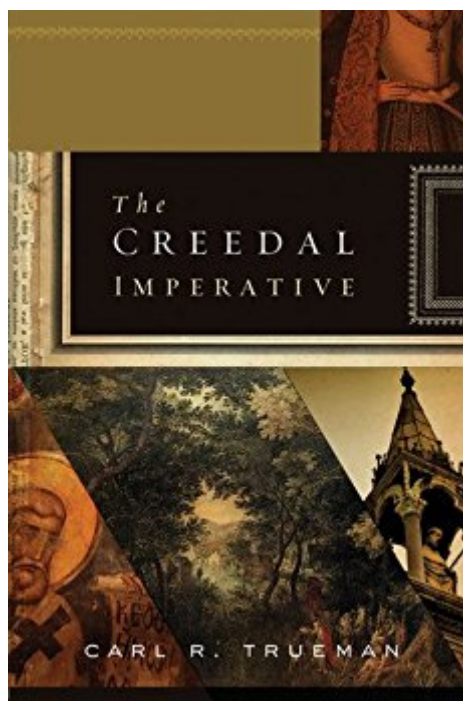


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# The Creedal Imperative



## Synopsis

Recent years have seen a number of high profile scholars converting to Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy while a trend in the laity expresses an eclectic hunger for tradition. The status and role of confessions stands at the center of the debate within evangelicalism today as many resonate with the call to return to Christianity's ancient roots. Carl Trueman offers an analysis of why creeds and confessions are necessary, how they have developed over time, and how they can function in the church of today and tomorrow. He writes primarily for evangelicals who are not particularly confessional in their thinking yet who belong to confessional churches—Baptists, independents, etc.—so that they will see more clearly the usefulness of the church's tradition.

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## Customer Reviews

The Creedal Imperative is an accessible and enjoyable defense of the need for creeds in Christian churches. The book is really an extended essay against the notion that a church can have "the Bible and the Bible alone" as its creed. The author notes that the New Testament itself refers to teaching and creedal formulations that are external to the Bible, undercutting the "Bible alone" argument at its

base: if the Bible is open to extra-biblical summaries of the faith, how can a church that purports to rely upon the Bible for its doctrine reject them? The author also observes that the early church as well as the Protestant reformers used creeds as summaries of right belief. In one of the most interesting chapters in book, the author argues that much liturgy and worship practices have a creedal component to them, and that reference to recognized creeds in worship ensures that non-orthodox strains are limited or eliminated. The final chapters of the book are also fascinating in their descriptions of the proper uses of creeds in relation to church membership, discipleship, congregational leadership, and ecumenism. All that being noted, the book has its shortcomings. There is definitely a polemical aspect to the work; for example, creedal skeptics are not just wrong, but their arguments are "specious" (almost once per chapter, it seems). And the reader does not really get to see the argument against creeds articulated in any objective fashion. The only real argument against creeds is offered not from a Christian viewpoint but from that of post-modern society. There is also a repetitive feel to the text that may stem from the fact that, as the author notes in his dedication, "many of the ideas in this book were debated and refined" in a series of monthly "table talks."

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