

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...who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried.”

1. *“who was conceived by the Holy Ghost”*

-Jesus Christ was _____ conceived. He had no earthly father, but the Holy Ghost was responsible for the pregnancy of Mary. Let not your mind be given to carnal questioning and thinking but simply recognize what the Scriptures declare here and submit your thoughts to them.

-When Mary heard that she was to be with child she was _____ and asked how and the angel responded to 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.”** (Luke 1:35)

-The supernatural conception of Christ shows that while He was a real man, He was _____ than simply a man. Packer writes, “The entry and exit miracles carry the same message. First, they confirm that Jesus, though not less than man, was more than man. His earthly life, though fully human, was also divine. He, the co-creator, was in the world-His own world-as a visitor, He came from God and went to God.” (73)

2. *“born of the Virgin Mary”*

-Before we discuss why this phrase is important, let's first take notice at what is not mentioned in the Creed at this point. There is no mention of the “immaculate conception” of Mary. There is no mention of Mary in any salvific or intercessory role for Christians. This Creed summed up the _____ of the Christian faith that must be believed for a person to be accepted into the Church of Christ. Therefore, the early church thought that no more was needed to know about Mary than that she was the physical mother of Jesus and that she was a virgin when pregnant with the Christ.

-The fact that Christ was “born” is important because it stresses His real humanity. A common heresy of the early church (known as “Docetism”) rejected the real humanity of Christ. However, the Creed emphasizes that Jesus, the Son of God, had a real _____ birth into this world.

-“For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.”-2 John 7

-The fact that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary is an important element both in biblical revelation and in the Creed. The fact that Mary was a virgin means that there was no explanation but a _____ of God responsible for her pregnancy. The virgin birth also is a unique element to Christianity. While many other religions have human women becoming pregnant by a god they do not involve “sex-less” conception and a virgin birth.

-The fact that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary also is important because Jesus did not inherit the sin-nature from Adam (the father of all humanity). Again, Packer writes, “He (Jesus) did not inherit the guilty twist called _____: His manhood was untainted, and His acts, attitudes, motives, and desires were consequently faultless.” (74)

3. ***“suffered under Pontius Pilate”***

-The Creed located Jesus death in _____ by this reference to Pontius Pilate. This again is emphasizing the point that the life and death of Jesus Christ are indeed historical facts.

-“Hitler will be remembered as the man who gassed the Jews, and Pilate, a nonentity otherwise, goes down in history as the man who _____ Jesus.” (Packer, 80)

-Jesus Christ is here said to “suffer under Pontius Pilate.” This is a reference to all the events that happened under Pilate’s _____: the beatings, ridiculing’s, humiliation, and death.

-Our Lord _____. The King of Kings suffered under the hand of a backwoods, small-time ruler, who hated his own life so much he would eventually kill himself. The Lord of Glory suffered under Pontius Pilate—a man whose very breath belonged to the One he was torturing. But His suffering was not in vain. He suffered for us and for our salvation.

4. ***“was crucified, dead, and buried”***

-Jesus Christ was crucified until dead and then buried. He was killed with the form of execution reserved for the worst of _____. Jesus Christ did indeed die via crucifixion (all concepts of various “swoon theories” are therefore rejected).

-It is historical _____ that Jesus of Nazareth (who was born of Mary) was condemned to death by Pontius Pilate and was crucified until dead and then buried. To be a Christian one must acknowledge and accept the historicity of the birth, life, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ.