

The First Article



Introduction

Opening Prayer: God, I am here to learn about you. Be with me and bless me. Lead me to understand you and your love. I thank you for all you do for me. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed is something that we say in church often. Sometimes we just say it without thinking about what it means. The Apostles' Creed is something that will be good for you to know if anyone ever asks you what you believe. You can answer them by just saying the Apostles' Creed. But then they might have some questions and ask you, "What does that mean." We're going to talk about that for the next few weeks. We're going to talk about what we mean when we say the words of the Apostles' Creed.

First define believe:

Lesson Aim: What does God our heavenly Father do for us?

Part One

Read Matthew 6:25-30.

- 1) What reasons does Jesus give us to not worry?
- 2) Who provides us with food and drink?
- 3) Who provides us with clothing?
- 4) Who provides us with all that we need every day?

Read John 6:3-13.

- 5) How many people were in the crowd that followed Jesus?
- 6) What did Jesus have in mind that he was going to do?
- 7) What would you have thought if you were one of the disciples passing out the bread and fish?
- 8) How did the leftovers compare with what Jesus had to start with?
- 9) How did Jesus provide for the people?

If God did not cause food to grow and he did not bless and preserve it in the field, we could never take bread from the oven or have any to set upon the table. – Luther

Part One continues on the next page...

Read Psalm 104:10-15.

10) Though we saw in the feeding of the 5,000 that God can provide for us by doing miracles, how does God usually provide for us as described in Psalm 104?

Read Deuteronomy 8:10-18.

11) This passage is referring to the Israelites as they had entered into the Promised Land of Canaan after wandering in the wilderness for 40 years. Things were going well for the Israelites. They were experiencing blessings. What warning and instruction are they given?

12) How can we say that God provides for people through work?

Read Psalm 121.

13) God not only provides for us. What else does Psalm 121 tell us that God does for us?

One of the main ways that God protects us is by the many and mighty angels he sends to guard us. We will study angels later this year in lesson 23.

Read Genesis 50:15-21.

14) Joseph's brothers had sold him into slavery. For years they assumed that he was dead. But guided by the hand of God, Joseph became an important and powerful person with a prominent position in the government of Egypt. When Joseph's brothers came to him in need and in fear, what statement of faith did Joseph make in verse 20 about what God does when we endure hardship?

KEY POINT 1 - God, my heavenly Father, in his divine providence takes care of me by preserving and protecting me.

What I've learned so far:

Part Two

Read Psalm 103.

1) What things does this psalm list that your heavenly Father has done and continues to do for you?

2) What response does this psalm expect us to have toward God the Father for all that he does for us?

Read 1 Samuel 12:24.

3) As you consider all the great things God has done for you, imagine how you would feel if he stopped.

4) In response to all the great things God has done for you, what do you want to do for him?

KEY POINT 2 - God cares for us so wonderfully, not because we deserve it, but only because of his great mercy for us. We can show our appreciation for our heavenly Father's goodness toward us by thanking, praising, serving, and obeying him.

What I've learned so far:

Part Three

Study pages 137-142 in the Catechism and answer the following questions in your own words.

- 1) What does it mean when we say, "I believe in God the Father"?
- 2) Describe the Father's work of provision and preservation.
- 3) Describe the Father's work of protection.
- 4) What does the First Article tell us about the power and might of the heavenly Father?
- 5) What causes God to preserve and protect you?
- 6) What do you appreciate about God the Father, and how can you show it?



Helpful Passages

2 Corinthians 9:8—God the Father provides all we need always, including that which we need most.

Psalms 145:15-16—These words make a great meal prayer.

What does this passage teach about God the Father of the First Article?

Romans 8:28

What does this verse teach about what God does when we endure hardship?

If God does let trouble come into our lives, he either delivers us from trouble or he makes trouble work for our good.

Psalms 91:10-11

What does this passage say about the angels God uses to protect us?

Psalms 118:1, 29—God wants us to thank him.

Do the words of these verses sound familiar?

Main point — God the Father continues to preserve us by providing for us and protecting us.

Final considerations:

- 1) When we say, "I believe in God the Father," we mean that we ____ .
 - A. believe that there is a higher power who has created the world.
 - B. worship the God who has created all people.
 - C. believe and trust in God, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we are the children of this God through faith in Jesus Christ.

- 2) God's preservation refers to his activity in keeping ____ .
 - A. us alive and richly and daily providing for all that we need for our body and life.
 - B. us from doing sinful things and getting into trouble.
 - C. all bad things from happening to those who truly love him.

- 3) The idea that God uses angels to defend, guard and protect us ____ .
 - A. is a medieval superstition, which no modern person would ever believe.
 - B. has never been taught in the Lutheran Church, since we do not believe that angels exist.
 - C. is taught in the Bible and is true.

- 4) God continues to preserve and protect us ____ .
 - A. purely out of his fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, and not because we have earned it.
 - B. as a special reward for those who serve him faithfully.
 - C. even though he no longer loves people as he did at first, but because he feels that it is his duty to do so.



Agree or Disagree

- 5) ___ Since God provide for our bodily needs richly and daily, there is no real need for any Christian to work.
- 6) ___ When we say we believe in God, we mean we trust in him with all our heart, and in his Word as truth.
- 7) ___ Because the true God created us all, every person is my brother or sister—whether Mormon or Muslim, whether heathen or Christian.
- 8) ___ The first person of the Godhead is called the Father because all who believe in a god have him as their Father.

- 9) Has there been a time in your life when you were confident there was an angel protecting you?

Keep working on your personal confession of faith creed.

I BELIEVE...

What I've learned about God the Father:

Commit to Memory:

- The First Article with Luther's explanation.
- Hebrews 11:1
- Romans 8:28
- Psalm 145:15-16