

# Small Group Discussion



## **Simple Christianity: Living In A Velcro World**

While our world is rapidly advancing and changing with new information and technology becoming available daily, there are some things that must remain internally to give us stability in changing times.

### **DISCUSSION STARTER:**

*I know the one in whom I trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until the day of his return. **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:12***

*I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God, who called you to himself through the loving mercy of Christ. You are following a different way that pretends to be the Good News but is not the Good News at all. You are being fooled by those who deliberately twist the truth concerning Christ. **Galatians 1:6***

Could you summarize your basic beliefs that you will live for?

What are the core elements of a biblical faith?

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_____	_____
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If possible, print a copy of the Apostles' Creed for each person in your Small Group to have during the discussion.

### **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

**History of the Creed** - The Apostles' Creed is a summary of the core beliefs of the Christian Church. It was completed in its basic form in A.D. 140.

The creed's formation has now been traced with great exactness. The original germ of it is to be sought for in the baptismal confession made by converts as they were baptized. The primitive confession may have contained no more than "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God," but we have evidence within the New Testament itself that it soon became enlarged. Paul speaks of the "form of teaching" delivered to converts (Romans 6:17), and reminds Timothy of "the good (beautiful) confession" he had made in sight of many witnesses (1 Timothy 6:12). Similar language is used of Christ's confession before Pilate (1 Timothy 6:13). We may perhaps conjecture from the epistles that Timothy's confession contained



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references to God as the author of life, to Jesus Christ and His descent from David, to His witness before Pontius Pilate, to His being raised from the dead, to His coming again to judge the quick and the dead (1 Timothy 6:13; 2 Timothy 2:8; 4:1). (International Bible Encyclopedia)

## **The Purpose of a Creed**

A Creed summarizes what we believe in an easy-to-remember form that often becomes a hymn or takes many forms that help Christians learn the issues that define us. Often Churches will recite these creeds weekly or teach them in new believer classes or catechism classes.

There are passages in the New Testament that appear to be early creeds in Scripture in Philippians 2:5-11 and in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:16.

## **The Creed**

“I believe in God the Father Almighty; Maker of Heaven and Earth; and in Jesus Christ His only (begotten) Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven; and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He will come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.”

## **What We Learn from the Creed**

I believe in God the Father Almighty...and in Jesus Christ...in the Holy Ghost. The existence of God in three persons is called *the Trinity*, it is the issue that distinguishes Christianity from any other faith. While there is only 1 God He exists in three expressions.

## **TRINITY – The Unity and distinct roles of the expressions of God.**

### **READ 2 Cor. 13:14 and Ephesians 4:4–6**

#### **What does each person of the Trinity do?**

**READ: Matthew 3:16–17** “After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.”” (NLT)

#### **What was the role of each person of the Trinity in this passage?**

#### **What does the Apostles’ Creed say is the role of each person of the Trinity?**

## **PERSON OF CHRIST**

### **READ: John 1:1-5, 10-13**



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**What is the role of Christ in these verses?**

**What roles of Christ make Him divine?** *Creator, provider of eternal life....*

This issue is what makes other religions disagree with Christianity – that Christ is divine.

**READ: John 16:13-15** *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not be presenting his own ideas; he will be telling you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by revealing to you whatever he receives from me. All that the Father has is mine; this is what I mean when I say that the Spirit will reveal to you whatever he receives from me.*

**What do we learn about the Spirit's work in us from John 16? What is the primary work of the Spirit?**

## **APPLICATION OF TRINITY – Unity and Diversity**

**READ: Genesis 1:26–27** *“Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.” So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” (NLT)*

Genesis 1 gives the first indication of a triune God. Notice how God made us in His image by creating us male and female. There cannot be one expression of God (male or female) but it must be diverse and unique, while still working together. When God brought the woman to the man the likeness of God is fulfilled in marriage with the man, the woman and God within marriage.

**How should marriage reflect diversity and unity?**

**How do some try to destroy diversity in marriage under then name of authority or submission?**

**If each person of the Trinity has unique functions and yet are equal and one, how should that be reflected in marriages, friendships, the Church, racial diversity?**

Perhaps one way to process the Apostles Creed is to attempt to memorize it this week. Write it down on a 3x5 card and put it in your car, on the bathroom mirror or at work and commit it to memory. Next week, if you can say it from memory your Small Group leader will give you \$50 each or stock options in Exxon Oil Co!!!