

THIS I BELIEVE

INTRODUCTION

In a time when our relentless individualism suggests that each person should arrive at his or her own conclusions about Scripture, the creed gives us a historically proven way to study scripture. The creed is, in many ways, a distillation of scripture; each of the statements within the creed may not represent a particular chapter and verse, but each statement is rooted in a recurring truth within Scripture as a whole. Further, the creed helps us to identify the core beliefs of the Christian faith, giving all Christian denominations a common reference point. In a world that so desperately needs the Gospel, churches of every kind need to find ways to rally together, finding unity in what is essential, and offering charity in all else; the creed helps us to identify what is essential.

The Apostle's Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

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

The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Read John 20:19-30
- Why is believing emphasized in Christianity?
- What causes you most to struggle with doubt?
- In the sermon, Pastor Jon discussed the four possible reasons that led Thomas to doubt.
 - Personal failure coupled with his personality triggered his doubts.
 - A lack of understanding fueled his doubts.
 - Deep disappointment and shock over Jesus' suffering nurtured his doubts.
 - Isolation from other believers deepened his doubts.

Which of the four is/are relatable to you with regards to your own doubts?

- In response to Thomas' reaction, why did Jesus say, "*Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*" (v. 29)?
- Why is the true identity of Jesus "the crucial question" (v. 31)? What implications flow from this question?
- How has the series THIS I BELIEVE help you in your own faith?

PRAYER GUIDE

- Pray that we would continue to grow from strength to strength in our faith and purpose,
- Pray for the Lord to help bring your faith in Him be brought to life on a daily basis, by experiencing Him deeply and witnessing for Him sincerely and boldly.
- Pray for the church to guard the doctrinal purity of our faith; to live out in mission and effective engagement with our community that is greatly in need of Jesus.