

The Apostles Creed: Week 3

“... who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary...”

1. The next section of the Creed deals with the background of Christ's physical birth
2. While this might not seem like that big of an issue, but in this statement we read of two more crucial elements of the Christian religion
3. First, we read of the Divinity of the Spirit
 - a. This will become clearer as we walk through this portion of the creed but the fact that God in the flesh is the product of the Spirit's work is evidence that the Spirit is Divine
 - b. There is simply no way for a righteous, holy and perfect man to be conceived by sinful and fallen humans
 - c. Instead, Jesus was the product of the Spirit's coming upon Mary as a supernatural work, thereby placing Christ in the womb
 - d. There are many other examples in the Bible of the Spirit's Divinity
 - i. His name is included with God the Father and God the Son as names in which we are called to baptize (Matthew 28:19)
 - ii. He is called God by Peter in Acts 5:3-4
 - iii. He is included in Paul's trinitarian closing statement in 2 Corinthians 13:14
4. Second, we read of the supernatural birth of Christ through the virgin Mary
 - a. This doctrine of the virgin birth has come under critical attack in the past century and a half, specifically at the hands of theological liberalism
 - b. Liberalism has sought to do away with the aspects of the Bible that seem contrary to modern “science” and therefore unexplainable
 - c. However, we must understand that the virgin birth is clearly taught in Scripture
 - i. First, we read of the prophecy of Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14)
 - ii. Second, the Scripture clearly teaches that Mary was a virgin when she conceived and gave birth (Matthew 1:18-25)
5. Third, we must think for a moment about the necessity of this teaching
 - a. While it might seem merely fanciful and bizarre, the virgin birth is a necessary and important component of the story of the condescension of Christ as our Savior
 - b. The reason is simple... man is sinful
 - i. The Bible is clear that man's sin is a universal reality
 1. All of us are conceived and brought forth in our fallen condition (see Romans 5, Psalm 51:5)
 2. The reason for this truth is simply the corrupt nature of man
 3. Man produces sinners because man is a sinner
 - ii. The biblical, redemptive storyline requires that One be brought forth who is perfect but that is impossible from a merely mortal perspective
 - c. What had to happen, therefore, was for God to intervene by descending from His throne and taking on flesh without the sinful aspects of fallen mankind

- d. Furthermore, the biblical story requires also that our salvation come through the sacrifice of our representative
 - i. Just as Adam's fall, as the first man, led to the fall of all men because he represented all men as their first head, so any new representative of mankind must be a man Himself so as to represent all who would be redeemed
- e. So, a man must be conceived but He could not be conceived by mere men
- f. What is the solution? The answer is that God must produce another, perfect seed and supernaturally implant that seed into the womb so that a man would be born perfect
- g. This is exactly what took place and it is the reason why the virgin birth is so incredible and imperative!