



During the summer months, we will look at The Apostles' Creed. The Ten Commandments precede the Creed in the Catechism to reveal sin and give preparation for repentance. The Creed tells us what God does for us in Christ. Drawing from The Catechism, we look at the work of salvation accomplished and delivered through the work of The Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This cannot be an exhaustive work in just three newsletters. Instead, it is intended to be a review or refresher of The Creed into which we have been baptized and confess in The Divine Service. My prayer is that you will be encouraged to review The Apostles' Creed in the Catechism and learn God's desire for us in our lives as faithful believers in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. *(Please read your Catechisms for the explanations of each Article and the Scripture passages referenced)*

The First Article: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth."

God created everything that exists by His Word alone, **Genesis 1; Psalm 33:6, 9; Hebrews 11:3**. God made Himself known through the existence of the world and in human conscience; this is the natural knowledge of God. Without the Holy Scriptures, however, no one can know Christ. The Scriptures reveal Jesus and the gift of salvation in Him to us. This is called the "revealed knowledge" of God as given in **St. John 20:31; 2 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 1:1-2**. Therefore, the Scriptures reveal that God alone created the universe and all things. We are God's creatures who serve Him with the gifts given to us by His Grace.

God also created the angels to be His messengers, **St. Luke 1:13**; to protect His people, **Psalm 91:11-12**; and to worship and praise Him **St. Luke 2:13-14**. Not all angels continue to serve God but some rebelled against God and now serve the devil to destroy all good, especially faith in Christ. God's good angels are powerful, **Psalm 91:11-12** to guard us in all our ways as God protects us by His grace. One of the most common questions regarding angels is "do we become angels when we die?" No, we do not become angels when we die because our citizenship is in heaven and we will one day be raised from the dead as glorified human creatures, **Philippians 3:20-21**. Furthermore, we do not pray to angels, **Revelation 22:8-9** nor does the Bible speak specifically of a "personal guardian angel." The Bible does, however, speak of God's angels protecting His people as **Psalm 91:9-12** and **St. Matthew 18:10** attest.

God created everything that exists from nothing and made humans from the dust of the earth and set them apart as the most important of all visible creatures giving them the breath of life, **Genesis chapters 1 & 2**. All evolutionary theories are false and entirely contrary to Holy Scripture, **Hebrews 11:3**. Any embrace of these theories will eventually lead to a loss of faith in Christ as the theory of evolution is a "replacement religion" for belief in Christ and thus a false teaching,

1 Timothy 6:20-21. Adam and Eve were created in the image of God, and truly knew God as He was and were righteous and holy doing God's will, **Genesis 1:26-27**. The image of God was lost in the disobedience of Adam and Eve with the fall into sin, **1st Corinthians 2:14**. Yet, by God's grace, we still possess dignity and worth as people who were created in the image of God who also were given dominion in creation. In Christ's resurrection, the restoration of the image of God has begun and will be complete when the Lord returns on the Last Day, **2 Corinthians 3:18 & Colossians 3:10**.

God is the Creator of all and still cares and provides for His creation giving to us all things necessary for our lives, the gifts listed in Luther's explanation to the 1st Article (*refer to your Catechism*). Knowing that God provides all things necessary for us in this life the question arises, "why do suffering and death exist today?" The answer is sin which will exist until the Lord's return. Yet, God does not allow evil to have the final word but works all things for our good, **Romans 5:3-5; 8:28-29**. Christ, on the cross, took our suffering and overcomes it and our sin. Christ bestows eternal life to all who believe in Him as their Savior as **Romans 5:8; Isaiah 53:3-4; and St. John 11:25** make clear. Jesus will return in glory to bring His people out of all suffering wiping away every tear **Revelation 21:4** as the sufferings of this world will become insignificant and we receive the freedom given in the glory of God, **Romans 8:18-21**. Every blessing, both spiritual and temporal comes from God's grace alone all for which we are "to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true." *(Everything quoted and referenced is taken from the Catechism and Holy Scripture)*

In Christ, Pastor Ahrendt