

## Creeds and confessions

### Introduction

1. "I believe". It shows thoughts of agreement and \_\_\_\_\_ of the heart.
2. Believing does not really do anything for us or prove anything profound.
3. In order to have heart and life changing significance, we must have the triune God of scripture as the \_\_\_\_\_ and object of our belief.
4. What we believe about God ends up being our \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is from the Latin credo – meaning "I believe". Romans 10:9
6. Solo Scriptura advocates a radical individualism and leads to embracing private \_\_\_\_\_ above all else.
7. Creeds give us a grounding and guarding that is very helpful for \_\_\_\_\_ in the life of any Christian.

### What are creeds and confessions?

1. These both serve to remind us \_\_\_\_\_ what the church believes about what the Bible teaches. They could deal with the \_\_\_\_\_ or they could deal with some aspect of a church's belief in scripture.
2. In the article "Creeds and Confessions: What's the difference?" Donald Fairbairn says "confessions are \_\_\_\_\_ we believe, while creeds are *in* \_\_\_\_\_ we believe."
3. Creeds are \_\_\_\_\_ in their acceptance, while \_\_\_\_\_ are narrower in the spectrum of who accepts them.
4. It only makes sense that creeds came first and then confessions followed.
5. This should remind us that as we believe the trinity ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), so goes our confession of accepted doctrine ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

### Why do we need creeds and confessions?

1. They help keep us grounded and a \_\_\_\_\_ to know where it is safe to go with regard to our doctrine.
2. Ligon Duncan continued "We could go through every confession in church history and show that contemporary \_\_\_\_\_, along with cultural and theological context, contributed to the content, shape, and topical coverage of the confession."
3. Regarding authority of scripture, Sinclair Ferguson said, "It makes all the difference in the world whether we believe something because we read it in Berkhof and whether we believe something because we read it in Romans."
4. We need to look back to bring \_\_\_\_\_. Ligon commented in the Creed article, "Regardless of our denomination, none of us (pastors) should go into a congregation assuming our people know their confessions of faith. We do not live in a theological age. Rather, we live in an age focused on feeling and deeds rather than creeds—as the saying goes, " \_\_\_\_\_, not creeds." Therefore, we should not assume our people know these documents, adhere to them, or even like them."
5. **What if a denomination rejects creeds and confessions?** Ligon commented "As groups rejected the more robust confessionalism of the period and opted for more minimalistic statements of faith, unbelief or \_\_\_\_\_ always followed. The result was either a rationalistic downgrade like Unitarianism (everything is accepted, all are right), which stemmed from New England congregationalism but rejected the confessionalism of earlier generations, or a heterodox downgrade that became a \_\_\_\_\_ theology (this leader is only right)."

6. Without something to confess, our \_\_\_\_\_ is empty and meaningless to a world in need of Christ and the hope and answers He gives to our lives.

### How are creeds and confessions used?

1. Defined and defended \_\_\_\_\_ and keep from straying into false teaching.
2. Training and equipping believers through \_\_\_\_\_
3. For use in public \_\_\_\_\_

We misuse the confession of faith if we use it as our final \_\_\_\_\_ instead of the scriptures.

### We use them properly when we use them for these reasons:

(from Creeds and Confessions article by Burk Parsons)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ **God**- according to His truth and to enjoy him forever by believing, confessing and proclaiming our doctrine with that he has revealed and not according to men, or the schemes of Satan or the arrogant notions of our own heart.
2. **Affirm the one True God Almighty**- who has graciously revealed Himself to us and whose glorious attributes, gracious laws and grand story of \_\_\_\_\_ point us to himself as our only hope and Lord to love as fully as possible with soul, mind and strength.
3. To **guard the Holy Scriptures**- against false teachers and heretics outside the church and also vain and \_\_\_\_\_ ideas from inside the church as a shining testimony to God's truth to a watching world. This world in which the elect are called out of through the preaching of the gospel and the inward call of the Holy Spirit.
4. **Discern truth** from error or half-truth- we contend for the faith delivered to the saints that we might grow up into Christ, the living \_\_\_\_\_ of the church, who is the way, the truth and the life.
5. **Remain steadfast**-as one, holy, catholic and apostolic church who believe, confess and proclaim God's word and rightly administer the sacraments of communion and baptism, including \_\_\_\_\_, correction and discipline of the church.
6. **Uphold sound doctrine**- God's inerrant and inspired word must be our sole and infallible \_\_\_\_\_ which has profit for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness that we equipped for every good work.
7. **Maintain freedom**- for Christians and the church from extra-biblical laws, traditions and superstitions that bind men's consciences, perplex their souls, lead our children astray according to their sin and bring about man-exalting \_\_\_\_\_ instead of God-exalting \_\_\_\_\_.
8. **Confirm God's leaders for the church**- they hold men to this high standard as well as to equip, \_\_\_\_\_ and approve as elders over the flock and ensure their fitness to feed, care for and pray with and for Christ's sheep.
9. **Preserve** \_\_\_\_\_ - The witness of the church of peace and unity flows from this. That we might stand together as family with one father, Lord, faith, and baptism being unwavering because of God's truth, never in spite of, disregard for or ignorant of it.
10. To **fulfill the Great Commission**- with a united affirmation of the one true gospel which is the only \_\_\_\_\_ of God unto salvation to all who believe by making disciples in our culture, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all that the Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us.

We confess, believe and follow historic and orthodox creeds and confessions out of a love and \_\_\_\_\_ for God, striving to love one another in his one, holy, \_\_\_\_\_ and apostolic church, as we uphold Christ and the unchanging doctrine of His word.