

## Lesson 1: Three Ecumenical Creeds

“Yet I do as a child who is being taught the Catechism. Every morning, and whenever else I have time, I read and recite word for word the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Psalms, etc. I still read and study the Catechism daily, yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the Catechism, and I do it gladly.”

—Dr. Martin Luther, *Large Catechism*: Preface

Thesis:  
The Ecumenical  
Creeds help pass on  
the faith with clear,  
simple statements.

Key question:  
Of what value are the  
Ecumenical Creeds?

Catechism:  
Three Ecumenical  
Creeds

Accompanying Bible  
Story:  
Psalm 78 – Asaph  
Recalls History

My questions:

While the people of Israel were encamped at the foot of Mt. Sinai, God gave them the Law. Forty years later, before sending them into the Promised Land, Moses reviewed the Law with them. He reminded them of the Ten Commandments. Then he also told God’s people how important it was that the faith be passed on from fathers to children: “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates” (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

Some 400 years later, after God’s people had been through many cycles of rebellion and rescue, God allowed the people to have a king. The second of those kings was David the son of Jesse of the tribe of Judah. Over half of the book of 1 Chronicles is the story of David’s reign. One of David’s main accomplishments was establishing Jerusalem as his capital city. Chapter 16 recounts the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. Named among the Levites appointed to lead the worship into Jerusalem was Asaph.

Among the twelve Psalms we know Asaph wrote is Psalm 78. As he himself said at the beginning of the Psalm, this poem was written to teach about God’s faithfulness

“Which we have heard and known,  
And our fathers have told us.  
We will not conceal them from their children,  
But tell to the generation to come the praises of the LORD,  
And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done.” (3, 4)

Moses reminds us of the importance of passing down the faith from parents to children. Asaph reminds us of the value of doing the same. In the same way, the Church has developed statements that summarize what we believe. These statements of belief, or creeds, help us pass on the faith in simple but clear ways.

\* Read the three Ecumenical Creeds aloud.

\* How are the three Creeds similar?

\* What is unique about the Apostles' Creed?

\* What is unique about the Nicene Creed?

\* The Athanasian Creed has two main parts. What titles might you give each part?

\* What is unique about the Athanasian Creed?

\* Summarized the following verses. As you do, think about what we are to either do with the content of our faith or what we should believe.

\* Jeremiah 6:16

\* Genesis 1:1

\* John 1:1-5, 14

\* Colossians 1:15-20

\* Colossians 2:8-10

\* Titus 3:3-8

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What did I learn in this lesson (three or four sentences)?