

The Apostles' Creed: Third Article

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.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

As we consider the work of the Holy Spirit, I want to draw your attention to the question, *Why do you say that the Holy Spirit has done this by the Gospel?* The answer is: *The Gospel is the means by which the Holy Spirit offers all the blessings of Christ and creates faith in us. Note The written and spoken Word of the Gospel and the Sacraments are the means of Grace.* That's something that was new to me when I joined the Lutheran Church. I never heard the term *means of grace* in any of the Evangelical churches I was in. There, Baptism and Communion are considered *ordinances* not *sacraments*. Baptism is a physical profession of faith, not an act of God. Christ's presence in Communion is *symbolic* not *real*. God speaks to us and works in us in many ways, without means.

But that's not a very comforting thought. How do you know when it's God who is speaking? But when we understand that the Holy Spirit works in us through physical means, i.e., Word and Sacrament, we can be certain that God is the one working in us and speaking to us. It's such a joy to have that certainty.