

# The Apostle's Creed

Sunday School  
July 30, 2023

## WEEK 1

### FIVE Questions about the Apostle's Creed

#### 1. WHAT is a creed?

- A *creed* is a summary of what Christians believe the Bible teaches.
- There are **two** types of creeds:
  - *An individual creed*. The term “creed” comes from the Latin root “credo”, meaning “belief.” It is a summary of what the individual Christian believes or is convinced of from Scripture. When asked every Sunday by the Pastor, “Christians what do you believe?” The congregation starts off by saying, “I believe...”
  - *A corporate creed*, called a “confession.” The term “confession” means “to say with” or “say together.”

#### 2. WHY have a creed?

- We need creeds because we're *forgetful* creatures! We often fail at the continued practice of ARTICULATING what we believe.
  - 1 Corinthians 14:40, Romans 10:9-10.
- Creeds help us summarize the teachings of the Bible. We use them **NOT** as a *substitute*, but a *supplement* for growing in our faith.
  - Luke 1:4
- **Martin Luther** said about the Apostle's Creed: “*Christian truth could not possibly be put into a shorter and clearer statement.*”

#### 3. WHERE did the Apostle's Creed come from?

- Rufinus in 404 AD
- 1 Timothy 3:16
- The earliest records of the Apostle's Creed are seen in 215 AD. Apostolic authorship wasn't questioned until the Council of Florence in 1438-1445.
- Is the Apostle's Creed the only Christian creed out there? There are **three** others that have been around since the 400's AD. All these creeds were written to combat against **FALSE TEACHING & HERESY**:
  - Nicene Creed, 325-381 AD
  - Chalcedonian Definition, 451 AD
  - Athanasian Creed, 500 AD

#### 4. **WHAT** does the Apostle's Creed teach us?

- It teaches us about the *work of God* and *His existence as a Trinity*. The instinct for many people today is to read the Bible as if it were "*all about me.*" However, as the creed summarizes the Bible, it's clear that Scripture is "*all about God.*"

#### 5. **WHY** should we use the Apostle's Creed?

- It is **declarative**. Every time we say it, *we declare openly and without shame, doubt, or skepticism* (at least we should) **WHAT WE BELIEVE**, strictly based on the foundation of God's Word. We need to be reminded of what we believe as often as we can, because as the Bible warns us, *false teaching is very sly*. "*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves,*" **Matthew 7:15**.
- It is **defensive**. "*In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,*" **1 Peter 3:15**.
- It is **educational**. A believer of any age can memorize this creed, learning the basics of the Christian faith. No matter how long we've been in the faith, whether it's our first day or 10 years, there is *always something we can learn about the vastness of God!* "*Can you fathom the depths of God or discover the limits of the Almighty?*" **Job 11:7**.
- It is **unitive**. When congregates confess a creed together, it shows conformity and unity. Saying it out loud isn't simply another "*part of the service*" to get through. "*But you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*" **Ephesians 2:19-21**.
- It is **doxological**. The Apostle's Creed is a *wonderful aspect of worship* and gives teachers of the Word a framework for **WHO** the focus of worship should be: *The Trinity*. By worshiping reverently and humbly, our need for personal and corporate faith grows stronger and stronger. "*He sets my feet upon a rock,*" **Psalms 40:2**.

**Scripture references for further study:** Deuteronomy 6:4-6, Job 11:7, Psalm 40:1-4, 133:1; Matthew 7:15, 10:32-33, John 6:68-69, Romans 4:25, 10:9-10, 14:9; Ephesians 2:19-21, 4:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:14, 2 Thessalonians 2:15, 1 Timothy 3:16, 6:12-13, 1 Peter 3:15.