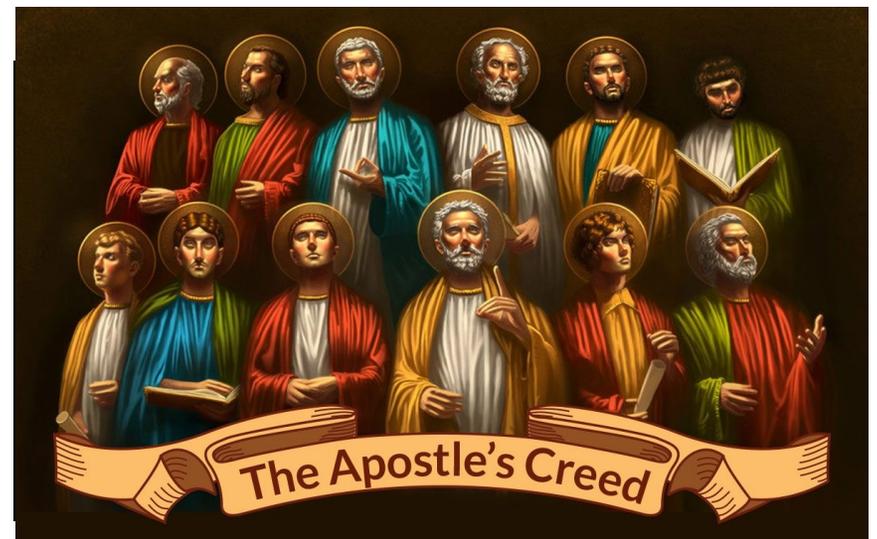


11. What questions about Christianity would you like answered?

12. Do you think the beliefs of a political candidate are important to how a Christian should vote? Explain.

13. Closing See Romans 10.9-10 How does this help us understand the purpose of creeds and confessions?



The Apostles Creed Lesson ONE

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A creed is a common or shared confession of faith. It is designed to allow the person to state what they believe clearly. It serves as a statement of basic religious beliefs. It highlights the Word of God and is not intended to replace the living word.

Peter's Confession of faith. Matthew 16.13-19

[13] Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" [14] And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." [15] He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" [16] Simon Peter answered, "**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**" [17] And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. [18] "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. [19] "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." NASB

Preparing for Prayer

Adoration

Confession

Thanks

Supplication

1. What was the first question Jesus asked?
2. How was the question answered? What was the source of their answer?
3. What was the second question Jesus asked?
4. How was the question answered? What was the source of their answer?
5. How is Peter's answer different from those around him?
6. What does Jesus promise here?
7. Is the promise based on Peter or is it based upon the truth he has spoken? Explain your answer.
8. How can Peter's answer be seen as a creed or a statement of belief?

4. Did the Holy Spirit force Philip or the Eunuch in any way? What choices did Philip have to make? What choices did the Eunuch have to make?
5. What preparations had the Holy Spirit made for this meeting?
6. What did the Eunuch want to know?
7. What was Philip able to share with him?
8. How did the Eunuch respond to the sharing of Philip?
9. What can we learn of the future of Philip. see Acts 8.40 & 21.8-9
10. Could you explain the basic Christian beliefs if asked to? What would you list as basic Christian beliefs?

³⁶As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" ³⁷Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

³⁸And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

* Verse 37 is not in the earliest Manuscripts.

Personal application

1. What was Philip's background in the Church? see Acts 6.1 -6
2. How did Philip end up on the road to Gaza talking to the Ethiopian? Can anything like this happen today? Explain. vs. 26 & 29
3. What do we know about the Ethiopian eunuch? What does this tell us about his life? vss. 27-28

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day He arose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
whence He shall come to judge the living and the
dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

*The word "catholic" refers to the universal church of the Lord Jesus Christ and does **NOT** specifically refer to the Roman Catholic Church.

The SOURCE of the Apostles Creed.

The *Symbolum Apostolorum* was developed between the second and ninth centuries. It is the most popular creed used in worship by Western Christians. Its central doctrines are those of the Trinity and God the Creator.

Legend has it that the Apostles wrote this creed on the tenth day after Christ's ascension into heaven. That is not the case, though the name stuck. However, each of the doctrines found in the creed can be traced to statements current in the apostolic period. The earliest written version of the creed is perhaps the *Interrogatory Creed of Hippolytus* (ca. A.D. 215). The current form is first found in the writings of *Caesarius of Arles* (d 542).

The STRUCTURE of the Apostles Creed.

Trinitarian structure, Father-what he does, Son-what he does, H.S.-What he does.

The USE of the Apostles Creed

The creed was apparently used as a summary of Christian doctrine for baptismal candidates in the churches of Rome. Hence it is also known as *The Roman Symbol*. As in Hippolytus' version it was given in question and answer format with the baptismal candidates answering in the affirmative that they believed each statement.

The LIMITATIONS of the Apostles Creed

TOO NARROW does not cover everything and misses key doctrines. **TOO WIDE** can be used by almost anyone and is all inclusive.

(Two sources used: <http://dowboy.wordpress.com/2011/03/24/why-creeds-a-new-study-in-the-apostles-creed/> accessed March 5, 2014 / <http://www.creeds.net/ancient/apostles.htm> accessed 12-5-2007)

You can force someone to enter a church . . . but you cannot force someone to believe. *Augustine of Hippo*

Personal application

1. Who are the only two people mentioned in the creed, other than Jesus, and why do you think they are listed?
2. What do we learn about:
 - God in the Apostles Creed?
 - Jesus in the Apostles Creed?
 - the Holy Spirit in the Apostles Creed?

3. What part of the Apostles Creed do you need more information so you can understand it? WHY?

4. How can a creed be good? How can it be bad?

FAITH NECESSARY IN THE DECLARATION OF A CREED

Acts 8.26-40 ^{NIV}

²⁶Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

³⁰Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

³¹"How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³²The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture:

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before the shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth." (Isaiah 53.7-8)

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.