

Creed Discussion Questions 04.15.18

Leader Prep Section

Take time before your small group meeting to prepare by reading through the questions and scripture passage so that you can select 4-5 questions that are best suited to your group.

Try to work through at least one question from each of the sections - Hook, Book, Look, Took in order to move from observation to application.

When possible spend time in prayer for each member of your group.

Hook - Ice breaker type questions to help make the transition into the study time.

1. What stuck out to you from Sunday's sermon? What surprised you? What did you disagree with? What confused you? What excited you?

Background

The origins of the Apostle's Creed can be traced back to the middle of the second century A.D. where a formula very similar to the Creed itself was used in Rome. Other second century Christian writers as far away as Gaul and North Africa when seeking to summarize the "Rule of Faith" use similar language. Its earliest use seems to be in the form of questions asked of people at baptism. The first mention of the title "Apostle's Creed" tied to this formulation of faith is in the year 390 A.D. Throughout church history the Apostle's Creed has been affirmed by Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox Christians.

The Apostle's Creed was written to create a clear statement (or rule) of faith that could be used to guide teaching and the further development of theology. It also served as a bulwark against false teachings that were common in the early church.

Read Luke 1:26 - 38 and the Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

Questions

Book - These questions are designed to get you into the text itself.

1. Who are the key participants in this scene from Jesus's birth story?
2. What does the angel tell Mary about why she was chosen and what was ahead for her?
3. What are the key attributes of Jesus and his birth listed in the Apostle's Creed?
4. Why was it important that Jesus be on the line of David? See 2 Samuel 7:4 – 16
5. What would a first century Jew think when they heard the phrase "Holy Spirit"? See Gen 1:1 – 2; 2:7

Look - These questions will take you on a deeper look at what the passage means for us today.

6. What does this passage from Luke teach us about the identity of Jesus?
7. Why is it important for us to remember that Jesus was in the line of David? What do we lose if we forget this?
8. Because of Gnosticism during the time of the early church people would have found it harder to believe that Jesus was born, period, than Jesus was born of a virgin. Why is it critical that we affirm Jesus was truly born?
9. Why is affirming the trinity, the relationships between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit important? What is at stake in affirming this?
10. Why do you suppose the early church fathers included these specific truths about Jesus and his birth?

Took - These questions are focused on applying the big idea from the text to our lives.

1. God continues to act in this world; how has he interacted with you?
2. What can we do this week that will reflect the deep faith shown by Mary in her response to the angel's visit?
3. Knowing God took the extraordinary step of sending his son to be born of a virgin to ensure we could be in relationship with him. What action will you take in response?
4. Jesus's birth sets in motion the path to salvation for all who choose to follow him. What role is God asking you to play in bringing the Good News to those in your life?

Closing

As you finish your time together take time to pray for one another to be focused this week on the amazing and undeserved gift of God sending his son to be born of a virgin. Pray together that we would see the opportunities that present themselves to share the truth that God is active today in our world just as he was in the first century and early church.

Reminder: We are part of the united body of Christ that has worshipped the same unchanging God for millennia. Our history is rich with evidence of God's involvement with and love for each of us.