

The Apostle's Creed as a pattern for prayer

For with the heart one believes and is justified and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. Rom. 10:10

NUGGET – This series on prayer has been meant to be practical as well as topical. In that vein I've given you several things that can be used in your own prayer life. And this week it's about using something familiar that can give you a pattern that keeps your prayer-life fresh and growing. Using the Apostles Creed as a pattern for prayer can do that. And we'll get into that more in going deeper.

But from our nugget verse we see how a cyclical pattern can be a healthy thing.

◆ The heart believes the saving gospel

◆ And the mouth confesses the saving gospel the heart believes.

The thing that St. Paul says here in verse 10 is in the context of the righteousness of God that is granted by faith (read [Rom 10:1-13](#), note especially verses 4 and 13). The pattern is belief and proclamation, belief and proclamation. That pattern serves us well daily as we seek to live and pray according to what we believe God has done for us.

God has given us access to Him through the name of Jesus. And we have been given the gift of faith to trust that, to believe that. Our response to that is to then proclaim with our mouths the gift we've been given. We say with our tongues the belief that resides in our hearts. In repeating this cycle we are both confronted and comforted.

Confronted – in that we need to always be reminded that the faith we have in our hearts, is God's *gift* to us and we dare not seek to be complacent about sin lest we turn away from that gift. If we let ourselves treat sin and temptation as a toy we are playing with the fire of hell itself. We tread on the verge of letting ourselves be carried away from God's gift if we become 'confident sinners'.

However this cycle also comforts us. It draws us further into our relationship with God in Christ Jesus as we believe and proclaim, believe and proclaim. In using this as a guide we find our prayer life vital and alive with trust and hope. As we speak to God of His graciousness and gifting of faith we learn to trust in Him more and more. By speaking our trust and reliance on Him, we know better our hope that comes from Him.

APPLICATION –

1. Make a list of where or when you have seen God's gift faith in your life. When has God's mercy to you been evident as His work in your heart. Now speak to Him in thanks of those times.
2. Recall a time when God gave you words to speak of your trust in Him to others. There was some element of risk or exposure in doing that. Thank God for His strength to see you through in that time and ask that He open your eyes to further opportunities to speak with your mouth the trust that is in your heart.

PRAY – As you go about your prayers this week give thought to the cyclical pattern that goes along with believe and proclaim and how we do that in relation to God the Creator, God the Redeemer and God the Sanctifier.

Peace in Christ, Pastor Tom Rhodes

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

'HEARING, SHARING AND LIVING THE GOSPEL'

Rev. Thomas A. Rhodes, Pastor

PO Box 5, 600 East Aldrich Road, Bolivar, MO 65613



*Going Deeper together. We meet in the **Fellowship Hall** during the Education Hour for discussion and prayer with all those who're able to come. If you're not able to make it Sunday, please feel free to e-mail me with your comments or questions so that we can have the benefit of sharing them together.*

GOING DEEPER

Pennies From Heaven

The Apostle's Creed as a pattern for prayer

The Apostle's Creed makes for a practical outline for prayer. I offer this as something you can use anytime you may be called on to give a prayer, a blessing or a devotional. This works at a family gathering, a ministry group or church meeting. Who knows I may even ask you to give the opening prayer at a meeting and if you remember this lesson you'll do fine!

For this to work you simply recall the three articles of the creed – God the Creator, God the Redeemer, God the Sanctifier – and what these articles teach us about God and our relationship to Him as revealed throughout the Holy Scriptures.

The first article on God the Creator, reminds us that we indeed are creatures, we are the handiwork of God. ([Gen 2:7](#); [Gen 1:26-28](#) [contrast with [Gen 1:24](#) where God *spoke* and the creatures were formed]) And that all things made by God are glorious and wondrous to behold ([Ps 139:14](#); [Gen 1:21](#); [Hebrews 11:3](#)).

Knowing that God is the Creator then, what thoughts come to mind on who God is and who we are in relation to Him? Keeping in mind the first article of the creed, what might you want to include as a way to begin addressing God in prayer?

The second article on God the Redeemer gives us a natural progression in prayer that draws us to repentance and forgiveness. In the second article we remember that we are sinners in need of God's redeeming grace ([John 1:29](#); [1Peter 1:3](#); [1John 2:2](#)). So naturally in our prayer we will confess our sinful condition and appropriate the forgiveness that Jesus, the only God/Man ([John 1:1-2](#); [Matthew 1:21](#); [Philippians 2:5-8](#)) died to win for the world ([1Peter 2:24](#); [John 4:42](#); [Acts 4:12](#)).

What thoughts might you use to transition from God the Creator to God the Redeemer? Having the opportunity to focus on Christ in prayer opens up all of the gospels and their stories to refer to. How might you narrow your aim in prayer to what Jesus has done in forgiving sin, setting free from death and restoring us to the Father?

And then the third article on God the Sanctifier leads us into daily obedience, the joy of the presence of the eternal God among us and the certainty of hope that is ours in Jesus Christ. God the Sanctifier is the one who has called, gathered, enlightened us by His gifts and sanctifies us, that is sets us apart, for the daily works of God we are called to do. ([1 Cor 6:11](#); [Rom 15:13](#); [Eph 2:10](#); [John 17:24](#); [Rev 14:13](#))

Now bringing your prayer to bear on the task, meeting or group you are with, you have the direction of God to consider. How might you express having open hands and hearts to follow where the Holy Spirit might lead? Knowing that God is the one who has accomplished our salvation and will complete our sanctification on the Last Day, how might you put into words the desire to act obediently, faithfully and diligently?

Like we started out talking in the nugget, having a cyclical pattern can be helpful in prayer. Using the 3 Articles of the Apostles Creed can provide a pattern of prayer that leads us to proclaim with our mouths what we believe in our hearts regarding God the Creator, God the Redeemer and God the Sanctifier and what He has done and will do in our daily lives.

Peace in Christ, PR.