

HUMAN NATURE

Q. What are we by nature?

- *What is nature? "the basic or inherent features of something, especially when seen as characteristic of it... the innate or essential qualities or character of a person or animal... inborn or hereditary characteristics as an influence on or determinant of personality"*¹

- *Genesis 1:26-28*²

A. We are part of God's creation, made in the image of God.

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**Q. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?**

- *What is creation? That which God created out of nothing. He is not himself a creation because he is different as the Creator, not a part of creation but active in it. To be created then, is to be lovingly and intentionally brought into existence by the Creator.*

- *Genesis 1:31*<sup>3</sup>

- *What is the image of God or imago dei? It means we were created to have dominion over creation (Gen. 1:26) and to be stewards of it. Mankind is different from the rest of creation by our purpose to care for it. We are created with authority, and with authority comes freedom and choices.*

- *Genesis 2:15-25*<sup>4</sup>

**A. It means that we are free to make choices: to love, to create, to reason, and to live in harmony with creation and with God.**

- *This is important for us. We love because God loves. We create because God creates. We reason because God reasons.*

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<sup>1</sup> Google definition of "nature".

<sup>2</sup> "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

<sup>3</sup> "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good..."

<sup>4</sup> Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed."

**Q. Why then do we live apart from God and out of harmony with creation?**

*We share in a portion of this, but we also remember that God's ways are higher than our ways. He loves, creates, and reasons perfectly while we do these things imperfectly.*

- Genesis 2:15-17 <sup>5</sup>

- Genesis 3:1-7 <sup>6</sup>

**A. From the beginning, human beings have misused their freedom and made wrong choices.**

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Q. Why do we not use our freedom as we should?

- Genesis 3:5-6 ⁷

A. Because we rebel against God, and we put ourselves in the place of God.

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**Q. What help is there for us?**

- Genesis 3:21 <sup>8</sup>

**A. Our help is in God.**

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Q. How did God first help us?

A. God first helped us by revealing himself and his will, through nature and history, through many seers and saints, and especially the prophets of Israel.

⁵ "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

⁶ "Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons."

⁷ "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate."

⁸ "And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them."

GOD THE FATHER

Q. What do we learn about God as creator from the revelation to Israel?

- What is revelation? It is unveiling, or making known that which was hidden. When God discloses himself to us, it is Divine Revelation.

- General Revelation is what is revealed about God from the facts of the world. It is what nature and reason reveal to us about God.

- Special Revelation goes beyond what can be generally known through nature and reason. It is not to all people but only to those chosen by God. This is what is known through the supernatural acts of God. This is the kind of revelation we see in his relationship with Israel and later through the Incarnate Christ.

- Genesis 1:1

- Deuteronomy 6:4

- Isaiah 44:6

- Isaiah 45:5

- Acts 14:15

A. We learn that there is one God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

- God is perfect, good, infinite, unchangeable, and eternal

- God is omnipresent (everywhere simultaneously), omniscient (knows all things), and omnipotent (all powerful).

Q. What does this mean?

- God is involved in creation still and so provides for it.

A. This means that the universe is good, that it is the work of a single loving God who creates, sustains, and directs it.

- Genesis 1:31

Q. What does this mean about our place in the universe?

- We are not the center of the universe. There is that which is greater, and it is God.

A. It means that the world belongs to its creator; and that we are called to enjoy it and to care for it in accordance with God's purposes.

Q. What does this mean about human life?

- As creatures of God's own making, our identity is tied to the creator. Who we are is defined by whose we are.

A. It means that all people are worthy of respect and honor, because all are created in the image of God, and all can respond to the love of God.

An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism

- To respect humanity, and indeed all of creation, is at its very core to respect the creator. One cannot love God without loving their neighbor, nor truly love their neighbor without loving God. To love in thought, word, and deed is how we respond to the love of God.

Q. How was this revelation handed down to us?

A. This revelation was handed down to us through a community created by a covenant with God.

Q + 1 How is God Father?

A + 1 He is Father because he is in relation to the Son. He has always been Father because there has never been a time there was not the Son. He is like a Father to his people and his creation, and those who are in Christ are adopted and therefore co-heirs with Christ.

THE OLD COVENANT

Q. What is meant by a covenant with God?

What is covenant? "A bond entered into voluntarily by two parties by which each pledges himself to do something for the other." (Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church). Commercial contracts and marriage would be two well known forms of covenant.

A. A covenant is a relationship initiated by God, to which a body of people responds in faith.

Q. What is the Old Covenant?

A. The Old Covenant is the one given by God to the Hebrew people.

* See reverse side of the page: Covenant in the Old Testament *

Q. What did God promise them?

A. God promised that they would be his people to bring all the nations of the world to him.

We also see in the Old Covenant the promise of Salvation through a Messiah, who in the Incarnation is revealed to be none other than the Son of God.

Q. What response did God require from the chosen people?

A. God required the chosen people to be faithful; to love justice, to do mercy, and to walk humbly with their God.

Micah 6:8.

Q. Where is this Old Covenant to be found?

A. The covenant with the Hebrew people is to be found in the books which we call the Old Testament.

Q. Where in the Old Testament is God's will for us shown most clearly?

A. God's will for us is shown most clearly in the Ten Commandments.

* See reverse side of the page: Covenant: Form, Function, and Future *

Covenant in the Old Testament

Adam and Eve (*protoevangelium* or “first good news”)

Genesis 3:15. The one referred to is not simply all of the descendants of Adam and Eve, but specifically the Christ shall be at enmity with the Serpent, that is the devil.

Noah

Genesis 9:8-17.

Abraham

Genesis 12:1-7. God promises land, descendants, and blessing. Each of these can also be seen to foreshadow the Messiah who would be Lord of all, a descendant of Abraham, and a blessing to the whole world.

Genesis 15:1-6. Covenant with God is founded on faith.

Genesis 17:1-4, 9-14. God gives Abraham a sign for those who are in Covenant relationship with him, circumcision.

Galatians 3:6-7,16, 27-29. Colossians 2:11-17.

Moses

Exodus 19:1-6. From this point the people of Israel receive the Ten Commandments and the law of God. The law does not replace the Abrahamic promise which is inherited by faith, but rather was meant to keep the Israelites from sin while they awaited the fulfillment of the promise in the Messiah who is Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:17-18.

David

2 Samuel 23:5. Psalm 89:1-4, 30-37. God makes a covenant with David establishing his throne forever regardless of the faithfulness or faithlessness of his descendants. By this he means, to quote the hymn, “the Lord’s anointed, great David’s greater Son” who is the Messiah.

Covenant: Form, Function, and Future

Genesis 15:7-21.

Covenants were typically made with a ritual element in ancient times. This continues today in some ways (think of the formality of signing the paperwork and the handshake at the end). Ancient ritual would follow a pattern similar to that which Abram does in Genesis. Those making the covenant would walk between the two rows of animals as a sign of the promise. Essentially, “If I break the terms of this covenant, may this kind of ruin happen to me.”

God has Abram prepare this rite, but Abram does not pass through the animals. Only God performs it as seen in the smoking pot and flaming torch (theophany – visible revelation of the divine). God bears the burden of the covenant and its promises. God requires faith on the part of his people but takes responsibility for its accomplishment. Even though the people will fail to obey God, his promise endures. This then is not only a foreshadowing of the Messiah, but of the Incarnate Son of God who has come to fulfill the Old Covenant and thereby establish the New Covenant. Only the Christ can perfectly fulfill the covenant by virtue of his divinity and humanity. The Old Covenant then is a promise of God’s unparalleled grace manifested in the perfect obedience of the Messiah who secures for the people of faith the promises and blessings of God.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Q. What are the Ten Commandments?

A. The Ten Commandments are the laws give to Moses and the people of Israel.

- *Exodus 20:2-17 / Deuteronomy 5:6-18*

- *Book of Common Prayer p. 317*

Q. What do we learn from these commandments?

A. We learn two things: our duty to God, and our duty to our neighbors.

- *Matthew 22:37-40*

- *Book of Common Prayer p. 324*

Q. What is our duty to God?

- *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."* – *Matthew 22:37.*

A. Our duty is to believe and trust in God;

I To love and obey God and to bring others to know him;

- *One God.*

- *Exodus 3:13-14; Deuteronomy 6:4*

II To put nothing in the place of God;

- *No idols.*

- *Deuteronomy 4:15-16; Matthew 4:10; Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-15*

III To show God respect in thought, word, and deed;

- *Honor God's name.*

- *Psalm 8:1; Psalm 29:2; Philippians 2:10*

IV And to set aside regular times for worship, prayer, and the study of God's ways.

- *Keep the Sabbath Holy.*

- *Genesis 2:2-3; Matthew 11:28; Hebrews 4:9*

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Q. What is our duty to our neighbors?

- *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." – Matthew 22:39.*

A. Our duty to our neighbors is to love them as ourselves, and to do to other people as we wish them to do to us;

V To love, honor, and help our parents and family; to honor those in authority, and to meet their just demands;

- *Honor your father and mother.*

- *Luke 2:51; Proverbs 1:8; Acts 5:29; Ephesians 3:14*

VI To show respect for the life God has given us; to work and pray for peace; to bear no malice, prejudice, or hatred in our hearts; and to be kind to all the creatures of God;

- *Don't kill.*

- *Job 12:10; Matthew 5:21-22; Jeremiah 1:5*

VII To use our bodily desires as God intended;

- *Don't commit adultery.*

- *Genesis 1:27; Matthew 5:27-28; Matthew 19:6*

VIII To be honest and fair in our dealings; to seek justice, freedom, and the necessities of life for all people; and to use our talents and possessions as ones who must answer for them to God;

- *Don't steal.*

- *Genesis 1:28-31; Matthew 25:44-45; 2 Corinthians 8:9*

IX To speak the truth, and not to mislead others by our silence;

- *Don't lie.*

- *John 14:6; John 18:37; 1 John 1:6; 2 Timothy 1:8*

X To resist temptations to envy, greed, and jealousy; to rejoice in other people's gifts and graces; and to do our duty for the love of God, who has called us into fellowship with him.

- *Don't covet.*

- *Matthew 5:8; Matthew 6:19-21; Galatians 5:24; 1 John 2:16*

Q. What is the purpose of the Ten Commandments?

A. The Ten Commandments were given to define our relationship with God and our neighbors.

Q. Since we do not fully obey them, are they useful at all?

A. Since we do not fully obey them, we see more clearly our sin and our need for redemption.

SIN AND REDEMPTION

Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is the seeking of our own will instead of the will of God, thus distorting our relationship with God, with other people, and with all creation.

- Psalm 51:4 (p. 694); Philippians 2:6-9 (p. 1424)

- "Sin is an offense against God...Sin sets itself against God's love for us and turns our hearts away from it. Like the first sin, it is disobedience, a revolt against God through the will to become 'like gods,' know and determining good and evil. Sin is thus "love of oneself even to contempt of God." (Augustine) In this proud self-exaltation, sin is diametrically opposed to the obedience of Jesus, which achieves our salvation." - Catechism of the Catholic Church

- Sins can be:

+ In thought, word, deed, omission

+ Related to God, neighbor, or self

+ Spiritual or carnal

- Galatians 5:19-21 (p. 1415)

Q. How does sin have power over us?

A. Sin has power over us because we lose our liberty when our relationship with God is distorted.

- Genesis 3:5 (p. 5); Matthew 15:19-20 (p. 1191)

- Sinning can lead to a greater tendency to sin by repetition, desensitization, and engendering vice.

+ The "Seven Deadly Sins" are capital or deadly because they naturally lead to other sins.

+ Pride, Greed, Envy, Wrath, Lust, Gluttony, and Sloth.

Q. What is redemption?

A. Redemption is the act of God which sets us free from the power of evil, sin, and death.

- "It is precisely in the Passion, when the mercy of Christ is about to vanquish it, that sin most clearly manifests its violence and its many forms: unbelief, murderous hatred, shunning and mockery by the leaders and the people, Pilate's cowardice and the cruelty of the soldiers, Judas' betrayal - so bitter to Jesus, Peter's denial and the disciples' flight. However, at the very hour of darkness, the hour of the prince of this world, the sacrifice of Christ secretly becomes the source from which the forgiveness of our sins will pour forth inexhaustibly." - Catechism of the Catholic Church

Q. How did God prepare us for redemption?

A. God sent the prophets to call us back to himself, to show us our need for redemption, and to announce the coming of the Messiah.

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Q. What is meant by the Messiah?

A. The Messiah is one sent by God to free us from the power of sin, so that with the help of God we may live in harmony with God, within ourselves, with our neighbors, and with all creation.

Q. Who do we believe is the Messiah?

A. The Messiah, or Christ, is Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son of God.

- Matthew 1:21 (p. 1172)

GOD THE SON

Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance (homoousios) with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer (Theotokos); one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us. - Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D., Act V (BCP p. 864)

Q. What do we mean when we say that Jesus is the only Son of God?

A. We mean that Jesus is the only perfect image of the Father, and shows us the nature of God.

- We mean that he is "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." – Nicene Creed, BCP p. 326

- I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord – Apostles Creed

- The name Jesus means "God saves". The child born of the Virgin Mary is called Jesus, "for he will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21): "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The title "Christ" means "Anointed One" (Messiah). Jesus is the Christ, for "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10:38). He was the one "who is to come" (Lk 7:19), the object of "the hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20). The title "Son of God" signifies the unique and eternal relationship of Jesus Christ to God his Father: he is the only Son of the Father (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18); he is God himself (John 1:1). To be a Christian, one must believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:37; 1 John 2:23). The title "Lord" indicates divine sovereignty. To confess or invoke Jesus as Lord is to believe in his divinity. "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 12:3). – Catechism of the Catholic Church

Q. What is the nature of God revealed in Jesus?

A. God is love.

- We see this in the Son's participation in the act of creation, "Through him all things were made." as well as his role in the act of salvation, "For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven."- Nicene Creed

Q. What do we mean when we say that Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and became incarnate from the Virgin Mary?

A. We mean that by God's own act, his divine Son received our human nature from the Virgin Mary, his mother.

Q. Why did he take our human nature?

A. The divine Son became human, so that in him human beings might be adopted as children of God, and be made heirs of God's kingdom.

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- *The Word became flesh for us: in order to save us by reconciling us with God; so that thus we might know God's love; to be our model of holiness; and to make us partakers of the divine nature.*" – *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- *"For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God."* – *St. Irenaeus.*

- *1 John 4:9-10; John 3:16*

Q. What is the great importance of Jesus' suffering and death?

A. By his obedience, even to suffering and death, Jesus made the offering which we could not make; in him we are freed from the power of sin and reconciled to God.

- *Philippians 2:8.*

Q. What is the significance of Jesus' resurrection?

A. By his resurrection, Jesus overcame death and opened for us the way of eternal life.

Q. What do we mean when we say that he descended to the dead?

A. We mean that he went to the departed and offered them also the benefits of redemption.

- *1 Peter 3:18-20*

Q. What do we mean when we say that he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

A. We mean that Jesus took our human nature into heaven where he now reigns with the Father and intercedes for us.

- *Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:11; 1 John 2:1-2*

Q. How can we share in his victory over sin, suffering, and death?

A. We share in his victory when we are baptized into the New Covenant and become living members of Christ.

- *Romans 6:5; 1 Corinthians 6:17*

Q + 1. *What are some of the names and titles of Jesus Christ?*

A + 1. *Chief Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20); Firstborn over all creation (Colossians 1:15); Head of the Church (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23); Holy One (Acts 3:14); Judge (Acts 10:42); King of kings and Lord of Lords (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 19:16); Light of the World (John 8:12); Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6); Son of God (Luke 1:35; John 1:49); Son of man (John 5:27); Word (John 1:1; 1 John 5:7-8); Word of God (Revelation 19:12-13); Word of Life (1 John 1:1); Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8; 22:13); Emmanuel (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:23); I Am (John 8:58); Lord of All (Acts 10:36); True God (1 John 5:20); Author and Perfector of our Faith (Hebrews 12:2); Bread of Life (John 6:35); Bridegroom (Matthew 9:15); Deliverer (Romans 11:26); Good Shepherd (John 10:11, 14); High Priest (Hebrews 2:17); Lamb of God (John 1:29); Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5); Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4); Resurrection and Life (John 11:25); Savior (Matthew 1:21); True Vine (John 15:1); Way, Truth, Life (John 14:6).*

THE NEW COVENANT

Q. What is the New Covenant?

- *Jeremiah 31:31-34* (p. 955)

- *Hebrews 8:8,13; 9:15* (p. 1461-62)

- *Luke 22:20* (p. 1279); *1 Corinthians 11:25* (p. 1390); *BCP p. 342*

A. The New Covenant is the new relationship with God given by Jesus Christ, the Messiah, to the apostles; and, through them, to all who believe in him.

Q. What did the Messiah promise in the New Covenant?

- *John 10:10* (p. 1302)

A. Christ promised to bring us into the kingdom of God and give life in all its fullness.

Q. What response did Christ require?

- *John 6:29* (p. 1295), *14:1* (p. 1308)

A. Christ commanded us to believe in him and to keep his commandments.

Q. What are the commandments taught by Christ?

A. Christ taught us the Summary of the Law and gave us the New Commandment.

Q. What is the Summary of the Law?

- *Matthew 22:34-40* (p. 1201)

A. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

- *Deuteronomy 6:5* (p. 223); *Leviticus 19:18b* (p. 146)

Q. What is the New Commandment?

- *John 13:34* (p. 1308)

A. The New Commandment is that we love one another as Christ loved us.

Q. Where may we find what Christians believe about Christ?

A. What Christians believe about Christ is found in the Scriptures and summed up in the creeds.

THE CREEDS

See pages 53, 96, 326, 327, and 864.

Q. What are the creeds?

A. The creeds are statements of our basic beliefs about God.

Q. How many creeds does this Church use in its worship?

A. This Church uses two creeds: The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed.

Q. What is the Apostles' Creed?

A. The Apostles' Creed is the ancient creed of Baptism; it is used in the Church's daily worship to recall our Baptismal Covenant.

- The Apostles' Creed is clearly based upon the teaching of the Apostles, but tradition holds that they actually composed it. One tradition even suggests that inspired by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost each apostle wrote one of twelve articles found in the Creed. Whether or not they wrote it is unconfirmed, but the Creed attributed to their work can be attested to early baptismal rites as part of the profession of faith on the Trinity much of which remains relatively unchanged since those early days.

- BCP p. 304.

Q. What is the Nicene Creed?

A. The Nicene Creed is the creed of the universal Church and is used at the Eucharist.

- The Nicene Creed was written in 325 at the Council of Nicea as a response to the heresy of Arius and the denial of Christ's divinity. The Nicene Creed thus emphasizes that the Son is God from before time and creation who took on flesh at the Incarnation in the person of Jesus Christ.

- The original creed was later amended in 381 at the Council of Constantinople to affirm the work of Nicea in denying Arianism as well as combat those who would deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit. This expanded version, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, is the standard creed of the Eucharist and of the universal Church.

Q. What, then, is the Athanasian Creed?

A. The Athanasian Creed is an ancient document proclaiming the nature of the Incarnation and of God as Trinity.

- For much of the Church's history, the Athanasian Creed was considered on par with the Apostle's and Nicene Creeds. Scholarship has all but eliminated the possibility of Athanasius being the creed's author, but rather the pseudonym of a later author to gain credibility and acceptability for the work. It is therefore not held to the same level as the other creeds because of questionable historicity, but no orthodox scholar or cleric will question or deny

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the substance contained therein. It is commonly held to be one of the finest discussions of the Incarnation and especially the Trinity.

Q. What is the Trinity?

A. The Trinity is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,(1) the Father Almighty,
Maker of Heaven and Earth,(2)

And in Jesus Christ,(3)
His only Son,(4)
our Lord,(5)
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,(6)
born of the Virgin(7) Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,(8)
was crucified,(9)
dead(10)
and buried.(11)
He descended into Hell.(12)
The third day(13)
He arose from the dead,(14)
He ascended into Heaven(15)
and is seated at the right hand
of God,(16) the Father Almighty.
From thence He shall come
to judge the quick and the dead.(17)

I believe in the Holy Spirit,(18)
the church universal,(19)
the communion of saints,(20)
the forgiveness of sins,(21)
the resurrection of the body,(22)
and life everlasting.(23)

Bible References

1. Isaiah 44:6; 45:5
2. Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-3; Acts 14:15
3. Luke 2:11; John 20:28
4. John 3:16; Proverbs 30:4
5. John 20:28
6. Luke 1:35
7. Luke 1:27
8. Luke 23:23-25
9. John 19:20; Acts 4:10; all Gospels
10. 1 Corinthians 15:3
11. 1 Corinthians 15:4
12. 1 Peter 3:18; Luke 23:43
13. 1 Corinthians 15:4
14. 1 Corinthians 15:4
15. Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51, Acts 1:11
16. Mark 16:19; Hebrews 1:3
17. 2 Timothy 4:1; John 5:22
18. John 15:26; 16:7-8, 13-14; Acts 13:2
19. Galatians 3:26-29
20. Revelation 19:14; Hebrews 10:25
21. Luke 7:48
22. 1 Thessalonians 4:16; John 6:39
23. John 10:28; 17:2-3

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Q. What is the Holy Spirit?

A. The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity, God at work in the world and in the Church even now.
- Mark 1:9-11 (p. 1213)

Q. How is the Holy Spirit revealed in the Old Covenant?

A. The Holy Spirit is revealed in the Old Covenant as the giver of life, the One who spoke through the prophets.
- Judges 3:10 (p. 296)
- 1 Chronicles 12:18 (p. 510)
- Micah 3:8 (p. 1126)

Q. How is the Holy Spirit revealed in the New Covenant?

A. The Holy Spirit is revealed as the Lord who leads us into all truth and enables us to grow in the likeness of Christ.
- Luke 1:35 (p. 1241)
- Acts 2:1-4 (p. 1320)
- Galatians 4:6 (p. 1413)

Q. How do we recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

A. We recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit when we confess Jesus Christ as Lord and are brought into love and harmony with God, with ourselves, with our neighbors, and with all creation.
- 1 Corinthians 12:3 (p. 1391)
- "Baptism gives us the grace of new birth in God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit. For those who bear God's Spirit are led to the Word, that is, to the Son, and the Son presents them to the Father, and the Father confers incorruptibility on them. and it is impossible to see God's Son without the Spirit, and no one can approach the Father without the Son, for the knowledge of the Father is the Son, and the knowledge of God's Son is obtained through the Holy Spirit." – St. Irenaeus

Q. How do we recognize the truths taught by the Holy Spirit?

A. We recognize truths to be taught by the Holy Spirit when they are in accord with the Scriptures.
- 2 Timothy 3:16 (p. 1448)
- 2 Peter 1:21 (p. 1481)

An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism

Events:

- Pentecost
- Incarnation
- Baptism of Jesus

The Holy Spirit in the Church,

- in the Scriptures he inspired;
- in the Tradition, to which the Church Fathers are always timely witnesses;
- in the sacramental liturgy, through its words and symbols, in which the Holy Spirit puts us into communion with Christ;
- in prayer, wherein he intercedes for us;
- in the charisms and ministries by which the Church is built up;
- in the signs of apostolic and missionary life;
- in the witness of saints through whom he manifests his holiness and continues the work of salvation.

Names:

Paraclete (consolor),
comforter,
Spirit of truth,
of the promise,
of adoption,
of Christ,
of the Lord,
of God,
of glory.

Symbols:

water (baptism),
anointing (confirmation),
fire,
cloud,
dove.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Q. What are the Holy Scriptures?

A. The Holy Scriptures, commonly called the Bible, are the books of the Old and New Testaments; other books, called the Apocrypha, are often included in the Bible.

- Holy Scripture is "God's Word written" (Articles of Religion, 20), given by the Holy Spirit through prophets and apostles as the revelation of God and his acts in human history, and is therefore the Church's final authority in all matters of faith and practice. (2 Timothy 3:16) - *To Be A Christian (An Anglican Catechism)*

Q. What is the Old Testament?

A. The Old Testament consists of books written by the people of the Old Covenant, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to show God at work in nature and history.

- The Old Testament contains the record of God's creation of all things, mankind's original disobedience, God's calling of Israel to be his people, God's law, God's wisdom, God's saving deeds, and the teaching of God's prophets. The Old Testament points to Christ, revealing God's intention to redeem and reconcile the world through Christ. - *To Be A Christian (An Anglican Catechism)*

Q. What is the New Testament?

A. The New Testament consists of books written by the people of the New Covenant, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to set forth the life and teachings of Jesus and to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom for all people.

- "The New Testament contains the record of Jesus Christ's birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension, the Church's early ministry, the teaching of the Apostles, and the revelation of Christ's coming eternal Kingdom." *To Be A Christian (An Anglican Catechism)*

Q. What is the Apocrypha?

A. The Apocrypha is a collection of additional books written by people of the Old Covenant, and used in the Christian Church.

- Article 6

Q. Why do we call the Holy Scriptures the Word of God?

A. We call them the Word of God because God inspired their human authors and because God still speaks to us through the Bible.

- "Because the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit, it is rightly called the Word of God written. God is revealed in his mighty works and in the incarnation of our Lord, but his works and his will are made known to us through the inspired words of Scripture. God "has spoken through the prophets" (Nicene Creed), and continues to speak through the Bible today. (Hebrews 1:1-2; 3:7-11; 10:15-17; 12:25-27)" - *To Be A Christian (An Anglican Catechism)*

Q. How do we understand the meaning of the Bible?

A. We understand the meaning of the Bible by the help of the Holy Spirit, who guides the Church in the true interpretation of the Scriptures.

- "Just as Holy Scripture was not given through private interpretation of things, so it must also be translated, read, preached, taught, and obeyed in its plain and canonical sense, respectful of the Church's historic and consensual reading of it. (2 Peter 1:20-21; Jerusalem Declaration; Articles of Religion, 2)" - *To Be A Christian (An Anglican Catechism)*

Practical/Liturgical Excursus:

From: *To Be A Christian (An Anglican Catechism)*

35. **How should belief in the God of the Bible affect your life?**

As I prayerfully learn Holy Scripture, I should expect the Holy Spirit to use it to teach, rebuke, correct and train me in the righteousness that God desires. This nourishes my soul toward the service of God and my neighbor. (2 Timothy 3:16)

36. **How should you use the Holy Scriptures in daily life?**

I should "hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them" (Book of Common Prayer) so that, by patience and strengthening through God's Word, I may embrace and cling to the hope of everlasting life given to me in Jesus Christ. I should read and pray Scripture daily, that I may know God's truth and proclaim it clearly to the whole world.

The Psalms - 30 day cycle

Daily Office - 2 year cycle

Sunday Lectionary - 3 year cycle

THE CHURCH

Q. What is the Church?

A. The Church is the community of the New Covenant.

- The Church is “where the Spirit flourishes.” – St. Hippolytus

- The Church is both visible and spiritual, a hierarchical society and the Mystical Body of Christ. She is one, yet formed of two components, human and divine. That is her mystery, which only faith can accept. – Catechism of the Catholic Church, 779

Q. How is the Church described in the Bible?

A. The Church is described as the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head and of which all baptized persons are members. It is called the People of God, the New Israel, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, and the pillar and ground of truth.

- Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 1 Peter 2:9

- The Church is both the means and the goal of God's plan: prefigured in creation, prepared for in the Old Covenant, founded by the words and actions of Jesus Christ, fulfilled by his redeeming cross and his Resurrection, the Church has been manifested as the mystery of salvation by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. She will be perfected in the glory of heaven as the assembly of all the redeemed of the earth. – Catechism of the Catholic Church, 778

Q. How is the Church described in the creeds?

A. The Church is described as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

Q. Why is the Church described as one?

A. The Church is one, because it is one Body, under one Head, our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Romans 12:4; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; Ephesians 4:4-6 (BCP p. 299)

Q. Why is the Church described as holy?

A. The Church is holy, because the Holy Spirit dwells in it, consecrates its members, and guides them to do God's work.

- 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:26

Q. Why is the Church described as catholic?

A. The Church is catholic, because it proclaims the whole Faith to all people, to the end of time.

- catholic = universal

- 'what has been believed everywhere, always, and by all' – Vincentian Canon

Q. Why is the Church described as apostolic?

A. The Church is apostolic, because it continues in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles and is sent to carry out Christ's mission to all people.

- Acts 2:42; Matthew 28:17-20

- The Church in this world is the sacrament of salvation, the sign and the instrument of the communion of God and men. – Catechism of the Catholic Church, 780

Q. What is the mission of the Church?

A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Q. How does the Church pursue its mission?

A. The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

- Romans 10:14-17

Q. Through whom does the Church carry out its mission?

A. The church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.

- All the saints (past, present, and future)

- You and me

THE MINISTRY

Q. Who are the ministers of the Church?

A. The ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons.

Q. What is the ministry of the laity?

A. The ministry of lay persons is to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church.

Q. What is the ministry of a bishop?

A. The ministry of a bishop is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as apostle, chief priest, and pastor of a diocese; to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the whole Church; to proclaim the Word of God; to act in Christ's name for the reconciliation of the world and the building up of the Church; and to ordain others to continue Christ's ministry.

- 1 Timothy 3:1-7

- Titus 1:7-9

- Acts 20:28

Q. What is the ministry of a priest or presbyter?

A. The ministry of a priest is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as pastor to the people; to share with the bishop in the overseeing of the Church; to proclaim the Gospel; to administer the sacraments; and to bless and declare pardon in the name of God.

- Titus 1:5

- 1 Peter 5:1

Q. What is the ministry of a deacon?

A. The ministry of a deacon is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as a servant of those in need; and to assist bishops and priests in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments.

- Acts 6:1-6

- 1 Timothy 3:8-13

Q. What is the duty of all Christians?

A. The duty of all Christians is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom of God.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Q. What is prayer?

A. Prayer is responding to God, by thought and by deeds, with or without words.

Q. What is Christian Prayer?

A. Christian prayer is response of God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Q. What prayer did Christ teach us?

A. Our Lord gave us the example of prayer known as the Lord's Prayer. See page 364.

Q. What are the principle kinds of prayer?

A. The principle kinds of prayer are adoration, praise, thanksgiving, penitence, oblation, intercession, and petition.

Q. What is adoration?

A. Adoration is the lifting up of the heart and mind to God, asking nothing but to enjoy God's presence.

Q. Why do we praise God?

A. We praise God, not to obtain anything, but because God's Being draws praise from us.

Q. For what do we offer thanksgiving?

A. Thanksgiving is offered to God for all the blessings of this life, for our redemption, and for whatever draws us closer to God.

Q. What is penitence?

A. In penitence, we confess our sins and make restitution where possible, with the intention to amend our lives.

Q. What is prayer of oblation?

A. Oblation is an offering of ourselves, our lives and labors, in union with Christ, for the purposes of God.

An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism

Q. What are intercession and petition?

A. Intercession brings before God the needs of others; in petition, we present our own needs, that God's will may be done.

Q. What is corporate worship?

A. In corporate worship, we unite ourselves with others to acknowledge the holiness of God, to hear God's Word, to offer prayer, and to celebrate the sacraments.

THE SACRAMENTS

Q. What are the sacraments?

A. The sacraments are outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace.

Q. What is grace?

A. Grace is God's favor toward us, unearned and undeserved; by grace God forgives our sins, enlightens our minds, stirs our hearts, and strengthens our wills.

- 2 Corinthians 12:9

- Ephesians 2:8-9

Q. What are the two great sacraments of the Gospel?

A. The two great sacraments given by Christ to his Church are Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist.

HOLY BAPTISM

Q. What is Holy Baptism?

A. Holy Baptism is the sacrament by which God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ's Body, the Church, and inheritors of the kingdom of God.

- BCP 872, Article XVII

Q. What is the outward and visible sign in Baptism?

A. The outward and visible sign in Baptism is water, in which the person is baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

- Matthew 28:18-20

- John 3:5

Q. What is the inward and spiritual grace in Baptism?

A. The inward and spiritual grace in Baptism is union with Christ in his death and resurrection, birth into God's family the Church, forgiveness of sins, and new life in the Holy Spirit.

- Romans 6:3-5

- Galatians 3:27; 4:4-5

Q. What is required of us at Baptism?

A. It is required that we renounce Satan, repent of our sins, and accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

- Acts 2:38

- BCP p. 302

Q. Why then are infants baptized?

A. Infants are baptized so that they can share citizenship in the Covenant, membership in Christ, and redemption by God.

Q. How are the promises for infants made and carried out?

A. Promises are made for them by their parents and sponsors, who guarantee that the infants will be brought up within the Church, to know Christ and be able to follow him.

- BCP p. 302

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Genesis 14:18; Hebrews 7:17; Exodus 12:7-8; 16:4; Leviticus 24:1-8; 1 Kings 19:5-8;
Luke 22:19-20; John 6: 35, 47-51; 1 Corinthians 10:16-21 Revelation 2:17; 3:20

Q. What is the Holy Eucharist?

A. The Holy Eucharist is the sacrament commanded by Christ for the continual remembrance of his life, death, and resurrection, until his coming again.

Q. Why is the Eucharist called a sacrifice?

A. Because the Eucharist, the Church's sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, is the way by which the sacrifice of Christ is made present, and in which he unites us to his one offering of himself.

Q. By what other names is this service known?

A. The Holy Eucharist is called the Lord's Supper, and Holy Communion; it is also known as the Divine Liturgy, the Mass, and the Great Offering.

Q. What is the outward and visible sign in the Eucharist?

A. The outward and visible sign in the Eucharist is bread and wine, given and received according to Christ's command.

Q. What is the inward and spiritual grace given in the Eucharist?

A. The inward and spiritual grace in the Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of Christ given to his people, and received by faith.

Q. What are the benefits which we receive in the Lord's Supper?

A. The benefits we receive are the forgiveness of our sins, the strengthening of our union with Christ and one another, and the foretaste of the heavenly banquet which is our nourishment in eternal life.

Q. What is required of us when we come to the Eucharist?

A. It is required that we should examine our lives, repent of our sins, and be in love and charity with all people.

OTHER SACRAMENTAL RITES

Q. What other sacramental rites evolved in the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

A. Other sacramental rites which evolved in the Church include confirmation, ordination, holy matrimony, reconciliation of a penitent, and unction.

Q. How do they differ from the two sacraments of the Gospel?

A. Although they are means of grace, they are not necessary for all persons in the same way that Baptism and the Eucharist are.

Q. What is Confirmation?

A. Confirmation is the rite in which we express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.

- Acts 8:14-17 (p. 1330)

- John 16:7 (p. 1310)

Q. What is required of those to be confirmed?

A. It is required of those to be confirmed that they have been baptized, are sufficiently instructed in the Christian Faith, are penitent for their sins, and are ready to affirm their confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Q. What is Ordination?

A. Ordination is the rite in which God gives authority and the grace of the Holy Spirit to those being made bishops, priests, and deacons, through prayer and the laying on of hands by bishops.

- 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 (p. 1390)

Q. What is Holy Matrimony?

A. Holy Matrimony is Christian marriage, in which the woman and man enter into a life-long union, make their vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows.

- Matthew 19:4-6 (p. 1196)

Q. What is Reconciliation of a Penitent?

A. Reconciliation of a Penitent, or Penance, is the rite in which those who repent of their sins may confess them to God in the presence of a priest, and receive the assurance of pardon and the grace of absolution.

- John 20:21-23 (p. 1316)

Q. What is Unction of the Sick?

A. Unction is the rite of anointing the sick with oil, or the laying on of hands, by which God's grace is given for the healing of spirit, mind, and body.

- James 5:14 (p. 1473)

Q. Is God's activity limited to these rites?

A. God does not limit himself to these rites; they are patterns of countless ways by which God uses material things to reach out to us.

Q. How are the sacraments related to our Christian hope?

A. Sacraments sustain our present hope and anticipate its future fulfillment.

THE CHRISTIAN HOPE

Q. What is the Christian hope?

A. The Christian hope is to live with confidence in newness and fullness of life, and to await the coming of Christ in glory, and the completion of God's purpose for the world.

- Matthew 6:25-34; Romans 8:16-17; Titus 2:11-14

Q. What do we mean by the coming of Christ in glory?

A. By the coming of Christ in glory, we mean that Christ will come, not in weakness but in power, and will make all things new.

- 2 Peter 3:12-13; Revelation 21:1-5

Q. What do we mean by heaven and hell?

A. By heaven, we mean eternal life in our enjoyment of God; by hell, we mean eternal death in our rejection of God.

Q. Why do we pray for the dead?

A. We pray for them, because we still hold them in our love, and because we trust that in God's presence those who have chosen to serve him will grow in his love, until they see him as he is.

Q. What do we mean by the last judgment?

A. We believe that Christ will come in glory and judge the living and the dead.

- John 5:25-29

Q. What do we mean by the resurrection of the body?

A. We mean that God will raise us from death in the fullness of our being, that we may live with Christ in the communion of the saints.

- 1 Corinthians 15:42-44

Q. What is the communion of saints?

A. The communion of saints is the whole family of God, the living and the dead, those whom we love and those whom we hurt, bound together in Christ by sacrament, prayer, and praise.

- John 17:20-21; Ephesians 4:4-6; Hebrews 12:1; Revelation 7:9-15

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Q. What do we mean by everlasting life?

A. By everlasting life, we mean a new existence, in which we are united with all the people of God, in the joy of fully knowing and loving God and each other.

Q. What, then, is our assurance as Christians?

A. Our assurance as Christians is that nothing, not even death, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

- Romans 8:38-39