# Apostles' Creed - Adult SS - Lesson 1: God

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Preacher: Andrew Kueh

[0:00] So we're starting a new series this half term on the Apostles' Creed. And I want to do this because over this term and over next term,! we're going to be thinking about the essentials of the Christian faith.

What are the core truths that we hold to in the Christian life? And so next term, we'll be looking at the Ten Commandments. And last half term, we saw Jesus teaches us the essentials in the Lord's Prayer.
Well, here we have another great summary of the essentials. But this isn't a prayer we're looking at. This is a creed. But I want us to kind of jump straight in and think, what is a creed?
What is this thing we're looking at in that grey box called the Apostles' Creed? But what is this thing that we say every Sunday? We're going to be saying it later in the service. Well, I just want to give you a very quick history of the Apostles' Creed.
Okay, so the word creed, it comes from the Latin word credo, which means I believe. Okay, O just means I. So I believe.
[1:09] And so you have credo. Shorten that to creed. Boom. There you go. You've got creed. And creeds developed in the Christian church as statements of what we believe as Christians.

There were lots of other creeds. Creeds kind of appear a lot of times in history. And they're there to kind of establish what are the core essential truths of the Christian faith.
And they were often used as confessions before an adult baptism. So a minister, so someone might come up for a baptism, an adult might come up, and then the minister would ask, Okay, before we baptise you, I've got some questions.
A bit like what we do in IPC then. And he might ask, Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty? I do. Do you believe in his only son, the Lord Jesus Christ? I do.
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? I do. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?
[2:30] Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? And in saying a creed, it's almost like the Pledge of Allegiance. It's kind of like saying, as a Christian, I'm not with the world or the flesh or the devil.

No, I am with God. And this is the God I believe in. And then they would say it. And so that is what a creed is, okay? But what is special about the Apostles' Creed is that this is one of the earliest and it is the longest lasting creed.
And so it can be traced back to about the middle of the second century, about 150 AD. So basically, 100 years after the crucifixion, Christians started to say, this is, these are the core truths.
This is what is key about Christianity. And it kind of, it started very early on. And it's just been there ever since. And it's called the Apostles' Creed. And not because it was written by the apostles. Remember, it's about 100 years after. No, it came after. And it's called this because it summarises the apostles' teaching. And we hold it, we hold to this creed here in IPC Ealing.
[3:50] We say it every Sunday. You've got to agree to this to be a church member here in IPC. And so basically, for the whole life of Christianity, Christians from every age and around the world have agreed, these words, this is what is essential to our faith.

This is what makes the church unique. This is authentic Christianity. And so if you want to simplify it, you can think of the Apostles' Creed as two things. The Apostles' Creed, it's a map and it's a marker.
So you can think of the creed as a map of the Christian faith. It's a guide to show us what are the essential truths that the Bible teaches.
But it's not a detailed map. So if the Bible was a map, the Bible would be like the ordnance survey map. You know those big maps you pull out and it's got every single detail there.

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So it's got every place name, every little landmark, every contour of every hill and the exact height and everything like that. So that would be the Bible.
[4:57] But the Apostles' Creed, it's more like the map that you would have on the back of a flyer. You know the simplified maps we get like on the Christmas flyer in IPC Ealing.

Turn on the back and it's kind of this simplified block map. And it kind of shows you, well, there's West Ealing, there's Drayton Green, there's Argyle Road and boom, you've got the church in the centre, right?
And those maps are there to say, here are the essential things to get you to the destination. Well, the Apostles' Creed, it's kind of like that type of map. Here are the most essential things to guide you through the Christian faith.
Truly get this, you truly have the Christian faith. And so it's not the Bible, so we're not kind of resting our hope on this like we do the Bible, but it's an essential summary of biblical truth.
And so it's a map, but it's also a marker, meaning it marks out what Christians believe and markers different from everyone else. So the church is built on these truths and the world isn't.
[6:09] Okay, so look at Ephesians 2. Look what it says about the church. You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, the church.

Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone. Okay, so what is the church built on, do you see?
The apostles, teaching, truth, doctrine. And look at 1 Timothy 3. The church of the living God is a pillar and buttress of the truth, an upholder of the truth.
And so, think of it like this. The church has a foundation. So this is the church and we're in it. The church is built on something. It rests on something.
It requires something to exist. It has a foundation and it's the apostles. Also the prophets, which are people that spoke apostolic teaching.
[7:12] And obviously Christ is kind of the more even foundational foundation. But for this, for the apostles' creed's sake, let's just think of it like this, right? The church is built on the teaching of the apostles.

It's marked out by truth. And so the world out here, the world, the world out here, it is not built on that foundation.
It's not resting on that foundation. Only the church is. But what is that truth? Right? So it is built on truth.
What is that truth? Well, it's the Bible. It's the ordinance survey map, right? That's got everything. Okay, but what are the key truths that if you take them out of this foundation, the whole foundation just crumbles?
But what are those truths? Well, it's summed up as the apostles' creed. All right, that's the summary of the foundation.
[8:15] And so what we have here in front of us, it's a map and it's a marker. And over the next few weeks, I want us to look at this map and kind of dig into the foundations that we're all standing on.

And so this will cover a fair bit of stuff that we've already done in Sunday school. We're going to look at God and the Trinity and atonement and eternal life, the second coming, stuff like that.
But I want us to kind of pull it together and look at it in a new light and realise that this is what Christians have always believed. And these are the essential foundational truths of the Christian faith.
And today, I just want us to look at that first section. So we'll break it up into sections. But I just want us to look at that first section. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
And I want to break it into three parts. So let's just look at those first three words, I believe in. To begin, I want you to break out into groups and just think about these three statements.
[9:24] What are the different ways each of these statements are using the phrase, I believe? I want us to think about, I believe. What does that mean? Break out in groups. I'll give you a minute for this. How are they using, I believe?

How are they using, I believe?
How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe?

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How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe? How are they using, I believe?
How are they using, I believe? 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds 30 more seconds and I trust it so much, I'm going to step on it and put my life on it.
[13:14] I'm going to climb all the way to the top. Well, that third statement there, that is like how the Apostles' Creed is using I believe. I believe, it means I trust.

So this isn't just wishful thinking about something we can't see. It's not just my opinion. No, we are saying I trust that I can step onto these truths and put my life on the line for this.
And so when we say this together as a church, we are saying more than this is what the Bible teaches, although this is what the Bible teaches, and we are saying more than these are the facts of the Christian religion, but even more than that, we are saying these are the truths that I'm building my life on.
Or specifically, this is the God I am building my life on. So just notice all the beliefs, just kind of scan the whole creed there.
Notice all the beliefs in the creed, those three beliefs, they're not I believe about something, but I believe in someone.
[14:22] I believe in this God and I'm building my life on him. So this creed is not just about what we believe, although it contains all that, but who we believe in.

And notice it is all I believe. These truths need to be held personally. It's no use for us to say, well, these people out there believe this, or, well, I've heard the Bible say this.
No, these truths, to be of any benefit to us, we must say, I believe this. I am building my life on someone. And who is that?
Well, let's look at the next few words. I believe in God, the Father. So if we're standing on a foundation, right? We're building our lives.
The church is built on a foundation. The church is upheld by truth. We're now kind of looking into that foundation, opening up the concrete, you could say, seeing who we believe in.
[15:29] And how does the creed begin? I believe in God, the Father. What is essential to the Christian faith is that we believe in God.

We trust in him. God is the centre of all of this creed. And so this, let's just think about the world now, this immediately opposes atheism, doesn't it?
An essential Christian truth is that God really does exist. So look at Hebrews 11. Whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.
He exists and he is gracious. The Christian says, I believe there really is a God, one God, and my existence centres around him.
And whatever I do in life, I am building everything on this truth here. Everything connects to this truth here, God. But it also matters which God, doesn't it?
[16:32] Because Muslims believe in a God. Ancient Greeks believe in many gods. But the creed mentions not just any gods, but it clarifies.

I believe in God, the Father. This is the one true God. Which means, just in these words, this is opening up to us the whole doctrine of the Trinity.
Because to be Father means, necessarily, there is a son. What is foundational for the Christian faith is belief in the Trinity.
And so this isn't the doctrine of the Trinity, the teaching about the Trinity. This isn't just kind of like the advanced stuff of the Christian life. You know, when you get a little bit older, then we can start to think about the Trinity and talk about the Trinity.

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Or kind of, oh, well, we'll only discuss after the morning coffee, you know, stuff like that. No, no, no. This is not just a tricky teaching that some Christians are interested in, or maybe it's more for the advanced, but it's not really a central issue.
[17:41] No, no, no. You take the Trinity out of the foundation, everything crumbles. Because look, this whole creed is structured around the Trinity.

It's all about belief, trust in the Trinity. So do you see how the creed, if you flip back over, do you see how the creed, it's split up into three parts there, with each heading saying, I believe, right? And so who are the three that we believe in? I believe in God the Father. I believe in Jesus Christ's only Son.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit. And you see under each person, there's something kind of unique focused on them. There's a specific work that they do in history.
And so you can only understand God and all his work in this world if you understand the Trinity. And the creed here, it's giving us a really helpful map, remember, simplified map, a summary of the Trinity.
[18:50] And this matches what we've seen in Sunday school before, okay? So just have a look. Again, just scan the creed quickly. How many gods does the creed mention? One, right?

I believe in God, the Father Almighty. I believe in one God, but there are three names mentioned, three persons. Who do we believe in?
Yes, one God, but we believe in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But there's only one God we believe in, not three gods. And so you have here already the teaching of the Trinity.
We believe in one God who exists in three persons. And so, if you've been in my Doctrine of God class, you'll remember this, right?
So you can think of the teaching of the Trinity like this, right? We're not drawing a picture of God, we're not drawing a picture of the Trinity. We're trying to just draw a diagram conveying what the words say that we believe, right?
[19:52] So how many gods are there that we believe in? We believe in one God, right? That's one line, right? One God. But we believe also in three persons.

There's Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So one God, three persons.
Okay? And each are fully and truly God, right? Not parts of God, not a third of God each, right? If you are a person and touching this line, you have all the line.
Say that, right? So there is one being of God, one of what God is, and three persons. But it not only mentions the persons, but what they do.
And the way the creed divides this up is really important. Okay. When God acts in history, the Father's work has a focus.
[21:01] What does the creed focus on? Creating. Beginning things, right? So when you see the Father act in this world, he focuses on, he creates, or he begins.

He begins things. That isn't to say that the Son and the Holy Spirit aren't a part of that creation. We'll get onto that in a moment. But kind of the focus is on the Father.
And the Son's work, just look at all those things mentioned, it's all about salvation, isn't it? Redemption. There's the birth, the cross, the resurrection. The Son's work in history is all about redemption.
salvation. Salvation. Salvation. Right. And what's the Holy Spirit's focus?
It's all about new creation. Right? The application of all of Christ's work and bringing it to us. So what do we have here? Church, forgiveness, resurrection, life everlasting.
[22:12] So you have the focus of the Spirit's work is new creation. The application of all the stuff that Christ's done.

And this is how the Trinity is revealed in history. Okay? So there is one God. Remember, one God. And he acts as one.
Right? This isn't three different words that are separate. This isn't kind of like a team joining up, doing three different words. Now this is one work. So one work. But in time, when God, the eternal God, acts in time, it's a bit like a beam of light going through a prism.
You know? A dispersion. So this isn't the best analogy. There's no analogy that truly works because there are different wavelengths in light. I get all that, but roll with me here.
Right? The one beam of light, one work of God. But when that hits the prism of time and history, we see that one work kind of disperse and we see different focuses of the Father, Son, and Spirit's

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work.
[23:29] Right? A bit like one beam of light disperses into revealing the three persons of the Trinity.

And now, his preponification is not three works. It's not a team doing three different things. It is one God, but we see in quite a mysterious way the one God acting in three persons.
And when we see his actions in history in this world, we see there is a focus to each of these persons, a focus of their work. The Father creates the world or he plans salvation.
The Son is sent to achieve that, accomplish that plan. and the Spirit applies all that the Son has done.
And so, all these truths of the Christian faith, so creation, crucifixion, church, resurrection, they are all tied together by the Trinity. And so, the Trinity is absolutely essential to what we believe.
[24:45] You can't make sense of anything in the Christian faith without the Trinity. And so, to say right at the beginning, I believe in God the Father, it opens up the door to all of this.

If you believe God is Father, you believe he has a Son. And if you believe in the Son, you believe in the Spirit that he sent. And in this creed, we are saying, this is the God I believe in.
And I pledge my allegiance to him and all that he is and that he does. I'm building my life on this. I trust in this God. But the creed doesn't stop there.
We don't only believe in who God is, but what God is like. God is almighty creator of heaven and earth.
I might stop there just for a minute for questions about this. Anything that we've thought about so far? So far clarification.
[25:52] Anything? Great. Let's keep going on. So, we're now looking at what God is, what he's like.

So these words sum up an important truth about the Bible. God is the creator. He's made everything. So when it says heaven and earth, it means all things, right?
It's basically a way of saying the A to Z of everything. From heaven up there to the earth down here and everything in between. God made it all. And it's just the first truth of the Bible.
Genesis 1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Everything. And this is a foundational truth of the Christian faith. When it comes to God and the world, there is the creator-creature distinction.
And this, this truth just summarizes most of my drawings, actually. Let's do it here. Let's do it here. This is just most of my drawings.
[26:55] So there is, let's do it here. So there is one God. There's one God. And he made all things.

So he's the one God and in time he has made all things. And we're saying all things, it's heaven and earth.
That's how the Bible says all things. There you go. And so there is a big distinction going on here. A big separation distinction. There is creation and then there is God. There is the creature, the thing created, and there is the creator.
And we must never blur those lines. You can never kind of cross that boundary and become one or the other. Although in the incarnation it's a little bit different.
[27:59] but God never ceases to be God. And the creation never can become the creator. There is God and then there is the creature and there is a distinction between the two.

And this, and so that means all things are from him and sustained by him and rely on him. Remember, we were thinking about that in the Lord's Prayer.
Everything's dependent on God. God. And just as we see the beginning of this creed, we need to realise this is what Christians have always believed. And I don't know if they ever did diagrams like this, right?
But this isn't just some kind of fancy idea that we're coming up with in Sunday school and finding fancy drawings about it. No. They believe this from the very beginning.
And I know this might seem just quite basic, and I know we've seen these drawings a lot, but this is actually such a radical thing for us to confess. Let's just stop and think about this. We are saying here, I have an owner.
[29:03] I have a creator, and this world belongs to someone. This isn't here randomly. All of this, it doesn't belong to us.

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No, this is God's property. And therefore, it's meaning, it's found in God. It's purpose, it's only from God. And this place will only make sense with God.
Therefore, I believe in him. I am building my life on him. I believe in the creator of heaven and earth. But look what else we believe about God.
He is almighty. Now, almighty, if you've been listening to the kids talk, what does almighty mean? God's omnipotence. Here's a word you can add to your theology vocabulary.
Omnipotence, it's just a fancy word of saying, God is all-powerful. And here's a way to remember it. So, omni means totally, completely. Omni and potent means strong, powerful.
[30:11] So, think of a smell. When a smell is really strong and powerful, you say, well, that's really potent. Omni-potent. Well, God is omnipotent, almighty.

And I want you to break out and see what that means. So, this will overlap with some of the stuff we saw in God's sovereignty, but it's always, always a helpful reminder. This is foundational. So, look at these verses.
What does it mean that God is almighty, omnipotent? And then I've got a second question for you to discuss. Can God make an object so heavy that he cannot move it?
Break out in groups, discuss. Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
[31:33] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

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[33:45] Thank you.

Thank you.
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Thank you.
[36:15] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Yeah. Yeah. So does that mean God cannot do something? No. Okay.
[38:41] Okay. Okay. So, so we can't do something then? All right. So you're rejecting the question entirely.

All right. Okay. Okay. All right. I like that. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. because God is perfect and totally consistent, He could. He could. There's no contradiction in Him, so He's not going to ever do one thing that would limit Him in another way. Then, there's another discussion where we thought, well, there's nothing that He can remove.
So maybe the verb is wrong, and can it God make a world? Would God make it? I'm lacking all these answers. No.
[39:41] Great. So, what my professor did, he wrote on the chalkboard, he said, okay, I'm going to answer this question, here's the answer. He covered the answer, and then he asked the question, and then he wrote the answer.

So, here is the answer, but I'm doing a big red writing, right? Can God make an object that He cannot move? Okay? Here's the answer. No. Right.
That is the answer. But, you both are very, very right in thinking that this question has completely the wrong assumptions. Okay? And there's more to it, right?
So, if we would think, well, then God can't do something, we need to realise, omnipotence doesn't mean God can do anything.
Right? Can God sin? No. No. Can God lie? No. There are things God cannot do, but omnipotence means, not that He can do anything, omnipotence means God's power is perfect.

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[40:43] And so, God cannot do something that will make Him imperfect. As Louisa said, absolutely rightly, God cannot be inconsistent with Himself.

That's why He cannot sin and why He cannot lie. He's the God of truth. He's the God of holiness. And so, no, God cannot make an object so heavy that He cannot move it, because that would deny His omnipotence.
Right? That wouldn't be consistent with it. And He would cease to be God Almighty in that case. And that, when He realised, that isn't a weakness. That isn't kind of, well, God cannot do something, okay, He's lacking, that's a weakness to Him.
No. To say God cannot sin or that He cannot make something more powerful than Himself, that's not a weakness. That is actually the strength of His omnipotence. And this is foundational to the Christian faith.
We do not believe in a weak God. We are not building our lives on a weak foundation here. No, God made all things, and He's almighty over all things.
[41:48] And by saying this creed, but by holding to it, we are saying, my purpose and my meaning and my whole life and future, it is in His hands.

And this is what we stand on. It is a solid foundation. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. But not only that, He's done something in this world.
God has sent His Son to save it. But we're going to see that next week as we look at the next article.

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