

The Apostles' Creed: Week 3

...And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord...

In the Scriptures:

1. In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

(Daniel 7:13-14)

2. At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

(Matthew 11:25-40)

3. In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. *(Hebrews 1:1-4)*

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As described by Christian writers:

4. You know what happens when a portrait that has been painted on a panel becomes obliterated through external stains. The artist does not throw away the panel, but the subject of the portrait has to come and sit for it again, and then the likeness is re-drawn on the same material.

Even so was it with the All-holy Son of God. He, the Image of the Father, came and dwelt in our midst, in order that He might renew mankind made after Himself, and seek out His lost sheep, even as He says in the Gospel: "I came to seek and to save that which was lost." This also explains His saying to the Jews: "Except a man be born anew..." He was not referring to a man's natural birth from his mother, as they thought, but to the re-birth and re-creation of the soul in the Image of God.

-Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*

5. If the end and motive of Christianity, and therefore of Christian missions, is to produce Christ-like character, I have no apology for being a Christian missionary, for I know nothing higher for God or man than to be Christ-like.

I know nothing higher for God. If God in character is like Jesus, He is a good God and trustable. The present-day doubt is not concerning Christ, but concerning God. Men wonder if there can be a good God back of things when they see earthquakes wipe out the innocent and the guilty alike and innocent little children suffer from nameless diseases they did not bring on themselves. But the distracted and doubting mind turns toward Jesus with relief and says, "If God is like that, He is all right." As Christians, we affirm that He is – that He is Christ-like in character, and we say it without qualification and without the slightest stammering of the tongue. We believe that "God is Jesus everywhere" and Jesus is God here – the human life of God.

If God thinks in terms of little children as Jesus did, cares for the leper, the outcaste, and the blind, and if His heart is like that gentle heart that broke upon the cross, then He can have my heart without reservation and without question.

-E. Stanley Jones, *The Christ of the Indian Way*

Why we believe in Jesus:

* Jesus reveals the holiness and love of God his Father, in a way that is completely unique. We cannot find any higher expression of love than that which Jesus brought, both in his ethical teachings, and his life that was in complete accord with those teachings. As the unique Son of God, he had an intimate connection with God that went far beyond that of any other person. When we look at Jesus, we see the Father.

* But to help those who are slower on the uptake, there are additional clues that Jesus has the full endorsement of God. His ministry was predicted by many prophets, and confirmed with many dramatic signs and miracles. He continues to be the living Lord and exerts his influence over the Church today, by changing people's hearts to love each other. In the rest of the Creed, we will explore the specific events in the life of Jesus (past, present, and future) that result in our salvation.