

The Reformed Faith

Week 3 - Adopted by God

What We Believe

1. Read 1 Peter 2:1-12. How does Peter describe the church in verses 4-5?
☐ What is the purpose of the priesthood?
2. Peter quotes Isaiah 28:16 in verse 6 and Psalm 118:22 in verse 7.
☐ Who are these prophecies about? Explain your answer.
3. How does Peter describe the church in verses 9-10?
☐ Which of these descriptors point toward our adoption as God's children?
4. According to verses 11-12, why should Christians abstain from the passions of the flesh?

Reformed Theologians - Martin Luther

Martin Luther (1483–1546), a German monk and theologian, sparked the Protestant Reformation by nailing his 95 Theses to the Wittenberg church door in 1517, criticizing Catholic indulgences and corruption. His emphasis on salvation by faith alone (*sola fide*), Scripture's supreme authority (*sola scriptura*), and the priesthood of all believers profoundly shaped Reformed theology. Luther's writings, like *The Bondage of the Will*, influenced reformers like John Calvin, reinforcing human depravity and divine grace. His translation of the Bible into German democratized Scripture access. Though distinct from Calvinism, Luther's ideas laid foundational principles for Reformed theology's focus on grace, faith, and biblical authority.

Creeds and Confessions - The Nicene Creed

The Nicene Creed, formulated in 325 CE at the Council of Nicaea and revised in 381 CE at Constantinople, addressed Arian controversies denying Christ's divinity. It affirms the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—emphasizing Christ's full divinity and humanity, His incarnation, death, resurrection, and second coming. Rooted in Scripture, it establishes core Christian orthodoxy. The creed's concise, ecumenical text unifies churches across traditions. In the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), the Nicene Creed is a foundational ecumenical creed, used in worship and catechesis alongside the Apostles' Creed and Athanasian Creed, affirming shared Christian beliefs and guiding theological instruction.

Catechism Corner - Canons of Dort 1st Point Article 7

Before the foundation of the world, by sheer grace, according to the free good pleasure of his will, God chose in Christ to salvation a definite number of particular people out of the entire human race, which

had fallen by its own fault from its original innocence into sin and ruin. Those chosen were neither better nor more deserving than the others, but lay with them in the common misery. God did this in Christ, whom he also appointed from eternity to be the mediator, the head of all those chosen, and the foundation of their salvation.

And so God decreed to give to Christ those chosen for salvation, and to call and draw them effectively into Christ's fellowship through the Word and Spirit. In other words, God decreed to grant them true faith in Christ, to justify them, to sanctify them, and finally, after powerfully preserving them in the fellowship of the Son, to glorify them.

God did all this in order to demonstrate his mercy, to the praise of the riches of God's glorious grace.

As Scripture says, "God chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, so that we should be holy and blameless before him with love; he predestined us whom he adopted as his children through Jesus Christ, in himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, by which he freely made us pleasing to himself in his beloved" (Eph. 1:4-6). And elsewhere, "Those whom he predestined, he also called; and those whom he called, he also justified; and those whom he justified, he also glorified" (Rom. 8:30).

God Speaks to Us

1. What are the rights and responsibilities fathers have toward their children? What rights and responsibilities do children have toward their parents? What are the corresponding rights and responsibilities God has toward us as his children? What are our corresponding rights and responsibilities we have toward our Heavenly Father?
2. Read Canons of Dort 1st Point Article 7. How does God adopt us as his children?

God Speaks to Our Family

1. Peter compares the church to newborn infants who long for pure spiritual milk so that they might grow up into salvation (verse 2). What does an infant do when she's hungry? Do you feel long for pure spiritual milk like an infant longs for milk? How do you feed your hunger?
2. Christian churches and schools educate our children in our faith. Aside from these institutions, how can parents and grandparents feed the young Christians in our church who are longing for pure spiritual milk?

God Speaks in Worship

1. Verse 5 says that the church is to offer "spiritual sacrifices." What is a spiritual sacrifice?
2. When do we offer spiritual sacrifices during worship?

The Gospel Call

1. We are adopted by God and Jesus taught us to pray to God as our Father. What would you say to someone who says they can't be a Christian because we worship a male God and call him Father? Why not call God our Mother?
2. Read verse 12. What conduct have you seen by Christians among non-believers that would cause unbelievers to question their belief that Christians are evildoers? What conduct have you seen by Christians among non-believers that would affirm their belief that Christians are evildoers?

