

KEEPING UP WITH BROOKDALE

APRIL 2024



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4 Assumptions Made by Anyone Reciting a Creed

by: Carl R. Trueman

Creeds Are Good and Necessary
My conviction that creeds and confessions are a good and necessary part of healthy, biblical church life rests on a host of different arguments and convictions; but, at root, there are four basic presuppositions to which I hold that must be true for the case for confessions to be a sound one. These are as follows:--Continue Page 2 or click here-->

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1. Human beings are not free, autonomous creatures defined by feelings but creatures made in the image of God and always defined by external relationships to God and each other.

We as human beings do not exist in isolation; nor do we exist in a world that is mere “stuff,” a kind of cosmic playdough of no intrinsic significance that we can simply make mean anything we wish. Our identity is determined by the fact we are made in God’s image and placed from birth in a network of relationships that have a binding authority on us and determine who we are. In short, our identity at base is not something we invent for ourselves; it is something we learn as we learn about the objective nature of the world in which we live.

2. The past is important and has things of positive relevance to teach us.

Creeds and confessions are, almost by definition, documents that were composed at some point in the past; and, in most cases, we are talking about the distant past, not last week or last year. Thus, to claim that creeds and confessions still fulfill positive functions, in terms of transmitting truth from one generation to another or making it clear to the outside world what it is that particular churches believe, requires that we believe the past can still speak to us today. Thus, any cultural force that weakens or attenuates the belief that the past can be a source of knowledge and even wisdom is also a force that serves to undermine the relevance of creeds and confessions.

3. Language must be an appropriate vehicle for the stable transmission of truth across time and geographical space.

Creeds and confessions are documents that make theological truth claims. That is not to say that is all they do: the role, for example, of the Apostles’ and the Nicene creeds in many church liturgies indicates that they can also fulfill doxological as well as pedagogical and theological roles; but while they can thus be more than theological, doctrinal statements that rest upon and express truth claims about God and the world he has created, they can never be less. They do this, of course, in words; and so, if these claims are to be what they claim to be—statements about a reality beyond language—then language itself must be an adequate medium for performing this task. Thus, any force that undermines general confidence in language as a medium capable of conveying information or of constituting relationships is also a force that strikes at the validity of creeds and confessions.

4. There must be a body or an institution that can authoritatively compose and enforce creeds and confessions.

This body or institution is the church. I address the significance of this in more detail in subsequent chapters, but it is important to understand at the outset that confessions are not private documents. They are significant because they have been adopted by the church as public declarations of her faith, and their function cannot be isolated from their ecclesiastical nature and context. This whole concept assumes that institutions and institutional authority structures are not necessarily bad or evil or defective simply by their very existence as institutions. Thus, any cultural force that overthrows or undermines notions of external or institutional authority effectively removes the mechanisms by which creeds and confessions can function as anything other than simple summaries of doctrine for private edification.

If these are the presuppositions of confessionalism, then it is clear that we have a major problem, because each of these four basic presuppositions represents a profoundly countercultural position, something that stands opposed to the general flow of modern life. Today, Western culture is dominated by expressive individualism, the idea that we are defined by our inner feelings, that our relationships with others place no natural or necessary obligations upon us, and that we can pick and choose them as they serve our emotional needs. This idea plays into the general cultural assertion of individual autonomy and rejection of external authority—or at least of traditional external authority—that requires some sacrifice of ourselves for others. Whether it is the child rebelling against the parent or the individual rebelling against the sex of his or her own body, today autonomy and personal desire are king; and these press against anything from outside that tells us who we are, what we should believe, or how we should live. Next, the past is more often a source of embarrassment than a positive source of knowledge; and when it is considered useful, it is usually as providing examples of what not to do or of defective, less-advanced thinking than of truth for the present.

Third, language is similarly suspect: in a world of spin, dishonest politicians, and ruthless marketing, language can often seem to be—indeed, often is—manipulative, deceptive, or downright wicked but rarely transparent and worthy of taking at face value. Finally, institutions—from multinational corporations to governments—seem to be in the game of self-perpetuation, bullying, and control for the sake of control. They are rarely seen as entities that exist in practice for the real benefit of others. As noted, above, in a world where expressive individualism rules the cultural roost, this tendency is only intensified. Thus, the big four presuppositions of confessionalism fly in the face of the values of contemporary culture, and confessionalists clearly have their work cut out to mount a counterattack. And such a counterattack begins with the simple truism of every successful campaigner, from wartime leaders to the coaches of high school track teams: know your enemy. In this context, knowing the enemy may also help us realize how, in our defense of the unique authority of Scripture, our understanding of what that means is sometimes shaped more by the hidden forces of the world around us than by the teaching of Scripture and the historic life and practice of the church.

Expressive Individualism

Various trajectories of modern culture have served to make expressive individualism normative in Western society. With the advent of the Reformation, the authority of the church as a solid and stable institution that gave religious identity to all came to an end. Religion slowly but surely became a matter of personal choice, and as it did so, the authority of personal choice became greater even as that of the church as institution declined. With this development came an increasing emphasis on inner psychology as offering the foundation for personal knowledge. René Descartes, whose philosophy of knowledge and certainty is typically summarized as “I think, therefore I am,” offered perhaps the most famous expression of this, but this move inward was not the monopoly of scientific philosophers seeking epistemological certainty. ¹ With Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Friedrich Schiller, and then the Romantics, more and more emphasis was placed on the importance of feelings and emotions as being critical to personal identity. And with them too came a rebellion against granting external institutions the kind of authority they had once enjoyed. We might put it somewhat simplistically, though not misleadingly, as follows: the idea that it is society, with its traditions and institutions, that messes people up became a deep-seated belief of the modern world.

To this intellectual trajectory we can add the impact of technology. This will also feature in the devaluation of the past discussed below, but it is worth noting here that technology feeds the sense of autonomy that lies at the heart of expressive individualism. Technology instills us with a sense of power and makes us feel that the world is not something to which we have to conform ourselves but rather something that we can overcome or bend to our will. The most obvious examples come from biology. Diseases that were once death sentences can now be cured with a simple course of antibiotics. Sexual promiscuity once carried unavoidable risks of sexually transmitted diseases or unwanted pregnancies. Medical developments have significantly mitigated those risks and allowed us to imagine that we are sovereign and autonomous in the sexual realm. And it is not just biology: cheap transportation has reduced the significance of geographical distance, as has the advent of technologies such as Zoom and Skype. Each of these feeds the idea that we as individuals are in control of the world. Nature lacks the authority it once possessed.

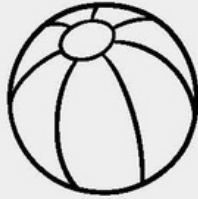
What is significant about expressive individualism for this book is what it does to the notion of institutional authority. In short, it dramatically weakens it. If the purpose of life is individuals being whoever they want to be, or whoever they think they should be, then institutions change from being places of formation to places of performance. They are no longer places of external authority but rather vendors of particular visions of what it means to be me, and I can choose whichever one suits my inner feelings and makes me feel happiest. I have no obligation to the institution, or to anybody else, that does not help in my own program of self-realization.

And that renders thoroughly implausible the idea of the church as the place where I am told who I am, who God is, what I am to believe, and how I am to worship and live in light of that.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

March 2024

1.



YOUTH GROUP



Things have been going pretty well with Youth Group. Each week we have kids come hang out in the gym, play group games and then we have Bible study. Our snack time has been pretty good too. Mark Sonnenmoser, Brandon Furlong, Xavier Taylor, Andrew Schaeffer, Leyton Furlong and now Sarah Bolander make up our awesome team of leaders. So grateful to each one.

We just started the Sermon on the Mount with the students. Kids read the scripture out loud, we discuss and answer questions. And we now have brand new Bibles! THANK YOU!



2.

SUNDAY MORNING

Sunday School is going well. Karen Gladhart does a great job with the students and our confirmation class has had several kids participate. Be on the lookout for several who will be joining the church.

We have some awesome kiddos in our church and fantastic helpers. Would you be interested in helping, just let Sue know.

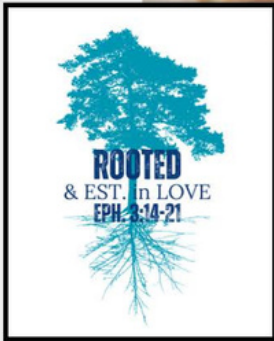


3.

MISSION TRIP BASKET AUCTION



Our Mission Trip will be here soon, We leave June 23 and return June 28. Our theme is Rooted & EST. in LOVE, Ephesians 3:17 and we are all looking forward to serving the Duluth, MN community. To help raise funds we will be having our **Annual Basket Auction** which will begin April 21 and close on Mother's Day (May 12). Would you be able to help out and make a donation? Look for more information to come out in the next couple of weeks. Please remember our students and volunteer leaders in your prayers, we have a group of 17 participating on our trip.



4.

UPCOMING EVENT



SOME OF THE SNACKS THE KIDS CAN'T RESIST.

ULTIMATE
Church Night Games

Romans & Christians
 Sardines
 Hide and Seek
 Flashlight Bible Study

Friday, April 12th
 6:30pm - 9:30pm
 Brookdale Church 31st & Edmond
 Middle School - High School

◆◆◆
 "THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, AND THE DARKNESS HAS NOT OVERCOME IT."
 JOHN 1:8

April Birthdays

- 1- Kristin Lemon
- 4 - Andrew Schweder
- 9 - Jen Schaeffer
- 10 - Drew Lemon
- 12 - Judy O'Donnell
- 13 - Joyce Clibon
- 15 - Carl Smith
- 16 - Ellie Larson
- 21 - Jim Burnham
- 23 - Beth Bachman,
Drexel Midyett
- 24 - Andrew Schaeffer
- 26 - Annie Austin,
Jerry Zweerink
- 28 - Henry Kritikos
- 29 - Mary Lou Marlowe
- 30 - Lydie Dean,
Cyndy Poggemiller,
Laney (Beier) Withers

May

- 5 - Ed Bartelt
- 7 - Doug Paden



Thank you notes...

Dear Church Members,

We appreciate your time, work, and faithfulness.

Thank you for your generosity given of your time.

Catherine Hague & Troy Hague

Thank you to Brookdale Church for the plant, prayers, and concern at the death of our nephew, Stanley Viestenz. You are definitely part of our family. Laura and Don Weckerlin

Our friends at Brookdale Church,

Thank you for your donation. Your support is such an encouragement to us! Your support makes it possible for us to continue to serve women survivors of trauma & addiction in our community.

Thank you for helping us light the way home for them.

With much love & gratitude, Team SOS (Sisters Of Solace)

Brookdale Church, Thank you for the delicious snacks & treats that you sent to us during our Parent Teacher Conference nights! We appreciate the love & support more than you know!--Thank you, Mark Twain

Session Summary-February 2024

Elder Brandon Furlong moderated the meeting on February 20th due to Pastor Drew Henderson being ill.

Session reviewed the ministry reports that were submitted. Ministry teams are requested to get their reports in one week prior to the Session meeting which normally meets on the third Tuesday of each month.

Reviewed questions from the Personnel Committee regarding staff.

Elders Ann Weston and Jerry Zweerink attended the January Presbytery meeting and gave a report. Pastor Henderson was received and approved as Brookdale's Transitional Pastor.

Session approved Pastor Henderson's employment contract.

Timing of setting up the Pastoral search team was discussed. The pastor support team will seek guidance from Pastor Henderson and it will be further discussed at the next meeting.

Membership rolls were discussed and will be reviewed at the next meeting.

A congressional meeting to discuss the transitional process and the listening sessions will be set up after Easter. Date to be determined.

The next Session meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2024.

Current Elders are Ron Bachman, David Bolander, Brent Colgan, Brandon Furlong, Jay McGhee, Donna Smith, Ann Weston, and Jerry Zweerink.

Floral Design Workshop



The women's flower arrangement workshop. Saturday, March 23, the women of Brookdale had tea and welcomed Elizabeth Godfrey, who led us in a flower arranging workshop. Multiple generations shared conversation at our tables as we enjoyed tea and cookies. During the workshop, Elizabeth guided as we each individually arranged a vase of flowers to take home. Praise to our Lord and Savior as we welcomed the Spring into our hearts and homes.

The Senior Adult Leadership Team organized a festive St. Patrick's Day Luncheon on March 15th, 2024. The event kicked off at Noon with a lively performance by The Buchanan Highlanders Pipes and Drums, delighting the attendees with traditional music. Following the entertainment, everyone enjoyed a delicious baked potato bar, complete with a variety of toppings, along with scrumptious desserts to satisfy their sweet tooth. It was a delightful gathering filled with good food, great company, and a touch of Irish spirit.



APRIL 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 10am Women's Bible Study	2 6:30am Men's Min. Meeting 5:30pm Dance Fit 6:30pm Deacons	3 6:30am Men's Min. 10am Women's Bible St. 5:30pm Dance Fit 6pm Woman's Bible	4 9:30am BSF 10am or 6pm Griefshare	5 6:30am Men's Min.	6 10:00am Dance Fit
7 Sunday School 9:15am Worship / Communion / 10:30am 6:30 Youth Group	8 10am Women's Bible Study 1pm Weckerlin's sm. gr. 5:15pm Finance	9 5:30pm Dance Fit 5:30pm Personnel 6:00pm Trustees	10 6:30am Men's Min. 10am Women's Bible St. 11am Daytimers 5:30pm Dance Fit 6pm Woman's Bible	11 9:30am BSF 10am or 6pm Griefshare	12 6:30am Men's Min. 2:00pm Book Club	13 10:00am Dance Fit
14 Sunday School 9:15am Worship 10:30am 6:30 Youth Group	15 10am Women's Bible Study	16 5:30pm Dance Fit 6:30pm Session	17 6:30am Men's Min. 10am Women's Bible St. 5:30pm Dance Fit 6pm Woman's Bible Study 7pm Prayer Night	18 Haven House / Food Kitchen 9:30am BSF 10am or 6pm Griefshare	19 6:30am Men's Min.	20 10:00am Dance Fit Men's Cookout 5:30-8pm
21 Sunday School 9:15am Worship 10:30am 6:30 Youth Group	22 10am Women's Bible Study 1pm Weckerlin's sm. gr.	23 5:30pm Dance Fit	24 6:30am Men's Min. 10am Women's Bible St. 11am Daytimers 5:30pm Dance Fit	25 9:30am BSF 10am or 6pm Griefshare	26 6:30am Men's Min.	27 10:00am Dance Fit
28 Sunday School 9:15am Worship 10:30am 6:30 Youth Group	29 10am Women's Bible Study	30 5:30pm Dance Fit				