

## A Personal Creed

1 I believe in the one true God,  
2 the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,  
3 An all powerful God who created the universe in which we live,  
4 and everything which exists.  
5 This God has revealed himself to us through his creation, by speaking to his chosen prophets,  
6 and through his written word, our bible.  
7 Although He is one, He exists in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.  
8 These three persons each have their own mind and personality,  
9 but are one in some way which is unfathomable to our limited human mind,  
10 and each is to be worshipped, praised and glorified.

1 I believe that, although we originally walked face to face with our God,  
2 we rebelled against Him and his plans for us,  
3 and were alienated from Him through our sin.  
4 In spite of our sin, God had a plan to redeem us.  
5 He sent his only Son, known to us as Jesus, the Christ,  
6 to become incarnate of the Virgin Mary and His Holy Spirit.  
7 The Son became truly human and lived among us,  
8 but we did not recognise him, we did not respect Him, and we killed him  
9 by nailing Him to a cross.  
10 But, this was God's plan to redeem us through the atoning sacrifice of his Son,  
11 who, perfectly human and perfectly divine,  
12 died the death each one of us deserved in our sin,  
13 but death could not hold the Son, because the Father raised him up to new life  
14 on the third day after His crucifixion.  
15 Later He ascended into heaven to rejoin the Father in a place of power and honour  
16 because of what He has accomplished.  
17 Because of Jesus' death and resurrection all of our sins past, present and future  
18 are forgiven, and we stand before God pure and blameless;  
19 if we just turn to Jesus and accept Him as our Lord.  
20 Then we shall be saved into eternal life in heaven with the Father.  
21 and all the company of heaven.

1 I believe that Jesus has caused the Father to send the Holy Spirit,  
2 to be with us and guide us and empower us,  
3 until that unknown and unknowable time when Jesus shall return to this world,  
4 in power and glory, to judge each and every human being who lives or ever lived.

## **My Personal Creed – Commentary on the Content**

For ease of reference I have numbered the lines in each section.

I have divided my creed into three sections, the first broadly dealing with God the Father and his Trinitarian existence, the second with God's plan for our redemption through the Son and the realisation of that plan, and the third with the Holy Spirit and the end of the age. This seemed to a great extent to mirror the three elements of the Trinity and the relations of each of these elements of the Trinity with us and to encapsulate what I regard as the heart of the Christian faith.

Since this is a personal creed it seemed appropriate to commence each section with a statement of personal belief – "I believe".

I commenced with a statement of belief in our Christian God which sets him firmly in the historical context of his early personal relations with the Jewish people, because it is from Judaism that our Christian faith springs and in which it has its roots. I think we sometimes tend to forget this or at least downplay its importance.

I then make it clear that this God is our creator, the one to whom we owe our existence and in whom everything has its origins, but that this powerful God is knowable because He has revealed himself to us.

Finally in the first section I felt it was important to deal with the Trinitarian nature of our God and the relations between the three elements of the Trinity as this is such an important yet mysterious part of His nature. One in three and three in one.

I then turned to man's rebellion and the fall, since the need for a radical redemption (such as the sacrifice of Jesus) can surely only be understood in the light of the result of our sin – alienation from God.

Of course, it is important to make it clear that the atoning and redemptive sacrifice of Jesus was God's plan for our redemption, even while we were still alienated from Him by our sin. That is the purpose of line 4 of the second section. We then continue with the details of that redemption plan. Lines 5 and 6 affirm the incarnation by means of the virgin birth. This is a doctrine to which I firmly hold, as I believe it supports the nature of Jesus as being both perfectly God and perfectly man, yet man without original (or other) sin. Line 7 then confirms the complete humanity of Jesus in the incarnation (which I consider an essential part of the doctrine of the atonement), whilst lines 8 and 9 attest to the rejection of Jesus by humanity and his eventual death on the cross.

The fact that this was God's plan is then taken up again in line 10 which also affirms the fact that Jesus' death *was* an atoning sacrifice for our redemption. We then come to the heart of the atonement (and I think the heart of our Christian faith) in lines 11 and 12 where we make it clear that Jesus, perfectly human and perfectly divine, paid the price for our sins, the penalty we deserved, in his death. The glorious and triumphant resurrection following His sacrificial death of the Son is then stated in lines 13 and 14. The incarnation is then brought to an end by an affirmation of the ascension of Jesus to a place of power and glory with the Father (lines 15 and 16).

We then move to a statement of what the death and resurrection of Jesus mean to us in terms of our justification and redemption (lines 17 and 18), provided we accept His atoning sacrifice and appropriate it and the benefits of it to ourselves (line 19). Finally this section concludes with an affirmation of our salvation into eternal life with God the Father in heaven through this justification and redemption (lines 20 and 21).

The third section of the creed affirms that the Father has sent the Holy Spirit through the intervention of Jesus (I personally don't like the filioque statement, which I think is not well supported by scripture) to guide and empower us until the end of the age, when Jesus will return to judge each and every one of us (what will happen in and as a result of that judgement is another, more complex, issue, which is perhaps best not included in a creed!