

Reading

Genesis 15:1–6

God's Covenant with Abram

¹After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” ²But Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³And Abram said, “Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir.” ⁴And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.” ⁵And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” ⁶And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Reading

Psalms 32

Blessed Are the Forgiven

¹Blessèd is the one whose transgression is for- | given,*
whose sin is | covered.

²Blessèd is the man against whom the LORD counts no in- | iquity,*
and in whose spirit there is | no deceit.

³For when I kept silent, my bones wast- | ed away*
through my groaning | all day long.

⁴For day and night your hand was heavy up- | on me;*
my strength was dried up as by the heat of | summer.

⁵I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my in- | iquity;*
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,”
and you forgave the iniquity | of my sin.

⁶Therefore let everyone who is godly
offer prayer to you at a time when you | may be found;*
surely in the rush of great waters,
they shall not | reach him.

⁷You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from | trouble;*
you surround me with shouts of de- | liverance.

⁸I will instruct you and teach you in the way | you should go;*
I will counsel you with my eye- | on you.

⁹Be not like a horse or a mule, without under- | standing,*
which must be curbed with bit and bridle,
or it will not stay | near you.

¹⁰Many are the sorrows of the | wicked,*
but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts | in the LORD.

¹¹Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O | righteous,*
and shout for joy, all you up- | right in heart!

Catechetical Instruction

The First Article

Creation

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

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.

He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.

He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.

This is most certainly true.

The Second Article

Redemption

And 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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 true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord,

who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, 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 suffering and death,

that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness,

just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.

This is most certainly true.

The Third Article

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 reason or strength 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 richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.

On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

Acknowledgments

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