



from the desk of . . .
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The Apostles' Creed - 9

... I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT;

The Acts 2:1-4

During the depression, a man named Ira Yates (X) owned a sheep ranch. Mr. Yates wasn't able to make enough on his ranching operation to pay the principal & interest on the mortgage, so he was in danger of losing his property.



With little money for clothes or food, his family was barely able to survive. Day after day, as he grazed his sheep over the rolling West Texas hills, he was no doubt greatly troubled about how he would pay the bills. A drought took the sheep & goats. The blowing sand nearly drove Mrs. Yates crazy.

Then a seismographic crew from an oil company came into the area & informed him that there might be oil on his land. They asked permission to drill a wildcat well, & he signed a lease contract.

At 1,115' they struck a huge oil reserve. The 1st well came in at 80,000 barrels a day.

Many subsequent wells were more than twice as large.

In fact, 30 years after the discovery, a test of one of the wells showed it still had a potential flow of 125,000 barrels of oil a day. And Mr. Yates owned it all.

The day he purchased the ranch land he had received all the oil & mineral rights. With crude oil selling for approximately \$1.19 per barrel in 1929, his wells produced \$133,280 worth of oil per day, about \$3½ million in today's money. He was a multibillionaire living in poverty.

The problem? ... He didn't know the oil was there ... even though he owned it. He wasn't aware of the miracle that laid within his own property.

I'm wondering if many followers of Jesus aren't living in spiritual poverty. They aren't aware of the wealth that lies within them. They don't tap into the knowledge & gifts of The Holy Spirit ... they ignore their birthright.

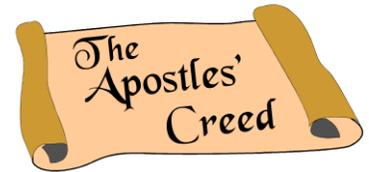
"We have not received this world's spirit; instead, we have received the Spirit sent by God, so that we may know all that God has given us." (1 Corinthians 2:12)

With that as an introduction, listen now to Good News, as recorded by Luke in his writing of The Acts, to you who have gathered here at C.C.R.M. for worship. Within your hearing comes the Word of the Lord ...

When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. (The Acts 2:1-3)

May the Lord grant that we may engage in contemplating the mysteries of His Heavenly wisdom with really increasing devotion, to His glory and to our edification. Amen

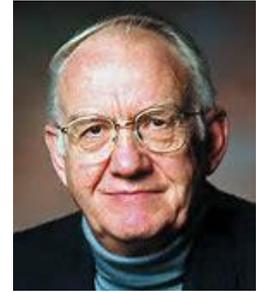
By way of review, very quickly, (X)
The Apostles' Creed is a basic universal statement of faith of what followers of Jesus believe. It has been part of the Church since around 390 A.D.



The 1st paragraph deals with God the Father. The 2nd paragraph focuses on Jesus Christ. And this morning we direct our attention to the final paragraph & begin studying the 3rd Person of the Trinity ... The Holy Spirit.

Now let's be honest, The Holy Spirit presents a challenge for most of us. Unlike the concept of God as Father, or God as Son, God the Spirit seems a bit intangible. I mean, after all, we know fathers, we know sons, but how many "Holy Spirits" do we know?

In fact, Gordon Fee, (X) who was one of my favorite N.T. professors, said this ... "the practicing creed for many Christians goes something like this, 'I believe in God the Father, I believe in Jesus Christ, God's Son ... but I wonder about The Holy Ghost.'"



It's easier to understand God as Father & Son because we can identify with those concepts, but what is the basis for our understanding The Holy Spirit? ... Well, the foundation of our knowledge of The Holy Spirit is **Scripture**; it's what the Bible teaches us about Him. So, let me share a few passages with you.

The 1st thing we find when we open the Scriptures is this (X) ... "In the beginning, when God created the universe, the earth was formless & desolate. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, & the Spirit of God was moving over the water." (Genesis 1:1-2)

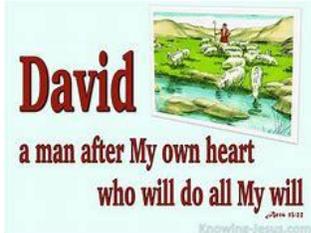


Most of you know the rest of the story. God then created everything that exists: the sun, moon, stars, trees, plants, fish, birds, animals, cats, dogs, sheep. (Kathy believes that sheep were at the pinnacle of God's creative juices before making people.)

Then Scripture tells us that "God created human beings, making them to be like himself." (Genesis 1:26)

I believe in The Holy Spirit.

Years later God called a young shepherd boy to become King of the Hebrew nation. In 1 Samuel 16 we read that God sent the prophet Samuel to anoint this shepherd boy, who appeared to be an unlikely candidate,



(X) but who would eventually become known as "the kind of man God likes."

(The Acts 13:22) A man who would do what God wanted. So, Samuel goes to the home of Jesse, & there, in the presence of his brothers, anoints David. And, "immediately the spirit of the LORD took control of David & was with him from that day on." (1 Samuel 16:13) I believe in The Holy Spirit.

8 days after Jesus was born, Mary & Joseph take Him to the Temple where they will present Him in accordance with Jewish Law. Scripture tells us that a man named Simeon, who was living at that time, "was a good, God-fearing man." Also, "The Holy Spirit was with him." (Luke 2:25) In fact, The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would live to see the Messiah. So, on that particular day The Holy Spirit led Simeon to the Temple.

And there ... he saw Jesus. And he took (X) the baby Jesus in his arms, & praising God said, "With my own eyes I have seen your salvation." (Luke 2:30)



I believe in The Holy Spirit.

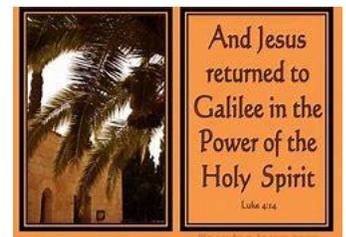
About 30 years later Jesus goes from Galilee to the Jordan River where John is baptizing. (John from his very birth has been filled with The Holy Spirit.) (Luke 1:15) Jesus approaches John telling him that He wants to be baptized. John responds, "I ought to be baptized by you, & yet you have come to me!"

"But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so for now. For in this way we shall do all that God requires.'" And so, John baptizes Jesus. And Scripture records (X) as "Jesus came up out of that water. Then heaven was opened to him, & he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove & lighting on him." (Matthew 3:14-16) I believe in The Holy Spirit.



Immediately after that Jesus is led, by the Spirit, into the desert for 40 days & nights to be tempted by the Devil. But He doesn't give in to that temptation.

Then, we're told, that (X) "Jesus returned to Galilee, & the power of the Holy Spirit was with him," (Luke 4:14) & He began to preach, "Turn away from your sins, because the Kingdom of heaven is near!" (Matthew 4:17) I believe in The Holy Spirit.



We jump to the Last Supper. It was different than any other night, any other meal ... & as the disciples tried to grasp what Jesus was saying to them, the Lord began to prepare them for what was to come.

“Do not be worried & upset,’ Jesus told them. ‘Believe in God & believe also in me. There are many rooms in my Father’s house, & I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. And after I go & prepare a place for you, I will come back & take you to myself, so that you will be where I am.’” (John 14:1-3)

And not only does He tell them that; He tells them that in the meantime, from the time He would leave until the moment He came back, that they would not be left alone. 5 times, in what we call His farewell (X) discourse, Jesus promises the coming of The Holy Spirit.



Jesus called Him another “Helper,” (John 14:16) who would stay with them forever.
I believe in The Holy Spirit.



(X) 50 days after Jesus’ resurrection that was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost ... The Holy Spirit came upon the believers in power, & we’re told that Peter preached his 1st sermon, & about 3,000 people came to faith. (The Acts 2:41)
I believe in The Holy Spirit.

Then we come to The Revelation, the last book, the last chapter, of Scripture.

“Listen!’ says Jesus. “I am coming soon!

"I will bring my rewards with me, to give to each one according to what he has done. I am the 1st & the last, the beginning & the end.' ... (X)

The Spirit & the Bride say, 'Come!'"

(The Revelation 22:12-13,17)



This is why I believe in The Holy Spirit.

From the beginning of Genesis to the end of The Revelation, & everywhere in-between, Scripture testifies to the **Person**, to the **work**, & to the **presence** of The Holy Spirit. Just as the O.T. promises the coming of the **Messiah**, Jesus in the N.T. promises the coming of **The Holy Spirit**, to live in those who have come to faith.

The Holy Spirit is revealed in Scripture just as God the Father is revealed, & God the Son is revealed. So, what does it mean then when we declare ... "I believe in The Holy Spirit"?

When we make that confession, what we're saying, from a Scriptural perspective, is that The Holy Spirit is the 3rd person of the Trinity. In other words, He is **fully God**, just like God the Father, & God the Son.

Now sometimes we get a little confused by the terminology The Holy Spirit, or as some of us grew up with, "The Holy Ghost." That almost gives the image of The Holy Spirit as something in a white sheet ... a kind of Casper, the Friendly Ghost, with a halo.

That's not who The Holy Spirit is at all. The Holy Spirit is a Person (capital "P"). He possesses personal characteristics. He has intelligence. He has emotions. He has a will. He's not an it, or a thing, or a force. And He possesses the attributes & qualities of God. He's eternal. He's all-powerful. He's everywhere present. He's all-knowing.

He is equal in **honor & glory** with God the Father, & God the Son ... & yet He has a different **function**. Just as the Son had a different function from the Father, so The Holy Spirit has a different function.

So, if that's the Scriptural perspective of The Holy Spirit, then the obvious question is, "what difference is He making in your life, what difference is He making in my life?" If The Holy Spirit lives in those of us who have come to faith, what difference does He make?

This morning I want to share 2 points with you. Both are foundational truths for understanding The Holy Spirit. So, when we stand & say, "I believe in The Holy Spirit," what we're saying are these 2 things.

#1 ... The Holy Spirit is the **restoration** of God's **indwelling presence**. In other words, The Holy Spirit is the point in which the Trinity becomes personal to the follower of Jesus.

We know that God the Father is transcendent. We know that Jesus the Son has ascended to Heaven & is seated at the right hand of God the Father. He's no longer physically present on this earth. But The Holy Spirit is the One who comes & lives in a person when they come to faith. At that point we're restored to a right relationship with God the Father. Wow! Isn't that an amazing thing? ...

And not only are we restored to a right relationship with God, but at that moment God's presence begins to live in our life.

So, if there's now a restored presence of The Holy Spirit in our life ... then what that means is there was a specific point in time when we lost the presence of The Holy Spirit. And we know exactly when that happened. It was in the Garden when Adam & Eve disobeyed the command God had given them not to eat of the tree that gave knowledge of what was good & what was bad. And as soon as they ate from it they knew immediately that something had happened. For one thing they recognized that they were naked. And they felt guilt. And they felt shame. And later that day when God was walking in the Garden, Adam & Eve even hid from Him.

"The LORD God called out to Adam, 'Where are you?'" (Genesis 3:9) Notice He didn't ask, "What have you

done?" God knew exactly what they did because He's all knowing. He asked, "Where are you?"

God wanted Adam to realize that something awful had taken place. He was now separated from God. And so, Adam & Eve were sent out of the Garden which was symbolic of being sent out of God's immediate presence.

Have you ever wondered why God didn't just wipe them out & start over? ... It's because God, in His wisdom, knew that the better plan was to redeem what was lost.

God had a plan. He took one man, Abraham, & made a covenant with him, promising to bless his descendants. In fact, they would be called God's chosen people. We're told over & over again in the O.T. that "From all the peoples on earth he chose them to be his own special people." (Deuteronomy 7:6)

And really condensing the story, God led these people to a "Promised Land." But on the way they stopped at Mt. Sinai, & there God revealed Himself to them. He gave them the 10 Commandments, & revealed who He was.

Now it's interesting, if you read the story, to see the response of the people to the presence of God. Part of it was because it was such an awesome experience. "When the people heard the thunder & the trumpet blast

& saw the lightning & the smoking mountain, they trembled with fear & stood a long way off. They said to Moses, 'If you speak to us, we will listen; but we are afraid that if God speaks to us, we will die.'

"Moses replied, 'Don't be afraid; God has only come to test you & make you keep on obeying him, so that you will not sin.' But the people continued to stand a long way off, & only Moses went near the dark cloud where God WAS." (Exodus 20:18-21)

God's plan was to come & be with His people. And even though they didn't understand it at that point ... God knew what He wanted to do. He descended on Mt. Sinai & revealed Himself. But that wasn't enough. He later called Moses to come up on that mountain & gave him specific instructions for building a tabernacle. And in the O.T. the tabernacle & the Temple were the predominant ways in which God's presence was with His people. "The people must make a sacred Tent for me, so that I may live among them." (Genesis 25:8)

God wanted to be there with His people. He wasn't satisfied with a distant relationship. (X)
 God wanted to "move into the neighborhood" ... He wanted to live with them.



But even being in the neighborhood wasn't enough. So, God sent Jesus. Jesus is Immanuel. We focus on Jesus being "Immanuel (which means, 'God is with us')" (Matthew 1:23) during the Christmas season.

The disciples saw Jesus & heard Him & touched Him. Jesus revealed God to them, because He was right there with them. "The Word became a human being & full of grace & truth, lived among them." (John 1:14) And while Jesus came to reveal God to us ... He also came with a mission. He came to die on the cross to pay for our sins. And He knew that after He died He would be raised from the dead & would once again be in Heaven.

So, Jesus told His followers, "When I go, you will not be left all alone. ... I will ask the Father, & he will give you another Helper, who will stay with you forever. He is the Spirit, who reveals the truth about God. The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you & is in you." (John 14:18,16-17)

A little later He added, "It is better for you that I go away, because if I do not go, the Helper will not come to you. But if I do go away, then I will send him to you." (John 16:7) The coming of The Holy Spirit was God's **continuing presence**, living in those who had come to faith in Jesus.

Now there's a huge difference between God's presence being **around** us & God's presence **living** in us. God isn't interested with a distant relationship. He doesn't want to just move into the neighborhood ... He wants to move into our hearts. He wants to live inside of us.

So, the question is does The Holy Spirit live in your heart, or is He just in the neighborhood?

That brings us to the 2nd point. The Holy Spirit is the **realization** of God's **transforming power**. You see, Jesus came to **save** us, but The Holy Spirit came to **transform** us. We cannot become like Jesus apart from The Holy Spirit. We absolutely & completely are dependent upon Him.

If we want to be like Jesus, which is God's will ... "Those whom God had already chosen he ... set apart to become like his Son" (Romans 8:29)... if we want to be like Jesus, we're **dependent** upon The Holy Spirit.

This is seen in the O.T. (X) "I will give you a new heart & a new mind. I will take away your stubborn heart of stone & give you an obedient heart. I will put my spirit in you & will see to it that you follow my laws & keep all the commands I have given you." (Ezekiel 36:26-27)



There, in the book of Ezekiel, God promises that The Holy Spirit will come & take this stubborn heart of stone, which has been hardened by sin & rebellion, which we all have, & He will give us a new heart, symbolizing life & renewal.

Well, that's a nice thought, but what does it mean "to have a new heart"? It means that we will have new desires, new motivations. We will look at life with a new attitude. In other words, like Jesus did.

But, without The Holy Spirit in us, that's impossible. We're dependent on The Holy Spirit working in us.

"And so I am sure that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished." (Philippians 1:6) It's God who begins the work ... & it's God who completes it. But we have a responsibility too. "Keep on working with fear & trembling to complete your salvation, because God is always at work in you to make you willing & able to obey his own purpose." (Philippians 2:12)

The Holy Spirit lives in us & calls us to cooperate & participate with Him. We're told in Scripture that we're to "be filled with the Spirit." (Ephesians 5:18) In other words, as Dallas Anderson said when he was here, The Holy Spirit needs to be leaking out of our lives, touching the people that we interact with. We're also told that we're

to keep in step with the Spirit. He's not just some impersonal force that we just call upon when we want to.

We're told not to "make God's Holy Spirit sad."
 (Ephesians 4:30) And we're not to "restrain the Holy Spirit."
 (1 Thessalonians 5:19) But that we're to yield & listen to Him.
 God has a good plan for all of us, & it's through the power of The Holy Spirit that that good plan becomes a reality.

Jesus came to **save** us, & The Holy Spirit came to **transform** us. But here's another question ... is there some area of your life that you haven't yet given to God?

You see, the greatest testimony to the reality of God is a person whose life has been completely transformed.

We see this in the disciples. After Jesus had been crucified, do you remember where we find the disciples? ... In a room with the doors locked. They were afraid. But then, after Pentecost, we see a boldness come on the disciples ... Peter especially. There's a transformation process that has taken place.

Later Peter & John are arrested & find themselves in front of the Council. And what the Sadducees, & the elders, & the teachers of the Law noticed about Peter & John was that they were uneducated ordinary men ... but they had been with Jesus. What they saw in Peter &

John was the power of The Holy Spirit working in their lives.

Today the Apostles are gone. We can read their story, but we cannot see that transformation 1st hand. But, I can see it in you, & you can see it in me, & we can testify to the power of The Holy Spirit.

"The Helper will come - the Spirit, who reveals the truth about God & who comes from the Father. I will send him to you from the Father, & he will speak about me. And you, too, will speak about me."

Jesus came to save us.

The Holy Spirit came to transform us. And He came to transform the world through us. And we can transform the world, through the power of The Holy Spirit, one person at a time.

Here's another question ... how does The Holy Spirit impact those people that God brings into our life, our friends & family? How is He using our relationship to transform those around us?

It's God's will for us to touch the world one life at a time. It was God's presence with the Hebrews that distinguished them as a people. It was Jesus' presence with His disciples that distinguished them as His followers. And it's The Holy Spirit's presence in us that **distinguishes** us as followers of Jesus.

Gordon Fee writes, "The coming of The Holy Spirit in & among us means that the Living God in the Person of the Spirit is indeed with us. He's an empowering presence. Here is one of the shifts that must take place in our thinking & experience if we are to be Biblical & more effective in our postmodern world. We must not merely cite the creed, but believe & experience the presence of God in the person of the Spirit."

He longs to transform us. He longs to indwell us. This week begin experiencing The Holy Spirit's power.

MARANA THA

When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. (The Acts 2:1-3)

The foundation of our knowledge of The Holy Spirit is _____

From the beginning of Genesis to the end of The Revelation, and everywhere in-between, Scripture testifies to the _____, to the _____, and to the _____ of The Holy Spirit

Just as the older Testament promises the coming of the _____, Jesus in the New Testament promises the coming of _____, to live in those who have come to faith

The Holy Spirit is _____, just like God the Father, and God the Son

He is equal in _____ and _____ with God the Father, and God the Son ... and yet He has a different _____

The Holy Spirit is the _____ of God's _____

The coming of The Holy Spirit was God's _____, living in those who had come to faith in Jesus

There's a huge difference between God's presence being _____ us and God's presence _____ in us

The Holy Spirit is the _____ of God's _____
Jesus came to _____ us, but The Holy Spirit came to _____ us

If we want to be like Jesus, we're _____ upon The Holy Spirit

Jesus came to _____ us, and The Holy Spirit came to _____ us

It's The Holy Spirit's presence in us that _____ us as followers of Jesus

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven & earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, & buried;
he descended into hell;
the 3rd day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
& sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the living & the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit;
the holy Christian Church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;

& the life everlasting.

Amen