

Apostles Creed Sermon Series Wk1

As we begin a new year and anew season, I want to start 2025 looking at what we believe.

I have chosen to use the Apostles Creed as a vehicle for that study.

Creeds have been used throughout the history of the church to help those who want to follow Jesus, by:

- providing clarity in the context of heresy and controversy,
- preparing people for baptism;
- setting out the boundaries of what is orthodox faith, and
- reminding us of truth.

When we recite creeds publicly, like we do in church, we are:

- publicly declaring what we believe,
- we're reminded of what we believe together,
- driving the truth deeper into our hearts.

However, creeds are **NEVER** intended to replace the Bible but point to the truths within the Scriptures... to summarise what we believe.

I want to begin by looking at both

- the context of the Apostles Creed, and
- the meaning of Christian belief.

First, Context:

The Apostles Creed has for almost its entire life been used for preparing baptism candidates.

When we recite this creed, we stand in a long and unbroken line of people, who have upheld the truth, and have passed it on faithfully to the next generation.

*For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance:
that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,*

*that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day
according to the Scriptures (1Corinthians 15:3-4)*

Second, Christian Belief

Unfortunately, in our culture, in our vocabulary, we use the word 'believe', in all sorts of ways.

- We might mean I'm fairly certain you're capable of this or that, or
- I'm optimistic that there will be a particular outcome.

When we Christians say 'I Believe'... it cannot be subject to whim, or popular philosophy or corporate principle.

- A creed is something bigger than me, bigger than us, bigger than our community.
- A creed is not a historical affirmation.
- A creed is something we have confidence in.
- A creed is something that we place our personal trust in.

When Christians recite a creed, "I believe" the

- I believe that this is true,
- I trust and rely on its truth, and
- I shape my life in obedience.

So, let's take a look at the Apostles Creed. The first line is:

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth".

Firstly, note that we believe in **God**.

The whole creed is structured around and affirms and celebrates - this wonderful truth - God is not a mystery.

Christianity asserts that there is only one true God, singular and still existing, and that it is God who is the object of our faith is a Father.

Not just a father but our father.

- When Jesus taught his disciples how to pray, *he begins with 'Our Father'.*

- The word used for Father, *Abba*, has the most amazing sense of intimacy.
- Jesus also taught that we can approach our Father in heaven with the closeness and joy of a child.

*Yet to all who did receive him,
to those who believed in his name,
he gave the right to become children of God...
(1 John 1:12-13)*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty...

- My Father... My Abba!
- Your Father... Your Abba!

Second, our father is the **creator of heaven and earth**.

Just try to grasp the gravity of the claim that God... your Father... is the creator of heaven and earth...

This is so important and foundational. It is one of the unique attributes of Christianity.

We don't worship creation, either in part or in whole, we worship the one who did the creating!

*For in him all things were created:
things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,
whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities;
all things have been created through him and for him.
(Colossians 1:16)*

We don't reject creation, because the Creator had his hands in the dirt.

We don't exploit it because if the Creator made it, it belongs to him and has a purpose!

We should revel in creation's glory because it points to God the Father the creator.

A creator who did not intend us to be careless developers, pillaging the earth for any benefit we see fit, nor simply as park rangers, looking but not touching:

- but instead, as loving gardeners, caring, tending, creating,
- enjoying its goodness,
- being sustained by its fruit, and
- restored by its beauty,
- so that everything in all of creation may point to the glory of God.

If all things flow from him, including ourselves, then we can only understand creation and ourselves, if we come to know the Creator.

Just the first sentence and so many implications and revelations for us to encounter.

Are you beginning to better see the one in whom we believe?

When we say “This I believe”:

- We are declaring that we stand for something and that we belong to someone.
- We are declaring what is true, and that we trust in those truths.
- We are responding to the incredible news of who God is, what he’s done, and what is yet to come.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

There is much more to the Apostles Creed. We also say:

- *I believe in* **Jesus Christ**, God’s Only Son, and
- I believe in the **Holy Spirit**.

That is another one of Christianity’s distinctiveness’s and what Scripture faithfully witnesses to: That is - one God, who exists as three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We’ll unpack that more over the coming weeks.

So, let’s conclude by declaring our faith in the words of the Apostles Creed....