

The Almighty Maker of Heaven and Earth  
Lesson #3

Welcome back to our study of the Nicene Creed, that great historic declaration of the reality and nature of God as revealed in the Bible that the Christian Church has confessed and declared for the last 1,700 years.

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Last time we studied the first phrase in the Creed, "We believe in the one God, the Father." We saw that the God of the Bible is one God who is a Father to his people. He is not an arbitrary despot, or an unreasoning and cruel tyrant, but he is a loving and kind Father who wants to establish a personal relationship with his people. His goal is to have a people who are his own – whom he loves, and they love him.

Remember what a creed is. It is a formal declaration of fundamental and specific beliefs of a Christian church or group of churches. It is based on the Bible and comes out of the Bible. A creed, such as the Nicene Creed, always flows out of the Word of God and stands under the authority of the Word of God.

Today we continue in the next phrase in the Nicene Creed which says:

[We believe in...] "*...the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.*"

Who is this God whom Christians believe in? He is the almighty God who made, that is, he created heaven and earth. He is "almighty," meaning his power and sovereignty is complete and absolute in all things. He is completely perfect and infinite in all his divine attributes, not only in his power, but in his righteousness, faithfulness, holiness, wisdom, mercy, and steadfast love. There is no power greater than his; there is no power in the universe that can come close to his. Our power over our lives and circumstances compared to his power is like that of an ant compared to an elephant!

The book of Job, which we believe was perhaps the first book written in the Bible, addresses God as the "Almighty" thirty-one times. If there's one thing that can be said about God, it is that he is Almighty.

I remember attending a funeral service one time at an African American church here in Dallas and several of the people got up and spoke and as they began their testimony they declared that God was "the Most High God." They had it right; there is no power or authority over him, or that can compare with him.

The Creed then gives us a very specific way in which he is "almighty" – he is the "maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible."

The Creed states: God, and God alone, God the Father, is the Maker, the Creator of all that is. He is the maker of heaven – that place where God reigns on his throne. And he is the maker of the heavens all around us that we can see if we are out in the country on a clear cloudless night – the stars and planets and galaxies out in the vast expanse of space. And he is the maker of the earth – and of all there is on the earth – all the geographic places – the mountains and seas and all the creatures on land and in the seas. And he is the Creator of man and woman.

The Creed here is dealing with what we sometimes call the matter of “origins.” Where did everything come from? Was it from the chance collision of a few atoms in the distant past which produced an explosion – a big bang and the universe begin to burst forth in expansion? The creed says, “No!,” this is not where everything came from. It came from the power and will of God Almighty to create the universe where before it had not existed.

Heb. 11:3 says that...

By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

This verse in the Book of Hebrews in the New Testament of the Bible is saying that at one time there was no universe that existed. There was nothing –a great silent emptiness, I suppose you could call it.

Then what happened? “The universe was created by the word of God.” God commanded that a universe come into place, and it did.

The very first sentence in the Bible declares how the universe came into being. It says: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. “ Gen. 1:1

The Bible is stating that “in the beginning,” that is, in the beginning of the universe, God was already there. God was alive and well before there ever was a universe. In fact, as far back as we could possibly imagine, God was there. There never was a time when God did not exist. This is what we call his eternality. It is difficult for us to conceive of this because everything we know about in this life had a beginning. I did not exist and you did not exist before our mothers gave us birth.

Chapter 1 of Genesis lays out for us the six days of creation in which God made everything there is. Verse 27 of Genesis one states:

So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

Here we see the origin of the human race. It was by a sovereign act of God. Man did not evolve from a one-celled amoeba millions of years ago. He did not slowly progress up the evolutionary chain from monkey to ape to pre-historic man and finally to humans as we know them today.

The Bible declares over and over that God and God alone is the Creator. Listen to Isaiah 40:28:

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the **Creator** of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

Psalm 95:6 states:

Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our **Maker!**

Here we see the proper response that should be engendered in us in view of the fact that God is our Maker: we should “worship and bow down” before him!

Who is it that gave us life? Who is it that willed that we should be born and have life and breath? It is God. Yes, our parents came together and produced a child but behind all this was God’s plan to bring you and me into existence. We owe our existence to God, to the personal plan and purpose of God, not just to our parents, or to evolution. The fact that God is our Creator ought to bring forth worship from us, his creatures.

Actually, this is the great sin of the human race – Listen to Rom. 1:25. It is talking our human race throughout the world and throughout history:

It says, “... they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.”

It was the Frenchman John Calvin some 500 years ago who said, “The human heart is an idol factory!” We have a tendency in our minds to make and worship all kinds of idols. An idol is anything or anyone whom we worship and serve and devote our lives to. It can be a statue of some kind of god or goddess, or it can be something else like money, or popularity, or sex, or food, or even something good, like our family or our country, but it is something that takes the place of your primary loyalty and devotion, which should be to God Almighty alone.

The first commandment of the Ten Commandments states in Exodus 20, verse 3: “You shall have no other gods before me.” No other gods. Only the living, eternal God, who created the heavens and the earth and who gives us life – he is be our God!

The Bible, in fact, states how foolish it is to worship idols, statues made by human hands. Isaiah 44:16-17 talks about a man who makes an idol from a piece of a tree:

<sup>16</sup> Half of it he burns in the fire. Over the half he eats meat; he roasts it and is satisfied. Also he warms himself and says, “Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire!”<sup>17</sup> And the rest

of it he makes into a god, his idol, and falls down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!"

Who is the Creator, the one who made all things and who sustains all things? It is God the heavenly Father of his people. But you may remember from our last session that we considered the fact that the Creator God is a triune God, he has eternally existed within his own being as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is a Trinity. This is not easy for our little human minds to grasp, but it is the truth that God has revealed to us through his Word.

In the Bible we learn that although God the Father created all things, he was not alone in this creative act. Listen to Heb. 1:1-2:

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

The book of Hebrews is here stating that in these last days that we are living, that is, in the last generations of human history, God has spoken to the human race through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And this Son is also the one through whom he created the world. In other words, Jesus is the agent of God's creative work. God was working through Jesus to bring about creation.

Col. 1:16 repeats this same truth:

<sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

The "him" here is Jesus Christ. It states here that "all things were created through him and for him." That is, all things were created through Jesus and for Jesus.

But even this is not a complete picture of God's creative work. Let's go back to Genesis 1 a minute. Genesis 1:1-3 states:

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

What, or rather, who was hovering over the face of the waters? It was the Spirit of God. So as we read the whole Bible we get a complete picture of the fact that God the Father made all things, but he was not alone in his creative work, but the Son and the Spirit were also there at creation. So it was the one triune God, all three persons of the triune God, who participated in the creation of the universe and of humankind. In fact, as we

read further on in the Nicene Creed, we learn that it does not fail to mention the fact that both the Son and the Spirit were active in creation as well.

What does it mean for you and for me that God is the creator of all things? Does it make any difference in the way we think about life, in the way we live? Yes, it makes all the difference.

This fact should not only call forth worship on our part, but in addition, it affects the way we live our lives, our behavior and our morals. Listen to these scriptures:

Job 6:14

“He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the **Almighty**.

Proverbs 14:31

Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his **Maker**, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.

Titus 3:8 –

⚈ The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.

So, because there is a Creator God, we should be kind to our friends and to others, not selfish and uncaring. And we should help the poor people and not oppress them. And we should devote ourselves to “good works” – doing things that help people, that relieves human suffering.

Where does much of the suffering and cruelty in the world come from? It comes from people and governments who deny the existence of God. Think of the millions of Chinese that suffered and died under the atheistic communist rule of **Mao Zedong** in the Cultural Revolution between 1966-1976. These kind of leaders have no fear of God, no standard of right and wrong to govern their behavior, so they descend into every kind of cruelty and murder and oppression.

But those who live their lives in recognition that God is the Creator and Maker and Sustainer of all things, live under his Lordship and his standards of right and wrong.

To know and recognize that God is the sovereign Creator of all things and of all life affects our lives in every possible way, and it affects us for good, for kindness and righteousness and love, the way the God of the Bible is.

Who do we Christians believe in? *We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.* There is no greater truth than this! May we live our lives accordingly.

Perhaps you'd like to join me as I lead us in prayer at this time. Let us pray:

Father in heaven, we thank you that you are the Almighty God, the maker of all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible. Because of this, our lives have meaning and purpose. We not just blown about by the arbitrary winds of fate, but you are directing all things, and it is you we must follow and obey. In the middle of human history you sent your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to bear the sins of your people for our forgiveness and the bestowal of eternal life. Because you raised Christ from the dead, we who believe in him and follow him as Lord will also be raised from the dead at the last day. Father God, we rejoice in you our Creator and Savior through Christ Jesus. In whose name we pray. Amen.

Thank you for being with us today. Next week we'll consider the next phrase in the Nicene Creed: We believe in "one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God." Please join us as we continue to learn about the great and awesome God of the Christian faith, the God of the Bible.

"The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you, and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face toward you, and give you peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

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