



*The Small Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther*  
*The Creed, the Second Chief Part: The Gospel*  
**Explanation of the Third Article**

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; **just as 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 me and all believers all our sins; and at the last day He will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

We do not concede to the papists that they are the church, for they are not. Nor shall we pay attention to what they command or forbid in the name of the church, for, thank God, **a seven-year-old child knows what the church is, namely, holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of their Shepherd.** So children pray, "I believe in one holy Christian church." Its holiness does not consist of surplices, tonsures, albs, or other ceremonies of theirs which they have invented over and above the Holy Scriptures, but it consists of the Word of God and true faith. – **Martin Luther, The Smalcald Articles, part III, article XII, The Book of Concord, Tappert edition, p. 315.**

**FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE**

**JOHN 10:11-16, 27-30**

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and **I lay down My life for the sheep.** And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd ... **My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.** And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one."

**A VERSE TO REMEMBER**

"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" – **Ephesians 4:4-6**

**The Good Shepherd cares for His sheep**  
*James Tissot, opaque watercolor - 1894*

