

Homework for Lesson 32: From Whence We Came: The Creeds

This lesson will introduce you to the creeds of the Christian faith as directives that guide and shape the expressions of our beliefs.

The Relay of Faith

For this assignment you will need the Apostles Creed and Nicene Creed found at the end of this document.

We have a relay of faith that is passed on from person to person until all are introduced to Jesus and the Christian faith. The creeds are a way that the church can pass along its “statement of faith” from generation to generation.

Earlier we studied what we believe; what it means to be saved, how grace plays a role in our Christian development. The creeds tell us the basics of what Christians have believed throughout the centuries. Having that connection to the past helps us better understand our present and future in Christ.

We have many different creeds and each is unique. Often, creeds were written to deal with issues that were in dispute. You can sometimes tell why a creed was written by what is in it and by how much space it devotes to a particular topic.

For the United Methodist Church, we have use a variety of creeds that summarize our faith instead of just one. Let’s look at a few of them.

Read the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed and answer the questions.

APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will 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 the life everlasting.

Amen.

What is the creed trying to emphasize? Does it repeat itself on particular topics?

What about the creed you read did you find confusing or unexpected? Why?

Did the creed cause you to think about any ideas you hadn’t considered before?

What did you find most interesting about this creed? What about the creed surprised you?

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

What is the creed trying to emphasize? Does it repeat itself on particular topics?

What about the creed you read did you find confusing or unexpected? Why?

Did the creed cause you to think about any ideas you hadn't considered before?

What did you find most interesting about this creed? What about the creed surprised you?