

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Sunday Morning Bible Class

Formula of Concord Series

Article 12 – The Rejection of Other Errors of Those Not of Our Fellowship

Why It Matters

- 1) While the errors rejected in this article are those not held by any in the Lutheran fellowship at the time of the writing of the Formula of Concord, to remain silent on these issues is, at best, to give an uncertain witness and, at worst, to imply agreement with them.
- 2) A clear rejection of error enhances the truth.
- 3) A clear rejection of error establishes a record for this and future generations.

What the Bible Rejects Concerning Various False Teachings of the Heterodox

- 1) That Christ did not assume his true body and blood from the Virgin Mary, but brought them with him from heaven.
- 2) That Christ is not true God, but that he simply has more gifts of the Holy Spirit than any other holy person.
John 1:1,14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ¹⁴ ¶ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- 3) That our righteousness before God does not consist wholly in the unique merit of Jesus Christ, but in renewal and in our own pious behavior. For the most part this piety is built on one's own individual self-chosen spirituality, which is actually just another form of monkey.
Galatians 2:16 yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.
- 4) That in the sight of God unbaptized children are not sinners but are righteous and innocent, and that as long as they do not have the use of reason they will be saved according to their own natural innocence (a rejection of original sin).
Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- 5) That children are not to be baptized until they have achieved the use of reason and can confess their faith personally.
Acts 2:38-39 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."
- 6) That children are holy and innocent by virtue of their birth from Christian and pious parents.

Matthew 3:7-9 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.

7) That no congregation can be considered Christian if sinners are still found in it.

8) That no one should attend services in a building once used by the heterodox or by pagans.

1 Corinthians 10:25-26 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. ²⁶ For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof."

9) That government is not a God-pleasing estate in the New Testament.

Romans 13:1-2 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

10) That no Christian can hold any public office in good conscience.

11) That no Christian may use an office of the government against wicked people, and that citizens may not call upon the government to use the power that it possesses to for protection and defense, as well as to remedy injustices.

Romans 13:3-4 Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴ for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

12) That Christians may never swear an oath under any circumstances.

Matthew 26:63-64 But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

13) That Christians may not pay taxes.

Romans 13:5-7 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶ For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷ Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

14) That in the New Testament, governments cannot inflict capital punishment upon criminals.

15) That no Christian may hold or possess private property, but must feel conscience-bound to place all possessions into a common treasury.

Acts 5:3-4 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal?"

16) That difference of faith is sufficient grounds for divorce and to marry another of the same faith.

1 Corinthians 7:13-16 If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. ¹⁵ But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. ¹⁶ For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?