

THE Apostles' CREED

May 14, 2023

OPENING QUESTION

Would you say you're an introvert, or an extrovert?

- What motivates you to participate as part of a group?

Francis Chan says that in many of our modern church experiences, the Holy Spirit is the "forgotten God." For many of us, we feel comfortable with the idea of God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ, but we feel more confused, uneducated or uncomfortable when it comes to the Holy Spirit. As we consider this final week in the Apostles' Creed, dedicated to the Holy Spirit and His unique work in the world and our lives, let's let ourselves be surprised and amazed by the ways God meets our needs and dwells with us.

READ John 14:15-26; 16:7-15

How does Jesus describe the Holy Spirit? Consider the titles or roles, the actions of the Holy Spirit, and the interactions between the Holy Spirit and believers.

- Would you say the Holy Spirit is easier or harder for you to *believe* in than God the Father or Jesus the Son? Why do you think?
- How are you hopeful or encouraged by the way Jesus describes the Holy Spirit in these passages?

READ Romans 8:13-14, Galatians 5:16-23

How do these passages describe our relationship with the Holy Spirit?

- How do they describe the life or actions of a person in relationship with the Spirit?
- Practically, how are we *led* by the Spirit? What does that look like in the Christian life?
- Do you *believe* that the Holy Spirit leads you? What makes this easy or hard to believe in your life?

Consider the explanations of holy catholic church (catholic = church universal) and communion of saints on the right.

- Why do we need the Holy Spirit's work for these groups to exist? (You might consider Ephesians 4:1-6 or Galatians 5:22-23 for some help!)
- Why do we need to *believe* in the communion of saints?
 - What would it look like to live as if we don't *believe* that it is part of the plan and purpose of God to work through the communion of saints?
- What actions in your life show your belief in the communion of the saint? Where do you have room to grow?

Discuss together how you understand "the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting," **before** we look at what the Bible has to say. Don't be shy about questions, misunderstandings, things you've heard when you were younger, etc!

READ John 6:35-40, 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5 (tent=body)

How do these passages add to your understanding of the nature of your coming resurrection, and everlasting life?

- There are stories in the Bible of dead people brought back to life (like Lazarus in John 11). How is resuscitation different and distinct from the idea of resurrection as described in these verses?
- What sorts of experiences remind you of this promise of resurrection for believers?

How can *believing* that you will one day be resurrected to new life with God forever reshape your thoughts and actions here and now?

FROM THE MESSAGE

DAILY TIME

Genesis 1
Genesis 2
Genesis 3
Genesis 4
Genesis 5
Genesis 6-7

As you read each day, consider:

- What do these passages show me about God and His character?
- How do these passages answer worldview questions like Who am I, Where am I, What's the problem, What's the solution, where are we in that timeline?
- How can I see my life experiences as a part of this same story God is telling?

SIGN UP TO SERVE!

Encounterchurch.org/serve

NOTES AND QUOTES

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father
almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and
the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The holy catholic church: refers to all believers, over all time, all over the world, always, not a building, location or denomination.

The community of saints (or the "local church"): "A local church is a group of Christians who regularly gather in Christ's name to officially affirm and oversee one another's membership in Jesus Christ and His kingdom through gospel preaching and gospel ordinances."
Jonathan Leeman

As Dirk shared about the Holy Spirit this morning, he used the analogy that transformation to new life offered by the Spirit is as dramatic as a caterpillar becoming a butterfly. We don't want to remain unchanged by neglecting the blessings and benefits we have through our relationship with Holy Spirit, our Advocate and Comforter.

The Holy Spirit increases our capacity (especially our capacity to love), offers conviction, and gives us comfort.

- Which of these areas are you most comfortable praying to the Holy Spirit for? Do any of them make you uncomfortable (as in, you may be nervous for the Spirit to do that work in you)?

“When you listen and obey, that’s when you really start to live the new life.”

- Discuss together what it looks like to listen to the Holy Spirit. How do you go about hearing from Him?
- What things tend to hold you back from obedience when you’ve felt His conviction? How can you ask God to help you remove these obstacles?

EXTRA Read Mark 9:14-27

Consider the plea of the father in 9:24. As we close out this series on what we believe, where do you need pray for God’s help in overcoming your unbelief?

- Read Romans 8:26-27; how do these verses provide even more encouragement?

Consider closing by reading John 20:29-31 together and being encouraged that as you continue to read and study the Word of God, your faith (and belief!) will increase!

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

Pray for one another over the needs in your hearts and lives. Ask God to help you believe, and to help your life evidence your beliefs.

PRAYER AND CARE

Reminders for the week ahead:

John 14:15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” 22Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” 23Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

25 “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 26But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 16:7Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Romans 8:13For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Galatians 5:16But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. 26Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

John 6:35Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 36But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. 38For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. 39And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

2 Corinthians 4:16So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. 17For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

5:1For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, 3if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. 4For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

Throughout the Bible, we see the Holy Spirit’s activity can be described in four broad categories:

- Regeneration – The Spirit transforms our hearts from stone to flesh and indwells us.
- Inspiration/Illumination – The Spirit inspires the Word of God and gives us understanding of God’s nature and will through that Word.
- Sanctification – The Spirit is our Helper as we grow in holiness through obedience to God’s commands.
- Empowering – The Spirit empowers particular people for particular service.

Borrowed from the [Knowing Faith podcast, November 27, 2019](#)