

Some disciples of John the Baptizer were questioning him about the baptism and preaching of Jesus. Many disciples were going to Jesus instead of John the Baptizer. John answers: "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven" (John 3:27).

John says this to show that Jesus, His teaching, and His baptism are from heaven. God provides everything we have in body and soul. We are taught this in the meaning of the Apostles' Creed in the *Small Catechism*. In the First Article of the Creed, we learn that God has made us and everything in the universe.

"He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him."

# The Apostles' + Creed +

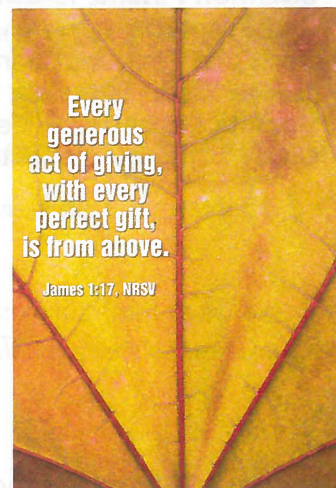
In the Second Article of the Creed, we learn that God sent His Son, Jesus, to humble Himself by taking the form of a servant.

In so doing, He "has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity."

In the Third Article of the Creed, we learn that the fruits of what Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did are given to us through the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

"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 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. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ."

Indeed, "a person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven." But how easy is this for us to forget? How easy is it for us to think that what we have in life is because we have earned it? How easy is it for us to forget that all our skills—the abilities of our hands and minds, the ethic to work diligently, and the desire to improve—is given to us from heaven? How easy is it for us to forget that it is Christ alone, and the work of the Holy Spirit, that reveals His salvation to us, delivers it to us, and that none of this is our doing?



Sure, we have responsibility for coming to church, for delving into God's Holy Word, and for praying without ceasing. But even these responsibilities are given to us from heaven. These duties are not earned; they are given in response to what He has accomplished for us. Everything we have, and everything we are—in both body and soul—are gifts from God in heaven. Let us then respond in thanksgiving and give back to Him as He asks—with a firstfruits, generous proportion offering of what He has given to us.

*Board of Stewardship*

## Financial Statement as of April 30, 2019

Income: \$ 65,750.97  
Expenses: \$ 38,262.44  
\$+ 27,488.53

## January-April 2019

109 Total Baptized Membership  
88 Total Confirmed Membership  
58 Average Sunday Worship  
21 Average Sunday School Attendance  
3 Children & Youth  
18 Adults

