

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

“I believe in...The forgiveness of sins”

1. What is sin?

-1 John 3:4 says, “sin is lawlessness.” To sin is to act in a way that is _____ the law of God (it can be thought, word, or deed). It is transgressing God’s Law. It is rebellion against God (the Law-Giver). It is treason as it is against your Creator and the one to whom you belong.

-Ralph Venning writes, “Sin is the transgression of a law, yea of God’s law...Now the law not only forbids the doing of evil, whether by thought, word or deed, but also commands the doing of good. So, to _____ the good commanded is sin, as well as is the doing of the evil that is forbidden.” (*The Sinfulness of Sin*, pg. 25)

-Sin is not just “doing something God says is bad,” it is also not doing something which God declares to be “good.” One cannot claim ignorance of God’s Law as an excuse. The Law of the Lord is written on the hearts of men and all men are _____ excuse.

-Sin is _____ God (as Lawgiver). Sin “goes about to ungod God, and is by some of the ancients called *Deicidium*, God-murder or God-killing.”

-“Sin is contrary to the _____ of God...God is holy, all holy, only holy, altogether holy, and always holy, so sin is sinful, all sinful, only sinful, altogether sinful, and always sinful.” Holiness is the image of God, whereas “sin is the Devil’s image.”

-Sin is contrary to God’s Lordship over _____. “Sin attempts to dethrone God.” Sin says with Pharaoh, “Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice.”

-Sin denies the _____ of God. “Every prodigal who leaves the Father’s house says in effect, ‘It is better to be elsewhere.’”

-Sin turns God's grace into _____. Sin is utterly ugly and horrid. "Sin is the challenging of God's justice, the rape of His mercy, the jeer of His patience, the slight of His power, the contempt of His love."

-Sin always seeks to _____ what God created as good. "All God's works were good exceedingly, beautiful even to admiration: but the works of sin are deformed and monstrously ugly, for it works disorder, confusion, and everything that is abominable."

-Sin is against _____ (as the Law was given for man's protection and good). "Communion with, and conformity to God is man's felicity. Inevitably, that must be evil to man, which is evil against God, who is the chiefest good of man."

-Sin has brought physical _____. "It has corrupted man's blood, and made his body mortal, thereby rendering it vile...from sin come all diseases and sicknesses; till sin there were no such things."

-Sin has brought _____ death toward God... "Sin has darkened men's understanding...poor man is covered with Egyptian thick darkness; he is said to be not only dark...sadly, he is in love with darkness."

-Sin leads to an _____ civil-war. "Sin is against the loving co-habitation of soul and body...Man is full of contradictions: time was when the mind commanded the body, but now this servant rides horseback, while the prince walks on foot."

-Sin is utterly _____ (Romans 7:13)...and as such it is worthy of punishment. Indeed, God, who hates sin, cannot let such wickedness go unpunished or His justice would be compromised.

2. What is forgiveness?

-Do to the fact that all men have sinned they all stand before God condemned and guilty. Forgiveness deals with the issue of guilt. A non-guilty person does not need forgiveness. Forgiveness deals with the _____ of guilt. To forgive means to remove guilt.

-When a person is forgiven the guilt that was deserved for that sin is canceled. In theological language the word "_____" is used to describe this. Expiation is the removal of sin and guilt or the cancelation of sin and guilt. Expiation is linked with propitiation. John Murray writes, "Propitiation is the removal of divine displeasure."

-When the Creed states in the belief in the "forgiveness of sins" it is saying 2 things: 1. Sin is _____ and it is indeed a very big problem that must be dealt with and 2. Forgiveness of sins is both necessary and _____.

3. How is forgiveness possible?

-Forgiveness of sins is only found in Christ Jesus our Lord (Acts 10:43). The atonement of Christ was _____ for the forgiveness of sins. Through the cleansing blood of Christ, a sinner, when through faith is united to Christ, is washed of their guilt and forgiven of all their sin (past, present, and future).

-The other side of forgiveness is "imputed righteousness" and this has to do with the clothing of Christ's righteousness. Our sins are not just removed but the righteousness of Christ is then added (_____). -Zechariah 3:1-5