



### **Ice Breaker:**

How did you prepare for exams in high school? (*All night cramming or disciplined study or on a wing and a prayer?*)

**Repeat together:** “I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell.”

### **Discussion:**

It is interesting to note that the phrase “He descended into hell” was not found in the earlier versions of the Apostles Creed. This line first appeared in A.D. 390. The phrase was accepted into wider use as an indication that it accurately reflected Christian belief at that time.

How do we interpret the phrase, “He descended into hell”? There are three widely accepted views:

1. John Calvin taught that Jesus suffered the pains of hell while on the cross.
2. The Westminster Catechism understands it to mean that Christ continued in the “State of Death” until his resurrection.
3. Many believe that the phrase means just what it appears to mean that Jesus actually did descend into hell after his death on the cross.

Which interpretation makes the most sense to you?

### **Bible:**

Read Acts 2:25-28 (*Verse 27 - The word translated “grave” in the New International Version is the Greek word “Hades” from where we get the English word hades or hell.*) What is the promise to Jesus and how does this promise relate to an individual believer’s hope?

What does a person who follows Jesus have to look forward to after death according to Acts 2:28?

Read 1 Peter 3:13-22 What lessons does this scripture teach about faith, actions, behaviour, and your witness to others? How does Jesus’ death affect our hopes and fears?

### **Application:**

What situation seemed hopeless to you until God brought hope?

**Memorize:** “Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell.”

### **Going Deeper:**

In 1 Peter 3:20-22 What hope do these verses give us from this hard to interpret passage of scripture?

What hope does Jesus’ death provide? How does the example of Christ’s death encourage those who suffer?

What does the phrase mean, “Baptism now saves you?”