



The 39 Articles

The faith we confess



Spring 2026

Articles 12–14

The Fruit of the Vine

39 Articles of Religion

John 15:1–8

*“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. **Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.**”*

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

The Problem

3. Grafted into the Vine

Romans 8:5–6

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.”

What Kind of Fruit?

3. Grafted into the Vine

Matthew 19:17–19

“If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

The Spirit's Work

3. Grafted into the Vine

Romans 8:9–11

“You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”

Ephesians 2:10

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Article 12: Of Good Works

Albeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.

Article 13: Of Works before Justification

Works done before the grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ; neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School-authors say) deserve grace of congruity: yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.

*“You shall find many which have not the true faith, and be not of the flock of Christ, and yet, as it appears, they flourish in good works of mercy; you shall find them full of pity, compassion, and given to justice; **and yet, for all that, they have no fruit of their works, because the chief work lacks.**”*

Chrysostom, quoted in the Homily

Article 14: Of Works of Supererogation

Voluntary Works besides, over and above, God's Commandments, which they call Works of Supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety: for by them men do declare, that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake, than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly When ye have done all that are commanded to you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

Luke 17:10

“When ye have done all that are commanded to you, say, We are unprofitable servants.”

Homily “Of Good Works annexed unto faith”

“Wherefore, as you have any zeal to the right and pure honouring of God, as you have any regard to your own souls, and to the life that is to come, which is both without pain and without end, apply yourselves chiefly above all things to read and hear God’s word; mark diligently therein what His will is you shall do, and with all your endeavour apply yourselves to follow the same. First, you must have an assured faith in God, and give yourselves wholly unto Him, love Him in prosperity and adversity, and dread to offend Him evermore. Then, for His sake, love all men, friends and foes, because they be His creation and image, and redeemed by Christ, as ye are. Cast in your minds how you may do good unto all men unto your powers, and hurt no man.”

Homily “Of Good Works annexed unto faith”

“Obey all your superiors and governors; serve your masters faithfully and diligently, as well in their absence as in their presence, not for dread of punishment only, but for conscience sake, knowing that you are bound so to do by God’s commandments. Disobey not your fathers and mothers, but honour them, help them, and please them to your power. Oppress not, kill not, beat not, neither slander nor hate any man; but love all men, speak well of all men, help and succour every man as you may, yea, even your enemies that hate you, that speak evil of you, and that do hurt you.”

Homily “Of Good Works annexed unto faith”

“Take no man’s goods, nor covet your neighbour’s goods wrongfully; but content yourselves with that which ye get truly; and also bestow your own goods charitably, as need and case require. Flee all idolatry, witchcraft, and perjury; commit no manner of adultery, fornication, or other unchasteness, in will nor in deed, with any other man’s wife, widow or maid, or otherwise.

And travailing continually, during your life, thus in keeping the commandments of God, wherein standeth the pure, principal, and right honour of God, and which wrought in faith God hath ordained to be the right trade and pathway unto heaven, you shall not fail, as Christ hath promised, to come to that blessed and everlasting life, where you shall live in glory and joy with God for ever. Amen.”

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Questions

Collect for Today

Lord God, you know that we do not put our trust in anything that we do: mercifully defend us by your power against all adversity, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen