

Catechesis Minute: I Believe

Our excerpt from the *Explanation of the Small Catechism* is quite large this week. I would recommend, if you do not have an *Explanation* at home, that you take this home and look up these verses to see for yourself, or better, get a *Small Catechism with Explanation*. Today, I want to touch on questions 9 and 10, as these are at the heart of the Christian faith. This is the reason the Trinity is covered in the first Article of the *Augsburg Confession*, the *Apology*, and the *Smalcald Articles*. Both *Apostles' Creed* and *Nicene Creed* are clearly trinitarian, while the *Athanasian Creed* was written to defend the doctrine of the Trinity and the Nature of Christ. This is why the answer to question 9, *Who is the only true God?* is *The only true God is the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three distinct persons in one divine being (the Holy Trinity)*.

Question 10, which asks how the three divine persons are distinguished from each other, is answered by the way they relate to each other. *Psalm 2:7* says, *"You are My Son; today I have begotten You."* The Son is begotten of the Father. Paul says in *Galatians 4:6*, *"And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'"* The Holy spirit is sent by the Father. Jesus says in *John 15:26*, *"But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness about Me."* The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

The Athanasian Creed sums it up this way:

The Father is not made nor created nor begotten by anyone. The Son is neither made nor created, but begotten of the Father alone. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten but proceeding.

This is at the heart of the Christian faith. This is what we believe, teach, and confess.