
Creed 1 God the Father Almighty

Sermon • Rev'd Andrew Hoggan • January 2026
Job 13:13-15 • Matthew 7:7-11



Let's pray.... Heavenly Father, awaken our hearts and minds that we might see you as we ought, and in so doing, build our faith and trust in you, amen.

I believe in God the Father almighty. So begins the Apostles Creed a series of non negotiable foundations of the Christian faith.

A few weeks back, in an intro to the Creed, we looked at the first two words, "I believe", making the link between belief and behaviour. We also looked at the link between belief and trust.

When it comes to faith in God though we are being asked to believe and trust in something we can't see.

Some years ago I was up the sky tower in Auckland. 1000 mtrs, 1 kilometre above the street is a series of glass sheets you can walk over as you go around the observation tower.

The person I was with would simply not step out onto one of these sheets of glass. I assured them it was safe. I jumped up and down as hard as I could to show it was safe. They simply did not trust that the glass was safe and nothing I said or did could change that.

Believing, trusting, having faith in God is sometimes a bit like stepping out onto that glass panel 1000 mtrs above the footpath, You know something is there even if you can't see it.

When I say the first four words of the creed, “I believe in God” I am not just saying I believe that God exists. I am saying I believe in God enough to trust God.

So what kind of God do we believe in? The next few words of the Creed. I believe in God the Father, almighty. Right there we hit on what for some is a major stumbling block given their negative experiences with fathers or men in general. For some it can be pretty difficult to think of God as Father in any positive sense.

My dad's dad let the side down a bit when it came to model fathering. So did my dad. I reckon I haven't always got it right either. Especially when it came to the balance of family and ministry.

That we don't always do a great job at being God's image bearers is somewhat obvious. Does that mean though that our faults are a reflection of God's faults? Or are our faults an indication of the gap between us and God?

The first creedal statement points us to a God that is relational and intimate and that is unique as compared every other belief system.

When Jesus called his Heavenly Father ABBA. It was like Jesus saying daddy. It was almost inconceivable to think God could be addressed in such an informal and intimate way.

The bible is the story of a God who reveals himself in terms of relationship. And not just in respect to God's relationship with us. God is a relational being. “Let “us” (plural) make humanity in “our” (plural) image, male and female, he make them”, we read in Genesis.

Scripture reveals God as in essence relational. God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Three in one in loving and holy harmony. It's a brain stretch for sure. But I can't help but see the logic and practicality of it.

A relational God creates an image bearer that only fairly images the creator as it dwells in harmonious, loving, sacrificial union one with another. You would not need Trump's board of peace if we rightly imaged the one who is relational and loving in their very being.

I believe in God the Father. The only way we turn belief into trust, is to rightly understand the one we are called to believe in. Thankfully we have scripture to help us, and the Holy Spirit help us understand the scriptures. And most importantly and helpfully we have a living image of God in the Lord Jesus.

If you have seen me you have seen the Father Jesus said. But what when things go wrong like they so often do? How do we trust God as Father then. Our OT reading from the book of Job helps us.

The book begins with a conversation between Satan and God. One that Job doesn't know about. God highlights the integrity and faith of Job. But Satan charges that Job is acting from purely selfish motives. His faith is only based on what he can get out of it.

Take your hand of blessing away from Job, Satan says, and see if he doesn't curse you to your face. It's important to understand that the book of Job signals a major shift in how the people of God understood God.

As the book begins Job's belief system would have been based on the principle that God blesses the good and punishes the wicked. And God does that in this life.

To Job's credit even after disaster following disaster, his response and ongoing trust in God is shown when he says "even though he slay me yet will I trust him."

Behind that statement is Job's belief that even though he challenge God and protest his innocence, knowing full well that God might take away his life, even then Job would continue to trust God.

Job 13:13-15 Let me have silence, and I will speak, and let come on me what may. I will take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in my hand. Even though he kill me I will trust trust in him; but I will defend my ways to his face.

That's a pretty remarkable place of faith and trust given the 13 chapters of misery Job has experienced.

It shows that Job's faith is developing and by the end of the book Job understands that his view of God was far too limited. "I thought I knew you but now I see you and I repent in dust and ashes."

In other words I thought I knew you, but like a child viewing the world through a straw, I had no idea and my understand and judgments were both limited and flawed. Regrettably, some people in the church are stuck in the pre Job understanding of God where they live their life in a transactional way. They follow God for what I can get out of it. It's the theology and basis of prosperity preaching that so often gives the church a bad name.

To our text in Matthew 7. vs 7-8 Ask and it will be given you; search and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and everyone who knocks the door will be opened.

As is the key in understanding any text, you have to have some familiarity with the whole story and the bigger picture.

Ask and it will be given you . Everyone who asks receives. That sounds somewhat open and indeed there may be some who interpret it in such. Whatever we ask we get whoever asks.

But what when we ask and we don't get. Especially when we ask for what would seem like good things and we don't get.

There are certain perimeters when it comes to answered prayer.

- Praying in accordance with God's will.
- Praying in Jesus name which is the same as saying you pray according to the character and nature of that person.

If we were to look at the parallel passage in Luke it says this. "if you then who know how to give good gifts to children how much more will your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him".

If the Holy Spirit chief aim and purpose is to make us like Jesus, which is the case. Then the most effective and answered prayer is that we would act and live and be like Jesus.

A part of that has to be understanding God as Father.

Again think of the language of Jesus as he address his Heavenly Father as "Abba" dad.

Surely when we say I believe in God the Father we are proclaiming a wonderful doctrine, and one that is unique to Christianity. Further it is a foundational truth from which everything else flows. I guess that's why it's in the first line of the creed.

The motivation to help us both persevere and trust is found in the character of God. If you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give good gifts to his children.

That is not to say all fathers are evil and everything fathers do is evil, it is simply a term of comparison. Compared to the goodness and perfect love of God our heavenly father, any human love is going to be pale by comparison.

For God so loved the world that he sent his only Son declares the apostle John. Surely that is the greatest of all loves and gifts.

At around 16 when I first gave my life to Christ, there were two scriptures that impacted me greatly, and I trust, have shaped my life to some degree for the last 50+ years.

The first vs i memorised was this “there is no temptation that has overcome a person which is not common to man (humanity), and God is faithful, he will not let you be tempted beyond what you are able to resist but he will provide a way of escape that you may endure it.” Pretty helpful for a 16 year old teenager who played drums and would a few years later tour in a rock band.

The other passage was this. “what profit is there if you gain the whole world yet forfeit, your very soul, or your very self.” That vs, I hope anyway, has given me a sense of perspective that has kept me somewhat focused on what is really important in life.

It was helpful when I had to make a decision between my business which was bookbinding and restoration and ministry. I sold the business while at Bible college and got ordained and I don't regret it one little bit.

Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and everything else will be given to you. Ask seek knock. Our motivations matter when it comes to asking, seeking and knocking.

Yes often we are called to belief, faith and trust and we don't know the full story. At times it a little like stepping out onto that glass at the sky tower. We know something is there but we can't see it.

When Jesus was asked by his disciples to teach them to pray we all know what Jesus said.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed or honoured be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

They say it's not what you know, but who you know that matters. If we know Jesus we are children of the almighty Father and we can trust for good things if they come from the hand of God. Even Job discovered that.

Let's pray...

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