

Having determined the flaw in Mr. Frazer's definition of natural religion, we must now consider his definition of Christianity. It is interesting to note here that Mr. Frazer never truly defines Christianity in his book. Instead of presenting an actual definition, he attempts to limit Christianity to "a set of beliefs officially espoused by all of the major Christian sects in America in the 1700s."¹ Ironically, Mr. Frazer criticized his own definition in a sermon by the same title as his book when he mocked Michael Novak for saying essentially the same thing. Mr. Novak claimed that George Washington should be measured by the definition of Christianity that was in vogue in the late eighteenth century, and Mr. Frazer's response to this was to ask:

"Did God's standards change? Do we have to look at the year to see whether someone's a Christian or not? Novak proceeds as if there's no actual definition of what it means to be a Christian, just differing opinions."²

We could ask these same questions of Mr. Frazer. Why does he not provide an actual definition of Christianity? Does God change His standard for how to become a Christian in order to conform to the "beliefs officially espoused by all of the major Christian sects" of a given century? Why does Mr. Frazer proceed "as if there's no actual definition of what it means to be a Christian"?

Throughout his book, Mr. Frazer emphatically states that certain individuals were not Christians. In order to make such a claim, he should have presented us with a clear explanation of what makes one person a Christian and another person not a Christian. Instead of doing this, however, Mr. Frazer chose to provide a mere consensus opinion on the beliefs held in common by those calling themselves Christians in eighteenth century America. Using a consensus opinion as a standard of measurement can only inform us of which individuals conformed to the opinions of the majority. It cannot tell us whether agreeing with the majority is necessary in order for someone to be a Christian.

Before we discuss the correct definition of Christianity, it is important that we take note of some major flaws in Mr. Frazer's consensus opinion. This opinion consists of a list of ten doctrines that were held in common by the five major groups or sects of Christians in the eighteenth century. Those doctrines are: the trinity, the interaction of God in human affairs, the deity of Christ, original sin, the virgin birth, the atonement of Christ's death, His resurrection, eternal punishment for sin, justification by faith and the inspiration of the Scriptures.³ According to Mr. Frazer, belief in these doctrines is necessary for salvation, and no one who rejects any one of these doctrines can be considered a Christian. Let me state at the outset that I believe each of these doctrines to be true, but there are, nonetheless, several errors in Mr. Frazer's claim.

The first, and perhaps the most obvious, error can be seen in the beliefs that Mr. Frazer attributed to the Catholic church. Mr. Frazer claimed that the Council of Trent in 1547 declared the Catholic church's assent to the doctrines of justification by faith, eternal punishment for sin and the inspiration of the Scriptures. There are several major flaws in this statement.

First, it is admitted by Mr. Frazer that "although Catholics disagreed with Protestants about the sufficiency of faith for justification, they agreed that justification required faith." Unfortunately, Mr. Frazer appears to be equivocating on the definition of the term "justification by faith." He is

using it to mean one thing when referring to the other groups of Christians in his list, but when he refers to justification by faith in the list of Catholic doctrines, he is referring to something completely different. When the other denominations in Mr. Frazer's list speak of justification by faith, they are referring to the concept of one's faith in Christ causing him to be declared righteous thus freeing him from the penalty of sin which is death in hell. The Council of Trent, however, proposed a different means of freeing people from the penalty of hell. Here is the statement of faith of which that Council said, "All who profess the faith of Christ necessarily believe:"

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages; God of God, light of light, true God of true God; begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made: who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from the heavens, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man: crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, he suffered and was buried; and he rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures; and he ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father ; and again he will come with glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end: and in the Holy Ghost the Lord, and the giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets and one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come."⁴

Notice the last sentence in which the professor of this faith declares his belief in "one baptism for the remission of sins." This plainly shows that it was baptism and not faith which the Catholic church declared to be the means of freeing an individual from the penalty of hell. This declaration is further explained in another part of the creed in which we read:

"If he denies that the said merit of Jesus Christ is applied, both to adults and to infants, by the sacrament of baptism rightly administered in the form of the church; let him be anathema...

"If any one denies, that infants, newly born from their mothers' wombs, even though they be sprung from baptized parents, are to be baptized; or says that they are baptized indeed for the remission of sins, but that they derive nothing of original sin from Adam, which has need of being expiated by the laver of regeneration for the obtaining life everlasting, – whence it follows as a consequence, that in them the form of baptism, for the remission of sins, is understood to be not true, but false, – let him be anathema. For that which the apostle has said, By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men in whom all have sinned, is not to be understood otherwise than as the Catholic Church spread everywhere hath always understood it. For, by reason of this rule of faith, from a tradition of the apostles, even infants, who could not as yet commit any sin of themselves, are for this cause truly

baptized for the remission of sins, that in them that may be cleansed away by regeneration, which they have contracted by generation...

“If any one denies, that, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted; or even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away; but says that it is only rased, or not imputed; let him be anathema. For, in those who are born again, there is nothing that God hates; because, There is no condemnation to those who are truly buried together with Christ by baptism into death; who walk not according to the flesh, but, putting off the old man, and putting on the new who is created according to God, are made innocent, immaculate, pure, harmless, and beloved of God, heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ; so that there is nothing whatever to retard their entrance into heaven.”⁵

Here we see, in no uncertain terms, that the Council of Trent declared baptism and not faith to be the means of justification. Mr. Frazer claimed that the Catholic church agreed with other churches in recognizing the need for faith in order for an individual to be justified, but how can a newborn infant possibly be said to express faith in a Christ that he has never heard of or, if hearing, could not possibly understand that which he hears? Mr. Frazer is quite mistaken. The very creed which he recognizes as the official creed of the eighteenth century Catholic church states that men are justified, in the sense of being declared righteous and freed from the penalty of hell, through the means of baptism and not by faith.

There was, however, a reference to justification by faith in the Council of Trent, and it is in this reference that we discover the source of Mr. Frazer’s equivocation. In the session immediately following the session on baptism, the Council presented the following declaration on justification:

“Of this Justification the causes are these: the final cause indeed is the glory of God and of Jesus Christ, and life everlasting; while the efficient cause is a merciful God who washes and sanctifies gratuitously, signing, and anointing with the holy Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance; but the meritorious cause is His most beloved only-begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, for the exceeding charity wherewith he loved us, merited Justification for us by His most holy Passion on the wood of the cross, and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father; the instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which (faith) no man was ever justified ... This faith, Catechumen's beg of the Church – agreeably to a tradition of the apostles – previously to the sacrament of Baptism; when they beg for the faith which bestows life everlasting.”⁶

From this declaration, it is plainly obvious that, when the Council of Trent spoke of the faith which brings justification, they were not speaking of a belief or an assent that a man must have but rather of a gift which he must receive from the church, namely, the gift of baptism. This act of baptism is described as the sacrament of faith, and the fact that it must be begged of from the

church shows that this faith cannot be a mental or even a spiritual belief in the truth of the gospel but rather a gift which is conferred upon the individual by the church in the form of a baptism.

Further evidence that the Council of Trent did not teach justification by faith in the same sense that this concept is understood by the other groups in Mr. Frazer's list can be seen in their claim that a person can lose his justification without losing his faith. Here is the Council's statement in that regard:

“In opposition also to the subtle wits of certain men, who, by pleasing speeches and good words, seduce the hearts of the innocent, it is to be maintained, that the received grace of Justification is lost, not only by infidelity whereby even faith itself is lost, but also by any other mortal sin whatever, though faith be not lost; thus defending the doctrine of the divine law, which excludes from the kingdom of God not only the unbelieving, but the faithful also (who are) fornicators, adulterers, effeminate, liars with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, railers, extortioners, and all others who commit deadly sins; from which, with the help of divine grace, they can refrain, and on account of which they are separated from the grace of Christ.”⁷

If an individual can lose his justification without losing the faith by which he was justified, then it follows that it was not really his faith that obtained his justification. Thus, it is evident that the Council of Trent taught that justification is a gift that must be sought of and kept through the good graces of the Catholic church. This is not justification by faith but rather justification by the church.

This brings us to Mr. Frazer's claim that the eighteenth century Catholic church taught the doctrine of eternal punishment for sin. This claim is partially correct. The Catholic church of this time period did teach that there was an eternal punishment for sins in hell, but as we have already seen, they also taught that baptism, including infant baptism, was the means of escaping that punishment. This, of course, presented a problem for the Catholic church. If all of those who were baptized as infants were thereby delivered from the punishment for their sins and assured of a home in heaven, then there would be no incentive for anyone to participate in the many rituals and formalities of the church. This problem, and the loss of funding that must have accompanied it, gave rise to the doctrine of temporal punishment for sins in Purgatory. Here is the statement regarding Purgatory that was made by the Council of Trent:

“If any one saith, that, after the grace of Justification has been received, to every penitent sinner the guilt is remitted, and the debt of eternal punishment is blotted out in such wise, that there remains not any debt of temporal punishment to be discharged either in this world, or in the next in Purgatory, before the entrance to the kingdom of heaven can be opened (to him); let him be anathema.”⁸

This doctrine of Purgatory is not to be found in the teachings of Scripture, and the Council of Trent acknowledged this when they admitted in another place that this doctrine was derived from the writings, traditions and councils of the church fathers:

“Whereas the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Ghost, has, from the sacred writings and the ancient tradition of the Fathers, taught, in sacred councils, and very recently in this oecumenical Synod, that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar; the holy Synod enjoins on bishops that they diligently endeavour that the sound doctrine concerning Purgatory, transmitted by the holy Fathers and sacred councils, be believed, maintained, taught, and every where proclaimed by the faithful of Christ. But let the more difficult and subtle questions, and which tend not to edification, and from which for the most part there is no increase of piety, be excluded from popular discourses before the uneducated multitude. In like manner, such things as are uncertain, or which labour under an appearance of error, let them not allow to be made public and treated of.”⁹

Notice the prohibition against questioning this doctrine. The Council of Trent recognized that there was no biblical support for the doctrine of Purgatory, but instead of abandoning the concept of temporal punishment for sins, they simply decreed that no one was to question it and that those who denied it were to be anathema. This stubborn persistence in teaching an additional, temporal punishment for sins should have precluded the doctrine of eternal punishment from being included in Mr. Frazer’s list.

Another of the doctrines which Mr. Frazer claims no one can deny and still be a Christian is the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures. In this category, however, Mr. Frazer’s inclusion of the Catholic church should have caused him to exclude every other group of Christians, for none of the other groups agreed with the Catholic church in regards to the inspiration of Scripture. The Council of Trent decreed that:

“Seeing clearly that this truth and discipline are contained in the written books, and the unwritten traditions which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand; (the Synod) following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety, and reverence, all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament – seeing that one God is the author of both – as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession. And it has thought it meet that a list of the sacred books be inserted in this decree, lest a doubt may arise in any one's mind, which are the books that are received by this Synod. They are as set down here below: of the Old Testament: the five books of Moses, to wit, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Josue, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, the first book of Esdras, and the second which is entitled Nehemias; Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, the Davidical Psalter, consisting of a hundred and fifty psalms; the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Jeremias, with Baruch; Ezechiel, Daniel; the twelve minor prophets, to wit, Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum,

Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggaeus, Zacharias, Malachias; two books of the Machabees, the first and the second. Of the New Testament: the four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles written by Luke the Evangelist; fourteen epistles of Paul the apostle, (one) to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, (one) to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, (one) to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two of Peter the apostle, three of John the apostle, one of the apostle James, one of Jude the apostle, and the Apocalypse of John the apostle. But if any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately contemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema.”¹⁰

It is clear from this declaration that the Catholic canon of Scripture included the books of the Apocrypha which the other groups of Christians rejected. None of the other churches recognized these books as Scripture. The Philadelphia Confession, for example, stated that:

“The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon (or rule) of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority to the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of than other human writings.”¹¹

And in *An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England*, the Bishop of Sarum wrote:

“It were easy to carry this much further down, and to shew that these books were never by any express definition received into the Canon, till it was done at Trent; and that in all the ages of the Church, even after they came to be much esteemed, there were divers writers, and those generally the most learned of their time, who denied them to be a part of the Canon.”¹²

Throughout his book, Mr. Frazer condemns several men as non-Christians for denying that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God. As Mr. Frazer admits, each of these men believed that God did give a written revelation to men. They simply did not accept the entire canon of Scripture as a divine inspiration, and for this, they receive his condemnation. Now, however, it is apparent that several of the groups of Christians in Mr. Frazer’s list also deny that the entire canon, that is, the Catholic canon of Scripture is divinely inspired. According to the Council of Trent, that single difference is enough to deny the Christianity of those other groups. Mr. Frazer seems to agree with this conclusion everywhere else in his book, and he should have remained consistent and denied the Christianity of all the Baptist and Protestant churches.

Mr. Frazer’s error in this point becomes even more significant when we consider what he said about Christians just before he presented his list of ten doctrines. In direct contradiction to the above decree from the Council of Trent, Mr. Frazer wrote:

“Christians believed that the whole Bible was divinely inspired, was God’s special revelation of Himself, and was the only infallible authority in all matters that it treated.”¹³

When we compare Mr. Frazer’s claim that Christians believe the Bible to be the only infallible revelation from God with the statement from the Council of Trent that the traditions of the church are an additional revelation that is equal to the Scriptures, then we can only conclude that Mr. Frazer is here denying the Christianity of the Catholic church as well. If the Baptist and Protestant churches are not Christian because they do not accept the entire Catholic canon of Scripture, and if the Catholic church is not Christian because it accepts the traditions of the church as equal to the Scriptures, then I submit that Mr. Frazer would have a very difficult time identifying a single Christian church that has existed at any time in the entire history of mankind.

In addition to Mr. Frazer’s incredible errors regarding the doctrines of the Catholic church, he also erred in claiming that his list of core Christian doctrines is derived from the “official” positions of the five groups that he listed. One of those “official” positions is identified by Mr. Frazer as the “official creed of Baptists and churches that emphasize baptism.”¹⁴ The problem with this claim should be immediately apparent to anyone who has ever studied the history of the baptistic churches, and that is simply that there is no official creed of the Baptists.

The creed which Mr. Frazer presents as the official Baptist creed is the Philadelphia Confession of 1720. This confession, however, was never claimed to be an official creed of all the Baptist churches in America. It was merely a common confession of faith that was shared by the small group of churches which made up the Philadelphia Baptist Association. Furthermore, this association admitted that it had no authority over the churches of its membership as was explained in a 1749 publication from the association which stated:

“That an Association is not a superior judicature, having such superior power over the churches concerned; but that each particular church hath a complete power and authority from Jesus Christ, to administer all gospel ordinances ... and to receive in and cast out, and also to try and ordain their own officers, and to exercise every part of gospel discipline and church government, independent of any other church or assembly whatever.”¹⁵

This independence of each local church is one of the distinctive qualities that has been associated with baptistic churches for nearly two millennia, and it is this quality of independence which belies Mr. Frazer’s attempt to identify an official creed for the fastest growing denomination of the founding era. Most of the more than 450 Baptist churches in America at the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the nearly 900 Baptist churches during the ratification of the Constitution either had their own, independent confessions of faith or freely chose to adopt one of the dozen or so more popular confessions such as the Standard Confession, the Sandy Creek Confession, The Coalheaver’s Confession, John Gill’s Confession, and several others in addition to the Philadelphia Confession which Mr. Frazer references. No one who is the least bit familiar with Baptist history could ever honestly claim to have found *the* official creed of the Baptists.

As significant as the aforementioned errors may be, they all pale to a ghostly white in comparison to the error which I will mention next. Mr. Frazer repeatedly states in his book that the ten doctrines which he listed are the measure of whether any individual should be considered a Christian or an infidel. Those who accepted these ten doctrines are referred to as Christians, and those who reject any one of the ten are themselves rejected as heathens. According to Mr. Frazer's book:

“These definitions are designed more to identify who was *not* a deist or Christian than to identify who was. Although some deists might add certain beliefs or attitudes to this definition, all would concur that one who disagreed with certain fundamentals was something other than a deist ... For the purpose of this study, Christianity as a belief system will be defined by the standards of eighteenth-century America. It refers, then, to a set of beliefs officially espoused by all of the major Christian sects in America in the 1700s. Those who held these beliefs were considered to be Christians, and those who did not were considered to be ‘infidels’ ... A Calvinist might add doctrines to the definition that an Anglican or Baptist would not, but none of them would subtract any of these. Again, the definition is designed to identify who was *not* a Christian or who would not be considered Christian by any of the denominations.”¹⁶

In an interview with Albert Mohler, Mr. Frazer stated:

“What I argue is that these are the fundamental core elements of deism just as the ten doctrines that you rattled off are the core doctrines, the fundamental doctrines, of Christianity. Whereas some Christians might add some things to the list of ten and some deists might add some things to the two or three elements of deism, everybody would agree who was a deist that if you don't believe those fundamental things, you're not a deist. And everybody would agree in the Christian community that if you don't believe those fundamental things, you're not a Christian.”¹⁷

This concept that no one can be a Christian who questions a single one of the ten doctrines in Mr. Frazer's list is the cornerstone of his work. After laying this cornerstone in the first twenty pages, he then proceeds to build on it by declaring that various individuals are not Christians solely because they dared to either question or deny some point on this list. His entire claim that the patriotic preachers and the key founding fathers were not Christians rests solely on their supposed non-conformity to his list of ten fundamental doctrines. The only problem is that Mr. Frazer's list is completely wrong.

Mr. Frazer claims to have derived his list from a comparison of the official creeds of five different groups of Christians. If we were to study those creeds, we would find that they do, in fact, make mention of the ten doctrines which Mr. Frazer has listed. What we would not find, however, is agreement within those creeds that these ten doctrines must be believed in order for someone to be a Christian. Only one of the creeds listed by Mr. Frazer agrees with his claim that no one can be a Christian who questions or denies a single doctrine from his list, and that is the

creed of the Catholic church. All of the other creeds give unanimous voice to a very different definition of Christianity.

To obtain an accurate definition of Christianity, it is necessary to consider the original usage of that term as recorded in the Book of Acts. In that portion of Scripture, we read that “the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch,”¹⁸ and from this we can see that the name of Christian was given to those who were in another place called “the disciples of the Lord.”¹⁹ This, however, is not to be understood as a reference to the original twelve disciples only, for none of the original twelve were in Antioch at this time, and further, it is stated earlier in the Scriptures that the number of disciples on the morning of Pentecost was “about an hundred and twenty.”²⁰ The proper understanding of which individuals were called Christians in Antioch can be seen in the phrase which precedes that statement. Just before we are told that the disciples were called Christians, we are informed that Paul and Barnabas traveled to that city and “assembled themselves with the church.” It was thus the members of the church that are here said to have been previously known as disciples and which were, from then on, known among the heathen as Christians.

Consideration must now be given to the means by which these disciples became members of the church. This is also explained in the Book of Acts where we read that “the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”²¹ The means of this salvation by which individuals are made Christians and added to the church is stated in another place to be “the gospel of Christ”²² which is clearly defined in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians.

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”²³

This gospel, or good news, is the means by which an individual is able to become a Christian, but he must first believe it to be true as is stated in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

“For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”²⁴

It is for this reason that we read in the Epistle to the Romans that this gospel is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth”²⁵ and not simply to everyone regardless of his belief. Of those who refuse to believe this gospel, the Scriptures tell us that the Lord will come “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”²⁶ But all of those who believe are promised salvation by which they are made members of the church, disciples of Christ and Christians in the purest meaning of the word.

It is this belief which produces salvation and Christianity that is referred to by the first four of Mr. Frazer's groups when they speak of justification by faith. The Augsburg Confession states this doctrine in this manner:

“Our churches further teach, that man cannot obtain forgiveness of sin, and be justified before God by his own strength, merits or works; but that he obtains the forgiveness of sins, and is justified before God, through grace, for Christ's sake, by faith; if he believes that Christ suffered for him, and that his sins are remitted for Christ's sake, who made satisfaction for our transgressions by his death. This faith God imputes to us as righteousness, as Paul says. (Rom. chap. iii. and iv.)”²⁷

In the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, we read:

“We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings: Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.”²⁸

And in both the Philadelphia Confession and the Westminster Confession, we find:

“Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons, as righteous; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness, but by imputing Christ's active obedience unto the whole law, and passive obedience in his death, for their whole and sole righteousness; they receiving, and resting on him, and his righteousness by faith.”²⁹

In addition to the creeds mentioned by Mr. Frazer, we could also point out that all of the other confessions from the various Baptist churches agree with these. The Standard Confession, for example, contains this declaration:

“God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, 2 Pet. 3.9. and the knowledge of the truth, that they might be saved, I Tim. 2. 4. For which end Christ hath commanded, that the Gospel (to wit, the glad tidings of remission of sins) should be preached to every creature, Mark 16.15. So that no man shall eternally suffer in Hell (that is, the second death) for want of a Christ that dyed for them ... The way set forth by God for men to be justified in, is by faith in Christ, Rom. 5.1. That is to say, when men shall assent to the truth of the Gospel, believing with all their hearts, that there is remission of sins, and eternal life to be had in Christ. And that Christ therefore is most worthy their constant affections, and subjection to all his Commandements, and therefore resolve with purpose of heart so to subject unto him in all things, and no longer unto themselves, 2 Cor. 5.15. And so, shall (with godly sorrow for the sins past) commit themselves to his grace, confidently depending upon him for that which

they believe is to be had in him: such so believing are justified from all their sins, their faith shall be accounted unto them for righteousness, Rom. 4. 22, 23, 24. Rom. 3. 25, 26.”³⁰

Nowhere in any of these creeds is there to be found any other belief which is necessary for salvation, and as we have already shown, this salvation is the only requirement given in the Bible by which an individual can become a Christian. All of the other points in these various creeds are stated to be items that particular churches believe to be true, but none of them are said to be necessary to be believed in order for someone to be a Christian. The only belief necessary in order for someone to be a Christian is a belief in the truth of the gospel.

Having said that, let me point out that there is one creed which agrees with Mr. Frazer’s claim that one must believe all ten of the doctrines in his list in order to be a Christian. That one creed is the creed of the Catholic church as stated in the Council of Trent, for there we find frequent assertions that those who deny various points of Catholic doctrine are to be declared anathema which is to say that they are no longer Christians. The Bible, however, states only that “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”³¹ Thus it is only the gospel which is declared in Scriptures that is necessary to be believed for salvation, and this other gospel of the necessity of believing a list of ten doctrines in order to be a Christian is denounced by the Scriptures as accursed.

¹ Frazer, Gregg L., *The Religious Beliefs of America’s Founders* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2012), 17.

² Frazer, Gregg L., *The Religious Beliefs of America’s Founders - Part I* (Sun Valley, CA, Grace Community Church, August 5, 2012)

³ Frazer, Gregg L., *The Religious Beliefs of America’s Founders* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2012), 19.

⁴ Waterworth, J., *The Cannons and Decrees of the Sacred and Ecumenical Council of Trent* (London: C. Dolman, 1848), 16-17 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=mTGD-xEkmB8C&pg=PA16>]

⁵ Ibid., 22-24 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=mTGD-xEkmB8C&pg=PA22>]

⁶ Ibid., 34-35 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=mTGD-xEkmB8C&pg=PA34>]

⁷ Ibid., 42 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=mTGD-xEkmB8C&pg=PA42>]

⁸ Ibid., 48 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=mTGD-xEkmB8C&pg=PA48>]

⁹ Ibid., 232-233 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=mTGD-xEkmB8C&pg=PA232>]

¹⁰ Ibid., 18-19 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=mTGD-xEkmB8C&pg=PA18>]

¹¹ The Philadelphia Association, *Confession of Faith* (Philadelphia: The Tract Depository, 1829), 12-13 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=jqc9AAAAYAAJ&pg=PA12>]

¹² Burnet, Gilbert, Bishop of Sarum, *An Exposition of the XXXIX Articles of the Church of England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1805), 119 [<http://books.google.com/books?id=2CUBAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA119>]

¹³ Frazer, Gregg L., *The Religious Beliefs of America’s Founders* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2012), 18.

¹⁴ Ibid., 19.

¹⁵ Gillette, A. D., *Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association from A.D. 1707, to A.D. 1807* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1851), 60-61. [<http://books.google.com/books?id=Z777vn-7mlAC&pg=PA60>]

¹⁶ Frazer, Gregg L., *The Religious Beliefs of America’s Founders* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2012), 15-18.

¹⁷ *Thinking in Public*, “What Did America’s Founders Really Believe? A Conversation with Historian Gregg Frazer,” Albert Mohler and Gregg Frazer, September 10, 2012, transcript, <http://www.albertmohler.com/2012/09/10/what-did-america%E2%80%99s-founders-really-believe-a-conversation-with-historian-gregg-frazer-transcript> (accessed February 06, 2013)

¹⁸ Acts 11:26

¹⁹ Acts 9:1

-
- ²⁰ Acts 1:15
- ²¹ Acts 2:47
- ²² Romans 1:16
- ²³ I Corinthians 15:1-4
- ²⁴ Hebrews 4:2
- ²⁵ Romans 1:16
- ²⁶ II Thessalonians 1:8
- ²⁷ Schott, Christian Heinrich, *The Unaltered Augsburg Confession* (New York: H. Ludwig & Co., 1848), 83.
[<http://books.google.com/books?id=1BRMAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA83>]
- ²⁸ Welchman, Edward, *The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1842), 31. [<http://books.google.com/books?id=XHgrAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA31>]
- ²⁹ The Philadelphia Association, *Confession of Faith* (Philadelphia: The Tract Depository, 1829), 33-34.
[<http://books.google.com/books?id=jqc9AAAAYAAJ&pg=PA33>]
- ³⁰ McGlothlin, W. J., *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1911), 113.
[<http://books.google.com/books?id=-jMXAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA113>]
- ³¹ Galatians 1:9