



### *Shorter Study*

■ **Open the session with prayer.**

■ **Read together Titus 1:5-9.**

- What does it mean to “hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught” (v.9)? How does an elder “hold firm” to the Word of God?
- There is a two-pronged purpose stated in verse 9 for “holding firm to the trustworthy word”. What is it?
- How does “giving sound instruction” and “rebuking those who contradict it” sit with your understanding of eldership? Do you feel capable of doing these two things in your role as an elder?

■ **Watch the video entitled “Session 8: Know the Confessions”.**

When elders know the church creeds and confessions well, it:

1. Gives proficiency in the “teaching” element of eldership.
2. Provides theological oversight not only of the local church but the broader church too.
3. Sets an example for the message of the church.
4. Exhibits to the world what the church believes.
5. Protects the church from error.
6. Protects the elder himself.

### **Study Questions:**

1. How would you answer the objection from congregation members (or visitors) who might say something like, “I don’t believe it’s good to hold to old confessions designed by humans, I simply believe in the Bible”?
2. When elders (and a church) are unified in holding to certain theological standards, there is an authenticity and transparency towards a watching world that says “this is who we are”. Do you agree with this statement? What are the benefits of “outsiders” knowing exactly what we believe?
3. Anecdotally, it seems quite common for elders to feel insecure about knowing their church creeds and confessions. If you were to personally rate yourself between 1-10 (10 being the highest) on how proficient you feel in knowing your church confessions, where would you rate yourself? Why is this the case?
4. What are some ways in which your eldership team can improve on its knowledge and proficiency of the church confessions?

■ **Close in prayer.**



### *Longer Study*

■ **Open the session with prayer.**

■ **Read together Titus 1:5-9.**

- What does it mean to “hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught” (v.9)? How does an elder “hold firm” to the Word of God?
- There is a two-pronged purpose stated in verse 9 for “holding firm to the trustworthy word”. What is it?
- How does “giving sound instruction” and “rebuking those who contradict it” sit with your understanding of eldership? Do you feel capable of doing these two things in your role as an elder?

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### **Theological Questions:**

1. How would you answer the objection from congregation members (or visitors) who might say something like, “I don’t believe it’s good to hold to old confessions designed by humans, I simply believe in the Bible”?
2. When elders (and a church) are unified in holding to certain theological standards, there is an authenticity and transparency towards a watching world that says “this is who we are”. Do you agree with this statement? What are the benefits of “outsiders” knowing exactly what we believe?
3. The church’s confessions typically come from hundreds of years ago. What advantages does this have? Do you think contemporary confessions need to be written to address more current issues as well?

