

A Line-By-Line Guide to the Apostles' Creed

Source: <https://finds.life.church/apostles-creed-explained/>

I BELIEVE IN GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

The Apostles' Creed starts with the idea of **belief**—all of the statements that follow “I believe” are things in which we, as Christians, place our trust.

The first of these beliefs is that God is the Father of everything. Everything seen and unseen throughout the universe was created by Him—every galaxy, every planet, every ecosystem, you and me. God upholds everything that exists.

Supporting Bible Verses

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. [Genesis 1:1 NIV](#)

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. [Psalm 90:2 NIV](#)

AND IN JESUS CHRIST, HIS ONLY SON, OUR LORD

God the Father is one part of the Trinity—God, three in one. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the second part of the Trinity. While God the Father was responsible for making all of creation, Jesus reigns as Lord over creation.

Supporting Bible Verses

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” [Matthew 16:16 NIV](#)

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” [Matthew 28:18 NIV](#)

WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY

When Jesus Christ came to Earth, fully man and fully God, He did so by being born of a Jewish virgin named Mary. God the Holy Spirit, the third part of the Trinity, was the source of Jesus' conception.

Supporting Bible Verses

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” [Isaiah 7:14 NIV](#)

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.” [Luke 1:35 NIV](#)

SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, WAS CRUCIFIED, DIED, AND WAS BURIED

At the age of 33, after three years of ministry alongside His disciples, Jesus was falsely accused by the religious leaders of his day. The Roman governor of Judaea, Pontius Pilate, oversaw Jesus' trial, permitting His torture and conviction. Jesus was then crucified, died, and was buried in a tomb.

Supporting Bible Verses

... Pilate ... had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. [Mark 15:15 NIV](#)

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! [Philippians 2:8 NIV](#)

HE DESCENDED TO THE DEAD [OR SHEOL]. ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN.

The first part of this statement is startling. Where did Jesus go immediately following His death on the cross?

That question is up for debate. There's some biblical evidence to support the idea that He actually went to hell, like [Ephesians 4:9](#) which says that Jesus "descended to the lower, earthly regions," and [1 Peter 4:6](#) which says "the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead." When the Apostles' Creed was written, many people believed that Jesus, having taken on the sins of humanity, did go to hell after His death. Today, however, there's no consensus on the answer to this question.

But after being dead for three days, we know exactly what happened next. The stone was rolled away from Jesus' tomb, and He rose from the dead, alive again!

Supporting Bible Verses

"He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" [Luke 24:6-7 NIV](#)

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 ... [1 Corinthians 15:3-4 NIV](#)

HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY

Forty days after Jesus' resurrection, the Bible tells us He left His disciples with some parting words—the Great Commission—and then ascended to heaven. Since His ascension, Jesus has been sitting at the right hand of God His Father, a place of honor and importance. From this seat, He intercedes on our behalf.

Supporting Bible Verses

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. [Acts 1:9 NIV](#)

Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. [Romans 8:34 NIV](#)

FROM THERE HE WILL COME AGAIN TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

One day, Jesus will return the same way he left—via heaven. When He returns, every person who has ever lived will be judged. Those who follow Jesus will be judged based on the work of Christ on their behalf on the cross. Those who don't follow Jesus will be judged based on their actions.

Supporting Bible Verses

... I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords ... [1 Timothy 6:13-15 NIV](#)

“For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.” [Acts 17:31 NIV](#)

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

As mentioned earlier, God the Holy Spirit is the third part of the Trinity. Ten days after Christ’s ascension, the Holy Spirit descended on believers in Jerusalem and took up residence in their hearts. The Holy Spirit is found in the heart of every believer, even today. He counsels us, providing us with guidance and wisdom so we’re better able to follow the example of Christ and share His love with the world.

Supporting Bible Verses

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” [Acts 1:8 NIV](#)

Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst? [1 Corinthians 3:16 NIV](#)

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

If you’re a Protestant, the term “catholic” might give you pause. But in this context, “catholic” simply means “universal”—all believers everywhere. This church is the body of Christ, and together we seek to share the good news of Christ’s love with all people.

The communion—or community—of saints is another way of describing the body of Christ, but it speaks to something important. The body of Christ is truly a community. It exists to share the good news of Christ’s love, but it also exists to take care of one another, as all good communities do.

Supporting Bible Verses

“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.” [Acts 20:28 NIV](#)

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms ... [Ephesians 3:10 NIV](#)

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

When Jesus died on the cross, He did so to cover our sins—the things that separate us from God’s love. Because of His sacrifice, we can approach God and find forgiveness for the wrong things we’ve done.

Supporting Bible Verses

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” [Acts 2:38 NIV](#)

“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” [Mark 11:25 NIV](#)

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

When Jesus rose from the dead following His crucifixion, He did so in a perfect, resurrected body. When Jesus returns, all believers will likewise rise from the dead in their own resurrected bodies.

Supporting Bible Verses

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" [John 11:25-26 NIV](#)

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you. [Romans 8:11 NIV](#)

AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING. AMEN.

Following the resurrection of the dead, we will live with God forever on a renewed Earth, free from the suffering and sin that burdens our lives in the here and now.

Supporting Bible Verses

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. [John 3:16 NIV](#)

The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. [Romans 5:20-21 NIV](#)