

WE BELIEVE

“I believe what I believe is what makes me what I am.
 I did not make it, no it is making me.
 It is the very truth of God and not the invention of any man.”
 - Rich Mullins (Christian songwriter) in “Creed”

THE LESSON: 1 CORINTHIANS 15

In the earliest days of Church history, the Christian creeds – or statements of belief – began to take form through the oral tradition of the teachings of Jesus and the writings of the apostles. Those converting to the faith were coming from diverse backgrounds, which was a great blessing as the Gospel continued to spread. However, some of the ideas being brought into the Church were incompatible with the Gospel and were causing widespread confusion and divisions.

In the history of the Church, many of the same false teachings (called *heresies*) have cropped up repeatedly, and this is still true today. The early Church tackled the problem of false teaching in two ways. First, it established a canon of scripture to form an authoritative group of writings (the Bible). Second, the creeds of the Church were written to set the record straight on what Christians believe. The scriptures and the creeds are a standard against which we can hold any new teaching to determine whether it is faithful to the Christian tradition or not.

+++

The Apostle Paul wrote many letters to the early churches, which are now a part of our canon of scripture. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul addressed some practices and teachings that were in need of correction.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

At home, find a quiet place...

Are there parts of the creed that you struggle to believe? Spend some time praying: “Lord I believe, help my unbelief”. (Mark 9:24)

Are there times when it seems like what you believe isn’t changing you? Spend some time asking God to write his truth on your heart, and to cause that truth to transform you.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect, pausing to reflect after each phrase.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: We beseech thee, that this holy faith may evermore be our defense against all adversaries; who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen. (THE COLLECT FOR TRINITY SUNDAY, BCP PAGE 214)

WE BELIEVE

1 CORINTHIANS 15: **OF FIRST IMPORTANCE**

¹Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ²and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Peter, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me... ¹²Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain... ⁵⁸Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.