

BACK TO BASICS: WHO IS GOD?

Scripture used: [Genesis 1:1-4 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon started us today on a series that will take us into the summer, examining the basic building blocks of Christianity, and why they matter in our lives. An essential building block is the Apostles' Creed, which affirms the tenets of the faith, and is an ecumenical profession of faith (one that includes many traditions of the Christian faith). As Christians, we should read the Creed with attention, and we may have questions. Pastor Hurmon invited listeners to send questions to pastorhurmon@nbcabayarea.com, or keep engaging with this message series thoughtfully and discuss questions with your life group!

KEY POINTS

1. The Creed starts with a declaration about the "Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth." God is indeed the maker of all life. "In the beginning": God is the ultimate source of everything. Science answers a set of questions, and Genesis 1 and 2 answers another set of questions. The questions that science can't answer, and the fundamental question that the Bible begins with, is: "Why is there something instead of nothing?" This is not just random chance. Genesis says there is intent. There is a clear origin, with an eternal God. This means that all things in this world that claim to be God or to have God-like authority are false idols. In 1934, the Nazis tried to subjugate the Church in Germany. Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his friends issued a statement that reaffirmed that only God is a source of authority. Knowing who God is and the authority that is found in God alone makes us wise.
2. God and creation: God is at the origin of everything visible and invisible, known and unknown. It's literally creation *ex-nihilo*: out of nothing. It's a very different story from antique mythology, where creation is always from something. When the Bible says, "And it was good," it indicates that God is pleased with creation, and a valid response to Creation is rest and delight. The implication is that we should enjoy creation too. Creation has purpose; we have purpose; we are not an accident. God has put us in charge of oversight and governance of Creation. This is why we must fight for justice, and healing of the body and the environment - we are called to do those things.
3. We are called not to deify creation, to be subsumed by the earthly & material world. We should not live for earthly and transitory things, but live for God. God is embedded in human life - Genesis 2:7 (NLT) - God is intimately connected to each one of us. God is the impetus of life, and life is empowered by God. God creates a covenant with us, He is wrapped up in our lives, and will help us when we are in the midst of suffering, confusion, and misdirection. Nothing can break that covenant. God is the one who is completely wise, powerful, uniquely loving, and holy.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Think of the moments of your life when you were most aware (or most hopeful) that there is a God. What difference did the knowledge of God or the hope of God make in those moments?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - From the beginnings of [Genesis 1](#), and from [the Apostles' Creed](#), we see the difference that the reality of God makes. There is order from chaos, purpose from random accidents, the establishment of a value system that identifies good and distinguishes it from evil and so creates a system for justice and thriving that is based on the capacity for loving relationship with God as our divine Father, who cares about us and is a part of our lives. What are the convictions about life that you have that flow from the reality of God? When do you struggle with living in a way that is at odds with the reality of God? How does keeping anchored in God's presence and reality make a difference in your life?
- 3) **DO** - Read [the Apostles' Creed](#) and consider this historical affirmation of the Christian faith. Ask to live in the reality of God's presence in your life each day this week, and look for defining moments of your life where His reality makes the difference in your choices and outlook. Join us next Sunday!