

CREDO

- "I Believe" -

The Christian Faith in a Faithless World

Part 4

"Our Father Who
Art in Heaven"

16 February 2020

Introduction: The Immanence & Transcendence of God

"Transcendence and immanence are not separable in the [Christian] faith. The very One who is beyond the finite and human is intimately manifested and warmly knowable within the human sphere." Thomas Oden, *Classic Christianity*

- Although we can truly know God, there are aspects of that knowledge that remain mysterious to us. We must keep this in mind as we consider the Persons of the Godhead and their works. What is true of the Triune God is true of each of the Persons of the Godhead.

Key Point: Christians rightly profess faith in The First Person of the Godhead, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father becomes "_____ " Father in Heaven when we are united to His Son by faith!

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.

The "Fatherhood" of God

1. As Creator, there is a sense in which God is the *father* of all mankind.

Mal. 2:10a—*Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?*

Acts 17:28—for "*In him we live and move and have our being*"; as even some of your own poets have said, "*For we are indeed his offspring.*"

2. Being God's children in a generic sense does not mean that people are in right relationship with Him.

Rom. 2:5—*But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.*

The First Person of the Godhead: The Father

"It has too often been assumed that all systems which recognize God at all, agree with the Christian system to the extent that the First Person is shared by all, that is, the Christian belief is satisfied if two other Persons are added to the One God whom all are supposed to acknowledge alike...but the *One God* is that whole Essence which subsists as Father, Son, and Spirit..." — L.S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*

1. Scripture speaks of God the Father primarily in relation to God the _____.

⇒ *Within God there exists an eternal Father-Son relationship.*

John 1:14—*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John 1:18—*No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.*

"only begotten"—μονογενής (monogenēs)—The only of its kind within a specific relationship; "the one-of-a-kind one."

- * Although this term is used to refer to the uniqueness of Jesus as the God-man, the early church saw in the term 'begotten' a way to understand the essential distinctions between the Persons of the Godhead.

(1) The Father has _____ been Father to the Son.

(2) The divine essence of the Son is _____ from the Father from all eternity. [Eternal _____]

"And [we believe] in in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father."
— From the Nicene Creed (4th C.)

"The phrase 'eternal generation' is simply an attempt to describe the Father-Son relationship in the Trinity and, by using the word 'eternal,' to protect it from any idea of inequality or temporality." - Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*

⇒ *Through the Incarnation, the relationship between the Father and the Son is most clearly revealed.*

Matt. 3:16-17— ¹⁶ *And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷ and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

- * The Son is deeply _____ by the Father!

John 12:49-50—⁴⁹For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. ⁵⁰And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

* The Father has entrusted the _____ of His Word to the Son.

John 5:20—²⁰For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.

* The Father has entrusted certain _____ to the Son.

Key Point: The relationship between the Father and Son is _____ both to who God is and to the works that God accomplishes.

John 14:10-11—¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

2. Scripture also speaks of God the Father in relation to His _____.

⇒ *The Father sends the Son to give new life to those who would believe in Him.*

John 5:21,24,26—²¹For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will...²⁴Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life...²⁶For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.

* The _____ of the Son which is given those who believe, has its source in the Father.

⇒ *Those who believe in the Son are adopted into the household of the Father.*

Rom. 8:15-17—¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

“[a] The adopted person lost all rights in his old family, and gained all the rights of his new family, [b] He became heir to his new father’s estate, [c] The old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out. For instance, legally, all debts were cancelled; they were wiped out as if they had never been, [d] In the eyes of the law the adopted person was literally and absolutely the son of his new father.”
—Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*

* Believers are set free from _____ (to sin and to the Law).

* Believers are given the new status of firstborn “_____.”

* Believers now have a new relationship with the Father because of _____ with the Son.

Key Point: The Father sent His one and only Son in order that He might _____ mankind and restore the relationship that they had forfeited through their rebellion.

John 1:12-13—¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Concluding Thoughts

1. To confess God as our Father is to claim to have a _____ relationship with Him.

2. To confess God as our Father is to claim that He is _____ involved in our lives.