

# First Article Gifts

What is the First Article of the Creed?

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.*

What does this mean?

*I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that 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.*

*This is most certainly true.*

## **. . . AND STILL TAKES CARE OF THEM.**

Remember when you were given your first bicycle? Or maybe it was a car or a set of tools. You were given the gift, but they also came with instructions about how to care for them. We understand that the need for maintenance doesn't negate a gift. We understand that effort is required in order to maintain function and beauty in life. Bike tires need air, tools need cleaned, cars need oil changes. Lawns need mowed, houses need repainted, With all of the work we put into life, it's easy to forget that God is still maintaining His creation. All too often, we can imagine the "first article gifts" spoken of in the Small Catechism (body, soul, eyes, ears, members, reason, senses, clothing, shoes, food, drink, house, home, wife, children, land, animals, and all that you have), as being only the first step in gift-giving. But God still takes care of them. Every pump of air into a bike tired, every spray of WD-40 onto a creaky door hinge, every blade of grass clipped by the lawn mower is a gift from God. How does this mindfulness affect the way we view the world? How do we respond with thanks and praise, service, and obedience?

## GOD HAS MADE ME

### Genesis 2:7

- Do humans have bodies?
- Is there such thing as a body-less human?
- Do humans have a soul?
- Is there such thing as a soul-less human?
- Why is death ugly?

## AND ALL THAT I HAVE

### Psalm 36:5-8 & Psalm 146:4-7

- How do humans rely on God?
- How does God preserve?

### Colossians 1:15-17

- What is the Wisdom that ties everything together?
- Who created the heavens and the earth according to Paul?

### Hebrews 1:3-8

- Who is the imprint of God's nature?  
Who are *not* the imprints of God's nature?
- By Whom does God hold up the universe?

## HE DEFENDS ME

### Deuteronomy 8:3-4

- How does God lead?
- How did God defend Israel?  
Purity

### Matthew 10:29-30

- God's preservation of the universe should encourage us
- We are God's favorite creation.

### Genesis 50:19-21

- God can even work through evil to protect His people.