

my mind and heart that keep me from faith in you. Help me to know and trust Jesus Christ. And lead me to those people who can help me as I seek to know you.

God will always answer such prayers made with patience, persistence, and humility. As you explore this catechism, continue to pray that you will come to know God more fully.

In order to provide clarity and further detail, and for the purposes of teaching and learning, these things will now be set out in question and answer form.

SALVATION

1. What is the human condition?

Though created good and made for fellowship with our Creator, humanity has been cut off from God by self-centered rebellion against him, leading to lawless living, guilt, shame, death, and the fear of judgment. This is the state of sin. (*Genesis 3:1-13; Psalm 14:1-3; Matthew 15:10-20; Romans 1:18-23; 3:9-23*)

2. What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is the good news that God loves the world and offers salvation from sin through his Son, Jesus Christ. (*Psalm 103:1-13; Isaiah 53:4-5; John 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5*)

3. How does sin affect you?

Sin alienates me from God, my neighbor, God's good creation, and myself. Apart from Christ, I am hopeless, guilty, lost, helpless, and walking in the way of death. (*Genesis 3:14-19; Psalm 38; Isaiah 53:6; 59:1-2; Romans 6:20-23*)

4. **What is the way of death?**

The way of death is a life without God's love and Holy Spirit, a life controlled by things that cannot bring me eternal joy, leading only to darkness, misery, and eternal condemnation. (*Genesis 2:16–17; Deuteronomy 28:15–19; Proverbs 14:12; John 8:34; Romans 1:24–25*)

5. **Can you save yourself from the way of sin and death?**

No. I have no power to save myself, for sin has corrupted my conscience, confused my mind, and captured my will. Only God can save me. (*Psalms 33:13–19; Isaiah 43:8–13; John 3:1–8; Ephesians 2:1–9*)

6. **How does God save you?**

God forgives my sins and reconciles me to himself through his Son, Jesus Christ, whom he has given to the world as an undeserved gift of love. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (*John 3:16; see also Psalm 34; Zechariah 12:10–13:2; Romans 3:23–26*)

7. **Why does God save you?**

Because he loves me, God saves me from sin and judgment, so that I may love and serve him for his glory. (*Psalms 98; Isaiah 42:5–9; John 3:17; Romans 5:8–10; 2 Corinthians 5:18–21; Ephesians 1:3–14*)

8. **Who is Jesus Christ?**

Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the Savior of the world. Fully divine, he took on our human nature, died on the Cross for our sins, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and now rules as Lord and King over all creation. (*Numbers 21:4–9; Psalm 110; John 3:13–15; Philippians 2:5–11; Colossians 1:15–20*)

9. Is there any other way of salvation?

No. The apostle Peter said of Jesus, “There is salvation in no one else” (*Acts 4:12*). Jesus is the only one who can save me and reconcile me to God. (*Psalm 2*; *Isaiah 42:1-4*; *John 14:5-6*; *1 Timothy 2:5-6*)

10. How should you respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

As soon as I receive and believe the Gospel, I should repent of my sins, put faith in Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord, and prepare to be baptized. “Now is the day of salvation.” (*2 Corinthians 6:2*; see also *Psalm 32*; *Isaiah 55:6-7*; *Acts 2:37-39*)

11. What does it mean for you to repent?

To repent means that I have a change of heart, turning from sinfully serving myself to serving God as I follow Jesus Christ. I need God’s help to make this change. (*Psalm 51:16-17*; *Isaiah 57:15-19*; *Acts 3:19-21*; *1 John 2:1-2*)

12. What does it mean for you to have faith?

To have faith means that I believe the Gospel is the truth: that Jesus died for my sins, rose from the dead, and rules over my life. Therefore, I entrust myself to him as my Savior, and I obey him as my Lord. (*Psalm 40:1-10*; *Proverbs 3:5-8*; *John 1:9-13*; *Romans 10:9-10*; *Hebrews 11:1, 6*)

13. How can you repent and put your faith in Jesus Christ?

With God’s help, I can acknowledge and turn from my sins, receive the gift of God’s grace in Jesus Christ, and embrace the new life he freely gives me. [One way to do this is by sincerely praying in the way described in the “Turning to Christ” section above, p. 20.] (*Psalm 86:1-7*; *Joel 2:32*; *Acts 16:30-34*; *Romans 10:11-13*; *Hebrews 12:1-2*)

14. What should you do as the sign of your repentance and faith?

After receiving instruction in the faith, I should be baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, thus joining his Body, the Church. If I have already been baptized, I should confess my sins, seek the guidance of a minister, affirm the promises made at my Baptism, and take my place as a member of the Church. (*Psalm 51:5-7; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Peter 3:18-22*)

15. What does God grant in your new life in Christ?

God grants me reconciliation with him (*2 Corinthians 5:17-19*), forgiveness of my sins (*Colossians 1:13-14*), union with him in Christ (*Romans 6:3-5*), adoption into his family (*Galatians 4:4-7*), citizenship in his kingdom (*Ephesians 2:19-21; Philippians 3:20*), new life in the Holy Spirit (*Titus 3:4-5*), and the promise of eternal life (*John 3:16; 1 John 5:12*).

16. What does God desire to accomplish in your life in Christ?

God desires to free me from captivity to sin and transform me into the image of Jesus Christ, by the power of his Holy Spirit. (*Exodus 33:18-23; 34:29-35; Psalm 27:4, 7-14; Matthew 17:1-9; Romans 6:5-11; 2 Corinthians 3:12-18*)

17. By what means will God transform you into the image of Jesus Christ?

The first Christians “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (*Acts 2:42*). Following this pattern, I will be transformed within the life of the Church through reading Scripture and receiving the sacraments, through worship and prayer, and through fellowship with God’s people and loving witness to the world. (*Deuteronomy 6:1-9; 2 Chronicles 7:1-3; Psalm 1; Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25*)

PART II

BELIEVING IN CHRIST

THE APOSTLES' CREED AND THE LIFE OF FAITH

All genuine Christians affirm that authentic Christianity is apostolic Christianity. Apostolic Christianity rests on the historic, eyewitness testimony of Jesus' first followers, the apostles, to the actual events of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, ascension, present heavenly reign, and promised future return. Both Jesus and his apostles understood these events to fulfill the Old Testament hopes of the kingdom (that is, the reign) of God. God's covenant with Israel prepared for this kingdom, which the Christian Church has received from Jesus and his apostles.

We learn from Scripture about these key events, including what they mean and how they hold together. Anglicans therefore affirm that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are contained in the Bible, are "God's Word written" (*Articles of Religion*, 20).

By the second century, these essentials of apostolic faith had been organized into an outline of topics for instruction (the Rule of Faith), and this outline came to be known as the Apostles' Creed because it sums up the apostolic faith. This Creed came to be widely used by the Church as the declaration of faith made at Baptism and was later included as one of three

creeds in the 1662 Anglican Prayer Book. The Apostles' Creed is the briefest and most easily memorized of these creeds, and is complemented and enlarged upon by the later Nicene and Athanasian Creeds.

To gather and focus the central truths of apostolic faith is the first task of all catechesis (instruction). That is precisely what the Apostles' Creed does. It is arranged in three paragraphs, which highlight in turn the work of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, thus distilling the teaching of Holy Scripture and reflecting the triune nature of God. It is a summary of biblical truths that is designed to lead inquirers into a grounded personal faith in the triune God.

The Apostles' Creed exists to define and defend this commitment, which is basic to being a Christian. The article on God the Creator (the Father) introduces the Creed; its central article—focused on the Person and Work of Jesus Christ—is the fullest and longest; and the article on the Holy Spirit and Christian salvation follows. As a whole, the Creed testifies to the vital core of God's self-revelation for our salvation. It is a consensus declaration that comes to us with the resounding, universal endorsement of faithful believers over nearly two thousand years. It has been recited by Christian communities throughout the history of the Church. And it is a benchmark of orthodoxy—that is, of right belief—guiding our understanding of God's revealed truth at points where our sin-clouded minds might go astray.

C O N C E R N I N G T H E C R E E D S

18. What is a creed?

A creed is a statement of faith. The word “creed” comes from the Latin *credo*, which means “I believe.” (*Deuteronomy 11:18–23; 26:1–11; John 20:24–29; 1 John 5:9–12*)