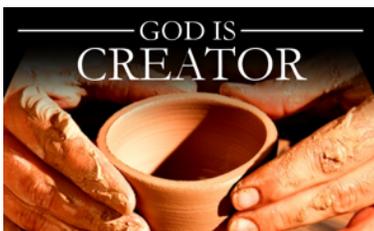




I Believe

...in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.



O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him....
Psalm 8:1

In the late 1980s only “13% of U.S. adults expressed serious doubts about the existence of God. ... 30% had serious doubts by 2014, more than twice as many,” according to the General Social Survey. And yet that same study showed that while 70% of Americans believe in God (in some form or other), 80% believe in an afterlife.

In a “man on the street” interview, one individual said “I believe in God, but I try not to let it affect my life.”

It’s not enough to believe; it really matters what we believe.

The Apostles Creed says, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth...”

Jesus said, “When you pray say, “Our Father, who art in heaven....” The word Jesus would have used for Father is ‘Abba.’” It is a term of affection and intimacy used by children of their fathers. God reveals through the New Testament that we can have a warm, affectionate, personal relationship with Him. He gives us life (John 3:3); He loves us (John 3:16); He rewards our efforts (Hebrews 11:6); He communicates with us through His Word (John 17:17; Ephesians 1:13; Colossians 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 2:13); He corrects us

lovingly (Hebrews 12:3-11); and, most important, He will grant us the ultimate gift of life.

Ephesians 3:14-15 states, “For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.”

The Creed also says we believe God is “Almighty.” “Almighty” translates the Latin *omnipotens* (omnipotent) and the Greek *pantokrator* (ruler of all things). Interestingly, in the New Testament, “Almighty” is found only in Revelation. Obviously, however, just because the specific word *pantokrator* is rarely used, the affirmation that God is all-powerful and the ruler of all things is found from Genesis to Revelation.

God is in charge. This is God’s cosmos. His purposes for his cosmos will be accomplished. We also affirm that God is the creator of all things. If it exists, God created it. The classic Christian doctrine is that God created everything *ex nihilo*, from nothing. There was no pre-existing raw material that God worked with.

God simply created. And not just the material stuff of the cosmos, but the immaterial as well. Again, if it exists – at all, in any form – God created it. And God created it “good.”

- Is it difficult to think of God as both Father and Almighty at the same time?

- Read Acts 17:22-34

Christians don’t just believe ideas—we believe in someone. The Apostles’ Creed, like Paul, made it plain that Christians trust in a personal, life-giving, loving God, not just a vague, abstract force.

- Do you tend to agree when Paul said, “God isn’t far away from any of us,” or do you struggle to believe that is true?

- How can we, too, share our faith with non-religious and nominally religious people without condemning them?

- Read Isaiah 40:26-31

This Isaiah passage spoke to weary Israelites facing a long, hard trip on foot from Babylon to Israel after years of exile. They were tempted to think God didn’t see their hardships. The prophet invited his readers (and us) to trust where we don’t understand, — to “hope in the Lord” for renewed strength.”

- Are you comfortable in “letting go” and trusting God to handle all the bad stuff?



God the Father created the universe and everything in it. He is a big God but at the same time is a personal God who knows each person's every need.

