

CREDO

- "I Believe" -

The Christian Faith in a Faithless World

Part 3

"Knowing & Proclaiming
The One True God"

9 February 2020

Introduction: Paganism: Our Default Belief System

- While we can recognize that a general belief in a "higher power" is perhaps better than pure unbelief, we must also recognize that some form of paganism (idolatry), rather than atheism, is the default mode of the human heart.

Rom. 1:22-23—²¹For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. ²²Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Key Point: For Christians, to proclaim that we "believe in God" is to say that we believe in the One True God, the Triune God who has _____ Himself in order that we might know Him!

THE APOSTLE'S CREED
I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH;
AND IN JESUS CHRIST
HIS ONLY SON OUR LORD,
WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,
BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY,
SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE,
WAS CRUCIFIED, DIED & WAS BURIED,
HE DESCENDED TO THE DEAD,
ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN
FROM THE DEAD
HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN,
AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE
FATHER ALMIGHTY;
FROM THERE HE SHALL COME TO JUDGE
THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.
I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT;
THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH;
THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS;
THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS;
THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY,
AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING.
AMEN.

Knowing the God Who Reveals Himself

"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about is." —A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*

"The most urgent and demanding question for Christian believers is not whether "a supreme being of some kind" exists, but rather whether this incomparably good and powerful and compassionate source and end of all things truly is as revealed in Scripture."

— Thomas Oden, *Classic Christianity*

1. God reveals Himself in general ways.

⇒ Through _____, our moral _____ (Rom. 2:12-16), our inner _____ of the divine (Acts 17:22-31), and His providential _____ for all mankind.

Rom. 1:20—For [God's] invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Acts 14:17—Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.

Key Point: General revelation allows sinful men and women to know God as _____, but alone it is insufficient for us to know Him as _____.

2. God reveals Himself in special ways.

"So that we might obtain an ampler and more authoritative knowledge at once of himself and of his plans and will, God has added written revelation. This revelation is on behalf of everyone whose heart is set on seeking God, that seeking they may find, and finding they may believe, and believing they may obey." —Tertullian, *Apology* (3rd C.)

⇒ God reveals Himself in order that His people may know Him _____

(1) He reveals to His people His powerful _____

Exod. 3:13-14—¹⁴God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

¹⁵God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations."

"The LORD" — יהוה ('Jehovah' or 'Yahweh') — This is the primary name by which God is referred to by His people in both testaments. It is related to the verb "to be" (I AM WHO I AM).

* This name emphasizes God's _____ - _____!

* It assures God's people of His personal _____ among them!

* It assures God's people of His great _____ that is exercised on their behalf!

(2) He reveals to His people His _____ character.

Exod. 34:5-7b— ⁵ The Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the Lord. ⁶ Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; ⁷ who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished...”

* God is _____!

“lovingkindness”— **חֶסֶד** (*chesed*)— Help or kindness as the grace of a superior; mercy.

* God is _____!

⇒ **God reveals Himself in order that His people may know His true _____.**

(1) The true and living God is _____.

Deut. 6:4-6—⁴ “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

Eph. 4:4-6—⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

(2) The one true and living God exists eternally as _____ persons, the Father, the Son, & the Holy Spirit.

Luke 3:21-22—²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.”

* God’s triune nature is demonstrated most clearly in His work of _____.

Titus 3:4-6—⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

* Although one person of the Trinity may be highlighted in a particular work of God, we must remember that the works of God are not _____.

Matt. 28:19—Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

Important Observations:

- (a.) The Persons of the Godhead mutually indwell one another (*perichoresis*)
- (b.) To speak of one Person of the Godhead is to speak of God.
- (c.) When one Person of the Godhead acts, God has acted.

“So far as our human experience goes, God comes towards us as one. Yet the one in whom he comes is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The coming is such that in the one the three come; and that in each the other comes. Yet we have an experience of each which is different from our experience of the other. There is an ‘Abba, Father!’; a ‘Lord Jesus!’; and a ‘Come, Holy Spirit!’ The three co-inhere in a single being so that there is no relation with the being apart from a relationship with the persons; no action of one person which does not have his own distinct mark upon it.”
—Donald MacLeod, *The Person of Christ*

* The Church has handed down to us important theological language by which we can speak with biblical accuracy about God’s triune nature:

“And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.”
—The Athanasian Creed (6th C.)

Key Point: To know God as triune is to recognize that He alone has _____ all that was necessary for the salvation of His people and that He alone is worthy of all worship and praise.

Concluding Thoughts

1. The Triune God can be truly spoken of as the God of _____!

2. To be made in the image of the Triune God means that we are made to be _____!