

# ***The Apostles' Creed***



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- *Intro to the Creed Itself*
- *God the Father (part 3)*



# The Apostles' Creed

- Intro to the Creed Itself
- God the Father (part 3)

- **NOTE:** This suddenly became a lot more timely this week when the Church of England announced that they were exploring “gender neutral” wording to use for God from now on
  - Now, I'm hoping that we all know and can agree on the fact that God isn't actually *male-gendered*, per se but there's a slippery slope to this that can remove clearly Biblical attributes from God in the attempt to generalize and remove any modern offensiveness from God's depictions
    - For instance, back in 2018, the United Methodists changed the Apostles' Creed from “God the Father Almighty” to “God the Creator Almighty”
      - What else does that change?
      - What's ironic about their reasoning here?



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## NOW EVEN GOD COULD BE GOING GENDER NEUTRAL

Church of England to debate whether to stop referring to the Almighty as 'He'

**NICOLA: DAY 12**  
Police clash with diver who claims it COULD be foul play

By Martin Beckford

GOD may be referred to in "non-gendered" terms in Church of England services, it emerged last night.

Following months of consultation, Anglican bishops are preparing to launch a major "project on gendered language".

It may include the phrase "we pray using the male language for the Spirit, the Holy Spirit" to be replaced with a neutral wording which would have to be approved by the church's governing body, the General Synod.

Such a move is being hailed by some as a landmark step away from the words of the Bible.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, who presides in a number of the church's services, is expected to announce the wording used for church services. *Photos*

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Everybody's God language is appropriate. People's God language signifies a relationship that you can't interfere with. You can raise questions and offer additional perspectives, but you can't dictate. You can't prohibit anybody from using any language about God. Whether they want to call God "Jehovah" or "Big Dog," you can't judge the validity of how that name connects them with God.



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- Now, I’m hoping that we all know and can agree on the fact that God isn’t actually *male-gendered*, per se
- Note something that C.S. Lewis wrote 75 years ago—

“Christians think that God himself has taught us how to speak of him. To say that it does not matter is to say either that all the masculine imagery is not inspired, is merely human in origin, or else that, though inspired, it is quite arbitrary and unessential. And this is surely intolerable...”

- Using neutered pronouns is *not* taking a neutral position—it’s making a statement



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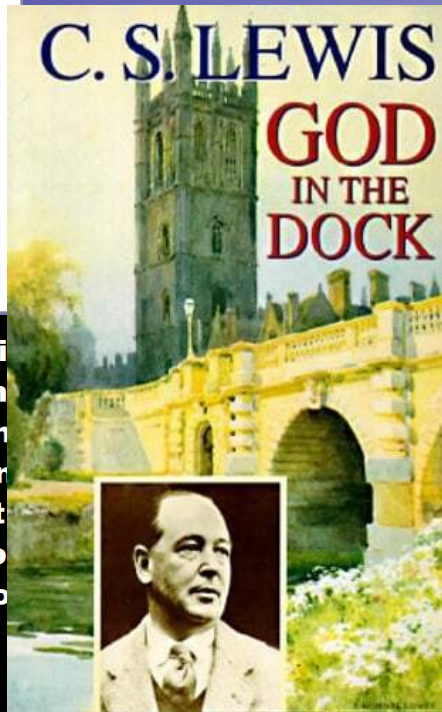
**NICOLA: DAY 12**

Police clash with diver who claims it **COULD** be foul play **SEE PAGE 13**

By Martin Beckford  
GOD may be referred to in "non-gendered" terms in Church of England services, it emerged last night. Bishops are preparing to launch a major project on gendered language.

It may be that the church can stop using the male pronoun for the deity, an issue which has become controversial in a radical rewriting would have to be approved by the church's governing body, the General Synod. The move would be a significant step towards making a step from the words of the Bible. The church's stance was clarified, according to a spokesman in the *Lancaster Chronicle*, a paper that develops the writing panel for church services. *Journal*

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Everybody's God language is People's God language sign that you can't interfere with questions and offer additional you can't dictate. You can't from using any language as they want to call God "Jehovah" you can't judge the validity connects them with God.

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- So it shouldn't be about gendering God, but rather about *responsibly* reflecting on the Biblical imagery



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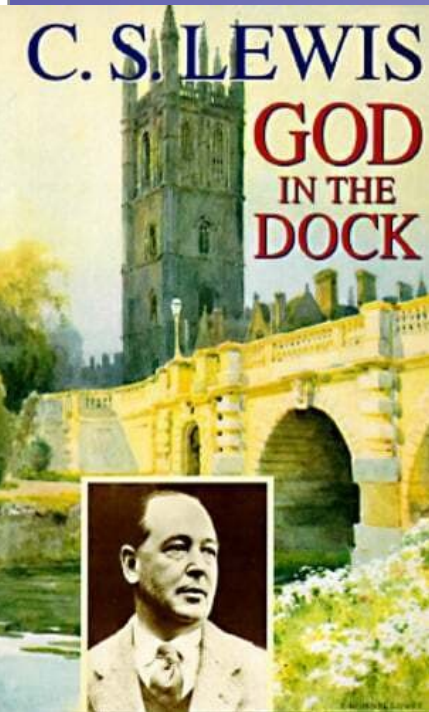
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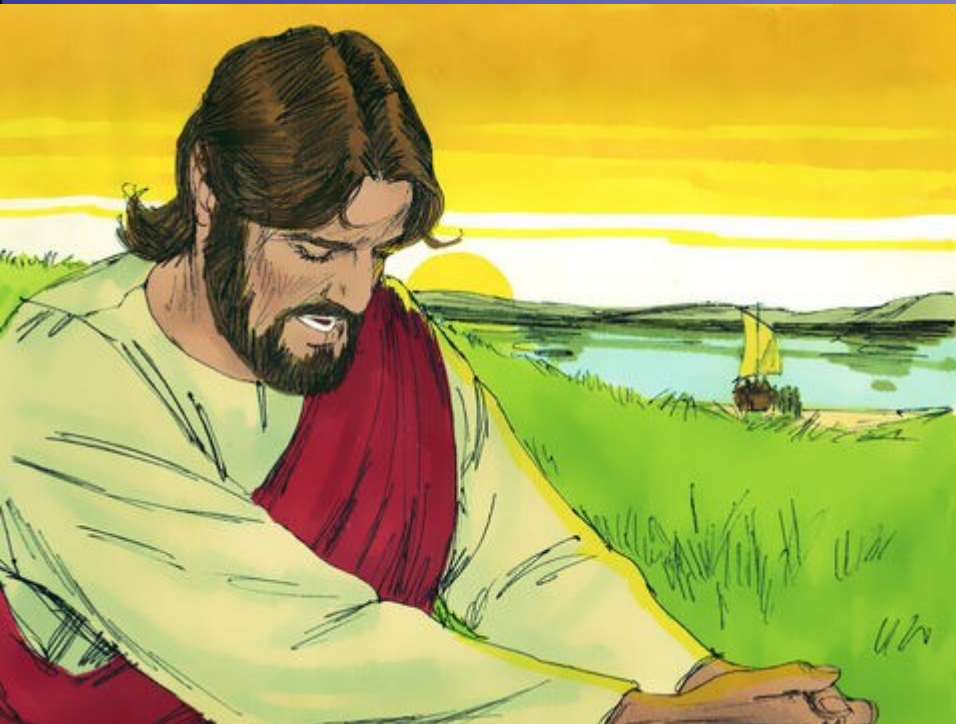


Everybody's God language is their own. People's God language sign that you can't interfere with questions and offer additional questions you can't dictate. You can't from using any language as they want to call God "Jehovah" you can't judge the validity of how they connects them with God.



# God the Father

- “We believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth...”
  - *Last week, we talked about what the Bible means by calling God “Our Father”*
  - *This week, let's talk about what God being “Our Father” means in point of practice to us in our own lives today*



# God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Maybe think of it backwards, working back from how we use the term “Father” in secular contexts
  - Biological Paternity  
(i.e.; Father-hood, or the status of being a father)





# God the Father



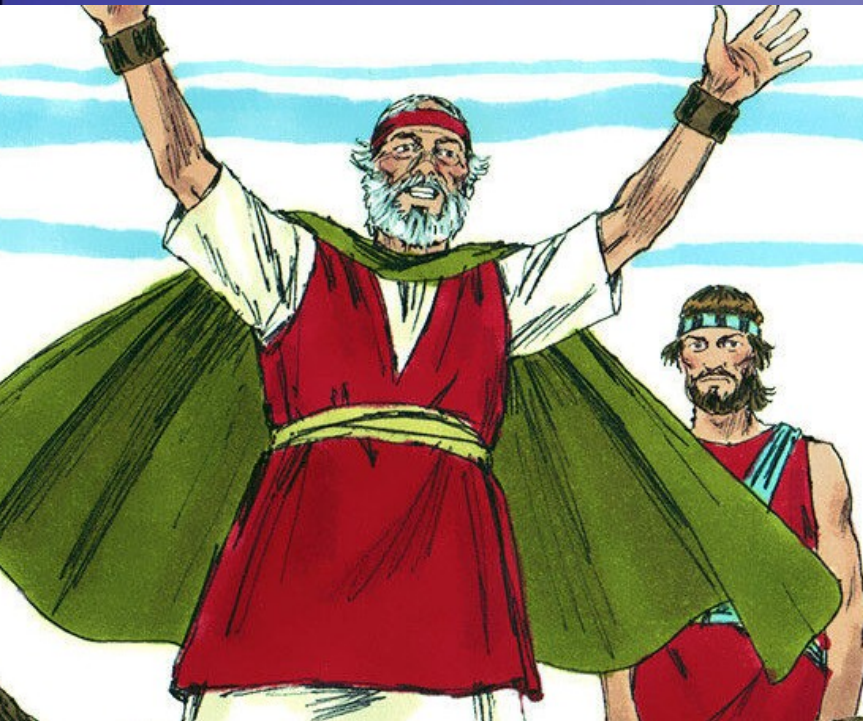
## Funky little teaching moment...

- Maybe think of it backwards, working back from how we use the term “Father” in secular contexts
  - Biological Paternity
    - On one level, no—we’re not immediately biologically descended from God the Father like Jesus had been and yet, what was it that Moses said the other week when chiding the people of God?

“Is this the way you repay YAHWEH, O foolish and unwise people? Is he not your father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?” (Deuteronomy 32:6)

(pointing back to Genesis 2:7, when “YAHWEH God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.”)

(NOTE: Technically, Adam was never referred to as a “son of God” since in Luke’s genealogy, he’s simply said to be “of” God—i.e.; “... Seth, of Adam, of God”—but it is still a continuation of the list that starts with, “son of Joseph, of Heli, of Matthat...” etc.)





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  - Biological Paternity
    - On one level, no—we’re not immediately biologically descended from God the Father like Jesus had been and yet, what was it that Moses said the other week when chiding the people of God?
    - In a very real sense, we are all of us technically born from God's paternal work in creating us in the first place



# God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Maybe think of it backwards, working back from how we use the term “Father” in secular contexts
  - Biological Paternity
  - Familial Community  
(i.e.; Father-ness, or the *attitude* of being a father)





# God the Father



## Funky little teaching moment...

- Maybe think of it backwards, working back from how we use the term “Father” in secular contexts
  - Biological Paternity
  - Familial Community
    - What was it that Jeremiah shared about God's heart?
      - Read Jeremiah 3:12-14, 19-20
      - What metaphors does God use here to describe how He feels about His relationship with His people?

(and how did Hosea dial that up to 11?)  
(note the harshness of the naming of Hosea's second son in Hosea 1:9  
—and yet the hope that God still gives them in Hosea 1:10)





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      - Read Jeremiah 3:12-14, 19-20
        - What metaphors does God use here to describe how He feels about His relationship with His people?
        - As heartbreaking as this is on the *negative* side, what does it say about God's *positive* perceptions of us as His genuine family?



# God the Father



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  - Biological Paternity
  - Familial Community
    - What was it that Jeremiah shared about God's heart?
      - Read Jeremiah 3:12-14, 19-20
      - Read Deuteronomy 7:6-8
        - The term “chosen family” has become quite popular these days (opposed to “biological”)
          - How had God chosen Israel to be His family in the Old Testament?
          - How did Paul expand on this to include *non-Jews* in Galatians 3:26-29?
            - What is the demarcation that makes us part of God's family?
              - Do we have to be baptised?
              - Do we have to be circumcised?
              - Or is this really a “circumcision of the heart” issue that both baptism and circumcision were *supposed* to point *back* to?  
(see Romans 2:28-29, John 1:12, etc.)





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      - Read Deuteronomy 7:6-8
        - The term “chosen family” has become quite popular these days (opposed to “biological”)
        - At the risk of sounding touchy-feely, how does it make you feel to know that God chose *you*—took great personal pains to *adopt* you—as part of His genuine family?  
(see also Romans 9:8, 1 John 3:1-2, Galatians 4:6, etc.)





# God the Father



## Funky little teaching moment...

- Maybe think of it backwards, working back from how we use the term “Father” in secular contexts
  - Biological Paternity
  - Familial Community
  - Parental Commitment  
(i.e.; Dad-ness, or rolling up your sleeves and actively taking the whole father thing seriously)

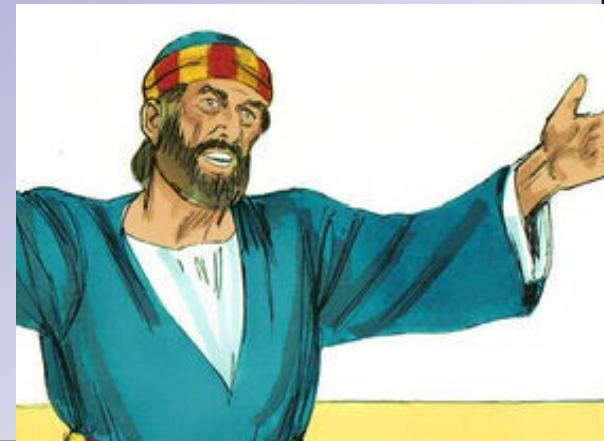
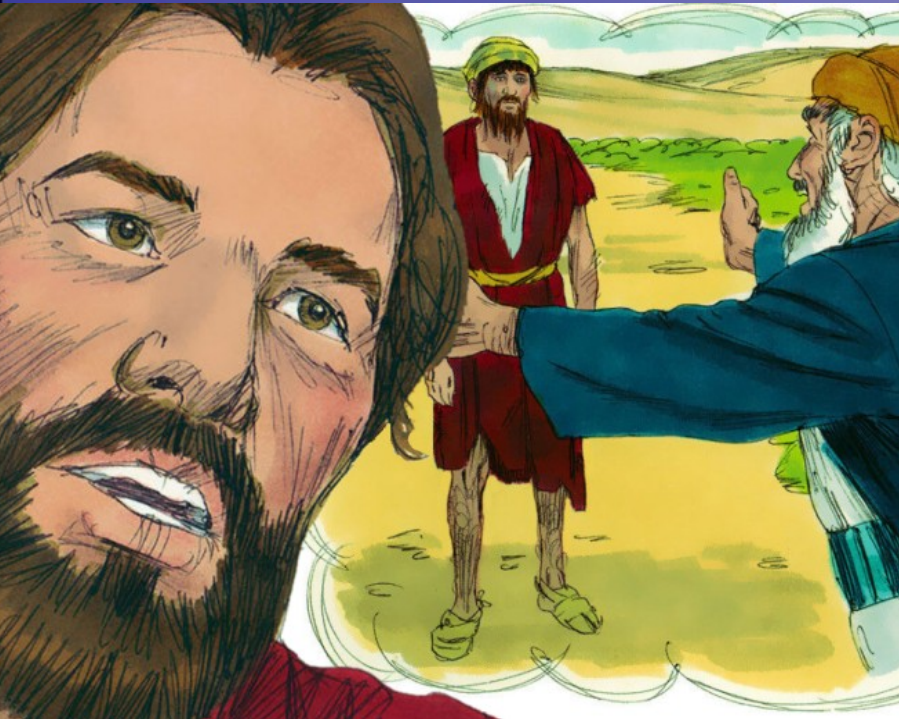


# God the Father



## Funky little teaching moment...

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  - Biological Paternity
  - Familial Community
  - Parental Commitment
    - Remember Luke 15:11-32
      - What parabolic—even *hyperbolic*—point(s) would Jesus seem to be getting at about the nature of God's love and commitment to *all* of His children?
    - How does Christ argue that we can infer God's love for us from observing even our *human* fathers' love for us in verses such as Matthew 7:9-11?
    - How does Peter echo these sentiments about God's love in 1 Peter 5:6-7?





# God the Father



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- Maybe think of it backwards, working back from how we use the term “Father” in secular contexts
  - Biological Paternity
  - Familial Community
  - Parental Commitment
    - Remember Luke 15:11-32
    - Read Isaiah 49:15-16a
      - With what level of intensity does God express His commitment to loving and providing for us?
      - In what ways is this example hyperbole, and in what ways is it not?
      - Think about Jesus' own, anguished cry in Luke 13:34—

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!”

(note that here, Jesus—the *Son*—is speaking in *maternal* verbiage...  
... so again, let's think in terms of *imagery* rather than *gender*...)





# God the Father



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“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!”
- Have you ever felt like God wasn't there for you at some point—and if so, how could that even be, given the character of our Father?



# God the Father



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  - Familial Community
  - Parental Commitment
    - Remember Luke 15:11-32
    - Read Isaiah 49:15-16a
    - Read Proverbs 3:11-12
      - What’s going on here?
- How does Solomon suggest that the Lord's protection of us extends even to protecting us from our worst selves?
- How does the New Testament Preacher elaborate more on this to us today in Hebrews 12:7-11?





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  - Familial Community
  - Parental Commitment
    - Remember Luke 15:11-32
    - Read Isaiah 49:15-16a
    - Read Proverbs 3:11-12
    - How committed to us is our Father to actively being our Dad—our “Abba”—in this relationship?
      - Why is that important?



# God the Father



## Funky little teaching moment...

- Maybe think of it backwards, working back from how we use the term “Father” in secular contexts
  - Biological Paternity
  - Familial Community
  - Parental Commitment
  - Legal Inheritance





# God the Father

- “We believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth...”
  - Last week, we talked about what the Bible means by calling God “Our Father”
  - This week, let's talk about what God being “Our Father” means in point of practice to us in our own lives today
    - How would you sum it all up?

