

BEING A CREEDAL AND CONFSSIONAL CHURCH

Part 1: "Why Creeds and
Confessions"
January 7th, 2023

PLANNED LESSONS IN THIS SERIES:

1. Why Creeds and Confessions? (January 7th)
2. How Creeds and Confessions Work in the Life of a Church (February 11th)
3. Our Church's Confession - A Crash Course in the New Hampshire Confession of Faith (March 31st)

I. _____

A creed defines _____, a confession defines _____

Creeds are not meant as comprehensive statements of the Christian faith; they're instead pledges of allegiance to the three persons of the Trinity.

*Say the following two sentences out loud and listen to the difference: "I believe in God the Father Almighty," and "I believe there is one God." Do you hear the difference? The second is a confessional statement, an assertion that answers a "what?" question. What do we believe about ultimate reality? We believe there is one God. But the first is a credal statement, an assertion of allegiance to the one true God who has created everything that exists - Donald Fairbairn, *Creeds and Confessions: What's the Difference?**

II. _____

A. _____

B. _____

“What right...has any church, or body of churches, to impose a creed on me, or dictate to me what I shall believe? To attempt such dictation is tyranny; to submit to it is to surrender the right of private judgment. - Samuel Miller, On the Utility and Importance of Creeds and Confessions

C. _____

D. _____

III. _____

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

*...a church confession not only sets before the congregation a list of doctrinal priorities and demonstrates how these priorities fit together into an overarching framework, it also represents an aspirational ideal of what the eldership hopes will be the appropriate level of doctrinal competence for the congregation. If something is a priority, is of importance, then it should be stated in the confession. If it is not in the confession, then it will be very hard to make the case that it is of any importance. After all, if one does not need to have an opinion on a topic to hold office, then that topic is clearly of highly negotiable significance. - Carl Trueman, *The Creedal Imperative*, 179*

D. _____