

Church Creeds?

Creed: Is an agreed belief or interpretation on which a group decides to associate. The creed governs *how* those members interpret events or ideas. To have a creed means that the body has the determining authority, *therefore* the majority is the deciding force regardless of facts and evidence.

This is a erroneous rule for christians; it assumes that the body is being lead by Christ and it leads away from Bible defined doctrine by how the group interprets those sacred pages and defines duty and belief.

James White in speaking of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how creeds affect His influence on the christian says:--

The gifts have been superseded in the popular churches by human *creeds*. The object of the gifts, as stated by Paul, was “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith.” These were Heaven’s appointed means to secure the unity of the church. Christ prayed that his people might be one, as he was one with his Father. Read John xvii. Paul exhorted the Corinthians in the name of Christ to be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. Read 1Cor.i,10; Rom.xv,5; Phil.ii,1,2; 1Pet.iii,8; v,5. The gifts were given to secure this state of unity.

But the popular churches have introduced another means of preserving unity, namely, human *creeds*. These *creeds* secure a sort of unity to each denomination; but they have all proved inefficient, as appears from the “New Schools” and “Reformed” of almost every *creed*-bound denomination under heaven. Hence the many kinds of Baptists, of Presbyterians, and of Methodists, &c., &c. There is not an excuse for this state of things anywhere to be found in the Book of God. These sects are not on the foundation of unity laid by Jesus Christ, and taught by Paul, the wise master builder. And the smaller sects who reject human *creeds*, professing to take the Bible as their rule of faith and practice, yet reject the gifts, are not a whit better off. In these perilous times they shake to fragments, yet crying, the Bible! the Bible! We, too, would exalt the Bible, and would say to those who would represent us as taking the gifts instead of the Bible, that we are not satisfied with a part of the Sacred Volume, but claim as ours the Bible, and the whole Bible, gifts and all.

All the denominations cannot be right, and it may not be wrong to suppose that no one of them is right on all points of faith. To show that they cannot have their *creeds* and the gifts too, that *creeds* shut out the gifts, we will suppose that God, through chosen instruments taken from each sect begins to show up the errors in the *creeds* of these different denominations. If they receive the testimony as from Heaven, it would spoil their *creeds*. But would they throw them away and come out on the platform of unity taught by Christ, Paul, and Peter? Never! never! They would a thousand times sooner trample the humble instruments of God’s choice into the dust. It is evident that if the gifts were received, they would destroy human *creeds*, and that if *creeds* be received, they shut out the gifts. The second angel’s message brought the Adventists from the *creed*-bound churches, where they could be reached by the gifts, be united and prepared for the

coming of the Lord.

Perpetuity Of Spiritual Gifts.
Page 10 para 4 #3.

EG White on Creeds

"Do not carry your *creed* to the Bible, and read the Scriptures in the light of that *creed*. If you find that your opinions are opposed to a plain "Thus saith the Lord," or to any command or prohibition He has given, give heed to the Word of God rather than to the sayings of men. Let every controversy or dispute be settled by "It is written." ... {OHC 207.3}

"The mistake made by the Roman Catholic is that he reads the Bible in the light of the priests and rulers of the church, the early fathers, or other Catholic expositors. Laying aside all *creeds* or articles prescribed by any church, we are to read the Bible as the word of God to us. The Light of the world will enable us to distinguish between truth and antagonistic errors." {2MR vol 2, page 89}

"The question is, "What is truth?" It is not how many years have I believed that makes it the truth. You must bring your *creed* to the Bible and let the light of the Bible define your *creed* and show where it comes short and where the difficulty is. The Bible is to be your standard, the living oracles of Jehovah are to be your guide. You are to dig for the truth as for hidden treasures. You are to find where the treasure is, and then you are to plow every inch of that field to get the jewels. You are to work the mines of truth for new gems, for new diamonds, and you will find them." FW Chap 9. The Quality of Our Faith

In the following is seen the real intention behind *creeds*. Notice that in the smaller font Charles Beecher is stating that *creed* is the means to determine who is qualified to be a minister. The larger is Uriah Smith. These appear in his book *The United States in Prophecy*, in regards to the National Reform Movement and their agenda through the political system and the National Council Of Churches.

"Our best, most humble, most devoted servants of Christ are fostering in their midst what will one day, not long hence, show itself to be the spawn of the dragon. They shrink from any rude word against *creeds* with the same sensitiveness with which those holy fathers would have shrunk from a rude word against the rising veneration of saints and martyrs which they were fostering.... The Protestant evangelical denominations have so tied up one another's hands, and their own, that, between them all, a man cannot become a preacher at all, anywhere, without accepting some book besides the Bible.... And is not the Protestant church apostate? Oh! remember, the final form of apostasy shall rise, not by crosses, processions, baubles. We understand all that. Apostasy never comes on the outside. It develops. It is an apostasy that shall spring into life within us; an apostasy that shall martyr a man who believes his Bible ever so holily; yea, who may even believe what the *creed* contains, but who may happen to agree with the Westminster Assembly that, proposed as a test, it is an unwarrantable imposition. That is the apostasy we have to fear, and is it not already formed?... Will it be said that our fears are imaginary? Imaginary? Did not the Rev. John M. Duncan, in the years 1825-6, or thereabouts, sincerely believe the Bible? Did he not even believe substantially the confession of faith? And was he not, for daring to say what the Westminster Assembly said, that, to require the reception of that *creed* as a test of ministerial qualification was an unwarrantable imposition, brought to trial, condemned, excommunicated, and his pulpit declared vacant? There is nothing imaginary in the statement that

the *creed*-power is now beginning to prohibit the Bible as really as Rome did, though in a subtler way.

“Oh! woful day! Oh! unhappy church of Christ! fast rushing round and round the fatal circle of absorbing ruin!... Daily does every one see that things are going wrong. With sighs does every true heart confess that rottenness is somewhere; but, ah! it is hopeless of reform. We all pass on, and the tide rolls down to night. The waves of coming conflict which is to convulse Christendom to her center are beginning to be felt. The deep heavings begin to swell beneath us. ‘All the old signs fail.’ ‘God answers no more by Urim and Thummim, nor by dream, nor by prophet.’ Men’s hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth. Thunders mutter in the distance. Winds moan across the surging bosom of the deep. All things betide the rising of that final storm of divine indignation which shall sweep away the vain refuge of lies.” USP 108.2-109.0

Let us look a moment at the fitness of the material. We are not unmindful of the noble service the Protestant churches have rendered to the world, to humanity, and to religion, by introducing and defending, so far as they have, the great principles of Protestantism. But they have made a fatal mistake in stereotyping their doctrines into *creeds*, and thus taking the first steps backward toward the spiritual tyranny of Rome. Thus the good promise they gave of a free religion and an unfettered conscience is already broken. For, if the right of private judgment is allowed by the Protestant church, why are men condemned and expelled from that church for no other crime than honestly attempting to obey the word of God, in some particulars not in accordance with her *creed*? This is the beginning of apostasy. Read Chas. Beecher’s work, “The Bible a Sufficient *Creed*.” “Is not the Protestant church,” he asks, “apostate?” Is not the apostasy which we have reason to fear, “already formed?” But apostasy in principle always leads to corruption in practice. USP 127.1-128.0

“Thus are the ministry of the evangelical Protestant denominations not only formed all the way up under a tremendous pressure of merely human fear, but they live, and move, and breathe, in a state of things radically corrupt, and appealing every hour to every baser element of their nature to hush up the truth and bow the knee to the power of apostasy. Was not this the way things went with Rome? Are we not living her life over again? And what do we see just ahead? Another general council! A world’s convention! Evangelical Alliance and Universal *Creed*.” USP 132.6-133.0.

Reference was made in chapter nine to the movement now on foot for a grand union of all the churches; not a union which arises from the putting away of error and uniting upon the harmonious principles of truth, but simply a combination of sects, each retaining its own particular *creed*, but confederated for the purpose of carrying out more extensively the common points of our faith. This movement finds a strong undercurrent of favor in all the churches. And men are engaged to carry it through who are not easily turned from their purpose. USP 157.1.

Verse 9 probably applies to those who do not keep pace with the advancing light of truth, and who oppose those that do. Such shall yet be made to feel and confess that God loves those who, not rejecting the past fulfillments of his word, nor stereotyping themselves in a *creed*, continue to advance in the knowledge of his truth. D&R 368.1

The great city, Babylon, is spoken of as composed of three divisions. So the great religions of the world may be arranged under three heads. The first, oldest, and most wide-spread is paganism, separately symbolized under the form of a dragon; the second is the great Romish apostasy, symbolized by the beast; and the third is the daughters, or descendants from that church. Under this head comes the two-horned beast, though that does not embrace it all. War, oppression, conformity to the world, the worship of mammon, the *creed-power*, pursuit of pleasure, and the maintenance of very many errors of the old Romish Church, identify, with sad and faithful accuracy, the great body of the Protestant churches as an important constituent part of this great Babylon. D&R

It was the will of Christ that his church should be one. He prayed that his disciples might be one, as he and the Father were one; for this would give power to his gospel, and cause the world to believe in him. Instead of this, look at the confusion that exists in the Protestant world, the many sectional walls that divide it up into a network of societies, and the many *creeds*, discordant as the languages of those who were dispersed at the tower of Babel. God is not the author of all these. It is just this state of things which the word Babylon, as a descriptive term, appropriately designates. It is evidently used for this very purpose, and not at all as a term of reproach. D&R

We answer, Because this was the effect with all who did receive it. They came from different denominations, and their denominational barriers were leveled to the ground; conflicting *creeds* were shivered to atoms; the unscriptural hope of a temporal millennium was abandoned; false views of the second advent were corrected; pride and conformity to the world were swept away; wrongs were made right; hearts were united in the sweetest fellowship; and love and joy reigned supreme. If the doctrine did this for the few who did receive it, it would have done the same for all, if all had received it. D&R

These started out on reform. They ran well for a season, and had the approbation of God; but fencing themselves about with *creeds*, they have failed to keep pace with the advancing light of prophetic truth, and hence have been left in a position where they will finally develop a character as evil and odious in the sight of God as that of the church from which they first withdrew as dissenters, or reformers. As the point before us is to many a very sensitive one, we will let members of these various denominations here speak for themselves. D&R

The work brought to view in verse 2 is in process of accomplishment, and will soon be completed, by the work of Spiritualism. What are called in Revelation 16:14 spirits of devils, working miracles, are secretly but rapidly working their way into the religious denominations above referred to; for their *creeds* have been formulated under the influence of the wine (errors) of Babylon, one of which is that the spirits of our dead friends, conscious, intelligent, and active, are all about us; and this renders such denominations unable to resist the approach of evil spirits who come to them under the names and impersonations of their dead friends.

A significant feature in the work of Spiritualism, just now, is the religious garb it is assuming. Keeping in the background its grosser principles, which it has heretofore carried so largely in the front, it now assumes to appear as respectably religious in some quarters as any other denomination in the land. It talks of sin, repentance, the atonement, salvation through Christ, etc., almost as orthodoxly as the most approved standards. Under the guise of this profession, what is to hinder it from intrenching itself in almost every denomination in Christendom? The basis of Spiritualism is a fundamental dogma in the *creeds* of almost all the churches. Its secret principles are, alas! too commonly cherished, and its dark practices too commonly followed, to put them at variance on that ground, so long as they seek a common concealment. D&R 667.1, 2.

Babylon's Merchandise. In these verses we have an enumeration of great Babylon's merchandise, which includes everything pertaining to luxurious living, pomp, and worldly display. All kinds of mercantile traffic are brought to view. The declaration concerning slaves and souls of men may pertain more particularly to the spiritual domain, and have reference to slavery of conscience by the *creeds* of these bodies, which in some cases is more oppressive than

physical bondage. D&R 676.1.

The Second Call to the Marriage Supper

The second message-the one following the judgment hour cry-says, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." And the second call to the supper reads, "Go ye quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." In each of these scriptures the Lord's professed people are called a "city." With their conflicting, confused *creeds* they are called "Babylon." By another scripture referring to the last times, we see that just before the Lord's coming his people are called out of "Babylon:" "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. . . . Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. 18:2-4.

A Separate People Chosen to Receive New Truths

The purpose of the Lord can be clearly discerned in bringing out a distinct people under the proclamation of the second angel's message-the second call to the "supper"-and the "midnight cry." Precious truths for the last days were to be searched out and proclaimed-a work which could not be done in "*creed-bound*" churches any more than the heralding of the gospel to the world could be accomplished by the apostolic church while retaining a connection with the Jewish sects. God called for separation there, Acts 13:46. and he also called for separation of the advent believers from those who would seek to hold them in the circle of their *creeds*.

Like Sheep without a Shepherd

Here was the great advent body, in one sense, as sheep without a shepherd, thousands of whom only a few weeks previously had separated themselves from all churches and *creeds*, no human organizations being responsible for their spiritual welfare. They had no earthly counselors in whom they could confide; in God alone was their trust.

They were confident, however, of one thing, and this to them was like an anchor,--the time proclamation was right.*1 But as a people they were in a position where, unless God should guide and keep them, they were liable to accept false explanations, or lose "patience" and give up faith in their past experience. This some did; while others, with an eye of faith fixed on him whom their souls loved, earnestly inquired, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come."Isa. 21:11, 12.

*1 By the most careful review of their reckoning of the 2300 days, they could find no mistake, neither yet can any be found.

Elder White on Organization

The following from Elder James White upon the subject of organization and discipline appeared in the Review of Jan. 4, 1881:-

"Organization was designed to secure unity of action, and as a protection from imposture. It was never intended as a scourge to compel obedience, but rather for the protection of the people of God. Christ does not drive his people; he calls them. 'My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me.' Our Living Head leads the way, and calls his people to follow.

"Human *creeds* cannot produce unity. Church force cannot press the church into one body. Christ never designed that human minds should be moulded for heaven by the influence of other human minds. 'The head of every man is Christ.' His part is to lead, and to mould, and to stamp his own image upon the heirs of eternal glory. However important organization may be for the protection of the church, and to secure harmony of action, it must not come in to take the discipline from the hands of the Master.

Church Trials Based on Church Creed

Just then a new feature began to be developed between the Adventists and the churches which had in 1843 favored the movement. They now called the Adventists to church trial for even daring to sing an Advent melody in their meetings, or to say in their testimony, that they still believed, "The Lord was soon to come." They called them to trial by their church *creeds*. The faithful ones said to them, "In this course you are following the way of the mother church. You are opposing with your *creeds* what we prove from the Bible. Doing so you will become a part of the Babylon represented in Revelation Chapter 14. We have been giving the first angel's message, but here is a second message, 'Babylon is fallen, come out of her my people.' "

In my native town I was permitted to see this thing carried out, though not in person, because I was never a member of any of those churches, not being baptized until the spring of 1848. But I had the chance to know how they were treating members who would venture still to teach in any way that the Lord's coming was near. On one day a church trial was appointed to church members. My brother, seventeen years of age, was one of those brought to trial. They demanded that they have a Bible trial, and so matters went on until noon, when the minister told them to, "meet again at one P.M. The Bible trial will be no longer, but a trial by the discipline will be conducted." During the intermission twenty-one met together, my brother being one of them, appointed a leader to speak for them when that meeting should open, and say to the minister, "If you are going to try us by your *creeds*, you can take our names off your list, as we withdraw from your church," and so withdrew. I was not in the meeting, but soon had information how my brother and others got out of the fellowship of that church.

It was not simply in Victor that such proceedings were going on, but all over the land. In some of the churches the ministers who had from the heart accepted the doctrine, brought out with them almost the entire membership of their churches. Of course, with them no such proceedings were going on. Of such we gladly, mention of the Baptists, Elon Galusha of Lockport, N.Y., Charles Fitch of Cleveland, Ohio, E. R. Pinney, of Geneva, N.Y.

The Nature of Man

As the apostolic church learned precious truths, and had experience for their world-wide work, so with the Adventists free from church *creeds*, they could now investigate and receive precious truths which the Lord had in store for them. Soon after the separation brought about under the second angel's message, Geo. Storrs published in pamphlet form his Six Sermons on the Nature of Man, and Future Punishment, showing plainly from the Scriptures that there is no immortality out of Christ, that future punishment is not eternal misery, but the second death, and that all hope of future life is dependent on the resurrection of the dead. This light was to those who received it as an "oasis in a desert." They said, "Why, what a glory this makes to cluster around the coming of Christ. His coming is in the fullest sense the consummation of our hopes."

The first religious laws ever passed by Christians were edicts of Constantine. In 312 the edict

of Milan granted universal toleration; in 321 the first law for the worship of Sunday was published; **in 325 was convened at Nice the first ecumenical council which formulated a creed for the world.** Then began the conflicts which tore the church asunder and exposed it to open shame. About the reign of Constantine cluster events of the greatest interest, not to Rome only, but to the church of God and to the world. It was the first and perhaps greatest object lesson illustrating the effects of the elevation of Christianity in name to the throne of the world. In the wake of this reign follow the years of darkness for all Europe, when the antichrist reigned supreme. SDP 258.1. PW 292.1.

So from this false teaching of the Word in Alexandria came two leaders—Athanasius and Arius. Each had his following, and yet no man could clearly define the disputed point over which they wrangled. So great was the controversy that the Council of Nice was called to settle the dispute, and deliver to the church an orthodox **creed**. The emperor Constantine called the council, and was present in person. At this council the **creed** of Athanasius was recognized as orthodox, and Arius and his followers were pronounced heretics. SDP 261.2

ELLEN G WHITE also says:

"The reason why He does not oftener choose men of learning and high position to lead out in reform movements is that they trust to their **creeds**, theories, and theological systems, and feel no need to be taught of God. Only those who have a personal connection with the Source of wisdom are able to understand or explain the Scriptures." GC 456.

Rome withheld the Bible from the people and required all men to accept her teachings in its place. It was the work of the Reformation to restore to men the word of God; but is it not too true that in the churches of our time men are taught to rest their faith upon their **creed** and the teachings of their church rather than on the Scriptures? Said Charles Beecher, speaking of the Protestant churches: "They shrink from any rude word against **creeds** with the same sensitiveness with which those holy fathers would have shrunk from a rude word against the rising veneration of saints and martyrs which they were fostering. . . . The Protestant **evangelical denominations** have so tied up one another's hands, and their own, that, between them all, a man cannot become a preacher at all, anywhere, without accepting some book besides the Bible.... There is nothing imaginary in the statement that the **creed power is now beginning to prohibit the Bible** as really as Rome did, though in a subtler way."--Sermon on "The Bible a Sufficient Creed," delivered at Fort Wayne, Indiana, Feb. 22, 1846. {GC 388.3}

When faithful teachers expound the word of God, there arise men of learning, ministers professing to understand the Scriptures, who **denounce** sound doctrine as heresy, and thus turn away inquirers after truth. Were it not that the world is hopelessly intoxicated with the wine of Babylon, multitudes would be convicted and converted by the plain, cutting truths of the word of God. But religious faith appears so confused and discordant that the people know not what to believe as truth. **The sin of the world's impenitence lies at the door of the church.** {GC 389.1}
"The Protestant evangelical denominations."

The fallen denominational churches comprise babylon. {TM 61.3} also PP124.

The churches have become as described in the eighteenth chapter of Revelation. {7BC 979. } also GC 389, 380-390.

This is the same message that was given *by the second angel*. Babylon is fallen, "because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." **What is this wine?- her false doctrine.** She has given to the world a false sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the falsehood that satan first told Eve in Eden- the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."...

In the last work for the warning of the world, two distinct calls are made to the churches. The second angel's message is, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." And in the loud cry of the third angel's message a voice is heard from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. {7BC 985.4}

In the *professedly* Christian world *many turn away* from the plain teachings of the Bible and build up a creed from human speculations and pleasing fables, and they point to their tower as a way to climb up to heaven. Men hang with admiration upon the lips of eloquence while it teaches that the transgressor shall not die, that salvation may be secured without obedience to the law of God. If the professed followers of Christ would accept God's standard, it would bring them into unity; but so long as human wisdom is exalted above His Holy Word, there will be divisions and dissension. The existing confusion of conflicting creeds and sects is fitly represented by the term "Babylon," which prophecy (Revelation 14:8; 18:2) *applies to the world-loving churches of the last days.* {PP 124.1}

Charles Beecher, in a sermon in the year 1846, declared that the ministry of "the *evangelical Protestant denominations*" is "not only formed all the way up under a tremendous pressure of merely human fear, but they live, and move, and breathe in a state of things radically corrupt, and appealing every hour to every baser element of their nature to hush up the truth, and bow the knee to the power of apostasy. *Was not this the way things went with Rome? Are we not living her life over again? And what do we see just ahead? Another general council! A world's convention! Evangelical alliance, and universal creed!*"--Sermon on "The Bible a Sufficient Creed," delivered at Fort Wayne, Indiana, Feb. 22, 1846. When this shall be gained, then, in the effort to secure complete uniformity, it will be only a step to the resort to force. GC 444-445.

In the 1930's the Adventist Church adopted a creed in opposition to EG White and the body of the Church.

The New view of the Daily.

144,000 symbolic.

Ect.