

REAL TALK FROM THE WORD

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL

Apostles' Creed – Week 4

I believe in
God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead and on the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, and he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Christian faith is monotheistic – meaning we believe in and worship ONE true God. We also believe this one true God exists in THREE distinct but equal Persons: Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Lk 1:26-38 (ESV)

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

This scripture introduces the invasion of the Godhead into a Genesis 3 broken world – just as it is something wrong with the world now, the world was sin-plagued at the time of Jesus' birth!

What is wrong with the world is sin – but the world calls it other things that are only symptoms.

There are two ways that sin plays itself out:

- Sin can be outright rejection of how God designed the universe to work.
 - Everyone is being disciplined – the question is "what story are we buying into?"
- Some sin by using religion to not need God.

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- **Isa 1:11-14 (MSG)** - “Why this frenzy of sacrifices?” GOD's asking. “Don't you think I've had my fill of burnt sacrifices, rams and plump grain-fed calves? Don't you think I've had my fill of blood from bulls, lambs, and goats? When you come before me, who ever gave you the idea of acting like this, Running here and there, doing this and that - all this sheer commotion in the place provided for worship? “Quit your worship charades. I can't stand your trivial religious games: Monthly conferences, weekly Sabbaths, special meetings - meetings, meetings, meetings - I can't stand one more! Meetings for this, meetings for that. I hate them! You've worn me out! I'm sick of your religion, religion, religion, while you go right on sinning.”

- **Je 31:31-33 (NASB)** - “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

The triune God of the universe – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost – is after the hearts of men! He doesn't want just mere action but HEART DRIVING ACTION!

God is a God of initiation!

- He doesn't wait for us to come to Him – He comes to us!
- He doesn't lean back – He leans in!
 - **Ps 40:2 (AMP)** - He drew me up out of a horrible pit [a pit of tumult and of destruction], out of the miry clay (froth and slime), and set my feet upon a rock, steadying my steps and establishing my goings.

God pushes out impossibilities (Luke 1:37)

- SYMMETRY (Balance): The theme of the Bible is not that the world's not messy but that God's at work in the mess.
- CLARITY: The more you understand that you did not save you but God saved you, the more confident you'll be in God of your salvation.
 - Phil 1:6
- COMMUNITY: We should be a community of optimists, and we should stand in contrast to the distrust of the world around us.
- COUNSEL: The confession underneath a lot of other statements is “I don't trust God.” God doesn't despise the confession of “I don't trust You” if it's coming from a broken heart.
 - Psalm 42:5