



March 13, 2017
The Apostles' Creed 1.1

Read Genesis 1:26-30

“I believe that God has created me together with all that exists. God has given me and still preserves my body and soul: eyes, ears, and all limbs and senses; reason and all mental faculties.” (Luther’s meaning to the Apostles’ Creed, *Small Catechism*)

“DIY”—these are the initials of our current culture. There’s a whole television network with that name. Big box retailers make this impulse the center of their business models. We are entertained by fixer-uppers, repos and renos, confirming whether that wall we want removed is load-bearing or not, and repurposing everything from our bedroom dressers to that toilet stool turned into a planter.

DIY is a great way to save money. It’s a wonderful way to reuse and recycle rather than to dispose and discard. It’s satisfying and saves money. It increases our sense of ownership when we build something on our own. In fact, simply assembling something that we didn’t build increases our estimate of an object’s value (something behavioral psychologists call the “IKEA effect”).

So this First Article of the Creed tends to produce in us a sense of resistance. “I believe that God has created me and all that exists,” Luther witnesses in his meaning. I am not a DIY project. I am a creature, and God is the Creator.

The essence of our sin is when we get that relationship backwards. In the Ten Commandments we learned that the root of all sin is idolatry, our desire to be gods. And the essential act of faith is to treat God as God—to fear, love and trust God above all things. In the Creed we begin by confessing who God is, and who we are. That is a primary act of faith.

“If you don’t know who you are,” writes Fredric M. Roberts in *Be Not Afraid*, “you can’t know what you can become.” When we seek to displace God we commit ourselves to becoming subhuman. We have been made, as we read in Genesis 1, in the image and likeness of God. We are not created to be gods. But we are created to reflect God’s image into and onto the rest of Creation. As N. T. Wright often notes, we are to be like “angled mirrors” that allow the light of God’s love to illuminate the world.

Jesus comes to redeem us in God’s image and to open our way to true humanity. “He is the image of the invisible God,” we read in Colossians 1:15. In his death he puts to death our bondage to idolatry. And in his resurrection he raises us up to the fully human creatures God made us to be. There’s plenty of “DIY” work for us as we grow into God’s image and likeness. But we can let God be the one who builds us up.

Let’s pray. Dear God, send your Holy Spirit into my heart today to remind me that you are my Creator and the Creator of all things. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Do something: Go through your closets and storage and donate something to the Habitat for Humanity Restore.

Pastor Lowell Hennigs
Emanuel Lutheran Church
2444 N Broadway
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503-0499
www.emanuelcb.org