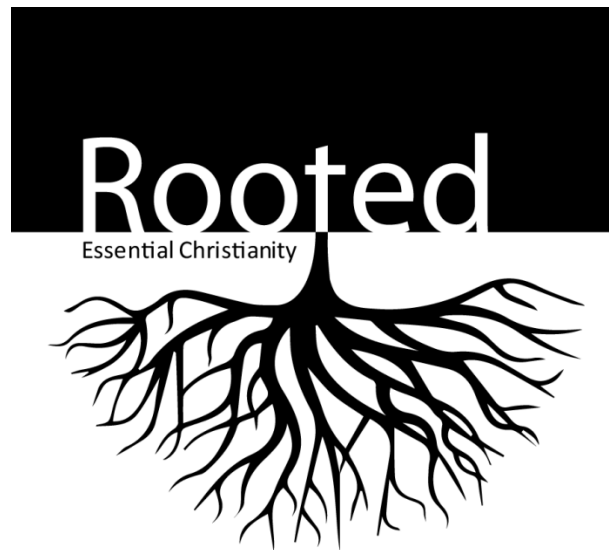




The Apostle's Creed

Part 1 – I Believe in God

Isaiah 45:22

*Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is no other.*

Composed sometime early in the third century, the *Apostle's Creed* declares those truths which must not be denied if one is to be truly Christian. Because of this, generations of Christians have found it indispensable as a tool for passing along the faith to the next generation.

The *Apostle's Creed* begins appropriately with the foundational building block of all Christian belief and practice: "I believe in God."

Main Idea: Christianity begins with confessing that our existence and salvation owes to the existence of the God revealed in Holy Scripture.

1. The undeniable fact of God's Existence

"...For I am God, and there is no other."

- Atheists do not exist. Certainly there are those who have convinced themselves that there is no God. But unbelief is achieved only through great effort. God has surrounded humanity with undeniable proof of his existence so that they "are without excuse" (Romans 1:18ff). A proper defense of the existence of God must never grant that unbelief is justified. While we must deal with the unbeliever with compassion and patience we must never assume that their unbelief is the natural consequence of a lack of evidence.
- Acts 17:25 – "In Him we live and move and have our being." Our existence does not support God. God's existence grants and upholds our existence.

2. The uniqueness of God's existence

"...For I am God, and there is no other."

- There is only one God, the Maker of heaven and earth. He is the God who reveals himself in Scripture.
- The Bible does not grant that idolaters have a legitimate reason to make and worship idols. God has made certain things known about himself which do not allow for the proliferation of idols. The Bible assumes that all men know their idolatry to be false (Rom. 1:18ff).

a) The non-existence of other gods

- *"...and there is no other."*
- The Hebrew word translated "idol" is literally "no thing," or "thing of nothing." All other gods are idols. They are no things; non-existent.
- We must resist the notion that all religions worship the same god or that the so-called "Abrahamic religions" (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) worship the same god. One opinion growing in popularity today is that these religions worship the same god but simply address him by different names. While the Scriptures teach plainly that all men "know God" (that is, everyone knows that there is an almighty Creator) this knowledge is twisted and suppressed so that it transforms into idolatry (Rom 1:21-22).
- Any religion which rejects the triune God of Scripture is idolatry for it presents an unbiblical construct for God. The non-triune gods of contemporary Judaism, Islam, and Mormonism are idols.

b) The powerlessness of other gods

- Romans 1:23 – "...and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things." Idols cannot help anyone. They cannot be drafted into the service of the worshipper. They have no power to harm, help, or heal.
- Christians ought to temper their enthusiasm over public references to an undefined "God," "Higher Power," or "Man Upstairs." Avoid calling for public "non-sectarian" prayers to an undefined god. Any god who is not the eternal Creator, the Triune God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is an idol unworthy of worship and unable to help.

3. The denial of God's existence

Psalm 14:1 – "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

Romans 1:25 – "...they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator."

- Unbelief is the result of intellectual and moral corruption. Given that God's existence is a fact written across the created order and the conscience of mankind, unbelief is not the understandable result of a lack of evidence. The unbeliever reveals that he has chosen to believe a lie and has retreated into the sin of preferred falsehood. To question or deny the existence of God is to call him a liar. Unbelief is deliberately chosen sin.
- That does not mean that we are to meet the unbeliever with an attitude of condemnation. Certainly we should exercise patience and empathy in our interactions with unbelievers. But let us never grant that their unbelief is the result of too little evidence.
- The Christian hope for unbelievers is not simply that they will acknowledge what they already know. Arguments for God's existence will not generate faith in the unbeliever. Only the gospel accomplishes that goal. Presenting evidences of God's existence may, however, further expose to the skeptic the folly of their chosen unbelief. The goal of Christian witness is not for men to acknowledge what they cannot deny. It is to see them embrace Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

4. The importance of God's existence

"Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth!"

a) The Moral Importance of God's Existence

- Psalm 14 and Romans 1 display the moral impact of atheism. History confirms the morally devastating impact of atheism. Unbelief removes the ethical and moral constraints that God has written upon the conscience of everyone. Unbelief removes those inhibitions that often restrain sin in society. Unbelief promotes prayerlessness and ungodliness thus promoting irreverence in man.
- Belief in the God who is revealed in Scripture promotes righteousness, justice, respect, compassion, and love. The God of the Bible calls upon his people to embody those virtues. What is more, since these qualities are found in God, belief offers to man a firm rationale for behaving in a way that promotes those virtues. Unbelief offers no such rationale for decency, charity, or love for neighbor.

b) The Redemptive Importance of God's Existence

- God's existence gives mankind hope for deliverance from sin and death. The gods of man's imagining cannot save or offer any hope beyond the grave. Neither can sinful mankind deliver himself from the consequences of sin. Therefore unless God intervenes graciously on behalf of sinners they have no hope for salvation.
- Isaiah 45:22 – **"Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other."**
- There is a remedy to man's tragic predicament. God is merciful and has called men and women out of all the earth to look to Him for salvation.
- It is in God's nature to save all those who turn to Him. Because He does not change, God will never revoke his promise to save any and all who turn to him.