



The Apostles Creed

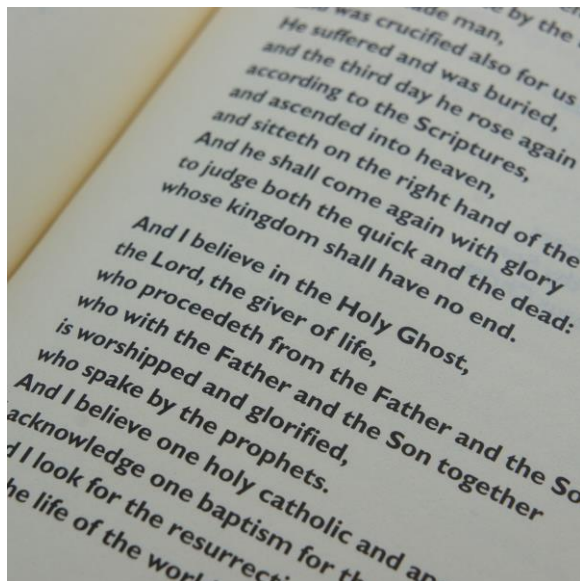
Introduction

The life of a Christian is one of confidence. Confidence that our sins have been paid for. Confidence that we have a right relationship with God. Confidence that we have a hope and future in heaven. Another word for that confidence is **faith**.

Where does that faith come from? And how do we know that we have the right faith in the right God?

The Bible tells us everything we need to know about who God is and what he has done. In the Bible, God reveals himself to be a Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He reveals that he is the Creator of the Universe, the Savior of mankind, and the one who calls people to faith in him.

Early Christians summarized these truths with a "Creed," or Statement of Faith, that helped to express what they believe about God and what he has done. The Apostles' Creed is a simple statement about the Triune God and his saving work, and over the next several lessons we will explore what it says and what it means, and why we still use it to express our faith today.



Through your learning in this module, you will:

- Discover what a Creed is and how it unites the Church.
- See God as a Father who made you and cares for you.
- Understand who Jesus is and how he won salvation for us.
- Recognize the role the Holy Spirit plays in giving and growing faith.
- Appreciate the value and purpose of the Christian Church.

Parent Instructions

Parents, as you get started with the Apostles' Creed module, here are some steps that will help you be well prepared to lead your kids through it:

1. Pray. When Jesus told his disciples he would send the Holy Spirit to them, he said the Spirit would remind them of all truth. The Spirit still does that for us. You learned these truths at some point in your life - now pray that he would remind you of them as you lead your children!

2. Read the Creed. We say it all the time in church. But do you take time to slow down and think about it? Take a few minutes to work through the following:

- a. Open your hymnal or catechism (or look it up online) to the Apostles' Creed.
- b. Make sure you have a quiet space and time to just focus on what you're reading. Take a few deep breaths to relax your mind.
- c. Read the Creed out loud to yourself. Take it slow. Pause after each line and think about what you just read.
- d. Remember that Christians nearly two thousand years ago formed this Creed to summarize the truth about who God is and what he has done. Read through it again keeping that truth in mind.
- e. Try and recite the Creed to yourself from memory. Once again, take it slow, and think about each line as you say it.
- f. Pray, asking God to help you understand the importance of the words you just said.

3. Read from Luther's Small Catechism. The first 20 pages or so of that dark blue Luther's Catechism book are the original Luther's Small Catechism. (The rest of the book is designed to take you deeper). Open to that section and find the Apostles' Creed and Luther's explanations. Read through those explanations. Anything confusing? Anything you want to understand better? Find the longer section in the book and read through the questions, Bible passages, and answers.

4. Read from Luther's Large Catechism. If you don't already have a copy, go get a copy of Luther's Large Catechism. We recommend the one you can find at ww.cph.org by searching "Luther's Large Catechism." Open it up and read the section about the Apostles' Creed. It will give you a better understanding of why Luther wrote the explanations he did.

5. Read *The Apostles' Creed: A Guide to the Ancient Catechism*. You can find this book by Ben Myers on Amazon. **Please note:** We disagree with Prof. Myers about his interpretation of the line "He descended into hell," but the rest of the book provides valuable insights into the formation and use of the Creed in the ancient church.

6. Remember what matters. Your goal here is not to make sure your child can pass a quiz or check the boxes. Your goal here is to help your child understand the nature of the Triune God and to enter into a deeper relationship with him. The Creed is a way to bring all the truths God tells us about himself and bring them into focus. Keep that in the forefront as you lead your child through this module.

What is a Creed?

I BELIEVE THE APOSTLES' CREED

The word "*Creed*" comes from the Latin word *credo*, which means: "I believe." So, a Creed is simply a statement of belief.

But a Creed is more than just, "I think this is true." For example, you wouldn't say, "I think it's going to rain today," is a Creed. It's just an opinion. Nor would you say, "I think pineapple on pizza is gross," is a Creed. That's just a preference.

A Creed is a statement about Truth (notice the capital "T") that says something is always true and always will be true, and that your life is guided by that truth. The Christian Church came up with Creeds to express the Truth about who God is and what he has done for us.

There are three Creeds that Christians have recognized as true for over 1,600 years:

- **The Apostles' Creed** - Named because it is a summary of the teachings of the Apostles, it is the simplest and probably earliest of the three Creeds. We don't know when it was first written, but there is evidence of its existence as early as 150 AD.
- **The Nicene Creed** - Named for the Church Council where it was formed, which met in the city of Nicaea in 325 AD. The purpose was to emphasize the Triune nature of God against false teachings that denied the doctrine of the Trinity.
- **The Athanasian Creed** - Named after Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, and written sometime around 380 AD. Athanasius did not write it, but it was named to honor him for defending the truth that Jesus is true God and true man in one person. The Creed emphasizes this truth about Jesus.

Why Study the Apostles' Creed?

"If I have the Bible, why do I need to study the Apostles' Creed?" Fair question. Here are three good reasons:

- It gives us a simple way of explaining who God is and what he's done.
- It provides a simple summary of the truth of Scripture
- It unites the Church around the truth

Check out this video, "What is the Apostles Creed and Why Should You Study It" on Youtube to hear more.

Family Discussion: Which of these three reasons do you find most helpful for your life right now?

Imagine you were having a conversation with your neighbor, and she said, "I don't really know what Christianity is all about. I know there's something to do with that book, and a guy named Jesus. But I don't really get it. What do Christians believe?" How would you answer? How would the Creed offer you a good starting point for explaining?



Knowledge Check #1

1. True/False? A Creed is a statement of faith that summarizes what you believe to be true.
2. Write down the three Creeds that the Christian Church has historically agreed on.
3. Which of the following is **not** a reason to study the Apostles' Creed?
 - a. It unites the Church around the truth as we agree on and express it together
 - b. It gives us a simple explanation of who God is and what he has done
 - c. The Apostles wrote it so we have to follow it
 - d. It is a simple summary of the truths of Scripture

Let's get started

So now we know what a Creed is, and why it's important to study the Apostles' Creed. So, let's dive in with first understanding God as our Father.

The First Article

Let's begin by simply reading the First Article of the Creed and Luther's explanation. Luther wrote the explanations as the easiest way to understand and teach the meaning of the Creed in the home. Read through this as a family, and then ask each other this simple question:

"Who is God and what does he do for us?"

Optional: Take a look at this video about the First Article:

<https://vimeo.com/175489133> (or hit the QR code over here →)



The First Article

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

What does this mean?

I believe that God made me and all that exists, and that he gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind and all my abilities.

And I believe that God still preserves me by richly and daily providing me clothing and shoes, food and drink, property and home, spouse and children, land, cattle, and all that I own, and all that I need to keep my body and life. God also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil.

All this God does only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it. For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him.

This is most certainly true.

Challenge for your family: Before you complete all of the lessons on the First Article, memorize and be able to recite the entire First Article and Luther's explanation.

God is Our Creator



Read Genesis chapters 1 & 2. This is the story of how God made all things, and how he made humankind, starting with two people.

- Describe how God created all things. What was different about how he made humans from how he made all other things?
- What's the difference between this story of creation and the story many science textbooks tell?
- How does your sense of identity and purpose change when you know you are created and designed by God, versus being a product of evolutionary process?

Make a picture, chart, or graph of the days of Creation. Talk about this question:

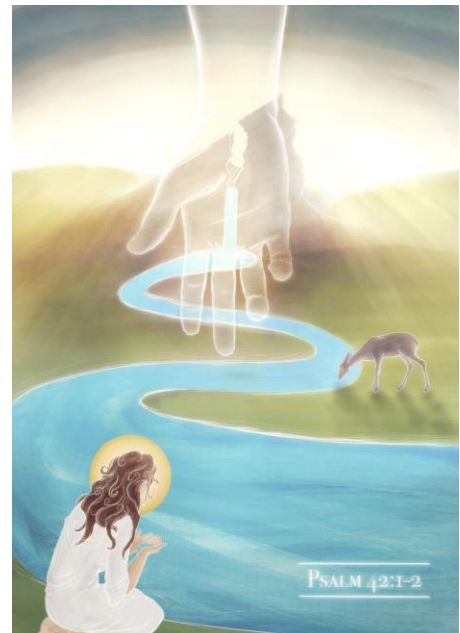
"What does God's Creation tell us about him - about who he is and what he's like?"

God is Our Preserver

Read Psalm 145. As you read, jot down on a piece of paper words and phrases that jump out to you.

- Summarize Psalm 145 in a single sentence. What is this psalm about?
- Which words and phrases does the psalmist use to reflect on God providing for his creation?
- How does God providing for his creation show his power? How does it show his love?

Make a list of the ways God provides for you each day. Say a prayer of thanks over this list, remembering that all good things come from God.



God is Our Protector



Read Psalm 91. Take note of words and phrases that talk about God protecting you.

- The Bible tells us that danger, disease, and death are all the result of sin in the world. Name some ways these effects of sin have impacted your family in the past year.
- If God promises to protect us, why do we still sometimes get sick or hurt? Why do people still die?
- God's promise of protection is still true, even when we experience physical suffering, because his main goal is to give us eternal life with him. How does God keep our souls safe and close to himself?

God is Our Father

Read Luke 15:11-32.

This should be a very familiar story, and maybe you have talked as a family about the story of the Prodigal Son before. But this time, talk about the Father in this story. What is he doing while his son is gone? What does he do when he sees his son come back? How does he show his love to his lost son? Why doesn't he blame or scold the lost son for leaving in the first place?

Read Galatians 4:4-6

- Jesus is God's Son, but he came into the world for a specific purpose. In a sentence, how would you summarize the reason Jesus came?
- This passage uses the phrase "adoption to sonship." What do you think that phrase means? (Hint: Think about the rights of a son in the culture of biblical times.)
- How does being adopted by God change our status?

God is our Father. He loves us, not because we are deserving of love, but because he chooses to love us. Through the work of Jesus, he has made us his children by adoption into his family. We have done nothing to earn his love and care, but he gives it anyway.

As a family, write a prayer addressed to God your Father. Thank him for making you, for caring for you, and for loving you. Ask him to help you live as his child.

This is Most Certainly True

Each of Luther's explanations ends with this phrase: "This is most certainly true."

At the end of Luther's explanation to the First Article, he encourages us to thank God, to pray to God, to serve God, and to obey God, and then he finishes by saying, "This is most certainly true."

Discuss as a family how you will serve and obey God this week. Talk through the week - school and work and the people you will interact with. What are some ways you can show God that you are thankful for all he has done for you?

Knowledge Check #2

Let's review what we've learned about the First Article.

1. Luther wrote the explanations to the Creed so that Christians would have...
 - a. words to say when arguing with friends about what the Bible says.
 - b. more memory work to do because kids need to memorize things.
 - c. an historical artifact to give them a Lutheran identity.
 - d. easy ways to teach and understand the Creed in the home.

2. Write down each day of Creation with what was created on that day.

3. When God made human beings, he... (select all that are true)
 - a. spoke and a human being sprang from the ground.
 - b. made humans in his own image and likeness.
 - c. was surprised to find out that humans look like him.
 - d. fashioned a human being from the dust of the ground and breathed into him the breath of life.
 - e. evolved humans from the animals over a long and slow process.

4. True/False? The fact that God fashioned humans with his hands, breathed into them the breath of life, and made them in his own likeness tells us that human beings have dignity and worth that comes from God.

5. True/False? God doesn't provide for everything he has made, just human beings.

6. True/False? While God often protects us from physical harm, he sometimes allows us to experience physical trouble for our spiritual good.

7. True/False? God provides for us and protects us not so that we can have a comfortable life here on earth, but so that we trust him and can be with him for eternity.
8. I can say with confidence that God is my Father because...
 - a. I'm a boy and all boys are sons of God.
 - b. Jesus, God's Son, redeemed me and brought me into God's family.
 - c. Pastor told me so.
9. True/False? Our family can recite the First Article and its explanation to each other.

The Second Article

It's time to look at the Second Article and Luther's explanation. While all of the Apostles' Creed is important, this one has the special significance of being the one that answers the question, "**How did God save us from our sins and give us hope for eternity?**"

Optional: Take a look at this video about the Second Article:
<https://vimeo.com/176353629> (or hit the QR code over here →)



The Second Article

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, 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.

All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.

This is most certainly true.

Challenge for your family: Before you complete all of the lessons on the Second Article, memorize and be able to recite the entire Second Article and Luther's explanation.

Jesus is true God and true Man

Read Mark 4:35-41

- Retell the story in your own words. What stands out most to you? What's the most surprising part of the story?
- Why do you think the disciples were afraid? Did they not fully understand who Jesus was, or did they just forget that he could handle it?
- How do you see the humanity of Jesus on display in this story? What is he doing that proves he is truly a human being?
- How do you see the divinity of Jesus on display in this story? What does he do that proves he is truly God?



Read Galatians 4:4-5

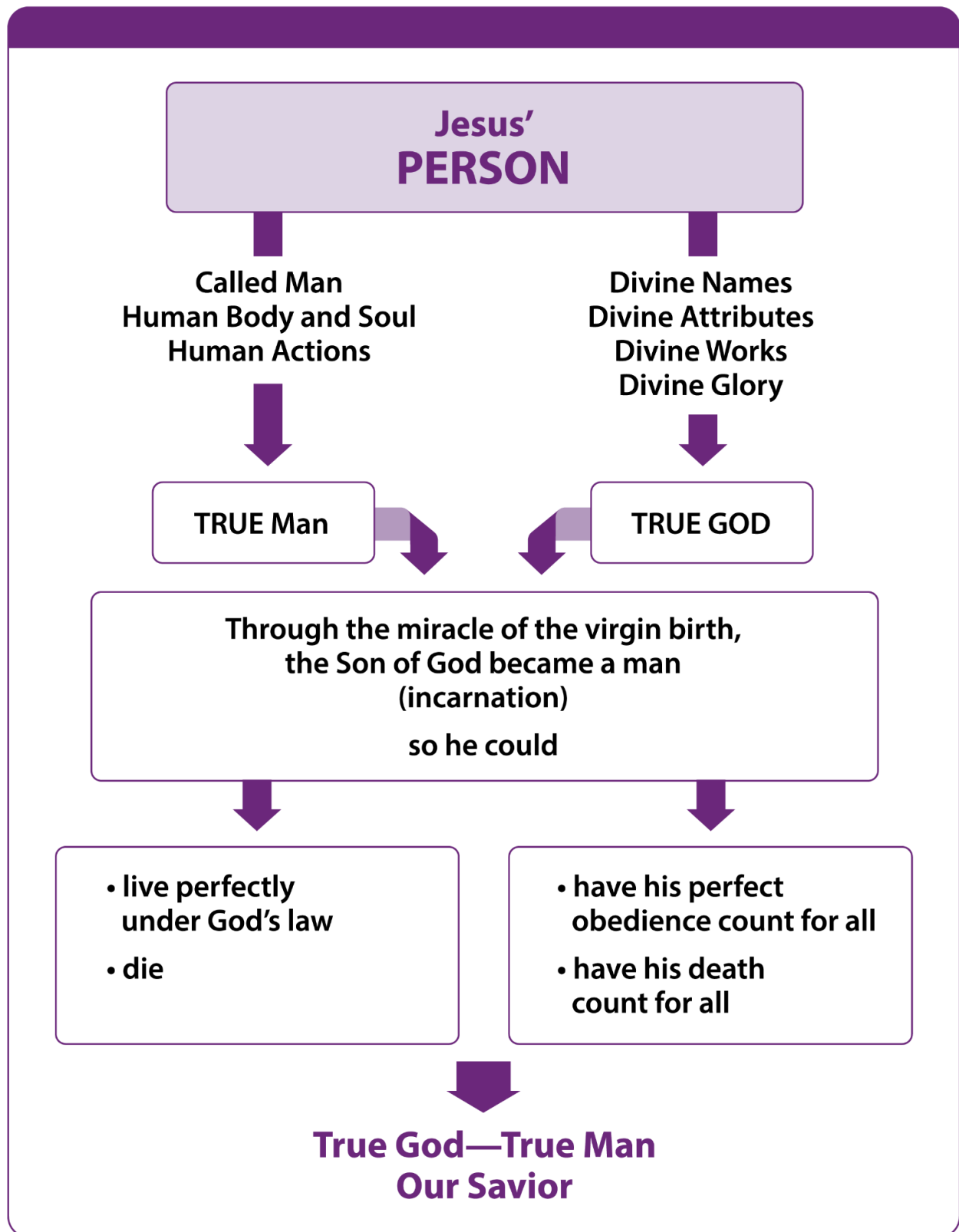
The truth that Jesus is both fully man and fully God is central to the Gospel. Think about this:

- If Jesus was not true man, he would not have been "under the Law," and then he would not have been able to live as our perfect substitute.
- If Jesus was not true man, he would not have been able to die in our place as a sacrifice for our sins.
- If Jesus was not true God, he would not have been able to live the perfect life needed to give us righteousness.
- If Jesus was not true God, his death would not have the infinite value needed to cover all humanity.

But Jesus was true man - he ate, he slept, he bled, he died. He is one of us, and so can be our substitute.

And Jesus was true God - he worked miracles, he lived perfectly, and he died and rose to save us.

Jesus is the God-man and the perfect Savior.



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Did Jesus Claim to be God?

Sometimes you'll hear people say, "Jesus never claimed to be God. That's just what his followers claimed later on." But is that true? First, take a look at this short video that gives a concise view of who Jesus was and what he claimed to be.



<https://youtu.be/p7XRPgZL6kk>

Clearly, Jesus claimed to be the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies and the one who had come to be the Savior and the King over all creation. But did he claim to be God? Take a look at this next video, and while you do, keep a piece of paper handy. Write down every passage mentioned, and then look them up in your own Bible.



<https://youtu.be/rUdcFQspHus>

Based on just the Gospel of Mark, we can see that Jesus did make claims to be God, and that he proved it by his actions. Does the rest of the Bible say that Jesus was God? Take a look at one more video:



https://youtu.be/y_5pz10_ewA

Based on what you have seen in these videos, what do you think? **Did Jesus claim to be God?**

As a family, come up with a response to each of the following statements:

"I think Jesus was a wise teacher and a good man, but I don't believe he was God."

"I don't think Jesus ever claimed to be God. He was more concerned with changing the status quo than exalting himself."

"I think Jesus was an alien from a far-off world who came to enlighten human beings, but since they killed him, that's why aliens don't make themselves known to us."

Jesus is Our Redeemer



Read John 19:16-37

- What is the last thing Jesus said in this reading before he died?
- The phrase "It is finished," translates a single Greek word: *tetelesthai*. That word could be translated, "Paid in full," or "It has been completed," or "Done!" It implies that not only has a debt been paid, but the debt can never be "unpaid." What does this say about our sin?
- This reading doesn't say, "Jesus' death paid for your sins." But the rest of the Bible explains that this is what Jesus' death did. Can you think of some Bible passages that tell you that Jesus' death pays for your sins?

In Luther's explanation to the Second Article, he writes, "He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sin, 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."

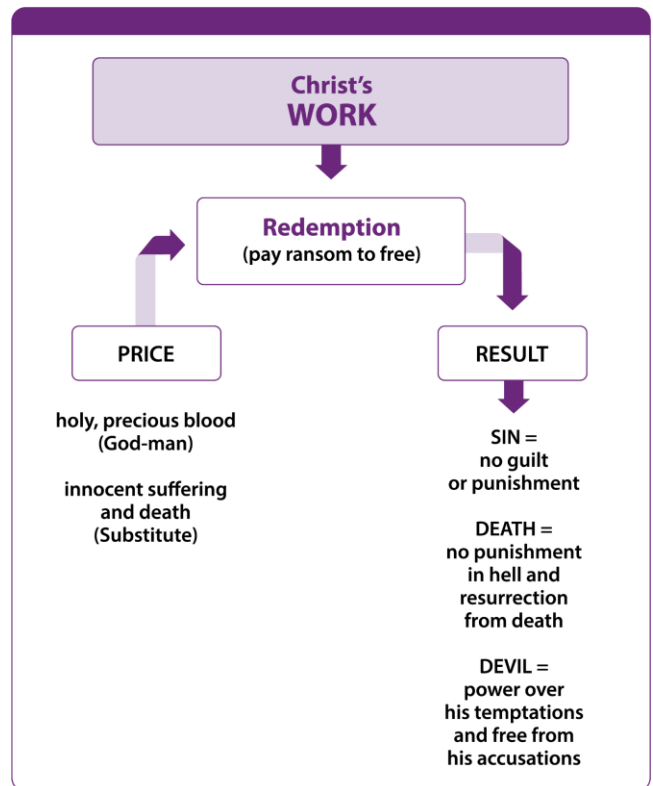
Imagine someone says to you, "I really have trouble with the idea of believing in Jesus. I mean, it seems too easy. You just believe in him, and you get to go to heaven? That doesn't make sense." How would you respond?

The Most Important Thing

While all of the Apostles' Creed is important for our understanding of who God is and what he has done, we want to remember that the simple message of Scripture is, in a nutshell, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

When you stand before God on the last day, he will not ask, "Can you explain the doctrine of the Trinity?" or "Can you define 'Sanctification?'" He is going to judge you on one simple question: Whose works are you trusting? Your own, or Christ's? If you are trusting your own, you are asking him to judge you on the basis of a flawed and sinful life. If you are trusting in Christ's, you are asking him to judge you on the basis of a perfect and sinless life. Only one is enough.

The good news is, Jesus has taken care of everything for you. There is nothing you need to do - and nothing you can do. Just trust in him.



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Parents, here is a simple set of questions to ask your child, and look for a simple answer:

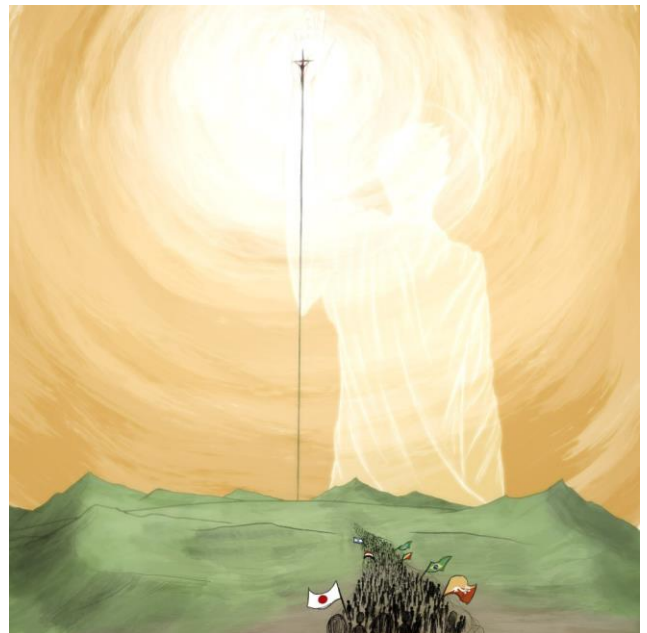
- Do you believe that you need a Savior from sin and that you cannot get to heaven on your own?
- Do you believe that Jesus was really God in the flesh, and that he died to take away your sin?
- Do you believe that Jesus gives you his righteousness as a gift through faith?
- Do you believe that Jesus will bring you to live with him eternally?
- Do you believe that following Jesus means surrendering to his will and being transformed by him to do the things he wants you to do?

Answering "yes" to these questions is the definition of what it means to be a Christian.

I Belong to Jesus

Read John 12:20-36

- Before he died, Jesus predicted both his death and his resurrection. Why do you think his followers didn't understand what he was talking about?
- Who spoke to Jesus from heaven in this section? What does it say about Jesus that this voice came from heaven in response to him?
- When does Jesus say he is going to draw all people to himself? What does he mean when he says he will be "lifted up?" (Hint: look at verse 33).
- Jesus was saying here that by his death, he would save all mankind. How can you be sure this includes you?
- Luther writes in his explanation to the Second Article: **"All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally."** What does it mean for you **today** that you are Jesus' own, that you belong to him?



After his death, Jesus rose to life again. This is the miracle that proves the truth of all of Scripture - and all Jesus said and did. Jesus said he came as the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies, prophecies that said God would deliver all people from sin and death and redeem the world. Jesus said he came to bring the Kingdom of God to earth, so that people and God would one day be reunited. Jesus said that he was the divine Son of God, who took on human flesh to restore Creation. At his resurrection, Jesus proved all this was true. Because when a man says, "I'm going to die and I'm going to rise again," and then he actually does it... you can believe what he says.

This is Most Certainly True

The end of Luther's explanation to the Second Article encourages us to consider how we may serve Jesus - not just now, but in eternity. Consider the following:

How has God uniquely equipped me to serve him?

- What gets me excited? What do I love to spend my time doing?
- When was a time I served someone else and really got joy out of it?
- What am I good at? What special talents has God put in me?
- What are my opportunities? Who do I know who needs Jesus' love in a special way?
- How can I meet the needs of people I know with my unique gifts?

Parents, spend time talking about these questions with your children. Help them discover answers that reveal God's work in their lives. Pray about those answers and ask God to open doors for opportunities to serve.

If you would like to discover more about how God has gifted you, we encourage you to consider using one of the following tools:

[Clifton StrengthsFinder Inventory](https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/home.aspx)

(<https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/home.aspx>)

[Spiritual Gifts Discovery Tool \(https://wels.net/wp-content/uploads/sgt/sgdt-1.html\)](https://wels.net/wp-content/uploads/sgt/sgdt-1.html)



Luther reminds us that our service to Christ continues into eternity. In many ways, our lives on this earth are a preparation for our eternal life with Jesus, not just through the cleansing of our sins and the promise of salvation, but also in the sanctifying work of the Spirit, who prepares us to live and serve Jesus forever. How does the Spirit do that? We'll cover that in the next lesson!

Knowledge Check #3

Let's review what we've learned about the Second Article.

1. True/False? Jesus is a real human being.
2. True/False? Jesus is really God.
3. Select all the statements that are true.
 - a. Jesus looked like a human being but was actually an alien from outer space.
 - b. Jesus was true God, and therefore his sacrifice had infinite value to cover all people.
 - c. Jesus was truly human, and therefore "under the law."
 - d. Jesus was truly human, and therefore able to die as a sacrifice for sins.
 - e. Jesus was true God, and therefore able to live a righteous life that he could give to us.
 - f. Jesus was a special human created by God to be sinless.
 - g. Jesus was a human who became enlightened as he came to the realization that all of us are one with God, and therefore showed us how to see that we're all God too.
 - h. Jesus looked like a human being but was really just God appearing to be a human and wasn't really human at all.
4. I know that Jesus is true human because... (select all that are true)
 - a. he was able to die.
 - b. he called himself the "Son of Man."
 - c. he said, "I am really a human being, believe me."
 - d. he was born of a human woman.
 - e. he got hungry, tired, he ate and slept, and he had to rest.

5. I know that Jesus is true God because... (select all that are true)
- a. he said, "I and the Father are one."
 - b. he did miracles, he knew things only God could know, and he said things only God can say.
 - c. he said, "Before Abraham was born, I AM."
 - d. he became enlightened and united himself with the divine.
 - e. he was called "the Son of God."
 - f. he accepted the worship of his disciples, when only God should be worshiped.
 - g. he said, "I am God."
6. True/False? Jesus claimed to be God.
7. By his death and resurrection, Jesus paid for...
- a. all the sins people committed before his death.
 - b. all the sins I haven't paid for by my good works.
 - c. all the sins I committed up until my baptism.
 - d. all my sins.
8. True/False? Jesus' death and resurrection paid the price of sin and won redemption for all people.
9. True/False? The idea that salvation is a free gift from God is too easy and too good to be true.
10. True/False? Being a Christian means believing that Jesus died and rose, trusting that he has saved you from all your sins, and relying on his perfect life as a substitute for your sinful life.

11. My response to the free gift of salvation will be...
- a. to keep the truth of the Gospel to myself because I don't want other people to think they're wrong.
 - b. to do whatever I feel like doing because I know any sins will be forgiven anyway.
 - c. to look for ways to love and serve Jesus out of thanks to him.
 - d. to just wait until I'm close to death to think about what God wants from me.
12. True/False? I trust in Jesus for salvation and want to follow him.
13. True/False? Our family can recite the Second Article and its explanation to each other.

Bonus - The Supremacy of Christ

Maybe you've noticed that most of the videos and artwork in these lessons look the same. That's because most of them come from our friend, Chris Powers, who makes amazing Bible-themed, Gospel-centered, Christ-focused artwork and puts it on his website, Full of Eyes. Chris has given us permission to use as much of his art as we would like, and asks only that we use it to God's glory as a free gift to God's people.

One of our favorite videos Chris has ever made is his (longer) video on the Supremacy of Christ. Take a look at his website, fullofeyes.com, to find it. It is a fitting wrap up to the Second Article. Enjoy!

The Third Article

It's time to look at the Third Article and Luther's explanation. Here we learn about the third person of the Trinity, and answer the question, "**How did God call me to faith in Jesus?**"

Optional: Take a look at this video about the Third Article:

<https://vimeo.com/177097674> (or hit the QR code over here →)



The Third Article

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the Community of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own thinking or choosing 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 fully forgives all sins to me and 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.

Challenge for your family: Before you complete all of the lessons on the Third Article, memorize and be able to recite the entire Third Article and Luther's explanation.

The Holy Spirit is God

We know the Father is God because Jesus always refers to God as the Father. We know Jesus is God because he did the things only God can do, and he claimed the authority of God himself, and then rose from the dead to prove his claims were true. But what about the Holy Spirit? How do we know that he is God, and that we have a Holy Trinity?

Read Acts 5:1-11

This story might raise a lot of questions about why the two people lied, why God struck them dead, and what we should do with this story. But for now, let's focus on just a few things Peter says.

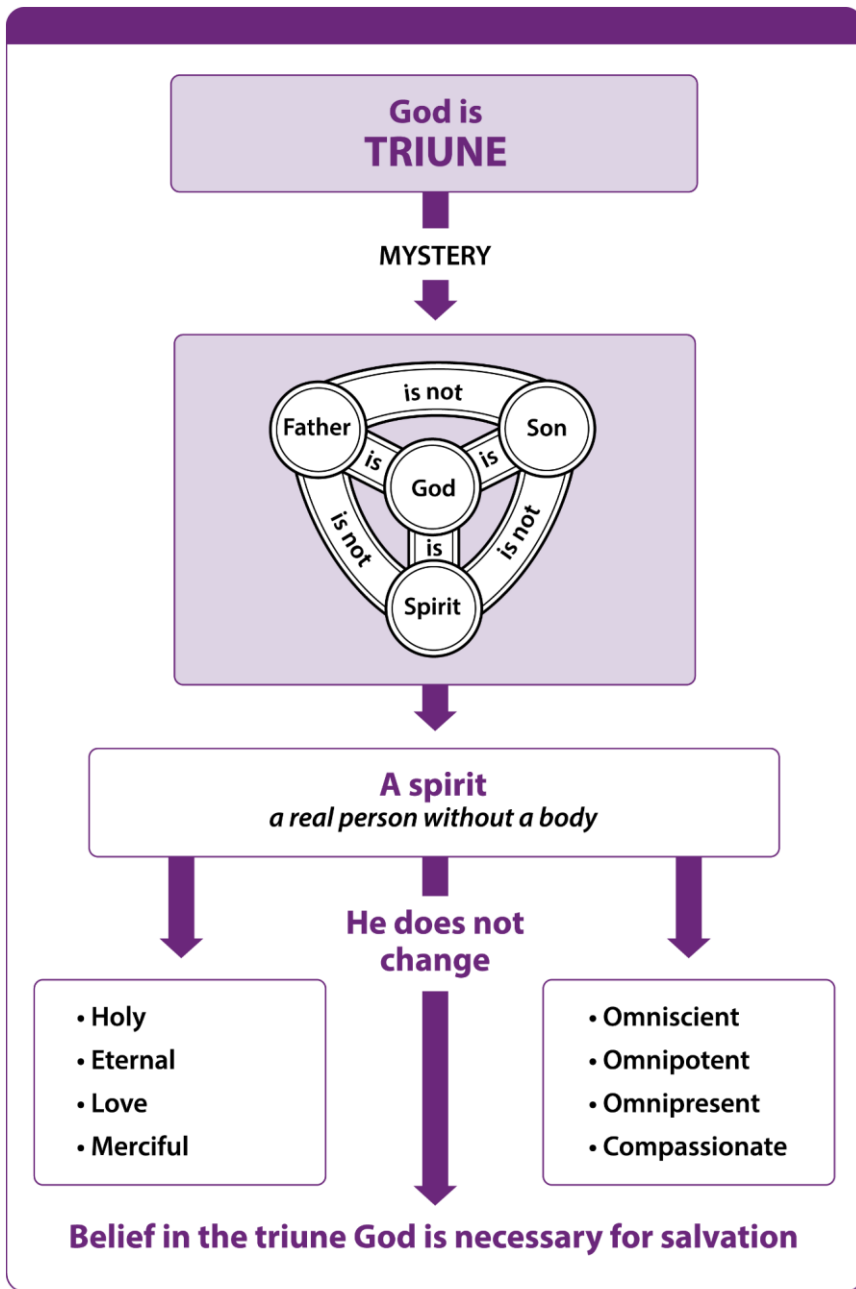
- Who does Peter say Ananias has lied to in verse 3?
- In verse 4, Peter reveals to Ananias how severe his lie is, by pointing out who he has really lied to. Who does Peter say the Holy Spirit really is?
- Later, when Ananias's wife comes, how does Peter reinforce that the Holy Spirit is God?

Read Matthew 28:19-20

Jesus says to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Do you notice that he doesn't say "names" (plural), but "name" (singular). And then later, in Acts 2, Peter urges new believers to be baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," and promises that with it comes the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus promised his disciples in John chapters 14-16 that he would send the Holy Spirit to them, and he refers to the Holy Spirit as a person. All this together helps us see that the Holy Spirit really is God, and the third person of the Holy Trinity.





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As a family, discuss the following thoughts:

- If the Holy Spirit is God, what are some things that must be true about him? (Hint: what are some things that are true about God?)
- If the Holy Spirit is God, can we pray to him?
- If the Holy Spirit is God, can we worship him?
- If the Holy Spirit is God, can we be confident that he loves us?
- If the Holy Spirit is God, can we trust him to meet our needs?
- If the Holy Spirit is God, how can we show our honor and respect to him?

The Holy Spirit Calls Me



Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-6

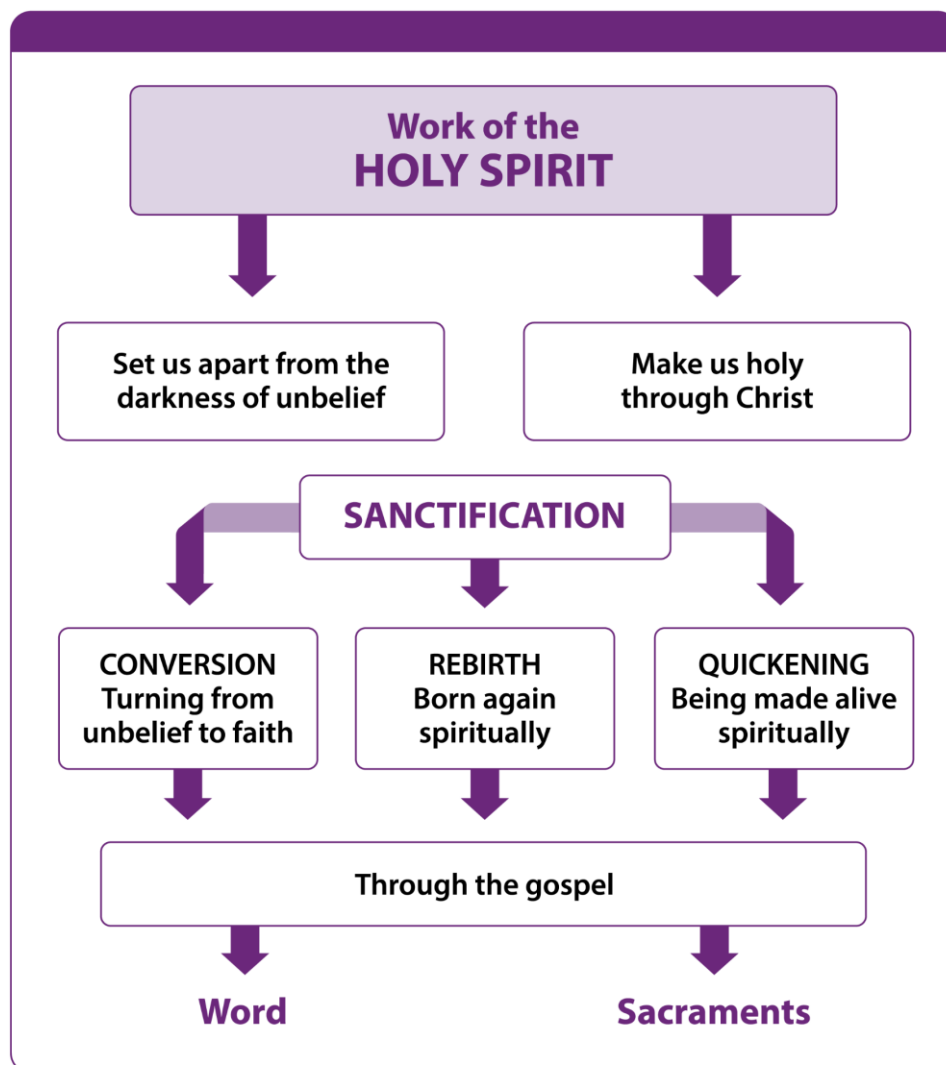
- Whose gifts will Paul be talking about in this section?
- How does Paul contrast false gods with the true God? What does he call those false gods in verse 2?
- Whose work is required for a person to have faith in Jesus and call him Lord, according to verse 3?
- According to Paul, can I decide to come to faith or make a choice for Jesus? Who brings me to faith in Jesus?
- How many gods does Paul say there are working in the life of a person? What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

Luther's explanation says, **"I cannot by my own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel."** This work of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary. It is by his calling that we become believers, and it is by his gift of faith that we receive salvation and eternal life.

Parents, reflect with your children on when you became a Christian. Were you baptized as a baby, or did you come to faith later in life? Who first taught you God's Word? What does it mean to you now to be a Christian? How has the Holy Spirit worked deeper faith in your heart over the years?

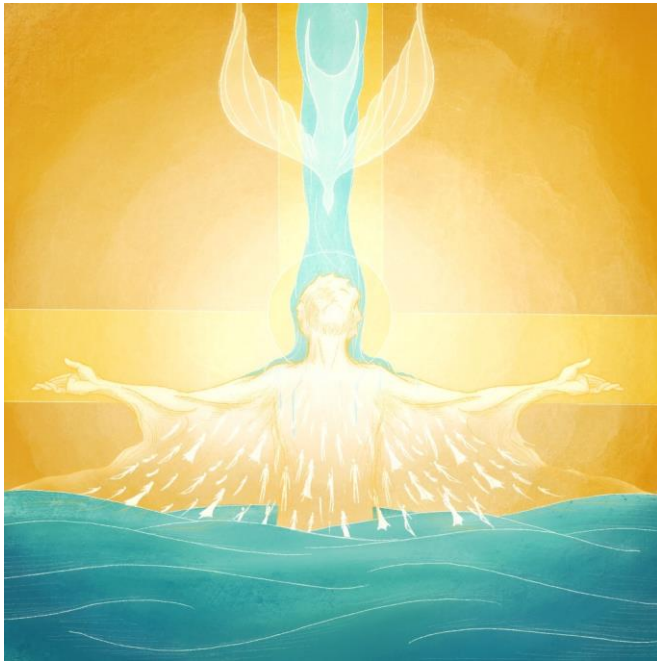
Now reflect on your child's faith. Were they baptized as a baby? Or did they learn about Jesus more recently than that? How have you seen the Holy Spirit working in their hearts as they've grown?

As a family, work together to write a "Memoir of Faith." That is, take the discussion you've just had above and put it into writing. Not only is this a way to think about and talk about it, but this could be a valuable thing to pass on to future generations, so they know the story of faith in your family.



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The Holy Spirit Works through the Church



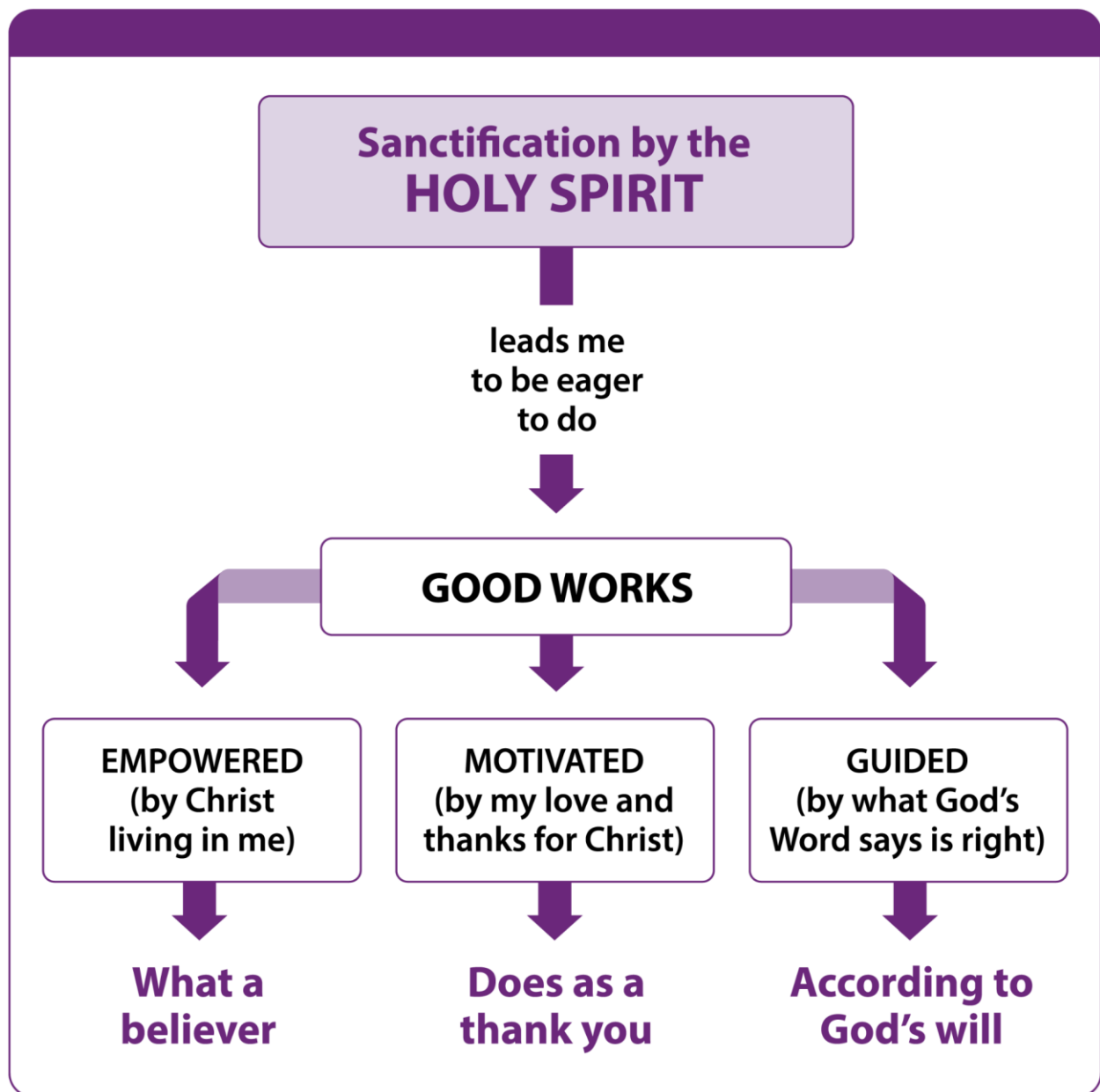
Read Acts 2:42-47 and Acts 4:32-35

- Based on these two paragraphs, how would you describe those early Christians and the way they related to one another?
- How did the love of Christ show itself in the lives of the early Christians?
- What was the basis of why these believers shared so much and showed such love to each other? What message was the foundation of their activity?
- How would you compare our current church culture to what you read here? How could our church be more like the lives of these early Christians?

The Bible gives us a word for the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives: **Sanctification**. To be "sanctified" means to be "set apart for a holy purpose." The Holy Spirit works in our lives to make us different from the world, to set us apart to achieve God's purpose in the world, to use us to build his kingdom until he comes again.

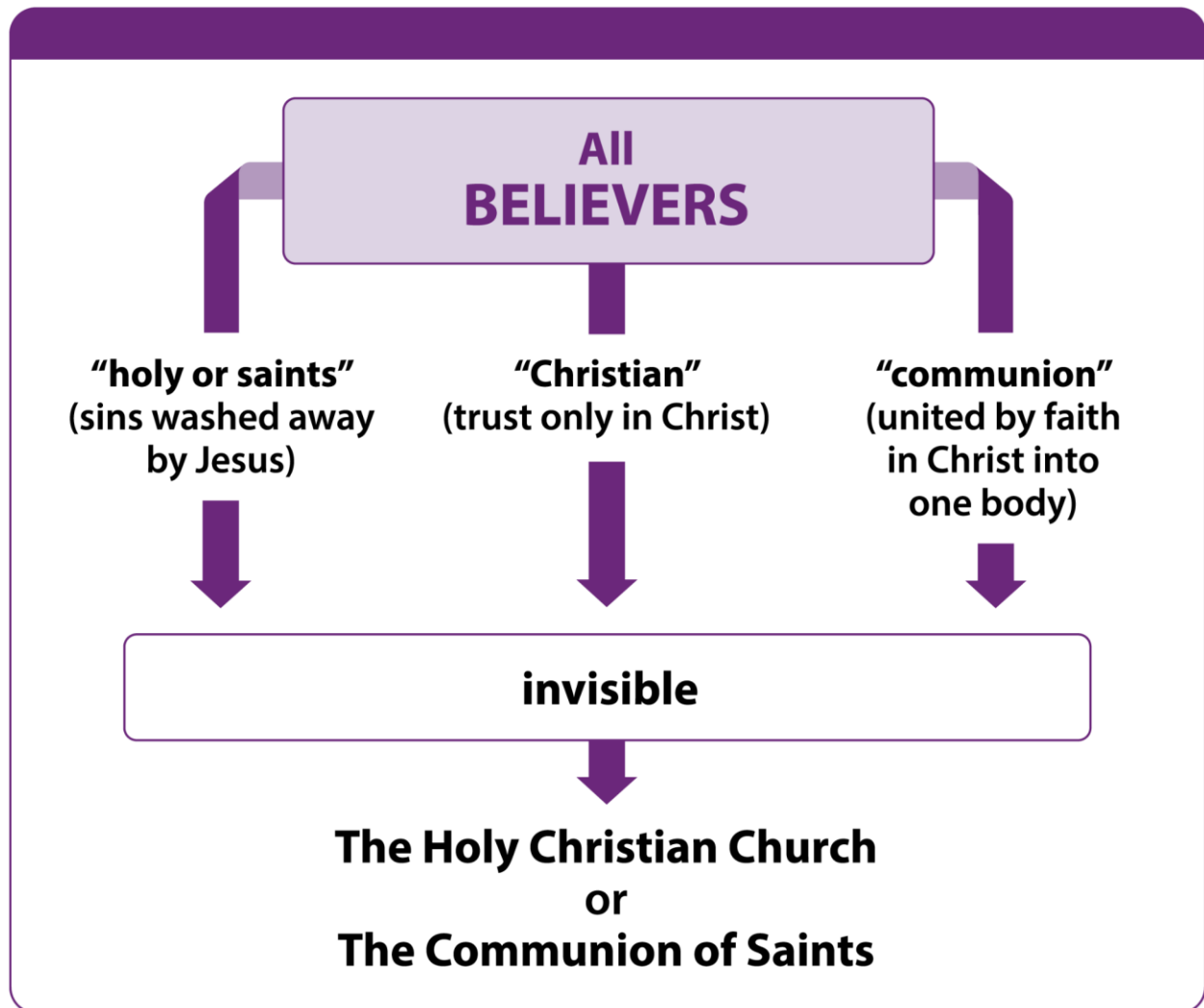
This is where **good works** factor into our faith. We don't do good works to earn salvation; we do good works as an expression of our love and thanks to God, and as part of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Read Romans 12:1-2. Notice how Paul says that part of being a Jesus-follower means being transformed - being made new to live for Jesus.



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Sanctification happens in relationships. That is, I can only serve others when I have others around me to serve. This is why the Church is so important. The Church is the gathering of all those who believe in Jesus.



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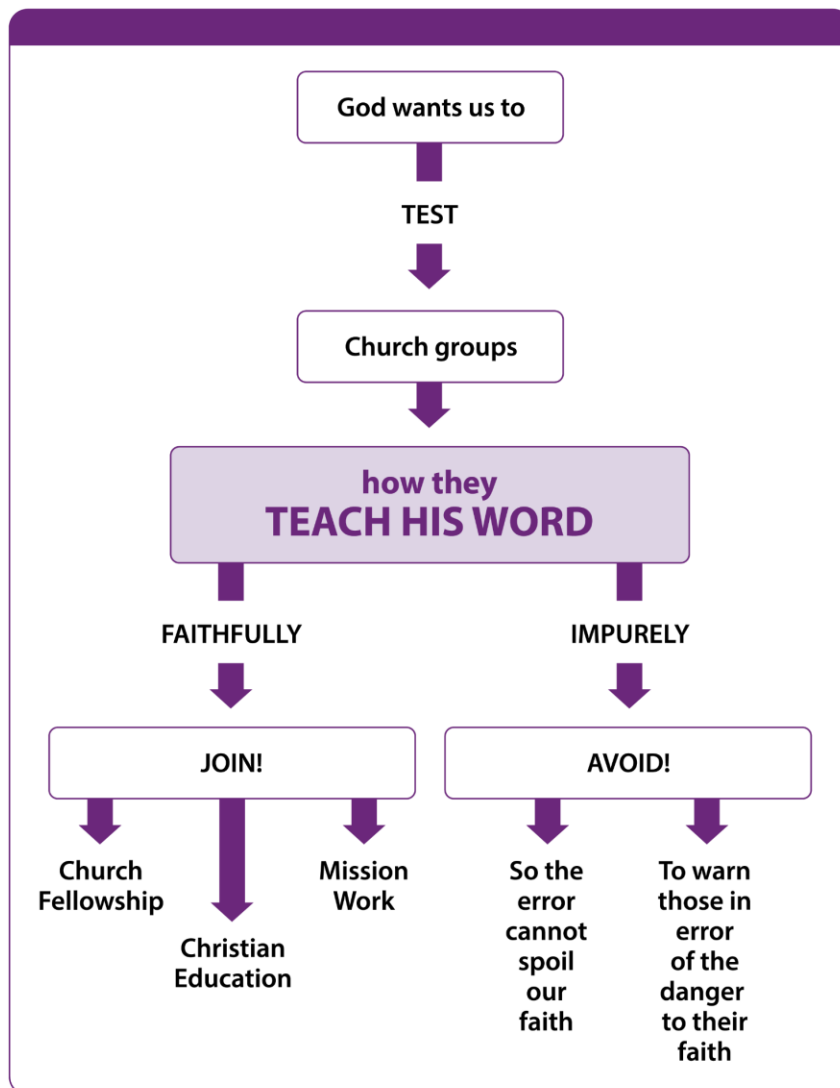
As you can see from the diagram above, all believers are part of a thing we call "the Holy Christian Church." We say that it is **invisible** because it doesn't have a physical building, and we can't see into people's hearts to know that it's there.

But God knows those who belong to him. **2 Timothy 2:19** says, "God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: 'The Lord knows those who are his.'" In other words, God can see the Holy Christian Church, and he can see that you are a part of it through faith in Jesus.

So why are there so many different kinds of churches? What does it mean to be Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Reformed, Presbyterian, etc.?

Because all people are sinful, we all have limitations to our understanding of God's Word. Sometimes people hold to false teaching out of ignorance. Sometimes they hold to false teaching out of a desire to do what they want. Either way, false teaching can harm our faith.

So, God wants us to look for a Church that teaches his Word faithfully, and to join together with our fellow believers to work for his kingdom, to encourage and build each other up, and to pass on his Word to the next generation.



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One last note: In every church where God's Word is taught - even where there is false teaching - if the Gospel is preached, there will be believers. This means that people from ***all kinds of churches*** will be in heaven. The only thing that counts is this: Do they trust in Jesus for salvation?

We may not be able to unite here on earth, because we need to give a testimony to the truth. But with all those who trust in Jesus we will spend eternity celebrating the forgiveness he won for us. This is good news!

As a family, give yourselves a grade (A - F) on how involved you have been in the work of your church. Don't be too harsh on yourselves, but ask some key questions:

- Do we attend worship faithfully?
- Are we involved in a small group or some other spiritual growth activities?
- How do we serve at church? Are we involved in some kind of regular activity or service project?
- Do we serve God outside of church, through a charity or community organization?
- Are we using our gifts and talent, our time, and resources, to build God's kingdom where we are?

After talking about this, discuss if your family would like to improve your "grade" in this area. Make a plan for how you might become more involved.

This is Most Certainly True

The Holy Spirit plays such an important role in our faith! He is the one who calls us into faith in Jesus, makes us part of the Church, and sets us apart to do God's will and build God's kingdom. We have so many reasons to thank and praise the Holy Spirit! And to thank and praise our great Triune God for all he does for us.

This is most certainly true!



Knowledge Check #4

Let's review what we've learned about the Third Article.

1. Select the most true answer about the Holy Spirit.
 - a. The Holy Spirit is God in the same way the Father is God, and the Son is God.
 - b. The Holy Spirit is God's active force or will in the world.
 - c. The Holy Spirit is God, but he's a lesser God than God the Father or God the Son.
 - d. The Holy Spirit is a special divine being created by God to carry out special tasks.
2. True/False? I should not pray to the Holy Spirit or worship him, because only Jesus deserves my prayers and worship.
3. True/False? Because the Holy Spirit is God, I can be confident of his love, his power, and his care for my life.
4. Select the most true statement.
 - a. The Holy Spirit brings me right up to the point of saving faith, and then I decide to cross the line into faith.
 - b. I choose to have faith in Jesus and then the Holy Spirit saves me.
 - c. The Holy Spirit gives me faith so that I can trust in Jesus and call him Lord.
 - d. God judges me based on my good works.
5. True/False? I need the Holy Spirit to work in my heart in order to have faith in Jesus.
6. The word "Sanctification" means
 - a. to be transformed into a holy person instantly.
 - b. to be ordained as a priest in the church.
 - c. to be set apart for a holy purpose.
7. True/False? All people who believe in Jesus are part of the Holy Christian Church.

8. Some reasons that it is good to be part of a visible church are: (select all that are true)
- a. It is a place that makes you feel important and significant.
 - b. It is a place where we can serve and be served by others.
 - c. It is a place to learn and grow in God's Word.
 - d. It is a place where they have really fun programs that you can't find anywhere else.
 - e. It is a place that serves bread and wine on a regular basis.
 - f. It is a place where you receive God's grace through Word and Sacraments.
 - g. It is a place where we get encouragement in our faith.
 - h. God tells us in 3 Maccabees 12:64 that you must be a member of a church.
 - i. You have to be on a church membership list to get into heaven.
 - j. It is a place where we can partner with other believers in Gospel ministry.
9. True/False? God is Triune - three in one, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - and I trust in him.
10. True/False? Our family can recite the Second Article and its explanation to each other.

Well done. You have worked through this module on the Apostles' Creed. Of course, there is so much more to learn and understand about it. If you want to dive deeper, take a look at the section in Luther's Catechism on the Apostles' Creed. Work through the questions and Bible passages to grow closer to Jesus as you better come to know and appreciate the Triune God.

Answer Keys:

Introduction Knowledge Check:

1. **True**/False? A Creed is a statement of faith that summarizes what you believe to be true.
2. Write down the three Creeds that the Christian Church has historically agreed on.

Apostles, Nicene, and Athanasian

3. Which of the following is **not** a reason to study the Apostles' Creed?
 - a. It unites the Church around the truth as we agree on and express it together
 - b. It gives us a simple explanation of who God is and what he has done
 - c. The Apostles wrote it so we have to follow it**
 - d. It is a simple summary of the truths of Scripture

First Article Review:

1. Luther wrote the explanations to the Creed so that Christians would have...
 - a. words to say when arguing with friends about what the Bible says.
 - b. more memory work to do because kids need to memorize things.
 - c. an historical artifact to give them a Lutheran identity.
 - d. easy ways to teach and understand the Creed in the home.**
2. Write down each day of Creation with what was created on that day.

Day 1 - Light and Dark

Day 2 - Sky

Day 3 - Dry land and vegetation

Day 4 - Sun, moon, and stars

Day 5 - Flying and swimming creatures

Day 6 - Land animals and humans

Day 7 - Nothing - God Rested

3. When God made human beings, he... (select all that are true)
 - a. spoke and a human being sprang from the ground.
 - b. made humans in his own image and likeness.**
 - c. was surprised to find out that humans look like him.
 - d. fashioned a human being from the dust of the ground and breathed into him the breath of life.**
 - e. evolved humans from the animals over a long and slow process.

4. **True**/False? The fact that God fashioned humans with his hands, breathed into them the breath of life, and made them in his own likeness tells us that human beings have dignity and worth that comes from God.
5. True/**False**? God doesn't provide for everything he has made, just human beings.
6. **True**/False? While God often protects us from physical harm, he sometimes allows us to experience physical trouble for our spiritual good.
7. **True**/False? God provides for us and protects us not so that we can have a comfortable life here on earth, but so that we trust him and can be with him for eternity.
8. I can say with confidence that God is my Father because...
 - a. I'm a boy and all boys are sons of God.
 - b. Jesus, God's Son, redeemed me and brought into God's family.**
 - c. Pastor told me so.

Second Article Review:

1. **True**/False? Jesus is a real human being.
2. **True**/False? Jesus is really God.
3. Select all the statements that are true.
 - a. Jesus looked like a human being but was actually an alien from outer space.
 - b. Jesus was true God, and therefore his sacrifice had infinite value to cover all people.**
 - c. Jesus was truly human, and therefore "under the law."**
 - d. Jesus was truly human, and therefore able to die as a sacrifice for sins.**
 - e. Jesus was true God, and therefore able to live a righteous life that he could give to us.**
 - f. Jesus was a special human created by God to be sinless.
 - g. Jesus was a human who became enlightened as he came to the realization that all of us are one with God, and therefore showed us how to see that we're all God too.
 - h. Jesus looked like a human being but was really just God appearing to be a human and wasn't really human at all.
4. I know that Jesus is true human because... (select all that are true)
 - a. he was able to die.**
 - b. he called himself the "Son of Man."**
 - c. he said, "I am really a human being, believe me."
 - d. he was born of a human woman.**
 - e. he got hungry, tired, he ate and slept, and he had to rest.**

5. I know that Jesus is true God because... (select all that are true)
- a. he said, "I and the Father are one."
 - b. he did miracles, he knew things only God could know, and he said things only God can say.
 - c. he said, "Before Abraham was born, I AM."
 - d. he became enlightened and united himself with the divine.
 - e. he was called "the Son of God."
 - f. he accepted the worship of his disciples, when only God should be worshiped.
 - g. he said, "I am God."
6. True/False? Jesus claimed to be God.
7. By his death and resurrection, Jesus paid for...
- a. all the sins people committed before his death.
 - b. all the sins I haven't paid for by my good works.
 - c. all the sins I committed up until my baptism.
 - d. all my sins.
8. True/False? Jesus' death and resurrection paid the price of sin and won redemption for all people.
9. True/False? The idea that salvation is a free gift from God is too easy and too good to be true.
10. True/False? Being a Christian means believing that Jesus died and rose, trusting that has saved you from all your sins, and relying on his perfect life as a substitute for your sinful life.
11. My response to the free gift of salvation will be...
- a. to keep the truth of the Gospel to myself because I don't want other people to think they're wrong.
 - b. to do whatever I feel like doing because I know any sins will be forgiven anyway.
 - c. to look for ways to love and serve Jesus out of thanks to him.
 - d. to just wait until I'm close to death to think about what God wants from me.

Third Article Review:

1. Select the most true answer about the Holy Spirit.
- a. The Holy Spirit is God in the same way the Father is God, and the Son is God.
 - b. The Holy Spirit is God's active force or will in the world.
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