

Credo

Lesson 5, for Sunday October 7, 2001

The Evangelical Lutheran Confessions of Faith

(Note that not all synods accept all of the following:)

1. The Three Chief Symbols

- The Apostles' Creed
- The Nicene Creed
- The Athanasian Creed

2. The Augsburg Confession – 1530

- Author - Philip Melancthon
- Tone - mild and conciliatory
- Purpose – Reasoned defense of Lutheran faith
- The 1530 edition is the first published edition
- Melancthon continued editing it for many years
- The 1540 edition was to try to unify German Christianity
- Agreed to by John Calvin (!)
- After 1560, the 1530 version became the standard
- Many still believe the 1540 version was better
- This issue still divides the various Lutheran synods

3. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession- 1531

- Author - Philip Melancthon
- Tone – confident and scholarly
- It is seven times larger than the Confession itself
- It is the interpretation of the Confessions,
Written by the author of the Confessions

4. The Large Catechism - 1529

- Author – Martin Luther
- Developed from the Roman Catholic Catechism
- Was too long and wordy for use teaching children
- Straight text – not the question/answer format

5. The Small Catechism – 1529

- Author – Martin Luther
- Developed from the Large Catechism
- High thoughts in simple language
- Considered his most important publication

6. The Smalcald Articles - 1537

- Author – Martin Luther
- Tone – aggressive, harsh and polemical
- A virtual declaration of theological war

7. Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope – 1537

- Author - Philip Melancthon
- This was an appendix to the Smalcald Articles
- Covered a topic about which the Confession is silent
- Well reasoned scholarly attack on the Pope's claim to power

8. The Formula of Concord – 1577

- Developed after 30 years of strife among the Lutherans
- Controversy after controversy over perfect theology
- Strife the equal of that between Luther and Eck
- This is the definitive (180 pages) theological document
- Very precise, very exact, positive statement of belief