

BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000

Introduction

1) What is a Creed, Confession, or Statement of Faith?

a. **Summary of Christian Doctrine**

A Christian creed is restating in brief, simplified form what you believe to be true based on what the Bible says.

b. **Clarifying Document on Specific Issues**

Often creeds and confessions have been used to respond to particular heresies attacking the church.

c. **Unifying Document around Essential Beliefs**

A creed or a confession helps to clarify what the church believes about the Bible, and in that way it should serve to help unite us together around Christ.

2) Does this contradict our commitment to Sola Scriptura?

a. **Sola Scriptura Definition**

We believe that the Scripture is necessary and sufficient, and that it alone is the standard by which all things are judged as true and right.

b. **Submission to the Scripture**

A creed or confession is a dependent document, not a sufficient and isolated document. It stands underneath Scripture. The degree that it is useful and right is limited by the degree in which it is faithful to the Bible.

c. **Summary of Scripture**

Creeds and confessions are very helpful because they are a summary of Scripture. The Bible is a big book, and it teaches a lot of various things to us about God. Everyone Christian can, and should, summarize the things he or she learns from the Bible in an articulate and concise way.

3) Why use a Creed, Confession, or Statement of Faith?

a. **Clearly Define our Interpretation of Scripture**

b. **Guard Against Heresy**

c. **Unify God's People**

d. **Enable Cooperation**

4) Biblical Principle for Creeds, Confessions, Statements of Faith

- a. 1 Tim 1:3-14 – Christian Instruction
- b. Jude 1-25 – Rebuke Heresy
- c. 2 John – Promote Unity

5) Samples of Historic Creeds, Confessions, and Statements of Faith

- a. Apostles Creed (~180 AD)
- b. Nicene Creed (381)
- c. Chalcedonian Creed (451)
- d. Athanasian Creed (500)
- e. Belgic Confession of Faith (1561)
- f. Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)
- g. 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith (1689)
- h. New Hampshire Confession of Faith (1833)
- i. Abstract of Principles (1859)
- j. Baptist Faith and Message (1925)
- k. Baptist Faith and Message (1963)
- l. Baptist Faith and Message (2000)

6) Assignment for Next Week

Read the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. It is short, and it won't take long. We will be studying Article I – The Scriptures. Look up the verse references noted in Article I and think through how those verses relate to the article.