



## "We Believe..."

*We believe in the Father—  
Creator of heaven and earth.*

*We believe in Jesus—the Eternal  
Son of God, who was incarnated  
through God the Holy Spirit, fully  
God and fully human, who  
suffered, was crucified and buried,  
who rose again and ascended to  
heaven and shall come again in his  
kingdom of which there is no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, our  
Comforter and Counselor, who  
together with the Father and Son,  
is one God and who lives within  
those who believe.*

*We believe in the universal body  
of Christ, composed of all who are  
in Christ, whether visible or  
invisible to one another, a  
universal body that transcends  
any and all earthly organizations  
and denominations that are legally  
incorporated as churches.*

*We believe in the forgiveness of  
sins—undeserved, by grace, not by  
merit.*

*We believe in the Resurrection—  
Jesus rose from the dead, and as  
our risen Lord he lives in us now  
and will come again and resurrect  
the dead in Christ.*

*We believe in Life Everlasting—  
eternal life is the gift of God.*

This "We Believe" statement is our CWR/PTM affirmation of faith. Some might call it a creed. The word "creed" comes from the Latin word "credo" which means "I believe."

By its nature, a creed is a short and succinct summary—not intended to explain all details and answer all questions.

The first three summary statements of the Apostles' Creed

and of the Nicene Creed explain the nature of the One God, who exists eternally as Three distinct divine Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God is one in essence and three in Person. Each divine Person is distinct, each divine Person is fully God and they exist harmoniously, in union and united as One God.

*Who God is and what he is like is critically important and foundational to our faith as Christ-followers.*

While no one knows the exact date of the origin of the Apostles' Creed, and while few think the actual Apostles wrote it, it is felt to be an accurate reflection of the teachings of the Apostles, thus its name "Apostles' Creed."

By linking this creed with the Apostles, the intent was to communicate its direction and intent coming directly from the disciples, who were eye-witnesses to all that Jesus taught and did.

The Apostles' Creed is probably the earliest and it is certainly the shortest of these two most well known and widely accepted summaries of Christian belief.

The Nicene Creed dates to the Council of Nicea, originally convened in 325 A.D. (its official councils and meetings continued for well over 100 years) because of further questions and disagreement about the Triune God (they asked specifically whether Jesus and the Holy Spirit are equally and eternally Persons of the Triune God, or somehow less than God the Father).

"Believe" and "belief" are foundational terms and concepts in these early Christian creeds because belief is central to life in Christ.

John highlights *belief* in that all time favorite and well-known, much-memorized summary of the gospel in his Gospel—the Gospel of John, chapter three and verse sixteen:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him...*

Belief is central to our faith—what **We Believe** is the absolute core and center, the bull's-eye of our faith.

**We Believe** in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit as the basis of our faith, with all other practices and traditions not as important as being centered in the Triune God.

C.S. Lewis said this of our faith and belief as Christ-followers:

*Christianity is a statement which, if false, is of no importance, and if true, is of infinite import. The one thing it cannot be is moderately important.*

Of course, memorizing and reciting words of the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed is not one and the same as heartfelt faith and belief. External behavior and belief may flow from a deep internal spiritual oasis—but not always!

Many within the world of Christendom memorize and recite historic creeds, yet effectively deny the essence of the love of God, and do not exemplify it. Christ-followers believe in God with living faith. □

—Greg Albrecht

*Join us for the complete message of "We Believe" at the audio teaching ministry of Christianity Without the Religion, the week of January 7, 2018.*