



His Word Is Truth!

This article is written by Pastor Tom Eckstein of Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown. "His Word is Truth" will appear in this paper every 3rd Monday.



In last month's article we examined the first line of the third section of the Creed: **"I believe in the Holy Spirit."** We learned that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the "Holy Trinity" – the One God who reveals Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (see Genesis 1:1-3, 26; Matthew 3:16-17 and 28:19; John 15:23-16:15). The Holy Spirit is sent to us by the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit works through God's Word of Judgment to humble us and convict us of our rebellion against God. This same Holy

Spirit works through God's Word of forgiveness and new life in Holy Baptism and Preaching to bring us to faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior from sin and eternal damnation (see 1st Corinthians 1:18-2:16; Galatians 3:1-5; Ephesians 1:13-14; John 3:5; Acts 2:38-39; Titus 3:5).

We now go on to examine the following words of the Creed: **"I believe in ... the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints..."** SIMPLY PUT, THE HOLY SPIRIT CREATES THE HOLY CHURCH! The English word "Church" translates a Greek word that refers to a group of people who have been assembled to hear someone speak. *Therefore, the word "Church" does not refer to a building but to the people who gather to hear the Word of the Lord!*

The Creed says that the Church is "holy." This means that the Church is God's creation! The Church is created by the Holy Spirit Who calls

people to faith in God through the Gospel of forgiveness of sins based on the person and work of Jesus the Christ. (See 2nd Corinthians 5:17-21 and Colossians 1:3-23).

The Creed also says that the Church is "Christian." The English word "Christian" translates the Creed's original Latin word "catholic" (based on the Greek word "kataholos") which means "one" or "universal." Simply put, the Church is "universal" in that there is only ONE Church which is made up of all people of all times and places who trust in Christ as Savior and are united by the Spirit through their mutual faith in Christ's Word (see Matthew 28:19-20; John 8:31-32; John 10:14-18; John 17:16-23; Acts 2:28-42; 1st Corinthians 1:1-9; Ephesians 2:19-20; Ephesians 4:3-6, 11-16; Hebrews 1:1-3; Jude 3-4). **Therefore, the Church is "Christian" in that the Church of all times and places keeps its focus on Christ and His Word alone –**

the Foundation and Rock of our salvation! (See Matthew 7:24-29 and 1st Peter 2:4-12)

The Creed then goes on to say that the holy Christian Church is also the **"communion of saints."** All who trust in Christ and His Teaching are "saints" because the guilt of their sin has been washed away by Jesus' sacrificial Blood and they have been clothed with the holiness of Christ's righteous life (see Psalm 149:1-5; Romans 1:6-7; Romans 3:21-31; Romans 8:1-4; 2nd Corinthians 1:1-2; Ephesians 1:1-10; Philippians 1:1-6; Philemon 1-7; 1st Peter 1:1-25).

Even though Christians continue to struggle with their sinful nature in this life, they remain saints before God because of Christ who forgives our sins and moves us to live according to God's gracious will! (See Romans 7:14-25; 1st Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:13-26; Ephesians 4:17-32; Colossians 3:1-17; 1st Thessalonians

5:12-24; 2nd Thessalonians 2:13-17; Titus 2:11-4.)

In addition, the Creed says that God's saints are in "communion" with each other. The word "communion" means that two things have been united by something else which they have in common. Simply put, we are united as the "body of Christ" through our communion with God through Jesus Christ. **The most holy reality of this "communion" is when Christians are united with each other and God through their reception of Christ's Body and Blood in the Lord's Supper – also called "Holy Communion!"** (See Matthew 26:26-28; John 6:53-56; Acts 2:42; 1st Corinthians 10:14-17 and 11:17-32.)

Therefore, when the Holy Spirit uses God's Word to convict you of sin and bring you to faith in Christ He thereby makes you a part of the **"holy Christian Church, the communion of saints."** This evil world and all who reject

Christ and His Word will pass away. But Christ's Church, founded on His Word, will endure forever! (See Matthew 16:13-26; Philippians 3:17-21; 2nd Thessalonians 1:3-12; Hebrews 12:22-29; 2nd Peter 3:1-18.) The Holy Spirit is calling out to YOU through the Gospel! **The Holy Spirit calls you to repent and trust in Jesus today and always!**



Please read the next "His Word is Truth" on Monday, September 17th! Pastor Eckstein will continue his series on the Apostles' Creed with the following part of the 3rd article: "...the forgiveness of sins..."

For more resources about Christian teaching and issues, go to Concordia Lutheran's webpage: www.concordiajst.org

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