

February 7, 2024

What We Believe: Confessions & Catechisms

Goal for This Week:

To examine historical creeds/confessions and a catechism to find out what the church has believed about God throughout the centuries.

Review of Past Weeks:

Theological Reflection – _____

Because theological reflection should always begin, remain, and end with God, and because God has revealed Himself to us through His Word to transform us to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom 8:28), theology should not only be intellectual but also *transformational*, which includes our _____ and _____.

Our Ecclesiology and Missiology flow out of our doctrine of God and leads to doxology.

Expositional preaching is to preach gospel doctrine from the text of Scripture, where the main point of the passage is the main point of the sermon.

Are Baptists a creedal people?

Do you agree or disagree with his sentiment?

“Baptists are not essentially a doctrinal people. We have no creed but the Bible, which everyone should be left to interpret according to his or her personal predilection. The basic criterion of theology is individual experience. The right of private judgement in matters religious supremely overrules specific norms of belief. Baptist means freedom, freedom to think, believe, and teach without constraints” (George, *Baptist Confessions*, 2).

Biblical Considerations:

Ephesians 4:1-6, 11-14 – “I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call – one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”

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What is supposed to unite the church under the Lordship of Christ?

What does gospel doctrine confess?

Matthew 16:16 – “Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”

Romans 10:9-10 – “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

What does it mean that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God and that Jesus is Lord?

Christian Confessions Throughout History

Apostles Creed (120-250)

Observations:

Nicene-Constantinople Creed (325 & 381)

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London Baptist Confession (1689) – Chapter Two (Of God and the Holy Trinity)

Observations:

The Baptist Faith and Message (1963)

Observations:

The Baptist Faith and Message (2000)

Observations:

How are these creeds/confessions similar and how are they different?

Are confessions of faith valuable or do they only cause division within the church instead do unity?

How does looking back at historical creeds and confessions help the church stay unified today?

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Preparation for Next Week:

Read – <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/6-reasons-why-membership-matters/> (Also attached to this document).

Resources That Will Be Used This Semester:

Akin, Daniel L. *10 Who Changed the World*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2012.

Clark, Elliot. *Mission Affirmed: Recovering The Missionary Motivation of Paul*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022.

Dever, Mark. *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021.

DeYoung, Kevin and Greg Gilbert. *What Is the Mission of the Church?: Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011.

George, Timothy and Denise George. *Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 1996.

Hammett, John S. *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2005.

Leeman, Jonathan. *One Assembly: Rethinking the Multisite & Multiservice Church Models*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020.

Leeman, Jonathan and Gregory A. Wills. *The Rule of Love: How the Local Church Should Reflect God's Love and Authority*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018.

Ott, Craig. *The Church on Mission: A Biblical Vision for Transformation among All People*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019.

Piper, John. *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.