

The Apostles' Creed



The Apostles' Creed

- *Intro to the Creed Itself*
- *God the Father*
- *God the Son*
 - *Christ's Birth*
 - *Christ's Crucifixion and Death*
 - *Christ's Death and Resurrection*
 - *Christ in Heaven*
 - *Christ as Judge (part 2)*



The Apostles' Creed

- We need to stop and back up
 - Let's finish the review that we started last week, just so that we can hit up the new material next week with the context that helps us understand it



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Christ's Crucifixion and Death

- “We believe in... Jesus Christ... Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried...”
 - We covered this primarily by defining various terms
 - “Suffered”
 - We talked about the horrific, physical act of crucifixion and about the suffering of taking the sins of the world onto Himself
 - Fully God and fully human at the same time—the perfect paying for the imperfect by taking our debt onto Himself



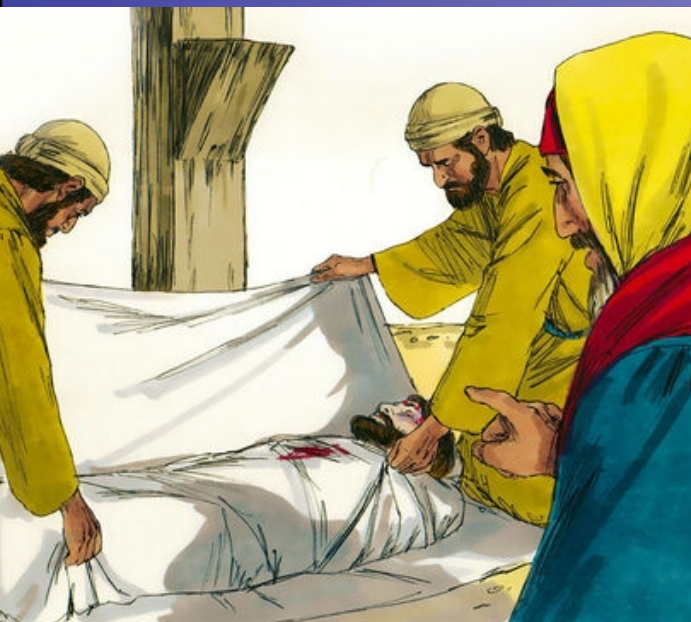
Christ's Crucifixion and Death

- “We believe in... Jesus Christ... Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried...”
 - We covered this primarily by defining various terms
 - “Suffered”
 - “Pontius Pilate”
 - Pilate was the fifth governor of the Roman province of Judaea, serving under Tiberius from 26 to 36 AD
 - He was an educated noble, but a brutal, ruthless man who'd been sent to Judea as a “last chance” to save his career—he absolutely *hated* the Jews
 - How does that affect the way(s) that you read the Gospel accounts of the crucifixion?
 - Why would a guy like that post a sign like this on the cross of a condemned man like Jesus?



Christ's Crucifixion and Death

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 - We covered this primarily by defining some terms
 - “Suffered”
 - “Pontius Pilate”
 - “Dead and buried”
 - The Romans made sure that Jesus was dead before they even took Him off the cross by stabbing his side with a spear
 - Why is it so important to clarify that Jesus really was honest and truly *dead*—so important that all four Gospels made a point to *emphasize* it?





- Why was it so absolutely crushing to the disciples to know—to *know*—that Jesus was truly dead on Friday?
- And why did that make such a difference on Sunday?

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Christ's Death and Resurrection

- “We believe in... Jesus Christ... Who descended into the grave and the third day rose again from the dead...”



Christ's Death and Resurrection



Funky little teaching moment...

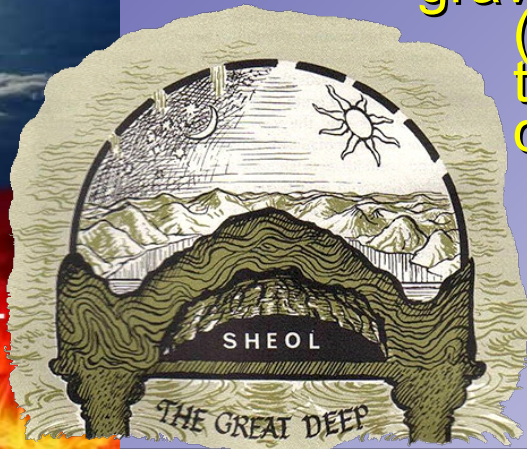
- We stopped and talked about how we tend not to understand the word “Hell” and its Biblical context
 - The Bible uses different words like “Hell” and “Hades” and “Tartarus” and “the grave” and “Sheol” and we too often tend to mash them all up together and think of them all as synonymous with “Hell”—which they totally aren’t
 - So a quick rundown of “Hell” stuff—
 - “Hades” is used in the New Testament as the Greek-language equivalent of the Hebrew “Sheol” (which was essentially just perceived as a “pit” where all of the dead go when they die) (i.e.; in many way, similar to the way that we today might poetically speak of “the grave”) (and *this* is what Rufinus told us that the Creed is talking about—that Jesus descended into the grave)



HEAVEN
PARADISE



HELL
HADES SHEOL



SHEOL

THE GREAT DEEP



Christ's Death and Resurrection



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 - So a quick rundown of “Hell” stuff—
 - “Hades” is used in the New Testament as the Greek-language equivalent of the Hebrew “Sheol”
 - “Hell” is the English translation of the Hebrew name “Gehenna”

(which was the constantly-burning, unclean valley of garbage just outside of Jerusalem that Jesus—and the rest of the New Testament writers—used as a metaphor for the unfathomably nasty eternity awaiting those who separate themselves in life from God... since, logically, to be separated from the “giver of all good things” is to be separated from anything that could be considered “good”)
(we’re never told that Jesus went there)



Christ's Death and Resurrection



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 - “Hades” is used in the New Testament as the Greek-language equivalent of the Hebrew “Sheol”
 - “Hell” is the English translation of the Hebrew name “Gehenna”
 - “Tartarus” is a name taken from Greek myth to describe a spiritual prison where the fallen angels are being held until God’s final Judgment Day (*this is where we’re told in the Petrine letters that Jesus went after His death and resurrection and “made proclamation” of His victory on the cross*)



Christ's Death and Resurrection



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 - And no, Satan is not the “ruler” of any of these places
(he’s trapped here on Earth with us—and the only connection that Satan has with any of these sorts of places in the Bible is at the end, when he’s eventually thrown into the Lake of Fire as a prisoner himself)



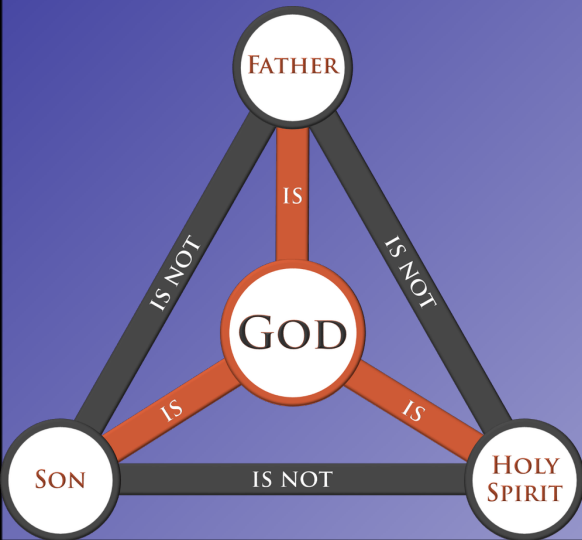
Christ's Death and Resurrection

- “We believe in... Jesus Christ... Who descended into the grave and the third day rose again from the dead...”
 - This portion of the Creed is trying to be very clear, and yet we still run off in our own crazy directions with it because we smush it all together, but still want it all to make sense
 - But all the Creed is trying to say is that Jesus truly, physically died and was as dead as Jacob Marley...
... but then He suddenly *stopped* being dead
 - And His resurrection makes all the difference for the rest of us
 - Why is Christ's genuine descent into the grave and His genuine ascent in Resurrection so crucial?



Christ's Death and Resurrection

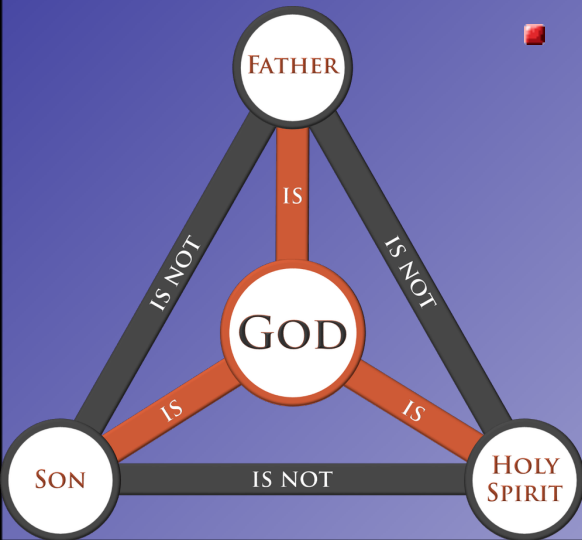
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 - This portion of the Creed is trying to be very clear, and yet we still run off in our own crazy directions with it because we smush it all together, but still want it all to make sense
 - Quick and easy Bible question:
 - Who *exactly* raised Jesus from the dead?
 - Read Acts 5:30
 - Read 1 Corinthians 6:14
 - Read Galatians 1:1



Christ's Death and Resurrection

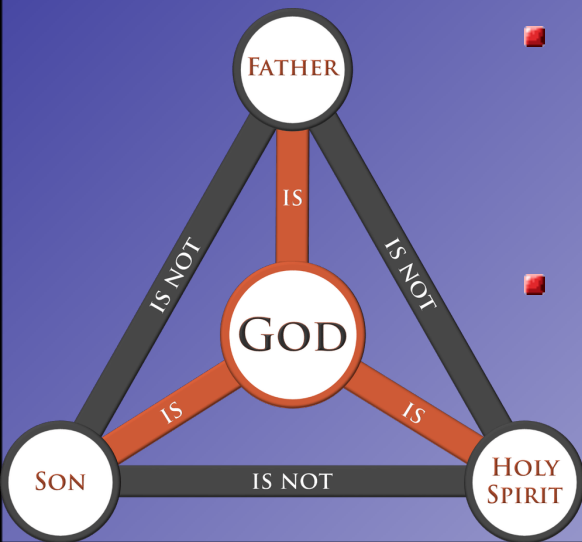
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 - **Quick and easy Bible question:**
 - Who *exactly* raised Jesus from the dead?
 - Then again, Jesus Himself said...
 - “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” ... But the temple he had spoken of was his body (John 2:19-21)
 - “I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” (John 10:17-18)

(seemingly based on his earlier teaching, “just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. [The Father] ... has entrusted all judgment to the Son” in John 5:21-22)



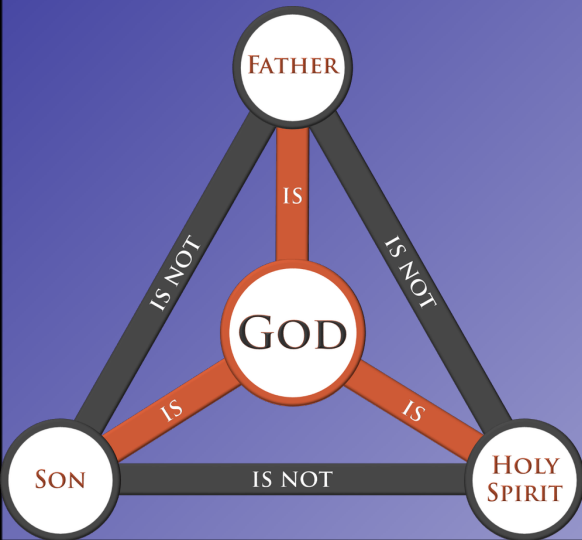
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 - **What does Jesus say about Himself in John 11:25-26 and Revelation 1:18?**
 - So who has the agency in the Resurrection—God the Father or God the Son?



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 - **Quick and easy Bible question:**
 - Who *exactly* raised Jesus from the dead?
 - Then again, Jesus Himself said...
 - **But then, to *complicate* matters...**
 - Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but **made alive by the Spirit** (1 Peter 3:18) (which mechanism may also be what Paul is getting at when he says, “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 **through his Spirit**, who lives in you” in Romans 8:11)

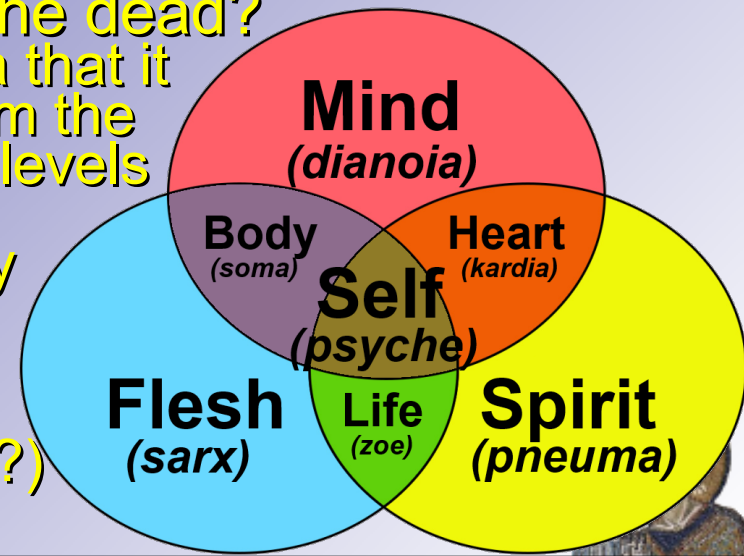
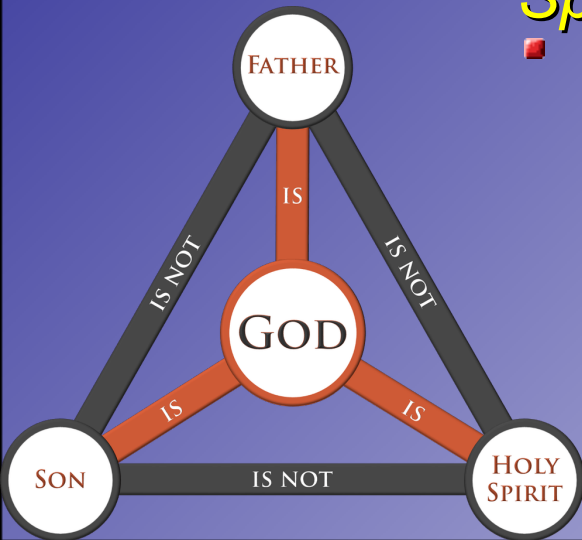


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 - **Quick and easy Bible question:**
 - Who *exactly* raised Jesus from the dead?
 - Then again, Jesus Himself said...
 - But then, to *complicate* matters...
 - So was it God the *Father* or God the *Son* or God the *Spirit* who raised Jesus from the dead?

Or is the more operative idea that it was *God* who raised Him from the dead, operating on *all* of His levels *at once* to do so?

(NOTE: Which part exactly created the world, do we see in Genesis 1 and in Colossians 1...?)
(why is this all significant?)



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Jesus in Heaven

- “We believe in... Jesus Christ... Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty...”

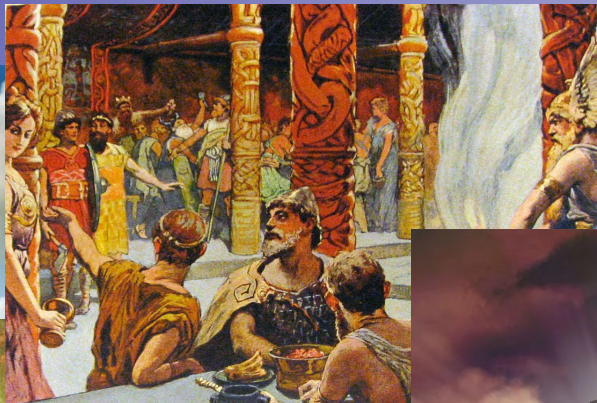


Jesus in Heaven



Funky little teaching moment...

- We stopped and talked about how we tend not to understand the word “Heaven” and its Biblical context
 - Everyone seems to have their own “take” on what Heaven is like
(in fact, to some people, that *is* what Heaven will be like—whatever you *want* it to be)



Jesus in Heaven



Funky little teaching moment...

- We stopped and talked about how we tend not to understand the word “Heaven” and its Biblical context
 - Everyone seems to have their own “take” on what Heaven is like, but the Bible's description of Heaven pretty much falls into three types—
 - 1) “Heaven” translates both the Hebrew and Greek words for “sky” (or “above us” place)
 - There's the first “sky” where the clouds are
 - There's a second “sky” where the stars are
 - There's a third “sky” where God dwells
- far beyond even the *highest* “above us” place



Jesus in Heaven



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 - 2) “Heaven”—where God dwells—will ultimately break through everything to come to Earth, so that God will dwell with us

- So though we will “meet Him in the clouds” at the end, it’s not like we will spend eternity “in the clouds” like people often picture—but rather, right here on Earth (albeit on a fully redeemed and perfected Earth)

(completing the cosmic “do-over” that Christ began at His birth)



Jesus in Heaven



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 - 2) “Heaven”—where God dwells—will ultimately break through everything to come to Earth, so that God will dwell with us
 - Thus, no—we don't become angels when we die, strumming on harps in the clouds (angels are angels, and people are people—we're totally different, unrelated creatures)

There's a new angel in Heaven!



Jesus in Heaven



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 - 2) “Heaven”—where God dwells—will ultimately break through everything to come to Earth, so that God will dwell with us
 - 3) “Heaven” is the *throne room* of God
 - But when we say that Jesus “sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty” we're not talking about physical thrones where the two guys sit around, chatting
 - We're talking about the cosmic **T**ruth that Christ is God's strong right arm—His active, effective, powerful aspect Who is actively acting on our behalf from a position of prominence and authority, expressed in terms we can picture



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Christ as Judge

- “We believe in... Jesus Christ... Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead...”



Christ as Judge



Funky little teaching moment...

- But before we can talk about Jesus judging us, we have to deal with the elephant in the room here
 - Most modern Americans categorically *hate* the idea of being judged by *anybody*
 - We will judge anyone who even remotely seems judgemental as a judgey judger who should be judged (I mean, it's okay to hate the haters, right?)



Christ as Judge



Funky little teaching moment...

- But before we can talk about Jesus judging us, we have to deal with the elephant in the room here
 - Most modern Americans categorically *hate* the idea of being judged by *anybody*
 - We will judge anyone who even remotely seems judgemental as a judgey judge who should be judge—though anyone who judges the stuff that *we* judge is just being, y'know, one of the “good guys”

Besides, if Miley Cyrus has taught us anything, it's that *only God* can judge us, right?

And since God is love, and love is never judgmental, then we're never *really* judged, right? Besides, where in the Bible does it ever say that we should judge others?



Christ as Judge



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- But before we can talk about Jesus judging us, we have to deal with the elephant in the room here
 - Most modern Americans categorically *hate* the idea of being judged by *anybody*
 - So we looked at multiple verses throughout the Bible—even in the New Testament—where we are specifically told to judge others
 - We're just consistently told to “judge *rightly*” when we judge one another, and to avoid ignoring the plank sticking out of our own eye as we dig at the speck of sawdust in someone else's eye
 - And the best way to accomplish both of those is to make sure that we ground *all* of our judgment not on what we think (or prefer), or even on what the *church* thinks (or prefers), but rather on what God thinks (and thus prefers)
(Reason #437 to consistently read for ourselves the Life Instruction Manual that God gave us to explain His thinking...)



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 - So if we get to judge (since we have the Holy Spirit within us), then shouldn't *Jesus* get to judge?
 - Of course, the world does weird things with that idea too

(picturing Jesus as either being too nice to ever judge us, or else He's some sort of nitpicking little tattletale who's *always* judging us)



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 - So if we get to judge (since we have the Holy Spirit within us), then shouldn't *Jesus* get to judge?
 - Of course, the world does weird things with that idea too—but now, we're all caught up and we can be ready to start cracking open the Bible again and chewing on new material next week...

