

Trinity Sunday – Why the Creeds?
11th June 2017

INTRO

“Oh, no! Here we go again!”

I. WHY DO WE HAVE CREEDS? - Isn't the Bible Sufficient?

A. Is the Holy Spirit Still at Work?

B. How Hard Is It to Read?

- How big is an elephant?

The one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things both visible and invisible. -
Article I, Thirty Nine Articles of Faith

- We begin everything with the infinite mystery
- How difficult must it be to truly understand the things of God?

C. Are Two Heads Better than One?

II. WHAT CAN THE CREEDS DO FOR ME?

A. We All Read the Bible ...

- Knowing the Boundaries
- Reading Scripture rightly

B. The Right Words Matter

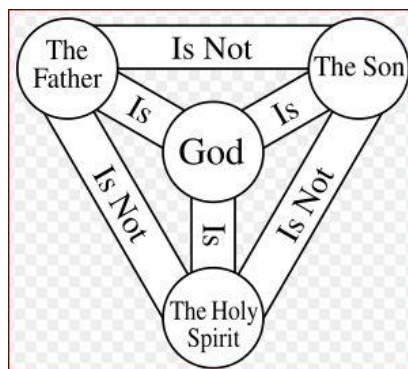
- What's the difference? “Jesus is a God” vs. “Jesus is God”

III. HOW DO WE USE THE CREEDS?

- Nicene Creed – The basics (from the IV. Century AD)
- Apostle Creed – Baptismal formula (as early at II Century AD)
- Athanasian Creed - Keeping the great mysteries of the faith pure (from the teaching of St. Athanasius (IV C. AD) and St. Augustine (IV-V C. AD) but written in late V. C. AD)

IV. THE ATHANASIAN CREED – You pick.....

1. Graphical analogy -



2. Grammatical/Logical Analogy –

- The Father is God, but does not exhaust the category of “deity.”
- The Son is God, but does not exhaust the category of “deity.”
- The Holy Spirit is God, but does not exhaust the category of “deity.”
- The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are God and fully fill up all that the Godhead is – and fully exhaust the category of “deity.”

3. The Relational Analogy –

- The Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist as a unity, but live in constant, joyful, and perfect relationship to one another.
- Who is the Father? The one who begets the Son before all time, before all eternity, before anything.
- Who is the Son? He is the one eternally begotten by the Father.
- Who is the Holy Spirit? He is the one who proceeds from the Father, through the Son.

V. THE DOCTRINE AT WORK IN EVERYDAY LIFE

A. In Your Prayers:

Since all three persons are God by nature, therefore prayer may be addressed to Father, Son, or Holy Spirit as God, as each person serves as representation to us of God. But more often we speak of prayer to the Father, through the Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

B. In Your personal Experience:

Since all three persons are God by nature - we can rightly speak of God dwelling in us. This is true and acceptable. But more precisely, it is the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, for Jesus' has a body and is dwelling at God's right hand.

C. In Living in Relationship with Others:

1. In the Trinity there is equality of honor and dignity, but diversity of roles:

- *The Father, wills all things and ordains their existence; but He did not die on the cross*
- *The Son is the vehicle and channel through which all things come into existence and are sustained in existence; but he did/does so by the will of the Father*
- *The Spirit is the energy and force by which the Son creates all things according to the will and purposes of the Father, but the Spirit's mission is to glorify the Father & the Son*
- *Hence, when we say "Jesus is Lord of All," we mean Lord of all created things, and that all creation (angels, men and all 'stuff') are subject to Jesus by the will of God. But Jesus is subject to the Father and the Father's will in perfect, loving harmony*

Since, in the Trinity there is equality of honor and dignity, but diversity of roles, it is appropriate to having different roles and different kinds of authority in life and in the church. All this takes place without a single loss of dignity or worth. Being under authority does not demean us, but makes us like Jesus.

D. In Deciding What Matters Most Among Your Priorities

Since the very essence of Being is existing in loving relationships and in unity, there is no higher good in life than living the Truth in love and harmony with others.