

The Apostles' Creed: Week 1

I believe in God the Father Almighty...

In the Scriptures:

1. Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I am has sent me to you.’ ”

God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘Yahweh*, God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’

(Exodus 3:13-15)

* "Yahweh" sounds like "I am", and is usually replaced with "Lord" in English translations of the Hebrew Scriptures

2. This is what the LORD says—

Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty:

“I am the first and I am the last;

apart from me there is no God.” *(Isaiah 44:6)*

3. When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created. *(James 1:13-18)*

4. “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” *(Matthew 7:7-11)*

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As described by Christian writers:

5. 'God has no origin,' said Novatian, and it is precisely this concept of no-origin which distinguishes That-which-is-God from whatever is not God.

Origin is a word that can apply only to things created. When we think of anything that has origin, we are not thinking of God. God is self-existent, while all created things necessarily originated somewhere at some time. Aside from God, nothing is self-caused.

By our effort to discover the origin of things, we confess our belief that everything was made by Someone who was made of none. By familiar experience, we are taught that everything "came from" something else. Whatever exists must have had a cause that antedates it, and was at least equal to it, since the lesser cannot produce the greater. Any person or thing may be at once both caused and the cause of someone or something else; and so, back to the One who is the cause of all but is Himself caused by none.

-A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*

6. Since God's eternity is inseparable from Himself, it was worthy of Him to reveal this one thing that He is as the assurance of His absolute eternity. For such an indication of God's infinity, the words I AM THAT I AM were clearly adequate; but, in addition, we needed to apprehend the operation of His majesty and power. For while absolute existence is peculiar to Him Who, abiding eternally, had no beginning in a past however remote, we hear again an utterance worthy of Himself issuing from the eternal and Holy God, Who says, *Who holdeth the heaven in His palm and the earth in His hand* and again *The heaven is My throne and the earth is the footstool of My feet. What house will ye Me or what shall be the place of My rest?* The whole heaven is held in the palm of God the whole earth grasped in His hand.

-Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity*

7. Therefore I say to son or daughter who has no pleasure in the name *Father*, 'You must interpret the word by all that you have missed in life. Every time a man might have been to you a refuge from the wind, a covert from the tempest, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, that was a time when a father might have been a father indeed. Happy you are yet, if you have found man or woman such a refuge; so far have you known a shadow of the perfect, seen the back of the only man, the perfect Son of the perfect Father. All that human tenderness can give or desire in the nearness and readiness of love, all and infinitely more must be true of the perfect Father--of the

maker of fatherhood, the Father of all the fathers of the earth, specially the Father of those who have specially shown a father-heart.

-George MacDonald, *Abba Father*

Why we believe in God the Father:

- You don't have to be a Christian to come to know *that* God exists. Many great philosophers from different religions and nations have reasoned their way to an understanding of God, by starting with the idea that the things we observe are not self explanatory, and imagining what a being that explains everything else would have to look like.
- However, being a Christian does allow you to *intimately know God*. That is because God has chosen to reveal himself to human beings by speaking to us, and telling us who he is, and what he is like. First he revealed himself to the prophets of Israel (recorded in the Old Testament) and then by means of his Son Jesus (recorded in the New Testament). The rest of the Creed describes how, by sending his Son and giving us his Holy Spirit, God helps each of us to know him as our *Father* who loves us and cares for us.