

Matins Sermon One

Kenneth Korby

Romans 11:33–36

Matins Sermon One: The Creed

The Text

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, from Romans, Chapter 11, for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen. And from the Small Catechism, the Apostles' Creed, the way the head of the household shall teach it in a simple manner to his household.

Baptized into the Name of the Triune God

My dearly beloved brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be baptized into the name of Jesus, to be baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be baptized into the life of the triune God.

The Passion for Making Myths

The apostolic decree of our baptism, the creed of [unclear] is perhaps the oldest and at the center of catechetical transmission, is what we consider this morning in the midst of an environment in which the passion for making myths about origin speak as perfectly as the imagination of man's heart speaks to create evil. The passion to create myth, to make the image of origin, is the passion to be a god, a passion based on a genetic style.

You can control the depth if you understand the order. And so we apply that to the universe. You'll be able to manipulate it and make the future what we want. If what we can know the secret of it or not.

In therapy this works, the whole style of therapy. Understand the root of the psychosis, and you can control the way you will manage the cure.

Now, I'm not railing against speculation this morning, against knowledge, against science.

Loving God with All Our Mind

God's command to love him is to love him also with all our mind. And that command of God is a driving energy that will not let mankind rest, but stimulate this curiosity and push it in to know.

And in the psalm, the Eucharistic Psalm 111, there is a description of the believing, worshiping congregation of the righteous gathered in the celebration, and it says there how they delight to study the works of God. And the works of God that they have pleased in are those very works. In that psalm, [unclear] not only with redemption, but also with creative words, with life and society, and with the authority and the activities that man is engaged in.

The mode of knowing those words of God is speculation, that is, you look at it, you observe, you test it, you make theories about it, you make conclusions, and then you start to process over again to revise what you know. [unclear]

And we ourselves, who are commanded by God to love God with our mind, are also to teach our children and teach each other to use that mind for God, for shame that we allow television to drug their head, and poor language, poor story, and poor tech to dull their sense.

Two Kinds of Mythmakers

Now I'm not railing against that part of knowledge, but it is the myth—making, the building of the story around the gap. That is another [unclear].

Now I call to your attention, first of all, that mythmakers hate either material things such as [unclear]. Their hostility is directed against material things. Or there are some mythmakers who hate the material things and spiritualize materiality by teaching us that somewhat obscene for God to have so much to do with things. If you want [unclear] to highlight the great spirit, then you must drop body and flesh as material.

That's one kind of mythmaker, or else there's the other kind of mythmaker. They practice their despair on us by seducing us into worshiping materiality.

The former materialists hate material because it is so hard and it breaks all the ideology. It simply will not be managed by [unclear]. The latter perverts materiality by making it into a God. [unclear], that is the God that will give you happiness.

The one materialist hates God's creation and does not hate God. The other one hates God and therefore hates God's creation.

God Makes and Uses Material Things

Now, it is my judgment that we who are evangelical Catholic Christians, we who are instructed by the catechism, have been euchred into a kind of Protestant thinking when it comes to the matter of God—making and [unclear]. God enjoys making dust. Look at all of it that he made. We have been taught that that making, or the using of it in the ways that God wanted you, maybe militates against spirituality. And it'd be slightly obscene if you deal with such concrete realities as God has made in his world.

And so the catechism is to be taught by us, to each other, and to our children, about how God himself makes and uses [unclear] body. We are not to buy that product or that anti-creative point of view about God and the spiritual life that makes us offended at the way he uses human body.

Marvelous, almost humorously in the union of love between man and woman using the very same organs that they use to eliminate waste matter, to generate new life. Only God could think of thought like that.

But even more, [unclear], is that when he wanted to come in the full majesty of his divine mercy to save us, what did he do? He huddled into the womb of a virgin, and he took a full body of God out of that [unclear] woman to give the whole world the joy of salvation, for it was in his body, the body of God, named Jesus for us, that God, on the tree, carried our sin to death. And from that dead body rose that we might live with God. And thus he made eternal joy, eternal redemption for us.

We do not therefore want to join those who find it offensive that this God would be the one who would take simple H₂O, bind his word to it, and give us the energy and life and coolness of that creating spirit for [unclear]. Nor do we find it something that we must neglect, that nurtures our dying bodies for immortality. Not, mind you, an immortality disembodied so that we are [unclear] around on an intellectual cloud. But for an immortality that is the resurrection of the body. And for that, he nourishes us with bread, his body, and with wine, his blood. And he does not niggle at giving holy absolution out of the mouth of another sinner, whose tongue and teeth will someday fall out and he too will die. And most offensive of all to some of these super—spiritualists.

Holy Works Done in the Body

The great works of holiness that God wants done in the baptized people's lives are done in our body. There you faithfully suffer without complaining, but in hope and in joy. And it is in our bodies that we join together our sweat, our work, our vocation, our sexuality, and in those places of relationship that we do the holy good work that God wants done for the neighbors.

So when we faithfully work in those bodies, those works of love are given to each other. We feed the hungry, and it doesn't matter if it's your own child, it's still a hunger to feed. You don't have to go to [unclear] to find the hungry. We give in the church. We take care of them in their things. We forgive them in their sins. We comfort them in their shame. We rebuke them in their error. And we give them courage to pray.

[unclear] We work.

The First Article Collapsed

Now I expect this time railing against what I judge to be a prevalent, a very pervasive, and a very perverse point of view in which we live. And it seems to me, both for my own instruction and [unclear]. And in the life that I have observed in the last 30 years of ministry, [unclear] collapse the first article into the second, I think we can be instructed and corrected from the catechism.

This, then, is how the head of the family in a simple way must teach his household. Day by day we are to be nursed and [unclear] in the faith into which we have been baptized, you and I, and our children.

We Are No Accident

We are no accident. We must not turn Genesis into a mystery. Once upon a time six days ago God made and then everybody agrees about our time then once upon a time. The catechism says I believe that God has made me and all creatures. We are no accident.

And then [unclear] the notion that keeps popping a pill into [unclear] mouth and says, No baby. No baby, twenty-one days out of [unclear]; no baby. And if a child comes in suddenly, it's an accident. Something went wrong.

But rather, we are not to see ourselves as [unclear], a kind of [unclear] as things move along. Each concrete person in his specific full being, in his specific concrete body is a clear manifestation before our eyes that God said one night or one day, I want you to be. He made a choice. You can see what choice he made.

And these days, and in hatred of the body, of envy, of the privileges of others, or of things that we might please ourselves with if we were not limited by our bodies, in the hostility that is growing toward children, reinforced by this endless, subliminal advertising to the body, no babies, no babies, no babies.

The Son of God Came Taking a Body

It seems to me we must, with our children and with each other, explore day by day the meaning of this first article, I believe, that God made me. And all creatures, and has given me eyes and ears, reason and senses, and it is into that created world that the son of God came, and the son of God came taking a body to suffer in our world, to be the victim with us, victim, to die on the cross, to die our death for us, that he might [unclear] in his body to be forever with God. And it is in his body he rose from the dead. He did all of it to lord it over us by that suffering, by that saving forgiveness, so that we could live under him and be dominated by that Lord and serve him forever.

Can eternity be long enough for us to teach each other to learn the meaning of this work of Christ, to catechize day in and day out with our family. To learn to live this life does not merely mean, now I can say the whole second article and explanation when my daddy asked me, what does this mean? It is not merely to repeat this or that, or to say it in other words, but the meaning of it is, the meaning of this service of Christ to us, is that we have a life that is transformed [unclear].

The meaning of the life, therefore, is not to be confused. [unclear] Its meaning is determined by our attachment to that crucified and risen Christ. What glues the life to that Christ is faith.

The Third Article: The Hallowing God

And so the third article also, in my opinion, has been collapsed into the second article; [unclear] that third article is kind of an appendix to number two. [unclear] For that third article which describes the creating God who made the world, of the saving God, who saved

the world, describes the hallowing God who sanctifies it. He is putting humanity back together in reality by reprocessing us.

We are not merely, however, recipients of his work. We are partners in it. It is by the words of the good news about Jesus' work for us, not by our imagination, not by our wisdom, not by our morality, not by our law, not by our ideology but by his gospel that God reconstitutes the new race and the name of that race is the church that's the new humanity being built.

The catechism of the material on holy church, her life by the spirit, her manifold giftedness to use the word of forgiveness can reshape some of our distortion. It is in the daily use of that word of forgiveness that Luther instructs us God daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all needs, not as some general spirit of divine truth, but as the holy creating spirit working out of the gospel spoken and heard. [unclear]

Not in the world of making, not in the world of our imagination, not in a flight to [unclear] celestial house, but in the grubby, sweaty, fighting, sinning, everyday life that we live in family, in our work, and in our society.

What Does It Mean?

There we are to catechize, teach each other the meaning of being the church. What does it mean? The catechism teaches us to ask, What does it mean? And it lays out a reliable, spirit—filled word, [unclear] roadmap for us. What does it mean? We ought to teach each other to ask. Do we ask it?

Not merely by memorizing or repeating, although it ought to be memorized and it ought to be repeated. Not merely by translating the old word into new words, although that seems to be done too. But we know its meaning by [unclear] each other in the word, given by the Spirit, and by [unclear] the faithful life of works, for where the holy people faithfully do their work, there you have the holy works. The whole kit and caboodle is designed to come into the full [unclear] when we are raised from the dead.

This is how the head of the family should teach it in a simple manner, to his household. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

SOURCE

Kenneth F. Korby · Matins sermon (date not given in the recording) · Romans 11:36, with the Small Catechism on the Apostles' Creed

Transcribed from an audio recording of a sermon by Kenneth F. Korby (CTSFW Media). [unclear] marks words that could not be made out, and a few short passages may be missing.

The recording is hard to hear in places, so this text is an approximation; check the audio before quoting.