

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

I BELIEVE - CREDO

Week One: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth

This study series is based on the Apostles' Creed, a creed of the Christian Church. A creed is a statement of the beliefs or aims which guide someone's actions.

If we believe that the creed, which we speak out each Sunday, provides the beliefs or aims which guide our actions, then we need to understand what it is that we believe..

1 Peter 3:15

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

2 Timothy 1:12

A...I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

Keeping these scriptures in our mind, we need to discover what this first line of the Apostles' Creed means.

I BELIEVE IN GOD: To believe in God is to believe that He is, and that His word is true.

The number of times people use the word 'God', you'd think the majority of them believed in him. Sadly, however, they are mostly taking God's name in vain – they are using it as a profanity, not a statement of belief which guides their actions.

Take a moment to consider what belief in God means to you. How does it affect your daily life? Are you able, like Paul, to say: for I know whom I have believed?

Write down any thoughts that come to you so that you can go back again.

As Christians, we should believe that he is and that his word is true. So, let's go back to the beginning.

Genesis 1:1 - In the beginning God ...

GOD IS – he is not governed by time as we understand it, a linear process, he is outside of time. Everything is present with God.

Colossians 1:17 - He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Read Psalm 139:1-12.

Pray for a faith and understanding, like David, of who God is.

THE FATHER ALMIGHTY: This means one who is omnipotent, that is having complete and unlimited power.

John 1:1-12

This, for me, is one of the most beautiful passages of scriptures.

- Read it over and again, until the reality of what it is saying impacts you. For some people, the memory of a father is not always a good one; for others they have been the rock of their lives. Whatever are your experiences of an earthly father,

OUR FATHER – OUR GOD – IS A GOD OF LOVE.

- Read Matthew 6:7-13 and say out loud that wonderful prayer. When you know something well it is all too easy to repeat it in the way you repeat your times tables. Pause after each line and consider what you have said.

Although God is the Father almighty, this prayer demonstrates his concern for us but also has an important lesson. If the Father almighty can love and forgive us, we **MUST** love and forgive others. The scripture clearly tells us that is the only way we will receive answers to our prayers. There are many scriptures describing God as father. A few examples are:

Psalm 103:13, Psalm 68:5, Mathew 6:26, Ephesians 1:3, Ephesians 4:6, 1 John 3:1

- Try and memorise one or two of these so that you can bring them to mind when you are feeling unsure of being loved.

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How do we know there is a God?

- Read the following statements, putting aside your own views.
"The truthful answer is that we cannot know for certain. We cannot prove the existence of God, but there are many reasons why belief in God is reasonable. The first thing is that nothing science has discovered explains the existence of the universe. Yet the universe has a beauty and an order that suggest a rational mind lies behind it all. Just as the existence of a computer demonstrates that there is someone who invented it, so the world in all its beautiful complexity points to the existence of a Creator, God." (Diocese of Portsmouth)

"There's an argument that many people make: that the natural world, and humanity's existence in the Universe, point towards a divine creator that brought forth all of this into existence. To the best of our knowledge, Earth exists with a plethora of conditions that allowed for our existence, and does so in a way that no other world can match.

- We live in a particularly privileged place. We live on a planet that
- has all the right ingredients for life, including:
- We're at the right distance from our Sun so that the temperatures are conducive to life.
- We have the right atmospheric pressure for liquid water at our surface.
- We have the right ingredients – the right balance of heavy elements and organic molecules – for life to arise.
- We have the right amount of water so that our world has both oceans and continents." (Published by Forbes)

When it comes to creation in the Bible, I always take the view that if the Bible is the word of God, then I cannot pick the bits I want to believe and discard those that don't fit with my theories. This is a personal view and you may see things differently.

The Church Times had this to say:

"PROMINENT and important as our current cultural conversations about origins and ecology may be, the doctrine of creation intends to say something vastly more encompassing and profound than either of the above discussions can admit. For creation is not (only) about a beginning in time, nor is it (only) about the relations of creatures one to another; far more basically, it is about all creatures, all times, being and time themselves, issuing from, ordered to, and dependent upon, the God who alone gives all to be."

Make this lovely old chorus your prayer and worship:

**Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy,
Thou art worthy, O Lord.
Thou art worthy to receive glory,
Glory and honour and power.
For Thou hast created, hast all things created,
For Thou hast created all things.
And for Thy pleasure they are created;
Thou art worthy, O Lord.**

Prayer: Father God, may we truly believe that you are our father and help us to live our lives accordingly.

