

The Apostles Creed

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:
The third day he rose again from the dead:
He ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty:
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:
I believe in the Holy Ghost:
The (universal) holy catholic church:
The communion of saints:
The forgiveness of sins:
The resurrection of the body:
And the life everlasting.
Amen

“...And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord...”

1. ***“and in Jesus Christ”***

-Belief in God, in general, is not enough. Christianity is not simply the acknowledgement of a deity that is supreme. Christianity is not simply monotheism. Many can believe in “a god.” What makes Christianity Christian is the belief in One God who sent His Son to take on _____ for the _____ of sinners. It is not enough to in general recognize God as Father of all people. You must believe in Jesus, the Messiah, the Savior of sinners.

-You must believe in the bodily existence of Christ. You must believe in the Jesus of the Bible (very God and very man). Explaining this truth about Christ takes up over half of the Creed-the gospel (the good news of Christ) is the _____ point of Christian religion.

-“This claim for Jesus is both the touchstone of Christianity and the ingredient that makes it _____. As the whole New Testament was written to make and justify the claim, we should not be surprised when we find the Creed stating it with fuller detail than it states anything else.” (Packer, 59)

2. ***“His only begotten Son”***

-Jesus Christ is the _____ Son of God in flesh. The word “begotten” is not to be understood how we think of it relating for human parents “begetting” a child. We must remember this is God using human language to describe something that is above us. We cannot see the word “begotten” as an evidence that there was a time when the Son was not “begotten.” We must remember that God is outside of time so the very idea of there being a “time” when the Son was not “begotten” is error.

-If Christ has not always been, then He is not God, for only God has no _____.
And if Christ had a beginning and is not God then, according to Athanasius, “Christian worship makes little sense, and is indeed blasphemous.”

-“For us, life is a sequence of moments, and future and past events are both out of reach; but to God (so we must suppose, though we cannot imagine it) all events are constantly present in the eternal Now...so the... ‘begetting’ of the Son...must be thought of not as a momentary event whereby God, after being singular, became plural, but as an _____ relationship whereby the first person is always Father to the Son and the second is always Son to the Father.” (Packer, 69)

-“‘Question: Since when has the Son been begotten? Answer: Since as long as the Father has not been begotten.’...One whose being is not the same as ours has a different way of begetting as well...He has existed as begotten from the _____.”(Gregory of Nazianzus, “On God and Christ”, pages 71, 72,73)

-“The biblical language of begetting (John 1:18) necessarily implies that the Son is from the being of the Father. Since all offspring bear the same _____ as their progenitor, the Son who is begotten from the Father is necessarily consubstantial (the same in essence) with the Father.” (Oxford Handbook of the Trinity, page 114)

-“The begetting of God must be honored by _____. It is a great thing for you to learn that He was begotten. But the manner of His generation we will not admit that even angels can conceive, much less you...If ever there was a time when the Father was not, then there was a time when the Son was not. If ever there was a time when the Son was not, then there was a time when the Spirit was not. If one was from the beginning, then the three were so too. If you throw down the one, I am bold to assert that you do not set up the other two.” (Gregory of Nazianzus, “Learning Theology with the Church Fathers, pages 63 & 69)

-While Christians are called “sons of God” in the Scriptures, it must be understood that they are not “sons” in the same way as Christ. Christ is the “only begotten Son” according to “eternal generation”-there was never a time when He was not the Son. We are “sons” by _____. We are adopted into the family of God at the moment of our salvation. There was a “time” when we were not “sons.”

3. ***“Our Lord”***

-Jesus is not only the Christ but He is also the Lord. He is our Lord, meaning the Lord of Christians. While Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and holds the title of Lord over all, His Lordship is especially seen over His _____.

-Christians acknowledge Christ not only as Savior but as Lord (ruler) of their lives and of the Church. Christ, as Lord over us and of the Church, rules by His _____. Christians do not rebel against Christ as Lord but rejoice that it is their Savior who is their Lord. C.H. Spurgeon once said, “Faith delights to think of Christ as Lord.”

-Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son, our Lord?