Note: In his writings, Luther would often refer to a young child as capable of understanding doctrine better than theologians. Here Luther presents a seven-year-old child as knowing very simply and clearly that the Church consists of those who hear and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd. The Church’s holiness is not found in man-made rituals and decorations, but only in the Word of God, which creates and calls forth true faith in Christ. (See AC VII/VIII; LC II, The Third Article.)

We do not agree with them that they are the Church. They are not the Church. Nor will we listen to those things that, under the name of Church, they command or forbid.

Thank God, today a seven-year-old child knows what the Church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd [John 10:11–16]. For the children pray, “I believe in one holy Christian Church.” This holiness does not come from albs, tonsures, long gowns, and other ceremonies they made up without Holy Scripture, but from God’s Word and true faith.