



REV. D. THOMAS PORTER, PH.D.

3422 Fallview Court ♦ Land O' Lakes, FL 34639

DrTom@PorterHouse.info

813.728.5713<sup>Cell</sup>

<https://DThomasPorter.com/BibleStudies/SYS501>

Monday, March 11, 2024

BIBLIOLOGY & THEOLOGY ☞ THEOLOGICAL & EPISTEMOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

SYS 501 – Comparing Three Versions of the “Apostles Creed”

ECUMENICAL VERSION OF APOSTLES' CREED—

I believe in God,<sup>1</sup> the Father almighty,<sup>2</sup> creator of heaven<sup>3</sup> and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ,<sup>4</sup> God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,<sup>5</sup>  
born of the Virgin<sup>6</sup> Mary,<sup>7</sup> suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;<sup>8</sup> he ascended into heaven,<sup>9</sup>  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,<sup>10</sup>  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,<sup>11</sup>  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,<sup>12</sup> and the<sup>13</sup> life everlasting. Amen.

<sup>1</sup>Referring to “God” (what He is) as if “God” were His name and “God” being made equivalent as “the Father.” Sloppy, if not misleadingly incorrect.

<sup>2</sup>The Scriptures disagree; Genesis 1:2 notes Holy Spirit’s role in the creation. Furthermore, Paul notes the Christ was creator as well (Colossians 1:16).

<sup>3</sup>The Scriptures disagree; Genesis 1:1; the Hebrew is “heavens,” not “heaven.” The latter makes the creation sound hyper-local as in our solar system, the sky above, whereas “heavens” suggests the cosmos. (The former conforms to LDS theology.)

<sup>4</sup>His name is not “Jesus Christ;” He is “Jesus the Christ” or “Christ Jesus.” “Christ” is His title, not His name. We would not say “Edward King;” however, we would say “King Edward” or “Edward the King.”

<sup>5</sup>His name is “Holy Spirit,” not “the Holy Spirit.” We would not say “the Jesus,” or “the God.” Paraclyton, or Counselor or Breath are additional names for Him.

<sup>6</sup>Why is “virgin” capitalized? Is this some title we have assigned to Miriam (see footnote below)? Would it not be more accurate to write “born of Miriam the virgin?” We are to respect her, for sure, as Luke records her words and role in the life of Christ Jesus (Luke 1:46-55).

<sup>7</sup>Her name was not “Mary;” it was Miriam (Μαριαμ). If you travel to Spain, your name may be pronounced differently, but it still your name. Similarly, Yeshua’s name was not “Ieasoun” (Ἰησοῦν), it was Yeshua. His step-father’s name was not Joseph, but Yousef (Ἰωσήφ).

<sup>8</sup>Why “again?” Had He risen before? Sloppy, if not misleadingly incorrect.

<sup>9</sup>Clarity, clarity, clarity. Did He ascend before Pentecost (Acts 1:9) or from Bethany (Luke 24:51)? Remember, it is not a different witness/author here. Luke is thought to have written both “Luke” and “Acts of Holy Spirit.”

<sup>10</sup>Is not the Christ also “the Father?” See Isaiah 9:6

<sup>11</sup>Just what does it mean to believe “in the Church?” Why is “church” capitalized? The Way, originally, or the called out, or the collection of people who follow the Christ, or a human operationalization of “church?” The Lutherans and the Methodists do not capitalize “church.” Message here or just sloppy? Misleadingly incorrect?

UNITED METHODIST/LUTHERAN VERSION—

---

I believe in God the Father Almighty,<sup>14</sup> maker<sup>15</sup> of heaven and earth;  
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth<sup>16</sup> at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.

ROMAN CATHOLIC VERSION—

---

1. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
2. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
3. He was conceived by the power<sup>17</sup> of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
4. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.<sup>18</sup>
5. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.
6. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
7. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
10. the forgiveness of sins,
11. the resurrection of the body,
12. and the life everlasting. Amen.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

---

An analysis of these belief statements (“creeds”) demonstrates the human frailty of attempting make the profound simple. It is. But when political usefulness and unexamined tradition influence the attempt—we fail. And, lest you, or I, become self-righteous about their “errors” and our corrections, I challenge anyone to write a “creed,” a statement of beliefs, that is beyond critique. Hubris indeed.

---

<sup>12</sup>Even if there is no body remaining? Destruction of DNA occurs quite quickly with the right circumstances. Is not our bodily resurrection a matter of spirit for which new bodies will be created? 2 Corinthians 5:1-5; Paul speaks of transformed bodies (Philippians 3:21).

<sup>13</sup>Why the definite article “the?” Is there a life after death that is not everlasting? The Christ’s teaching on hell/hades/pit typically indicates an everlasting tone as well.

<sup>14</sup>Why is “Almighty” (note the capital A) part of the Father’s title in Methodist/Lutheran creed?

<sup>15</sup>Is the difference between “maker” and “creator” a difference of style, substance or just poor proofreading?

<sup>16</sup>Why King James era language (“sitteth” and “thence” and “quick”) when other language is not (e.g., “Ghost” for “Spirit”)?

<sup>17</sup>This creed asserts virgin Miriam’s child, Yeshua, was conceived not by “Holy Spirit,” but by the “power” of Holy Spirit. Is this inadvertent support for the belief that Holy Spirit is the power of Deity, rather than a separate person?

<sup>18</sup>Curious linguistic structures (nuance or grammar?):

- ✓ Ecumenical Creed—“ was crucified, died, and was buried,,,”
- ✓ Methodist/Lutheran Creed—“ was crucified, dead, and buried...”
- ✓ Roman Catholic Creed—“ was crucified, died, and was buried...”