



A COMPASS FOR ALL GENERATIONS

By Linda Borecki

[S]et your hearts on things above (Colossians 3:1).

Oh, the questions generations coming-of-age have pondered: If God is real, where is He and what is He up to? Does my life really have any significance? How should I be spending my time and energy — and on whom? How do I hear God's voice better?

There was another generation with similar questions. Our older siblings in faith in the first centuries after Christ developed a strategy for discernment and decision-making, a compass to orient their heart and discern their Lord's voice: the two "presentations," one-on-one, written not on paper but *on one's heart* to internalize and ponder.

One "presentation" was the Lord's Prayer, words spoken and prayed by Christ Himself and taught to His followers as model communication with our Father. The other developed by the church was the Apostles' Creed.

What? Dry, dusty old Creed? The snoozer bridge in the worship service between heart-stopping Message and heart-rendering Thanksgiving? Well, snooze no more, for when our hearts are awakened to it, there are in these ancient words reassurance and power for our everyday living.

Credo in unum Deum. *Credo*, a contraction of two Latin words: *corde* meaning "heart" (also found in *accord* and *Concordia*), and *do* meaning "to set, to place, to rest." *Credo* meant, and was heard to mean, "I set my heart on God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. "I place my heart with Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord." "I rest my heart in

the Holy Spirit." Spoken at Baptism and recounted afterward, they can become for us, too, a compass and encouragement, to gain wisdom and to know Christ better.

The Creed tells the Adventure Story of Christ. Yes, there is a God! God is the great Author, the Story-Teller, of all history. The Story-Teller stepped into His story to take care of the problem of sin for everyone. He has sent His Spirit to draw us into His story. It can be difficult from our limited human perspective to see the meaning and purpose of events in our lives or to discern what is God's will. The more we focus on the cosmic Story and on the Father, Son, and Spirit, the more our limited vision is enlarged to see life and meaning and choices through God's eyes.

If we have eyes to see it and hearts open to it, our personal story is being woven into God's cosmic Story, a truth for us today as much as twenty centuries ago. Our individual lives do have significance! Our little stories are caught up and given meaning in His great Story. Our perspective changes because of our connection to the One who was conceived, born, crucified, buried — the One who rose from the dead and is coming again to take the faithful to Himself.

"I set my heart on You" we affirm, and God catches up our words and our hearts, pours Himself into us, orients our human compass on His cosmic destination, and fills us with courage and wisdom and purpose. We are given direction and encouragement for decisions great and small — generation after generation after generation — as we confess the faith: *Credo in unum Deum.*

Linda Borecki participated as a reader for the Opening Worship at the Portland LWML Convention and recently returned from south India, where she served as guest professor of worship and liturgy at Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil.

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