

Ancient Faith Part VI

"suffered under Pontius Pilate
was crucified, died, and was buried"



Trinity Baptist Students

02/21/2018

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of Heaven and Earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day He rose again;
He ascended into Heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
And He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church (the word catholic means "universal")
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Jesus Died

After discussing the miraculous birth of Jesus, the creed moves to His death. This person who was "God's only Son, Our Lord" "was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary." This person also "suffered under Pontius Pilate".

It may seem like old news to you, but God the Son dying is quite extraordinary. This was quite unbelievable to those in the ancient world. And, this was a big point of contention between the Early Church and the world that surrounded them.

God, whom we serve, is much different than the conception "gods" that existed at this time. Deities did not come into human existence. So, the thought of any "god" becoming human was unthinkable.

That is not what we find in Scripture. Here, as we saw last week, we find God taking on human flesh and dwelling among us. And this week we will discuss God the Son dying for us.

Read together Mark 16:16-41.

Jesus Died In History

Why would it be important for the Creed not to just say that Jesus suffered, but that He “suffered under Pontius Pilate”? He seems like a rather unimportant character in the Scriptures. Why is it important that Pilate was even mentioned?

“The reference to Pilate firmly anchors the creed to history. It affirms that we are dealing with an event—the crucifixion of Jesus Christ—that actually happened in history. The gospel is not like some fairy tale that happened “long, long ago and far, far away.” Its central event happened in a definite place and at a definite time (Luke 3:1-3)....The gospel affirms that God himself entered into that history, in order to meet us and redeem us. God came down to meet us where we are, in time and space. The doctrine of the incarnation tells us that God came down to our level in order to bring us up to his. There is a certain down-to-earth realism about the Christian faith. And this is partly grounded in the fact that God came down to our earth from heaven to meet us and bring us home. The gospel is not just about ideas; it is about God acting, and continuing to act, in history.” —Alister McGrath, *I Believe*, pp. 56-57

Why We Love The Cross

The cross, which is the symbol of Christ's death, is near and dear to the believer. It seems odd doesn't it? An instrument of death is near and dear to the believer. I have not seen anyone holding an electric chair or a noose near and dear to their heart.

The reason that it is so near and dear to the believer's life is what it signifies.. The meaning of the cross and the fact that God the Son was willing to die makes the cross so significant to us.

Is the cross significant to you? _____

If it is significant to you? Why is it significant to you? _____

Our Great Problem

We will not view the death of Christ as something glorious until we understand just how badly we needed it.

Read Romans 3:23 and describe what it means.

Read Hebrews 9:27 and consider what it means for us. Make sure and keep Romans 3:23 in your mind as you read this passage.

Read Isaiah 59:2 and state what separates people from God. _____

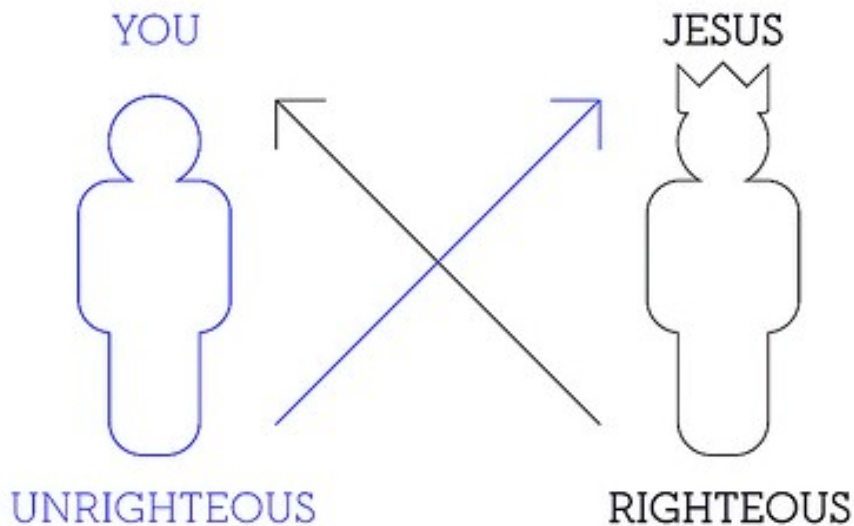
Read Psalm 5:4. Are sinful people allowed into the presence of God? _____

“The Bible doesn’t accept excuses for sin. Sinful human beings have no more place in the purity of heaven and the perfect holiness of God than do spiders on the rug of a five-star hotel.”—R.C. Sproul *What We Believe*, p. 116

The Cross and Our Problem

When we examine the Scriptures we find two things that seemingly cannot go together. The first is that God is completely and totally holy. He is separate from us and cannot be in the presence of sin. The second is that we are sinners.

It would seem that these are two things that are completely separated. How do these two things come together. Well, the cross holds the answer to this and is why it is so important to us?



Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.

What was it that Paul stated
was credited to Jesus?

What was it that Paul stated
was given to Jesus? _____

How is it that we are made right with God? _____

The Divine Curse-Bearer

Let's dig further into this transaction that was made, specifically as it pertains to the death of Christ.

Read Galatians 3:13-14

What was Jesus doing on the cross?

If one was blessed then they were equated with being in the presence of God. One who was cursed was outside of or removed from the presence of God.

"Pilate represents the legal authority of the Gentile world, Jesus is tried and judged outside the camp. "Outside the camp" was the place of separation from the covenant for the people in the wilderness. Bull, heifer and goat sin offerings were burned outside the camp *Exod. 29:14; Lev. 4:12, 21; 8:17; 9:11; 16:27; Num. 19:3,9). Criminals were executed and blasphemers were buried there (Lev. 10:4-5; 24:14, 23; Num. 15:35-36). The unclean lived there through the time of uncleanness (Lev. 13:46; 14:3; Num. 5:3-4; 12:14-15; 31:13, 19; Deut. 23:10). Outsiders remained

there until they were accepted into the covenant community (Josh. 6:23)"—R.C. Sproul, *What We Believe*, pp. 118-119

Now, read Hebrews 13:11-13

Why did Jesus die "outside the city gate"?

Read John 1:29 and answer this question. Whose curse was Jesus bearing outside the city gate?

Is Jesus' sacrifice precious to you? Is the cross precious to you? Why or Why Not?
