

# The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and buried; He descended into hell.

The third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven,

and sits on 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 the saints;  
the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed is the oldest creed of the church. Its language has massive influence upon subsequent creeds that cannot be understated. The name arose from a tradition emerging in the sixth century which stated that each of the twelve Apostles contributed to the twelve articles found within the creed.<sup>1</sup> This story, while having ancient roots, is likely a legend as the creed itself was certainly not a direct production of the Apostles. However, we continue to refer to the creed as the Apostles' Creed because it preserves the "rule of faith" transmitted from the Apostles. The creed itself should be seen as a summary of the apostolic teaching.

The church historian, Philip Schaff, speaking about the significance of the Apostles' Creed writes,

"As the Lord's Prayer is the Prayer of prayers, the Decalogue [Ten Commandments] is the Law of laws, so the Apostles' Creed is the Creed of creeds. It contains all the fundamental articles of the Christian faith necessary to salvation, in the form of facts, in simple Scripture language, and in the most natural order—the order of revelation—from God and the creation down to the resurrection and life everlasting."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Justin Holcomb, *Know the Creeds and Councils*, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in *Historic Creeds and Confessions*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Lexham Press, 1997)