

THIS I BELIEVE

INTRODUCTION

As we welcome each other back into our DGroup, we are excited to start off this new season with the new sermon and study series, **THIS I BELIEVE**. We will journey through the basic teachings of Christianity based on the ancient document, *Apostle's Creed*. The Apostles' Creed is worth knowing today perhaps more than ever. 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 FOR DGROUPS.

- What do you think of when you hear the word "church"?
- What is the universal church? 1 Corinthians 12:12-13
 - Who belongs to it? 1 Corinthians 12:27.
 - What is its purpose? 1 Peter 2:5 & 9.
- What is the local church (communion of saints)? 1 Corinthians 1:2
 - *Every local church is called the visible church.* It is a gathering of believers in communion together. Read Ephesians 4:12-15 and give practical reasons why it is important to be a part of the local church.
 - *What is the mission and purpose of the local church?* Matthew 28:19-20 and Colossians 1:27-29.
 - *How is the local church led?*

The church is led by Pastors/Bishops and served by deacons. The word bishop/pastor/elder are interchangeable in the Bible. It means the overseer/shepherd. (1 Timothy 5:19 and Ephesians 4:11). The word deacon means "to wait on tables" (serve). Anyone who serves the church who is not a pastor is a deacon. Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
 - *Why does the church gather?* Hebrews 10:25.
 - To worship God. Psalm 75:1.
 - To receive God's Word and be equipped for Christian living. Ephesians 4:11-14.
 - To encourage one another. 2 Timothy 4:2.
 - To bring more people to Christ. 1 Corinthians 14:23-25.
- How important is the local church to you? In what ways can you be a better part of the local church?

Spend time praying:

- Pray that you will develop a deeper love for your local church, your pastors, your co-servants.
- Pray for your group, that you will experience what a local church is supposed to be.
- Pray for our church to be more effective in reaching people for Jesus, equipping believers and honoring the Lord.