

While Christians profess belief in one God, we believe this one God is triune. There is *one* God who exists as *three* distinct and yet equal persons consisting of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This belief is what sets Christ followers apart from all other faiths. The first article of the Apostles' Creed concerns belief in God, "the Father almighty."

Dwelling in the Word

Prayerfully read Isaiah 40:21-31 and Nehemiah 9:6 and ask: 1) What words, phrases, or images stood out to you? 2) What does this say about what God desires to accomplish in you? 3) How could you respond to what God says in this passage?

Beginning the Conversation

1. When you say, "I believe in God," are you usually thinking of a personal relationship with the triune God or a generic God?
2. When you address God as "Father," what personal images or feelings come to mind? Stated differently, does the notion of God as Father fill you with concern or assurance? Explain.

Digging Deeper

1. While the Trinity is not explicitly found in the Bible, it is implicitly found in a number of passages (e.g., Matthew 28:19; 2Corinthians 13:14) and required by the logic of the gospel. In this sense the Trinity is a biblical doctrine. How does belief in the Trinity make a difference for how you live out your faith?
2. All language about God is metaphorical or analogical. If the essence of metaphor is "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another," what are we meant to understand when we use the word "Father" to describe God?
3. The series defines a creed as a "centring statement." How does starting our confession with God as "Father" centre our faith in a personal relationship rather than just a set of abstract theological facts?
4. The NT teaches that Christ followers are adopted into God's family through Jesus (Rom 8:15-16; Gal 4:6). What is the significance of the Spirit enabling us to cry out "Abba, Father"—the same intimate words used by Jesus (Mark 14:36)?
5. The word "almighty" refers to God's power to accomplish his purposes rather than power in the abstract or coercive power. How is this power most fully revealed in Jesus and the message of the cross? How does belief in an Almighty God protect us from the fear that evil, politics, or chaos are ultimately in control of our world? If God were not "almighty" would God still be worthy of our worship?
6. What does the affirmation, "creator of heaven and earth" say about the nature of God and the nature of the creation?

Living it Out

1. We pray to God with confidence because he is both personal ("Father") and all-powerful ("almighty"). Identify a need in your life this week and pray trusting God's power to accomplish his purposes in you.
2. Because we believe God is the "creator of heaven and earth," find one practical way this week to honor his handiwork. This could be through an act of environmental stewardship or by intentionally showing love and dignity to someone made in his image.

The Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

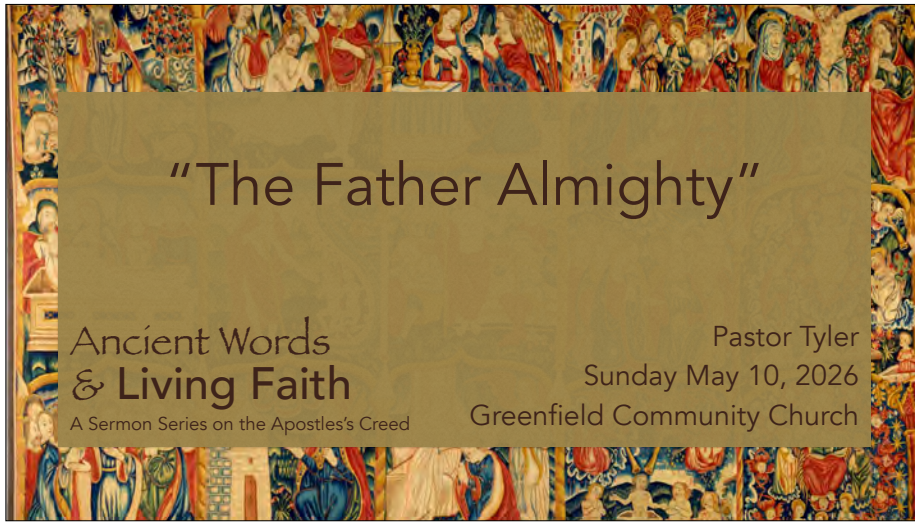
I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic^[a] Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Notes

[*] This version is based on the translation of the ELLC.

[a] Catholic (small case c) means "universal."




"The Father Almighty"

Ancient Words
& Living Faith

A Sermon Series on the Apostles's Creed

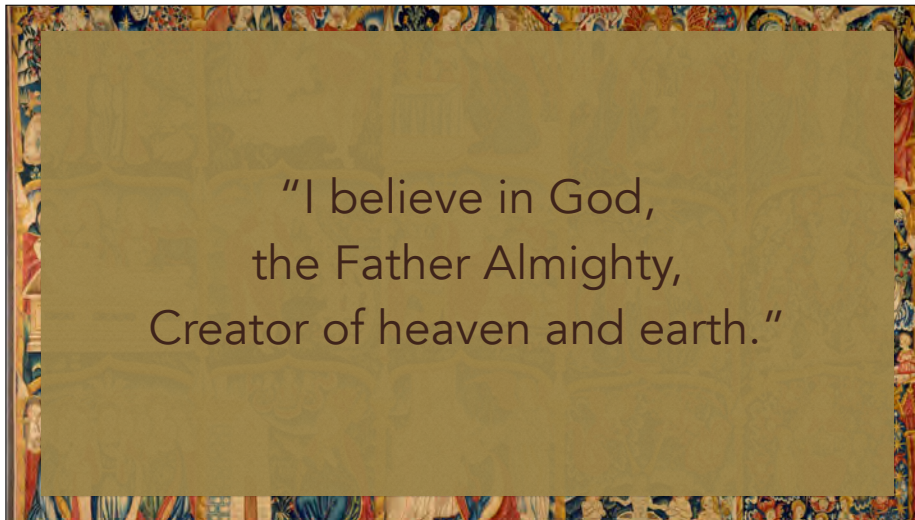
Pastor Tyler
Sunday May 10, 2026
Greenfield Community Church




Talking about "God" as Christians

Christians don't just believe in an abstract and impersonal higher power called "god" or the generic god of the philosophers.

We believe in *one* God revealed as *three* distinct yet equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



"I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth."



God the Father

When we as Christians speak about God as "Father," it is important to know what we ARE saying as well as what we are NOT saying...



An Aside on God & Language

The first word about theology is not about God, but it is a recognition about how we use language — especially language about God.

- ♦ “No words of ours can ever be trusted to mean the same thing when predicated of of ourselves and God. Not even the florid ones with Greek and Latin roots” (Robert Farrar Capon, *Hunting the Divine Fox*, 7).



An Aside on God & Language

This absolutely necessary and unavoidable as all language is metaphorical.

- ♦ The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.



An Aside on God & Language

In Scripture, God is described with many metaphors:

- ♦ Father – of his people Israel (Deut 32:6; Jer 31:9; Hosea 11:1); warrior (Exod 15:3); king (Psalm 93:1-2).
- ♦ Rock/fortress/shield (2Sam 22:3; Ps 18:2; 89:26).
- ♦ Mother (Isa 49:13; 66:13); pregnant woman (Isa 42:14); seamstress (Gen 3:21); midwife (Ps 22:9); mother bear (Hos 13:8); mother eagle (Deut 32:11).



An Aside on God & Language

None of the references to God in the Bible as man or woman are meant to literally teach that God is male and/or female.

- ♦ God proclaims about himself: “For I am God and not a man” (Hosea 11:9).
- ♦ “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).



An Aside on God & Language

Early Christian theologians took pains to differentiate the God of the gospel from the gods of Greco-Roman religion.

- “God is not born, not made, an ever-abiding nature without beginning and without end, immortal, perfect, and incomprehensible... He is neither male nor female” (Aristides).
- “Or maybe you would consider our God to be a male because of the masculine nouns ‘God’ and ‘Father’? Is the ‘Godhead’ a female because in Greek the word is feminine? Is the ‘Spirit’ neuter because the noun is neuter?” (Gregory of Nazianzus).



God the Father

Underlying the Father language for God is a metaphorical understanding that affirms:

- Like a father... God is personal.
- Like a father... God is the source, originator, and provider of all good things.



God the Father

“What then does the word ‘Father’ mean? For Christians, the word describes a relationship and nothing more.... The Father is the source, the origin, the wellspring of divine life. And the Son derives from that source. So there is a relationship of origin between Father and Son. According to early Christian teaching, that is all we are meant to think of when we say the word ‘Father’” (Myers, 22).



God the Father

Jesus reveals God as his “Father” and he invites his followers to share in the same relationship (John 1:18; 20:17; 1John 3:1).

- Through Jesus we have been adopted into God’s family and share in the Holy Spirit — and just like Jesus (Mark 14:36), we can now cry out to God, “Abba, Father” (Rom 8:15-16; Gal 4:6).
- Because God is a caring generous Father, Jesus teaches us to pray, “Our Father...” (Matt 6:9; 10:29).



Almighty

Saying God is “almighty” is to say God possesses all might; God is “omnipotent” (“all powerful”).

- From “Yahweh of Armies/Hosts” (*Yahweh Saba’oth*; יהוה צבאות). Occurs 284x in the OT, where we see God at the head of his armies or his heavenly host/court.
- In the NT, God the Father is identified as “Almighty” (*pantokrator*, παντοκρατωρ), most frequently in Revelation (1:8; 4:8; 11:17).



Almighty

The notion that God is “almighty” is not power in the abstract, but power to accomplish his purposes.

- “God’s power is the reason why we trust in him to do all things for us, in us, and even through us. God’s limitless power is why we can place limitless faith in him, knowing that God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask of him” (Bird, 61).
- God’s power is ultimately — and most fully — revealed in Jesus.



Creator of heaven and earth

God is the Creator — God and no other.

- “In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen 1:1).
- “You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything” (Neh 9:6).
- “By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible” (Heb 11:3).



Creator of heaven and earth

Creation is an act of the Triune God.

- **God the Father** is the one “from whom all things came” (1Cor 8:6; Rom 11:36; Heb 2:10).
- **Jesus Christ the Son** is the one “through whom all things came” (1Cor 8:6) and “in him all things were created” (Col 1:6; John 1:1-5).
- **The Holy Spirit** was active in creation (Gen 1:2) and gives life (John 6:63; Rom 8:10).



Creator of heaven and earth

Not saying anything about *how* God created, but *that* God created all things, sustains all things, and will renew all things.

- The Creator is distinct from the creation.
- The creation is good – yet fallen (Gen 1:31; 3).
- The creation is sustained by the Creator (Neh 9:6; Col 1:17; Heb 1:3).
- The creation has been redeemed and will be made new by the Creator (Revelation 21:1-5).



Invitation

The God in whom we believe is the almighty Creator of the universe, who has revealed himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God the Father invites us into an intimate personal relationship *through* Jesus his Son *by* the Holy Spirit.

We are invited to pray to our loving God the Father.