

Engaging the Heart

What Do You Believe?

Matt Heard, Senior Pastor

Part 15: The Purpose Beyond the Passion 1 Peter 1:3-9

The Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy, universal Church;

the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;

the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen

We have been involved in a teaching series here at Woodmen since last October in which we've been looking at a very important phrase in a person's life: "I believe." We've been learning that it's a phrase we use in so many areas of our lives, from opinions about the outcome of athletic events to our relationship with God; from things of little consequence or importance to matters of great and eternal significance.

We have acknowledged, when it comes to faith, that the most important element is the *object* of our faith. The amount of faith we have is significant, but only after we have determined the trustworthiness of the object of our faith.

The *Apostles' Creed* is an important resource for those pursuing ultimate realities because it is a summary of the Object of our spiritual faith. It is a summary of what the Bible teaches, a summary of essential Truth about who God is and His activity in this world—specifically His work of amazing grace on our behalf. Authentic followers of Christ of all cultures and ages hold these convictions in common: this is the foundation of what we believe.

We have examined what authentic belief looks like: it involves the *mind* (recognition of the Truth about the Object of my Faith); the *emotions* (embracing the relevance of my faith's Object to my need); and the *will* (actually relying on God with my actions). In other words, my entire being, my whole heart is to be engaged in my faith walk with God!

We also looked at the question, "In a world of so much pain and confusion and so little time, why study such an old document like *The Apostles' Creed*?" As our society casts away more and more of its reference points and restraints, the fangs of sin and its effects are more exposed. The result is people who are in great pain and need. So we tend to think the priority is our need for comfort and freedom and purpose, not Truth. What we forget is that for us to receive the comfort, the freedom and the purpose, we must drink from the well of Truth!

How appropriate it is to find ourselves, on Easter weekend, dealing with the last part of the Creed: *the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting!* Since these phrases address the matter of what happens after death, we can easily make the mistake of thinking that the Truth contained in them has no relevance to our lives now. Yet it is the Truth of resurrection that enables us to live a life of purpose, meaning and fulfillment *now*. And it is for such a purpose that Christ came and endured the Passion of His suffering and death. This Truth points us to the purpose of His Passion: to give *us* ultimate purpose!

To begin to live this life of ultimate purpose, I must understand and experience three necessary ingredients of purpose:

1. _____ : realizing _____ (v. 4-5)

2. _____ : realizing _____ (v. 6-7)

3. _____ : realizing _____ (v. 8-9)



Welcome to Woodmen Valley Chapel! We are honored that you have chosen to celebrate Easter with us this year. Whether you are a long-time follower of Christ or someone who is honestly investigating what Easter is all about, we are glad you are here.

If we can help you with your spiritual journey, please let us know. If you would like more information about becoming a follower of Jesus Christ, please check the box on the tear-off part of this program. Once you fill it out, you may put it in the offering basket or place it in one of the boxes on the walls by each exit as you leave.

Thank you again for being with us. Have a great Easter!

Easter 2004

April 10 & 11, 2004

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