

## ***“Singing the Faith – The Creed”***

“O Lord open my lips .... and my mouth shall declare your praise.” This evening we sing the Christian Faith – using Dr. Martin Luther’s catechetical hymn on the Creed – “We All Believe in One True God.”

“We all believe” – how true that is – not just for Christians, but for all people. In truth, there are few, if any, genuine atheists – those who believe there is no god. We all have gods, objects of faith – that which we fear, and love, and trust in.

In the Large Catechism, Luther has this to say about the First Commandment. “A ‘god’ is the term for that to which we are to look for all good and in which we are to find refuge in all need. Therefore, to have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe in that one with your whole heart. As I have often said, it is the trust and faith of the heart alone that make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust are right, then your God is the true one. Conversely, where your trust is false and wrong, there you do not have the one true God. For these two belong together, faith and God. Anything on which your heart relies and depends, I say, that is really your God.” (K-W, 386)

In the hymn, it’s not just, “We all believe” (as if it is every man for himself, with his own god, with his own beliefs) – but, “We all believe in one true God.” That’s a much different confession.

There is so much confusion concerning this today. The world around us says that all beliefs have some value, and that everyone is entitled to their own truths. And if our truths do not fit together nice and neat – if we don’t “all believe” the same thing – then the creed that is confessed, is that “diversity rules.”

Well, folks, “diversity” and “one true God” are not the same. They don’t “confess” – they don’t say the same thing. Truth, and “other truths” that contradict one another --- is foolishness.

This foolishness has infected the church. For instance, the largest Christian denomination in the world has this as part of their confession: “The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church)

And don’t be fooled – there are pastors and people in our church body (the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod) – who also confess this to be true. Luther wrote, “We all believe in one true God” – and some who bear the name of Lutheran, confess that “the Muslims worship the one true God.”

O Lord, open our ears that we might hear your truth – and open our lips, that we may declare the praise of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

[Please turn to LSB 954 – we sing the 1<sup>st</sup> stanza]

Who is this one true God that we confess – whom we “fear, love, and trust” above all things? He is the One who “created earth and heaven.” All creation has this one true God as its source. He created the heavens and the earth and everything in it – which means He has created all people.

Our life comes from Him. Our life is dependent upon Him. Like a little child, we had no say about our birth – it is given to us. And like a little child, we are dependent on Him for life itself.

He teaches us to confess Him as “Our Father” – rather than calling upon One who is Lord God Almighty, the Judge of the living and the dead, the all-seeing-One who is in charge of revenge! Call upon Him as “Our Father” – for indeed, He is the Father of all people, for He is the Creator of all.

To call upon Him as “Father” – is to confess that He has given you life – and to confess that He sustains your life. This His children do with all boldness and confidence – knowing Him to be their true Father.

Most of us have never been without food, or clothes, or a home. The closest I came was as a child, when we lost almost everything in a house fire. We had no house – no clothes (except the clothes on our backs) – and no food. But that didn't last very long – as our neighbors, including our brothers and sisters in Christ, provided for all of our needs.

The truth be told – it was the Lord, the one true God, who provided for all our needs. It is “Our Father” who “feeds us” – “all we need His hand provides us.” He's the One responsible for sustaining us – not only from the danger of the fire – but providing for all our needs of body and soul.

He is the One of whom we sing: “Through all snares and perils leads us, watching that no harm betide us. He cares for us by day and night; all things are governed by His might.” He is the One who deserves our thanks and praise.

[We sing stanza 2]

The one true God whom we confess is “Our Father” – and, “we all believe in Jesus Christ, His own Son, our Lord ...” Jesus, the Son of God, is not inferior to the Father – He is of “equal Godhead, throne, and might.”

Like the Father, the Son is all-mighty, all-knowing, and the Judge of all mankind – but He is revealed to us as the “source of ev'ry grace and blessing.” The Father is the source of our life – and through His Son, Jesus Christ – we receive all His gifts by grace, the undeserved blessings of “Our Father” poured out on us richly, through Jesus Christ.

In the Son, the mystery of God's love and grace is revealed. That mystery is revealed in the Incarnation – when the Son of God takes on human flesh. Jesus is “born of Mary, virgin mother, by the power of the Spirit – the “word made flesh.”

A mystery indeed! How can the One through whom all things were created – become part of His creation? How can the finite contain the infinite?

Rather than play God, and rule the Incarnation impossible according to our reason – we confess that we are not God, we are not the Creator – and by faith, willingly believe and confess that what God says in His Word – “it is so.”

The question to be answered is WHY did true God become true man – taking on human flesh and blood? You sang the answer: “Word made flesh, our elder brother; that the lost might life inherit, was crucified for all our sin and raised by God to life again.”

We are not just children of God by creation – we are His children through faith in Jesus Christ, our brother – our brother, who takes on our human flesh so that we might become “children of God.”

God becomes man so that we might inherit God’s kingdom. God’s own Son is crucified to redeem all sinners. He takes the place of all mankind – so that by faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God – man might be raised from death to life again.

[We sing stanza 3]

Who is this “one true God” we confess? He is the Holy Ghost – the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, the Counselor, the Comforter. He dwells “with God the Father and the Son” – and comforts sinners with the forgiveness, life and salvation that proceeds from the Father and the Son.

The Holy Ghost points you to Jesus Christ your Redeemer – creates a faith that trusts in Him alone for the forgiveness of all your sins – and sustains that faith, nourishes that faith, by the Word and Sacraments of Jesus Christ.

Where Jesus and His Word and Sacraments are found – there you will find the Holy Ghost at work – calling sinners to faith, enlightening them with the gifts of God’s kingdom, making them holy through the blood of Jesus – and keeping this “communion of saints,” this gathering all believers, in the one true faith – that is, faith in the “one, true God.”

“Here” (in the holy, Christian Church) forgiveness and salvation daily come through Jesus’ merit. All flesh shall rise, and we can be in bliss with God eternally.” For where there is the forgiveness of sins – there is life and salvation – life eternal, with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. “Amen, Amen. Which means – yes, yes, it shall be so.”

The peace of God which passes all understanding, guards your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.