

Historical Overview of Creeds

1. Apostles' Creed

2. Nicene Creed

3. Athanasian Creed

Scripture is *norma normans* ("the rule that rules"),
The creeds are *norma normata* ("a rule that is ruled").

Scriptural Overview

Answer to Quiz #2:

1. A statement of belief for a group of people
2. Non-creedal churches don't require their members to confess a creed.
3. We don't know. It wasn't the apostles. Though it is an accurate statement of what they believed.
- 4A. Liturgical: Profession of catholic faith (i.e. universal, the faith of the Christian church), Standard to the World
- 4B. Ministers: A guide for preaching/instruction, Principle of Interpretation, Meaning of Scripture. It tells what is most important or the guiding principles.
- 4C. Discipline: State the truth in response to heresy. Serves as signposts to Heresy – shutting out the heretic, and setting boundaries for authentic Christian theology and life.
- 4D. Baptism: Teaching for conversion to the Christian faith (into which one is baptized)
- 4E. Holy Communion: Catechetical teaching for the baptized, Catechism

287. Scripture Sole Standard and Rule.

From the high estimation in which Luther was held by the *Formula of Concord* it has falsely been inferred that this Confession accords Luther the “highest authority” as Hase says, or considers him “the regulative and almost infallible expounder” of the Bible, as Schaff asserts. (*Creeds* 1, 313.) But according to the *Formula* the supreme arbiter and only final rule in all matters of religion is the inspired Word of God; and absolutely all human teachers and books, including Luther and the Lutheran symbols, are subject to its verdict. When, after Luther's death, God permitted doctrinal controversies to distract the Church, His purpose, no doubt, being also to have her fully realize not only that Luther's doctrine is in complete harmony with Scripture, but, in addition, that in matters of faith and doctrine not Luther, not the Church, not the symbols, nor any other human authority but His Word alone is the sole rule and norm. The *Formula* certainly learned this lesson well. In its opening paragraph we read: “We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which both all doctrines and all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament alone ... Other writings, however, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever name they bear must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them.” (777, 1.) And in this, too, the *Formula* was conscious of being in agreement with Luther. Luther himself, it declares, “has expressly drawn this distinction namely, that the Word of God alone should be and remain the only standard and rule of doctrine, to which the writings of no man should be regarded as equal, but to which everything should be subjected.” (853, 9.) **Scripture is, and always must remain, the only norma normans, the standard that rules everything,**—such was the attitude of the *Formula of Concord*.

Accordingly, the proof proper for the truth of any doctrinal statement is taken by the *Formula* neither from the Lutheran symbols nor the writings of Luther, but from the Word of God. And the only reason why the promoters and framers of the *Formula* were determined to restore the unadulterated teaching of Luther was because, in the controversies following his death, they had thoroughly convinced themselves that, on the one hand, the doctrines proclaimed by Luther were nothing but the purest gold mined from the shafts of God's Word, and that, on the other hand, the various deviations from Luther's teaching, which had caused the dissensions, were aberrations not only from the original Lutheran Confessions, but also from Holy Scripture. The thirty years of theological discussion had satisfied the Lutherans that to adhere to the Bible was tantamount to adhering to the teaching of Luther, and *vice versa*. Accordingly, the *Formula* also declared it as its object to prove that the doctrines it presented were in harmony with the Bible, as well as with the teaching of Luther and the *Augsburg Confession*. (856, 19.) This agreement with the Word of God and the preceding Lutheran symbols constitutes the *Formula* a Lutheran confession, which no one who is a true Lutheran can reject or, for doctrinal reasons, refuse to accept. (Historical Introductions, Bente, p.252)