

The One God Seminars

November 7–8, 2015 • Renton, Washington

— It's Not Settled —

What's not settled? The Greatest Controversy in Christianity's 2000-year History Remains Open

The centuries-long battle by theologians to define or redefine the nature of God and the nature of Jesus was not settled by the enforced creeds of the fourth and fifth centuries. There has been no such doctrinal upheaval striking Christianity before or since.

And why wouldn't this be such a colossal dispute as it hits at the very basis of the Christian faith, the Doctrine of God? Nothing is more important than knowing who God is and what he is like. Likewise, for us humans what could be more relevant than a clear knowledge of just who the Son of God is and what he is like: Is he man? Half man/half God? A preexistent God?

We are called to become like God, to take on his divine nature and follow his son's example, which will lead us to God's presence and eternal life. Both require us to know the truth about God and Jesus.

"Creed" is from the Latin *credo*, "I believe," and is what a church's statement of faith is, or one's confession of faith, or one's statement of core tenets or doctrines. We all should have one, but it need not be the product of a corporate denomination or the result of political compromise or coercion, as was the case with the great creeds of Christendom. It should be your own creed developed by careful study of Scripture.

Did the creed of Nicea (A.D. 325) when two thirds of the new doctrine of trinity was fixed make things clear or just mystify the doctrine of God? Was the conundrum solved with the Constantinopolitan Creed (381) when the Holy Spirit was added to the mix of mysteries making the trinity complete? Did the great creed of Chalcedon (451), intending to clarify all the many Christological confusions created by the previous creeds, finally settle the matter? Not even slightly.

Were any of these creeds, conceived centuries after Jesus and the apostles, really necessary? Why weren't the creeds of Hebrew Scripture sufficient? Why wasn't the Creed of Christ sufficient?

There are reasons: The predicted great falling away from the faith was in full flow. The church bishops were gentiles more familiar with Hellenistic (Greek) culture and pagan religion than they were with the Hebrew/Jewish culture of Scripture and the early church.

These theologians, sincere and well-meaning for the most part, saw the Christ event through a different lens. Their world of reference was the philosophical principles of Plato and the cultural influences of pagan Greek and Roman religion.

The sea change of doctrines from that of the very Jewish/Hebrew church Jesus began to the one that emerges centuries later is thoroughly shocking. Add to that the strong anti-Jewish bias that motivated that falling away and you are left with a faith quite different from that of Jesus, Peter and Paul.

Things deemed Jewish or too Old Testament were vigorously opposed and ultimately eliminated from doctrine and practice. Things like the Sabbath, annual Holy Days, belief in the mortality of man, of rest in the grave

your own creedal confession with that information.

Consider first the Creed of Jesus as plainly declared in Mark 12:28-34, giving close attention to the setting, the question asked of Jesus, his unambiguous answer, and the dialogue with the Torah expert that followed.



Kenneth Westby

"One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, 'Of all the commandments, which is the most important?'"

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord

your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'" The second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these.'"

Jesus' confession of what is most important in belief and action are exact quotations from Deut. 6:4-5 (the Shema, which God-fearing Jews recite every morning and evening and at the beginning of every synagogue service, which was also the personal practice of Jesus), and Lev. 19:18, love of neighbor is part of the "holiness code"—"Become holy as your heavenly Father is holy" (Lev. 19:2; Matt. 5:48).

The Torah teacher affirmed that Jesus was correct and repeated back to Jesus, "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him." Is this understanding of God important or just a minor doctrinal point? Jesus answers.

"When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.'"

Knowing that God is One, according to Jesus, is essential knowledge for moving toward the Kingdom of God and all it gloriously entails.

—Ken Westby

We do not apologize for challenging orthodoxy where it has muddied and corrupted the holy doctrine of God. You're invited to attend our seminars and decide for yourself.

awaiting God's resurrection call, and many more core teachings, were replaced. But—most important of all—the very doctrine of God was changed: the truth of the One True God and his promised Messiah.

Why weren't the creeds of Scripture totally sufficient? Why did these gentile theologians create whole new creeds and require the faithful to pledge allegiance to them?

You can declare your freedom. Rediscover the simple and easy-to-understand creeds from Scripture and from Jesus. Then make

The 13th edition of the annual **One God Seminars** is coming. **November 7–8 (Saturday and Sunday), 2015, Red Lion Hotel, One South Grady Way, Renton, Washington 98057, phone 425-226-7700.** ¶ Presentations are always fresh and with several new speakers this year. Open to the public. No fee. ¶ Questions and discussions are a regular feature of our seminars, as is the welcoming, collegial spirit of fellow seekers open to discovering more of the treasures of Scripture. Attendees from out of town will be pleased that we have been given a **special rate of \$98 a night** for guest rooms (the normal rate in this popular hotel is almost double that). Book your reservation by asking for the block of rooms reserved for **"ACD Seminar—Christian Development."** ¶ Hope to see you there!

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