



# In the Steps of Jesus

## 2. Faith

**Sunday, September 23, 2012**

**10 to 10:50 am, in the Parlor**

***Presenter: David Monyak***

*St. John in the Wilderness*

# In the Steps of Jesus

- **Sep 16: The Bible**
- **Sep 23: Faith**
- **Sep 30: Worship**
- **Oct 7: History**
- **Oct 14: The Sacraments**
- **Oct 21: Spirituality and Prayer**
- **Oct 28: Navigating the Church**

# References

## ■ *Series:*

- **Welcome to the Episcopal Church. In Introduction to Its History, Faith, and Worship,** by Christopher L. Webber, Morehouse, 1999.
- **Your Faith, Your Life, An Invitation to the Episcopal Church,** by Jenifer Gamber, Morehouse, 2009.

## ■ *Today's Topic: Faith:*

- **Credo. The Apostles' Creed Explained for Today.** Hans Küng. Doubleday, 1992.
- **Introduction to Theology. Revised Edition.** Owen C. Thomas. Morehouse, 1983.

Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen thou me. I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent that my love may go out to my neighbour. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust thee altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in thee. In thee I have sealed the treasures of all I have. I am poor; thou art rich and didst come to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; thou art upright. With me there is an abundance of sin; in thee is the fullness of righteousness. Therefore, I will remain with thee of whom I can receive But to whom I may not give. Amen.

Martin Luther, 1483-1546.

***This Week:***

**2. Faith**

# The Choice



# The Choice

## An Atheist's View of Reality

- The universe is a vast, mindless, domain of matter, of gas, dust, and stars, ultimately meaningless and pointless.
- The development of life on this insignificant planet called Earth was a chance, freak accident.
- From the perspective of the universe, individual human lives flicker but for a split-second, tiny flames amid the dark eons of time.
  - We are born, grow and mature, wither and die.
  - At death, our thoughts, memories, hopes, dreams, accomplishments, failures are extinguished and quickly forgotten.
  - Our lives are ultimately meaningless passages from nothingness to nothingness.

# The Choice

## The Christian View of Reality

- The universe is a vast, glorious, domain of matter, of gas, dust, and stars, deliberately fashioned by an all powerful, good, and loving God. God *designed* the universe to give rise:
  - to life and consciousness,
  - to human beings bearing the image and likeness of the Creator.
- Individual human beings are born, grow and mature, and die, but we will live beyond the grave:
  - Our thoughts, memories, hopes, dreams, accomplishments, failures will remain intact,
  - We will live, with “glorified bodies,” like butterflies that were once caterpillars, in an unimaginable new heaven and universe,
  - living eternally with each other and with the God who created us and loves us.

# What is Faith?



# What is Faith?

## A Definition

- What is Faith?
- Faith is a willful, deliberate action of a *whole* human being.
  - *Whole*: a human being with reason and a heart
- An action involving:
  - A deep commitment to an object or person.
  - A reasonable trust in an object or person.
- This commitment and trust includes / involves our:
  - knowledge and beliefs
  - questions and doubts
  - understandings
  - attitudes and dispositions

# What is Faith?

## The Creeds

- What do Christians “give their faith to”?
  - *That is:* what do Christians make a commitment to, put their trust in?
- The Creeds are statements of the early Christian Church that try to encapsulate what it is that we Christians “give our faith to.”
  - They are “confessions of faith.”

# What is Faith?

## The Creeds

- The statements in the Creeds begin with:
  - “I believe” (the Apostles Creed)
  - “We believe” (the Nicene Creed)
- In Greek (the language the New Testament and the Creeds were written in), the same word *pistis* carries the English meanings of both faith and belief.
  - Greek has a verb form of *pistis* that describes the deliberate action of “giving our faith to” something or someone.
  - However, there is no English verb form of “faith.”
  - Hence in translating the Creeds from Greek, translators used the active verb “believe”.

# What is Faith?

## The Creeds

- In saying “we believe” in the creeds, we are saying more than what the strict English sense of the word “believe” implies.
  - Even the devil “believes” in God in the strict English sense of “believe.”
- We are using the verb form of *pistis*; we are saying:
  - We place our trust in ...
  - We commit ourselves to ...
  - *That is:* We put our faith in ...

**God: Father, Almighty,  
Creator**



# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and  
unseen.**

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## What is God?

- What is God? God is:
  - that which cannot be defined, cannot be limited.
  - a literally invisible, unfathomable, incomprehensible and infinite reality,
  - a reality which is the source, ultimate meaning and goal of the universe's and our personal existence.

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## What is God?

- God is not an “object” or “thing” in this universe discoverable by science.
  - “A God who is there, is not God” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## God the Creator

- God is the primal ground, the primal author, the creator of the universe.
- God brought the universe into being from nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*)
- God continuously sustains the universe, sustaining all of space-time, from moment to moment, keeping it in being (*creatio conservata*)

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## God the Creator

- The Bible was not intended as a scientific textbook. The biblical stories of Creation in Genesis 1 and 2 tell us:
  - there is but one God
  - God is the ultimate origin of each human being
  - God is not in competition with an equally powerful evil counterforce (there is no “dark side” comparable to God)
  - all that is in the creation – night, day, waters, lowliest creatures, the human body – are fundamentally good
  - human beings are the goal of creation
  - God’s very word is creative

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## Almighty God

- What Does Almighty Mean?
  - Greek *pantocrator* = “ruler of all”
  - Latin *omnipotens* = “capable of doing everything.”  
English: omnipotent
- Expresses God’s superiority and effectiveness:
  - God is not opposed by any force of similar potency.
  - God has sovereign power over all of creation.

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## Almighty God

- We should not think of “Almighty” God however as a:
  - A God who exists only “above” the world,
  - A great king in absolute detached splendor
  - A king untouched, unsoiled by the suffering of creation.
- God is *not* a super “watchmaker,” who has crafted the universe and now watches it tick away from afar.

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## Almighty God

- Almighty God is both:
  - **Transcendent** (above, outside the world), and
  - **Immanent** (within and among the world)
- Almighty God is an all-embracing, all-permeating, infinite reality, existing *both above the world and within* the world.
  - The concept of God as existing “in, with and among human beings and things of this world” is what we mean by the **sacramental nature** of the universe.

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## God as Father

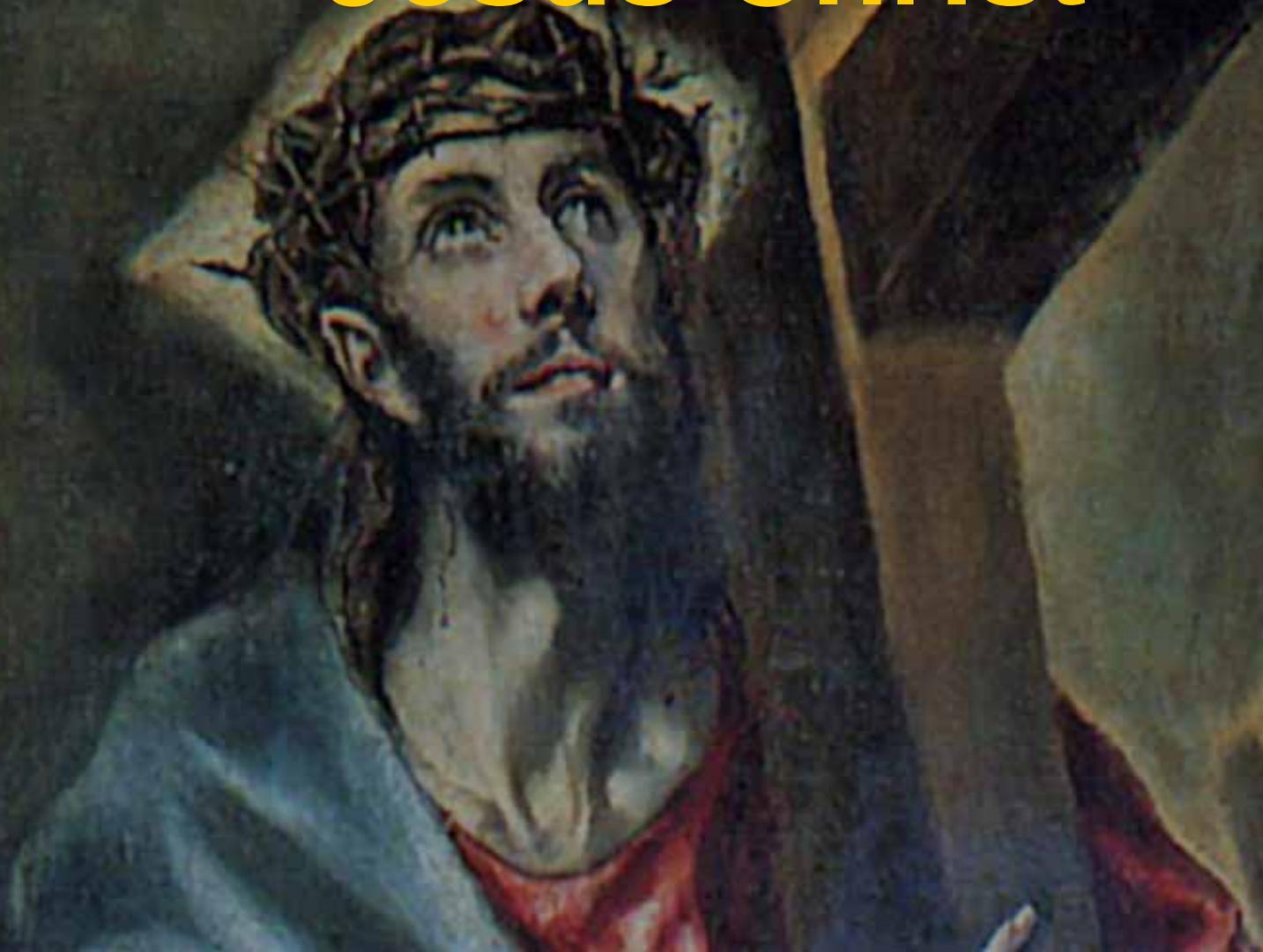
- What do we mean when we describe God as “Father?”
- God transcends masculinity and femininity:
  - God is not male
  - God is not masculine or feminine, but transcends masculinity and femininity
- All terms for God are:
  - analogies
  - metaphors
  - ciphers
  - symbols

# God: Father, Almighty, Creator

## God as Father

- The problem we have as human beings trying to describe God is that we are *only human*:
  - we have no higher names than human names.
  - Words like “father” and “mother” convey much more to us as human beings than abstract terms like “the Absolute,” or “the Ultimate Being”
- We describe God as “Father” to evoke the awareness that God’s love for us is that of the greatest, most ideal father imaginable (“Father”), or the greatest, most ideal mother imaginable (“Mother”).
  - And so we say, as Jesus taught us, *Abba*, “Our Father”

# One Lord, Jesus Christ



# **One Lord, Jesus Christ**

## **The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.**

# One Lord, Jesus Christ

## The Incarnation

- How can we – mere lowly, limited, finite human beings – possibly know or love the invisible, unfathomable, incomprehensible and infinite reality that is God?
  - We believe that God has revealed God's self to us in the form of the human being Jesus in part so we might better know and love God.
- God:
  - deliberately set aside all of God's divine attributes, all the privileges of divinity,
  - deliberately “emptied” God's self of all the powers of God, and took on human form as Jesus, the Christ (= “the anointed one” = the Messiah).
- God taking on human form in Jesus = the **Incarnation** (literally “en-flesh-ment”; from Latin *carnem* = flesh)

# One Lord, Jesus Christ

## The Incarnation

- The meaning of the **Incarnation**:
  - A “persona” within the inner life of the incomprehensible God, a “persona” termed “Son of God” or “the Logos” (in John’s gospel), eternal (“eternally begotten of the Father”), present at the creation of the universe, became fully human while remaining fully divine – Jesus, the Christ
- The description of the “virgin birth” of Jesus in the gospel nativity stories emphasize that:
  - God acted *uniquely* in history in the conception of the man Jesus.
  - Jesus was a union of *both* divine and human natures.

# One Lord, Jesus Christ

## The Nature of Jesus

- The early Church struggled for several centuries trying define the mystery of Jesus' nature.
  - Was he really fully human and fully God?
    - Greek *homoousios* = of the *same* being or substance (= *ousios*) as the Father
  - Or was he only partly human and partly God (some hybrid half-human, half-God alien?)
    - Greek *homoiousios* = *similar* in being or substance (= *ousios*) as the Father

# One Lord, Jesus Christ

## The Nature of Jesus

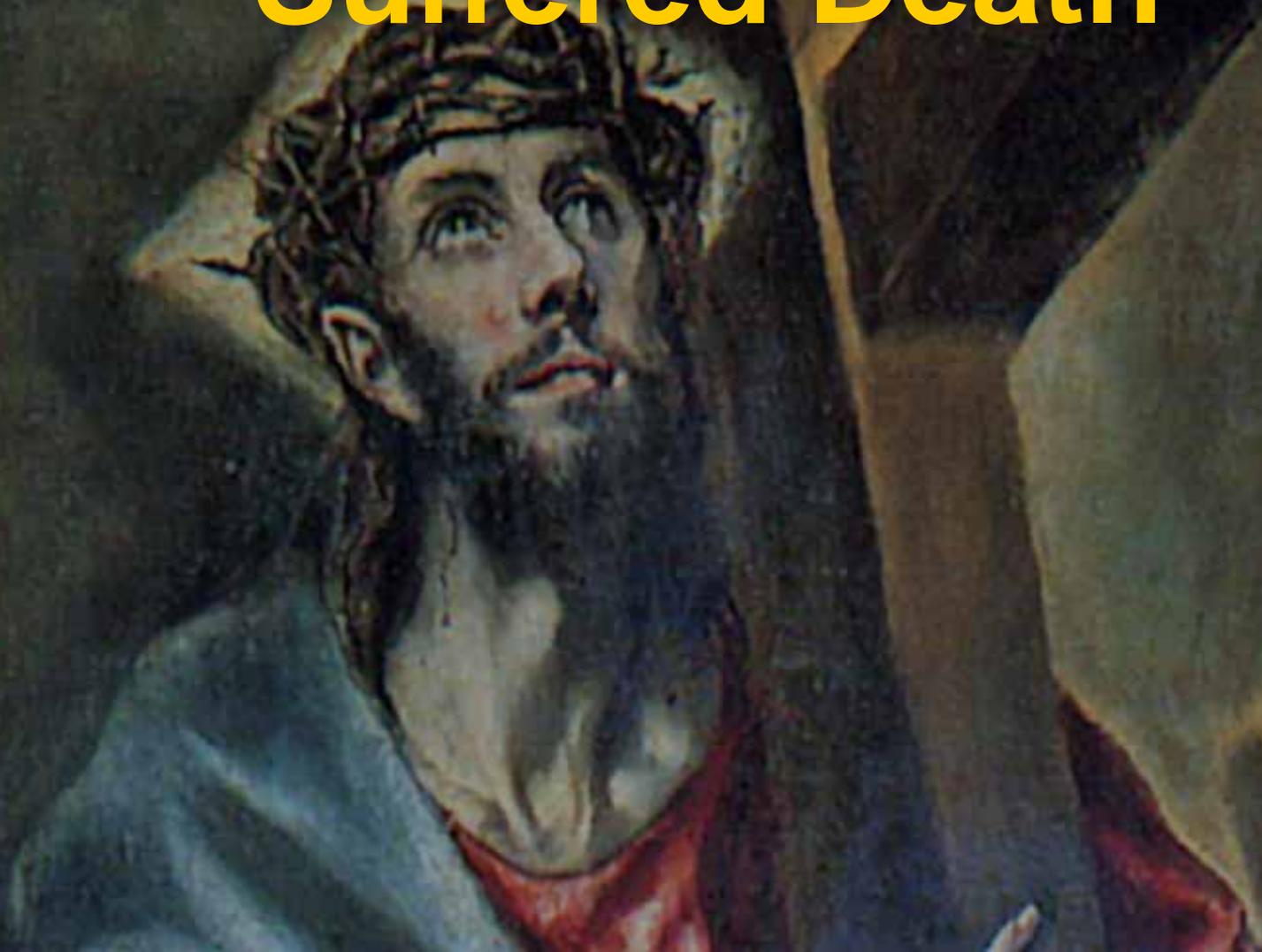
- The difference between *homoousios* and *homoiousios* is a single Greek letter iota.
- The early Church ultimately decided there was NOT an “iota of difference” between Jesus as God and the Father as God. Jesus was of the same being or substance – *homoousios* – as the Father.
  - Jesus was *fully* human and *fully* divine.
- The early Church also ultimately affirmed Jesus was as *fully* human as we are, not some half-human hybrid alien.
  - Yet he was also *fully* God (= the *mystery* of the **Incarnation**)

# One Lord, Jesus Christ

## The Nature of Jesus

- The Creed does not try to explain *how* Jesus could be *fully* God and *fully* human. It only tries to:
  - indicate where the mystery lies
  - defend the mystery against attempts to dissolve it into some neat formula that would distort it
- Is Jesus just an inspired man like the prophets?
  - No Jesus is of one substance or being with the God the Father.
- Is Jesus God masquerading as a human being?
  - No Jesus is fully human, true humanity
- Is Jesus an intermediary being, semi-divine and semi-human?
  - No Jesus is truly God and truly human.

# Crucified, Suffered Death



# Crucified, Suffered Death

## The Nicene Creed

**For our sake he was  
crucified under Pontius  
Pilate;  
he suffered death and  
was buried.**

# Crucified, Suffered Death

## Crucifixion

- The Crucifixion was:
  - an abhorrent instrument of execution and deterrence
  - a brutal historical fact
  - had nothing to do with life, wholeness, and true humanity

# Crucified, Suffered Death

## Why Did Jesus Have to Die on the Cross?

- Why did Jesus have to die such a horrible death?
  - The Creeds do not tell us.
  - The Creeds only affirm that it happened “for our sake”
- There are several theories – so-called “Atonement theories”
  - Atonement theories = theories on how Jesus’ suffering and death on the cross took away sins and reconciled human beings to God.

# Crucified, Suffered Death

## The Meaning of Jesus' Death on the Cross

- What is the meaning of Jesus' death on the cross?
  - Outwardly, like much of the suffering in this world, Jesus' death on the cross seems meaningless, a horrible, godforsaken dying.
- A meaning can be glimpsed if we pair the belief in the cross with a belief in the Jesus' resurrection to new life.
- By believing in Jesus' resurrection, Jesus' apparently meaningless, godforsaken death on the cross becomes an invitation to us:
  - to *trust* in a hidden meaning in our own suffering
  - to practice endurance and persistence in this life to the end

# Crucified, Suffered Death

## Taking Up One's Own Cross

- What does taking up one's own cross mean?
- It does not mean:
  - accepting supervision
  - giving in or surrendering
  - become subservient
  - humbling oneself
  - accepting repression
- Taking up our own cross means taking up the cross of one's own life. This includes
  - acceptance of self
  - going one's own way:
    - in the risk of one's own situation
    - in the midst of the uncertainty of one's own future

# Rose, Ascended into Heaven



# Rose, Ascended Into Heaven

## The Nicene Creed

**On the third day he rose  
again in accordance with  
the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right  
hand of the Father.**

# Rose, Ascended Into Heaven

## The Easter Stories

- Is the empty tomb proof of the resurrection of Jesus?
  - If you find an empty tomb, who would presume its occupant had been raised from the dead?
  - The empty tomb is no proof; it says only: “He is not here” (Mark 16:6). An explanation is required.
- So what caused Jesus disciples to believe in his resurrection?
- What happened to cause Jesus’ disciples to leave their hiding as the followers of:
  - a criminal crucified by the Roman Empire?
  - one condemned as a blasphemer by Jewish authorities?And proclaim that he who had been crucified, died and buried was alive!

# Rose, Ascended Into Heaven

## The Easter Stories

- The reason given by the first disciples of Jesus for their new faith was Jesus himself:
  - There were overwhelming appearances by the resurrected Jesus before witnesses, appearances that led to public testimony.
  - Paul mentions a whole series of witnesses who were still alive at the time he was writing (in the 50's AD):
    - . . .and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me (1 Corinthians 15:5-8)

# Rose, Ascended Into Heaven

## The Easter Stories

- All the early witnesses of the resurrected Jesus shared the conviction:
  - the crucified one was alive, and
  - the crucified one “sits at the right of the Father”
    - From Psalm 110:1 “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand!’”

# Rose, Ascended Into Heaven

## Meaning of the Resurrection

- Jesus' resurrection was *not*:
  - a revived body returned only to earthy life.
  - a return to life in this space and time.
  - a continuation of this life in space and time
- Jesus's resurrection was:
  - a passage into that ineffable and incomprehensible last and first reality = a passage into the reality of God
    - a “real event” in the divine sphere
  - a new life, an entering into a completely different form of existence.
    - analogy: from caterpillar to butterfly

# Rose, Ascended Into Heaven

## Meaning of the Resurrection

- Paul says God raises to a some *pneumatikon* = to a “pneumatic” body, a “spiritual corporeality.” Implies both:
  - continuity: corporeality includes the identity of the person
  - discontinuity: not a revival of the old body, but a raising into a new dimension.

# The Holy Spirit



# **The Holy Spirit**

## **The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the Prophets.**

# The Holy Spirit

## What is the Holy Spirit?

- What is the “Holy Spirit”?
  - The Holy Spirit is God, of the same essential nature as the Father and the Son
  - The Holy Spirit is God’s invisible activity, tangible yet intangible, invisible yet powerful
    - As important to life as the air we breathe
    - Laden with energy like the wind, like a storm
  - The Holy Spirit is the personal nearness of God to us, and the nearness of God to the world
    - *not* a “third” element, *not* something between God and us

# The Holy Spirit

## The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

- In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God is the personal presence and power of God:
  - cooperates in the work of creation
    - The Spirit (Hebrew: *ruach*) is the breath or storm of God which moves over the waters at creation
  - guides rulers and king
  - inspires the prophets
  - sanctifies Israel

# The Holy Spirit

## The Holy Spirit in the New Testament

- In New Testament, the Holy Spirit is
  - the manifestation of the power and presence of God
    - at Jesus' conception and Jesus' baptism
    - at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry
    - in Jesus' works of healing
  - After the Resurrection, the Spirit is given to the community of the church, and guides and empowers the church's mission.
- In Paul:
  - The Spirit is the way Christ is present in the church
  - is present in each individual, and helps each individual to produce the fruits of the Spirit, especially love
- In John, The Holy Spirit is:
  - counselor
  - bears witness to Christ
  - confirms Christ's teachings

# The Holy Spirit

## The Trinity

- The mystery of **the Trinity** (from St. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*):
  - 1. The Father is God
  - 2. The Son is God
  - 3. The Holy Spirit is God
  - 4. The Father is not the Son
  - 5. The Son is not the Holy Spirit
  - 6. The Holy Spirit is not the Father
  - 7. There is only one God

# The Holy Spirit

## The Trinity

- The Trinity is a mystery about the inner life of God.
- One theological idea used to try to understand the “three in one:” *perichoresis* or *circumincessio* = mutual interpenetration.
  - Within the inner life of the Godhead, The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit are continuously mutually interpenetrating each other, in a continuous communion with each other, to the point they have a single will
- Another idea (from St. Augustine):
  - The Spirit is the bond of union between the Father and Son in the Trinity
  - The Spirit is the bond of union between the God and the believer
  - That bond is Love. The Holy Spirit = Love.

# The Church



# The Church

## The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one  
holy catholic and  
apostolic Church.**

# The Church

## What is the Church?

- Four images of the church in the New Testament:
  - The congregation of the faithful
  - The body of Christ
    - the Spirit of Christ gives gifts to members of the church, allowing them to function like part of a whole body
    - the life and well-being of the community depends on the service and function of all its members, just as the function of a body depends on the function of all its parts
  - The fellowship of the Spirit
    - possession of the Spirit is the decisive mark of being a Christian
  - The community of hope
    - life of the church is a foretaste of what is to come

# The Church

## One

- Church as “one”
  - Ephesians 4:4-6: “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. . .” (NRSV)
  - The *visible* community is clearly not one now, but divided. There are many churches. Many will not share the Eucharist with each other.
  - We must therefore profess: “We believe in one holy catholic Church” with some pain.

# The Church

## Apostolic

- Church as “apostolic”
  - a call to live in accordance with the testimony of the apostles:
    - an invitation to all Christians in the church to become “more apostolic” = strive to be loyal to the origin of the church
  - made concrete in the exercising of the “apostolic ministry”
    - **apostolic succession** = the historical continuity of bishops being consecrated by bishops, who were themselves consecrated by bishops, going back to the original 12 disciples of Jesus
      - followed by Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox Christians

# The Church

## Catholic

- Church as “catholic”
  - “catholic” = from a Greek work meaning “universal”
  - to be catholic means to be concerned with the whole, universal, world-wide church

# The Church

## Holy

- Church as “holy”
  - holy = being set apart by God for God
  - In Scripture, there is no such thing as “institutional holiness.” Only individuals can be holy
  - Individuals are holy to the degree they have oriented their will to God.
  - A church can be holy only to the degree the individuals making it up are holy.
- Since all individuals are also fallible and therefore sinful, we must say:
  - the church is holy and sinful at the same time
  - the church is part of the battlefield between God’s Spirit and evil in the world, a front running:
    - not only through the holy church and the unholy world
    - but also through the middle of the human heart

# Forgiveness of Sins



# Forgiveness of Sins

## The Nicene Creed

**We acknowledge  
one baptism for  
the forgiveness  
of sins.**

# Forgiveness of Sins

## *Metanoia*

- All have sinned. No one is spared experiences of helplessness, failure, guilt.
  - All are entangled in complex histories of guilt they would like to repress or deny.
- Jesus' intent: liberation from guilt.
- Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God calls for *metanoia* = a turning back from false, sinful ways.
  - Jesus invites us to a radical inner conversion, a homecoming of the whole person back to God.

# Forgiveness of Sins

## The Means of Liberation from Guilt

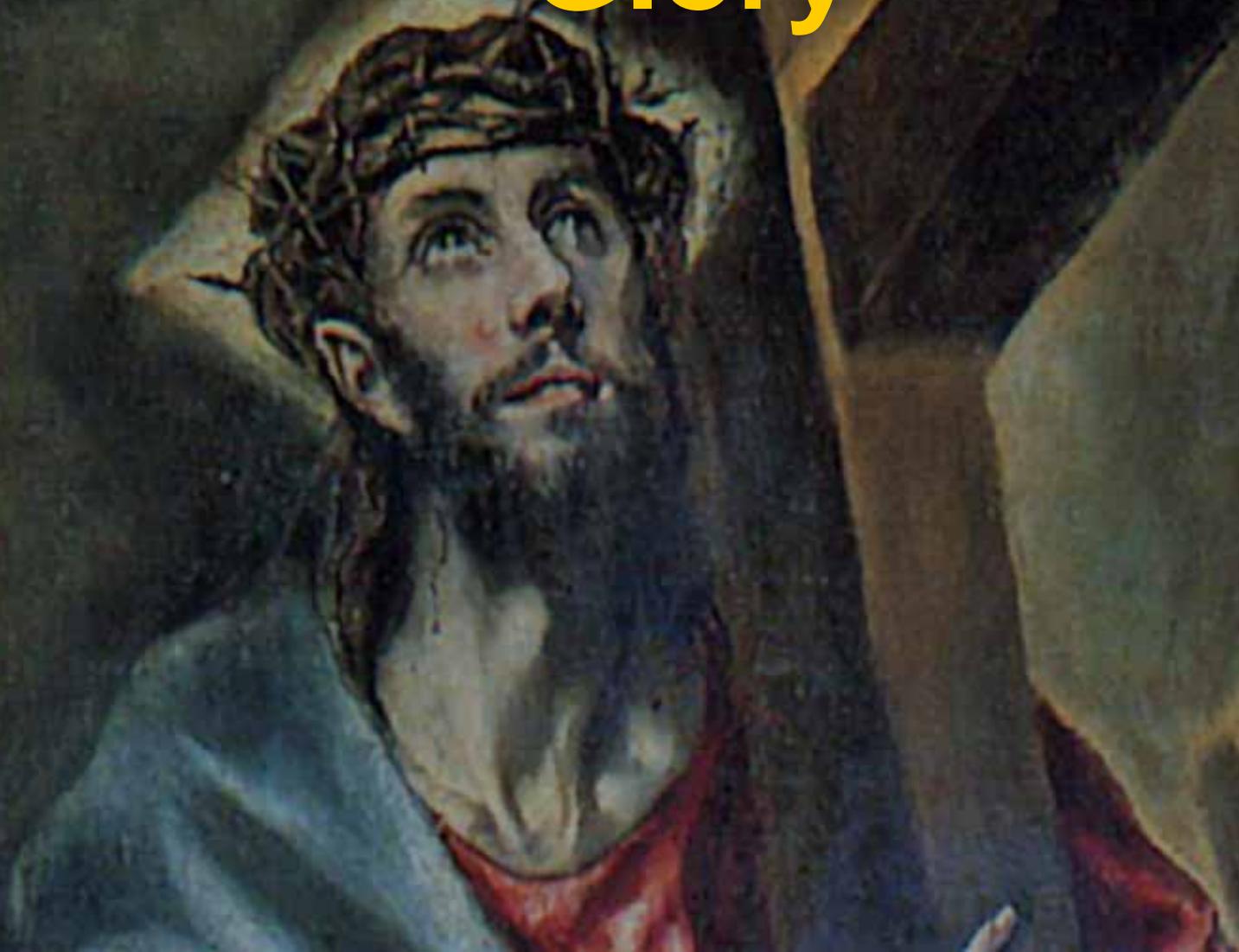
- Means of liberation of guilt: the forgiveness of sins
  - Jesus promised forgiveness of sins (claiming what in Judaism was a province of God alone)
- Forgiveness is:
  - the offer of God's grace given without condition
  - makes liberation from the guilt of past sins possible: “put a line under it; you are forgiven”
  - a critical part of all *metanoia*, repentance – for it allows us to move on to new, positive possibilities.

# Forgiveness of Sins

## Ways We Are Forgiven

- Ways in which forgiveness of sins is possible:
  - baptism
  - preaching of the gospel
  - general absolution in liturgy
  - absolution from any believer
  - special absolution of ministers (sacrament of Penance)

**Will Come Again in  
Glory**



# **Will Come Again in Glory**

## **The Nicene Creed**

**He will come again in glory to  
judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no  
end. ...**

**We look for the resurrection of  
the dead,  
and the life of the world to come.**

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The End of the World

- Scripture tells us the world will ultimately end:
  - “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.” (Isaiah 51:6; second Isaiah, during the Babylonian exile)
  - “For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind” (Isaiah 65:17; third Isaiah, after the Babylonian exile)
- Modern astronomy and cosmology predicts:
  - In 0.5 to 1 billion years from now, the sun’s temperature will increase enough to boil the oceans away
  - In 5 billion years from now, the sun will become a red giant and incinerate the earth
  - In ~1000 billion years from now, the last longest-living stars will die.

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The End of the World

- Biblical statements about the end of the world give us two messages:
  - This imperfect universe is temporary and will ultimately end as we know it
  - But God intends to perfect this universe by creating a new heaven and the new earth:
    - either by a transformation of the old universe
    - or by a new creation of the old universe

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The Last Judgment

- History will not and cannot make amends for all the injustice suffered in this world by individual, and by nations
- The biblical picture of a **Last Judgment**:
  - The ultimate bringing together to God of all people so that justice is done
  - The gathering of all humanity to its creator, judge, its perfecter

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The Last Judgment

- The biblical picture of a **Last Judgment** tells us:
  - all institutions – political, economic, and religious – are under God's judgment
  - the meaning of each individual human life will be God's judgment
  - all generations, all human beings must share in judgment and God's justice
  - Life's ambiguities and negatives can be overcome only by God
  - Jesus Christ will be the last judge

# Will Come Again in Glory

## Hell

- Hell – exclusion from communion with the living God – does not appear in the Nicene Creed, but is found in the New Testament.
- Hell highlights the tension between God's gift of human freedom versus the power of God's love:
  - the human freedom to turn away from, to reject God's love
  - the power of God's love to win all people freely

# Will Come Again in Glory

## Hell

- The gift of human freedom means hell is:
  - an extreme, last possibility of remoteness from God which we cannot rule out
  - the possibility of:
    - forfeiture of the meaning of our life,
    - exclusion of ourselves from communion with God
- New Testament statements about hell remind us:
  - of the unconditional seriousness of God's claim on us
  - of the urgency of human repentance
  - life is serious business
  - life is an emergency!

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The Resurrection of the Body

- Our bodies are the:
  - basis of interpersonal communications
  - basis of social life
  - basis of historical life
- We need a body to be fully part of the natural world.
- Our bodies are a manifestation of our individuality.

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The Resurrection of the Body

- Thus the resurrection of the body tells us the Christian hope is not an escape from:
  - the body
  - social life
  - historical lifebut a fulfillment of these.
- Because the body is part of the natural world, its resurrection points to the fulfillment of the whole cosmos.
- Because the body is part of our individuality, implies also our fulfillment as individuals in the world to come.

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The Life of the World To Come

- Scriptures give us only poetic images of the world to come:
- Old Testament:
  - Isaiah 11:6-9: “The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” (NRSV)
  - Isaiah 65:17-20: “I [God] will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime” (NRSV)

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The Life of the World To Come

- New Testament poetic images of the World to Come include:
  - a bride and a wedding feast
  - the living water
  - the tree of life
  - the new Jerusalem
  - images of community, love, clarity, fullness, beauty, harmony

# Will Come Again in Glory

## The Life of the World To Come

- What can we say and hope for in faith? The consummation of humankind and the world is:
  - a new, eternal life in the unimaginable, unthinkable dimensions of God. A life beyond our time and space, and therefore an ineffable mystery – the mystery of God
  - 1 Timothy 6:16: “It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion.” (NRSV)
  - 1 Corinthians 2:9: “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him” (NRSV)

***Next Week:***

**3. Worship**