

The Lord's Day Evening

October 1, 1944

**“The Apostles’ Creed”
Scripture Lesson – Mark 9:14-29**

The Reverend Dr. Girard Lowe

Introduction

1. Why I am preaching this series of sermons
 - a. Young lady asked me to
 - b. Many Christians do not know what they should believe
 1. Chosen Apostles’ Creed because belongs to faith of all churches
 - c. To counteract much of false teachings today.
 1. In First Presbyterian Church of Nashville they secured a minister who preached what seemed to many strange doctrines and they began to question. But the young man had a noted preacher come for a preaching mission and he talked in the same way about the great truths and so the discussions subsided because they decided since this visiting minister occupied a large and influential pulpit in New York and was president of Federal Council of Churches that surely he must be sound and so they decided they must be mistaken about what they thought the church believed. They made a serious mistake. They should have studied the Creed of their church in the light of Scriptures and found for themselves what they should believe as members of that denomination. But because so few will do that, I am making bold to try and teach you what the Apostles’ Creed holds to be the great truths of Christianity.
2. My hope
 - a. Not to defend
 - b. But to explain what it means to believe in these great truths
3. How creeds came into being
 - a. Many various attitudes taken toward some of essential things of this new religion called the Christian religion. Who was Jesus Christ? Why did He die upon the cross? What was the mission and message of the church?
 - b. So men gathered from over the then known world to discuss and formulate statements of these great truths.
 1. Many of these men came with mangled bodies because they had stood firm in their faith about these great eternal truths. They could show a mangled arm, a torn off limb, a face with no ears, and could even stand and be led to platform because their eyes had been burned out because of their faith in Christ.
 - c. Several of these councils are outstanding
 1. Chalcedon
 2. Constantinople had three
 3. Ephesus

4. Nicaea had two

d. Out of these councils came great statements of Christian doctrine which have stood for all the intervening centuries.

1. These statements have been studied and checked in the light of Scripture and men and denominations continue to hold to them.

4. The Apostles' Creed

a. Have been told it came in following manner

1. Selection from "The Faith We Live By" (Earl L. Douglass, chapter 2, page 21)

"A legend, said to have made its appearance first in the early Middle Ages, runs as follows: 'On the tenth day after the Ascension, when the disciples were gathered together for fear of the Jews, the Lord sent the promised Paraclete. And when he had come as a flaming fire and they were filled with the knowledge of all tongues, they composed the symbol. Peter said: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. Andrew said: And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord. James said: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary the Virgin. John said: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. Thomas said: Descended into hades, on the third day rose from the dead. James said: Ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. Philip said: Thence he is about to come to judge the quick and dead. Bartholomew said: I believe in the Holy Spirit. Matthew said: Holy Catholic Church, communion of saints. Simon said: Remission of sins. Thaddaeus said: Resurrection of the flesh. Matthias said: Life eternal.'"

b. None really believe this I presume

c. In second century we have what is called "Old Roman Symbol," which is in substance the Apostles' Creed of today.

d. None know just where or how it was formed. But all believe it expresses the belief of the apostles as expressed in their writings and teachings.

I. Creeds are important

1. Some churches have no written creeds

a. Baptist and disciples

b. Say Bible is their creed

2. But someone must authoritatively interpret the Scriptures

a. Necessary in early days

b. Necessity today

1. To hold to great faith of Christianity

2. To teach children

3. That Church may stand against modernisms of today

II. Some say do not need Creed today

1. Because times have changed and so beliefs must change

- a. What is true at any time is true at all times.
- b. Science may enlarge our conceptions of truth, but cannot change
 - 1. We have a greater conception of God today than Hebrews had because science has shown us a larger world and more immense universe. But we still say I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
- 2. Because actions are essential not beliefs
 - a. So would have us lay aside our great truths and unite with anyone who calls us to union
 - b. But our beliefs determine what we will do
 - 1. Unitarians and Universalists do not believe in Christ as God
 - 2. An old fisherman who was out with a Unitarian clergyman (from “The Faith of Christendom” by John M. Vander Meulen – page 30)

“A New York acquaintance, a couple of years ago, told me an incident concerning one of the prominent Unitarian clergymen of New York City. This Unitarian clergyman wanted to take a rather unusual vacation. So he got a captain of a fishing boat to take him in. He did not want to go on a passenger boat, not even on a passenger boat for fishing. He wanted to be with these plain, honest fishermen alone. One day he thought he would engage the captain, a plain, rough, bluff fisherman, somewhat given to profanity, in a religious conversation. He said to the captain, ‘To what denomination do you belong?’ ‘Well,’ said the captain, ‘I do not work hard at my religion; but I lean to the Baptist denomination. My kin are all Baptists and I suppose you might say that is my denomination.’ But then he added, a little to the embarrassment of the clergyman, ‘To what denomination do you belong?’ ‘Well,’ replied the clergyman rather hesitatingly, ‘I belong to the Unitarian denomination, but I don’t suppose you know what that means.’ ‘Oh yes,’ said the captain, ‘I do. I know what the Unitarians are and I like them; they don’t believe a _____ thing on Sundays and live up to it every day of the week.’”

- 3. Those who believe that salvation is not to be found in cross do not have any mission enterprise.
- c. Surely we cannot work in any spirit of unity with those who do not believe much as we do about the great purpose of death of Christ and mission of Church.
- d. What a man believes will affect his actions.
 - 1. It is foolish to say they do not.
 - 2. Dr. Torrey talking to man who said what he believed did not make any difference. Dr. Torrey said it did and then told man he heard someone scream the building was on fire and man jumped from his seat and prepared to run.
 - 3. Believe bonds are good investment and so put money into them.
- e. So with Christian faith
 - 1. Believe there is a hell – will do everything necessary to stay out of there.
 - 2. Believe in God – will do all can to serve Him.

Conclusion

1. May I be pardoned for speaking a few moments to younger people in the congregation.
2. Many will tell you that you need not be worried about Christian faith but I will tell you that you should hold on to your faith for dear life.
 - a. They will tell you do your patriotic duty regardless of your faith in God and Christ.
 1. Your patriotic duty will not lead you to an action which God will not approve.
 2. Do not sell your soul for a mess of porridge of popularity or patriotism.
3. Men of old accomplished things because of their faith
 - a. David stood before Goliath
 1. Trusted God
 - b. Three Hebrew children
 1. Daniel 3:17, 18
 - c. Daniel went to lion's den unafraid
 - d. Elisha saw forces of God greater than those of Darius
4. It is more modern than that
 - a. John G. Paton was raised in a poor family of faith when he had to work so hard he did not have time for study. He went to work for an engineering school and because of his studious habits his employer offered him a raise in pay and an easier position if he would promise to work for him seven years, but young John said he could not make any such promise and when asked why he answered he served a Master greater than himself and his employer became angry and fired him. He went to Glasgow and began work with a mission there and was very successful but heard call to South Sea Islands and in spite of the protests of his friends he went, as they said, to be buried away where he would never be heard of even if he were not eaten. But away he went and because of what John G. Paton did there in the South Sea Islands a young man wrote to his mother recently: "Dear Mom, Because of missions I was feasted and not feasted upon when I fell from the sky in this village."
 - b. Fritz Lanham was a fine handsome young man and had brilliant prospects as an actor. He was touring the country with a fine company but he was lonesome and out of place because the other people lived and acted and his faith would not allow him to act and so he quit. All the alluring prospects were gone and he went to a small town in Texas to settle down as a small-town lawyer, but today he is a prominent congressman in Washington where he represents his district and he has been there for nearly 30 years and is a Bible class teacher of a large men's class in a Methodist church.
 - c. My own case – heard call of God and have tried to follow Him. I was in Navy and had temptations which come to man in service – foreign duty. I was a traveling man and had temptations which come to many of them. I had an offer of a position with a recompense of \$35,000 per year, but through it all my humble faith in Christ, God and His Word has kept me. Today I am not great and am little known but I am happy and contented.
5. God help you to see it does make a difference what you believe. Hold on to the great Christian truths.

6. We shall look at them for several Sunday nights now.