

How Big is My Vision of Jesus? St. Chad's March 31, 2019

Apostles creed ca.200AD	Nicene creed 325 & 381 AD	
I believe in God the Father Almighty creator of heaven and earth	We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker <i>of heaven and earth</i> , of all that is, seen and unseen	Changed from 'I believe' to 'We believe.' 1971
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.	We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, <u>of one Being</u> with the Father, through him all things were made.	O Come all ye faithful BCP very God of very Greek homoousios 'of one substance'; not homoiousios 'of like substance'.

Part I What does believing in Jesus Mean for my Life?

Ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it. Jeremiah 6.18
The creeds have been agreed by all the major churches for 15 centuries.
They are the ancient paths.

The Apostles creed is a Trinitarian Creed with a Jesus creed inserted.

1 I believe in ..

To 'believe in' is to 'throw my weight upon'. We take a risk and act assuming that what we know with our head is true.

Faith is a gift from God, Ephesians 2.8. But we can feed it.

We know when our belief has taken hold of us.

2 I believe in Jesus Christ

I believe that.. Jesus is God's Christ, his anointed one, his long promised Messiah, who has come to save.

You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins Mt.1.21

Jesus means 'he saves'. And not just Israel; - all humanity.

Say '***I believe in Jesus Christ who saves me.*** How does that feel?

3 I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son

God chose 'Son' – a struggle for the right language.

You are my much-loved Son; I am very pleased with you. Lk.3.22

He asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' They reply, 'Some say, John the Baptist, some Elijah, or Jeremiah'. 'Who do you say I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God'. Mt.16.13-6

Simon, how blessed you are. This has not been revealed to you by human flesh and blood; it's my Father in heaven - he has revealed it. 16.17

God has revealed it and given Peter faith.. Peter knows it. He speaks with complete conviction. *'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God'.*

Say ***'Jesus, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'*** Feel?

You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. 16.18,19

A promise for all subsequent popes? Or Jesus' gift to each believer of the keys that unlock heavens' blessings for others?

4 I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord

Christians had to sprinkle incense and say, 'Caesar is Lord'. Some refused and were martyred. Jesus as Lord challenges every political system.

Thomas had refused to believe his fellow disciples saying they had seen Jesus alive in the Upper Room. When Jesus appeared the second time he showed Thomas the nail marks in his hands and side. Thomas surrendered, saying, *My Lord and my God!* The believer's response.

Jesus says, *Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen but believe.* 20.29

For us: in any situation, 'Lord Jesus, what is your will?'

Say ***My Lord and my God!***

I throw my weight on Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

Part II How Fully is Jesus God? The Nicene Creed

4th century, to settle long standing arguments about the Trinity. Unless we understand and believe how great Jesus is – our God is far too small.

1. His eternal being.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, Eternally begotten of the Father, begotten not made.

Struggling with language. The Son was eternally generated, begotten, given birth to, before time or anything else. Amazing!

Colossians 1.15 *the first born of all creation; v.17 he is before all things.*

Wisdom, Proverbs ch.8: *The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago. I was set up at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth.* 8. 22-24

Then I was beside him, like a master worker, 8.30

St. John: *In the beginning was the Word* 1.1 Jesus called The Word.

Applications: 1 Answers one heresy, that Jesus had a normal birth by a human father, Joseph; but God by his Spirit adopted him.

2 Explains ‘God is love’. Love is between beings. You can’t have love if there is no other being. In God’s eternal being there is passionate love between Father and Son. God is a Holy Trinity of Love.

2 He is fully God

God from God; Light from Light; True God from true God, Of one Being with the Father.

‘How can a God who is One generate a being from himself, without making two?’ Problem for muslims and Jehovah’s Witnesses.

But this is God. How can we possibly understand him with our finite human minds? We are completely dependent on what he reveals about himself. We must not exalt our minds over what he reveals.

Col 1.15. *the image of the invisible God.* Jesus, is a perfect image of the source, the Father, a perfect reflection.

v.19 *in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.*

St. John *The Word was with God and the Word was God.* 1.2
In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men/all humanity. 1.4
Through the eternal being, Jesus, God pours out his breathtaking Life.

Of one Being with the Father -Greek 'of one substance'. Out of the same spiritual stuff. The heretics were saying, 'out of stuff like the Father God'.

The Church said, No; not like substance - the same substance.
'You can't be God by halves: therefore fully God, or not God.
Application: we can pray equally to Father, Son or Holy Spirit.

3 His role in creation

Of one being with the Father, through him all things were made.

1 God created all things through Jesus.

2 Jesus now holds creation together. The destiny of creation is Jesus.

Hebrew thought: word is like a speech bubble in a cartoon: the speaker expressing themselves, *and God said, 'let there be light.'* Genesis 1.

Colossians 1.16 *In him all things were created – all things have been created in him and for him. He is before all things and in him all things hold together.*

Hebrews 1.3 *upholding all things by the word of his power*

John 1.3 *All things became through him; without him not one thing became which has become.*

Greek thought: the Word, logos, also Wisdom, is the rational principle holding everything in the universe together.

St. John: That's Jesus! He who is fully God holds together the whole universe. Jesus, the Son, The Word, Wisdom.

The Vision: The eternally generated Son, Jesus, is the complete and full expression of our God who is love in his eternal being; who both created everything as the Word who spoke, (the speech bubble) and now sustains the whole universe, holding it in its God given rational order. I think it is wonderful!

Group Questions 1 How has your vision of Jesus changed?

2 How do you struggle to believe what God has revealed?

3 Is 'Lord, what is your will?' too difficult?

4 What does it mean to be given the keys of the kingdom of heaven?