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INCREASING KNOWLEDGE IN NEW BELIEVERS AND
YOUTH AT THE DAYTON KOREAN GRACE CHURCH
IN DAYTON, OHIO, USING A CATECHISM
CURRICULUM BASED ON THE
APOSTLES' CREED

A Project
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the Faculty of
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APPROVAL SHEET

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Read and Approved by:

Danny R. Bowen (Faculty Supervisor)

Michael Pohlman

Date _____

To our most senior elder, Jack Click.

His passing comment on how our church should use the Apostles' Creed more often to help clarify what our church believes became the basis for this project.

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PREFACE

This project was possible because of the help and guidance of many people. I want to first thank my Father in Heaven for lovingly carrying me through this project. It has become abundantly clear that we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength and that His grace is sufficient. To my wife, Sae-Eun, for the extra burden she had to bear as I worked through this project. She pushed me when I needed pushing and encouraged me when I needed encouragement. To our children, Sung-Jin, Lydia, and Daniel, for helping with all the little things.

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To all the leaders and members at Dayton Korean Grace Church for their support, prayer, and participation. To our former senior pastor, Ingyu Song, for allowing me to start this project at his church. To our new senior pastor, Daljin Kim, for allowing me to continue the project. The the elders and leaders who provided feedback and participated in the class, Gary Nanfito, Eric An, Will Blakney, Chuck Somerville, and Jack Click, thank you for your help and willingness to give up your evenings during the holiday season to help me see this through to completion. Your feedback will help to improve this class for all future students. Jack, this project would not have happened without your suggestion that this church needs to use the Apostles' Creed more often. Will, you have been a great friend and an inspiration to me. Gary, your helpful spell-checking saved me a lot of time in editing the teacher and student books.

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Duane Schlottke

Dayton, Ohio

May 2020

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Catechesis, in the Christian sense, has a history as old as the church.¹ J. I. Packer shows the biblical foundation for catechesis in his literal translation of Galatians 6:6: “One who is catechized must share all good things with the one who is catechized”² For this project, *catechesis* is used in the most basic sense, as defined by Gerard Sloyan: “Catechesis carries out the command of Christ to proclaim God’s message of salvation to all people.”³ Catechesis is one of the ways that disciples are made and is inseparable as the foundation of discipleship and proclaiming the gospel. Beyond the basic sense, to speak of catechesis is to speak to a tradition within the church and to an earlier tradition of discipleship.⁴ Catechesis is one way of passing on of the gospel with which the church has been entrusted, and to training disciples in the doctrines of the church. In the latter

¹ Everett Ferguson shows that the early Christian communities shared and passed on their communal identity through intentional systematic catechesis. Documents from the mid-second century show this, but even prior to the second century it is likely this teaching was based on an oral tradition much like that attested to in the introduction to the gospel of Luke. Everett Ferguson, *The Early Church at Work and Worship*, vol. 2, *Catechesis, Baptism, Eschatology, and Martyrdom* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 1-10. Gerard Sloyan claims that *The Didache* is the earliest example of a formal text used for catechesis. Gerard S. Sloyan, “Religious Education: From Early Christianity to Medieval Time,” in *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*, ed. Michael Warren (Winona, MN: Saint Mary’s Press: 1983), 110-39. The position taken in this paper is that *The Didache* has an early date, and with Athanasius, it was meant to be read to new converts. Jonathan Alfred Draper, “The Jesus Tradition in the Didache,” in *The Didache in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan Alfred Draper (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1996), 72. Stein claims that Luke 1:4 uses the Greek *κατηχέω* to refer to teaching the tradition that was “handed down.” Robert A. Stein, *Luke*, *The New American Bible Commentary*, vol. 29 (Nashville: B & H, 1993), 60-62.

² J. I. Packer and Gary A. Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 29.

³ Gerard S. Sloyan, “Religious Education: From Early Christianity to Medieval Times,” in Warren, *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*, 34.

⁴ Lawrence D. Folkemer, “A Study of the Catechumenate,” *Church History* 15, no. 4 (December 1946): 286-307.

sense it speaks to Jesus' role as a disciple-maker and the task he left to his disciples. Matthew's Gospel ends by commissioning his disciples to make new disciples by teaching them (διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς) (Matt 28:20). Scripture also attests to the passing on of the tradition or the catechesis (κατηχήθης) of Luke 1:4. Luke further explains that the purpose of writing his letter is to confirm the truth of what Theophilus had learned.⁵

In this project, *catechesis* refers to the foundational means by which new believers learn the basic tenets of the orthodox Christian faith. The sense in which catechism is used here is meant to recall the tradition and commission of the disciples, the history and continuity of the community of faith, but not necessarily the standard catechisms of any denomination. The word *catechesis* is used in continuity with the earliest catechetical tradition of the church. In this context of the early Christian tradition, the Apostles' Creed—one of the earliest extant creeds⁶—provides a starting point for the instruction of new Christians in some of the major foundational beliefs of the church. Further, the Apostles' Creed is practical and provides a method of reinforcement as the congregation memorizes and recites the Apostles' Creed.

⁵ Darrell Bock argues that Luke is referring to previous instruction that Theophilus had received. The belief is that catechesis was standard in the church already at the writing of Luke's gospel and he was reaffirming the tradition in which Theophilus was trained. Based on the purpose described by the author of Luke and the command of Jesus in Matthew's narrative, it becomes clear that at least in the early Christian tradition the command to make disciples included the handing down of the received witness and the passing it along to the next generation. Luke offers his reaffirmation of Christian teaching based on the knowledge that Theophilus has been previously instructed (Matt 28:20 διδάσκω). Darrell Bock, "Understanding Luke's Task: Carefully Building on Precedent (Luke 1:1-4)," *Criswell Theological Review* 5, no. 2 (1991): 187. Further, according to Craig Keener, the Great Commission provides a basis for assuming that teaching new disciples was obligatory. Craig S. Keener, "Matthew's Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 12, no.1 (2009): 3-20.

⁶ Liuwe Westra argues that the creed is essentially in continuity with the earliest confessions, including the baptismal confessions found in the early church fathers. Liuwe H. Westra, *The Apostles' Creed: Origin, History, and Some Early Commentaries* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2002), 1-4. Westra's claim is similar to the claims of Kinzig, which he develops along a different trajectory. Wolfram Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae: A Collection of Early Christian Creeds and Creed-Related Texts*, vol. 1, trans. Christopher M. Hays (New York: Oxford, 2017). Different views about the Apostles' Creed and its development are more fully addressed in chap. 3.

Context

This project addresses a shortfall in the ministry of Dayton Korean Grace Church (DKGC). While the context of a Korean immigrant church in America provides some unique problems, the main shortcoming is the lack of catechetical emphasis that, according to Packer, can also be seen in too many North American churches today.⁷ The Korean church in America has two key practices that set it apart. First, the practice of having an entirely different service for youth.⁸ Second, many people that attend DKGC are not Christians; they have never attended church before coming to America and have never made a confession of faith in Jesus. Many of the unbelieving, or at very least un-disciplined church attenders, actively attempt to become involved in a Korean church congregation as leaders.⁹

There are some unique advantages from a missional perspective because non-believers seek a church purely to make social connections with other Koreans. The church having unbelievers willingly attending each week provides a great opportunity for proclamation in a context with an obvious advantage to the one sharing the message. However, when new attendees make a profession of faith, they often have not been taught even the basics of the Christian faith and frequently do not understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.¹⁰ All that is required to become a member is a two-hour course and baptism. When prospective members do have an understanding about what they are

⁷ Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 20-21.

⁸ Youth and children attending separate services has been the practice at the three Korean churches in America in which I have served. It has also been the practice at the approximately twenty additional congregations where friends minister. It is also the standard practice at most Korean churches in Korea.

⁹ Su Yon Pak et al., *Singing the Lord's Praises in a New Land: Korean American Practices of Faith* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005). The practice of communal meals and the primarily social function of Korean immigrant churches is a great benefit for community building; however, the overemphasis on the social function of church also leads to people with no commitment to Christ to seek out Korean Christian communities solely to become socially integrated into Korean immigrant society.

¹⁰ This general statement is based on experience in this context.

committing to, it is often based on a rudimentary understanding of the faith.¹¹ Many of the people seeking membership or baptism know that being a Christian means believing in Jesus, or that they have been baptized, but they fail to grasp the implications of following Jesus as a disciple.

The membership class and the new member party held annually at DKGK are meant to integrate people into the congregation quickly. The new member class is less than two hours long, and the baptism class is likewise two hours or less. This desire for rapid integration could be from a desire to grow numerically, to assimilate newcomers because of frequent turnover,¹² or it could find impetus in the desire for Koreans to share in meeting the basic needs of the other.¹³ The other teaching programs are for more mature Christians who wish to increase their knowledge about Scripture.¹⁴ A gap exists between the confession of faith and teaching for mature believers. A two-hour membership class is not sufficient to instruct prospective members in the core Christian doctrines or commitment level of a member of DKGK. According to the current format, the class only covers the basic beliefs of the congregation, not the church catholic. Since the church practices and recognizes infant baptism, there is currently no requirement for some people, who will later become members, to make a profession of faith. The course developed

¹¹ The claims about membership background and demographics are based on the pre- and post-tests in appendix 6, along with the post-course evaluation discussions as outlined in chaps. 4 and 5, as well as personal interactions with new members in the new member class.

¹² The church loses three to four families per year on average and gains the same number. The frequent turnover in membership has to do with the overall make-up of the congregation. Some families are working nearby at the Air Force base, and some are here for graduate work. In either case they leave after a few years.

¹³ Park, *Singing the Lord's Praises*, 87-88. Other care, or care for the neighbor, is referred to in Park's work as "ricing" and is connected to the shared experience of the Korean people, with Christians adding the biblical basis to the cultural one, often having the biblical basis take an *a priori* status.

¹⁴ The church uses the *Life of Christ* series right now. It is required for people who wish to be involved in ministry at the church, although the policy of having leaders take the course first is not always enforced. SEAN International, "SEAN Courses," accessed January 11, 2018, <http://www.seaninternational.com/courses.html>.

based on the Apostles' Creed should fill the gap that exists between the profession of faith, baptism, and membership at DKGC.

One of the problems in immigrant churches, and particularly Korean immigrant churches, is the role they play in immigrant life.¹⁵ Immigrant churches serve as a social network that tends to attract people who have never been to church before. Many of those who attend have no background in Christianity. Like their parents, many of the youth have not grown up in the church.¹⁶ The segregation of the youth from the main congregation further complicates the lack of a strong foundation. Having separate services for different age groups is a common practice in Korean-speaking congregations both in Korea and in America. In most cases, the parents and children part ways at the church door and do not interact with one another until they leave. This practice often leaves the young adults with the impression that church is a social club where the parents hang out with other Koreans, and they hang out with their Korean-American friends.

While the age-segregated service can be made more relevant to the youth, it also precludes any form of cross-generational interaction in the main congregation. In most congregations in Korea, even those with as few as fifty members, children or young adults rarely attend the main worship service. When Korean churches in America follow this model, the different shared cultural experience of the second generation further complicates the issue. The youth do not have the same experience as their parents, and they do not have the same experience as the majority culture. Many young second-generation Korean Americans face an identity crisis because they have trouble relating to their parents and do not feel like they entirely belong in mainstream white America. The practice of separate worship has contributed to the students feeling a sense of isolation or having trouble relating outside second-generation Asian immigrant groups. A study by

¹⁵ Park, *Singing the Lord's Praises*, 87-88.

¹⁶ In this project, *youth* refers to children from sixth through twelfth grades. This range comprises the youth group at DKGC.

Sharon Kim showed this problem in other congregations and it seems to be true at DKGC.¹⁷

The young people that grow up in Korean immigrant churches often have little knowledge about the faith they profess because they have spent their time in a children's ministry that often functions as Christian childcare. The emphasis seems to be simply sending the kids to another part of the church to keep them entertained while the adults participate in church the service. The children's church service begins around 10:30 a.m. with a movie. Movie time lasts until about 11:45 a.m. when they have a short Bible story time. Bible story time is followed by lunch together. Teachers stay with students until they go to Korean school, where the students learn Korean language, which usually runs from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

On the surface, the practice at DKGC is to keep kids happy and entertained. Little education is taking place, and because of the segregation, the children never really experience the adult worship service. Many of the sixth-grade students entering the youth group cannot even answer the most basic questions about the Bible. When asked which person performed a prominent act in the Bible, students rarely know. When asked who killed the giant named Goliath, most students are unable to answer. When asked the name of the person in the Bible who was thrown into the lion's den by his king, few students can answer. Fewer still can articulate even the most basic tenets of the Christian faith.

Currently, DKGC is not providing adequate teaching for the youth in the church. This lack of in-depth teaching is a bigger problem because many parents also lack the knowledge to teach their children at home. In addition, communication is often difficult because of language and cultural barriers that exist between the first and second

¹⁷ Sharon Kim speaks to several common problems of Korean churches, both inter-generationally as well as the unique power-seeking mentality. Sharon Kim, *A Faith of Our Own: Second Generation Spirituality in Korean American Churches* (Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 21-22.

generation.¹⁸ Both new members and the youth have a similar problem in their lack of basic biblical competency.

DKGC is failing in its calling to make disciples. Beyond the lack of education and dubious “conversion experience” of some of the new members, the church is not following Jesus’ command to make disciples by baptizing *and* teaching them to obey everything he commanded.¹⁹ People are becoming members of the church without fully understanding what it means to be a member of the church. Additionally, they lack the basic knowledge of what the church has confessed since her earliest days.²⁰

The church is also failing in its efforts to help parents raise their children in the Word of God. If parents lack this foundational understanding of Scripture, then they cannot teach their children.²¹ Not providing adequate teaching is a failing on the part of both parents and the church in the sense that at a baptism or child dedication both the parents and the church commit to raise children in accordance with Scripture.²² The church

¹⁸ Rebecca Kim, “Second-Generation Korean American Evangelicals: Ethnic, Multiethnic, or White Campus Ministries?” *Sociology of Religion* 65, no. 1 (March 2004): 19-34. For further support, see Christine J. Hong, *Identity, Youth, and Gender in the Korean American Church: Asian Christianity in the Diaspora* (New York: Palgrave, 2015). Kim and others offer general support to the claim that the second generation has difficulty connecting and relating to the adult members of the church.

¹⁹ Arland J. Hultgren, “Mission and Ministry in Matthew,” *Word and World* 18, no. 4 (1998): 344. Hultgren paraphrases Matthew’s record of the Great Commission in such a way that it reads more naturally to show that baptism and teaching are the dual tasks of disciple-making.

²⁰ An appeal to what the church has confessed from the earliest days assumes that the Apostles Creed is an accurate representation of the earliest confessional statements of the church as found in broad outline in early document like the *Didache*. Pardee writes, “The broad consensus today is for a first-century date. This could be as early as 50 . . . or as late as 80 or 90.” Nancy Pardee, *The Genre and Development of the Didache*, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 2 (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 50-52. For further support, see Thomas O’Laughlin, *The Didache: A Window on the Earliest Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 26.

²¹ The idea that parents should teach their children is based in the Old Testament assumption found in Deut 6:7, as well as Prov 22:6 and the affirmation at infant baptism or dedication services when the parents and church pledge to follow this teaching in raising the next generation.

²² The United Methodist Church Discipleship Ministries, “This Is Your Baptismal Liturgy,” February 15, 2013, <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/this-is-your-baptismal-liturgy>. The United Methodist Church website reads, “5. The pastor addresses parents or other sponsors of candidates not able to answer for themselves: Will you nurture these children (persons) in Christ’s holy Church, that by your teaching and example they may be guided to accept God’s grace for themselves, to profess their faith

is failing to fulfill her obligation in a more egregious way. First, DKGK is not adequately fulfilling its role of teaching the children. Second, by not training parents, the church is failing to provide the tools the parents, as disciples, should have been taught, and need to train their children. Third, the church is failing to follow through on its commitment to the children and its obligation to raise them as disciples.²³ People are becoming members of DKGK without a full understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus²⁴ and member of a local congregation, which is a local representation of the body of Christ.

Rationale

One of Jesus' last commands to his disciples was to make more disciples (Matt 28:18-20).²⁵ In the early church, the commission was carried out through baptizing and teaching.²⁶ While DKGK does an excellent job entering relationships with others²⁷ since

openly, and to lead a Christian life? I will." United Methodist Church, "This Is Your Baptismal Liturgy." United Methodist Church website continues,

Congregational response Section 5. PROMISES OF PARENTS AND SPONSORS. Baptized children are included in the church, but must be shaped into Christians. As parents and sponsors, we take responsibility to teach and exemplify the Christian faith, to see that children stay within the nurture of the church, and to guide them toward personal commitment to Christian discipleship. This is why the baptism of infants and young children is to be practiced only when their parents or sponsors are believing Christians and when there is commitment that these children will be brought up with intentional Christian education and formation in church and home. (United Methodist Church, "This Is Your Baptismal Liturgy")

²³ See the member and parent affirmation in the baptismal liturgy in The United Methodist Church, "This Is Your Baptismal Liturgy."

²⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 75-77. The sense here is what Bonhoeffer speaks of when he addresses the difference between those who count the cost and follow Jesus and those who do not.

²⁵ In chap. 2 is a focus on Matthew and Luke because the Great Commission provides a basis for teaching as part of the disciple-making process. Also, Luke begins with his stated purpose of affirming the tradition that Theopholis had received. DKGK also has a study on the life of Christ that is primarily focused on Matthew and Luke.

²⁶ Hultgren shows that the call to makes disciples was a call to baptize, a public statement that showed a change of allegiance and catechesis instruction in what Jesus taught. Hultgren, "Mission and Ministry in Matthew," 344. Simply, the commission was to make disciples by baptizing and teaching.

²⁷ Mark Dever addresses the fact that discipleship involves entering a relationship with the other, and it must be grounded in love; but this love is not just a love for the other it is founded in a love for

many of the people that come to this DKGC have never been to church before, DKGC needs to follow Jesus' commission by teaching youth and new members.²⁸ Some of the people who attend are not even believers, but the church quickly incorporates them into the membership through baptism without spending time to fully explain the implications of baptism and membership.²⁹ Unbelievers actively seeking out a church provides a unique opportunity to witness to people who would otherwise never listen to the gospel, however, having a church body that is so obviously a mixed body of believers and unbelievers also requires a greater emphasis on the message of the gospel and greater care when teaching what it means to be a church member, to be baptized, and to be a disciple of Jesus.

The course designed for this project was meant for believers, but unbelievers could also attend. Given the nature of this congregation and their mixed background, the church must be clear that baptism and church membership should be restricted to those who have professed faith in Jesus. If membership candidates have not made a profession of faith, then they cannot become a member of the church.³⁰ Likewise, for new believers, or those who may not have made a real profession of faith, the curriculum developed for

Christ. Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus*, 9Marks: Building Healthy Churches (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 35-36.

²⁸ Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 70-71. Packer claims that the Sunday School movement caused a serious decline in depth and breadth of biblical teaching and that catechism is biblical. The decline of deep and broad biblical teaching is a failure in implementation of the Sunday School movement, not a failure of Sunday School.

²⁹ The claim being made here is based on interaction and conversations with church members who have been asked to become members. One attendee recently commented that he was asked to translate the sermon to English, to which he responded with surprise, asserting that he was not even Christian.

³⁰ Ferguson, *The Early Church at Work and Worship*, 18. Ferguson looks at some of the earliest historical requirements for church membership. He shows that there is a well-documented, established tradition from the end of the second century, but there is also strong support for the claim that the tradition he refers to was established as early as the end of the first century.

this project was based on the Apostles' Creed and lays out the Christian faith clearly and helps them to better count the cost of discipleship.³¹

In the early church, both those seeking to enter the community of faith as well as those already a part of the community were instructed in the faith.³² In the same way, both newcomers who know nothing about Christianity as well as children of those who attend the church regularly need to have sound instruction about what Christians believe.

The goal of the curriculum developed for this project was to give Christians at DKGC the basic ability to articulate their faith. By addressing this problem systematically, the church builds a foundation for future teaching. By instructing students in basic doctrine, the church trains students in the way they should go, and students should have the ability to spot doctrinal errors at whatever church they attend in the future. The Apostles' Creed provides an outline not only for a confession of faith, but also shows the uniqueness of Christianity. It confesses the Triune God—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Apostles' Creed attests to the God who creates and gives life and it speaks to the promise of a new life. It confesses faith in both the person and work of Jesus Christ. The first three clauses are standard professions of faith at baptisms in the Methodist church. The profession made before baptism, and reaffirmed in the Apostles' Creed, provides a summary of what it means to be Christian. The Apostles' Creed can also be integrated into a bigger discipleship program because it provides a theological outline of the big story of the Bible.

³¹ Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, 57-79. In his chapter on the cost of discipleship, Bonhoeffer makes it clear the one needs to understand the “cost” of the commitment she or he is about to make. The cost cannot truly be considered if there is no knowledge of the commitment being made.

³² Gerhard Lohfink argues that the reason people were immediately admitted into fellowship and baptized in Acts was because they had a knowledge of the Old Testament and this was in a sense the catechesis required later of people from a pagan background with no base of knowledge. Gerhard Lohfink, *Does God Need the Church? Toward a Theology of the People of God* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 268.

There are three main reasons for choosing the Apostles' Creed as the basis for the curriculum developed for this project. First, it is an ecumenical document used by western confessing Christian churches. Given the ecumenical nature of DKGCC, as the church's Methodist affiliation, the Apostles' Creed fits best.³³ Second, the Apostles' Creed addresses some of the most important doctrines for believers. Third, the church corporately confessing its faith using the Apostles' Creed reinforces the teaching from the curriculum. Specifically, the Apostles' Creed shows two things that are relevant as a foundation for Christians to understand and articulate their faith. First, it shows what one must believe, minimally, to claim the name "Christian." Faith is articulated in a way that is held in distinction from what it means to be a Christian in relation to other religions, even those like Mormonism or Jehovah's Witnesses that claim to be Christian. It contains the doctrines of (1) Faith, (2) God the Father, (3) Creation and the Fall, (4) Jesus and the Incarnation, (5) Sin and the Suffering, Torture and Death of Jesus (The Substitutionary Atonement), (6) Resurrection—Vindication and First Fruits, (7) Ascension (8) Forgiveness, (Faith Revisited), (9) The Second Coming and Judgement, (10) Holy Spirit (and through this the trinity), (11) The Church and Communion, and (12) Eternal life. Second, corporately confessing the Apostles' Creed is meant to be a statement of faith and public profession of the faith.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to increase knowledge in new believers and youth at the Dayton Korean Grace church in Dayton, Ohio, using a catechism curriculum based on the Apostles' Creed. This will provide a strong theological foundation for the church's youth and new believers as a first step in the longer journey of discipleship and to incorporate them into church membership.

³³ The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed are the only creeds officially recognized by the United Methodist Church. The Apostles' Creed is confessed regularly as part of the worship service.

Goals

This project had three goals that were meant to address the need that exists and provide a foundation for the future and prepare students/participants³⁴ for their future.

1. The first goal was to assess current knowledge of students/participants in relation to basic tenets of the Christian faith as described in the Apostles' Creed.
2. The second goal was to develop a twelve-week catechism curriculum for youth and new Christians based on the Apostles' Creed to increase knowledge of the basic tenets of the Christian faith.
3. The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of basic Christian beliefs by implementing the catechism curriculum.

Research Methodology

The success of this project was determined by the extent that it satisfied the three goals. The first goal was to assess current knowledge of the students. To measure the first goal, a pre-test was given on the subject matter to be taught.³⁵ The pre-test results were recorded for comparison. One of the concerns before implementations was that based on the results of the pre-test, the curriculum may have needed to be adjusted based on the students' knowledge prior to the course. Since this course was designed for those with little to no knowledge about the Apostles' Creed or the doctrines contained therein, it was only a minor concern that any changes would be needed. If students had shown a deeper knowledge, based on the pre-test, then the course would have needed revision to include more in-depth exploration of the doctrines expressed in the Apostles' Creed.

The second goal was to develop a twelve-week catechism curriculum for youth and new Christians based on the Apostles' Creed to increase knowledge of the basic tenets of the Christian faith. The curriculum was developed for a young adult and new member catechism. Before beginning the course, the curriculum was reviewed with the

³⁴ The term *students/participants* is used interchangeably for the youth, young adults, and college students who participated in the curriculum based on the Apostles' Creed.

³⁵ All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

pastoral staff and elders based on the rubric for evaluation located in appendix 1, to assess whether the program adequately addresses the major themes that the church feels are necessary based on the Apostles' Creed. The curriculum was deemed ready for implementation when no areas were found to be either deficient or needing attention. If an area was found to be deficient, that section was revised and reassessed by the staff. If a section was considered to need attention, it was revised and reassessed if needed. If all areas were considered sufficient or better by three out of the four elders, then the unit was ready to be implemented.

The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of basic Christian beliefs. Once the course was completed, the same test was administered as a post-test so the results could be compared to the pre-test. The goal was considered met when there was a statistically significant increase from the pre-test results to the post-test results as measured by the *t*-test. For testing purposes, and so this evaluation could be conducted as a paired *t*-test, the students wrote their names on the pre-test as well as the post-test. When the data was compiled for the project, no names were included, just the test scores.

There was also a short introductory discussion before each class in which students would answer questions, based on the pre- and post-tests, as well as the teaching goals of the previous lesson. The discussion addressed the Christian faith, based on the Apostles' Creed. Most of the time was spent clarifying questions the students thought of after the previous unit. This questioning showed that they had been working toward memorizing the Apostles' Creed and were able to answer questions about the primary statements, such as giving a basic definition of the Trinity, or what is meant by "the holy catholic church." The review time also helped both students and the teacher to assess knowledge base in an ongoing way. This assessment helped to review the material already learned, to reinforce it, and to help identify any deficiencies to be addressed during the course.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms are used in the ministry project.

Catechism. The term *catechism* is used to refer to a formal course with the express purpose of teaching Christian doctrine. Historical examples of catechisms are the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Luther's Large and Small Catechism.³⁶ In this project, the word *catechism* moves away from the post-sixteenth century usage and focuses more on the early church use of catechesis. The catechism curriculum was based on propositions from the Apostles' Creed, and the students were expected to memorize the Creed as part of the course, but the lessons were more dialogical. The course was taught in twelve units. Each session began by reciting the Apostles' Creed. Each unit addressed a creedal statement³⁷ and the teaching time would begin with a creedal statement and a short, concise definition of the statement, and then the implications of the statement were explained. The creedal statement addressed in each unit was memorized, and students were able to explain what the statement meant in their own words based on the definition provided after each statement. The answers to the implications of the statement were not meant to be memorized, rather, expressed in the students' own words.

Catechesis. *Catechesis* is used in this project in the most basic sense to refer to the teaching of the good news of Jesus Christ. It is the organized teaching of doctrine that existed from the earliest days of the church.³⁸ For this project, *catechesis* is meant to be theological training in the basic tenets of Christianity. What sets it apart is the emphasis on foundational teaching in general doctrine, rather than a Bible study or topical studies.

³⁶ Warren, "Introductory Overview," in Warren, *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*, 29.

³⁷ For example, a creedal statement would be "I believe in God the Father Almighty."

³⁸ Justo Gonzales claims that there was an established tradition by the end of the second century, but there were also schools before the end of the second century. Justo L. González, *The History of Theological Education* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2015), 5. Folkemer is an older source but is still quoted frequently. He also supports an early formation of catechesis tradition. Folkemer, "A Study of the Catechumenate."

Korean immigrant churches. *Korean immigrant churches* is a term used to describe the church, and those like it, used as the basis for this study. Korean immigrant churches are distinct in that they are primarily composed of first-generation Korean immigrants and their children. They are distinct from second-generation Korean-American churches in demographics and language emphasis. Frequently, the term Korean-American churches has been used to describe these churches, however, with the emerging body of literature distinguishing between these “Korean-American” churches and “second-generation Korean-American churches a term that more clearly distinguishes this may be helpful. The term Korean-American also does not help to distinguish the large number of Koreans, that is those who still retain their Korean citizenship, who are not in fact Korean-American that attend these churches.

Four delimitations were placed on this project. The primary focus of chapter 2 is on the Great Commission in Matthew 28: 18-20 and the introductory material in the gospel of Luke 1: 1-4, along with Acts 2:41-42; 6:2-4. Chapter 2 is meant to establish a biblical mandate for teaching the faith. Supporting texts were used to further this thesis. The focus on the gospel texts is intentional in this project because the church uses a more advanced course that teaches the life of Jesus through the gospel and is meant to follow the curriculum developed for this project.

Chapter 3 is delimited to the history and development of the Apostles’ Creed. The discussion of the use of the Apostles’ Creed in pedagogy is included in this analysis but focused primarily on more contemporary sources and usage. The doctrines discussed in the curriculum were restricted to the Apostles’ Creed but were not an exhaustive analysis of all the doctrines within the Creed. The doctrines primarily discussed are limited to (1) Faith, (2) God the Father, (3) Creation and the Fall, (4) Jesus and the Incarnation, (5) Sin and the Suffering, Torture and Death of Jesus (The Substitutionary Atonement), (6) Resurrection—Vindication and First Fruits, (7) Ascension, (8) Forgiveness (Faith

Revisited), (9) The Second Coming and Judgment, (10) Holy Spirit, (11) The Church and Communion, and (12) Resurrection of the Body (Flesh) to Everlasting Life.³⁹

A further delimitation was that the course was a maximum of twelve weeks. It would be difficult to incorporate this course into the DKGK's calendar if the course were longer. The series that will follow this course is broken down into five courses that are each ten-weeks long.

The final delimitation for the course was that it was based on the Apostles' Creed and the doctrines addressed herein are meant to fit within the categories of the Creed. They were not exhaustive and were not meant to be an end to teaching. The doctrines were chosen because of their importance to articulate historical orthodoxy and to provide a basic knowledge for articulating faith and to ensure they have a basic understanding of the personal implications of sin, forgiveness, and the atonement. A further reason for choosing the doctrines outlined within the Apostles' Creed was that it is the minimum one needs to confess and still be within the bounds of historical orthodoxy.

Two limitations applied to this project. First, the accuracy of the results of the surveys were affected by the willingness to honestly answer the questions. If students did not honestly evaluate the project, then the outcomes would not be accurate. The surveys were anonymous, but anonymity cannot guarantee honest answers. Second, attendance and weekly completion of the work could have affected the test results for the post-test. If students were not actively engaged in the teaching session and did not answer the questions on the student sheet, then they would have had lower scores on the post-test. Likewise, the pre-test depended on an honest effort on the part of the participants. If the students did not try to accurately answer the questions, then the pre-test evaluation would have been inaccurate.

³⁹ See appendix 9 for a scope and sequence that describes these topics in more detail.

Conclusion

Jesus commissioned his disciples with the task of making more disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything he had commanded them. Jesus' commission, or the Great Commission, marked the beginning of the church's role of catechizing new believers. From the very beginning, the church was to teach new believers, which involved the teaching of biblical doctrine. The Apostles' Creed is representative of the teaching of the earliest Christian communities and provides a basis for the teaching the church was commanded to pass on when Jesus gave the disciples their final commission.

CHAPTER 2

THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL TEACHING ON DISCIPLE-MAKING THROUGH BAPTISM AND TEACHING IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus commissions his disciples to make more disciples by baptizing and teaching.¹ Since that commissioning, the church has carried out his command through teaching that was first based on an oral tradition and then based on formal written instruction. When Luke gives the purpose for writing his Gospel, it is not just to restate the tradition but to confirm the veracity of the teaching handed down to Theophilus (Luke 1:1-4).² In wording his introduction in this way, Luke was restating the tradition while implicitly affirming that the church was already attempting to carry out the commission, though to what extent it is uncertain, it is clear that the emphasis was on a written account that with the oral tradition was more formal. Finally, in the book of

¹ Matthean authorship is assumed for two main reasons. First, the early church quickly ascribed authorship to Matthew and his authorship was universally accepted. Second, with few exceptions, modern scholarship continues to attribute the book to Matthew the tax collector, disciple of Jesus. For a more detailed discussion, see W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew*, The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 7-57.

² Rick Strelan, *Luke the Priest: The Authority of the Author of the Third Gospel* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), 110-12. Bruce gives a basic summary of the rationale for Lukan authorship while pointing out that Luke is mentioned in Paul's letter to the Philippians as a travel companion. The question of authorship is both a minor and a major issue. It is major in the sense that the author was a traveling companion of Paul and was familiar with Paul's emphasis on sound catechesis or teaching. It is minor in the sense that the exact identity of the author does not change the importance of the "we" sections as they attest to the early missionary work of the apostle Paul. As a traveling companion of the apostle Paul, Luke would have likely had little doubt of the necessity of sound instruction. He sees Paul's practice of establishing elders, and in their qualifications he sees the importance of the teaching of the Word. This is also the exact story Luke relates in Acts 6. F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1990), 3-5.

Acts,³ specifically 2:41-42 and 6:2, 4, it is shown how the commission was carried out and just how important the ministry of the Word or the apostolic teaching (διδασκαλίαν τῶν ἀποστόλων) was with relation to other areas of church ministry. The two works of Luke and Acts are, in a sense, clarification of how the tradition that was received by Theophilus was handed down and was the same tradition the apostles taught.⁴

Baptizing and Teaching: Disciple-Making in Practice

Matthew's Gospel ends with what may be the summary of the entire message. There is widespread consensus that the key to understanding the whole of Matthew's Gospel is found in the final missional imperative of Matthew 28:18-20.⁵ This is plausible given the focus of the command that Jesus gives his disciples in Matthew's conclusion. Because the final commission is believed to be a summary of the gospel, Matthew has been called a book of disciple-making or a manual of discipleship because of the style in which it was written, naturally lends itself to teaching.⁶ The emphasis on discipleship

³ Keener shows that the first two chapters of the book of Acts function as an introduction. The introduction is meant to serve as an introduction to Luke's second volume of his two works of Luke and Acts. In Acts, the first chapter (1:1-11) serves as a recapitulation of the final chapter of Luke. Craig S. Keener, *Acts 1:1-2:47*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 1:647-48. See also Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*. The significance of Keener's and Bruce's works cannot be overstated. A summary of Keener's work could simply function as half the content of the present chapter. Palmer provides further support by offering Acts as a historical book that shows the work of the church from its earliest days as being a disciple-making endeavor. Darryl W. Palmer, "Acts and the Ancient Historical Monograph," in *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, ed. Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clarke (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 1:1-30. For a general assessment based in some of the earliest literature concerning Matthew, Luke, and Acts, see Edmond L. Gallagher and John D. Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity: Texts and Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 30-39.

⁴ Richard Baukham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 104-36.

⁵ Charles Talbert, *Matthew*, Paideia (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 24. Talbert points out that numerous other scholars, likely the majority, believe that the final commission is the key to understanding the entire gospel, though Talbert himself disagrees with the position.

⁶ Anna Case-Winters, *Matthew*, Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible (Louisville: Westminster, 2015), 1-20. D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 9 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 44-49. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 1-4.

may be difficult to see in the English because the commissioning story in 28:18-20 begins with the transitive verb “go.”⁷ What then looks like a command to go is followed by the conjunction “and,” which can lead the reader to believe the emphasis is on the command to “go.” The Greek begins with a word often translated as “go,” but that is not the central focus of the passage. More recently, the scholarly focus has rightly shifted to acknowledge that the real focus of this section is on disciple-making instead of going.⁸ The verse includes an emphasis on the idea of going to the nations, but the main idea is found elsewhere.⁹ In the understanding suggested here, *going* is required if disciples are to be made, and *baptizing* and *teaching* are the means by which disciples (teachers) make new disciples. It is more holistic, and discipleship is the ultimate goal. This analysis of Matthew 28:18-20 will show how the commission is an authorization to go and make disciples of the nations by baptizing and teaching them to obey all Jesus had commanded. The call to go to the nations must not be neglected, but like baptizing and teaching, it falls under the scope of the commission to make disciples. The possibility to carry out this commission in its fullness comes from the authority and promise of continued presence that Jesus promises his first disciples and all future disciples to the end of the age.

⁷ The NIV begins with “therefore go.” Considering the wording of the English translation, it can be assumed that “go” takes on the imperative force but is not the imperative verb, “making disciples” is. Going over great geographical distances may not be required. D. A. Carson, *Matthew and Mark*, in vol. 9 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 665-67.

⁸ Bosch shows the Matthean emphasis in David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2011), 81-83. Seventeenth-century Anabaptist missions emphasized going, which angered the Lutheran reformers who emphasized parishes, ecclesial offices, and the notion that the Great Commission was no longer binding. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 243-48. William Carey is often credited with the shift to going and proclaiming rather than making disciples, but Bosch believes that, while influential, Carey’s shift is not wholly responsible for this turn. Bosch’s work is often seen as causing a paradigm shift in missiology, but it is still unclear whether the shift has had much success in finding widespread application outside the academy. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 340-42.

⁹ John Michael Morris, “Contrasting Missiological Positions in Regard to Matthew 28:20,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 57, no. 1 (Fall 2014): 87-101. Morris provides a detailed view of major competing ideas, but neither position excludes the idea that disciple-making is primary; rather, he addresses how disciplined a disciple should be.

The final statement¹⁰ that Jesus makes to his disciples can be better understood as three main ideas that form an ABA pattern, and looks something like this:

A And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (v. 18)

B Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you (vv. 19-20a)

A And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (v. 20b)¹¹

In the ABA format, 18 and 20b frame the commission that Jesus gives his disciples; however, it should be understood that 18 and 20b provide the foundation and possibility for the formal commissioning found in 19-20a. These two framing sentences provide the basis for and possibility of carrying out the commission.¹²

In the first half of verse 18, Jesus takes all the initiative in approaching and speaking to his disciples. There is a dual emphasis on the speech or maybe more appropriately the command that Jesus is about to issue to his disciples.¹³ This section begins with Jesus coming to the disciples, and the section ends with the promise of his continuing presence. There is a reiteration of the idea of Jesus speaking in the ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς λέγων. He came to them, and Jesus spoke saying to them. In this sense, the λέγω may be referring to a command.¹⁴ In other words, Jesus came and spoke to his disciples

¹⁰ This section seems to extend from 28:16-20; however, the focus of the exegesis and most works focus on the commissioning proper found in 28:18-20.

¹¹ This verse is not likely a chiasm, but rather a ABA pattern given the grammatical and structural emphasis on disciple-making. A chiasm would seem to place the emphasis on baptism. See Grant R. Osborne and Clinton E. Arnold, *Matthew*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 9.

¹² Talbert, *Matthew*, 23-24. David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 46, 689.

¹³ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1112.

¹⁴ The idea that the author is emphasizing Jesus' authority comes from the fact that there is a double reference to Jesus speaking, with the λέγω followed by the inferential οὖν linking the command λέγω that links his authority to the command that will follow. This word structure does occur elsewhere in

and he commanded them, followed by a statement of his authority, followed by “therefore” (οὖν) to draw attention to the authority given to him followed by the imperative command to make disciples.¹⁵ If this is the case, then the statement of authority begins with Jesus issuing a command to his disciples, followed by his claim to authority. By stating the requirement to make disciples in light of his authority, and reinforcing the contingency of the command by once again basing it in his authority and showing the possibility through his continued presence, Jesus’ authority becomes a central issue.

Since Jesus makes the command to make disciples contingent on his authority,¹⁶ it is necessary to begin by looking at the issue of Jesus’ claim to authority. After a not so subtle affirmation of Jesus divinity in verse 17 (only God is worthy as the object of worship),¹⁷ Jesus affirms that they are correct in worshipping him by stating that all authority (πᾶσα ἐξουσία) on heaven and earth has been given over to him. Jesus’ claim to all authority in heaven and earth is bound to the exalted authority he now possesses, as Jesus is now the mediator of the Father’s authority.¹⁸ The universal nature of Jesus’ authority shows there is a universal nature to his mission. The authority allows Jesus to confer authority to teach and baptize to the disciples. If this authority were lacking, the command would likewise not have universal authority. The command that begins with λέγω and connects to the next section with οὖν binds his present and future disciples to

καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς λέγων (Matt 28:18). See also Matt 13.3, 14.27, 23,1-2 for similar claims to authority. France, *Matthew*, 1113.

¹⁵ Osborne and Arnold, *Matthew*, 1079. Charles L. Quarles, *Matthew: Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament* (Nashville: B & H, 2017), 351.

¹⁶ Authority and its connection to Jesus is an important theme for Matthew. In most cases Jesus’ relation to divine authority is in question, but in the end it becomes quite clear (Matt 4:8-9, 9:8, 11:27, 13:37-43, 21:23).

¹⁷ John Paul Heil, *The Gospel of Matthew: Worship in the Kingdom of Heaven* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 149. Heil makes a further connection to the disciples’ earlier affirmation of Jesus’ divinity in Matt 4:33.

¹⁸ France, *Matthew*, 731-33. France connects the exalted Son of Man from Dan 7:13-14, with the commission scene. See also Heil, *Matthew*, 150.

the task of disciple-making as the final command issued by the Lord, to whom all disciples for all times are to express their allegiance.¹⁹ The authority is universal and therefore extends to all nations. The framework for the commission then stands under the call to a universal mission to make disciples of all the nations with a promise of continued presence. The two phrases marked by beginning καὶ, that seem to frame the command itself, are used as a tool to draw attention to two important claims that are necessary for the mission to be carried out. It begins with “and Jesus came to them” and it ends with a promise that he will be with them. The καὶ at the beginning of verse 18 begins the statement of Jesus’ claim to all authority.

If the καὶ at the beginning in verse 18 marks the beginning of a new sentence in which Jesus shows his universal authority, then the καὶ at the end marks a new sentence that frames the commission by stating his continued presence. The commission proper is concluded with the promise in 20b that Jesus will be with them always. The commission then is framed before and after with dual promises—first, one attesting to the divine power of the son. The second claim is that he will be with them, always ensuring the power of his presence until the end of the age.²⁰ Jesus’ claim to authority is both confirming the act of worship and assuaging the fears that some disciples display in verse 17. The continued presence is reminiscent of the omnipresence associated with the Father, as well as a continuation of the promise made at the annunciation of Jesus’ birth. He will be called Immanuel or God with us (Matt 1:23) The power and authority to carry out the mission are present with the disciples through the continued presence of the Son.²¹

¹⁹ Quarles, *Matthew*, 351. This expression of allegiance on the part of disciples is reinforced again later in and through the act of baptism. France, *Matthew*, 1118.

²⁰ Turner, *Matthew*, 46, 689-90. Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 360. France sees this claim of authority and presence as not only restating Jesus’ authority but passing on the authority and new role of teacher to the disciples. France, *Matthew*, 91-92.

²¹ France, *Matthew*, 731-33, 1113-14.

The universal nature of this mission is reinforced by the repetitive use throughout this section of the word $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma, \pi\tilde{\alpha}\sigma\alpha, \pi\tilde{\alpha}\nu$, which occurs four times in the conclusion of Matthew's Gospel.²² In the first three instances it is translated as "all" with the final occurrence being "always." For flow in the English, the literal "all the days" is rendered as "always" for obvious reasons. However, the phrase $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha\varsigma \tau\grave{\alpha}\varsigma \eta\mu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha\varsigma$, which is usually translated in English as "always," would be better translated as "the whole of every day."²³ It may have been the intention of the author to not just express the universal nature of the mission, but also the sense of wholeness or fullness.²⁴ The rendering of this as "always" may flow better but does not have the same dramatic effect. The repetition and emphasis along with the urgency expressed in the commission itself is meant to show the universal nature of the mission. It also adds to the impossible nature of the mission. How are the disciples to go to all nations for the fullness of all days to the end of the age without making disciples and without the continued presence of their Lord?

When Jesus gave his disciples their new mission they were presented with a near impossible task. One difficulty of this mission is that it continues for an undisclosed length of time, leaving the disciples with no option other than producing new disciples to carry on the task. With the commission standing between these two complimentary claims that affirm the authority of Jesus as well as his continued presence, the $\text{o}\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$ is inferential connecting the previous statement of authority with the commission that follows. It is also necessary to keep in mind Jesus' claims to authority are not something new and are a theme that Matthew likes to emphasize concerning Jesus (Matt 7:29; 8:9; 9:6,8; 10:1; 21:23-27) What makes an apparently impossible task possible is that now the authority given to Jesus by the Father is clear and focused and conferred to the disciples as the role

²² Carson, *Matthew*, 18.

²³ Osborne and Arnold, *Matthew*, 1082.

²⁴ Osborne and Arnold, *Matthew*, 1082.

of teachers.²⁵ It is the end of Jesus' physical presence on earth and his presence in his church through the Holy Spirit. The task of making obedient disciples through baptizing and teaching is given to his disciples who will now likewise go and make obedient disciples by baptizing and teaching.

Once it is obvious that the beginning and end serve to frame the commission, it draws the reader to the central focus of the commission in the single word μαθητεύσατε (make disciples). The word μαθητεύσατε that is translated in English as "make disciples" is in the imperative. The use of the imperative form makes it the central command and is also the word that λέγω anticipates.²⁶ The use of the imperative of "make disciples" leads to a focus on the end goal of the disciples' mission, which is to make disciples of the nations, rather than on the means, of making disciples, which is to go, baptize, and teach. Go, (Πορευθέντες), as a commission, seems lacking when considering the universal nature of the mission.²⁷ Going cannot be an end in itself either, so the reader can either understand the three clauses go, baptize, and teach as being dependent upon the imperative, make disciples, or it could be understood as "go and make disciples." In the latter understanding, the imperative is connected to go, while baptizing and teaching are the way in which disciples are made. There has been a great deal of exegesis done on this passage, but also a great deal of eisegesis, which makes a clear reading that is free from all the previous baggage difficult.²⁸

²⁵ France, *Matthew*, 90-91.

²⁶ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, 768.

²⁷ Curtis Mitch and Edward P. Sri, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 590-91.

²⁸ Robert D. Culver provides a detailed analysis of the commission at many points and does so in dialogue with past misconceptions in *A Greater Commission: The Broad Range of the Scriptural Mandate for World Evangelism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001). Bosch also provides a great resource for examining past and present tradition in *Transforming Mission*.

With two obvious readings available, the central question is not whether the focus is on evangelizing or disciple-making²⁹—the centrality of disciple-making is obvious—the question is how disciple-making should be understood with relation to the three participles that accompany the disciple-making command (μαθητεύσατε).³⁰ Applying the imperative form of μαθητεύσατε to the three participles in this passage leads to interpreting the participles as one set of imperatives in which Jesus is essentially telling his disciples to go, disciple, baptize, and teach, with each participle taking on an imperative, command-like function.

As an alternative to interpreting all the participles as imperative, a more promising option is to see the commission as one imperative statement with two participles that provide the methodology, or means, for the process of disciple-making.³¹ It is worth noting that μαθητεύσατε is a distinctly Matthean term. It occurs in 13:52 and 27:57. The only other occurrence is Acts 14:20-21. In each case is a similar construction illustrated in the context of Paul making disciples. In Paul’s context there is a sense of urgency to the command, but the act of making disciples is a longer process; it is not just about going, it is about dwelling. The emphasis is on going and making disciples, but the means of disciple-making is a process that takes time and requires continued presence.

Whether the commission sentence is understood with all three participles “go, baptize, and teach” taking on the imperative or just the participle “go” taking on the

²⁹ Evangelizing is implied in Matt 28:18-20 because one cannot begin the process of discipleship if he or she does not first hear the call to discipleship. In Matthew’s Gospel it is clear that disciple-making involves a holistic ministry that includes moral as well as ethical teaching. A type of anti-prosperity gospel in which the marginalized are blessed. Case-Winters, *Matthew*, 14-15.

³⁰ Hagner claims that “the participles when linked with the imperative verb themselves take on imperatival force and function as imperatives.” Donald Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33B (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 882.

³¹ Dennis C. Duling, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 300; France, *Matthew*, 19; Blomberg, *Matthew*, 433. If the main point is to make disciples, then teaching is just one aspect of what it means to make disciples. It is not meant to be an end but one part of the overall act of disciple-making. Making disciples involves evangelism, baptism, teaching, and living. Disciple-making must be balanced and holistic.

imperative, the central focus of the imperative “make disciples” cannot be extricated from the means of baptizing and teaching. The text should not be misread as “go and make disciples” in the sense that transforms *going* into the primary focus. Likewise, since there is little doubt that the participle “go” takes on the imperative of the command, the commission to make disciples involves getting outside the church.³² Even if it is more likely that “go” and “make disciples” are joined and form a single imperative statement, they are still closely connected to mean baptizing and teaching as the functional imperatives, or the how of disciple-making.³³ In other words, disciples must be made and the way disciples are made is by baptizing and teaching as a necessity. For Matthew, going and making disciples involves going out and bringing in new disciples who can be taught to go out and make new disciples. According to Matthew’s Gospel, disciples cannot be made and the commission cannot be fulfilled if there is not baptizing and teaching, and disciples cannot continue to make disciples if the commission does not continue with each following generation.

After the command and the means are established in the first half of the verse, the nature of the disciple is further clarified. While the command in this section is to go and make disciples, with the how being by baptizing them and teaching them, it must be remembered that the true disciple is obedient to the commands of Jesus (Matt 28:20). Disciple-making involves much more than passing on a set of traditions but truly following the commands of Jesus. Teaching in this context is not just an expectation to know about Jesus, it is about being in a relationship with him that requires obedience. This emphasis

³² Carson, *Matthew*, 666. and France, *Matthew*, 90. Participles before the imperative almost always take on the imperative form, while this is not always the case with participles that follow the imperative.

³³ Matt 28:19-20 is literally the textbook example of this grammatical structure. The participles may be taken as expressing attendant circumstances and translated as imperatives or as modal, explaining how disciples are made. Wallace takes πορευθέντες as indicating attendant circumstances and βαπτίζοντες and διδάσκοντες as modal. Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 628-29, 640-45.

on obedience is nothing new (Matt 5:18-19; 19:17; 22:36-40; 23:10), but now obedience finds both focus and possibility in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The task of disciple-making cannot be completed by just going and evangelizing.³⁴ Disciple-making requires the teacher to focus on the deeper development of individuals—entering a relationship and dwelling—in (and as) the presence of Christ with the other and for the other. The continued presence as a transformative aspect of ministry seems more in line with Jesus’ project as a whole in Matthew’s account and it fits with the end being the summary of the gospel as a whole.³⁵ What is interesting, however, is that the project does not change whether all three participles are imperative, or only the participle “go” takes on the imperative.

In the end, it may not be the universal task of going to all nations for all time that proves to be the most difficult task; what may prove most difficult is the task of teaching new believers to obey. Traveling great distances to proclaim the gospel gets easier all the time and people can learn languages. People can also teach languages and exegesis, but obedience, at least the true obedience that the father desires, must originate in the calling that comes from Jesus, which is the true mark of a disciple.³⁶ In the end, it reminds the reader once again that making disciples that obey all that Jesus commanded requires the continued presence and power of Jesus that he promises to his disciples and each generation of new disciples until the completion of the fulness of days.

³⁴ Carson provides a detailed assessment of Matthew’s idea of mission. There is also a clear foreshadowing of this coming commission and the necessity of evangelism found in Matt 24:14. The text also shows the universal expectation that will come with the future mission that is lacking while Jesus is still with his disciples. Carson, *Matthew*, 29.

³⁵ Talbert claims that most authors see Matthew’s commissioning as being definitive of the whole gospel, though Talbert disagrees. Talbert, *Matthew*, 24.

³⁶ See Matthew’s account of the immediate obedience of the first disciples called in Matt 4:18-22, as well as Matt 12:49 for what constitutes a true disciple.

This brings the reader back to the first act of obedience in the form of baptizing new believers in the name of the triune God.³⁷ There is much discussion concerning the origin of this trinitarian statement, but there is no reason based solely on textual evidence to believe it was a later introduction.³⁸ The form of this baptism (Βαπτω) is difficult to assess. The two most likely origins are in either proselyte baptism or baptism practiced by John the baptizer.³⁹ In chapter 3, Jesus' baptism was carried out by John, and there was the presence of Father, Son, and Spirit. It is likely that the baptism referred to here is akin to the baptism of John in that it involves repentance, but now its fullness is available through the person and work of Jesus Christ. In this sense, the triune formula would be essential to Christian baptism.⁴⁰ It is further an expression of obedience to the commission itself as the symbol that visibly expresses obedience to the Lord that issues the command to all disciples for all times. The word *order* here is worth considering. Baptism comes before the teaching to obey. In this sense, the act of obedience and public act of declaring allegiance to the triune God as the first act of discipleship occurs before they are taught to obey everything Jesus had commanded.⁴¹ The practice of teaching before baptism may have become necessary once the gospel began to spread beyond

³⁷ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 954

³⁸ Quarles, *Matthew*, 351; France, *Matthew*, 1118; Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, 689.

³⁹ Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1964), s.v. "Βαπτω." See also Rudolph Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Scribner, 1950), 40; Nils A. Dahl, quoted in Arland Hultgren, "Baptism in the New Testament: Origins, Formulas, and Metaphors," *Word and World* 14, no. 1 (Winter 1994): 6-11. It is important to consider Matthew's own account of Jesus' baptism in chap. 3 that likewise includes this trinitarian affirmation in the presence of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

⁴⁰ Everett Ferguson, *The Early Church at Work and Worship*, vol. 2, *Catechesis, Baptism, Eschatology, and Martyrdom* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 74.

⁴¹ The question that arises later is about the long periods of catechesis that happened before Christian baptism and emerged in the first few centuries. Some of the earliest records outside the New Testament place the teaching first.

Jewish circles and extend to those who had no foundation in the moral/ethical teaching of Judaism.

While the *order* may indicate the relative relationship between baptism and teaching, it might not indicate an absolute relative order between baptism and teaching. The practice of the early church tended toward longer periods of catechesis before baptism.⁴² Longer periods of catechesis insured that the new believers understood the implications of baptism. In the account of Phillip and the Ethiopian eunuch, this concern can be seen in the fact that Phillip first explained how the Scriptures pointed to Jesus and that the Eunuch understood the content of the teaching before Phillip led him in the water and baptized him. This account may be a basis for adding a period of instruction before baptism, albeit a short one.⁴³ What is evident in this commission is that disciples are those who here understand and obey.⁴⁴ An incomplete understanding of particular aspects of the faith may be further reason for making sure baptismal candidates fully grasp what they are committing their lives to since baptism is a public statement of obedience and allegiance to Jesus.

Interestingly, the story ends with the disciples standing on the mountain. Mark concludes by having the disciples go and preach everywhere. In his gospel, Luke has the disciples return to Jerusalem to wait for the spirit before continuing the story of the disciples in his second volume of Acts. What, if anything, is the significance of Matthew ending here? Is it to show that there is no central place for worship now but rather a central person? Not a temple but a messiah? Is it to anticipate the spread of the good

⁴² Ferguson looks at some of the earliest historical requirements for church membership. He shows that there is a well-documented, established tradition from the end of the second century, but also strong support for the claim that this was established as early as the end of the first century. Ferguson, *The Early Church*, 18-51.

⁴³ In that account, Phillip explains from Scripture how Jesus was in fact the Messiah, and once there was a clear understanding of this, he was baptized.

⁴⁴ Crucial to this understanding is Matt 12:46-50.

news to the nations? Moses, in contrast, received the Law, went down the mountain, and commissioned a new place to worship. The disciples end on the mountain, the new commission is to make disciples, and the new law is the content of Jesus' teaching. Matthew ends with expectation of continued disciple-making that extends to the end of the earth and until the end of days. With it is a promise of continued presence. It is unfulfilled but loaded with the expectation of a great work of disciple-making that will see the nations obedient to the Son. The fulfillment is only possible through his continued presence and power.

The Tradition Handed Down and the Commission Fulfilled in Luke-Acts

While the Gospel of Matthew ends with the command to begin making disciples of all the nations, the Gospel of Luke begins with the assumption that the task of disciple-making is well under way. While Luke states his purpose explicitly in his introduction, he shows three things that are both obvious and implied. First, he is writing to people that have already heard the gospel. Second, the Jesus tradition was already well-known and written and oral traditions existed. Finally, he is writing to prove that this tradition is true and that he is part of that tradition.

What is not immediately evident in the English and is further complicated by the fact that this section is split into four verses, is that the introduction to Luke (vv. 1-4) is one extended sentence. It outlines the purpose of the letter, which is to confirm the tradition that has been taught to Theophilus from the beginning. There is a parallel between the tradition handed down and what Luke is setting his hand to writing down. Luke is writing a narrative that includes, expands, and affirms with certainty the previous telling of the story of the person and work of Jesus Christ. This can be seen in the parallel between 1:1-2 and 1:3-4.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Richard J. Dillon, "Previewing Luke's Project from His Prologue (Luke 1:1-4)," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (April 1981): 205-27; Darrell L. Bock, "Understanding Luke's Task:

- a Inasmuch as many have undertaken (1:1)
 - b to compile a narrative of the things (1:1)
 - c just as those . . . delivered to us, (1:2)
- a it seemed good to me also, (1:3)
 - b to write an orderly account for you (1:3)
 - c that you may have certainty in the catechized word (1:4)⁴⁶

The parallels hint to Luke’s attempt at both continuity and veracity. He places his work in line with that which has already been taught.⁴⁷ Luke is also doing something different in that unlike some other accounts his narrative extends beyond the life of Christ to show the continued work of Christ through his disciples and the power of the Spirit. What is at stake is the continuation of the tradition that passes on the good news of Jesus.

Luke’s introduction also contains elements that are familiar to his readers. The introduction is said to be in the line of the classical Greek introductions. While this may be true, it is also in line with the biblical prophets. Isaiah and John both contain prologues, though categorically different. In line with ancient prefaces, Luke includes reference to works that precede his, the subject he addresses, his qualifications, plan, and purpose, and finally, the name of the person addressed.⁴⁸ But it is also categorically different from ancient works in that Luke is not just writing historiography.⁴⁹ Like the prophets, Luke has been and is being shaped by his message and is also deeply and personally involved in the work.⁵⁰

Carefully Building on Precedent (Luke 1:1-4),” *Criswell Theological Review* 5, no. 2 (1991): 183-202.

⁴⁶ All Scripture quotations from the English Standard Version.

⁴⁷ Michael Wolter, *The Gospel according to Luke*, trans. Wayne Coppins and Christoph Heilig, Baylor-Mohr Siebeck Studies in Early Christianity (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 31-34.

⁴⁸ Mikeal C. Parsons, *Luke*, Paideia (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015), 25; Strelan, *Luke the Priest*, 110-12

⁴⁹ I. Howard Marshall, “Acts and the Former Treatise”; Winter and Clarke, *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*, 163-82; Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 20-31.

⁵⁰ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 31.

Luke's prologue outlines the purpose of his letter, which is to convince the most excellent Theophilus of the truth in which he has been instructed.⁵¹ The question of whether Theophilus is an individual or not is irrelevant to the work at hand, but it is important to at least mention that if this is not an individual, which many have claimed, then Luke is writing his letter to all those who fear God.⁵² If he is writing for an individual, then it is one who fears God. In either case, it is clear that the assumption that the audience was familiar with the story of Jesus and that further assurance of the facts they already knew was in order.⁵³

Returning to the introduction proper, the first word, *Ἐπειδήπερ*, which is usually translated "inasmuch," is a casual conjunction that usually refers to something

⁵¹ It is the assumption here that Bauckham is correct in his claim that there was not likely an intended audience in the Pauline sense of a particular church or congregation. Rather, it is a more generic audience. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 98. Stein explains that while an individual, Theophilus, is named, there is some debate as to who Luke wrote the gospel for. Generally, the chief assumptions can be reduced to two ideas: he wrote for a wealthy benefactor, or to all those who fear God in a broad sense and Theophilus is a pseudonym for anyone who fears God. While this debate is interesting, it does little to influence the understanding of Luke's purpose in writing or the assumption that the reader had received some form of previous instruction. This could have been an actual individual, or it could have been a generic address to anyone who reading this text. What is important is the assumption that this Theophilus had already received some instruction in the good news about Jesus. If either the former or the latter is true, then the intended audience is one who has already been informed about the story of this Jesus person to some extent. It may also be that the reader could be in need of more instruction or simply an affirmation that what he had been taught was indeed true. Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: B & H, 1992), 20.

⁵² The idea that Theophilus was a generic address to all who believe is popular in the academy but was seen early on in both Ambrose and Origen. Arthur Just, *Luke*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament, vol. 3 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2003), 56. It has also been proposed that Theophilus was a Roman official (Stein, *Luke*, 20); a wealthy Greek-speaking person probably a gentile (John T. Carroll and Jennifer K. Cox, *Luke*, New Testament Library [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012], 4); or all Christians (Wolter, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 26).

⁵³ Bock argues that Luke is referring to previous instruction that Theophilus had received. The belief is that catechesis was already standard in the church at the writing of Luke's gospel and he was reaffirming the tradition in which Theophilus was trained. Based on the author's stated purpose for writing the book of Luke and the command of Jesus in Matthew's narrative, it appears that people were already taking responsibility for carrying out the commission before Luke began his narrative task. Luke offers his reaffirmation of Christian teaching based on the knowledge that Theophilus has been previously instructed. Bock, "Understanding Luke's Task," 187.

that is already known.⁵⁴ It may be telling that the first word is used in relation to what is already known by the intended audience. It is possible that Luke proceeds to reinforce what is already known by pointing out the masses (πολλοί)⁵⁵ that have undertaken (ἐπεχείρησαν)⁵⁶ the work of recounting the story of Jesus Christ. This combination is important because it makes it clear that this work was not written as an evangelistic tract—it was addressed to believers already familiar with the Jesus tradition.⁵⁷ Luke’s work is meant to minister in some way to those who are already Christians but may need further assurance of what they have been taught.

One question that immediately needs to be addressed concerning Luke’s purpose is whether he is critical of the tradition that already exists. Some believe that Luke’s use of “undertaken” (ἐπεχείρησαν) indicates that he is critical of those works that came before him.⁵⁸ The word itself can either be neutral or negative.⁵⁹ The word has been literally taken as meaning “to set one’s hand to (do something).”⁶⁰ The fact that Luke uses the same word on two other occasions, once in Acts 9:29 and again at 19:13, is seen by some as evidence that points to a possible solution. In both instances the word reflects a failed attempt, first to kill Paul and later to drive out demons. Three possible interpretations are

⁵⁴ Wolter, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 44.

⁵⁵ Fitzmyer shows that Luke’s use of “masses” may be a rhetorical device to emphasize that the message of his gospel was already a widely known fact, or it may be referring to Mark, Q, or a primitive Lukan source. Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, Anchor Bible, vol. 28 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), 290.

⁵⁶ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 292. Fitzmyer shows three possible uses for the word ἐπεχείρησαν that will be addressed in detail later in this chapter.

⁵⁷ Stein further adds to the discussion of the audience the claim that many of the ideas expressed throughout Luke would have been foreign to non-believers or those unfamiliar with the Jesus tradition and would have required further clarification for an unfamiliar audience. Stein, *Luke*, 21.

⁵⁸ Francois Bovon, *Luke*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 16.

⁵⁹ Carroll and Cox, *Luke*, 18; Darrell Bock, *Luke*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 51.

⁶⁰ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 290.

presented. First, Luke is claiming that the previous attempts at transmission, both oral and written, were unsuccessful.⁶¹ Second, that the previously written attempts were not successful, while the oral tradition, which was handed down by the eyewitnesses is still reliable and based on that account, Luke is writing his account so that Theophilus can be certain of the truth he has been taught.⁶² Finally, Luke finds nothing *prima facie* unreliable about the previous attempts, nor do they lack in what is necessary for basic instruction in the faith; rather, Luke finds himself in continuity with the tradition, written and oral, handed down to Theophilus⁶³ and is simply gathering as much information as is available and presenting it in an orderly fashion.⁶⁴ One addition that may further nuance the argument is that Luke may intend to continue his gospel beyond what has been recorded in the other written accounts and preserve a record of the work of the early church through the Holy Spirit after Christ's exultation.

Given the fact that Luke is not explicitly disparaging the previous attempts coupled with his use of the comparative "just as" (καθὼς), he is likely placing the compilers in harmony with the eyewitnesses.⁶⁵ It also seems likely, given the larger

⁶¹ Bovon believes that while Luke is showing his work in light of the others before him, the purpose of referencing the other works is to show the superiority of his account. For Bovon, Luke sees his work as a more orderly and accurate presentation of the written and oral source materials. While possible, Bovon's view seems to discount the desire to affirm the tradition and places too much weight on the assumed meaning of καθεξής—a word of which the exact meaning is not clear in this case. It cannot be accurately determined if the word refers to temporal, geographical, logical, or chronological order or succession. In any case, Luke's reference to other works in the context of his own methodology and purpose alone is not enough to claim Luke is emphasizing the superiority of his work. Bovon, *Luke*, 20.

⁶² Johnson claims Luke's emphasis on presenting an orderly account is meant to contrast with other written accounts that were in fact not orderly, which leads to a negative assessment of the written accounts. Luke Timothy Johnson *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 3 (Collegville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 28

⁶³ According to Gadenz, Luke is seeking to compliment the earlier works, not to write something better in light of a critical assessment. Pablo T. Gadenz, *The Gospel of Luke*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), 31-32.

⁶⁴ David Lyle Jeffrey, *Luke*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012), 16-17.

⁶⁵ Dillon, "Previewing Luke's Project," 205-27.

context, that Luke's goal was not to diminish the value of others' work. The second option may still be possible, but it seems rather unlikely given that he begins with expressing his work in light of the many (πολλοὶ) who have compiled a narrative (ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν). It seems even less likely that Luke is diminishing the work of others considering that he proceeds to compare the eyewitness accounts handed down to the many as being the same eyewitness accounts delivered to Luke. It is more plausible that Luke is expressing his continuity with what is already known, at least in the affirmation of the eyewitnesses.

Somewhere between disparagement and acceptance is another possibility. It may be that Luke is distinguishing between the written accounts that have only attempted to recount the oral tradition handed down from those in the beginning. The (possible) oral tradition actually handed down by the eyewitnesses is in fact reliable irrespective of the inadequate attempt to pass on that tradition in written form on the part of the previous writers.⁶⁶

Given Luke's close association with the eyewitnesses and his desire to show with certainty ἀσφάλειαν⁶⁷ the truth of what Theophilus has already been taught, it does not seem helpful to his project to degrade the received tradition as somehow having been taught in a way that is lacking. It would seem most likely that Luke is placing himself within the tradition that others have already handed down to provide more assurance for those who have received the tradition. Having written for those who already believe, not unbelievers, adds to this distinction. The previously written accounts, which likely could have included the written gospels of Mark and Matthew, are not ineffective attempts, but are sources being recapitulated and affirmed.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ For more on the accuracy of the eyewitnesses, see Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*.

⁶⁷ David E. Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 56-57.

⁶⁸ Augustine believed that Matthew was written first and Mark followed, with Luke drawing

Contributing to the understanding of the context is the phrase having been accomplished or having been fulfilled or brought to fullness (πεπληροφορημένων). The word is a perfect passive participle, in this case referring to a completed action or something fulfilled.⁶⁹ In this case, it is not the work of humans but of God. Bovon claims that the usage here implies a religious context and that the things that have happened were not by chance but in the fulfillment of God's will.⁷⁰ This assertion, placed within the introduction, is putting Luke's work within the context of the other works as well as the context of God's plan. Emphasizing the tradition and God's plan adds to the force of the continuity. It further seems less likely that if the tradition received from the eyewitnesses is an account of the fulfillment of God's plan from old that Luke would be too critical of the previous works.

In verse 2, Luke introduces the idea that his work is not an entirely new enterprise, but something that has been handed down (παρέδοσαν) from others, or those who came before.⁷¹ The word "order" is more telling in the Greek, which places "just as" (καθὼς) and "handed down" before, by the "eyewitnesses and ministers." The wording emphasizes the handing on of the tradition to the next generation before reminding the

upon both sources. While the idea of the primacy of Matthew has mostly fallen out of favor, a more contemporary work that posits a similar idea is from Thomas J. Mosbo. Mosbo shows that Luke is doing something entirely different from Matthew and Mark while possibly drawing on many of the same sources as well as the possibility of using both Matthew and Mark. Regardless of the date of Matthew and Mark in relation to Luke and Acts, it is plausible that Matthew was written before Luke. Even if it was not, they had access to the same sources in an oral tradition. Thomas J. Mosbo, *Luke the Composer* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 91-121. One of the assumptions of this work is that Luke knew of both Matthew and Mark's Gospel and had access to both works. This view does not prefer either the Farrer hypothesis or the Augustinian hypothesis, but with Mosbo, assumes that Matthew relied on Mark, Luke, and a well-known oral tradition. Mosbo, *Luke the Composer*, 1-14, 121.

⁶⁹ According to Jervell, for Luke Scripture is unquestionable. Therefore, this mission must be in continuity with God's plan. Jacob Jervel, *Theology of the Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Cambridge, 1996), 62-63.

⁷⁰ Bovon, *Luke*, 20.

⁷¹ Bovon, *Luke*, 20-21. The Greek παραδίδωμι refers to the handing down of a tradition or teaching from a rabbi to a student.

reader that is was handed down by the same eyewitnesses. Luke may be again trying to emphasize continuity with previous accounts by showing that the ministers of the Word that passed on the tradition used by others are the same ministers of the Word that Luke received his information from, either written or orally.⁷²

If the parallelism seen between the first half of this sentence (vv. 1-2) is indeed in line with the second half (vv. 3-4), then that which has been handed down (παρέδοσαν)⁷³ parallels the teaching (κατηχήθης). These two words serve a parallel and intensifying function as they refer to the passing on of the tradition and are of particular import. First, the word παρέδοσαν can mean either a general transmission of information or more technically, the handing on of a tradition from a teacher to a disciple.⁷⁴ The second is κατηχήθης another word that can mean something as simply as passing on information in a general sense, or a technical word for the passing on of religious instruction. Biblically, κατηχήθης can fall to varying degrees between simple passing on and the more technical catechesis.⁷⁵ Taken individually, it may be that κατηχήθης was

⁷² Stein emphasizes the importance of the continuity between Luke and those who have come before. Stein, *Luke*, 57.

⁷³ Stein sees “been handed down” (παρέδοσαν) as referring to an authoritative tradition. Stein, *Luke*, 59. See also Fitzmeyer, *Luke*, 296; 1 Cor 11:2, 23; 15:3, Mark 7:13; 2 Pet 2:21; Jude 3.

⁷⁴ Quarles, *Matthew*, 10, also Fitzmeyer, *Luke*, 296.

⁷⁵ While this project does not focus on Galatians, it is helpful to see the usage in one of the earliest letters from the New Testament. Conservative dating places the book in the 50s. Raymond E. Brown and John P. Meier, *Antioch & Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 113. The reference to Galatians is meant to show that, prior to the writing of the New Testament Gospels and Acts, there existed catechists, and those who were catechized. Previous tradition, and possibly Galatians in particular, may have influenced the writing of some of the Gospels with regard to format, and definitely with regard to purpose as seen with Luke and Acts. The biblical and theological foundation of catechesis was not quite as formal as the catechisms of the reformation era, but even in the earliest New Testament writings, there seems to have been some form of an established tradition of teaching and being taught. It can be seen in the most basic form in Acts 1:4; 18:25; 21:21; 21:24; Rom 2:18; 1 Cor 14:19; Gal 6:6. In these cases, the use varies slightly from informal passing on of information, to more formal instruction. In the case of Gal 6:6, it is likely that catechesis refers to much more formal instruction than in Acts 21:24. While in either case catechesis may lack its later implications of formal instruction based on catechisms, Cole explains that “it is relevant to note that Paul uses for both the ‘one teaching’ and ‘the one being taught’ is κατηχέω (katēcheō), a quasi-technical word in the NT for gospel instruction.” R. Alan Cole, *Galatians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity,

referring to Luke’s methodology, but together it seems that the emphasis is on the tradition handed down as being trustworthy, authoritative, and uniform.⁷⁶ In this context, Luke is doing what is natural in the relationship between Rabbi and disciple. Like those before him, he is handing down the tradition entrusted to them. This parallel is seen in the similarities between 1:2 and 1:4.

With the introduction to verse 3, Luke states, “It seemed good to me as well” (ἔδοξεν καὶ μοι). Luke places his work within the context of those who preceded him.⁷⁷ “It seemed good to me” also seems to indicate a continuity with or at least a neutral opinion of those who had written or passed on orally earlier accounts. Given Luke’s claim that he is writing an account combined with the claim earlier that the transmission was based on or even written by eyewitnesses from the beginning, he firmly locates his work in the context of the other sources.⁷⁸

The final addition here is the term “catechized word” (κατηχήθης λόγων) or “what you have been taught,” in the aorist indicative.⁷⁹ By adding this phrase, Luke is affirming, the word in which Theophilus has already been instructed. Teaching does not always need to address something that is lacking; it can simply affirm what has already been handed down.⁸⁰ When the gospel is proclaimed to those who have already received

2008), 229. In addition, Schreiner claims that this passage, from the beginning of the Jesus movement, “testifies to how important teaching of the Word was in a congregation.” Thomas Schreiner, *Galatians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary Series: New Testament, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 54. Douglas J. Moo, *Galatians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 383. This passage may have been more significant in the larger context if the individual in question was a teaching elder. Schreiner writes, “Were the Galatians perhaps refusing financial support for an erring or even Judaizing pastor. Schreiner, *Galatians*, 364.

⁷⁶ The more technical implications in Luke’s usage becomes evident in Luke’s second volume, Acts, with the importance placed on the teaching of the apostles.

⁷⁷ Stein, *Luke*, 60. Wolter, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 53.

⁷⁸ Parsons, *Luke*, 40-50.

⁷⁹ Fitzmeyer, *Luke*, 298. Bovon, *Luke*, 24.

⁸⁰ Contra Johnson, *Luke*, 28. Stein claims that Luke’s statement of “an orderly account” is

it, it affirms, builds up, and enables the hearers or readers to faithfully pass the same tradition on to the next generation of catechumens or disciples.

What remains to be addressed is how Luke views the tradition. The further emphasis on coming to know (ἐπιγνῶς) with the final word being certainty (ἀσφάλειαν) serves the purpose of reasserting the certainty of what has already been taught to the reader.⁸¹ Taken in light of the introductory ἵνα clause, the combination shows the reader the purpose of Luke’s undertaking. He is retelling the story that has been passed on from the beginning, and by concluding with certainty, he reaffirms the solid (ἀσφάλειαν) foundation that has been passed along. Luke’s work is not meant to add to the previous tradition or to add to the written accounts. It is meant to confirm them and to show the certainty of the claims of others. Claiming to be more systematic or more orderly in no way diminishes the tradition that had been handed down. The parallel statements that build upon what was handed down and the word that they were catechized in serve to build this assurance of the certainty of the word he has been taught. Luke finds himself in line with the tradition, supported by it, in continuity with it, and setting out to prove the certainty of it.

The final word, and possibly the focus of this long sentence, is “certainty” (ἀσφάλειαν). English seems to lose the force applied in the Greek construct by placing “certainty” at the end of the sentence.⁸² The work is not to show what is lacking in other works (hence the parallels “inasmuch” and “to me also,” plus “to compile” and “to write,” and finally “delivered to us” and “the word taught”) but to show the certainty of the teaching that had been received. The other works were not failures but part of a

critical to understanding Luke’s negative assessment of the others who have attempted to pass on the tradition. Luke sees his account as being orderly and appropriately arranged as opposed to those who have only attempted to correctly instruct. Stein, *Luke*, 60

⁸¹ According to Carrol, ἐπιγνῶς has more force than the alternative word choices and when coupled with ἀσφάλειαν is to reinforce the certainty of what is known. Carrol and Cox, *Luke*, 19.

⁸² Quarles, *Matthew*, 15.

greater tradition.⁸³ The claim that other works are not failed attempts is especially true if some of the other works Luke is referencing are Gospels, like Mark and Matthew. It would potentially undermine the faith, not reassure, if the other Gospels were being called into question.

In the end, Luke writes his gospel with the purpose of affirming the tradition in which new believers were instructed. His work could technically be understood as an early catechism in the sense of what he attempts to do.⁸⁴ Most basically, it is an attempt to pass on what had been handed on by those who came before. Their work is not lacking, though he may be adding to what they have recounted. It may have been later used with more formal catechisms or as the basis for them, much like all the Gospels were. Luke saw himself in continuity with the tradition of handing on an account of the faith that he, as well as others before, concomitant, and following him would also hand on. Luke passes on what is necessary to reassure his reader(s) of the validity of their faith based on what had been handed down and the word they had been catechized.

The Primacy of the Teaching and Baptizing in the Primitive Church

While the book of Acts does not contain the commission formula found at the end of Matthew's Gospel, as Luke recounts Jesus' shorter commission from Luke and recapitulates it in the introduction of Acts, he is foreshadowing the work of the disciples through the power of the Spirit to carry the gospel to the end of the earth. At the same time, Luke is calling his audience to participate in that mission.⁸⁵ While Luke is showing the work of the first disciples after they receive the Holy Spirit, it becomes evident that

⁸³ John's Gospel refers to other works and stories about Jesus' work and teaching.

⁸⁴ Pablo Gadenz, Peter Williamson, and Mary Healy, *The Gospel of Luke*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), 31-32.

⁸⁵ Keener, *Acts 1:1-2:47*, 647-48, 992-93. Keener shows that the first two chapters function as an introduction to Acts, with the beginning of the first chapter (1:1-11) being a recapitulation of the final chapter of Luke.

those actions parallel the commission found at the end of Matthew's Gospel.⁸⁶ By spreading the gospel from the moment they receive the Holy Spirit, they are continuing the tradition Luke is referring to and implicitly showing what the earliest communities looked like as they went about handing down the tradition and making disciples. The section begins in chapter 2, with verses 41-47 serving as a summary of the response to the gospel message.⁸⁷ The actions of going and making disciples by baptizing and teaching are seen in Acts 2:41-42, while the section in Acts 6:1-7 shows the importance of the ministry of the Word as the apostolic teaching. It further shows that there is a difference between evangelism, proclamation in general, and teaching.⁸⁸ However, both events fall within the greater picture of God's plan of salvation. It is evident here that baptism is in itself an act of discipleship, baptism is not the beginning or end of discipleship. Discipleship begins with a response to the call that comes from the proclamation of the gospel. The first disciples became disciples in response to Jesus' call to them.⁸⁹ In Acts there is a more extensive and clarifying narrative. The call to repent and be baptized follows the proclamation of the gospel, which is followed by repentance and baptism, culminating in devotion to the apostolic teaching. The command to be witnesses to the ends of the earth is only possible through the continued presence of the Lord through the power of the Spirit. Discipleship begins with turning from self, or the law or empty things, to follow Jesus and answer the call to repent.

⁸⁶ If the claim that Matthew was written before Luke and he had access to Matthew's Gospel, or if they had access to the same tradition, then it is possible he is intentionally reflecting this commission. If Luke did not have access to Matthew's Gospel, then it is still evident from Luke's retelling that baptism and teaching were part of the processes of discipleship in the primitive church.

⁸⁷ Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 167.

⁸⁸ Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 31 (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 270.

⁸⁹ Davies and Allison write, "One can become a disciple of Jesus ... only on the basis of a call which leads to discipleship. That Peter and the others become disciples not in response to Jesus' teaching, but his call is suggestive." Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, 684.

The first step is to locate the beginning of the new section that makes up the summary. While many translations and commentaries begin the new paragraph with verse 42, Acts 2:41 marks the beginning of a new section. It is set off with the familiar clause μὲν οὖν,⁹⁰ which is usually translated as so, or so then. It probably means something more akin to “then accordingly.” Since the section begins at verse 41, the summary of the activity begins with the response of those who respond to Peter’s admonition and repent. The response is followed by the very public act baptism of those who receive the Word.⁹¹ After they are baptized, they are added to the number of disciples. So, the process goes from belief, to obedience in baptism, to being counted as a member of the church, as the 120 has grown to about 3,000. The addition of 3,000 new believers is followed by the church including the new Christians within the fellowship of the community and beginning to teach them. The public act of baptism as entrance into the community is given at least some primary importance followed by a devotion to the apostles’ teaching.

The importance of baptism as the first step taken by the new believers in response to their belief in Peter’s message may be showing that the act by which believers are added to the number of disciples is through baptism. It likely includes the idea that baptism is the outward act of obedience that makes them officially members of the group of disciples. The distinction would be that discipleship begins with baptism in

⁹⁰ Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 182. The clause occurs in Acts 1:6; 2:41; 5:41; 8:41; 11:19; 15:30; 23:31 and is usually preceded a new section or summary section.

⁹¹ The sheer number of those baptized has been the subject of much speculation. The pools of Shiloam and Bethesda could have accommodated the large number of baptisms and it would have made this a very public act. Schnabel *Acts*, 167. Polhill shows the crowd could have been 180,000 to 200,000. John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 97-98. Marshall, following Jeremias estimates the crowd at 55,000 to 95,000. Marshall *Acts*, 76 Witherington places the population of Jerusalem at about 100,000 under normal circumstances. Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 156.

the former case and it begins before baptism with an internal change in the latter case. Either way, baptism is a necessary act on the part of the disciple.⁹²

While baptism functions as initiation into the new community, belief marks the beginning of the new life in Jesus. The statement that “those who received the word” (ἀποδεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον) may be reinforcement for Luke’s larger project in that it is referring back to the reception of the word from the original eyewitnesses,⁹³ and likely includes both the idea of receiving Jesus and the reception of the tradition. While there is no small debate concerning what exactly the apostolic teaching involves in this case, the apostolic tradition and the written gospels are probably one and the same.⁹⁴

The book of Acts was written in the context of a newly developing community and most of the recent commentaries focus on the necessity of the communal nature of the primitive church. The early church’s communal nature can be seen beginning in Acts 2:1 when the 120 were all in one place. The 120 and the 3,000 are now all in one place emphasizing the unity of the new believers. It is easy to get distracted by the massive growth that emphasizes the work of the spirit and the astonishing act of God as the gospel is ready to spread to the nations, but the willingness on the part of new believers to share everything and be completely devoted to the teaching of the apostles also show the thorough work of the Spirit. In a non-Western context, it may be of particular import to focus on the work of the spirit in the apostolic teaching. In non-Western contexts there is a greater emphasis on obedience and community and just doing.

⁹² Dunn shows that baptism after belief is not only a sign of obedience, but one of repentance and commitment to a new life in Jesus. James D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 75. See also Darrel L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 150.

⁹³ Keener points out that the apostolic teaching was of utmost importance to Luke’s community, and his audience. Keener, *Acts 1:1-2:47*, 1000-1002. Being witness to the apostolic teaching was the proper response of the disciple, but it also reinforces the sources for Luke’s project.

⁹⁴ Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 119-20.

The community Luke is describing here is idealized. They are devoted not only to the apostles' teaching but to each other. The dedication of the first believers is defined in five ways. The first, baptism, has already been discussed. Baptism is followed by dedication or devotion (προσκαρτεροῦντες) to the apostolic teaching (διδαχῆ τῶν ἀποστόλων), fellowship (κοινωνία), breaking bread (κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου), and the prayers (ταῖς προσευχαῖς). While the other aspects that define the life of the early church are important, what is relevant here is the place of the apostolic teaching. Much understanding with regard to the apostolic teaching depends on the relationship between devotion (προσκαρτεροῦντες) and the teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayers. There are two major possibilities here.⁹⁵ First, the devotion applies to the teaching of the apostles, which is reinforced by the acceptance of the Word in 2:41, as well as the emphasis placed on the apostles' own dedication to the Word in 6:4.⁹⁶ In support of this idea is the belief that the apostolic teaching, which is the content of the gospel of the Christian canon, is authoritative because it is the teaching that Jesus instructed the disciples to pass on by being witnesses (Acts 1:8) and by making disciples (Matt 28:19). The apostolic teaching was primary because it provided the foundation for the first Christian community.⁹⁷ While there is much to commend in this view, there are some limitations as well.

Limiting the devotion of the new disciples to primarily the apostolic teaching is problematic because the devotion in 6:4, as well as in 1:14, includes prayer, and 2:46 shows the new community being devoted to meeting in the temple and breaking bread. Essentially, they are not just devoted to the apostolic teaching, they are devoted to one

⁹⁵ While Bock outlines the commitment of the first converts, he places this section in reference to Matt 28:18-20 and the commission found there. Bock places this commitment in the context of all the actions of the new community. Bock, *Acts*, 150-51. Schnabel shows that the devotion to the apostolic teaching was primary. Schnabel, *Acts*, 170-75.

⁹⁶ Schnabel, *Acts*, 178.

⁹⁷ Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 73.

another. The second possibility, which is based on the problems with the first option outlined, shows that the devotion is in relation to the communal nature of the primitive church.⁹⁸ While it would be ideal to simply claim that the devotion was to the teaching and the communal element was secondary, it is not supported by the text. What is clear about the text and leads to a qualification is that the persistent devotion meant they practiced what they heard.⁹⁹

While the teaching cannot be seen in a primary versus secondary relationship in the text, there is a nuanced distinction between the two. The question about the place of teaching in relation to other ministries within the community is clarified when viewed in light of the problem described in Acts 6:1-7. The division of roles that begins here shows that while there are different people with different callings, all the ministries of the church are necessary, even if some are more necessary. What is seen in verse 2 is something akin to “if it is not good or fitting that the apostles give up the ministry of the Word, then it is likewise not fitting that the ministry to the other be neglected.” Since the church needs to continue caring for those in need, someone must be appointed to the task. The ministry is carried out through the appointment of godly men of good moral character to continue the work, who are finally appointed to their position by the apostles.¹⁰⁰

With the task of “waiting tables” delegated to others that are fit for that ministry, the apostles can return to their primary work in the ministry of the Word.¹⁰¹ The teaching of the apostles (διδασκαλίαν τῶν ἀποστόλων) of 2:42 further reinforces the idea that the Word comes directly from the apostles. This statement shows the continuity of the message

⁹⁸ Richard I. Pervo, *Acts*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis Fortress, 2009), 92.

⁹⁹ Schnabel, *Acts*, 178.

¹⁰⁰ Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 121.

¹⁰¹ Dunn, *Acts*, 83. Boice contends that the main work that Jesus handed over to the twelve apostles was the ministry of the word. Jesus told the apostles to remember what they had seen and heard and pass this on. This was the content of the apostolic teaching. James Montgomery Boice, *Acts: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 56-57.

with the original message and lends credibility to Luke's work. The phrase also shows that the importance of the teaching ministry cannot be underestimated. It is referred to in Acts 4:2,18, and the apostles continue teaching under the threat of punishment. They continue in this work even after being placed in prison and continue under the threat that if they continue to teach there will be further punishment (Acts 5:18-42). Paul continuing this tradition of apostolic teaching for a year in Antioch (11:26) shows that it was not just proclamation or evangelism. Paul's "year and six months" in Corinth is shown in Acts 18:11. Paul is also shown spending extended periods of time in other cities—in Acts 20:20 it is Ephesus, and in 28:30-31 it is two years in Rome. Of import is the length of time teaching. It is not just a few days or weeks.

The ministry of the Word should not be understood as being limited to the evangelistic proclamation, or sermons, or even formal teaching. In many works there does seem to be the tendency to limit the application of the word "teaching" (διδασκαλίᾱ).¹⁰² In this case, the apostolic teaching probably refers to all things that the apostles taught in word and deed, much as Jesus' teaching was seen both in and through his words and deeds. The appointment of a deacon to the new task of waiting tables in chapter 6, when there was a problem, shows that the work of community care in the form of meeting physical needs must continue. The teaching of the apostles is, therefore, used here as an all-encompassing term to show everything that the apostles taught and, given the communal nature of the early Christian community, the moral, ethical living example of the apostles was a major part of this.¹⁰³ However, the ministry of the Word, in the sense

¹⁰² Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 270. Fitzmyer distinguishes between three specific areas of the apostolic ministry that the "they" are devoting themselves to, teaching (διδασκαλίᾱ), proclamation (κηρύσσω), and catechesis (κατηχέω). Keener shows that the emphasis is on the continued devotion to the whole of the apostles' teaching not just one particular aspect. Keener, *Acts 1:1-2:47*, 1002.

¹⁰³ Boice shows that the intention of Jesus was that the disciples pass on the content of his life and ministry, which included obedience to the teaching on their part as well. Boice, *Acts*, 56-57.

of what they were teaching, took priority for the apostles¹⁰⁴ and the disciples who would later be called to this ministry.¹⁰⁵

The parallels found in chapter 6 and chapter 2 show there is immediately devotion to the apostles' teaching (προσκαρτεροῦντες τῇ διδαχῇ Acts 2:41), which requires that the apostles continue their primary ministry of teaching. This continued devotion may be the proper response to the gospel for a new disciple, but for the disciple-maker, particularly ministers of the Word, it means they must devote themselves to handing on the tradition, or the apostolic teaching (τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ λόγου προσκαρτερήσομεν Acts 6:4). This devotion of the first believers to the teaching of the apostles, as well as the devotion of the apostles to faithfully hand on the tradition, also lends credibility to Luke's project, and possibly to the sources he is using. There is mutual devotion to disciple-making and being a disciple.

The work of making disciples is further the natural thing for the apostles to do. "It is not fitting" (οὐκ ἄρεστόν) probably refers to "it not being fitting" before God, and that they should not neglect the Word since what they are proclaiming is the message God has given them. The final section leads to the conclusion that the ministry of the Word must continue. The ministry of the Word may have priority but should not come at the detriment of the care of others, fellowship, or any other ministry that is necessary to the life of the church. The overall devotion to the teaching of the apostles, combined with the ideal picture of the church and continued oneness of the community, emphasizes that not only did they receive the teaching, but they also practiced it.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Their responsibility is to preach and teach about Jesus. See also Luke 24:47-48, Acts 1:1-8, 4:20; 5:19-20.

¹⁰⁵ This is a complex issue further complicated by denominational issues.

¹⁰⁶ C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, vol. 34 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 140.

At the end, readers are faced with the reality that the Christian life and the life of the church are intertwined in the act of being a disciple and making disciples. Christians are left with the command that was faithfully passed on by the first disciples: to make disciples who are obedient to Jesus' teaching. To make disciples obedient involves baptism and teaching them everything Jesus commanded. Most basically, this teaching can be seen in the continued passing on of the teaching of the apostles in word and deed. It is difficult to make a sharp distinction between teaching in the western sense and the communal aspect of the church seen in Acts. What is left is the command to make disciples through baptizing and teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded. This proves to be a much more holistic ministry that includes ministry of the Word, fellowship, breaking bread, and communal prayer.

Conclusion

The church has its beginning in the command that Jesus gave his disciples to go and make disciples of the nations. To carry out this command, the newly commissioned apostles were told that they should make disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything Jesus commanded. They are enabled to carry out this command under the authority and through the presence of the risen Lord. In Luke, it is implied that the work of disciple-making began immediately, and while it was originally based on the testimony or oral tradition of eyewitnesses, written works soon followed. The written works were meant to preserve the teachings of Jesus that were passed on by the twelve apostles so that they could continue the mission they had begun. In Acts, Luke's second volume, he records the work of the apostles as they proclaim the good news about Jesus, baptizing those who believe and teaching them about the person and work of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 3

THE HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT, AND FUNCTION OF THE APOSTLES' CREED WITH RELATION TO ITS FUNCTION IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Vis-à-vis the primitive Christian witness in the New Testament, the question of how Christians are made, or maybe more appropriately asked, “how are disciples made?,” comes to the front. Taken by itself, the biblical witness shows that an “apostolic tradition” of sorts was passed on to each following generation of new disciples. The specifics of this argument are noticeably open to dispute and varying interpretations regarding when the informal catechesis took on the form that would prove to be the foundation for the following millennium of church history.¹ Couple this with some of the earliest Christian witnesses attesting to an apostolic tradition and the argument becomes more credible. Part of the problem of validating the apostolic tradition lies with the importance of the apostles, specifically the twelve (original eleven plus Matthias). The Roman Catholic church tends to overdraw the election of Matthias, apostolic succession, and succession of St. Peter, while the Protestants tend to neglect it.² Biblically, the role of the twelve or specific members of the twelve was prominent when mentioned, particularly in the book of Acts. However, the twelve were not mentioned as frequently in Acts as a

¹ Everett Ferguson, for example, shows that the word *catechesis* had taken on a very technical meaning that was easily defined during the end of the second century. Everett Ferguson, *The Early Church at Work and Worship*, vol. 2, *Catechesis, Baptism, and Martyrdom* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 2. If Irenaeus’ *The Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* is in fact an early catechetical manual, then Ferguson is correct. See Robert Grant, “Development of the Christian Catechumenate,” in *Made Not Born: New Perspectives on the Christian Catechumenate* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), 32-50.

² Bovon presents an interesting study on Luke, and the church’s understanding of apostleship. There are differing views regarding the continuity between the earliest confessions and the Apostles’ Creed. Francois Bovon, *Luke the Theologian, Fifty-Five Years of Research (1950-2005)*, 2nd rev. ed. (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 407-16.

primary source of authority, as they are mentioned in post-apostolic, pre-Nicene writers. The importance of the original apostles cannot be overstated. Their lives were meant to serve as a model for the early church and their teaching was the primary source for teaching about Jesus. Their primacy was the reason early Christian writers frequently made appeals to the “apostolic teaching.”³ The apostolic teaching also provides the impetus for handing on the faith and its relation to both catechism and creed (confession). This chapter will show some of the earliest attempts to transmit the faith in an organized way, through catechesis and creed (confession), along with the connection to one of the earliest continuous confession traditions as represented in the Apostles’ Creed.⁴

The idea begins with what is “normative.” Like a normative Scripture⁵ that eventually led to the formation of a canon, a normative confessional Christianity included broad concepts found in the Apostles’ Creed and before that the Old Roman Creed, and before that the baptismal interrogations and even the New Testament. Normative Scripture is akin to what Arland Hultgren refers to as “normative Christianity.”⁶ The early confessions only bearing a similar form to the later creeds does not mean that formal

³ Everett Ferguson, “The Appeal to Apostolic Authority in the Early Centuries,” *Restoration Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (2008): 49-62. Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, in Ian M. MacKenzie, *Irenaeus’s Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 1-28. See also Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*, trans. Dominic J. Unger, 4 vols. (New York: Paulist, 2012).

⁴ The antiquity of the Apostles’ Creed assumes that the old Roman creed and some of the early creedal statements have continuity with the Apostles’ Creed. These earlier confessions likewise connect to the earlier catechetical tradition and associated baptismal interrogation/confession.

⁵ The notion of “normative” is difficult to define but is more akin to a consensus in early Christianity. “Normative” can be seen in what is called variously “the apostolic teaching,” for example, in Irenaeus’ *The Apostolic Preaching* or the “apostolic witness,” the *regula fide*, the English “rule of faith,” *analogia fide* also “rule of faith” in Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, bk 1, chap. 2, finally as the *sensus fidelis* and variations of these terms.

⁶ Arland Hultgren, *The Rise of Normative Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 105. The idea can be open to misinterpretation. According to Hultgren, it is not the same thing as a closed canon or a final form of a creed, but a basic set of principles that is agreed upon. See also Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, and Augustine’s anti-manichean writings. Augustine of Hippo, *The Manichean Debate: The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century. Part I, Books, V. 19*, trans. Roland J Teske and Boniface Ramsey (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2006).

creeds did not exist. Early confessions likely did exist,⁷ but they were evolving within a broad orthodoxy and were not necessarily written down early on.⁸ Certain ideas may not have been fully developed, but they did exist. In other words, there were, according to Hultgren, “broad streams of traditions that coexisted” and provided the foundation for the orthodoxy that would develop,⁹ as well as later creeds that were still growing as new conflicts arose,¹⁰ and add to all these the early baptismal confessions that parallel some of the early creeds. The notion of a broad stream of orthodoxy does not assume that the final form of the confessions existed, nor did an established orthodoxy, rather it assumes that obvious limits to diversity and boundaries existed and that these would later develop into orthodoxy in contradistinction from heresy.

The focus of this chapter is first the historical rationale that requires tracing the development of the Apostles’ Creed,¹¹ followed by the rationale for using the Apostles’ Creed as a catechism. The first section looks at the origin and development of the Creed and begins by exploring how the Creed as it is recorded today is essentially a construct

⁷ Longenecker shows what he believes are early creedal formulations that are attested to in the New Testament. Richard N. Longenecker, *New Wine into Fresh Wineskins: Contextualizing the Early Christian Confessions* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999). See also Liuwe H Westra, *The Apostles’ Creed: Origin, History, and Some Early Commentaries*, *Instrumenta Patristica Et Mediaevalia* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2002), 43, 46-49; Wolfram Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae: A Collection of Early Christian Creeds and Creed-Related Texts* (New York: Oxford, 2017), 1:33-60, 1:145-64; and Jaroslav Pelikan, *Credo: Historical and Theological Guide to the Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 123-81.

⁸ The development of the tradition is more fully discussed in the next section, “The Development and Historical Continuity of the Apostles’ Creed.”

⁹ Hultgren, *The Rise of Normative Christianity*, 105. According to D. Holland, J. N. D. Kelly touches on a similar vein with his understanding of broader creedal traditions, but as Holland notes, it is somewhat contradictory with his other claims. D. Larimore Holland, “The Earliest Text of the Old Roman Symbol: A Debate with Hans Lietzmann and J. N. D. Kelly,” *Church History* 34, no. 3 (September 1965): 262-81.

¹⁰ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:8-10. Pelikan, *Credo*, 288-93.

¹¹ D. Larimore Holland, “The Earliest Text of the Old Roman Symbol: A Debate with Hans Lietzmann and J. N. D. Kelly,” *Church History* 34, no. 3 (September 1965): 262-81. While dated with respect to more recent works, it is concise and gives a helpful summary in a short form.

that developed from older creeds and is much later when considered in relationship to apostolic Christianity. Next, while the Creed is a construct, it finds its origin in the Old Roman Symbol that can be dated as early as the second or third centuries. Third, the Creed developed from the earliest baptismal confessions. Some of the early baptismal confessions may have been from the early second century with connections to the first century. In each case, it is assumed that the Creed changed or evolved throughout the centuries. Finally, while some issues are difficult to assess fully, there is clearly a connection, both genetic and analogical,¹² between the earliest confessions and the Apostles' Creed.

In the second section, the rationale, beyond the primarily historical, is explained. The second section begins by looking at the universality of the Creed with the continuity with the earliest confessions of the church.¹³ After exploring the universality, it is shown that one of the reasons for catechesis and creeds is the notion of the plain sense of the text, or the more popular term perspicuity of Scripture, is a little more relative than is readily admitted. Early catechists, like Origen, quickly recognized that some students see the plain sense of Scripture more easily than others and teaching helps people see the plain meaning of Scripture.¹⁴ Next, the trinitarian structure of the creed is explored. Finally, the statements that Christians confess in the Apostles' Creed are the basic essential beliefs that distinguish Christian faith from non-Christian and heterodox beliefs.

¹² The genetic connection refers to specific phrases and terminology passed along in proto-creeds while analogical refers to those ideas that find expression in Scripture and provide general foundation for the principles that are defined in the early creeds.

¹³ *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* connects this to the commission found in Matt 28:18-20. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), s.v. "Apostles' Creed."

¹⁴ Alan Kreider, *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church: The Improbable Rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 173-80. Geoffrey R. Boyle, "Confirmation, Catechesis, and Communion: A Historical Survey," *Catholic Theological Quarterly* 79 (2015): 121-42.

The Development and Historical Continuity of the Apostles' Creed

In Paul's letter to the Romans, the apostle shows the necessary correlation between belief and confession. Paul claims, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved" (Rom 10:9-10). Verse 9 is confession, followed by belief, while in verse 10 Paul reverses the order with belief preceding confession. In this section the Pauline emphasis on confession is examined in the life and work of the early church and the patristic period.

This confession of the early church was handed on to new believers through catechesis. The nature of catechesis evolved as the understanding of the church's confession developed as it confronted new religions as well as new philosophical challenges. Catechesis was carried out from the beginning of the church and is still carried out to this day to varying degrees.¹⁵ Bengt Haeggglund shows why catechesis is a concern as he explains what he believes to be Irenaeus' chief concern. Irenaeus believed that catechesis was the way the faith was passed on and was therefore concerned with establishing the *regula fidei* or *regula Veritatis*. For Irenaeus, the *regula fidei*, refers to the original, immutable truth that the church holds, or faith itself which Scripture reveals. The immutable truth the church holds on to is found in the *kerygma* of Christ and the apostles, and which is passed on to the believer before baptism. This truth is absolute; it is the revelation that lies behind the creed, the content of Scripture, and the proclamation of the tradition of the presbyterial succession. The *regula fidei* constitutes the right knowledge of God and His redemptive action in the divine economy.¹⁶

¹⁵ Packer blames the Sunday School movement for this loss of deeper and more intentional catechesis. J. I. Packer and Gary A. Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 23-24.

¹⁶ Bengt Haeggglun, "Die Bedeutung der 'Regula Fidei' als Grund Lage Theologischer Aussagen," *Studia Theologica* 12 (1958): 4-19, cited in Philip Hefner, "Theological Methodology and St. Irenaeus," *The Journal of Religion* 44, no. 4 (October 1964): 294-309.

The Creed and Teaching

The foundation for teaching that takes place in the church is important historically and is still important today. The Apostles' Creed provides a summary of basic teaching that is, in Calvin's *Institutes*, the Apostles' Creed is a summary of what Christians need to believe in order to be able to call themselves Christians.¹⁷ In addition to being a summary of Christian teaching, it provides an historical continuity with what the church has continually confessed since the beginning. As such, it is important to look at the development of the Apostles' Creed through history. Many of the earlier changes in the development of the Creed were likely in response to heresies.¹⁸ Examining this development will show the continuity between the earliest confessions until the reaffirmation of the Apostle's Creed by the reformers.

While there is little doubt that the church began confessing its faith in creedal form early on,¹⁹ it is difficult to trace the origin of the Apostles' Creed. There are two primary difficulties in tracing the origin of the Apostles' Creed. First, the earliest creeds were not written down.²⁰ Second is establishing continuity between the earliest statements that bear a family resemblance to the Creed. With this question of continuity, there is also the problem of assessing whether the connection between the earliest confessions and the later Apostles' Creed is analogical or genealogical.

¹⁷ Calvin places particular emphasis on the creedal confession as various doctrines are explained. One clear example of this is in Book IV.I.2, where he explains the church and the duty of the church to teach. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1012-16. Karl Barth affirms Calvin's understanding of the Apostles' Creed as foundational doctrine for Christian orthodoxy. Karl Barth, *The Faith of the Church: A Commentary on the Apostles' Creed according to Calvin's Catechism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1958), 40-43.

¹⁸ The evolution of the Creed in light of needs of the church is explored later in this chapter as the historical development is further discussed.

¹⁹ Longnecker, *New Wine*, 10-15; Westra, *Apostles Creed*, 5-50; Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:33-265; Pelikan, *Credo*, 123-42.

²⁰ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:11.

Dating the Apostles' Creed

The first problem with dating the Apostles' Creed is that there is little written evidence of creeds in the sense that they are called creeds in the West until well into the fourth century.²¹ One of the earliest references found in the West concerning creeds was in a letter from Hillary of Poitiers to fellow bishops. Hillary expresses his surprise that some people found it necessary to write down creeds. The conclusion Hillary draws is that the controversies led to written creeds, which he had previously seen as unnecessary.²² Kinzig quotes him as saying,

But among these things, O you who are blessed and glorious in the Lord, who preserve the perfect and apostolic faith in the confession of your convictions, you have hitherto been ignorant of written creeds. For you, who abounded in the Spirit, have not needed the letter. You did not require the service of a hand to write down what you believed in your heart {and} professed with [your] mouth unto salvation.²³

Hillary's brief statement is revealing for three reasons. First, the confessions were not written, and it was not thought to be necessary, but they were seen as creeds or symbols. Second, they were not deemed necessary because no obvious controversy, in Hillary's mind, would necessitate the confession to be written. Third, it was also inclusive of the idea that the confession was based upon some catechetical teaching included in the confession that was equated to right (read orthodox) believing, at least in the sense seen in the relationship between faith and confession found in Romans 10:9-10. Further, and relating to one of the claims about the evolution of creeds, was that written creeds were not necessary until this point in Hillary's understanding because there was not widespread teaching contrary to the received tradition. It was a confession that one made at the beginning, and that one held until the end. It is also clear, according to Hillary, as it relates to the confession of a creed, that the catechetical teaching that took place with

²¹ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:11.

²² Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:115-61.

²³ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:151-61.

“new-born believers” was not necessary to be written out and signed as an affirmation of faith, that is, until “the meaning of the conviction was in danger.”²⁴

What is implied in Hillary’s letter is that creeds in the West were memorized and handed down through an oral tradition. The early emphasis on the primarily oral, unwritten state of the Creed may be seen in Augustine’s sermon to catechumens on the Creed. In this sermon, Augustine states that the “Creed no man writes so as it may be able to be read.” In this statement, it is possible to see that the earliest confession may have been a way to distinguish between those who had received baptism and those who had not. It seems that, on the surface, Hillary and Augustine share common reasons for not writing the creed.

Augustine refers to the Apostolic teaching as the Creed, and it was part of the content of his *Enchiridion* in which he referred to as a baptismal creed.²⁵ Augustine’s works provide for an historical connection later between baptismal confessions, catechism, and Creed, which was at this point meant to be unwritten. He taught on the creed specifically in a sermon to catechumens on the Apostles’ Creed. It is also in this work that Augustine claims that the Creed should not be written, but memorized and recited. At least part of his catechism instruction, as well as other works, were dedicated to the teaching summed up by the Creed or at very least a baptismal confession, which he saw as the rule of faith. The teaching summed up in the Creed, or baptismal confession, would be the minimum that needs to be believed and confessed, and to be counted with the orthodox Christians.²⁶

²⁴ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:151-61, 453.

²⁵ Augustine’s reference to the Creed will prove to be important later in drawing a connection between the baptismal confessions and the Creed and later the final form of the Apostles’ Creed.

²⁶ In the beginning of his work on faith and the Creed, Augustine states, “We have, however, the catholic faith in the Creed, known to the faithful and committed to memory, contained in a form of expression as concise as has been rendered admissible by the circumstances of the case.” Saint Augustine of Hippo, *Doctrinal Treatises: On Faith, Hope and Love (The Enchiridion), On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed, On Faith and the Creed, Concerning Faith of Things not Seen, On the Profit of Believing on*

The second problem in dating the Apostles' Creed is how to understand the historical progression from the earliest church, and baptismal confession to the Roman Creed, to the Apostles' Creed. It is generally held that the Apostles' Creed is the evolution of the Roman Symbol in use at least by the fourth century.²⁷ Since this is the most common view, it will be used as a center to work around in developing the historical continuity. The problem of an explicit connection comes to the surface in what some people consider the earliest document attesting to the Old Roman Symbol.²⁸ The historical foundation must be understood, and the connection to the later Apostles' Creed must be shown, to see the continuity between the earliest confessions and the present form of the Apostles' Creed.

The origins of the Roman Creed are difficult to access, as well. Three early references are generally understood as being the first explicit references to the Roman Creed. The first written record in the West of the precursor to the Old Roman Creed is found in a letter from Marcellus to Pope Julius of Rome ca. 340/341. It is thought to have begun in response to the Arian controversy.²⁹

3.1 Therefore, I believe in God Almighty, and in Christ Jesus, his only-begotten Son, our Lord, who was born from the Holy Spirit, and the virgin Mary; who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, buried, and on the third day rose from the dead; ascended into the heavens and is sitting at the right hand of the Father, whence he is

the Creed: A Sermon to Catechumens, ed. Philip Shaw, trans. James F. Shaw et al. (n.p.: Createspace Independent, 2015), 301-4.

²⁷ Holland, "The Earliest Text," 262.

²⁸ This early creed is referred to as The Old Roman Creed, The Roman Creed, the Roman Symbol, or the Old Roman Symbol. The reference to Symbol comes from the Greek word *symbolon* for "symbol," which was likely referring to the confession or claim to allegiance to the content of the creedal statement.

²⁹ Marcellus writes, "Let them give credit to the Creed of the Apostles, which the Roman Church has always kept and preserved undefiled." Marcellus, "LETTER XLII. [A.D.389.] section 5," in Henry Bettenson and Chris Maunder, eds., *Documents of the Christian Church*, 4th ed (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 25-26.

coming to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Spirit, the holy Church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh, eternal life.³⁰

The difficulty here is the origin of Marcellus' confession. Vinzent holds that this statement is the creation of Marcellus in response to some heresy, and upon reception in Rome it was spread throughout the West.³¹ The Creed that Marcellus quotes also may have some relation to the formation of the Nicene Creed in the East in response to a heresy of the same era.³² In any case, the difficulty in clearly locating the original source of the Creed to which Marcellus is referring has led to two alternatives concerning the origin of the text. Either the text was a creedal statement that resulted from a council and Marcellus used this in his text, or it was the written form of an earlier baptismal confession.³³ Whichever position is preferred, however, there is not much deviation in form from the basic confession or foundation of the faith and the structure of the tri-part baptismal statement that Jesus gave his disciples in Matthew. In all cases, they take the form of a tri-part confession.

Another example of how the origin can become obscured is found in two other examples of early reference to the Creed,³⁴ which are found in part in Ambrose's letter to Pope Siricius³⁵ and a letter from Rufinius³⁶ around the same time. In Ambrose's letter,

³⁰ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 2:223. Bettenson and Maunder, *Documents of the Christian Church*, 25-26.

³¹ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:12.

³² Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 2:13.

³³ Pelikan, *Credo*, 365-96.

³⁴ A distinction needs to be noted between creed and Creed. The lower case version creed refers generally to creeds and confessions; when capitalized it refers to a formal creed like the Old Roman Symbol or the Apostles' Creed. When it is capitalized in this project it is referring specifically to the Apostles' Creed or one of the earlier versions that are believed to be the predecessor to the Apostles' Creed, like the Old Roman Symbol.

³⁵ Ambrose of Milan, "Letter 42. 5," accessed February 17, 2020, http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/ambrose_letters_05_letters41_50.htm.

³⁶ Rufinus, of Aquileia, *A Commentary on the Apostles' Creed*, ed. and trans. J. N. D. Kelly (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1954).

reference is made to the title of the Apostles' Creed, but the creed itself is not written out. The fact that the Creed remains unwritten but explained in some detail may reflect continuity with the Western preference at the time of not writing the Creed.³⁷ Rufinius' comments are the first explicit reference scholars are aware of that attributes the creed to each of the Apostles and includes a creedal statement found in Rufinius from around 390 CE.³⁸ His exposition is accompanied by the legend that each of the twelve apostles, including Matthias, came up with one clause. While these early references are the first clear examples of an Apostles' Creed, it seems that this tradition was already received at this time. References to an earlier tradition and the unwritten Creed show the importance of the apostolic tradition to maintain continuity with and to prove the veracity of the teaching. What is important in all of this is the similarities, whether genetic or analogical, with the later Apostles' Creed.

Assuming Marcellus' or Rufinius' version is seen as a genetic predecessor of the Apostles' Creed as it is received today, it is unclear how far back this connection goes in finding links to primitive creedal statements and still maintain a genetic continuity rather than an analogical connection? Given the fact that creeds were not written down earlier makes it difficult to make a concrete judgment about a continual connection with earlier traditions. One of the reasons for wanting to connect later Creed to the earlier tradition can be seen in the similarities with baptismal questioning found in some earlier written accounts. Many similarities can be found in both earlier creeds and baptismal questioning. An example can be seen in the early liturgical reference to baptism. Rufinius writes,

³⁷ The reason the Creed was not written was explained in the works that referenced Augustine and Marcellus.

³⁸ Rufinius does not mention the Apostles' Creed as a title but mentions a creed that was a compilation of statements that were contributed by each of the twelve apostles. John H. Leith, *Creeds of the Church: A Reader in Christian Doctrine from the Bible to the Present* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), 22-23. Kelly affirms a position that is similar to Leith. J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd ed. (London: Longman, 1972), 50-51.

When each of them to be baptized has gone down into the water, the one baptizing shall lay hands on each of them, asking, "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?" And the one being baptized shall answer, "I believe." He shall then baptize each of them once, laying his hand upon each of their heads. Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and died, and rose on the third day living from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, the one coming to judge the living and the dead?" When each has answered, "I believe," he shall baptize a second time. Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church and the resurrection of the flesh?" Then each being baptized shall answer, "I believe." And thus let him baptize the third time.³⁹

It seems more evident that the Apostles' Creed is in continuity with an earlier tradition,⁴⁰ but to what tradition remains unanswered. One thought is that while in obvious continuity with The Old Roman Creed,⁴¹ it is not necessarily in line with the older baptismal confessions.⁴² Kinzig states,

The basic conclusions to which we have come are the following: the form of the Old Roman Symbol known to Rufinus and Marcellus is traceable only to a date in the latter half of the third century with any likelihood, but the same creed existed in recognizable form in baptismal interrogations, as presented to us in the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus, at the beginning of the third century, and, probably, in the last quarter of the second century on a conservative estimate. Furthermore, insofar as we have textual evidence upon which to decide the question, we have concluded that H held a monopolistic status at Rome as the baptismal creed at that time, and thus, as it seems to me, constitutes the earliest text we have of the Old Roman Symbol.⁴³

However, the ideas that form the basis for the written confession go back further. An example that attests to an early tradition is found in Rufinius. Rufinius' writing attests to a tradition he was taught some thirty years before he wrote his letter. In his letter he claims

³⁹ The similarities with other confessions, and the structure outlined in *The Didache* are quite obvious.

⁴⁰ Barr's position is that there is more continuity than discontinuity with the earliest creeds and the Apostles' Creed. O. S. Barr, *From the Apostles' Faith to the Apostles' Creed* (New York, 1964), 20-35. Kelly has a similar position to Barr's, in Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 368-434.

⁴¹ Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 100-166. P. Smulders, "The Sitz im Leben of the Old Roman Creed," *Studia Patristica* 116 (1975): 13. W. Kinzig and M. Vinzent, "Recent Research on the Origin of the Creed," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 50 (1999): 535-59.

⁴² Holland, "The Earliest Text," 262-63.

⁴³ Holland, "The Earliest Text," 262-81

that not only was he taught this creed, but he was taught a more detailed catechetical tradition upon which the creed was based.⁴⁴ Hippolytus is writing down what he considered to be the tradition that had been handed down by the apostles and connects this tradition to the tri-part baptismal and early apostolic teaching referred to in the book of Acts.

Following Hippolytus' claim that he had received a previously recognized tradition that had been handed down from the apostles, some authors claim that the Apostles' Creed is much older. One possibility is that the confession began simply with the tri-part baptism formula in Matthew like what is seen in the *Didache*.⁴⁵ As the church grew, questions arose, and it encountered other religions, the Creed was expanded to a longer statement, which then evolved into the Old Roman Creed, which eventually became the Apostles' Creed.⁴⁶ Some authors entertain the idea that the Creed originated in earlier formulations, like The Rule of Faith.⁴⁷ "Rule of faith" was one of the names used to describe formulaic statements of Christian belief that circulated in the second century church designed to make clear the essential beliefs confessed by Christians. These creed-like statements were considered to be in line with the apostolic teaching and to serve as guides in the exegesis of Scripture.⁴⁸ Later, Augustine equated the Rule of Faith with the

⁴⁴ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 2:226-27. There are also allusions to the Roman Creed in Leo the Great, though he does not quote it. This may be connected to the tradition that the creed was not written down. Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 2:231-41.

⁴⁵ Texts of *The Didache* along with comments are found in Jonathan A. Draper and Clayton N. Jefford, eds., *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity: Early Christianity and Its Literature* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015). Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Faith, Hope, & Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50-70 C.E.* (New York: Newman Press, 2003).

⁴⁶ Westra, *The Apostles' Creed*, 46-50.

⁴⁷ Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 76-88. G. H. Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church: The Crisis of the Protestant Reformation* (New York: Harper, 1959), 3-11.

⁴⁸ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.9.4.

Creed.⁴⁹ In Irenaeus, it is evident that the points of the Creed are included in much of his work on the apostolic doctrine,⁵⁰ and a more concise summary can be found in *Against Heresies*.⁵¹

Phillip Schaff writes, “While the individual statements of belief that are included in the Apostles’ Creed—even those not found in the Old Roman Symbol—are found in various writings by Irenaeus, Tertullian, Novatian, Marcellus, Rufinus, Ambrose, Augustine, Nicetas, and Eusebius Gallus,”⁵² it may never be clear how closely one form follows the other. Two main conclusions can be drawn. First, there were several basic creedal forms at this point, and they fall under a broader umbrella of orthodox confessions. Some authors believe that the earlier creeds’ only direct connection with the New Testament would be the church’s tradition that had been handed down.⁵³ Alternatively, some authors believe there is a direct connection between the earliest baptismal confessions/interrogations and the later Creed.⁵⁴ In either case, it is evident that the confessions, proto-creeds, interrogations, and the Apostles’ Creed share similarities. Baptismal confessions can be seen as being in continuity with the early creeds, and even a basis for them.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, World’s Classics (New York: Oxford, 1991), 45.

⁵⁰ Irenaeus’ contribution to later doctrinal and creedal development cannot be overstated. MacKenzie, *Irenaeus’s Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*, 29.

⁵¹ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.19.1.

⁵² Philip Schaff, ed., *Creeds of Christendom*, accessed May 19, 2019, <https://ccel.org/ccel/s/schaff/creeds1/cache/creeds1.pdf>, 37-38.

⁵³ See for example Holland’s assessment of Kelly.

⁵⁴ See for example Schaff, Kinzig, Vinzent, Pelikan.

⁵⁵ Alfred Seeberg claims that the primitive Christian Creeds are a recapitulation in formulae of both the trinitarian framework found in Matt 28:18-20, as well as the basic faith outlined in catechesis. Alfred Seeberg and Ferdinand Hahn, *Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit: Theologische Bücherei*, in Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 50. See also in Jaroslav Pelikan, *Creeds and Confessions of the Faith in the Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, *Early Christian and Medieval* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 389.

Kinzig explains, “The Apostles’ Creed is significantly shorter and less detailed; it is based upon the most ancient formula used by the Church in Rome, and we find it in various forms dating back to the 200s.” One of the closer examples, recorded in Hippolytus around 230 CE, was used as a confession before baptism. The similarities with Hippolytus lead some to conclude that the Apostles’ Creed was based on a much earlier tradition.⁵⁶ Similarities between the Apostles’ Creed and earlier works can also be seen in the writing of Irenaeus as he describes the basics of the tradition handed on by the apostles.⁵⁷

Moving past the patristic era, the Apostles’ Creed in the West, with the reformers, Luther, his heir Melanchthon, and Calvin, held the Creed in high regard and included it as part of their catechisms.⁵⁸ Luther and Calvin held that the form of the Creed that the church confesses today, which seems to have been solidified sometime around the eighth century,⁵⁹ was an accurate representation of the earliest teaching of the church. Further, Luther and Calvin both believe it was integral to understanding the apostolic teaching and attested to in Scripture. Both Luther and Calvin felt that the Creed was, even if not written by the twelve apostles, a concise summary of the necessary

⁵⁶ Kinzig and Vinzent, “Recent Research,” 535-59.

⁵⁷ Irenaeus writes,
The Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith: [She believes] in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His [future] manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father “to gather all things in one,” Ephesians 1:10 and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race. (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.19.1)

⁵⁸ Luther’s Small Catechism, Heidelberg Catechism, Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

⁵⁹ Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 398.

doctrines and a complete summary of the Christian faith.⁶⁰ In the Heidelberg catechism, the articles of the Apostles' Creed are the things that a Christian must believe as it is a summary of the gospel.⁶¹ The understanding of the reformers regarding the apostolic teaching is in line with the Augustinian tradition as previously explored, but there are also similarities with what was seen previously in Irenaeus. Both Irenaeus and Augustine believed that they were in continuity with the tradition handed down by the apostles.⁶²

In the end, the Creed was accepted by the Western half of the church, and the title, The Apostle's Creed, has continued to be used. Forms of the Creed have been found throughout the world, and it could be that before the schism between east and west the Creed was universally accepted and confessed. The Apostles' Creed is widely used in baptismal rights.

Further Rationale for Using the Apostles' Creed as a Basis for Teaching in the Church

The Christian faith is often referred to as a tradition. Likewise, Christianity is said to contain a tradition. Both statements contain elements of truth. Christianity contains a tradition that has endured for two millennia, but the faith cannot simply be founded on the traditions of the church. Scripture is at the heart of maintaining the *sensus fidelium*.⁶³

⁶⁰ William E. Phipps, *The Apostles' Creed: The Ongoing Struggle of the Church to Define Its Basic Beliefs* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2010), 24.

⁶¹ Phipps, *The Apostles' Creed*, 25.

⁶² Behr explains,

This is followed by the fullest description given by Irenaeus of the faith received by the apostles, "in one God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth . . . and in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was enfleshed for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who through the prophets preached the economies"—that is, his coming (τὴν ἔλευσιν), the birth from the Virgin, the Passion, resurrection and bodily ascension into heaven, and his coming (παρουσία) from heaven, to recapitulate all things, bringing judgement to eternal separation or life" (haer. 1.10.1). (John Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity* [New York: Oxford, 2015], 111)

⁶³ The Roman Catholic understanding of the *sensus fidelium* mediated through Luther's claim of *sola Scriptura* could be a helpful concept for Protestant theology. The *sensus fidelium* reinforces the priesthood of all believers. The *sensus fidelium* here is an appeal to the testimony of all true Christians from all times.

Scripture provides the basis for the continuity with the true church at all times and in every place, but it is more than historical continuity—it is a spiritual continuity that includes not just Scripture but the apostolic tradition and the faith that has been received and passed along from the beginning through each successive generation to the present. Robert Jenson sums this idea up well when he claims that the “the *sensus fidelium* is diachronic before it is synchronic: it is the mutual sense of all believers of all times from Pentecost to the Parousia. . . . The *sensus fidelium* yields only to prayer and fasting and long deep study.”⁶⁴ The *sensus fidelium* is not the result of contemporary opinions or feelings, no matter how “universal” they may be. The continuity emphasized by both the written accounts and oral tradition seen at work here is the same sense that Luke appeals to the tradition he received in his Gospel (Luke 1:1-4). The *sensus fidelium* is the true church of all ages and places seeking a deeper understanding of the triune God through faith.

Seeking this truth requires prayer, fasting, and long deep study. To adequately understand the importance of the *sensus fidelium* it is necessary to see the interdependence of tradition⁶⁵ and Scripture. In short, Scripture is informed by tradition, as tradition informs the understanding of Scripture.⁶⁶ To put it another way, Scripture cannot be rightly understood apart from the tradition that was handed down from the apostles, but the Scripture is an accurate record of what was handed down by the apostles.⁶⁷ To show the

⁶⁴ Robert Jenson, “It’s the Culture,” *First Things* 243 (May 2014): 33-36.

⁶⁵ Tradition is not used in the sense of the Roman Catholic understanding in which tradition can be a foundation for a belief. As it is used here, tradition is based on the historical teachings of the church, the historical creeds and confessions, and the *sensus fidelium* all informed by Scripture through the work of the Holy Spirit.

⁶⁶ For a more detailed understanding of the relationship between Scripture and tradition, particularly in relation to early heresies, see C. F. Evans, “Tradition and Scripture,” *Religious Studies* 3, no. 1 (1967): 323-37; Robert L. Wilken, “Tradition, Exegesis, and the Christological Controversies,” *Church History* 34, no. 2 (June 1965): 123-45; and Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 37. Irenaeus and Tertullian see this cooperation as well.

⁶⁷ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 32-33, 37-38. According to Kelley, this is the view of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement, and other church fathers.

interdependence of Scripture and tradition and being mutual and necessary is a bit of a circular argument, but no more so than claiming that Scripture interprets Scripture, or that Scripture validates Scripture. In this sense, creeds are like a “social inheritance” that affirm the *sensus fidelium* as Christians’ “spiritual inheritance” and conform to the earliest Apostolic tradition as found in Scripture and attested to in the earliest Christian writing.⁶⁸

The Function of Creeds

Before looking at how creeds fit into the bigger picture it is necessary to give a basic working definition of creeds for the purposes here. Creeds are seen primarily as liturgical texts today. They are recited, often with little thought regarding their content. Some seem to take great offense at some of the things confessed in creeds. The function goes beyond merely a declarative statement like the *shema* for Israel.⁶⁹ The addition of “I/we believe” transforms the creed into a public personal/corporate confession of faith. It is not just a declaration of a religious claim, but it is declaring a commitment to that claim. It is not just a statement of orthodoxy but a commitment to that statement of orthodoxy. The commitment to orthodoxy in the apostolic tradition can be seen in the early church with some of the baptismal interrogations that would later develop into creeds, as well as the close relationship that would develop between catechism, baptism, confession, and creed.⁷⁰ For a basic working definition, a creed is a public confessional statement that claims adherence to a set of orthodox beliefs that define minimally the orthodox faith and confess a commitment to the beliefs the Creed professes.

⁶⁸ Phipps, *The Apostles’ Creed*, 20.

⁶⁹ Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:2. Kinzig uses the *shema* as an example of an Old Testament Creed, but others believe this is not a good example because it lacks the personal/corporate statement of a personal confession that the creedal I/We believe statement includes.

⁷⁰ Grant, “Development of the Christian Catechumenate,” 32-50.

When considering the function of creeds in general, they serve three main purposes.⁷¹ First, as confessionals, they function as a public affirmation of the faith. In baptismal confession, the confessor is seen as affirming publicly what, as a catechumen, they have been instructed in and to what they are committing their lives. In liturgical confession, creeds serve to reaffirm what those who had received baptism had previously confessed. Second is pedagogical; with Augustine, creeds are a foundation for life-long learning. They provide the simple confession for new believers who are not taught the fullness of doctrine but are able to confess the basic tenets of the faith.⁷² In this sense, creeds serve a pedagogical function and fit well with the thesis herein. Third, as correctives, Leith suggests that creeds serve to refute heresies.⁷³ The Creed provides a concise outline of what the church believed, and in this sense the co-operation of Scripture and tradition was important.

For clarification, it is necessary to look at the three functions of confessional, pedagogical, and corrective individually, as the overlapping functions are seen in early patristic writings. In this case, catechism based in the Creed is teaching that shows what will be confessed in baptism, and later liturgy. It would also serve as a confession to prove that one's faith conformed to orthodox teaching. Early on the functions of the creeds can be clearly seen. In Rufinus, when he claims that the Creed functioned to show true teachers of sound doctrine and likewise refute heresy, he is describing his understanding of the confessional, pedagogical, and corrective functions of the Creed.⁷⁴ This corrective function of the creed was, however, founded in the confession made at

⁷¹ The functions of creeds could likely be broken down further and there is obviously overlap in these areas.

⁷² Augustine, *Faith and Creed*, accessed February 17, 2019, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1304.htm>, chap. 1.

⁷³ Leith, *Creeds of the Church*, 3-5.

⁷⁴ Pelikan, *Credo*, 20-31.

baptism and in the liturgy of the church and was a summary of what was taught in catechism.⁷⁵

In the first case, the creed serves as a public affirmation of faith. The creed functions as a recapitulation of the faith in the form of a concise summary as catechism, creed, and confession became more prevalent in their interrelation as Christianity rapidly spread.⁷⁶ The formula is generally placed within a trinitarian framework, which is often based on a catechetical formula.⁷⁷ The general outline of the catechetical formula that developed later would incorporate the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments as well.⁷⁸ In this way, Christianity relates to the Scripture as confessional, but also the *sensus fidelium* as both normative and pedagogical; hearers remembers their baptism and catechesis. More than this, the I/we believe statements in the Apostles' Creed make it more than a restatement of basic beliefs; it also publicly confesses adherence and commitment to the basic tenets of the orthodox faith.

When the catechumens, usually on Easter, were baptized, the earliest written interrogation/confession formulas follow the form of the Creed in its trinitarian form as well as the basic beliefs it confesses.⁷⁹ As shown, the confession developed into the *textus receptus* of the Apostles' Creed that many churches still use today for both liturgical corporate confession and as a form of baptismal interrogation formed around the Creed.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Seeberg and Hahn, *Der Katechismus*, 271, in Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 52.

⁷⁶ Kreider, *The Patient Ferment*, 135.

⁷⁷ Seeberg and Hahn, *Der Katechismus*, 271, in Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 50.

⁷⁸ Pelikan, *Credo*, 389-98. See also Luther's Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism.

⁷⁹ Pelikan, *Credo*, 101; Pelikan, *Creeds and Confessions*, 389.

⁸⁰ Pelikan, *Credo*, 101; Pelikan, *Creeds and Confessions*, 389.

When considering the relationship between catechism, creed, and baptism, of primary import was the catechesis⁸¹ because of logical priority. Early on in Christianity's encounter with non-Jews or those who had no prior connection to the Jewish moral tradition, catechism was done before baptism, so the one being baptized could fully affirm the confession made in baptism.⁸² The confession reflects an early creedal tradition, which was a summary of doctrine. The need to confess what one believes, like in Romans 10:9-10, led to the connection between baptismal confession and the later creed, followed by the later explicit use of the Apostles' Creed.

Regarding practice, early catechetical instruction is thought to have taken place in three stages and vary in length. Origen's catechism provides a useful illustration. Catechesis had three parts. First, they were introduced to the Scriptures, then to the doctrinal, and finally baptism preparation. The third stage is most interesting because at this point the catechumens would, according to Bradshaw, "make profession of the Christian faith in the words of the rule."⁸³ During this time they would learn a more concise version of the major points of Christian doctrine, or the elements necessary to confess the one true faith, and at baptism would confess them.⁸⁴ The content, as well as the length of the instruction, was important because it showed that the catechumenate needed to be thoroughly instructed in the Scripture according to the apostolic tradition.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Paul F. Bradshaw et al., *The Apostolic Tradition*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 124.

⁸² Grant, "Development of the Christian Catechumenate," 32-50.

⁸³ Bradshaw, *Apostolic Tradition*, 104.

⁸⁴ Kreider shows that a similar form for catechism and baptism is seen in Origen, Ireneaus, and Tertullian. Kreider, *The Patient Ferment*, 175-81.

⁸⁵ Kreider, *The Patient Ferment*, 15.

While the length of catechesis could vary, the apostolic tradition stated it was three years.⁸⁶ Origen likewise set three years as a baseline for his school, but he also allowed for flexibility depending on the moral and intellectual readiness of the candidate.⁸⁷ Augustine later clarified that catechesis was a lifelong process,⁸⁸ and the catechism classes were attended by both lay and clergy very early on.⁸⁹

By the fourth century there were many catechetical texts.⁹⁰ What stood out in these texts was their holistic nature. The texts were meant to not just educate or hand on a tradition. They were meant as transformational and related general moral teaching. Things under the content of moral teaching included avoiding idols and sexual immorality. Early catechisms also included learning the Old Testament for the background of salvation and the New Testament for the teachings of Jesus.⁹¹ There was also much emphasis on learning the teaching behind what was confessed in the creeds.⁹²

One of the reasons for choosing the Apostles' Creed as a basis for the curriculum for this project, rather than another creed, was its pedagogical function and connection early on with catechism, rather than primarily the refutation of heresies, as can be seen in the Athanasian Creed or the Nicene Creed (325/381). In Augustine's writing, the pedagogical function is clearly shown. The pedagogical function of creeds

⁸⁶ Bradshaw, *Apostolic Tradition*, 96.

⁸⁷ Kreider, *The Patient Ferment*, 172

⁸⁸ Fergusson, *The Early Church at Work and Worship*, 42-49.

⁸⁹ Bradshaw, *Apostolic Tradition*, 194.

⁹⁰ Kreider, *The Patient Ferment*, 166-61.

⁹¹ Kreider, *The Patient Ferment*, 172.

⁹² Kreider, *The Patient Ferment*, 156-61.

can be seen in earlier works,⁹³ but it is most clear in Augustine.⁹⁴ The creeds likely began as summaries of doctrine,⁹⁵ which can be seen in some of the writings of the earliest church fathers.⁹⁶

With its pedagogical function, the Apostles' Creed is also the heart of gospel teaching. Building on Luther's claim, the three articles show God's gracious action for humanity as he reaches out to fallen humanity and through Christ redeems that fallen people. Augustine likewise saw the importance of the Creed in relation to pedagogy:

1. Receive, my children, the Rule of Faith, which is called the Symbol (or Creed). And when ye have received it, write it in your heart, and be daily saying it to yourselves; before ye sleep, before ye go forth, arm you with your Creed. The Creed no man writes so as it may be able to be read: but for rehearsal of it, lest haply forgetfulness obliterate what care hath delivered, let your memory be your record-roll: what ye are about to hear, that are ye to believe; and what ye shall have believed, that are about to give back with your tongue. For the Apostle says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." For this is the Creed, which ye are to rehearse and to repeat in answer. These words which ye have heard are in the Divine Scriptures scattered up and down: but thence gathered and reduced into one, that the memory of slow persons might not be distressed; that every person may be able to say, able to hold, what he believes. For have ye now merely heard that God is Almighty? But ye begin to have him for your father, when ye have been born by the church as your Mother.⁹⁷

⁹³ See the discussion on Irenaeus, *Against Heeresies*, 1.19.1.

⁹⁴ Augustine, *De symbolo ad Catechumenos*, in *Augustine: On the Holy Trinity, Doctrinal Treatises, Moral Treatises*, vol. 3, ed. Philip Schaff, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956).

⁹⁵ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.19.1.

⁹⁶ Kinzig and Vinzent, "Recent Research," 535-59.

⁹⁷ Augustine, *De Symbolo ad Catechumenos*. For Irenaeus, the *regula fidei* can be summed up in a statement from *On The Apostolic Preaching*:

This faith: in one God, the Father Almighty, who made the heaven and the earth and the seas and all the things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was made flesh for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who made known through the prophets the plan of salvation, and the coming, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the bodily ascension into heaven of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and his future appearing from heaven in the glory of the Father to sum up all things and to raise anew all flesh of the whole human race." (Irenaeus of Lyons, *On the Apostolic Preaching*, trans. John Behr [Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Press, 1997], 41)

In his exposition, Augustine equates the Creed with the *regula fidei*, a concern that goes back to Irenaeus' primary concern.

In the third function, it was not just a confession for new believers but a confession for Christians to affirm their adherence to orthodoxy. To illustrate the mutual dependence of Scripture and tradition in the development of the creedal tradition, it is important to remember that creeds often developed as early attempts to refute heresies.⁹⁸ Heresies were frequently distortions of Scripture, so an appeal to Scripture, while sufficient in a sense, was supported by the apostolic tradition.⁹⁹ It was also later used as a litmus test to affirm that pastors, presbyters, or bishops were adhering to sound teaching. As seen in Rufinius, the creeds were written in response to heresies. Creedal statements like Rufinius' statement about the Creed contains two functions in one. With the pedagogical function, as seen in Augustine, Luther, and Calvin, there is a connection between the continued instruction of more mature believers as they seek to fulfill the roles of elders and deacons.¹⁰⁰

The necessity to refute heresies is inextricably linked both to sound teaching from the beginning as well as sound teaching for those who would desire to teach. The biblical requirements for elders and deacons show the necessity of teaching sound doctrine. The biblical basis in the requirements for elders is that they must be capable of teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teaching (Titus 1:6-9, 1 Tim 4:11-6:2). In the case of deacons, they must adhere to the truth of faith (1 Tim 3:8-13). In this sense, a clear connection can be seen between being taught sound doctrine for the purpose of teaching sound doctrine as well as being able to refute false teaching. It logically follows that the

⁹⁸ The Nicene Creed and Athanasian Creed are clear, widely known examples of Creeds that were written to refute heresies. See also Hillary's letter in Kinzig, *Faith in Formulae*, 1:11, 2:231-56.

⁹⁹ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*. Irenaeus appeals to the tradition of the apostles that was handed down to him through the church.

¹⁰⁰ Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions and Enchiridion*, trans. Albert C Outler, The Library of Christian Classics, vol. 7 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955), 157.

church needs leaders who can confess and teach sound doctrine, as well as refute heresies. For leaders to fulfill their roles within the church, a foundation in sound doctrine must be laid.

While the church may use other longer creeds, none is as universal as the Apostles' Creed. Many of the formulas it expresses follow some of the earliest extra-biblical teachings that are available, and it is part of a larger corpus of what is often referred to as the apostolic teaching.¹⁰¹ The Creed provides a concise summary of the content of Christian teaching. It is the most basic summary of faith required if the confessor is to claim the Christian faith. Questions 22 to 23 of the Heidelberg Catechism show that faith is the acceptance of God's Word and that a Christian must believe the summary of the articles of faith. When the summary of the articles of faith in question 23 is explained, it is clear the basis is the Apostles' Creed:

A. III.1. I believe in God the Father almighty, III.1. Creator of heaven and earth. III.2. I believe in Jesus Christ, III.2.His only begotten Son, our Lord; III.3. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, III.3. born of the virgin Mary; III.4. suffered under Pontius Pilate, III.4.was crucified, dead, and buried; III.4.He descended into hell; III.5. On the third day, He arose from the dead; III.6.He ascended into heaven, III.6. and sits at the right hand III.6. of God the Father almighty; III.7.from there He will come to judge III.7. the living and the dead. III.8.I believe in the Holy Spirit; III.9. I believe a holy catholic Christian church, III.9.the communion of saints; III.10. the forgiveness of sins; III.11. the resurrection of the body; III.12. and the life everlasting.¹⁰²

One must believe what is taught in the Creed to be a Christian. The Creed is further a summary of Christian teaching in that it affirms the apostolic teaching in light of the evolution of doctrine that was necessary in response to heretical teaching. It also can and should serve as a guide for interpretation and a correction for false teaching that may arise.

¹⁰¹ Pelikan, *Creeds and Confessions*, 667.

¹⁰² The Apostles' Creed is summed up in this statement of faith found in the Heidelberg Catechism, explicitly in question 23. Westminster Theological Seminary, "Heidelberg Catechism," accessed November 1, 2019, <https://students.wts.edu/resources/creeds/heidelberg.html>.

Like the Medieval catechesis, which was frequently based on the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed,¹⁰³ the reformers likewise included the Creed. Further in the spirit of Calvin's 1539 Geneva Catechism, it seems that basic instruction in the faith beginning with the Apostles' Creed is a good tradition. The Creed also finds its connection with Matthew's threefold baptismal rite and confesses faith in the same Father, Son, and Spirit that is proclaimed over the one receiving baptism.

The fact that the Creed is intentionally trinitarian may come from the controversies that required its expansion or clarification,¹⁰⁴ but it is more likely that the pattern was meant to conform to the tri-part baptismal formula found at the conclusion to Matthew's gospel, as well the *Didache*. In addition to affirming the faith handed down from the apostles, it further emphasizes the triune God for each new generation of disciples. The doctrinal outline of the Apostles' Creed continues to correct current trends in theology that may prove problematic in the future, such as a functional monotheism or Christomonism that an overly developed Christocentric hermeneutic can lead. God acts for humanity as the triune God, not as Christ alone. The foundational beliefs of the Christian faith are continually affirmed in the confession of the creed both at baptism and in the liturgical life of the church.

Contemporary Use of the Creed

Contemporary use of the Apostles' Creed brings the current project back to the historical foundation and back again to the final reason for using the Apostles' Creed. It is founded in the historical confession, the scriptural imperative, the *regula fidei*, and the *sensus fidelium*, and the Christian commission to make disciples by teaching them to obey and baptizing them in the name of the triune God. Confessing the Creed in the church

¹⁰³ B. A. Garrish, foreword to Phipps, *The Apostles' Creed*, iii.

¹⁰⁴ Ferguson, "The Appeal to Apostolic Authority," 49-62. Ferguson shows that Irenaeus' *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 1-28; and *Against Heresies* are examples of appeals to apostolic authority or church confessions as a basis for refuting heresies.

today brings the reader full circle to the origins of the Creed itself. As a form of continuity with the earliest Christian community, the Creed is still used today by many churches as a baptismal confession/interrogation. The form used by the Methodist Church states,

9. The pastor addresses all, and the congregation joins the candidates and their parents and sponsors in responding:

Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

I believe 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 was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.]

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

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.]¹⁰⁵

In this corporate confession is the *sensus fidelium*, *regula fidei*, and apostolic tradition at work. It is a corporate confession of the summary of the tradition handed down from the apostles throughout the history of the church. The Creed is continually confessed by Christians around the world both in the liturgy and in baptismal ceremonies. As such, it not only has continuity with but also harmony with the confession of all true Christians at all times and places.

As a final aside, while the Apostles' Creed is almost universally accepted in the west, to claim that the Creed is universal requires a minor qualification. One line has received some scrutiny and is even omitted from the Methodist version of the Apostles'

¹⁰⁵ United Methodist Church—Discipleship Ministries, "This Is Your Baptismal Liturgy," February 15, 2013, <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/this-is-your-baptismal-liturgy>.

Creed.¹⁰⁶ The claim that Christ descended into hell is problematic for some.¹⁰⁷ Some authors, like Grudem, claim the descent to hell is a later addition and does not reflect the earliest tradition or the biblical witness. One point worth noting is that the reformers not only include the descent to hell, but they vigorously defended it.¹⁰⁸ While the reformers have explicitly defended the descent to hell, to avoid the problem, the ecumenical version of the creed and some other traditions include the phrase “he descended to the dead.” The United Methodist Church omits the phrase altogether. Martin Luther ordered his small catechism by placing the Ten Commandments first followed by the Apostles’ Creed. He believed that the commandments showed what God required and the creed shows God’s grace.¹⁰⁹

Conclusion

The Apostles’ Creed serves as an excellent foundation for teaching because it carries a concise summary of the Christian faith that was confessed in short form by the earliest Christians. It carries a connection to the earliest church and the *sensus fidelium* of the earliest church. The Creed has a confessional, pedagogical, and corrective function that preserves the earliest witness, teaching, and refutations. It also sets apart the confession of the orthodox Christian faith from other religions and other groups that claim to be Christian. It still serves to pass on the faith and clarify the faith for each new generation.

¹⁰⁶ Methodist traditional and Ecumenical version do not have the descent to hell. The former omits that entire line, while the latter changes the descent to hell to the descent to the dead. *Apostles’ Creed: Traditional and Ecumenical Versions*, accessed February 17, 2019, <http://ee.umc.org/what-we-believe/apostles-creed-traditional-ecumenical>. It is important to add that the Korean version used in worship includes the descent to hell.

¹⁰⁷ Wayne Grudem, “He Did Not Descend into Hell: A Plea for Following Scripture Instead of the Apostles Creed,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34, no. 1 (March 1991): 103-13. For an opposing point, see David P. Scaer, “He Did Descend to Hell: In Defense of the Apostles’ Creed,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 35, no. 1 (March 1992): 91-99.

¹⁰⁸ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1331-35.

¹⁰⁹ Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 345, 369.

CHAPTER 4
FOUNDATION, DEVELOPMENT, ASSESSMENT,
AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE MINISTRY PROJECT

Introduction

The idea to develop a catechism curriculum based on the Apostles' Creed began with the perception that students did not know the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. The rationale for choosing the Apostles' Creed came about when one of the elders at Dayton Korean Grace Church (DKGC) lamented that the church did not confess the Apostles' Creed frequently like other Korean churches. Two things were then considered in developing the curriculum. First was the concern that students were not able to confess the Creed, or, further, if they were able to confess the Creed, they were not able to explain what it meant. The second consideration was that the students, or those confessing the Creed, did not know what it was precisely they were confessing or further why the creeds mattered. To address the problem of confessing the Creed, the church now confesses the Creed weekly. The second problem, teaching what the Creed means, grew from attempts to address the lack of background knowledge that the youth at DKGC possessed.

Concern

For the majority of Korean immigrants and their children living in North America, church participation is woven into the fabric of their lives.¹ While there are some positive aspects to the primarily social function of Korean immigrant churches, the emphasis on the social over the spiritual leads to several problems when addressing the

¹ Won Moo Hurh and Kwang Chung Kim, "Religious Participation of Korean Immigrants in the United States," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 29, no. 1 (1990): 19-34.

pedagogical concerns and the desire to retain the next generation as they come of age and move on to college or career.² The primary goal of this curriculum for this project was to increase knowledge. The primary concern was based on the concern that the first generation was not doing enough to hand down their Christian beliefs. Underlying the concern was whether the faith was being handed down to the next generation in a way that made them able to articulate and understand their faith.³

Purpose and Goals of the Project

The purpose of this project was to increase knowledge in new believers and the next generation at the Dayton Korean Grace church in Dayton, Ohio, using a catechism curriculum based on the Apostles' Creed. Increasing basic knowledge would provide a strong theological foundation for the church's youth and new believers as a first step in the longer journey of discipleship and incorporating them into church membership. The project had three goals. The goals were meant to address the need that existed and attempt to provide a foundation for the future and prepare students for their future. The first goal was to assess the current knowledge of students. The second goal was to develop a twelve-week catechism curriculum for youth and new Christians based on the Apostles' Creed that would increase knowledge of the basic tenets of the Christian faith. The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of basic Christian beliefs by

² Kwon and Hurh promote the standard understanding of Korean immigrant religious participation in America. There is a divergence in the literature on this point, but it is a minority. Some believe that the social function of the Korean immigrant church drives frequency of participation while others believe it is related to the high level of participation in general. Of Korean Protestants in Korea, 76 percent attend services weekly. Victoria Hwon Chu Kwon, Helen Rose Ebaugh, and Jaqualine Hagan, "The Structure and Function of Cell Group Ministry in a Korean Christian Church," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 36, no. 2 (1997): 247-56. Hurh and Kim, "Religious Participation" is also an important resource for the divergent viewpoint. See also Pyong Gap Min, *Koreans in North America* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013), 82.

³ Pyong Gap Min and Dae Young Kim, "Intergenerational Transmission of Religion and Culture: Korean Protestants in the U.S.," *Sociology of Religion* 66, no. 3 (2005): 263-82.

implementing the catechism curriculum. The success of the project was determined by the completion of the three goals.

Research Questions

The research questions, which correspond to the goals for this project were as follows:

1. What was the initial level of knowledge about the Apostles' Creed and the primary doctrines it outlines? This question corresponds directly to the first goal: assess current knowledge of students.
2. Will the course increase knowledge about the Apostles' Creed and the doctrines it outlines? This question corresponds to the second goal: develop a twelve-week catechism curriculum for youth and new Christians based on the Apostles' Creed that will increase knowledge of the basic tenets of the Christian faith.
3. Will the course change perceptions about certain ideas about Christianity that are embedded in Western culture? This question corresponds to the third goal: increase the students' knowledge of basic Christian beliefs by implementing the catechism curriculum.

The success of this project was determined by the extent to which it has satisfied the three goals. The first goal was to assess current knowledge of the students. To measure the first goal, a pre-test was given based on the content of the twelve-unit Apostles Creed curriculum. The test results were recorded for comparison. Based on the results of the pre-test, the curriculum was considered sufficient to meet the teaching goals set out in the project, so the curriculum could be implemented. Since this course is designed for those with little to no knowledge, there were no changes needed. The teacher's guide that was written as the foundation for teaching the curriculum also offered more in-depth exploration of the doctrine expressed in the Apostles' Creed in case the teachers and leaders needed to answer more in-depth questions.

The second goal was to develop a twelve-week catechism curriculum for youth and new Christians based on the Apostles' Creed that would increase knowledge of the basic tenets of the Christian faith. The curriculum was developed for Christians who had not participated in a catechism, confirmation, or discipleship program. To assess whether the program adequately addressed the major themes that the church felt were necessary

based on the Apostles Creed, the curriculum was reviewed with the pastoral staff and elders before beginning the course.⁴ The curriculum was deemed ready for implementation since no area was found to be either deficient or needing attention. If an area would have been found deficient, that section would have been revised and reassessed by the staff. If a section was considered to need attention, it would have been revised and reassessed if needed. Since as all areas were considered sufficient or better by the elders, and the criteria laid out in the original design section required approval by three out of the four elders, the unit was ready to be implemented.

The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of basic Christian beliefs. Once the course was taught to the students, the pre-test was administered as a post-test so the results could be compared. The goal was considered to have been met because there was a statistically significant increase from the pre-test results to the post-test results as measured by a *t*-test. For this evaluation to be conducted as a paired *t*-test, before the first test, students wrote their names on the pre-test, and then students again wrote their names on a post-test so the results could be paired.

Research Methodology

Preparation

The preparation for the implementation of the Apostles' Creed curriculum began based on the perceived need for more education for the next generation Christians at DKGCC. The biblical rationale for the need to pass along the faith was described in detail in chapter 2. The question of what to teach as a foundation came next, and the Apostles' Creed was used as the framework for which doctrines would be taught since it can be considered the minimum set of beliefs that a person needs to hold to be in historical continuity with orthodox Christianity. What emerged in chapter 3 was that the heart of Christian teaching is found concisely articulated in the Apostles' Creed.

⁴ See appendix 1 for evaluation rubric.

With the rationale for the project established, an outline was developed based on the articles of the Apostles' Creed. Since there are traditionally twelve articles to the Creed, the course was designed in twelve units.⁵ The outline was initially developed during the "Foundations for Teaching" course at Southern Seminary.⁶ The initial outline evolved as the course was being developed and the teacher's manual was written.

Following the development of the scope and sequence for the course, I wrote the teacher's book and student book based on the scope and sequence. One of the initial steps was the assessment of each unit based on the assessment rubric⁷ by the pastor and elders to see if each unit met the needs of the church and the individual goals set out for that unit, as outlined in chapter 1. The student book consisted of twelve, one-page summaries of the teaching for that unit. Each unit included the main doctrine and a brief explanation of the implications. The rationale behind this design was to make the student guide similar to the Reformation era catechisms in form. The student sheet was designed to have a doctrinal statement followed by a definition that concisely explained the implications of the claim. A key difference from the older catechisms was that the definition of the key doctrine was included with fill in the blank sections that included key words or ideas to help promote engagement with key terms and vocabulary. Key Bible verses were also included along with several study questions that relate to lesson application.

Prior to the course each student was given a pre-test to assess the extent of their knowledge. Along with the pre-test, some preliminary questions about demographics, cultural and linguistic background, and religious education were addressed.⁸

⁵ Some authors claim that there are three articles based on the Trinitarian structure of the Creed, an idea addressed in chap. 3.

⁶ See appendix 10 for scope and sequence.

⁷ See appendices 1 and 2 for the assessment rubric.

⁸ See appendices 6 and 7 for pre- and post-test. See appendices 3 and 4 for the basic

Project Design

The curriculum for this project was designed in twelve units. Each of the twelve traditional statements made in the Apostles' Creed were explained in light of the theological doctrines contained in the statement. The goal of the curriculum was to increase students' knowledge of doctrine and for some students that included changing perceptions about religious pluralism, or the exclusive claims about Jesus and salvation in Jesus alone. The curriculum was also designed to show the connection between the statements in the Apostles' Creed and their importance for Christian orthodoxy. A detailed scope and sequence for the curriculum is found in appendix 10 and a more compact version of the scope and sequence is found in appendix 9.

Unit 1 laid the foundation for the rest of the curriculum. It began by exploring the relationship between faith and confession. The heart for this relationship is in the *Shema* of Israel and the claim that there is only one God. From the confessional foundation in the *Shema*, the unit moved on to show that there is more to faith than simply stating certain objective truths; faith requires confession and allegiance. The relationship between faith and confession was explored through Romans 10:9-10. The idea of faith in the triune God was addressed at the beginning of units 1, 3, and 8 when each person of the trinity was discussed individually. One of the important ideas traced throughout the curriculum was the exclusivity of the triune God in contradistinction to other religions, including Judaism and Islam.

Unit 2 focused on the doctrine of creation and God's omnipotence. The emphasis was on *creatio ex nihilo*, the original goodness of creation and God's omnipotence. The goal was for students to see the importance of God creating everything out of nothing and how this would later relate to the new creation. The importance of God's omnipotence was shown in relation to creation and his ability to bring about a new

background information survey.

creation, as well as anything that he promises. One final area explored was God's omnipotence and the extent of his foreknowledge.

Unit 3 focused on the person of Jesus Christ. The virgin birth was discussed as well as the humanity and divinity of Christ. Particular attention was paid to two-natures Christology and the divinity of Jesus. The exclusiveness of Christian belief in God was discussed in light of the divinity of Jesus Christ. This unit showed that Jesus is both fully God and fully human and that the divine nature of Jesus makes it impossible to say that Islam or Judaism confess the same God as Christians. The one caveat here was that it may be superficially possible to say that Jews believe in the same God, but without Jesus, there is no possibility of saving faith in God.

Unit 4 addressed the suffering, crucifixion, death and burial of Jesus. In this section the implications of sin and atonement were addressed in a more general way. The story of Jesus' death was the primary focus. This unit showed that Jesus joyfully died for the sins of humanity, which was the will of the father. Of particular note here was the introduction of Luther's concept of the joyful exchange.

Unit 5 continued to explore the reality of the death and resurrection of Jesus and how it is distinct from Islamic teaching. Emphasis was placed on the real and physical nature of both Jesus' death and resurrection. Gregory of Nazianzus' claim, "that which was not assumed was not redeemed," was the starting point for the discussion on the necessity for a fleshly redeemer, or as the reason for the Word becoming flesh (John 1:1). The idea of future hope was introduced in light of the resurrection of Jesus and how it relates to the future hope of Christians. Finally, the idea and symbolism of baptism were introduced as students were told that the idea would further explored in units 6 and 10.

Unit 6 continued exploring the work of Jesus and future hope based on the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of the Holy Spirit. Unit 6 anticipated the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the church by showing both Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8 as well as the necessity and hope that the Spirit gives Christians in light of the final

commandment of Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20 as Jesus leaves his disciples with the command to make obedient disciples by baptizing and teaching all the nations. This unit returned to the issue of foreknowledge as the promise of the Spirit was discussed. The Gospel of John was used with reference to the predictions Jesus makes about the helper that would come.

Unit 7 examined the second coming from the positive perspective founded in Christian hope and the negative perspective founded in judgment for unbelievers. This section focused on the reality of hell and judgement in the scriptural context as a basis for the sense of urgency that should follow and drive believers to make disciples. The theme of promise and eternal hope continued through this section as the promise of believers' future participation in the resurrection through faith in Jesus.

Unit 8 began discussing the person and work of the Holy Spirit and went into detail about the doctrine of the trinity. The idea of the uniqueness of the triune God in distinction from other religions' conceptions of God was rejoined for further discussion. The fruit of the spirit was explored as one of the works in the life of individual Christians and how Christians can live out their lives in the public arena in a way that glorifies God. Attention was paid to the distinction between the fruit of the Spirit and the spiritual gifts that believers receive from the Spirit.

Unit 9 began by clarifying what is meant by the catholic church in the Creed and explored what it means for the church to be universal when there are many different denominations. This unit also sought to discover what the church as a mixed body looks like. The question of how the local church functions as the body of Christ, given the mixed and fragmented nature of the church, was also addressed. Finally, the purpose of the church was explored with attention paid to glorifying God, discipleship, and sending.

Unit 10 addressed the sacraments of baptism and communion. Baptism was looked at first in light of church membership. After the necessity of baptism for church membership was discussed, adult believer's baptism as the primary model was explained

through Scripture and theology. After laying a foundation for baptism, questions about infant baptism were addressed in light of the biblical model of believer's baptism and long-held church teaching on infant baptism. The Lord's Supper was explored in the context of the new covenant, along with the blessings and warnings that go with the new covenant. Finally, the community was discussed as well as their responsibility for other believers.

Unit 11 addressed in great length the forgiveness of sins. The discussion of sin began with the fall and its effects on creation as well as the extent of the corruption. Through the letter to the Romans, the penalty for sin was addressed, and forgiveness for sins was discussed. This section placed weight on the necessity of Jesus and the biblical claim that forgiveness is only available through faith in Jesus. This section focused on the distinction and inter-connectedness of justification and sanctification.

Unit 12 connected the resurrection of Jesus and the promise therein with the ground of Christian hope. The source of hope focused on Paul's claim in 1 Corinthians 15:17 that without Christ's resurrection, Christians would have no hope. Resurrection hope was then connected to the promise of participation in the resurrection of Christ through faith. Emphasis was placed on the bodily resurrection, and particularly the fleshly nature of the resurrection as articulated in the early credal confessions. This unit revisited Gregory of Nazianzus' claim about assuming the flesh and redemption of the flesh.⁹ The final promise was that of everlasting life with God in the new creation.

Test Design

The purpose of the pre- and post-tests¹⁰ was to measure the students' knowledge before and after the implementation of the course. The test was divided into three sections for a total of fifty questions. Each section was meant to measure knowledge

⁹ As noted later, this section was revised at the request of the senior pastor.

¹⁰ The test used for pre- and post-tests is located in appendices 6 and 7.

or changed perception. Sections 2 and 3 were written to correspond to specific units and doctrinal issues so the effectiveness of the curriculum could be measured. The questions also corresponded to the lesson plans and individual doctrines. Students wrote their names on the pre- and post-test, and the tests were identical so that the results for each student could be used for comparison on the *t*-test. After implementing the course, the post-test was administered. While the students wrote their names on the pre and post-tests, for the purposes of the project no names are listed.

Test Design—Section 1

The first section assessed the extent to which students knew the Apostles' Creed. Since the Creed is frequently recited during church services, it was assumed that there would be a certain level of fluency or rote knowledge. Because the Creed is often memorized in different forms, as long as the terminology matches one of the forms used by different denominations, the answer was considered acceptable. For example, some older versions of the Apostles' Creed use the term Holy Ghost, with newer versions using Holy Spirit. Likewise, some versions state, "He descended to the dead," rather than "He descended into hell."

Test Design—Section 2

Section 2 of the test consisted of fifteen multiple choice questions. The questions in section 2 corresponded to one or more units or doctrines.¹¹ Question 1 corresponded to unit 2 and the doctrine of creation from nothing. Question 2 corresponded to trinitarian teaching, and was reinforced in units 1, 2, and 3 generally as each person of the godhead is discussed, and in unit 8 in particular when the doctrine of the trinity was discussed at length. Question 3 was likewise based on teaching in units 1 and 8, but also in the continued emphasis on the uniqueness of the Christian confession of a triune God and the

¹¹ See appendices 6 and 7 for the test.

oneness of God that was touched on in other units as well. The Trinity received further attention in units 1, 3, and 8. Question 3 was meant to assess how the curriculum changed perceptions since most young Christians are taught that Jews, Christians, and Muslims all believe in the same God.¹² Question 4 addressed the idea of faith outlined in unit 1. Question 5 addressed the doctrine of the Trinity proper and unit 8. Questions 6 and 7 were both related to units 5 and 6 respectively. Question 9 addressed unit 7. Question 10 clarified the creedal statement and addressed unit 9. Question 11 addressed units 5 and 10 and the discussion of the symbolism of baptism. Question 12 addresses unit 3 and two nature Christology. This question was also meant to change perceptions about who Jesus is. Question 13 addressed units 4 and 7 particularly. This question was designed to assess a change in perceptions. The change in perception was necessary because mainline theology tends to de-emphasize the nature of sin and atonement and focus on Jesus as an example. Question 14, like 13, was meant to change perceptions and was tied to units 4 and 7. Question 15 was connected to units 5 and 12.

In addition to measuring knowledge, questions, 3, 12, 13, and 14, were meant to see how the curriculum changed perceptions. The questions also addressed broader themes that are traced throughout the curriculum.

Test Design—Section 3

Section 3 has ten true or false questions. Like section 2, section 3 measured knowledge as well as perceptions, though in section 3 most of the questions were written in a way to test perceptions. Question 1 addressed units 1, 3, and 8. Question 2 addressed unit 1 and a theme that was developed in units 3 and 8 as the idea of faith in each person of the triune God was addressed. Question 3 addresses units 2 and 3 and the connection

¹² Mark Galli's article provides a good example of scholars who believe Christians and Muslims believe in the same God. Mark Galli, "Do Muslims and Christians Worship the Same God?" *Christianity Today*, April 15, 2011, [https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2011/april/muslimschristiansamegod.html](https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2011/april/muslimschristianssamegod.html).

made between Genesis 1 and John 1. Question 4 was a reiteration of the use of catholic in the Apostles' Creed and unit 9. Question 5 addressed units 1, 3, 4, 7, and 8, and particularly unit 11 on forgiveness through Jesus alone. Question 6 was a companion question to 5 and both were meant to further assess how perceptions change. Question 7 indirectly addressed the general perception of faith but directly speaks to unit 3 and Mary's role. Questions 8 and 9 are linked to questions 5 and 6 about salvation through Jesus by faith alone. Question 10 dealt with units 4 and 11 and the necessity of the atonement. It was also one of a set of questions that assessed how perceptions changed.

Evaluation Rubric Design

For each unit that was taught, a rubric was distributed to assess whether teachers and leaders felt the curriculum was ready to be implemented with students.¹³ The same rubric was used for the students to evaluate each lesson after the class session. The teacher and student rubrics are identical. Unlike the pre- and post-tests, the rubric responses were anonymous and the letters T (teacher) and L (leader) were used to distinguish their position in the church for data-collection purposes. Student surveys were left blank. The rubric used a four-point Likert scale that evaluated the curriculum as "1," for insufficient: major revisions are needed before teaching. The unit does not address the doctrine or doctrines and lacks biblical support or is incoherent. "2," requires attention: there are doctrines or sections that are unclear and need to be revised or expanded before teaching. The unit does not meet the teaching goals as described. "3," sufficient: some minor revisions may be required but the unit addresses the doctrine/s adequately and is clearly supported from Scripture and is ready to begin teaching. "4," exemplary: no changes are needed. There were sections for comment following each category and a final section for general comments or feedback. If an area was found to be insufficient or requiring attention, respondents were asked to note what section precisely.

¹³ See appendices 1 and 2 for the rubric.

The criteria for evaluation were as follows: Does the lesson cover the doctrine with clarity? Is the lesson faithful to historical teaching? Is the lesson easy to understand? Is the learning goal clearly stated? Does the doctrine fit well with the creedal statement? Is there adequate biblical support? Are the questions appropriate for the age? Are the questions appropriate based on the material? If any of the units were considered insufficient by three out of four leaders, or the pastor, the unit was revised and reassessed by the leaders. If the unit was thought to require attention by leaders, then it was revised, but no further follow-up was needed. Since the leaders that evaluated the curriculum before implementation, with the exception of the senior pastor, participated in the class for a more in-depth evaluation, there was a risk that a section may be perceived as insufficient requiring a re-write and not allowing for a valid study. Finally, students were given the same evaluation rubric and instructed to answer questions that applied.

Participant Data

Before the course was implemented, a background information survey was administered to collect background data about the students.¹⁴ This survey was consulted to assess the length of time students had attended church to measure their background knowledge. The survey was also meant to potentially limit participation of students who had been through a catechism, confirmation, or extensive discipleship training course. The same background information survey was used to measure the background knowledge of church leaders that participated in the course, which insured that each of the leaders that were evaluating the course had either been through a catechism, confirmation, or extensive discipleship training course. A group of four leaders from the church along with three teachers participated in the course along with the twelve students. Each of the leaders was given a copy of all the material for the course. The material included the teacher's book for evaluation along with a copy of the student book, the detailed scope

¹⁴ See background survey in appendices 3 and 4.

and sequence, and the twelve-unit lesson plan. The assessments that the leadership submitted found that the course was sufficient or exemplary in each area for each unit.¹⁵ All the leaders had attended various leadership training courses in the past and were also Bible study teachers in the church. The leaders have also completed the Life of Christ series and have taught the Life of Christ series that the church uses for its education program. One additional participant was a new deacon at the church and came from a Roman Catholic background and had been through the Catholic catechism class.

The three youth teachers that would later teach this course to the youth group for confirmation classes also participated. The youth teachers did not fall within the criteria delimited for students because all of the teachers had been through previous confirmation classes or had been through leadership training programs in the past. Their test scores are not included in the data.

Twelve students participated in the course and met the criteria for participation. Each student was given a short survey of basic background information.¹⁶ Of the twelve students, ten were second-generation Korean Americans. All the participants had grown up in the church. None had participated in a catechism or confirmation courses in the past. Ten had attended Korean immigrant churches for their entire lives. One participant had attended a non-Korean Catholic church when he was young, but later switched to a Korean church. One participant had attended a non-Korean Anglican church when he was younger. The participants were all part of the young adult ministry of the church and between the ages of 18 and 25. As a whole, the group fit with the overall demographic

¹⁵ Results from the survey can be found in appendix 5.

¹⁶ See Background Survey in appendices 3 and 4. The background survey was revised from the original survey that was submitted with the project. After re-evaluating the questions, they were re-written to be more focused on information relevant to the curriculum and to the students with whom the survey would be used. By combining data from the Background Survey and the pre-test the same information could be extracted.

information that is stereotypical for Korean immigrant churches.¹⁷ The two non-Korean students fit the other criteria for the course so were included. They also reflect the shifting demographics of the youth and young adult ministry as it trends toward multi-ethnic.

The demographic information breaks down as follows for the students. All students had attended church for 10 years or more and considered English their primary language, even those born in Korea. Ten out of 12 students grew up in a home where both parents primarily spoke Korean. Two students did not grow up with Korean parents. All students had attended both Sunday school and youth group. Ten out of 12 students had attended a Korean immigrant church for 10 or more years with no experience at a church that was not a Korean immigrant church.¹⁸ One student had attended a Korean church for 5 to 10 years. One student had attended a Korean immigrant church for 1 to 2 years. The 2 non-Korean students had some experience at non-Korean churches. All students had only participated in the regular Korean service after beginning college.

The background and initial knowledge of the students was important for assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum and its future application. The background survey was designed to assess the length of time students had attended the church and the level of engagement in the community and their Christian educational background. The survey focused on how long they had attended a Korean church, and what their primary languages were versus which language was spoken at home.¹⁹ One of the key limitations was whether the students had participated in a catechism, confirmation, or discipleship program before. Related to their overall education, the survey asked in which ministries the students participated in the past and whether they had ever attended a non-Korean

¹⁷ Sharon Kim, *A Faith of Our Own: Second Generation Spirituality in Korean American Churches* (Rutgers, NY: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 50-72. Chap. 3 describes the typical second-generation Korean Christian.

¹⁸ The same 10 out of 12 students indicated that they had attended a non-Korean church for 0-1 years.

¹⁹ See survey in appendices 3 and 4.

church for an extended time. Finally, the survey asked what generation Korean they were, if applicable.

Initial Assessment

Before teaching the curriculum, the lesson plans were discussed with the senior pastor and the leadership. This conversation with the leaders was to decrease the chances that after implementing the curriculum with the leaders attending the class that major revisions would be requested requiring me to teach the class again after revisions. The rubric was used to assess each unit based on the criteria that each chapter must be considered sufficient or better in each area by three out of four leaders before implementation. The curriculum met the criteria for each unit; however, revisions were requested by the senior pastor in two units though they met all the criteria of the rubric. The unit on the descent to hell needed further clarification, at the request of the senior pastor, given the Methodist preference to not include the descent to hell in the Creed. While the curriculum did mention the fact that Methodists and some other denominations do not agree with the descent to hell, the senior pastor felt the idea was not adequately addressed.

The senior pastor also requested that unit 12 be revised because the teaching on the resurrection of the body placed too much emphasis on the physicality of the resurrection. The unit was revised to explain different views on the resurrection, particularly the spiritual resurrection, since the senior pastor does not believe in a physical resurrection of the body and believes it will be a spiritual resurrection and a spiritual body.

After discussion with some of the church leaders, it was decided that rather than just doing a cursory assessment based solely on the teaching material, the leaders participated in the course alongside the teachers and the students. This did introduce more risk into the project than if the leaders had just read the curriculum because there was the potential that the leaders would find an area to be lacking and require major revision, requiring a re-write after the course had already begun. The leaders who participated in

the course found all the areas to be sufficient or exemplary based on the criteria outlined in the evaluation rubric; however, some of the assessments were marked all exemplary with no comment. The individual comment for each unit is as follows: Unit 1 was considered sufficient or better by all the leaders and teachers. One comment by a leader stated that the teacher's guide may have been a little too "academically" oriented and may need to be revised in the future if the teachers found it too difficult. Another comment stated that they found some spelling and grammar mistakes. Unit 2 was likewise found to be sufficient or exemplary by all of the leaders and teachers. The one comment added to this unit was that the "life applications to existential postulates were very helpful," and that the "discussion questions in the student guide provided great examples." Unit 3 was found to be sufficient or better in each category with a comment on the overall organization from one leader who thought it seemed somewhat counter intuitive. Unit 4 was sufficient or better in each category. Two comments were related to the application of the work of God the Son. One comment expressed concern that there was some lack of clarity concerning atonement theories. The section to which he commented just briefly introduced the concept of atonement and not theories. In spite of this, one leader thought there should be less discussion about the different atonement theories, while another leader felt there should be more, though they both thought it was sufficient for teaching purposes. Unit 5 was sufficient or better in each area and there were no written comments. There was far more in-class discussion around the descent to hell. Interestingly, none of the teachers or leaders had ever heard the Apostles' Creed recited without the clause about the descent to hell. Unit 6 and 7 were both rated sufficient or better in all categories. There were no written comments on either section. Unit 8 was considered exemplary in each area by most leaders and teachers. The exception was the teachers' desire for more historical background about the Trinity. The other written comment was that this section brought together and clarified the doctrine of the Trinity proper. Units 9 through 11 also were sufficient or better in each category. One written comment on unit

11 stated, “Now the atonement theories make more sense.” Finally, unit 12 was exemplary in most cases. The comments reflected a desire to hear more about the resurrection and eternal life. Most of the leaders liked the emphasis on the resurrection of the body with one leader saying they did not think it was helpful to mention a spiritual resurrection since “it isn’t biblical.”

After the post-test evaluation, the leaders found that, while there was some disagreement with minor points of doctrine, which may have been due to the diverse denominational background of the leaders, the lessons were “clear and insightful” and brought together all the doctrines into one clear and focused form. One leader who was from a Roman Catholic background stated that he “finally understood what the Apostles’ Creed was all about.” As a whole, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive from the leaders and the teachers.

Research Findings

Pre-Test Evaluations

Before beginning the course, students were given a pre-test. The students wrote their names on the pre-test and the post-test so the scores could be compared in a paired *t*-test. The scores on the pre-tests as a whole showed that most of the college students had never memorized the Apostles’ Creed.²⁰ The average before the course was 12.25 out of 25 possible points. For an average of 49 percent for part 1. Part 2 of the pre-test had an average score of 11.83 out of 15 possible points, or 78.8 percent. Part 3 of the pre-test had an average of 9.08 out of 10 possible points for an average of 90.8 percent. The only questions that were answered incorrectly were question 10, with seven students answering incorrectly, question 7 with two incorrect answers, and question 4 with one incorrect answer. Question 10 was meant to address the example theory of atonement that was

²⁰ See appendix 8 for a breakdown by section.

taught in the course. Most students seemed to have thought that Jesus' death was an example of self-sacrifice for humanity.²¹

Individual Unit Feedback

Like the leaders and teachers, the students were given an evaluation rubric with each lesson. The evaluation rubrics were anonymous, but they were marked with the letter L for leaders or T for teachers. Evaluation rubrics were kept anonymous to help ensure honesty in the responses. Most of the evaluation rubrics were handed back after the teaching was complete for each unit with "exemplary" checked in each category. The instructions for how to complete the evaluation were on the rubric and were also reiterated verbally. The evaluation was qualified by telling participants some questions may not always apply so they were to check all that apply. No one left any response blank, even when the response did not seem to apply to a particular unit. All areas were found to be sufficient or better. After each section, students were asked if they had any further questions or concerns, or anything that needed clarification.

There were several written responses to unit 1.²² One student said it was not engaging enough and sounded too academic, which was reinforced by some of the other students. The perception of the curriculum seemed to be a presentation problem more than a curriculum problem. The participants frequently referred to the lack of Bible verses even though the Bible reference followed each statement. Based on this feedback, subsequent presentations were revised to place more emphasis on the scriptural connection. Rather than reference the verse, the verse was added in its entirety. The material and content in the teaching manual remained the same. Several comments related to the nature and connection between faith and confession, as found in Romans 10:9-10. Students had

²¹ Due to the number of incorrect answers to this question, it was asked directly during the teaching time if students thought the crucifixion was meant to be an example for us.

²² Individual comments that were either written on the evaluation rubric or offered verbally after class are recorded from this point forward.

never viewed the creed as a confession of faith in relation to the basic doctrinal teaching of Scripture.

For unit 2, the students commented that the focus on Scripture was better. Three students stated that they liked the specific scriptural support for each section. The students' change in perception may have been helped by including the Bible verses under the discussion on the PowerPoint presentation rather than referencing them and expecting the students to follow along in their Bibles. One comment stated that "it showed the importance of the Apostles' Creed in relation to growth in faith and discipleship." One student commented that the discussion questions were "very relevant and appropriate for different ages." Since the comments on the presentation were more positive, the Scripture verses were included in the presentation slides for all the following units.

Unit 3 was said to have "good biblical support on every slide," referring to the presentation. One student was "not clear on all the Son language." Unit 4 appeared to have cleared up their confusion about the "Son language." There were no written comments for units 5 through 7. However, in the after-class discussion, students stated that they appreciated the balance between doctrines, such as two-natures Christology, and the scriptural support for each doctrine.

Unit 8 had one written comment that stated, "Goes over each point with much support." Unit 8 and 9 had repeated comments that requested more "historical support" for the doctrines and the development of the trinity. Unit 9 had one written comment that stated, "Each part of the Creed was dissected and explained [and] there was a great deal of biblical support for each point." Comments on unit 10 suggested that the lessons had gotten easier to understand, and they were "theological enough" without getting "too theological about each question [so] that it hinders one's faith." Unit 11 had no written comments. Unit 12 had no written comments, but much after-class discussion was focused on the nature of the resurrection and everlasting life. The church leaders liked the emphasis

on the bodily resurrection and the new creation. The students had never really thought much about it and had always thought of the after-life in terms of going to heaven.

Post-Test Evaluations

After the course instruction was completed, a post-test was administered so the effectiveness of the course could be measured. Students again wrote their names on the post-test so the scores could be compared using a paired *t*-test. The scores as a whole increased from 33.16 to 47.42 out of 50 possible points, showing a statistically significant increase ($t_{(11)} = 5.45, p < .0001$). By the post-test, most of the students had memorized the Apostles' Creed. While the pre-test average was 49 percent, the post-test average was 23.58 out of a possible 25 points, or 94.33 percent. The increase between the pre-test and post-test showed that the students did in fact memorize most of the Apostles' Creed through the course. One of the main goals was to increase knowledge, and this was evident in the overall increase in part 1 of the post-test versus the pre-test. Most of the students were unfamiliar with the Apostles' Creed before the course. Students, teachers, and leaders alike appreciated the opportunity to not only be in a position where they were required to learn the Creed but also one in which they learned about the meaning behind it and its historical and theological significance.

Part 2 of the post-test had an average score of 14 out of 15 points for an average of 93.3 percent. The average score on the pre-test was 11.83, or 78.8 percent. Most of the students thought this part of the test was good and made them think. Generally, students thought some of the questions were appropriate, but the answers were too easy because they could figure them out even if they did not know the answers. Students did comment on the third question that asked which religion believed in the same God as Christians. All the students got this question wrong on the pre-test. Two students got this question wrong on the post-test. This question was meant to be more about changing attitudes, and the students were generally in agreement that the material convinced them that Christians do not believe in the same God as any other religion. Two students were

not convinced and believed that Muslims worshipped the same God as Christians. Question 8 was answered incorrectly by six students on the pre-test and four on the post-test. Students that answered the question wrong on the post-test thought it was confusing. Question 10 was answered incorrectly by eight of the twelve students on the pre-test and two on the post-test. Most of the students agreed that they did not know what the word meant and were guessing. One student with a Roman Catholic background believed it referred to the Roman Catholic church as the one true church and still believed that at the end. Four students answered question 11 wrong, with two choosing that baptism symbolized the washing away of sins and two saying it symbolized death and rebirth in Christ. On the post-test, no one answered question 11 incorrectly. Seven students answered question 14 incorrectly on the pre-test, with none answering incorrectly on the post-test. The reasoning varied but it was generally a combination of the precise language concerning the Son and the Father that confused people and led them to “guess” a different answer. None of the students seem to have understood the distinction that was drawn in the precise terminology about the person and the work of the Father and the person and the work of the son. Further, even if they knew the right answer originally, they did not know why it was the case. This question revealed a lack of knowledge about the persons and work of the Trinity more than it did a belief that there is a way to heaven other than Jesus or faith. When asked, four of the students thought that works somehow contributed to salvation, but the course had changed their beliefs about this issue. The student with the Catholic background admitted that while they had answered the question correctly because they knew that was what was taught, they were not entirely convinced of the veracity of the claim.

Part 3 of the post-test had an average score of 9.83 out of 10 possible points, or 98.3 percent. The pre-test average was of 9.08 out of 10 possible points for an average of 90.8 percent. Question 10 was answered incorrectly by two people. Overall, section 3 was not very difficult, and question 10 in particular was the only question that proved

difficult for most students. One of the students that answered question 10 incorrectly on the pre-test and the post-test thought that the wording was confusing. Most of the students answered question 10 correctly on the post-test reflecting a clearer understanding of atonement theories after the intervention. The students that answered questions 4 and 7 wrong on the pre-test answered these questions correctly on the post-test, showing that their understanding of the Catholic church had changed as well. One student came from a Roman Catholic background and previously had understood the Catholic church to only refer to the Roman Catholic church, and he also believed that praying to Mary was the best way to pray. The other student that answered that it was okay to pray to Mary because she was in heaven with Jesus. Overall, the teachers thought the questions were good for younger students but may have been too easy for older students.

After the students finished the course, there was an open discussion to assess their thoughts on individual questions and teaching sections to gain a better understanding of the results. This time included discussion about specific questions students answered incorrectly to verify that the questions were not confusing or misleading. Particular questions on which people changed their answers were addressed in the context of the course teaching material.

Conclusion

Overall the project was successful and most of the results were as anticipated. The students' overall scores improved and there was more integration of the knowledge. What remains to be seen is whether the continued emphasis on education and discipleship improves the long-term retention of young people.

The success of the project was determined by how well the project met all three goals. The pre-test was administered to the students and the average score on the pretest was 33.16 out of 50 possible points. The background information showed that all the students had grown up in the church yet had never participated in a catechism,

confirmation, or extensive discipleship program. Given the length of time the students had attended church, their background knowledge was not very high.

The second goal was to develop a twelve-week catechism curriculum for youth and new Christians based on the Apostles' Creed to increase knowledge of the basic tenets of the Christian faith. Before beginning the course, the curriculum was reviewed by the senior pastor and elders using a rubric to assess whether the program adequately addressed the major themes that the church felt were necessary based on the Apostles' Creed. The curriculum was deemed ready for implementation since no areas were found to be either deficient or needing attention. Since the goals were met and the curriculum was implemented, goal 2 was successful.

The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of basic Christian beliefs. Once the course was completed, a post-test was administered, and the results were compared. The goal was considered to have been met since there was a statistically significant increase from the pre-test results to the post-test results as measured by the *t*-test. The students increased their overall scores from 49 percent to 94.33 percent.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

This chapter serves as a summary and comprehensive evaluation of the project. The chapter addresses the project based on how it met its goals and fulfilled its purpose. The strengths and weaknesses of the project are explored in more detail, followed by future changes that would improve the work. Last is theological and personal reflections.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project was to increase knowledge in new believers and youth at the Dayton Korean Grace church in Dayton, Ohio, using a catechism curriculum based on the Apostles' Creed. Based on the criteria of showing a statistically significant increase in knowledge, as measured by a paired sample *t*-test, the purpose of increasing knowledge has been met. The curriculum further increased knowledge in young believers, and finally, participants also memorized the Apostles' Creed by the end of the course. At very least, the students knew the Creed and were able to recite it during corporate confession in worship services that contain it as part of the liturgy, as well as baptism services.

The curriculum was developed around the Apostles' Creed as a summary of the basics of Christian doctrine. The necessity this curriculum was based on the commission found at the end of Matthew's Gospel in which Jesus commands his disciples to make disciples by teaching and baptizing. Since Dayton Korean Grace Church (DKGC) did not have an introductory course that outlined the basics of the Cristian faith, this course was necessary as a means toward fulfilling the call to make disciples who in turn possess the basic knowledge needed to begin making disciples.

While the test results and statistics showed an increase in knowledge, comments from participants who expressed their gratitude for this course and expressed their hope that this course would be taught again, also showed the success of the project. One of the leaders who participated in the course wanted his wife to take the class. Two main categories summarize the general response from students. First, students were glad that they finally memorized the Apostles' Creed because they now understood why confessions in general, and the Apostles' Creed in particular, were relevant, and how creeds and confessions related to their faith. The second major theme was that now the students understood how the doctrinal claims that they knew superficially were important because they understood both what they meant and why they were used to confess to define their faith.

The response from leaders who participated in the class also showed the value of the curriculum. For assessing the effectiveness of the course, a group of participants was used primarily from DKGCC's college ministry. None of the participants had completed an extensive church membership or catechism class prior to participation. However, the positive feedback from the leaders and students that did not meet the delimitations for use in the study provided more support since they had been through leadership courses in the past and they still found the course helpful. The leaders and teachers particularly found the integrative approach to faith and confession was excellent and thought other leaders at the church would benefit from the course as well.

Since this study was conducted within the confines of a Korean immigrant church, the results of this project may have a limited application. A further limitation may be in the model that DKGCC employs in its ministry. DKGCC does not have a separate English ministry like most other Korean immigrant churches with a substantial number of English speakers. The main service, along with other events, are translated into English so anyone can participate. There are however still separate ministries for children, middle and high school, and college and young adults. This segregated model of ministry may

influence the involvement level and the learning of some students. Most of the time only adults participate in the church's main services with the younger generation prefers to attend their respective smaller worship service. The model of separate services for different groups is almost universal for Korean churches. Finally, the results might be different when taught to new believers instead of young people who grew up in the church.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

Goal 1

The first goal was to assess the current knowledge of the students. The first goal was accomplished by writing and administering the test that was based on the curriculum. The first section of the test measured the students' prior knowledge of the Apostles' Creed, and the extent to which they had memorized it. The next two sections were multiple choice and true or false and measured the background knowledge of the students. The questions were designed to evaluate the students' level of knowledge about topics addressed throughout the twelve-unit curriculum.

Goal 2

The second goal was to develop a twelve-week catechism curriculum for youth and new Christians based on the Apostles' Creed to increase knowledge of the basic tenets of the Christian faith. This goal was accomplished first by the development of the curriculum, and then by the final goal of increasing knowledge. The curriculum development began in outline over a year before the actual writing of the curriculum. The course was designed around twelve teaching units that corresponded to the twelve traditional statements of the Apostles' Creed.

The development of the curriculum was successfully completed when the senior pastor and the leaders that evaluated the curriculum found each area to be sufficient or better. The leaders participated in the course before offering their final evaluations to ensure the accuracy of their responses. In addition to the leaders' and pastor's evaluation,

each student submitted an evaluation after the teaching session. The same criteria were used and the students also felt that each area for each unit was sufficient or better. The feedback that students offered showed they felt the course had increased their knowledge and better equipped them to think more deeply about their faith. The leaders that participated in the course felt that not only would the course increase knowledge in the students who participated, but that it had increased their knowledge as well.

One of the limits may be the honesty with which people assessed each unit. If the students did not provide honest, thoughtful feedback in their assessments, then the final assessment of the curriculum would be inaccurate. Further, if the students answered the question with the answer that was expected and did not necessarily agree with the answer, it would affect the outcomes. While this outcome was successful based on the evaluation rubric and feedback, it assumes an honest response.

Goal 3

The third goal was to increase the students' knowledge of basic Christian beliefs by implementing the catechism curriculum. The third goal was met when there was a statistically significant increase from the pre-test to the post-test. One of the more positive results was how students seemed to understand the relationship between their faith and the faith of historical orthodoxy as expressed in the Apostles' Creed. One particularly telling comment was that students now understood why the church recites the Creed at baptism.

Most of the students appreciated that they had memorized the Apostles' Creed by the end of the course, and learning what each article meant and how it was related to church teaching helped them to better appreciate the concepts and the relationship between the Creed and confession in general. Most of the students could not remember how many times before this course they had recited the Apostles' Creed in English. Reciting the Creed in Korean could be the source of the lack of knowledge given that all of the participants considered English to be their primary language. Anecdotally, in a

confirmation class that I taught at another Korean immigrant church, the interviews were done in Korean and the students were criticized for not knowing the answer. However, when the question was translated into English, the students were able to answer in English.

One of the limits in assessing this knowledge increase based solely on the test is in how well the students understood the answer that they chose. If students were able to figure out the answer through the process of elimination even though they did not know the answer, then they would have answered correctly without having known the answer before. If the students knew what to say, for example, there is only one God, but did not know how this was distinguished from claims made by Islam or Judaism, then it would be difficult to accurately assess how much knowledge increased.

Strengths of the Project

The greatest strength of the project was the classroom teaching time. The verbal feedback after each teaching session was overwhelmingly positive. The subject matter in the discussions led to further discussions, and the classes rarely ended on time. Students interacted more with the material and with each other.

The design of the student book was also effective in the teaching context. The students appreciated a concise, clear statement that they could memorize. The format of stating a doctrine based on the Creed, followed by a summary of the meaning and implication, was well received. Because each definition of the doctrine was written in a fill-in-the-blank format seemed to help students stay engaged throughout the course as well as reinforced key vocabulary and ideas. Having something clear and to the point helped the students understand the implications of the statement and gave them a starting point for discussion. The students and teachers also felt that the discussion questions for each unit that were part of the student book were relevant and conducive for conversation.

Another strength was that there was a great deal of interest in the course, so attendance was high. The leaders that participated in the course, as well as the teachers and students, took time during the busy holiday season to participate in the course. The

high level of participation was appreciated and revealed a high level of interest in the subject matter. Based on student feedback, there was a high level of desire for learning more about the faith. Students that could not attend enough classes to be used for this project asked if they could participate in the course even though they were not part of the study. The desire to participate by those that could not be included in the study shows that the content of the course was a motivating factor for those who chose to participate.

Recitation of the Apostles' Creed and the individual articles before each class session helped the students memorize the Creed and also helped them formulate new questions for in-class discussions. Toward the end of the teaching sessions, students were able to recite the Creed without looking at the notes.

While many of the results were as expected, a strength that came out in the discussion that was not expected was that of integrating faith, knowledge, and application for the students. A comment made by the leaders, teachers, and students alike was the value of the integration and application of what they already knew. The correlation between those who scored the highest on the test and this comment was quite telling. Several participants, particularly leaders and teachers, expressed that while they knew the Apostles' Creed and had known many of the doctrines discussed, they never really understood the connection between the Creed and the doctrine, or why the Apostles' Creed was recited as a part of the baptismal liturgy. Other students said they knew the answers before but did not really know why they were important or why people believed this way. In the end, the biblical foundation provided strong support for making disciples while the Apostles' Creed made for a good framework for teaching basic Bible doctrine.

Weaknesses of the Project

The first project weakness was in the time constraints for implementation. Since the course was taught over the winter break, it was easy to find days that worked for the first nine units, but the last three were more difficult. Further, students were required to attend 80 percent of the classes, which meant that if they missed more than

two units, their tests would not be used for the project results. Delimiting the group of participants to those who could come to a minimum of ten classes meant that several students participated in most of the course and even took the tests, but their scores were not used. Some absences were due to the holiday season, travel, or family obligations. It may have been easier to hold the course on Sundays or another regular teaching time to allow students to meet once a week on a regular basis. It would also have helped if the course was longer than twelve units.

One of the problems addressed immediately during the teaching sessions was the format of the PowerPoint presentations. The students' perception that the course was too theoretical and not biblical enough seemed to stem from the lack of full Bible verses included in the presentation slides. Students were told to bring their Bibles to each session, but they did not always do this. Furthermore, bringing their Bibles did not mean that the students would open them during class. Bible verses were added to all subsequent lectures and the perception changed about the course. Nothing else about the presentation, the teacher's book, or the student book was changed. Therefore, perceptions were a much bigger problem that should have been anticipated. Even when theologians were mentioned to show historical support some students thought this was bias.

During implementation, it seemed as if the questions could have been asked in a better way. The test questions were based on previous discussions with DKGC congregants at and other Korean-immigrant churches and seemed appropriate to measure prior knowledge on the pre-test. Occasionally the questions did not measure participants' knowledge to the extent I had hoped for because there was a gap between their ability to make claims and their ability to explain them. Choosing the right question applies to the survey and the rubric as well. Once the curriculum was implemented and the answers were collected, it also seemed like there were more questions to ask, or that a particular question could have been worded better.

Future Changes

One of the things that would need to be changed when this course is taught again is the pre and post-test. The test was adequate for the purpose of the project because it showed a statistically significant increase, but most of the questions in parts 2 and 3 were too easy for young adults. The questions are more suitable for middle school to early high school. In the future, different tests need to be written for different age groups. It is obvious that a different test would be required for different age groups, but the test seemed like it would be suitable for young adults before it was administered. Since the same course is currently being taught to the youth group, the same test was administered to middle school and high school students. The results were much more in line with what was expected and the scores more accurately reflected their knowledge. The pre-test scores were much lower, and the distribution of incorrect answers was much more even.

After the course was completed and the post-test was finished there was a brief time for general feedback. During the post-test discussions, it came out that students answered certain pre-test questions correctly even though the students did not know why it was the correct answer. The students sometimes knew the correct answer but did not know the biblical basis of the doctrine. In other words, participants may have known what to say, even though they did not know why this was the case or what the implications were. The knowledge gap between confession and understanding was an unexpected result. Based on previous conversations it seemed that students were completely unfamiliar with a concept when this was not the case. Students knew of the concept to the extent that they could say it was what the church believed but they could not explain the idea, and may not have known why the church believed it. For example, they knew that the church confessed the triune God, but they thought it was God, Jesus, and Holy Spirit, and did not know how this confession was distinguished from the Jewish or Muslim conception of God.

The students' feedback corresponded to the idea that they may have known something was the correct answer, but they did not know why it was the correct answer. A lack of in-depth theological teaching could explain the frequent comment that students never knew the connection between doctrine and the explanation of the doctrine, or why creeds and confessions were important. They may have known the doctrine, or even repeated it, but did not know what it meant and why they confessed it. The question is, what is the source of the problem? It may be that they have heard certain things enough that they can say it or even repeat it without knowing why it is true or even believing it is true. The question about whether or not other religions believe in the same God as Christians may show a connection between what they learn in school and its influence. A few students referred to what they had learned in school as the reasoning behind their answers. Overall, even when students knew the answers, they did not know why it was important. Further, students did not know the Apostles' Creed before and did not know why it was important in the life of the church.

One change that may be required if the course is taught to more leaders, or to adults who do have a stronger background, would be to provide more diverse support when a particular historical figure or theologian is used. Rather than just showing what Calvin thought about something, it may be necessary to incorporate Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Wesley, and others when necessary. The necessity for more diverse support is related to the diverse background of DKGCC, but also the teachers' and leaders' desire to know more about the history of some doctrines, like the Trinity. It was surprising that students wanted to know more about the historical development of some ideas.

In the future it would be helpful to provide a better introduction to the curriculum so students could anticipate where the course is going with some of the doctrines or ideas. In some cases, when students expressed uncertainty about a particular doctrinal point, it would be cleared up in a later section, this was particularly true of doctrines that were often discussed in relation to other concepts, like the Trinity and the

Christian life. While everything cannot be explained in one session, it needs to be clear to students that the doctrine will be explored more fully in later sessions. To help students see the big picture, a syllabus of sorts needs to be developed and included in the introduction to the student book. An additional session at the beginning of the curriculum that presents a big picture of the course and lays out where the course will go and how it will get there would be particularly helpful to address themes that are explored throughout the course in several different teaching units.

Theological Reflections

There were a lot of valuable lessons to take away from the experience of researching and teaching the curriculum. The *sensus fidelium* was probably the single most important idea that came out in this project that changed my theology. It has always seemed clear that there is no such thing as a private individual Christianity that can grow and function in a healthy way apart from the Christian community. What changed was understanding this community as being part of not just a local, but a universal community that is further made up of all Christians from all times, as they confess their faith within the bounds of historic orthodoxy. The practices of the early church would be a helpful guide as society continues to grow in varying degrees from indifference to open hostility toward the church and Christianity. Learning more about how the church lived out its faith and made disciples in the face of opposition and in some cases under the threat of violence would better help the contemporary church confess its faith in a hostile world.

Some of these reflections blur the distinction between personal and theological. This distinction is evident in relation to disciple-making—it is theological, but it is personal. The importance of disciple-making and its limits came out in the need to both be involved personally in the lives of others and to teach the faith in a transformative way. It is evident that the Christian calling is to make disciples, but the disciples are also called to make disciples. It does not seem to be enough to have Sunday school classes and more Bible studies, a close relationship with members that want to grow is needed,

and it is necessary to teach them to develop relationships that contribute to making disciples as well.

People want to be discipled. What was surprising based on the turnout for the class was the desire of people to be discipled. Most of the people that came wanted to both know more about the faith that they claim and find ways to grow in that faith in the Christian community. There is a desire to belong and be in a community, but for Christians there is a desire to grow in faith in community. Even though many Koreans seek out the Korean church for social reasons, a lot of church members are serious about their faith and have a strong desire to grow in faith. The desire to grow more is often not being met because of the seeker-sensitive, social orientation of many churches. The lack of educational opportunities within the context of the local church leaves Christians feeling like growth is stunted or non-existent.

While the need for deeper theological training came out during this course, there grew a distaste for seeker-sensitive worship. The early church was more intense than anything that the contemporary church has to offer. In the historic church, long catechism courses involved both increasing knowledge and practical application for Christian living. Through studying the context of early creeds and the early Christian community, it became clear that a seeker-sensitive worship service would be unthinkable for the primitive church. This change in perception continues to shape my teaching and preaching.

Personal Reflections

One of the greatest difficulties in the implementation of the curriculum was the continually changing church. When the associate pastor resigned and I was asked to assume his ministry responsibilities, which was primarily the college and young adult ministry. Since I was still doing the teaching and preaching for the youth ministry as well, there were two potential groups with which to implement the curriculum. In the end, the curriculum was taught to both the youth and the college and young adult ministries. The group used as the basis for this study was the college and young adult

group since I was able to teach this course over the college groups winter break. Further, when the senior pastor resigned, and a new senior pastor was chosen, the curriculum needed to be revised in two areas to meet his requirements. These changes reflected the more decidedly Methodist convictions of the new senior pastor. The changes were not too difficult, just unexpected at so late a stage and in light of the previous senior pastors' approval and enthusiasm about the doctrines that the course taught. Pastoral turnover is a perpetual problem that needs to be addressed at Korean immigrant churches and therefore a potential continuing obstacle.

I learned that people are aware of a lot of problems in immigrant churches, and even though people seem to know a great deal about the problems, no one seems to do anything about them. For example, people understand that there is a problem with the second generation leaving the church, and nothing that the church has tried seems to keep them there. There are countless studies on the problems within Korean immigrant churches, but most churches continue to do the same thing they have always done. For the last three, almost four years now, I have worked to change the pattern of the youth ministry at DKGC from being primarily social to focused primarily on discipleship. As a result, the youth have become more engaged and have grown closer to each other. The group has also become more multi-ethnic as the youth invite their friends and their friends choose to stay at DKGC.

I learned that there needs to be a great deal of trust built to be open and honest in every situation. Students that expressed difficulty with affirming some ideas, despite what was taught, were students who trust me as a teacher and mentor and not just a pastor or someone with a little extra knowledge.

Additional Comments and Analysis

Students who participated in this course had previously failed to memorize the Apostles' Creed. A reason that students previously failed to memorize the Apostles' Creed may be attributed to the fact that the majority of participants had attended the

children or youth ministries at Korean immigrant churches. Most Korean churches, and DKGC in particular, have a separate service for children and youth, with the children and youth ministries only participating in the main service one or two times a year. If the children and youth services do not recite the Apostles' Creed, then the students would have a difficult time learning it. Ten out of twelve students had attended the youth or children's service almost exclusively until after high school.

Application

Currently, this course is being taught to the youth group at DKGC. The elder in charge of education has asked that the curriculum continue to be used for teaching either youth, college, or new Christians. The former senior pastor of DKGC has also asked to use the material to teach a course at his new church. The course has a wider application in many churches because it makes a connection between confession, faith, and doctrine. It also has a broader application because it teaches basic doctrine that all churches for all times have confessed, and the Apostles' Creed is broadly accepted in Western Christianity both within the Protestant and the Catholic traditions.

Further Research

One final thought was how students responded to certain questions. Sometimes what students knew was not necessarily what they believed. In several discussions with students, they stated that they answered questions with the answer they knew was correct, or at least they thought they knew was correct, but they were not necessarily convinced that they believed their answer. The difference between knowing the right answer and believing it is true is a problem and it may require more teaching focused on changing perceptions, rather than just increasing knowledge. For further study, it may be helpful not just to find out what doctrines students know, but whether they understand and agree with the doctrine.

One area that would prove interesting for future research would be the correlation between teaching foundational church doctrine and the exodus of the second generation in Korean immigrant churches. Understanding if there is a correlation between education and attrition of the second generation would help leaders better understand if more teaching or more integration into the main congregation would help. What came out in this work was the idea that students often knew ideas but did not know why it mattered. It would be interesting to see if changing this gap would improve retention and involvement. For example, since DKGC has implemented a more discipleship-oriented focus, there has been a noticeable increase in involvement in the youth ministry. The college and young adult ministry is starting to see similar results. This spring over thirty students participated in the retreat to learn more about intimacy with God, while last year only six students participated.

Conclusion

The purpose of this course was to increase knowledge, and overall was fulfilled. The unexpected benefit was that the curriculum was more broadly applicable as leaders and teachers alike affirmed how much they had learned in the class. The curriculum also changed perceptions, particularly about doctrine and disciple-making. Improving some areas will further broaden the applicability of the course.

APPENDIX 1

INDIVIDUAL LESSON EVALUATION
RUBRIC (UNDER 18)

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottke for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete the following weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

You are being requested to give permission for a minor or member of a vulnerable population under your legal supervision to participate in a study designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottke for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, a person will complete the weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information provided will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will a person's name be reported, or a person's name identified with his or her responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary, and the person you are giving approval to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By signing your name below, you are giving informed consent for the designated minor or member of a vulnerable population to participate in this research if he or she desires.

Participant Name _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Individual Lesson Evaluation Tool					
Answer all questions that apply, otherwise write N/A in the comments section					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Does the lesson cover the doctrine with clarity?					
Is the lesson faithful to historical teaching?					
Is the lesson easy to understand?					
Is the learning goal clearly stated?					
Does the doctrine fit well with the creedal statement?					
Is there adequate biblical support?					
Are the questions easy to understand?					
Are the questions appropriate based on the material?					

1. Insufficient: Major revisions are needed before teaching. The unit does not address the doctrine or doctrines and lacks biblical support. **2. Requires attention:** Some items are unclear and need to be revised or expanded before teaching. The unit does not meet the teaching goals as described. **3. Sufficient:** Some minor revisions may be required, but the unit addresses the doctrine/s adequately and is clearly supported from Scripture and is ready to begin teaching. **4. Exemplary:** No changes are needed. (Note: Questions refers to the fill in the blank statements at the end of each unit in the student book)

Comments:

APPENDIX 2

INDIVIDUAL LESSON EVALUATION RUBRIC

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottke for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete the following weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Individual Lesson Evaluation Tool					
Answer all questions that apply, otherwise write N/A in the comments section					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Does the lesson cover the doctrine with clarity?					
Is the lesson faithful to historical teaching?					
Is the lesson easy to understand?					
Is the learning goal clearly stated?					
Does the doctrine fit well with the creedal statement?					
Is there adequate biblical support?					
Are the questions easy to understand?					
Are the questions appropriate based on the material?					

1. Insufficient: Major revisions are needed before teaching. The unit does not address the doctrine or doctrines and lacks biblical support. **2. Requires attention:** Some items are unclear and need to be revised or expanded before teaching. The unit does not meet the teaching goals as described. **3. Sufficient:** Some minor revisions may be required, but the unit addresses the doctrine/s adequately and is clearly supported from Scripture and is ready to begin teaching. **4. Exemplary:** No changes are needed. (Note: Questions refers to the fill in the blank statements at the end of each unit in the student book)

Comments:

APPENDIX 3

STUDENT SURVEY FOR DEMOGRAPHICS,
KNOWLEDGE, AND BACKGROUND
INFORMATION (UNDER 18)

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottke for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete the following weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

You are being requested to give permission for a minor or member of a vulnerable population under your legal supervision to participate in a study designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottke for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, a person will complete the weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information provided will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will a person's name be reported, or a person's name identified with his or her responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary, and the person you are giving approval to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time.

By signing your name below, you are giving informed consent for the designated minor or member of a vulnerable population to participate in this research if he or she desires.

Participant Name _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Church background information

Please answer all questions to the best of your ability.

Are you a Christian?

Yes	No	Not Sure
-----	----	----------

Have you participated in a catechism or confirmation class?

Yes	No	Not Sure
-----	----	----------

Have you participated in a discipleship program?

Yes	No	Not Sure
-----	----	----------

For how many years did you attend Sunday school as a child?

0-2	2-3	4-5	5 or more	Never
-----	-----	-----	-----------	-------

For how many years did you attend youth group growing up?

0-2	2-3	4-5	5 or more	Never
-----	-----	-----	-----------	-------

In your church, how often did children or youth group students attend worship?

weekly	Twice a month	monthly	Every few months	Once or twice a year
--------	---------------	---------	------------------	----------------------

How many years have you attended church?

0-2	2-5	5-10	10 or more	My entire life
-----	-----	------	------------	----------------

How long have you attended a Korean Immigrant church?

0-2	2-5	5-10	10 or more	My entire life
-----	-----	------	------------	----------------

If you have attended a non-Korean church, for how long?

0-2	2-5	5-10	10 or more	Never
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What was the language primarily spoken in your home as a child?

English	Korean	Other
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What language is your preferred language?

English	Korean	Other
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APPENDIX 4

STUDENT SURVEY FOR DEMOGRAPHICS, KNOWLEDGE, AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottke for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete the following weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Are you a Christian?

Yes	No	Not Sure
-----	----	----------

Have you participated in a catechism or confirmation class?

Yes	No	Not Sure
-----	----	----------

Have you participated in a discipleship program?

Yes	No	Not Sure
-----	----	----------

For how many years did you attend Sunday school as a child?

0-2	2-3	4-5	5 or more	Never
-----	-----	-----	-----------	-------

For how many years did you attend youth group growing up?

0-2	2-3	4-5	5 or more	Never
-----	-----	-----	-----------	-------

In your church, how often did children or youth group students attend worship?

weekly	Twice a month	monthly	Every few months	Once or twice a year
--------	---------------	---------	------------------	----------------------

How many years have you attended church?

0-2	2-5	5-10	10 or more	My entire life
-----	-----	------	------------	----------------

How long have you attended a Korean Immigrant church?

0-2	2-5	5-10	10 or more	My entire life
-----	-----	------	------------	----------------

If you have attended a non-Korean church, for how long?

0-2	2-5	5-10	10 or more	Never
-----	-----	------	------------	-------

What was the language primarily spoken in your home as a child?

English	Korean	Other
---------	--------	-------

What language is your preferred language?

English	Korean	Other
---------	--------	-------

APPENDIX 5

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottko for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete the following weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

APPENDIX 6

APOSTLES' CREED PRE- AND POST-TEST
(UNDER 18)

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottker for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete the following weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

You are being requested to give permission for a minor or member of a vulnerable population under your legal supervision to participate in a study designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottker for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, a person will complete the weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information provided will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will a person's name be reported, or a person's name identified with his or her responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary, and the person you are giving approval to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By signing your name below, you are giving informed consent for the designated minor or member of a vulnerable population to participate in this research if he or she desires.

Participant Name _____
Parent/Guardian Name _____
Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Part 1—The Twelve Points of the Apostles' Creed (25 Points)

1. I believe in _____, Creator of heaven and earth.
2. And in _____, his only _____, our Lord.
3. Who was conceived by the _____, and born of the _____?
4. He suffered under _____, He was _____, -
_____, and was _____.

5. He descended to _____ . On the _____ , he _____ again.
6. He ascended into _____ , and is seated at the right hand of _____ .
7. He will come again to _____ the _____ and the _____ .
8. I believe in the _____ ,
9. The holy _____ , the _____ of _____ ,
10. the _____ of sins,
11. the _____ of the _____ ,
12. and _____ life.

Part 2—What Does the Apostles' Creed Mean? (15 Points)

1. How did God create everything?
 - a. He formed it from the formless things that already existed.
 - b. From nothing, he just spoke.
 - c. He arranged everything that was already there.
 - d. He killed another god and used their blood.
2. How many gods are there?
 - a. There is one God.
 - b. There are three gods.
 - c. There is no God.
 - d. Too many gods to count.
3. Which religions believe in the same God as Christians?
 - a. Muslims.
 - b. Hindus.
 - c. Zoroastrians.
 - d. None of these.
4. What is the opposite of faith?
 - a. Un-faith.
 - b. Doubt.
 - c. Certainty.
 - d. Insanity.
5. Who are the persons of the triune God?
 - a. Father, Son, Mary.
 - b. Father, Son, Spirit.
 - c. Father, Mary, Jerry.
 - d. God, Son, Spirit.

6. Jesus descended into...
 - a. Death or hell.
 - b. Heaven or “the good place.”
 - c. The dirt.
 - d. The basement.

7. Jesus ascended into...
 - a. Death or hell.
 - b. Heaven or “the good place.”
 - c. An upstairs bedroom.
 - d. The dirt.

8. Jesus died and...
 - a. Rose again.
 - b. Was buried.
 - c. Both a and b.
 - d. Neither a nor b.

9. Jesus will come again to...
 - a. Hang out with his friends.
 - b. Judge all the people I don’t like.
 - c. Tell me how good I am.
 - d. Judge the living and the dead.

10. The word catholic means...
 - a. Holy.
 - b. Church.
 - c. One special church.
 - d. Universal.

11. What does baptism symbolize
 - a. Washing away our sins.
 - b. Our death and rebirth with Jesus.
 - c. Both a and b.
 - d. Neither a nor b.

12. Which statement about Jesus is most correct?
 - a. He was God, but he looked like a person.
 - b. He started out as a person and became a God.
 - c. He was half God and half-human.
 - d. He was completely God and completely human.

13. Jesus died for us because...
 - a. He wanted to be an example of selflessness.
 - b. For the forgiveness of sins.
 - c. The Jews and Romans really didn’t like him.
 - d. It was all a big mistake.

14. How do we go to heaven?
 - a. Being a good person.
 - b. Doing enough good things and being good.
 - c. It doesn't matter; everyone goes to heaven.
 - d. Only through faith in Jesus the Son of the Father.

15. What is the final promise of the Apostles' Creed?
 - a. Everyone gets a dirt nap.
 - b. Eternal life for everyone who believes in Jesus.
 - c. If you worked hard enough at being good, you get to go to heaven.
 - d. A shorter time in purgatory for people who memorize it.

Part 3—True False (10 Points)

1. God the Father and God the Son are different Gods. True/False
2. Faith means I never have any doubts. True/False
3. The Son of God was present at creation. True/False
4. The word catholic refers only to the Roman Catholic church. True/False
5. Everyone that lives a good life will go to heaven when Jesus comes again. True/False
6. Only good religious people will go to heaven when Jesus comes again. True/False
7. We can pray to Mary because she is Jesus' mother. True/False
8. We can have forgiveness from sin if we work hard enough. True/False
9. If you are good and religious, you will go to heaven. True/False
10. Jesus died for us to show us a good example of self-sacrifice. True/False

APPENDIX 7

APOSTLES' CREED PRE- AND POST-TEST

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the quality of the lesson being taught each week. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottke for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete the following weekly survey based on the lesson taught. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

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2. And in _____, his only _____, our Lord.
3. Who was conceived by the _____, and born of the _____?
4. He suffered under _____, He was _____, - _____, and was _____.
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6. He ascended into _____, and is seated at the right hand of _____.
7. He will come again to _____ the _____ and the _____.
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9. The holy _____, the _____ of _____,
10. the _____ of sins,
11. the _____ of the _____,
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Part 3—True False (10 Points)

1. God the Father and God the Son are different Gods. True/False
2. Faith means I never have any doubts. True/False
3. The Son of God was present at creation. True/False
4. The word catholic refers only to the Roman Catholic church. True/False
5. Everyone that lives a good life will go to heaven when Jesus comes again.
True/False
6. Only good religious people will go to heaven when Jesus comes again. True/False
7. We can pray to Mary because she is Jesus' mother. True/False
8. We can have forgiveness from sin if we work hard enough. True/False
9. If you are good and religious, you will go to heaven. True/False
10. Jesus died for us to show us a good example of self-sacrifice. True/False

APPENDIX 8

APOSTLES' CREED PRE- AND POST-TEST
SCORES AND BREAKDOWN

Table A1. Pre- and post-test scores

Total		Section 1		Section 2		Section 3	
Pre-test	Post-Test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
27	49	7	25	11	14	9	10
34	44	13	20	12	14	9	10
29	48	8	24	12	14	9	10
29	48	9	25	11	13	8	10
41	50	20	25	13	15	8	10
39	43	18	21	13	13	8	9
33	46	12	23	12	13	9	10
35	47	13	22	12	15	10	10
30	47	10	24	11	14	9	9
33	50	11	25	12	15	10	10
37	47	16	24	11	13	10	10
31	50	10	25	12	13	9	10
Totals							
33.16	47.42	12.25	23.58	11.83	14	9.08	9.83

APPENDIX 9

ABRIDGED SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Week/ Article	Title	Key Themes	Objectives	Student outcomes
ONE 1. I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:	I Believe in God the Father.	Foundation of faith What is faith	Faith as the beginning of the Christian life. Faith and doubt and despair.	Students should be able to articulate the basic definition of faith. Students should be able to describe what it means to them when they confess God as Father. Students should be able to talk about the difference between doubt and despair.
TWO 1. I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:	Almighty Maker of Heaven and Earth.	The Almighty God. Creation <i>ex nihilo</i> .	Begin to understand why they need to describe what God they believe in. The almighty Creator. The good creation.	Students should be able to describe basic beliefs about what it means to say God is Almighty. Students should be able to apply this basically to their own lives. Students should be able to articulate the story of creation based on the biblical story.
THREE 2. And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord: 3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary:	I believe in Jesus Christ Son of God and Lord. Born of the virgin Mary.	What God do you believe in. The divinity and humanity of Christ Mormon and Jehovah's Witness' views of Jesus.	The humanity and divinity if Jesus Christ. Jesus as the eternal word and the eternally begotten son. The reality of the virgin birth.	Students should be able to describe basically the two natures Christology in their own words. Students should be able to outline the story of Jesus birth including the Angels announcement to Mary. Students should be able to tell the story of John 1 and how it relates to Genesis 1.

Week/ Article	Title	Key Themes	Objectives	Student outcomes
FOUR 4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell:	Sin and atonement: He was crucified, died, and was buried.	Why did Jesus need to die? Real physical death. The joyful exchange.	Atonement theory. Jesus' death was real. Sin and death. It was the will of God the Father that the Son would suffer and die, and the Son died joyfully.	Students should be able to express the atonement and why that death of Jesus was necessary considering sin and God's plan for redemption. Students should be able to show that Jesus death was a joyous occasion and it was God's will. (Hebrews 12:2)
FIVE 4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into death: 5. The third day he rose again from the dead:	Descent to death and resurrection and the symbolism of baptism.	What does baptism symbolize? The real death and real resurrection .	Different modes and forms of baptism. Death and resurrection of Jesus. Symbolism of baptism. Sign and Sacrament.	Students should be able to describe different forms and modes of Baptism along with describing their own convictions about baptism. Students should be able to describe the importance of Christ's resurrection.
SIX 6. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty:	The ascension: time of promise and hope.	Bodily ascension. Promise of the Holy Spirit. Command to make disciples.	Jesus ascends into heaven. The promise of our resurrection. The bodily ascension.	Students should be able to describe the story of the ascension. Students should be able to use Paul's claim to show why Jesus' resurrection is important to the life of Christians and Christian witness.

Week/ Article	Title	Key Themes	Objectives	Student outcomes
SEVEN 7. From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead:	The coming judgment: hope in Christ	Judgment Heaven and hell	Eternal life and judgment. Views of hell and punishment. Hope in Christ.	Students should be able to discuss the reality of hell and punishment for unbelievers. Students should be able to express how views of punishment and hell should be a reason for sharing the gospel. Students should be able to explain why the gospel is good news.
EIGHT 8. I believe in the Holy Spirit:	I believe in the Holy Spirit	What God do you believe in? The helper the Father sent The triune God	The trinity. The work of the Holy Spirit. Jewish and Muslim under standing of God.	Students should be able to describe the trinity in their own words and show how the Christian belief in the triune God is different from other monotheistic religions.
NINE 9. I believe in the holy catholic church: the communion of saints:	The holy catholic church	The body of Christ Many members	The existence of denomin- ations and the universal church. Ideas about the invisible and visible church.	Students should be able to articulate what it means to be one church particularly in light of the multitude of denominations and independent non- denominational churches. Students should be able to articulate the idea of an invisible and visible church.
TEN 9. I believe in the holy catholic church: the communion of saints:	The communion of saints: sacraments and the church	Entered through baptism The Lord's supper Fellowship Community	Sacraments. Different views on the Lord's Supper. Community in the church.	Students should be able to define what a sacrament is. Students should be able to describe what the Lord's supper as it is in the Bible. Students should be able to share some ideas about why community and fellowship are important for the Christian life.

Week/ Article	Title	Key Themes	Objectives	Student outcomes
ELEVEN 10. The forgiveness of sins:	The forgiveness of sins.	Forgiveness Original sin Only through Jesus	The Christian idea of the origin of sin and the fall. The exclusive claims of Jesus.	Students should be able to retell the story of the fall and its implications. Students should be able to share the gospel. Students should be able to describe how one is saved through Jesus and why this is important.
TWELVE 11. The resurrection of the body: 12. And the life everlasting. Amen.	The resurrection and life everlasting.	No one comes to the Father except. We share in his resurrection We share in eternal life	The resurrection of the body. Everlasting life. No sin, no possibility for sin.	Students should be able to articulate the difference between the idea of heaven now and the idea of the new heavens and new earth. Students should be able to explain what the resurrection is. (an embodied eternity, physical or otherwise)

APPENDIX 10

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess the level of your background knowledge about Christianity and the level of your previous and current involvement in a Christian church. This research is being conducted by Duane Schlottko for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will complete the following survey. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is meant to be an introduction to the basic beliefs of Christianity as confessed in the Apostles' Creed. Each week will cover one of the themes that are confessed in the Creed. Special attention will be paid to the doctrine of the trinity. Each person of the trinity will be addressed individually along with their distinctive work.

Each week will build on the previous session, and as the course progresses, previous ideas will be reviewed to show how all the ideas fit together.

Students will go over the basic arguments for foundational doctrine as well as the biblical support for the claims. Most of these doctrines are based on what Christian churches confess and practice universally. Basic practices discussed will include the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper.

The discussion of sacraments will include their relationship to the doctrines sin, atonement, death, resurrection and eternal life.

Special attention will be paid to the claims that distinguish Christianity from other religions, particularly other monotheistic religions like Islam or Judaism. Further attention will be paid to the religions that try to claim to be Christian like Mormonism and the Jehovah's Witnesses. The argument for this course is that they do not worship the same God.

Christian claims of the divinity and absolute deity of Father, Son, and Spirit make it impossible to accept the position that any other religion that

COURSE OVERVIEW**WEEK**

- 1. I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER**
- 2. ALMIGHTY MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH**
- 3. I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD AND LORD WHO WAS BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY**
- 4. SIN AND ATONEMENT: HE WAS CRUCIFIED, DIED AND WAS BURIED**
- 5. DESCENT TO DEATH AND RESURRECTION AND THE SYMBOLISM OF BAPTIST**
- 6. HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN: THE TIME OF PROMISE**
- 7. HE WILL COME AGAIN TO JUDGE: HOPE IN CHRIST**
- 8. I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT**
- 9. THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH**
- 10. THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS: SACRAMENTS AND THE CHURCH**
- 11. THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS**
- 12. THE RESURRECTION AND LIFE EVERLASTING**

professes something other than the triune God is not the same.

Finally, the course will address the exclusive claims of Christianity that no one comes to the Father except through Jesus, or that eternal life is only through the Son.

The Apostles' Creed

WEEK ONE

TITLE:
I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER

Key Themes:
Faith and the beginning of the Christian life.

Faith, doubt, Despair.

FAITH	DOUBT	DESPAIR-UNFAITH	GOD THE FATHER
What does it mean to have faith?	Does doubt mean no faith?	Doubt versus despair.	Our Father, Creator and Hope.
BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE
Hebrews 11	Mark 9:17-27	2 Corinthians 4:6-10	1 Thessalonians 1
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Study the examples of faith in Hebrews 11. Discuss what faith looks like. Did all the examples of faith always show absolute trust?	Sometimes it looks as if doubt is the opposite of faith, but often it can be the beginning of deeper faith. Look at the father in Mark 9, Job is another example.	Paul speaks of hardships and trials, but never giving in to despair. Talk about what the difference between hope and despair looks like.	If God created everything How does that give you hope for the future? Relating this to Hebrews 11 what kind of God do you believe in?

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The focus of this lesson is to get students to begin to think about their faith, what it means to believe in something, and what it is they believe in. Sometimes when we consider the examples of faith in the Bible, we tend to only focus on the great faith they exhibited and overlook the doubt that they showed. Some of the greatest “heroes” of faith showed that they could make mistakes and they often try to do things their own way. Usually the results we not ideal.

Students should also understand that doubt is not always meant as the absence of faith or even weaker faith than others. It is normal to have doubt from time to time, especially in the face of difficulty. Two main ideas are used to show the difference, doubt and despair. In the first example, (Mark 9:17-27) the father has doubt, but he still believes that Jesus can do something, hence his cry “I believe, help my unbelief.”

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The Apostle Paul speaks of the distinction between hope and despair when he describes the hardship and persecution he was facing. All of these things never led to despair, or the abandonment of their faith. Why? Because the Christian places their hope in the God who created everything, including humans. The same God who created us from nothing is able to raise us from death and give us new life. This is the hope Paul had in the face of all trials and persecution. We have a father in heaven who created us, loves us and sent his Son to redeem us.

Talk a bit about the God of Christianity and bring up the question of other religions and even other monotheistic religions and whether or not they believe in the same God. This is the beginning of an ongoing discussion.

WEEK TWO		TITLE: ALMIGHTY MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH	Key Themes: The Almighty God. God the Creator. Creation for Nothing.
CREATION	GOOD CREATION	ALMIGHTY GOD	HOPE IN THE ALMIGHTY GOD
How God created.	It was good...very good.	It was good...very good. Is anything impossible for God?	God accomplishes His plans
BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE
Genesis 1:1-15	Genesis 1:31	Psalms 115:3; Jeremiah 32:17,27; Luke 1:37	Isaiah 25
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Look at everything God created. Did God use something to create or have help? What is different about the Babylonian creation myth?	After everything God created, he declares it was good, and at the very end very good.	What does it mean when we say God can do anything? Is there anything outside God that limits Him?	Our God who created everything can do anything he pleases. He is our protector and provider.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Looking at the Babylonian creation myth, we see gods that used some pre-existent stuff to create as they struggled to bring order from the chaos. Creation always remains chaotic and at best ambiguous, at its worst, evil. The gods wanted little servants to take care of them and humans' position, even the power of the gods was tenuous at best. In the creation story recorded in Genesis, God creates without any effort, and he creates from nothing. He simply speaks and the power of His Word (John 1) creates everything. There are no other gods that exist before Him or alongside him. There is no eternal stuff that exists with him either, no chaos to overcome.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

After each step of creation, God affirmed that what He made was good, and finally very good. Nothing was lacking, and there was no evil force that was competing with God for control of creation. There was no chaos waiting just on the edge of his creation to oppose it. In the beginning, when God created, he was in control of everything. He gave the people he made charge over creation to subdue it and fill it.

As the biblical story progresses, it becomes clear that God can still do whatever He chooses to do. There is nothing outside of God that limits His ability to carry out His desires. This does not include absurd ideas like “can God make a rock so big He can’t lift it?” or power to the contrary. God has also made promises that he will be faithful to and He will not go against His promises or His nature.

We ultimately have hope because nothing is impossible with God, and He is faithful to his promises and His nature. He promised Noah that he would never end all life by a great flood, and He has and will keep that promise. When God promises life in His Son, He will certainly keep that promise.

Continue to develop the idea that the Christian God is different from other gods.

WEEK THREE		TITLE: I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST SON OF GOD AND LORD. BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY.	Key Themes: Two nature Christology. Virgin birth. Other views of Jesus.
DIVINITY OF CHRIST	HUMANITY OF CHRIST	JESUS BIRTH	GENESIS AND JOHN
Jesus as Son of God and God.	Jesus as human.	Jesus human birth.	Where was the Word (Jesus) in creation.
BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE
John 1:1-14; Colossians 1:15-20	John 1:14; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 7	Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38	John 1; Genesis 1
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
His full divinity was in the person of Jesus.	The real “fleshy” humanity of Christ was an important issue for the church during the Apostolic age.	Retelling the story of Jesus focusing on both his human and divine natures in the proclamation stories.	The act of creation in Genesis is attributed to the Word of God, the eternally begotten Son, who would later become flesh and live among us.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

One of the more difficult things to deal with is the full humanity and divinity of Christ. Often Christology errs towards either emphasizing Jesus’ humanity or divinity. It is difficult to hold both in tension. Sometimes it is easier to describe Jesus in just human term, other it is easier to describe him in just divine terms. The main point here is that Jesus was both fully God and fully

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

human, not two separate things, or one nature being more important, or overshadowing the other.

First, focus on the divinity of Jesus. John has the most emphasis of the Gospel writes when it comes to speaking of Jesus’ divine nature. Not because it is more real than the human nature, but because that is where John Starts. For him, it was important to show that Jesus was not just another prophet, or even in a polytheistic context, another god.

Second, focus on the real humanity of Christ. He was like us in every way as a human. He was born (Luke 2:7). He grew (Luke 2:40, 52). He grew tired (John 4:6) and got thirsty (John 19:28) and hungry (Matthew 4:2). He became physically weak (Matthew 4:11; Luke 23:26). He was tempted like us (Hebrews 4:15) He suffered (Isaiah 53:5)and died (Luke 23:46). And he had a real human body after his resurrection (Luke 24:39; John 20:20, 27).

Jesus had a real human birth. He was born to a virgin as is clearly shown in the story presented by the gospel authors. At this point we need to continue thinking about how the God Christians believe in is different from other religions and other groups that claim to be “christian”

Finally, Jesus, the eternal Word of God who became flesh, is seen as the one creating all things. This vision provides hope for our lives because Jesus was a human just like us, he was tempted in every way we are, and did not sin. He can help us through the difficulties of our lives, and our temptation because he was fully human and fully divine.

WEEK FOUR		TITLE SIN AND ATONEMENT	Key Themes Sin and Death. Crucifixion, death and burial. Why did Jesus die?
SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE	CRUCIFIED, DIED, AND BURIED	ATONEMENT	THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM
The story of Jesus death and burial	Jesus crucifixion	By his wounds we are healed	Jesus joyfully endured the cross and it pleased the Father.
BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE
Mark 15	Isaiah 53	Isaiah 53; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Galatians 3	Hebrews 12:1-2; Isaiah 53:10
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Retell the story of Jesus trial, torture, death and burial. Focus on the reality of this story.	Relate the story of Jesus’ death to the servant song of Isaiah. Focus on the prophetic fulfillment.	Why did Jesus need to die? What did Jesus death accomplish?	It was the Father’s will that Jesus should die on the cross, a task that Jesus joyfully accepted

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The focus in this section is more on the actual suffering, death and burial. The majority of time is used just retelling the story. First Jesus death at the hands of the Jewish religious leaders

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

who had been rejecting Jesus all along, then his death at the hands of the Roman authorities, particularly Pontius Pilate.

The ideas of sin, judgement and atonement will be addressed more fully later, but they still require attention here as well. Jesus died at the hands of sinful men, but it was all according to the will of the Father. It was part of God’s plan, which as we have seen before, cannot be stopped.

There needs to be some discussion of atonements theories, but the idea here is that orthodox Christians believe that Jesus death made atonement for our sins. Atonement theories are simply an attempt to wrap our brains around the idea of what Jesus joyfully did for us. Some of the newer theories want to focus on the moral example of Jesus. These ideas diminish the deliberate nature of the Divine plan for atonement. Jesus was meant to die for us.

It is of utmost importance that the students understand that Jesus’ death not a failed attempt to do something else. It is not as if he wanted to live and set up an earthly kingdom, but he made the people in charge nervous and angry, so they killed him. What happened was part of the eternal plan of God (Acts 2:22-24) and it happened according to his will. Jesus himself, after the resurrection showed his disciples that it was necessary that he suffer and die to make atonement for their sins.

WEEK FIVE		TITLE DESCENT TO DEATH AND JESUS’ RESURRECTION	Key Themes Jesus death and resurrection. Symbolism of Baptism.
HE DESCENDED INTO HELL	RESURRECTION	IMPORTANCE OF JESUS RESURRECTION	BAPTISM
Jesus really died for three days.	Jesus bodily rose again from the dead.	Jesus resurrection is our hope.	Baptism represents our participation in Christs death, burial and resurrection.
BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE	BIBLE VERSE
Ephesians 4:9	Acts 2:24	1 Corinthians 15:20-28	Romans 6:3-5
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Jesus died and spent three days in the grave. What about the descent to “hell?”	Jesus rose again. Some believe in a fleshly body, some believe it was a spiritual body.	Just as Jesus rose again, so will all those who believe in him.	Infant baptism and its understanding as well as believers baptism and its foundation.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The clause that is most difficult for many Christians is the phrase “he descended into hell.” In the Apostles’ Creed, we confess this. Beliefs vary from claims that the clause should be removed altogether to reinterpreting it as saying “descended into death” and taking it as a literal descent into the underworld. The church believe that Jesus was dead for three days, and this was not a state of “spirit sleep.” Something happened during this time. What is important here is that students acknowledge that Jesus was dead for three days.

The bodily resurrection was an important claim for the early church. In the modern period varying claims have arisen. Some claim that just as Christ lived and died in the flesh to redeem all flesh, he also rose again from the dead in the flesh as the first-born of the resurrection. Some believe his resurrection was a spiritual resurrection. The point here is to focus on the resurrection of Jesus and that we will also be raised with him. Save the resurrection to judgment questions for session seven.

Baptism is a symbol, and it is a sacrament that all Christian churches perform. It is significant because it is an outward sign of a spiritual reality. Churches, however, have different beliefs and practices. Some churches baptize infants, others baptize adult believers. Some baptize by sprinkling water, some baptize by immersion. These issues can be very divisive and often reflect deeply held convictions. The purpose here is not to debate forms of baptism, but to introduce them to various practices. Students should ultimately be able to describe what they, or their denomination does and why they do this. Baptism is a necessary function of the church, and for a Christian church to be a Christian church they must practice baptism.

Finally, focus on what baptism symbolizes. Beliefs about baptism vary from sacrament to sign of obedience. In either case baptism is an outward representation of our death and burial with Christ as well as the anticipation of our future resurrection. Whether a church practices infant baptism or adult believer’s baptism, it is generally agreed upon that adult believer’s baptism is the model through which baptism is understood, with baptism by immersion being the ideal as well. This form follows Jesus’ own baptism. Baptism, with few exceptions, is universally required prior to church membership.

WEEK SIX			TITLE	Key Themes
			HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN: THE TIME OF HOPE	Bodily ascension. Promise of Spirit. Disciple making.
HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN	PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT	GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES		
The disciples watched Jesus go to heaven bodily.	Jesus promised a helper.	Jesus left his disciples with a command.		
Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse		
Luke 24:39-51; Acts 1:9	John 15:26; Acts 1:4; Acts 1:8	Mark 16:15-20; Matthew 28:18-20		

LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Jesus emphasizes his physical resurrection (flesh and bones.)	Jesus had promised a helper.	The disciples saw all these things and received the Spirit so they could tell others and teach it to them, so those new disciples could make disciples.
Jesus eats with the disciples.	Jesus told the disciples to wait because apart from him they can do nothing.	
They see him taken to heaven.		

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The fleshy nature of Jesus is again emphasized as the story of his resurrection and subsequent ascension unfold. Luke focuses on the real wounds in Jesus flesh. In the narrative the emphasis is on the real physical resurrection as the ascension into heaven. He specifically points out that Jesus is flesh and bone, and not a spirit. He recounts how Jesus ate a meal with his disciples, before he physically ascends into heaven. This is important because it points us to our own future bodily resurrection and bodily existence in the new heavens and earth. However, the nature of this body is an area of debate. Was it a physical fleshy body, or was it now a Spiritual body? The emphasis should again be on the idea that just as our savior rose again bodily so will we. Likewise, mirroring the transfiguration and the body, or transformational resurrection, our whole self, body included will be finally redeemed and transformed.

Before leaving Jesus makes clear that the disciples will not be left alone. The helper, in the person of the Holy Spirit, will come to the disciples, and through the Spirit they will be sent out in power. They are commissioned to make disciples, and it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that they will accomplish this mission. Jesus promises that in addition to being witnesses, they will perform wondrous signs through the Spirit.

The final commission is to make disciples of the nations. There is urgency in this mission, but they will be able to carry it out through the Spirit. The next clause, and the hope of Christ's return add urgency to this mission.

WEEK SEVEN	TITLE HE WILL COME AGAIN TO JUDGE	Key Themes Christ's return. Judgment. Heaven and hell.
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HE WILL COME AGAIN	JUDGMENT AND URGENCY	CHRISTIAN HOPE	HEAVEN AND HELL
Jesus promised he would return.	Since there is a judgment we need to be making disciples.	Christians have hope that Jesus will come again so we can live with him.	There is a promise of a new heaven and earth as well as a real hell.

Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse
Acts 1:11; John 14:1-6	Revelation 22:12	John 14:1-6	Revelation 20:15; 21:8, 21:1-4
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Jesus promised his disciples he would come again.	Everyone will be judged based on their works.	Christians have hope that through Jesus they will go to the Father.	The Bible speaks of heaven and hell as real, eternal places of reward or punishment.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Sometimes the Apostles' Creed seems to lack continuity. It speaks of the ascension then the second coming and judgement. The forgiveness of sins comes long after the person and work of Christ is described. However, we shouldn't lose focus. The claim that Christ will come again is meant to inspire hope in the early church. Just as Jesus ascended, he will come again. The hope that some see in Christ's return should also be an imperative for sharing the gospel and making disciples.

The claim that Jesus will come provides hope but it is also a reminder of the coming judgment. This is not about one particular view of when Jesus will return. It also is not about the tribulation or the millennium. This is about the general claim that Christians all believe that Christ will return and there will be some kind of judgement. How this works out is debated.

Our hope as Christians rests in the previous promises that we are in Christ. Christians share in the death of Christ and the atonement that was made, and we share in the resurrection and hope of Christ's second coming. This will be discussed more in forgiveness and everlasting life but needs to be briefly addressed here as well in connection to the judgment.

One of the most difficult ideas developed here is that of judgement. Rarely do we doubt that there is some kind of "heaven" for good people. The problem arises when we discuss ideas of real punishment, judgment, and hell. Some Christians believe that when Christ returns and judges the nations, there will be universal salvation. Other Christians believe that there will be a real judgment of those who do not believe in Jesus at which point they will be condemned to spend eternity in hell, a real place of physical torment. Others believe in a physical judgement but in a limited punishment or annihilation of the wicked. There are also any number of varying degrees of these views. What is important is that there will be some kind of judgment at some point. Historically, the church has believed in a real hell that is a real place of punishment.

Whatever the view about hell and judgement, the command to make disciples still stands. Even if there is universal salvation. In light of the judgement, and punishment, there should be greater urgency to proclaim the goapel.

WEEK EIGHT

TITLE

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Key Themes

Trinity.
Work of the Spirit.
What God do you believe in?

THE HOLY SPIRIT	THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT	THE TRIUNE GOD	ONE GOD: DO YOU BELIEVE IN HIM
The Helper	Fruit of the Spirit. Truth.	Holt Spirit and God. Baptismal formula	Concepts of God. Is there really only one God and one way?
Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse
John 14:26	Galatians 5:22-23; John 14:16-18	1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; Matthew 28:19	1 Corinthians 8:5-6
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Jesus promised not to leave his disciples alone.	The Holy Spirit produces a new life in Christians.	The doctrine of the trinity.	Is there only one God? Are all other religions wrong?
Through the Holy Spirit they could do great things.	The Holy Spirit will lead us to truth.		

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Jesus told his disciples that apart from him they could do nothing, yet he was going away. Before he left them, he promised the Holy Spirit and that through the Holy Spirit they would perform miracles and spread the gospel throughout the world.

The Holy Spirit gives Christians the truth. The Holy Spirit moved the biblical writers in some way as they recorded God's Word. The Holy Spirit shows believers that the Bible is true and that the claims Jesus made are true. The Spirit gives new life in Christ through faith. The evidence of this new life is visible through the work (fruits) of the Spirit in the life of a believer. They are also to increase as one grows in faith. From the time a believer makes a confession of faith in Jesus, which is only possible through the Holy Spirit, to their last day, Christians should continue to show evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.

The trinity is one of the true examples of systematic theology. The word is not in the Bible, but it is an expression of the church's desire to make sense of the Bible's teaching. The baptismal formula in Matthew calls for new disciples to be baptized in the triune name. The church struggled to formulate how the claims of divinity for the other persons of the trinity could be true if there is only one God. The trinity is how the church made sense of this.

In a pluralistic world, how can we claim that there is really only one way to God? How do we appropriate claims that Jesus is the only way to the Father in a culture that finds exclusive claims like this to be oppressive? As Christians we must believe that the only way to Jesus is through God and that belief in the one true God is only possible through the Holy Spirit. This session discusses not only the Holy Spirit, but finally the trinity and the exclusivity of Christian claims. It also shows how the triune God and the full divinity of each person distinguishes the Christian God from all others.

WEEK NINE	TITLE	Key Themes
	THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH	One body many members. Denominations. Mission.

THE BODY OF CHRIST	DENOMINATIONS	VISIBLE OR INVISIBLE	PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH
The local church as the body of Christ.	How is the church still universal?	Does the church exist as a mixed body?	Glorify God. Discipleship and sending.
Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse
Colossians 1:18		Matthew 7:21-22	Colossians 1:18
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
The local church needs to function as the representative of Christ for a lost world for his glory.	The many denominations represent different expressions of Christianity but share a common confession.	We cannot know if everyone is truly a Christian or not.	The church exists to build up the body of Christ, so they are equipped for their calling of disciple-making.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The church as a whole, or the church catholic, is the body of Christ. It is comprised of all believers and is meant to represent Christ to a world that is living in the darkness of sin. The church should be edifying and building itself up locally as well as universally. The first focus is on the local church as the body of Christ.

Denominations make it difficult to say the church is still universal in the same way the Apostolic church was. However, since the church as a whole still only has one Lord and savior, and that is a common ground for all confessing Christian churches. What the denominations do have in common are summed up in basic confessions like the Apostles' Creed. In this sense the church is still one, holy, and catholic.

Since we still live in a fallen world, and only God can see the inner being of humans, the church exists as a mixed body. This does not alleviate our responsibility to discern who should be leading and teaching, but we cannot know everything so the church will always have some people that may not be saved. The qualifications of leaders for the church are clear in Scripture and Paul described who should be appointed to church leadership roles.

The task of the church is to make disciples. This involves proclaiming the gospel, baptizing believers, and teaching them to obey everything that Jesus commanded. Teachers should be able to instruct new believers in sound doctrine.

WEEK TEN		TITLE THE COMMUNION OF SAINT: SACRAMENTS	Key Themes Baptism and membership. The Lord's Supper. Fellowship and community.
SACRAMENTS	BAPTISM AND MEMBERSHIP	THE LORD'S SUPPER	FELLOWSHIP AND COMMUNITY
The two sacraments that are practices by the Protestant church.	Baptism as entrance into the body of Christ.	Sharing in the body and blood of Jesus Christ.	The community has gifts that it uses for building one another up.
Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse
Acts 2:38-42	Acts 2:38-42	Acts 2:38-42	Romans 12:4-8
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Why just baptism and communion? What is a sacrament.	Why is baptism related to membership? Command to baptize.	Symbolism of the Lord's supper. Command of Jesus.	The imperative to love and serve one another.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

The Protestant church generally practices two sacraments. All Christians churches practice baptism and communion, with some having additional sacraments. The point of this unit is not the number of sacraments, but the two sacraments the church practices universally. It is safe to say that in order to be a Christian church these two sacraments should be performed in some form. The first is baptism. As discussed previously, some churches practice infant baptism and their views on infant baptism vary. Some denominations see it as imparting grace, others see it as effective for salvation, and others see it as a sign of the new covenant. Other denominations practice adult believer's baptism. In both cases baptism marks entrance into the body of Christ, though those that practice infant baptism do not generally mark it as the beginning of full membership. It is almost universally required for church membership. However, churches that practice infant baptism generally have a "confirmation" class that is required for full membership and sometimes participation in the Lord's Supper.

Briefly discuss why membership is important. This discussion may include ideas about positions within the church and church discipline.

The other sacrament that is universally practices by the church is the Lord's Supper. As it is illustrated in the Bible, it is the new covenant that was established by Jesus Christ. The church is to practice the Lord's Supper until he returns.

This may be a good time to review some of the ideas that are include with the sacraments. In Baptism and communion, we are reminded of the death of Christ and participation in his life ad death. In baptism we have symbols of atonement, washing, death, and resurrection. In the Lord's Supper, we are reminded of the body and blood of Christ, and we participate in the body and blood, until Christ returns. Both sacraments are acts that occur within the community if

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faith and serve as a constant reminder of our union with Christ and our participation in his body.

Fellowship and community are important for building up the body. Connect this back to the work of the Spirit in the both the life of the believer and the life of the community of faith. In the sacraments and in the community, we see the triune God at work amongst his people. This is tied to the greatest commandment.

WEEK ELEVEN		TITLE THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS	Key Themes The fall. Sin. Forgiveness.
THE FALL	SIN	WAGES OF SIN	FORGIVENESS
The first sin and its effects on creation.	Sin has corrupted everything. Everyone has sinned.	What do we deserve because of sin?	What do we receive through Jesus? Forgiveness through Jesus alone.
Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse
Genesis 3; Romans 8:19-23	Romans 5:12; Romans 8:19-23	Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Romans 5:12-13	Ephesians 1:3-10; Colossians 1:13-14
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
Sin, fall and the effects of sin. Distorted image.	Corruption of humanity and nature. Recapitulation of Adam's sin	The Old Testament was a bloody mess.	Jesus claim that no one comes to the father apart from him. Through Jesus we have forgiveness.

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God created everything good. What happened to that world? The humans God created rejected God in favor of themselves and sinned. After the first sin, people live under the curse that their sin brought about. This sin meant estrangement from God and each other. After the first sin, Adam and Eve's son killed his brother. A few generations later and a man is bragging about his violent actions. Sin continues to grow. We cannot know abstract ideas about sin like where came from in a good world. Avoid too much abstraction and focus on the reality that sin entered the world through one man and death through sin. (Romans 5:12)

Later God sees that every thought of the humans is continually evil. The people continue to recapitulate the first sin over and over and perpetuate violence. It is so bad that even the creation groans under the burden of human sin waiting to be set free from it.

While the Bible mentions the taint of original sin, it is not entirely clear how this works. In the Creed, it is assumed that humans are sinful. In our own experience, we can see and know that humans are sinful. This is the focal point of the problem, it is not necessary to discuss a vague concept of original sin when the world is so visibly full of sin and evil that we can see.

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In the Old Testament it becomes evident that sin requires atonement. The wages of sin is death. Look back to the ideas of atonement presented earlier and expand on them in light of sin. We have life because Jesus paid the price of our sin and died once so that all who believe could have life through him.

Bring up the judgment and the hope we have in Jesus Christ. Because of the work of Christ, we have forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life. This could be one of the more difficult concepts since people generally don't think they are that bad. This may also bring up the current pushback against the exclusive claims that are made by Christianity. It is not mean or closed-mindedness, it is done in love. Focus on the Scripture and the claims that it makes, not opinions.

WEEK TWELVE			
		TITLE	Key Themes
		RESURRECTION AND LIFE EVERLASTING.	The resurrection of the flesh. Only through Jesus. Everlasting life.
RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH	ONLY THROUGH JESUS	RESTORATION	EVERLATING LIFE
John's flesh and resurrection.	Revisit the idea that salvation is only through Jesus.	We will be completely restored and healed, physically, mentally, and spiritually. New heavens and earth. New you.	The promise of everlasting life. Symbolism and hope shown through the sacraments.
Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse	Bible Verse
John 20:25-31; 1 Corinthians 15: 35-38; Revelation 21:1-5	John 14:1-6; Acts 4:11-12	Revelation 21:1-5	John 3:16; 5:24; 1 John
LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE	LESSON AT A GLANCE
John's emphasis of the flesh and the eternal nature of the Word tie to the physical resurrection of Jesus and our hope in the resurrection. But what is the nature of the new body	Salvation is only through Jesus. Water of life.	Our bodily resurrection is part of the complete restoration of God's creation and our restoration as complete humans.	The sacraments point to the hope of new life in Christ that will be everlasting.

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It is hard to talk about this topic today because western Christians have very comfortable lives and we try to hide death, but the resurrection and eternal life are ultimately the foundation of

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Christian hope. Just as the gospel is the gospel because of the forgiveness of sins, not because we are generally good people, so the resurrection and eternal life are the answer to the ultimate curse of death. One day everyone will die and will see the judgment.

The warning of judgment serves to push towards the promise of forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus. The question again is about the exclusive nature of Jesus' offer of eternal life. Peter's claim in Acts 4:11-12 that there is no other name once again speaks to the exclusive work of atonement and forgiveness through Jesus. This is so linked to eternal life that they are often used synonymously. Tie this to the claims in John 6:51 and the symbolism of the Lord's Supper.

When Christians are raised again on the last day it will be to participate in eternal life through Jesus. The promise is that all things will be made new including our body, but the exact nature of this body is debated. The two main views that contend to fit with biblical orthodoxy are the claim of a spiritual body and a real flesh body. Again, the nature of the body is not as important as the idea of the bodily resurrection itself. For the redeemed, there will be the final declaration of forgiveness and then the creation will be renewed. This is a point of contention for several reasons, but it may come down to a natural understanding of the kingdom of God, or arguments over interpretation of Christ's return and millennial reign. The focus is not on timelines but on the ultimate promise of making all things new. There will be no more sorrow or sin. No possibility of sin.

Finally, the resurrection is not just living again, it is a new life that cannot perish.

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ABSTRACT

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE IN NEW BELIEVERS AND YOUTH AT THE DAYTON KOREAN GRACE CHURCH IN DAYTON, OHIO, USING A CATECHISM CURRICULUM BASED ON THE APOSTLES' CREED

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2020
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Danny R. Bowen

This project is designed to provide introductory theological education for members of Dayton Korean Grace Church to address a perceived lack of foundational doctrinal teaching. Chapter 1 provides the introduction and the rationale for the project. Chapter 2 provides the biblical foundations for catechesis through the books of Matthew and Luke. The main idea behind this unit is that Jesus commanded his disciples to make disciples and the way they make disciples is by baptizing and teaching. Once Jesus ascended the disciples began carrying out this commission, as seen in the book of Acts, by baptizing and teaching. Catechesis is one aspect of the disciple-making process. Chapter 3 provides support for using the Apostles' Creed for the purpose of this course by exploring the Apostles' Creed in relation to foundational doctrine. With the Apostles' Creed established as the basis for historical orthodoxy, it is used as the foundation for this teaching curriculum. When the course is completed, the students should have a general knowledge of basic Bible doctrine. Chapter 4 describes the design and implementation of the project. The project was conducted in twelve sessions based on the twelve traditional statements of the Apostles' Creed. Chapter 5 evaluates the project and suggests further areas for research.

VITA

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EDUCATION

BA, University of Northwestern, 2001
MA, Luther Seminary, 2009

ORGANIZATIONS

Society of Biblical Literature
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ACADEMIC

Hebrew Instructor, The Bethlehem Institute, Bethlehem Baptist Church,
Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2007-2008.
Research Assistant to E. Mike Rusten, The Bethlehem Institute, Bethlehem
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MINISTERIAL

Children and Youth Ministry Pastor, The Lord's Church of Minnesota
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Youth Pastor, Minnesota Korean Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn Park,
Minnesota, 2010-2012
Children, Youth and Family Minister, The Lord's True Light Church (formerly
The Lord's Church of Minnesota, Korean), Minneapolis, Minnesota,
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