HOME TALK

Making Disciples in the Middle of Everyday Life   Mt 28:20a

Explanation of
Luther's Small Catechism

Talking about the Third Article of The Apostles' Creed

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.

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith, just as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith, in which Christian church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers, and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ, This is most certainly true.

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252 Where does the church get its authority to [deal with members who will not turn away from their sin]* do this?

The church gets its authority to do this from the words of Jesus.

Matthew 18:18 "Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."   * Question 251

253 What does the Bible say about what your attitude should be toward those who are caught in acts of sin?

The Bible says, "Brothers if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:1, 2).

254 What shall the congregation do when the expelled person repents of sin?

The congregation shall forgive the person who repents and restore that person to membership in the church.

2 Corinthians 2:7b, 8 "so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him."

Scriptures are noted in the English Standard Version