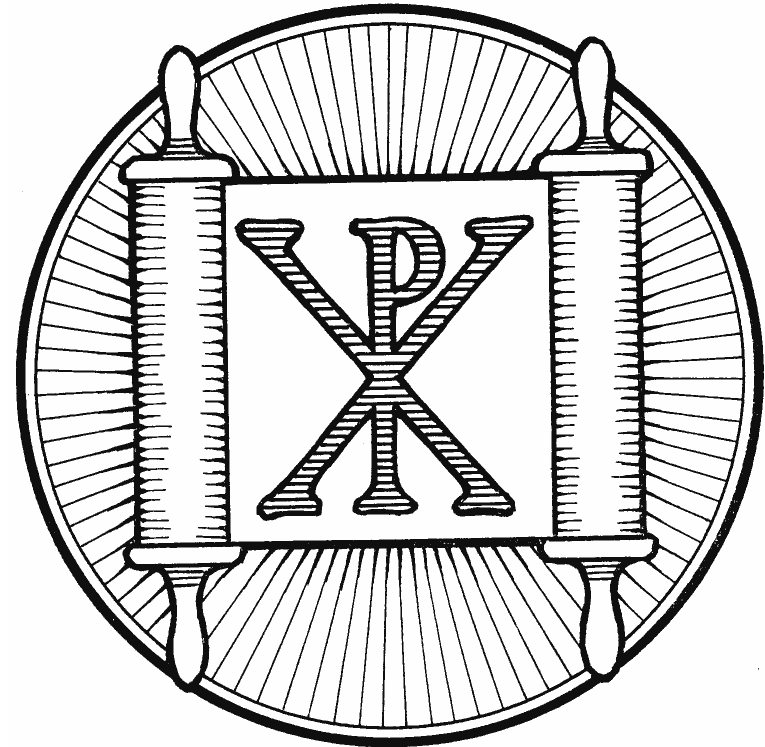
I believe that I cannot by my own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him.

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 to all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

Daily Prayers



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How a Father Should Teach His Household to Conduct Morning and Evening Devotions.

Morning Devotions

In the morning, when you rise, you shall bless yourself with the sign of the holy cross and say:

In the name of God the Father, Son +, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the (Apostles') Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may, in addition, say this little prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go to your work with joy, singing a hymn, as the Ten Commandments, or what your devotion may suggest.



The Evening Devotions

In the evening, when you go to bed, you shall bless yourself with the sign of the holy cross and say:

In the name of God the Father, Son +, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Then, kneeling or standing, repeat the (Apostles') Creed and the Lord's Prayer. If you choose, you may, in addition, say this little prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that you have kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go to sleep promptly and cheerfully.

How a Father Should Teach His Household to Ask a Blessing and Return Thanks at Meals

Asking a Blessing

The children and servants shall go to the table with folded hands and reverently, and say:

The eyes of all look to you, O Lord, and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

Note: To satisfy the desire means that all animals receive so much to eat that they are on this account joyful and cheerful; for worry and greed hinder such satisfaction.

Then pray the Lord's Prayer and the following prayer:

Lord God, heavenly Father, bless us and these gifts, which we receive from your bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



Returning Thanks

Likewise also after the meal they shall reverently and with folded hands say:

O, give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures forever. He gives food to all flesh; he gives to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He does not delight in the strength of the horse; he does not take pleasure in the legs of man. The Lord takes pleasure in those that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

Then pray the Lord's Prayer and the following prayer:

We thank you, Lord God, heavenly Father, for all your benefits, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns forever. Amen.