

# THE APOSTLE'S CREED

# I BELIEVE - CREDO

*WEEK FOUR: On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

The Resurrection is the lynch pin of the Christian faith.

## **Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-17**

But tell me this—since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead? For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.

Paul is laying it on the line here: **NO DOUBTS**. It is unequivocal, logical and powerful.

## **I BELIEVE: ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN**

*Then on the third at break of dawn,  
 The Son of heaven rose again.  
 O trampled death where is your sting?  
 The angels roar for Christ the King  
 O praise the name of the Lord our God  
 O praise His name forever more  
 For endless days we will sing Your  
 praise Oh Lord, oh Lord our God  
 O Praise the Name - Hillsong Worship*



Reading these words should make your heart leap for joy. The disciples had not been able to grasp what Jesus had been telling them. They thought the crucifixion was the end, but it was only the beginning.

- Read John 20:1-10 and try and see it from their perspective. We know the full story, but they hadn't understood.
- Mary thought he was the gardener. If our eyes are not spiritually opened, we too may not recognise Jesus. Pray that the eyes of our understanding will be opened.
- Read Matthew 17:22-23, John 14:1-9, Why do you think the disciples hadn't understood what Jesus had been telling them?
- Read John 19:24-30. Put yourself in the shoes of Thomas. Would you have believed that Jesus had been resurrected? Write down reasons for and reasons against.
- Read Luke 24:13-35. Why do you think the disciples didn't recognise Jesus as they walked along the Emmaus road?
- We need to ask ourselves why we too do not always recognise Jesus when he is speaking to us. What gets in the way of hearing his voice? He speaks to us in many ways: through the scriptures, through other people, highlighting things in our everyday life so that we have a new perspective, and sometimes in that 'still small voice' as we spend time in prayer.

## I BELIEVE: HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN

**Read Matthew 28:16-20, Luke 24:44-53, Acts 1:1-11**

Can you imagine the scene as Jesus spends his last few moments on earth before he ascends to his father? The disciples had finally grasped what Jesus had been telling them throughout his earthly ministry.

- What was their immediate response, having seen Jesus ascend into heaven?
- Why was there such a difference in their attitude and actions? Write down the things that had happened to bring about this change?
- Do these speak into your life in any way? Are there attitudes and actions that you know need to be changed. If so, write them down and regularly pray over them.

## I BELIEVE: HE IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER

**Read Romans 8:34, Colossians 3:1, Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 12:2, Hebrews 8:1, Mark 16:19, 1 Peter 3:22, Hebrews 10:12, Acts 2:33, Hebrews 1:3, Ephesians 1:20, Acts 7:55-56, Mark 14:62, Acts 5:31, 1 John 2:1, Isaiah 9:6, 1 Peter 1:3**

These are but a fraction of the scriptures confirming this statement. Right through the Old Testament and the New, this is constantly reinforced. It is not only that Jesus is sitting on the Father's right hand but that he is interceding on our behalf. When we are Christians and part of God's family, God does not see us as unrighteous, but he sees us through the filter of Jesus which makes us righteous.

- Does it give you confidence to know that Jesus has got your back. It's not the angels who intercede, but Jesus himself, the son of God.
- Give thanks every day for what Jesus did for us at Calvary and also that he is constantly coming before God on our behalf.

## I BELIEVE: HE WILL COME TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

**Read 2 Corinthians 5:10**

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. WE WILL NOT BE JUDGED FOR OUR SINS BECAUSE CHRIST HAS FORGIVEN US AND DEALT WITH THESE. It will be on the following that we are judged:

1. Whether we have lived for God's glory or for self-pleasing (2 Corinthians 5:15).
2. How we have used our time (John 9:4; Ephesians 5:16; 1 Peter 1:17).
3. How we have used our money, possessions, property (Matthew 6:19-21; 1 Timothy 6:17-19).
4. Whether we have sought the salvation of the lost (Daniel 12:3; 2 Corinthians 5:11).
5. Whether we have been faithful in prayer (Luke 18:1).
6. All the words that we have spoken (Matthew 12:36).
7. Our attitude towards our brethren (Romans 12:10; 14:10; Galatians 6:1).
8. Our work will have to be accounted for (1 Corinthians 3:13)

*Stop and consider: How far do I live up to God's standards? Not man-made regulations of any particular denomination (and I am not decrying them), but what God requires of us.*