

Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

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I Believe in God the Father Almighty – The Apostles' Creed, Part 5

October 8, 2023

Sermon Text: Genesis 1

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only begotten 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.

We have considered what genuine, justifying faith is – that faith we profess when we confess: *I believe in God the Father...* And we looked at just who God is and how, in Christ, He becomes our Father rather than our enemy. And we become His children rather than HIS enemies. We also saw that to

confess faith in God is to confess faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit. We believe, in other words, in the triune God who is three Persons in one Godhead.

Furthermore, this confession rules out all false gods – a complete rejection of idols. We considered how the Roman church is an apostate church, an idol temple consisting of false sacraments, a false priesthood, and a false gospel. Never compromise with Rome. Never. Never go into a Roman idol temple. It is all antichrist.

But there is more here – *I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.* Here is a fundamental attribute of God – He is all-mighty. The word used here is omnipotent. What does this mean and what are the implications for us as His creatures?

When we declare that the God we believe in is Almighty, we are not confessing that He is really, really, really powerful. What we are saying is this:

Jer 32:17 ‘Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and

the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.

You see the same connection here then that we have in these opening words of the Creed - ...God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. When there was nothing, no universe, no earth, no air, no stars or planets – there was only God. Unmoved. Uncaused. Eternal. ALL power resided in Him and when He spoke His powerful Word, “Let there be...” there *was*.

How much power is in the sun? That would be very difficult to quantify, but consider this. As mind-boggling is the energy the sun puts out (which keeps us alive here on planet earth), our sun is a relatively small star. There are – how many stars in the universe? Millions? Billions? How many galaxies? What is making all of these energy factories “go”? It is God ALL-mighty. His power is not just great – it is infinite. Consider –

Col 1:15-17 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (16) 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. (17) And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

And in Him all things hold together. When a nuclear bomb goes off, it is the release of power from atoms in a relatively small amount of matter. Where did the energy which holds the atoms in our bodies together come from? It is Christ. *In Him all things hold together.*

Why do the planets remain locked in their orbits? If earth's orbit altered ever so slightly or if the tilt of the earth varied a bit – earth would become a wasteland. What is holding all these things together – It is the Lord Jesus Christ.

What is energy? Light, gravity, electrical...what is it and where does it come from? The Lord Jesus Christ.

When we declare that we believe in God the Father Almighty, creator

of heaven and earth, we are confessing belief in this:

Joh 1:1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) He was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (4) In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

We do not confess that the universe came into being by itself, or that the universe is eternal. We do not confess that the universe is the product of time plus chance. We deny these things. We believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Job 9:4-12 He is wise in heart and mighty in strength—who has hardened himself against him, and succeeded?— (5) he who removes mountains, and they know it not, when he overturns them in his anger, (6) who shakes the earth out of its place, and its pillars tremble; (7) who commands the sun, and it does not rise; who seals up the stars; (8) who alone

stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea; (9) who made the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the chambers of the south; (10) who does great things beyond searching out, and marvelous things beyond number. (11) Behold, he passes by me, and I see him not; he moves on, but I do not perceive him. (12) Behold, he snatches away; who can turn him back? Who will say to him, 'What are you doing?'

Now, what are the practical applications and implications of these facts? That God is ALL-mighty, creator of heaven and earth?

He is the Giver of Life and Raises the Dead with a Word

During one mid-June evening, the discussions turned to the nature of the principle of life. "Perhaps a corpse would be re-animated", Mary Shelly noted; "galvanism had given token of such things". It was after midnight before they retired, and unable to sleep, she became possessed by her imagination as

she beheld the grim terrors of her "waking dream", her ghost story:

"I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half vital motion. Frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world."

She began writing what she assumed would be a short story. With Percy Shelley's encouragement, she expanded this tale into her first novel, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*, published in 1818. [Wikipedia, s.v. Mary Shelly]

The power of galvanism – electricity. Perhaps man could harness it and even bring a corpse back to life.

That would require more power than any human being could ever

possess. To raise the dead, to command ‘Lazarus! Come Forth!’ so that the dead man came forth – requires the resurrection power of the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

Gen 2:7 then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Rev 20:4 Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

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

It is a VERY good thing that God is Almighty, able to raise the dead because –

Eph 2:1-6 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins (2) in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— (3) among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (4) But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, (5) even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— (6) and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

To save us from our sin, from bondage to the devil, from the old person we were, God must put us to death and raise us up again with Christ. He must re-create us so that we are new creations. This resurrection power is an even

greater manifestation of His glory than the creation of the heavens and earth.

Now, consider – why do human beings – including many professing Christians, insist that salvation requires work on our part in addition to the work God does? Because they do not truly believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth. He needs, they maintain, some help from us. Their god is not the God we confess in this Creed. The living and true God is ALL-mighty!

Charles Hodge (December 27, 1797 – June 19, 1878) was a Reformed Presbyterian theologian and principal of Princeton Theological Seminary between 1851 and 1878. He was a leading exponent of the Princeton Theology, an Orthodox Calvinist theological tradition in America during the 19th century. He argued strongly for the authority of the Bible as the Word of God. [Wikipedia]

Listen to Hodge's comment here regarding the omnipotence of God

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“It is by removing all the limitations of power, as it exists in us, that we rise to the idea of the omnipotence of God. We can do very little. God can do whatever He wills. We, beyond very narrow limits, must use means to accomplish our ends. [ie, if we are going to drive a nail, we need to use a hammer]. But with God, means are unnecessary. He wills, and it is done. He said, Let there be light; and there was light. He by his will alone created the heavens and the earth. At the will of Christ, the winds ceased, and there was a great calm. By an act of the will He healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, and raised the dead.

This simple idea of the omnipotence of God, that He can do without effort, and by His will, whatever He wills, is the highest conceivable idea of power and it is that which is presented to us in the Bible.

I am the Almighty God. (Gen 17:1)

There is nothing too hard for You.
(Jer 32:17)

With God, all things are possible.
(Matt 19:26)

Our God is in the heavens; He has
done whatsoever He pleased. (Ps
115:3)

Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that
did He in heaven and in earth, in
the seas, and in all deep places. (Ps
135:6)

The Lord omnipotent reigns, and
does His pleasure among the
armies of heaven and the
inhabitants of the earth, is the
tribute of adoration which the
Scriptures everywhere render to
God, and the truth which they
everywhere present as the ground
of confidence to His people.”
[Systematic Theology, Vol 1,
Charles Hodge, Eerdmans
Publishing]

Nothing Can Stand Against the Lord

And though this world, with devils
filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed

his truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure,
for lo! his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.

One little word. He speaks and it is
done:

Rev 19:15 From his mouth comes
a sharp sword with which to strike
down the nations, and he will rule
them with a rod of iron. He will
tread the winepress of the fury of
the wrath of God the Almighty.

Rev 19:19-21 And I saw the beast
and the kings of the earth with their
armies gathered to make war
against him who was sitting on the
horse and against his army. (20)
And the beast was captured, and
with it the false prophet who in its
presence had done the signs by
which he deceived those who had
received the mark of the beast and
those who worshiped its image.
These two were thrown alive into
the lake of fire that burns with
sulfur. (21) **And the rest were
slain by the sword that came
from the mouth of him** who was
sitting on the horse, and all the

birds were gorged with their flesh.

How is it that we can have confident assurance that Christ wins – and that in fact, He has already won? How can we be sure? What if Satan is like some equal and opposite god, perhaps able to pull off some scheme which God cannot deal with? *Because God is ALL-mighty*. Satan and all of his hordes are as nothing before Him.

The ending of the Bible, which is the end of this present world and age, is absolutely certain. God's decree is already accomplished because He has spoken, and it is done. Christ is King of kings, lofty and exalted so that:

Psa 2:2-4 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, (3) “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.” (4) He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.

Psa 118:6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?

Heb 13:5-6 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (6) So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”

On the surface of things, there is much to be afraid of in this present wicked world which is growing ever more evil. Our own nation is led by some of the most, if not the most, corrupt and wicked leaders in the highest offices of the land. They are using their power to dominate and control and abuse and they hate Christ and His people. How are we to look at all of this? – “*The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?*” Because this Helper is God omnipotent. Justice for Christ's people is coming – of this we can be absolutely certain.

“The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want...”

How much time do we spend everyday *fearing all kinds of things*? What if social security runs out? What if there is a nuclear war? What if evil wins the day in our nation and we lose our constitutional rights? What if I get cancer? What if some demonic person starts shooting at the mall? What if I lose my job? What if people hate me? *What if God stops loving me?*

Every single one of these fears dissolves in light of the omnipotence of God. He is all-mighty and therefore nothing is outside of His decree. Nothing. He cannot fail to keep His promises to us – “I know I promised to provide for you, but I can only do so much, you know.” That is not the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. When we fear these kinds of things, we are forgetting that God is Almighty.

“Let us consider what our Lord Jesus Christ says, that if we have a small grain of faith, we will be able to make mountains move out of their place, break loose, and cast themselves into the sea, if need be

(see Matt 17:20; Luke 17:6); not that this has to happen just because we might want to amuse ourselves and make entertainment of God’s promises; for we must receive them with all reverence. But the long and short of it is that nothing will be impossible for us...if our trust is in God.

We must not, in these things, walk in front of God and insist that He follow us, as if we have the right to command Him. No, our faith must *follow* and God’s Word must guide it, for His Word is not called our lamp without reason. In the midst of this world’s darkness, it must light our way, so we can stay the course. And if our faith follows God’s Word that way and is governed by His guidance, we will then be able to overcome everything that is against us. Neither mountains nor valleys, neither fire nor water, neither sword nor anything else will be able to harm us because we have God’s promise, in which He tells us that He protects us, that our lives are precious to Him...Since we have His promises, it is certain that we cannot be disappointed. Even

Satan's instruments to destroy us will help us if we put our confidence in God and call upon Him." [John Calvin, Sermons on Genesis, Banner of Truth Trust]

And you see how all of this must be true because *we believe in God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth*. Because He is omnipotent, all power residing in Him.

The All-Mighty God is to be Feared by all – and the wicked should be terrified

Now, what about the omnipotence of God and the person who is outside of Christ, dead in their sins, still an enemy of God? Well, they are the ones who should be afraid with a fear that is a terrifying fear.

While all men, including Christians, are to have a reverential, worshipful fear of the Lord, the terror of the Lord has been removed in Christ for all who know Him savingly. But that terror remains for those who still reject Christ.

Are they afraid of nuclear war? Let me show them something that is

infinitely worse than a nuclear holocaust –

2Th 1:1-9 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: (2) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (3) We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. (4) Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring. (5) This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— (6) since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, (7) and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels (8) in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who

do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (9) They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

2Th 2:8-12 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. (9) The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, (10) and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. (11) Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, (12) in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The Fallacy of the “Wise”

We will end on one more note and it concerns the foolishness of people who claim to be soooo wise.

The omnipotence of God has been objected to by this wicked notion –

“How can God be all-mighty if there are some things that He cannot do?”

For instance, we ourselves maintain that God does not love all men, certainly not in the way that He loves His elect. And in fact we would go further and insist that *God cannot love the wicked*. And in a related subject, we maintain that God’s Word plainly teaches that *God not only will not save all men, but that He CANNOT save all men*.

Now, the foolish man objects here and says – “See, even yourselves say that there are things God cannot do. Therefore He is not omnipotent.” And of course their goal is to pull God down and make Him no god at all.

Listen to Hodge once more –

“Power can only produce possible effects. It is no more a limitation of God’s power that it cannot accomplish the impossible, than it is of reason that it cannot comprehend the absurd, or of infinite goodness that it cannot do wrong. Or of perfect holiness that it cannot sin. *God can do nothing in*

contradiction to His nature. God's will is determined by and always in agreement with who God is – with His nature. It is certainly no limitation to perfection if we say that perfection cannot be imperfect.”

Such are the wicked and foolish schemes man in his sin comes up with to deny that God is God and to enable himself to continue on in this world having no fear of the Lord. Such men will go to elaborate lengths to build a bomb shelter equipped with supplies for years and years should a nuclear war occur. But of this, he refuses to believe and fear-

2Pe 3:10-13 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. (11) Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, (12) waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because

of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! (13) But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

It is certain, because our God is the Father All-mighty, creator of heaven and earth.