

“God Speaks”—*God’s Word: The Authority for Our Confession*
ECO Essential Tenets Study for BYF - June 21, 2026
Dr. Clay Brown, MDPC Adult Discipleship Pastor

1. Announcements and Prayer

2. Review of Last Week’s Lesson on “Reformed, Evangelical, Egalitarian”

3. Reading Section I of ECO Essential Tenets

I. God’s Word: The Authority for Our Confession

The clearest declaration of God’s glory is found in His Word, both incarnate and written. The Son eternally proceeds from the Father as His Word, the full expression of the Father’s nature, and since in the incarnation the Word became flesh all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are offered to His disciples. The written Word grants us those treasures, proclaims the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, and graciously teaches all that is necessary for faith and life. We glorify God by recognizing and receiving His authoritative self-revelation, both in the infallible Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and also in the incarnation of God the Son. We affirm that the same Holy Spirit who overshadowed the virgin Mary also inspired the writing and preservation of the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit testifies to the authority of God’s Word and illumines our hearts and minds so that we might receive both the Scriptures and Christ Himself aright.

We confess that God alone is Lord of the conscience, but this freedom is for the purpose of allowing us to be subject always and primarily to God’s Word. The Spirit will never prompt our conscience to conclusions that are at odds with the Scriptures that He has inspired. The revelation of the incarnate Word does not minimize, qualify, or set aside the authority of the written Word. We are happy to confess ourselves captive to the Word of God, not just individually, but also as members of a community of faith, extending through time and around the globe. In particular, we affirm the secondary authority of the following *ECO Confessional Standards* as faithful expositions of the Word of God: *Nicene Creed, Apostles’ Creed, Heidelberg Catechism, Westminster Confession, Westminster Shorter Catechism, Westminster Larger Catechism and the Theological Declaration of Barmen.*

Question: What strikes you as the most noteworthy phrase or sentence in this two-paragraph summary of what ECO believes about God’s Word? Why so?

4. Reading the Scriptures about the Scriptures:

- Note the multiple genres or styles (made up of 43% narrative, 33% poetry, 24% discourse)
- Psalm 119:105
- Matthew 5:17-20
- Luke 24:38-48
- 2 Peter 1:16-21
- 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Question: What connections do you see between the Old Testament Law and Prophets and the New Testament? How are these connections important for living as a disciple of Jesus?

Question: The Word of God is active and working. So what does Scripture do to us and for us, according to 2 Timothy? Describe at least one way in which you have observed Scripture's activity in your life recently.

5. About the Scriptures as noted by ECO:

1. Self-revelation of God...
2. Authoritative...
3. Inspired...
4. Infallible...
5. Gospel focused...
6. Concentrates on faith and practice, so there are areas undiscussed...
7. Scripture and the Holy Spirit work in tandem with each other...
8. Authority both to individuals of faith and communities of faith...

Question: Of the eight characteristics of God's Word listed above, which one stands out to you as being particularly crucial in our day? Provide at least one reason why.

Question: What happens when we make Scripture primarily a "rule book" or a "how-to manual"? What is over-emphasized? What is left out?

6. Closing Prayer

For Next Time...

June 28	"God Is"	Trinity: One of Two Central Christian Mysteries Part 1
July 5	Stand-Alone Study	(4th of July weekend) TBD
July 12	"God Is"	Trinity: One of Two Central Christian Mysteries Part 2
July 19	"God Comes Near"	Incarnation: One of Two Central Christian Mysteries Part 1
July 26	"God Comes Near"	Incarnation: One of Two Central Christian Mysteries Part 2
August 2	"God Saves"	God's Grace in Christ
August 9	"God Chooses/Sends"	Election for Salvation and Service
August 16	"God Gathers"	Covenant Life in the Church
August 23	"God Entrusts"	Faithful Stewardship of All of Life
August 30	"God Forms"	Living in Obedience to the Word of God
September 6	Stand-Alone Study	(Labor Day weekend) TBD