

Creeds as Philosophical Corruption — Cheat Sheet

CORE POSITION (ONE SENTENCE)

The ecumenical creeds introduced Greek philosophical categories (substance, essence, simplicity, impassibility) foreign to the biblical text, reshaping the

apostolic understanding of God into a metaphysical construct the apostles never taught.

KEY EVIDENCE THAT THE CREEDS ARE PHILOSOPHICAL, NOT BIBLICAL

- *Homoousios* ("one substance") — never appears in scripture; condemned at the Council of Antioch (268 AD) before being adopted at Nicaea (325 AD)
- *Ousia* (substance/being) — an Aristotelian category, not a biblical one

- Divine simplicity (God has no parts) — from Neoplatonism (Plotinus), not scripture
- Divine impassibility (God cannot suffer) — from Platonic philosophy; contradicts the God of the OT who grieves (Genesis 6:6), is jealous (Exodus 20:5), and relents (Jonah 3:10)
- The Nicene Creed was enforced by Emperor Constantine, a non-baptized ruler, and finalized under Emperor Theodosius I's political edict (380 AD)

BIBLICAL WARNINGS AGAINST PHILOSOPHICAL

CORRUPTION

Verse	Key Point
Matt. 15:8-9	"Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"
Mark 7:9	Rejecting God's command to keep human tradition
Col. 2:8	"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit"
2 Thess. 2:3	The prophesied "falling away" before Christ's return
Acts 20:29-30	Grievous wolves entering after apostles depart
2 Tim. 4:3-4	Turning from truth unto fables

EARLY CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE (QUICK HITS)

- **Justin Martyr (c. 150 AD):** Son is "another God and Lord subject to the Maker" (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 56) — not Nicene
- **Tertullian (c. 210 AD):** "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" (*Prescription Against Heretics*, 7) — recognized the danger of philosophy even while using it

- **Origen (c. 230 AD):** Son subordinate to Father (*Commentary on John*, 13.25) — later partially condemned for not being Nicene enough
- **R.P.C. Hanson:** "No theologian before the Arian controversy [c. 318] regards the Son as anything other than subordinate to the Father"
- Jerome admitted "the whole world groaned to find itself Arian" — the Nicene position was a minority view for decades

APOSTOLIC CONFESSIONS VS. CREEDAL CONFESSIONS

Apostolic (Biblical)	Creedal (Post-Biblical)
"Jesus is Lord" (Rom. 10:9)	"God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God"
"Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (Matt. 16:16)	"Begotten not made, of one substance with the Father"
"One mediator, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5)	"Three persons, one substance, co-equal, co-eternal"
Personal, relational language	Abstract, metaphysical language

QUICK-FIRE OBJECTION RESPONSES

"The creeds just clarified what scripture already taught."

They introduced vocabulary and concepts absent from scripture (*homoousios*, divine simplicity, impassibility) drawn from Greek philosophy. Clarification does not require importing an entirely new conceptual framework.

"Without creeds, you get heresy."

The apostolic church managed for 300 years without Nicene language. The creeds solved philosophical problems the apostles never raised — and created new ones (how three persons can be one being remains unexplained after 1,700 years).

"All Christians accept the creeds."

The Church of the East rejected Chalcedon. The creeds were contested for 55+ years after Nicaea. Groups are defined as "Christian" by creedal standards, then the creeds are defended by "all Christians agree" — circular reasoning.

"Joseph Smith had no authority to reject centuries of theology."

The claim is that God the Father and Jesus Christ personally appeared and declared the creeds incorrect (JS—History 1:19). The authority is divine revelation, not human scholarship.

"Doctrinal development is normal, not corruption."

Development draws out what is already present. Innovation introduces what was never there. *Homoousios*, simplicity, and impassibility are traceable to Greek sources, not biblical ones. That is innovation.

KEY LDS SOURCES

- Joseph Smith—History 1:19 — the creeds declared an abomination
- D&C 130:22 — Father and Son have tangible bodies (contradicts creedal immateriality)

- Articles of Faith 1:1 — three distinct beings, united in purpose
- [FairLatterdaySaints: Creeds](#)
- [FairLatterdaySaints: Apostasy](#)
- [Church of Jesus Christ: The Restoration](#)