

In the early history of the Church, a special case occurred in which it became necessary for the Church at Jerusalem to adopt and publish a creed or dogma, in order to check certain growing heresies respecting the rights and duties of Jews joining the Christian church. Paul and Barabas were commissioned to carry the "degrees",—[original "dogmata," or "dogmas," so much decried by our "liberal" friends] to the various churches in Asia Minor. If it be objected that this creed was the more defensible because issued by inspired apostles, it must be remembered that the whole body of elders or Church authorities were in session with the apostle, and were equally concerned in this issuing of a creed. Indeed, this seems designed as a precedent for the Church to guide in all similar cases of heresies which are liable to occur in the history of the Church. Moreover, the Apostle Paul, II Tim. 1:13, tells Timothy to hold fast "*the form of sound words.*" The word "*hypotyposis*"—here rendered "form"—means a "sketch" or "outline," and is the very word used by the classic writers to designate the "outline" or "compend" of any system of philosophy or theology. Such a form or compend, we have seen is necessary, and is alluded to in other places in the apostolic writings. That such a form or creed was used by the apostles is, moreover, rendered probable from the indisputable fact that such creeds were used in the earliest and purest period of the history of the church. And it is by no means improbable that the creed now called the "Apostles' Creed" grew out of the forms used by the Apostles themselves, and that though changed, it yet contains substantially what Paul, Peter and John "once delivered to the saints."

(12.) *Belief in a creed is, in the Scriptures made the absolute condition of personal salvation.*