

CREEDS AND DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS

What True Purpose Do Creeds and Doctrinal Statements of Faith Serve?

You know what is wrong with creeds, statements of belief, catechisms, confessions of faith, and doctrinal statements? Once stated, once formulated, and once accepted the church and/or the individual believer tends to think: I've got it all now – I don't need anything more! Then they dig in their heels and cannot be persuaded no matter how much light or how brilliant that light shines on or from any and all 'new' truths which are in all reality, just, that which has been and was believed long ago; but then long forgotten, and once more newly re-discovered/uncovered or re-established. Those who subscribe to such statements, creeds, and confessions of faith believe they are now good enough, standing within their creed; and that they have need of nothing more - much like or, rather, exactly like the Laodicean Church which is advised to buy pure gold, white garments/raiment, and eyesalve. They cannot accept the counsel of God that they need eyesalve to anoint their eyes that they might truly see their wretchedness and nakedness, that is, their separation from God. They cannot believe that their gold, the truth that they possess, is corrupted and that they now need pure refined gold - pure unadulterated truth. They cannot conceive that their spotted raiment – their own righteousness - is insufficient and that they need the righteousness of Christ Immanuel, and God. They can only believe that – 'We got it all now!' And all that they got is good enough! That is what is wrong with creeds, doctrines of faith, listings of fundamental beliefs, confessions of faith, catechisms, and any such-like enumerations of doctrinal beliefs. The mind is shut tight to any further truth!

Creeds; statements of doctrinal beliefs; confessions of faith, catechisms; and etc. tend to place the one who espouses them into a box, and his thinking becomes confined to only that which is in the box. It is as if the box is then welded shut, a box of thick, heavy lead through which no ray or beam of truth could ever possibly penetrate.

The Bereans were some different, actually, they were markedly different in that they received, with all readiness of mind, the word spoken

to them with gladness - then they searched the Scriptures, daily, as to whether that light stood up to the test and examination and inspection by the Word of God.

Acts 17:11 “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

It is in my heart to be as those more noble Bereans. I want the truth! Or, at least, I believe and think that I want the truth. Perhaps, having received it and after promising to obey/follow it, I would be as the Israelites in Jeremiah's day [see chapter forty-two], and say, ‘It's all lies!’ We ought, finally, to learn not to trust in or to ourselves. Aw'mane. Remember, the heart is deceitful above all things! I admonish you the reader, ‘Do not forget or abandon this arrant truth.’

So therefore, this other morning I did read Jeremiah chapter forty-two, yet, once more. Having full confidence and complete assurance that Solomon was, indeed, right and, of course, correct when he said, 'The thing which has been, it shall be the thing which is to be'. The errors and sins of God's people will be repeated, and without great diligence and much discernment, we will be the ones to repeat them!

"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after."

In the context of Jeremiah's discourse we discover that it is the desire of the rebellious Israelites that they would certainly have it to be that **יהיה** should/would sanctify their disobedience so that they would/should bear no shame. Isaiah in chapter four says it, yet, another way: ‘Seven women, in that day, will take hold of one Man, Immanuel the Christ, and say we will eat our own bread (speak our own words of life), drink our own wine (have our own doctrines), and wear our own apparel (have our own righteousness) only just let us be called by thy name that we suffer not reproach.’ That is, in order to take away and remove our shame - let us, just only, be called **Christians**. My brethren we have to be constantly aware and ever cognizant of and diligent to the fact that the heart - our hearts - are

deceitful and deceptive above all things. We still want to do it our own way! Our hearts desire is that God should sanctify our rebellion and sin so that we would bear no culpability.

And, just as it was with the remnant of the people in Judah (Jeremiah chapter forty-two), after the assassination of the newly appointed governor, Gedaliah; and in whose hearts it was pre-determined to return to Egypt: Therefore, they presented themselves before the prophet to 'seek' the Lord's will [actually secretly hoping to have the Lord sanctify their flagrant rebellion and arrant disobedience] - and they presumptuously promised to do His will, no matter what it turned out to be - But when they, at the end of ten days, heard the words of the Father's will that they should *not go back* to Egypt, they said to the prophet Jeremiah, 'You are telling a lie': So it is with us today, we are not any wit different, whatsoever! The thing which has been, it is the thing which shall be!

We only want to perform that which is in our hearts and minds to do, regardless of what **יהוה** would have us to do. I am no less susceptible to this evil and presumptuous sin than anyone else. We must be constantly vigilant! For the devil goes about seeking those whom he might devour at his will; and he will not hesitate to lead us into this very same temptation. Satan was correct in telling the partial truth in the garden of Eden – ‘and you shall know evil!’ But, in consequence of knowing evil, we no longer know that which is good.

It seems to me that Confessions of Faith, Doctrinal Statements, Listings of Fundamental Beliefs, Catechism, and all such-like statements are counter-productive to Christian growth; and the acceptance of ‘new light’ and rediscovered ‘ancient truths’ is precluded by such statements of beliefs. Furthermore, these formulated statements of beliefs have the overwhelming tendency to be embedded with the *‘traditions of men’*; the *‘doctrines of men’*; and are chock-full of the *‘private interpretations of the Scriptures’* of and by men. These kinds of documents stagnate and immobilize the body of Christ. These kind of statements fly in the face of the truth of Scripture that the light shall grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

Proverbs 4:18 “But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

Such statements as creeds lead the churches of God and His congregations into complacency. But, worse yet, not only do they lead the people into complacency, these kind of documents and statements of beliefs

regiment the congregations into rank and file members of one mind and one thought - most certainly and verily a form of mind control! They enslave and hold the adherents of such documents captive to the hierarchy of the church. Upon viewing the effects of these enumerations and listings of beliefs: We must first consider; and then ask: 'Certainly God does not, cannot, author such writings as creeds, for His Word is all sufficient in and of itself; and the Word of God needeth not to be added to, nor taken away from'! The people of **יהוה** are not, and never have been authorized to pick through the Scriptures - choosing that which is acceptable and pleasing to them - and, then, having done so: To assemble those things that they have chosen into documents of faith and creeds and fundamental beliefs and confessions of faith: The which are full of those things that are pleasing and acceptable to them; and to the which they will, then, pledge their allegiance! These statements, creeds, and documents become tests of faith and fellowship! So, therefore, we must ask, 'Does Satan prompt men to make the like-kind of statements such as Creeds and Doctrinal Statements?' What do you suppose is the case?