

CREED

STUDY GUIDE

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. -- COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

THE POINT: We believe Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, and He is both fully God and fully human.

The Apostles' Creed proclaims the load-bearing walls of the Christian faith. It identifies for us the essentials, the non-negotiables, and the irreducible minimums from the Bible. The Creed has no authority on its own except that it points to the Bible and affirms the three persons in one of the Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit.

Last week we began this series by looking at God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth—an infinitely powerful, yet intensely personal Father. Today we continue with God the Son. Of the 24 statements in the Creed, 14 are dedicated to Jesus. At the center of the Creed and the center of the Christian faith is Jesus. Simply put, Jesus' identity and ancestry are the load-bearing walls of the Christian faith.

Once we understand who Jesus is—this God who put on flesh and came into the world to save it—then we, as His followers, will understand that we are also to approach the broken world with open hands and generosity; to be FOR our city and FOR the people Jesus came to save.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Answer the questions below as a group:

1. The theologian Sinclair Paterson said, "Take away from Christianity the name and person of Jesus Christ and what have you left? Nothing!" The Apostles' Creed proclaims that the whole substance and strength of the Christian faith is Jesus Christ. What would your belief and faith look like without Jesus?
2. Jesus' identity is the first load-bearing wall in our faith. The first part of His identity centers around His name: Jesus. Studies have shown that our names may influence our success in life. What does the name "Jesus" mean and why was this God-given name necessary for His assignment?
3. The second part of His identity centers around His title: The Christ. The title "Christ", or CRISTOS in the Hebrew Old Testament, means "King." We often call Jesus "King" when we talk about Him, but what does it really mean for Jesus to be the King of your life?
4. The third part of His identity is that He is God's only Son. Jesus is the only individual to claim and be proclaimed to be co-eternal with God and have all the authority of God. Since people rarely question the goodness of Jesus, why do you think this identity provokes such strong reactions from people?
5. The second load-bearing wall is ancestry. The Creed states that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit AND born of the virgin Mary; that Jesus is fully God AND fully man. Why is it essential to understand how Jesus entered the world?

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NEXT STEPS

- 1. Train Your Soul:** Last week we begin a practice called the one-minute pause where we were to find two or more times in our busy/hectic day to take a minute to be intentionally in relationship with God. We also talked about a tool to accomplish this called the One Minute Pause App (www.pauseapp.com). This week use this intentional time to focus on Jesus and being quiet. Remember, God promises to speak to us in a still, quiet voice. We just have to be willing to be quiet and seek Him.
- 2. Know Your Why:** Continue to read or recite the Apostles' Creed daily and reflect on its truths. In addition, read and reflect daily on one of the following scriptures: **Colossians 1:15-20, Matthew 1:21, Matthew 16:13-16, John 1:1-2, or John 3:17.**
- 3. Know What You're FOR:** Make a plan for you or your Group to leverage your time, resources, talent, or even your home to be FOR our city and the people Jesus came to save.

North Ridge Church is a movement FOR all people to discover and deepen a relationship with Jesus.