

The Apostolic Witness

From the Catechism

The explanation to the Third Commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy”: “*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.”

From the explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed: “. . . 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*.”

From the explanation to the First Petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Hallowed be Thy name”: “*How is God’s name kept holy?* God’s name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. . . . But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God’s Word profanes the name of God among us.”

From the explanation to the Second Petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy Kingdom come”: “*How does God’s kingdom come?* God’s kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.”

From the Liturgies

The First Main division of the Divine Service is called “The Service of the Word” and features three readings per Sunday, the first usually from the Old Testament, the second from one of the epistles, and a third from one of the four Gospels. The “Lectionary” is a schedule of appointed readings, usually thematically corresponding to the festival or season of the church calendar, and carefully selected to present “the whole counsel of God” over the course of a year. The schedule of readings repeats every three years. The only things ever read in worship like this are the writings of the prophets and apostles, that is, Holy Scripture. No other books or letters are read.

The Ecumenical Creeds: That is, the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds, both of very ancient origin and confessed in all Christian Churches. They summarize what the Scriptures teach concerning the most fundamental facts about the work of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Response to a Reading from Scripture, All Services: “This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God” or, “This is the Gospel of the Lord. Praise to You, O Christ.”

The Verse preceding the Gospel Reading, Divine Service Setting 4: “These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.”

Dismissal after Holy Communion, Divine Service, All Settings: “Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you *in the one true faith* and to life everlasting.”

Collect for the Word: “Blessed Lord, since You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.”

From the Scriptures

Matt 5:17-18; Matt 22:29; Lk 1:1-4; John 10:35; Acts 2:42; Acts 18:24-26; Rom 16:17; 1 Cor 11:18-19; Gal 1:6-9; Eph 4:20-24; 1 Tim 1:3; 1 Tim 4:6; 1 Tim 6:3-4; 1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:12-14; 2 Tim 3:14-17; 1 John 2:18-21; 2 Pet 2:1; 2 Pet 1:19-21; 2 Pet 3:15-18