

Apostles Creed Sermon Series Wk2

Based on "Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord" by the Rev'd David Browne

Last week we concentrated on the first line of the Creed: "I believe in the Father almighty maker of heaven and Earth"

In saying these words with conviction, we are:

- responding to God's glory,
- Proclaiming belief in the one and only God who is our father,
- And acknowledging that the physical creation around us has a creator who we can respond to.

This week we are looking at one of those present and active parts of our God, our Father, who invites us to be his Children.

*I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead*

We are reminded that the scriptures tell a story which has brought life and meaning to people across time and space, and controversy, the story of **God who is among us!**

As we read the Gospels, the eyewitness accounts of the life of Jesus, we find that Jesus was like us:

- Jesus felt hunger,
- he got angry,
- he felt betrayed,
- but he also felt pain and loss,
- as well as love, friendship and community.

To say 'I believe in Jesus' is to say that Jesus was a real person,

- Someone who walked on the earth, as human as you and I.
- Someone that I trust like a person I have met face to face.
- Someone who sought me out.

In the Hebrew culture, the name of the child was important.

But when God gives someone a name, it really matters.

And so here we have the most remarkable news, that this baby, from God, is to be called “Jesus”.

One of the meanings of Jesus is...

‘The Lord Saves’.

In the name of Jesus, God is signalling that the long hope of God redeeming Israel from all their sins, is going to be fulfilled in this child.

The writers of the creed use words **Gods ONLY Son** to point to the special relationship between the Father and the Son.

On the mountain of Transfiguration, we see God the Father not only express his delight in his only Son.

This is my Son with whom I am well pleased, listen to him!

God loves his Son and delights in him and urges us to listen to him. It is one of the ways we get to know our Father in Heaven. As Jesus himself says

If you see me then you see the father. (John 14:9)

The disciples of Jesus, women, men and children across the Roman Empire and beyond began to proclaim to the world their belief that Jesus is Lord!

In effect they were saying that Jesus is worth it:

- all my time,
- all my energy,
- all my possessions, and
- all my worship

In Jesus we can know that God is among us,

- God is redeeming his creation and
- God is inviting us into relationship with him.

Today, and for the rest of our lives our choices and our actions will reveal who is Lord of our lives. Unfortunately for some the Lord of their lives:

- is themselves, or
- some created thing like money,
- even a loved one, or success.

The Apostles Creed points us to a Lord who is more worthy of our worship than **ANYTHING** else.

The word Christ is not Jesus' surname as if Jesus was born to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph and Mary Christ instead it's a title filled with meaning

- Christ is Greek for 'chosen one' or Messiah
- To say that I believe in Jesus Christ is to say that Jesus is the one God chose to send into the world to save and rescue humanity
- The Hebrew Scriptures tell us how the good world that God created became more and more broken through human sinfulness

And it is very important that He is Lord because in Jesus God the Father is revealing a New Creation, a new Kingdom, a New Future.

But Jesus' life in many ways like ours...

- Jesus lived, died and was buried.

What is not like ours is the persecution he endured during his life and the manner of his death and his birth.

- Born of a virgin!
- There is no middle ground here.
- Jesus is human after all he died...but born of a virgin.

The writers of this creed knew about babies, they knew that what they declared:

- what they ask us to declare
- that Jesus is the Christ of God, fully human, fully God.

The Gospels leave us with absolutely no doubt that Jesus endured a real death. There is surprising detail in the accounts of these events.

- The show trial full of lies and false testimony
- The humiliating treatment by his captors,
 - The flogging...
 - The gambling over his garments...
 - The cruel costume thrust upon him with a crown of thorns,
 - the journey of carrying the crossbar to his place of execution,
- The time of day, who was there, what those around were discussing,
- That a spear was thrust in his side...
- the charge nailed on the cross above his head,
- and that he was buried in someone else's tomb.

What is Father God thinking?

- What is this new Kingdom?
- How does this fix anything?
- What hope is there if God's **ONLY SON** can be killed?

Well like any good TV serial you will need to tune in next week to find out.

But...

What the life, and death of Jesus does for all time is remove all doubt that Jesus was a real person.

- He is not fictional.
- He is not mythical.
- Jesus is history.

So are his words real...

I did not come to condemn but to save. (John 3:17)

I am the way, the truth and the life. (John 14:6)

I came to set the captives free. (Luke 4:18)

I am the good shepherd. (John 10:11-18)

I will be with you always (Matt 28:20)

And finally...

*But first the Son of Man must suffer terribly
and be rejected by this generation. (Luke 17:25)*

God has going to extreme lengths to get your attention and to tell you something of vital importance to you and those around you...

If we trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour then you and I have the opportunity to hear our Father in Heaven say

*You have done well.
You are a **good and faithful** servant.
You have been **faithful** over a few things.
Come **and** share my joy.*

YOU ARE LOVED BEYOND ALL REASONABLE MEASURE BY YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

Not because you do great things or are great in the eyes of the world... but because

*You have been **faithful** over a few things.*

Trust in Jesus... in whom there is no condemnation.