FOUNDATION OF FAITH

See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation
Isaiah 28:16

January 22: Foundational Summaries

The Foundation of Faith is God's mercy as He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ.

"Foundations" explores the ways God gives to receive and live out His grace in Christ Jesus.

Summaries within scripture

Deuteronomy
- Moses' sermon

Deuteronomy 6:4
- Hear Israel: Yahweh God Yahweh One

10 commandments (Exodus 20 / Deuteronomy 5)
- How do they start?

Jesus' summary (Matthew 22:37-40)

I Corinthians 11:23
I Corinthians 15:1-11
I Thessalonians 4:14

Acts 7 – Stephen
- Believe – God's Story

Any summary MUST be a summary of scripture

Scripture as "rule and norm"

All founded on the first commandment

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" Matthew 22:37

Summaries in history

The Didache
- 1st Century teachings of the Apostles

The Apostles' Creed (2nd or 3rd cen.)
- From the early church baptism rite (in question form)

Nicene (Constantinople) (325 / 381)
- Arianism – who is Jesus?

Athanasian (5th or 6th cen. – 100 years after Athanasius)
- Trinity

Small Catechism (1529)
- For teaching the family

Book of Concord
- Augsburg Confession (1530)
  - Confession of what the Lutheran churches teach

Not all Christian Churches say the creeds,
but all Christian churches believe what they say.

Why Summaries?

- Unification
- Clarifying Faith
- Combatting heresies
- To share the faith

Someone asks, "What do you believe?"

What do you say?
- Clear (avoid "churchy" words)
- Concise (keep it short)
- Consistent (the words may change depending on who asks, but what is the core?)
- Compelling (connects with the person asking)

The Bible was written for one primary purpose:

…so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:31

Many Muslims believe that Christians are polytheistic, mistaking the Three Persons of the Trinity for three separate gods. The Nicene Creed makes it clear that Christians believe in one God, three Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

قانون الإيمان النيقي

بالحقيقة نؤمن بإله واحد،
أللهُ الآب، ضابط الكل،
خالق السماء والأرض، ما يُرى وما لا يُرى.

نؤمن برب واحد يسوع المسيح،
إبن الله الوحيد،
المولود من الآبّ قبل كلّ الدهور؛
نور من نور،
إله حق من إله حق،
مولود غير مخلوق،
مساو للآب في الجوهر،
الذي به كان كلّ شئ.
هذا الذي من أجلنا نحن البشر، ومن أجل خلاصنا،
نزل من السماء،
وتجسّد من الروح القدس .ومن مريم العذراء تأنس،
وصُلِب عنّا على عهد بيلاطس البنطي.
تألّم وقُبِر وقام من الأموات في اليوم الثالث كما في الكتب،
وصعد في السموات،
وجلس عن يمين أبيه،
وأيضا يأتي في مجده ليدين الأحياء والأموات،
الذي ليس لملكه إنقضاء.

نعم نؤمن بالروح القدس،
الرب المُحي المنبثق من الآب.
نسجد له ونمجده مع الآب والإبن،
الناطق في الأنبياء.

ونؤمن بكنيسة واحده مقدسة جامعة رسولية.
ونعترف بمعمودية واحدة لمغفرة الخطايا.
وننتظر قيامة الأموات
وحياة الدهر الآتي .آمين.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my limbs, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life, protects me from all danger, and guards me and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
He descended into hell;
the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence He will come
to judge the living and the dead.

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from all eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.
Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death,
That I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.
This is most certainly true.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give everlasting life to me and all believers in Christ.
This is most certainly true.