

Sermon
10 May 2026
Sermon Series #3 by Rob Dawson

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of all our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, our strength, and our redeemer.

As you may, or should, be aware by now we are considering the words of the Nicene Creed as part of a sermon series. We started with the Rector giving us an introduction to the Creed and last week we heard from David about one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

This week we are considering our belief in “one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made.”

The section or article of the Nicene Creed relating to Jesus is the longest article within the Nicene Creed and it testifies to two aspects of Jesus – Who Jesus is and what Jesus did. We will consider the first question ‘Who is Jesus’ this week.

We should note that Jesus himself asks his disciples this very question - ‘Who do people say that I am?’ - as recorded in the Gospels of Matthew 16, Mark 8 and Luke 9. The fact that Jesus is asking this question and it is recorded in all three of the synoptic Gospels signals that this matter is of some importance. Not only to the Gospel writers but to Jesus himself and, of course, for us here today and for the Church at large. This question ‘who is Jesus’ is fundamental, central to and forms the basis of the Christian faith. It is who Jesus is that sets Christianity apart from other world religions.

A starting point for us to consider the question may be, to consider what we can easily relate to; that is Jesus was just like us, a human being. But a person who had a distinct or particular single effect on the world. Jesus was born of a woman, Mary and as an infant this Jesus was visited by gift bearers from the East who sought him out having been led by a star. As a young man Jesus was immersed in his culture and the religious beliefs, he went to the Jewish Temple as recorded in Luke 2.

In later life this Jesus as an itinerant preacher travelled around his homeland and nearby places explaining or teaching the scriptures and showing people that they meant we should love God and love one another (Matthew 22). We know that Jesus attracted a devoted following of various folk who travelled with him and on some occasions his preaching was that good that whenever he stopped to talk, large crowds, sometimes of four or five thousand people (Mark 6 and 8) would gather to hear what he had to say.

So radical was his message that it disturbed the established religious authorities who attempted to engage him in discussion and dissuade him from his view with trick religious argument (Matthew 22). So amazing or miraculous was his interactions with people that they were fed, healed of their afflictions and infirmities, and in two cases brought back to life (Luke 8 & John 11).

So charismatic and of increasing importance was this man that some believed that he was the Messiah, the promised and favoured one of God that would redeem Israel, the new King David who would rule over God’s chosen people or at the very least free Israel from the bondages of Roman occupation – the Pax Romana. Crowds hailed his arrival into Jerusalem and so disturbing

and dangerous was his popularity perceived to be by the authorities that he was put to death. Death on a cross. Matthew 21.

Like us here today this Jesus, experienced fatigue, hunger, thirst and temptation (40 Days in Wilderness), sadness at the loss of a loved one (Lazarus – Jesus Wept), he felt fear (Garden of Gethsemani) and pain, humiliation (the road to Golgotha) and like us he experienced joy, happiness, fun, laughter, and love, love of and for others his family and friends (John 15). Jesus was like us, he was fully like us, fully human. Or as the Council of Chalcedon of 451AD put it “perfect in humanity in all things like unto us... sin only excepted”. A human body, a human mind, human strengths and weakness and limitations who acts and thinks in the same way that we think and act and this is of importance because it shows that Jesus shared our experiences, that Jesus understood people, Jesus understands, experienced and feels what we feel including pain and death.

And it is in his humanity that Jesus is both sinless and fully obedient to God, showing us what it is to be with God to live as God intended us to be; that whilst sin may be endemic, sin is not what makes us human. As one writer puts it “Human beings properly belong in the stream of this divine life, and to be sinners is to live as fish out of water, where we flounder, Jesus swims” (Higton).

But this is not the whole story of Who Jesus is. Jesus is not just fully human - Jesus is the Son of God. We may translate ‘Son of as belonging to God. At the time of Jesus baptism we hear God speak and announce “This is my Son, whom I love;” (Matt 3:17). Jesus is of God, from God, belongs to God. - Jesus Christ, the only Son of God. Notice in the creed the use of the word only. Signifying that there is something unique or singular to Jesus being the Son of God. So we are now at the point where we can say Jesus a man who did amazing things who was also the Son of God. That he came from and was sent by God, God the Father.

But there is still more, the phrase ‘Eternally Begotten of the Father’ gives us even more to think about. ‘Eternally’ clearly means for ever and always - having no fixed end or no fixed starting point. Begotten is also an interesting word and it means brought forth. Brought forth not being made by or from, not created but being brought from, out of, a part of God that becomes a being within itself. Jesus was not made or created by God but was brought forth from God, being part of God. Jesus is of God. True God of True God – Everything that makes God God is also Jesus.

Simply put Jesus is God. God the Father - is God and God the Son – Jesus is God. In the same way that God is the Father so God is also the Son.

So Jesus is both fully Human and fully Divine. Fully human and fully Divine at the same time. A dual nature. God from God, True God from True God or very God of very God in the traditional language. Eternally begotten - for ever and always coming from the Father.

Jesus as God the Son was there with God the Father and it was through the Son all things were made. Jesus was there with the Father at the time of creation and remains with and from the Father.

In the story of Creation from Genesis 1 we look at the section regarding the creation of Adam & Eve in 1:26 - “Then God said, ‘Let **us** make humankind in **our** image, according to **our**

likeness”. Note the use of the plural, God the creator does not say I, Me or My; God the Creator says Us, We and Our.

The Gospel of John starts “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth.” God the Father and God the Son were there as God at and before the creation of all things. God the Son is sent by the Father, God the Son becomes flesh he takes on our human form or as we may say – incarnate. Jesus – God Incarnate. And God incarnate ministered to his people, healed the sick, gave the blind sight, fed the hungry, forgave their sins and was crucified, resurrected and ascended into heaven.

In the well known hymn the Servant King there is line which says “Hands that flung stars into space to cruel nails surrendered ...” a line which depicts the beauty and drama of creation, stars being flung into space; but also depicts the reality of the crucifixion, those same hands being nailed upon a cross, the hands of God the Son willingly be placed on that cross. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son” John 3:16. God gave of himself to suffer and to die for us.

At the start of this sermon we heard how Jesus asked the disciples who do people say that I am and the disciples come up with a variety of answers. In response to this Jesus turns and asks them another question, a more direct question. He turned to his disciples and said “But who do you say that I am”. As Jesus speaks to his Disciples in the Gospel so Jesus speaks to us and that question asked of them is asked of us. So Who do you say Jesus is?

Amen