

BUILDING STRONG SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Dear Families,

Whether you are a new Christian, or you've followed Christ for decades, whether you're a child or a senior adult, there are some basics of the Christian faith that everyone should learn.

Often in services at RPC we'll recite together the words of the Apostles' Creed. Sometimes called the Roman Creed, we use the oldest known version. Other churches utilize similar verbiage, so it may be familiar, or you may notice a different word or phrase. The heart of it is the same – **it's a statement of what we believe to be true about God.**

Pastor Ron teaches this in his sermon, "[Things Every Christian Should Know](#)."

The mission of RPC Kids is to partner with families to build strong spiritual foundations, while encouraging children to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. To that end, we offer our 5th graders the opportunity to memorize the Apostles' Creed with their family. Additionally, and since the Creed is meant to be recited, we provide the opportunity for our 5th graders to recite the Creed as a group at our annual 5th Grade Blessing occurring on May 6th. To register you and your 5th grader to attend, visit [5TH GRADE BLESSING](#). NOTE: Your child is not required to memorize or recite the Apostles' Creed to attend this milestone event.

As Christians, it is a joy to celebrate in the living faith of those who came before us, those whose lives were radically changed by the gospel, and who fought to pass the gospel on to the next generation. As you teach your child the Apostles' Creed, help them appreciate that they are reciting a confession of faith that has been uttered by countless millions of Christians throughout the ages.

Enjoy the time as a family and know that we are praying for you as you lay this important spiritual foundation in your child's life! Please don't hesitate to reach out if we can help you in any way.

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MEMORIZING THE APOSTLES' CREED

You may be wondering what value does the Apostles' Creed have for Christian families today? We believe there are 3 worthy reasons:

1. The Creed gives our children essentials of the faith.

The Apostles' Creed states in simple, Scriptural language the essential facts of our faith as God has revealed them, from the creation of the world to Christ's redeeming work to eternal life in the world to come.

2. The Creed teaches our kids that Christianity is "confessional."

The apostles did not only write sacred Scripture through the Holy Spirit; they also summarized essentials of the gospel in creedal statements. For example, the first creed of the New Testament is "Jesus is Lord" (Romans 10:9; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). The Christian was one who "received Christ Jesus as Lord" (Colossians 2:6), confessing that Jesus is God's Son, come in the flesh (1 John 2:23; 4:2-3; 4:15; 2 John 7). These short statements summarize the believer's loyalty and commitment to Jesus Christ, and they state truths about Jesus in His relation to God.

3. The Creed teaches our children that Christianity is personal but not private.

When families and churches recite the Apostles' Creed, they are reciting something deeply personal, starting with the phrase "I believe." The Creed was written as a personal statement of faith, and this is something all parents should stress to their kids. Merely reciting the words isn't nearly as important as really believing them. Creeds are written not merely as personal statements, but as public declarations said by whole communities. The very reason why creeds are formulated is to pass the essentials of the faith on to future generations.

MEMORIZATION TIPS

- **Index Cards:** Have your child write portions of the Apostles' Creed on index cards. The index cards can be hole-punched and placed on a ring. Read | Review | Recite – daily.
- **Sticky Notes:** Place sticky notes with the Creed on it on the mirror, door, etc...
- **Motions:** Create motions to go with sections of the Creed.
- **Pictures:** Draw or cut out pictures that help you remember portions of the Creed.
- **Scramble:** Write portions of the Creed on separate pieces of paper then spread them out for your family to place in the correct order.
- **Ball Toss:** Take turns tossing a ball as you recite the Creed in sections.
- **Snap It/Clap It:** Try snapping your fingers between phrases. Breaking the Creed up into phrases makes it easier to memorize. For example, "I believe in God the Father"...snap, snap..."Almighty Creator of Heaven and Earth"... snap, snap.... Alternate snaps with claps and keep it moving.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty Creator of Heaven and Earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

On the third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Church, the communion of believers, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Connect: If I had an important announcement that I wanted you to remember, what could I do to help you not forget it? (*Give your child the opportunity to come up with ideas.*)

Tell: Over 2000 years ago, a group of men had a very important message. It was an amazing message about God - given to them by God. These men are called "apostles." This means they were people who Jesus personally sent out to lead the church and tell others about Him. These apostles wrote a lot of information down about Jesus so we would not forget.

Let's read part of one of the letters an apostle wrote to tell others about Jesus.

Read: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15

Paul wrote to Christians whom he knew and loved. The first time he met these people he told them a wonderful message called "the gospel." The word "gospel" means "good news." This was good news about someone the readers had never heard about before: Jesus.

In this letter, Paul says his readers should hold on to the teachings and traditions he taught them. After they started believing in Jesus, Paul taught them great truths about God, and he didn't want them to forget. Paul says he taught them in two ways: by speaking to them personally and by writing letters to them.

You see, Apostles didn't just write things down. They also trained new leaders in the church to teach after they were gone. Those leaders trained more leaders who also taught more people about Jesus. Those church leaders didn't want people to forget the important things the apostles taught, so they made lists of the most important things we should remember about Jesus.

These lists are sometimes called "creeds." The word "creed" comes from an old Latin word "credo," which means, "I believe." These were lists of things that Christians believed. These were the most important things Christians needed to remember about the gospel, the good news.

The "Apostles' Creed" wasn't written by the apostles. It was written by church leaders who came after the apostles. It tells us a great story about the things God has done, starting all the way back when He created the world, to the time when Jesus came, to the time when Jesus will come back again in the future and make everything right.

Discuss:

- 1.) What is the name given to the people Jesus sent to lead the church and tell others about Him? (*Apostles*)
- 2.) What were the main ways the apostles taught the church about Jesus? (*They wrote things down and they taught people personally.*)
- 3.) What is a creed? (*Your child may remember that “creed” comes from the Latin word “credo” that means, “I believe.” A creed is a brief statement about what Christians believe.*)

I BELIEVE

Connect: Invite your child to stand up about 3 feet in front of you with their back to you. Tell them that you will catch them if they will fall backwards into your arms. Ask them if they believe you. Then, have them put that belief into action by leaning back and falling into your arms to be caught.

Tell: The beginning of the Apostles’ Creed says, “I believe.” That phrase also appears two more times in the Creed. This is not talking about just any kind of belief. It is talking about living faith. When we say we believe in God, or we believe in Jesus, we are really saying, “I trust God.” We’re saying, “My trust in God makes me want to follow Him, makes me want to obey Him.”

Read: James 2:14-19

The word “faith” is another way to talk about belief. If you have faith in something, it means you believe in it. James, the half-brother of Jesus, writes that there’s a big difference between dead faith and living faith.

You have dead faith if you just say you believe but it doesn’t change the way you live. If your faith is alive, it changes the way you act. It’s like falling backwards into the arms of someone you trust to catch you. You show your faith, your belief, by your actions.

Discuss:

- 1.) If a person with dead faith says, “I believe in God,” does that person want to follow God or obey Him? (*No. He might follow God sometimes when he feels like it, but he doesn’t really put all his confidence in God. Deep down he wants other things more than he wants God.*)
- 2.) What are examples of living faith? (*Brainstorm as a family what a life of living faith looks like. How does your family live out your belief in God?*)

Pray:

“Search us, God, and know our hearts. See if there is anything sinful in us (Psalm 139:23-24). Help us to test ourselves, to see whether we really have living faith (2 Corinthians 13:5). We want to add to our faith goodness, self-control, and godliness so we can be sure that we really belong to You (2 Peter 1:5-11). Amen.”