

CREDO

- "I Believe" -

The Christian Faith in a Faithless World

Part 6

"Savior, Like a Shepherd, Lead Us"

1 March 2020

Introduction: Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

- In our day, many who claim to believe in God tend to articulate a certain set of beliefs that have come to be referred to by sociologists as MTD:
 - God exists. He made everything and watches over things.
 - God wants people to be good, nice, and fair with one another.
 - The goal of life is to be happy and feel good about oneself.
 - God main involvement in our lives is to help with problems.
 - Good people go to heaven when they die.

"The result is a nation where gurus and therapists have filled the roles once occupied by spouses and friends, and where professional caregivers minister, like seraphim around the throne, to the needs of people taught from infancy to look inside themselves for God. Therapeutic religion promises contentment, but in many cases it seems to deliver a sort of isolation that's at once comfortable and terrible—leaving us alone with the universe, alone with the God within." —Ross Douhat, *Bad Religion*

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.

Key Point: When we confess that we believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord, we are declaring Him to be our Savior who restores our relationship with God and our Shepherd who cares for us throughout all of our days.

The Person of the Son

"The riches of divine revelation embodied in Jesus Christ are as measureless as the ocean and His perfections as numberless as the stars. To attempt to state in complete theological form all that should be said about Jesus Christ leaves the writer with a sense of futility. He has dipped but a cup from the ocean of infinite glory and perfections of his Lord and Savior." - John Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord*

His Name: "Jesus Christ"

- We believe that the Son is our *Savior*.

"Jesus" – Ιησους (Iēsous), יֵשׁוּעַ (Jeshua) a later form for יְהוֹשֻׁעַ (Jehoshua) – "Jehovah is Salvation" or "the Savior of Jehovah."

⇒ This name recognizes the truth that salvation is found in the Lord (Yahweh/Jehovah) alone.

Isa. 43:11-12—¹¹I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no savior. ¹²I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and I am God.

⇒ This name recalls God's past work of redemption (the Exodus) and anticipates a future, greater work of redemption.

Num. 13:16—These were...the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua.

Isa. 45:22-23—²²"Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. ²³By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'

Key Point: Confessing Jesus as our Savior means recognizing that we needed to be saved!

- We believe that the Son is the *Messiah*.

"Christ" – Χριστός (Christos), מָשִׁיחַ (Mashiyach) – anointed or "Anointed One."

⇒ This name recalls the anointing associated with the three OT offices (prophet , priest , & king)

* While these offices were for the most part exercised independent of one another, there were two key OT figures in particular that exercised aspects of all three simultaneously:

(1) Moses

Prophet? (Deut. 18:15)

Priest? (Exod. 40:9-15)

King? (Exod. 18:26)

(2) David

Prophet? (Acts 2:29-31)

Priest? (2 Sam. 6:13,17-18)

King? (1 Sam. 16:12-13)

⇒ **This name recognizes that Jesus is the promised One of God.**

Acts 3:18—But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he this fulfilled.

Acts 26:22-23—²²To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: ²³that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

Key Point: Confessing Jesus as Messiah means recognizing that we need to be taught, ministered to, and lead.

His Nature: “The Only Son”

- **We believe that the Son is one with the Father, and is therefore God.**

John 1:1-3,18—¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made...¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

John 10:30-33—³⁰I and the Father are one.” ³¹The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. ³²Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” ³³The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.”

Vital Theological Truths

1. The Son has always been Son to the Father.
2. The Son is of the same nature as the Father.
3. The Son shares all of the attributes of the Father

“The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit is eternal. And yet there are not three eternal beings; there is but one eternal being. So too there are not three uncreated or immeasurable beings; there is but one uncreated and immeasurable being.”

—The Athanasian Creed, (6th C.)

Key Point: Confessing Jesus as the Son of God means recognizing that He is to be worshiped.

Our Response: “Jesus is Lord”

- **We believe that Jesus is our Lord because Jesus is the LORD.**

Jude 4-5—⁴For certain people have crept in unnoticed who...deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. ⁵Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

- **We believe that Jesus is our Lord and therefore our lives are not our own. (We are His servants !)**

1 Cor. 6:19-20—¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Rom. 8:9—You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

- **We believe that Jesus, rather than Caesar, is Lord.**

Acts 17:6b-7—^{6b}“These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, ⁷and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.”

Concluding Thoughts

1. The person and work of the Lord Jesus is the heart of what we as Christians believe.
2. We are not as strong as we think we are.

Psalms 23

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.

³ He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name’s sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in
the house of the LORD forever.