



# THE CREED

WHAT WE BELIEVE



**5/29/2022**

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**Week 14 - “The Resurrection of the Body and the Life Everlasting. Amen.”**

We will start in the book of Ecclesiastes today, and then move over to 1 Corinthians.

The Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes is King Solomon’s recounting of his effort to find meaning in the world. He was a guy who had everything that could be had in his day, he had fame, wealth, relationships, wisdom, knowledge, power, and world renown.

He had it all, and he made an attempt to glut himself on everything the world could offer in every category to find meaning and purpose in the world.

But he put a limit on his quest: he would only look at life “under the sun,” that is, in the natural, material world. He, at least temporarily, pushed God out of the picture and tried to discover meaning and fulfillment down under the sun.

And his conclusions all throughout that book sound like this:

**Ecclesiastes 1: 2 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.**

Some of your translations say “meaningless.” Everything is meaningless, everything is vanity. He tried everything life had to offer under the sun and it all seemed empty. It was all vain and fleeting and lacking in any real meaning.

**Ecclesiastes 1:3 What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?4 A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever.**

What is the point of all of this work we do? We work and toil, and then we die, and another generation comes to work and toil and die. Skipping to verse 8 he says:

**Ecclesiastes 1:8 All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.**

He says, I've seen it all now. I've heard it all now. I've had every experience. And not only is it not satisfying, the whole attempt at trying to find satisfaction is a weariness. Nothing was fulfilling, and looking for fulfillment itself was an exhausting and futile project.

And Solomon wasn't the only one to ever make it to the top and not find any meaning and fulfillment. That has been the repeated experience of others who have come after him and climbed the same mountain - they get to the top and realize they've climbed the wrong mountain.

In 2016, at the Golden Globe Awards, Jim Carrey, who made it to the top of his mountain and won his awards said:

*"I'm two-time Golden Globe winner Jim Carrey. When I go to sleep at night, I'm not just a guy going to sleep. I'm two-time Golden Globe winner Jim Carrey going to some well needed shut-eye. And when I dream, I don't dream any old dream. No sir. I dream of being three-time Golden Globe winning actor Jim Carrey. Because then I would be enough. It would finally be true. And I can stop this terrible search. For what I know ultimately won't fulfill me."*

Solomon goes on:

**Ecclesiastes 1:9 What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.<sup>10</sup> Is there a thing of which it is said, "See, this is new"? It has been already in the ages before us.**

He said nothing is all that new. We think we're inventing new ideas and isms because we didn't read much history, but we are mostly trying the same old things again and again. We may be trying old things in high-tech ways, but we are still chasing after the same things generations chased after before.

He goes on:

**Ecclesiastes 1: 11 There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after.**

Nothing lasts, and eventually nothing will be remembered. Even the most memorable people will eventually be forgotten. Most of us can't name all of the presidents, and they were all one of the most notable people in the world in their day.

So why try to make your mark? Your mark will fade away.

**Skip to:**

**Ecclesiastes 1:15 What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted.16 I said in my heart, "I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge."17 And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a striving after wind. 18 For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.**

So Solomon says that you can't fix the brokenness of the world.

He says that wisdom and knowledge and madness and folly, all alike, don't satisfy. They're like chasing after the wind, and the more you know, the more sorrow you have.

You can't escape the reality of it. Everything is so futile. Science says this, philosophy and the arts say this.

**All of the scientific models** for the future of the universe end with humanity not existing. Whether they think it will all collapse in on itself, or just die a slow heat death, if you hit fast forward for long enough, you don't have thriving humanity. It's all gone. Everything humanity ever achieved and became. Best case scenario, it's gone in a really long time.

**So when people have moments of reflection** and write their songs in response, they sing things like, "nothing really matters, anyone can see..."

**Or if you'd prefer Shakespear to Freddy Mercury**, his Macbeth reflects on the death of Lady Macbeth and says, "Out, out, brief candle.

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,

And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing."

**All of creation under the sun is characterized by inescapable vanity. So why bother?**

Why bother with anything? Why bother with your job - everything you do will just fall apart anyways. Why bother with your marriage? Even if it improves you'll just age and one of you will die. Why bother making art and beauty? Nobody will remember it in a few thousand years. Why bother preaching? The words will be forgotten by the time the grill is fired up tomorrow and certainly won't be remembered even a few decades from now. Why bother with an education? Your student debt might outlive the industry you're trying to get into. The universe could die a slow heat death, but Fannie Mae will probably still send that bill.

**Why hope?** Isn't everything we invest ourselves in temporary and fleeting and, as Solomon says, chasing after the wind?

**Aren't we all just Cosmic Bills** fans who get their hopes up only to get them inevitably dashed?

**Why bother with anything?**

The answer is in the last lines of the Apostle's Creed:

**"I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen"**

At the heart of Christian faith is this confidence in the future resurrection of the body and everlasting life.

And this is our hope, that when all is said and done, the Lord will return, and just as Jesus rose from the grave, we will rise too. All of creation that is so broken and laden with sin and frustration and sorrow and so subject to futility will also resurrect, and, sustained by the Lord, that resurrected state will go on into eternity.

**And this is the Christian answer to the futility of life in this world.**

1 Corinthians 15 is the passage that deals with this hope the most.

**1 Corinthians 15: 19 If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.**

So Paul here essentially agrees with Ecclesiastes. Under the sun, in this life only, if this is where our hope is, Christians are most to be pitied. Pity everybody because it's all fleeting, but especially pity Christians who make sacrifices and strive to constrain themselves to holy living and who don't just glut themselves on every pleasure.

And if all we get from serving the Lord are the rewards we get here under the sun, pity us.

In this life alone, there isn't enough meaning to be found in the Christian life and the sacrifices we make and the frustratingly futile efforts at changing things. But there's good news!

**1 Corinthians 15:20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.**

So the Christian hope is that, just as death and futility entered creation through Adam, life and hope entered the creation through Jesus. In Adam we have a source of futility, but in Christ we have hope.

God didn't create the world with this sin and meaninglessness. That death entered through Adam.

God put him in the garden - a garden of possibility and delight. A garden made into a temple where God would come down in the cool of the day and meet with people. A place of meaningful work and fulfillment and growth, and the potential to build family and community as they obeyed the call to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Nothing but joyful productivity, the opposite of Solomon's experience. And in a world of yesses, there was one tree of no.

But Adam believed that God, in forbidding Him to take from that tree, was somehow withholding and stingy, that God would keep something good and desirable from him, so he ate. And sin entered creation and wrecked everything.

The last house that my family lived in was a big-time fixer-upper. It sat empty for a couple of years, windows were boarded up, a foot of water was in the basement. There were other really gross things I won't describe. But I took Debbie in thinking, "no way she'll go for this." But she said "I can see the potential!" So we signed right away.

So we went in and, over 7 years because my wife is patient, overhauled the whole thing. But the whole house was a little bit bent, a little twisted. And, as a result, the doors didn't close quite right, a hallway had a slightly slanted floor that never looked or felt right. Even in its best state, it was twisted right down to the guts.

And because of our fall in the garden, creation is wracked. We can, and should, make great improvements to life in this world, but underneath it all the world still doesn't work right on its best days.

And verse 22 here says that creation is the way it is because in Adam, "all die" (verse 22). **Romans 5 says that in Adam, "all sinned."**

He says that when Adam sinned, all sinned. We sinned too in the garden.

We bear his guilt. This idea is called original sin - that ever since the fall we are not born good and then get corrupted. We are born already corrupted and act accordingly.

But you say, "That's not fair at all. I wasn't there. Adam was a dufus. I would have been satisfied with everything else in the world and avoided that one tree, and we'd be fine."

Well that's not true because we are like him.

But this is saying not only that we would have done the same thing, but in Adam, we did it. We did sin in the garden.

How is that? Its the concept called **Federal Headship**. Adam was our **Federal head**, or our representative.

And just like when we elect representatives to go to congress for us, they make our decisions. They can declare war, and then, whether we wanted to go to war or not, we declare war in them.

In the same way, Adam was our perfect representative, and in him we all sinned.

And we might say, “Still not fair, because I didn’t elect Adam. I didn’t vote for that guy.” (#notmyfederalhead).

But God chose him to represent us - and God perfectly knows who would represent us perfectly.

He chose better than we could ever choose someone who perfectly represented our hearts. Who would do what all of our hearts would want to do. And he sinned. And in him, all who were represented by him sinned, all of humanity sinned.

And the result was that death and futility and vanity entered the creation.

This is what created the sense of meaninglessness that Solomon and Freddy Mercury and Shakespeare and Kierkegaard all understood.

All of those represented by Adam sinned, and that’s all of us.

But the good news of 1 Corinthians 15:22 is that all of those represented by Christ will be made alive. Death is not the end for those who have laid hold of Christ by faith.

### **There’s a resurrection coming.**

Sometimes we think that the ultimate goal is that we would go to heaven. And we describe heaven as a disembodied spiritual plane where we experience bliss forever. But behind that is the belief that the body is bad, that the material world is bad, and that we just need to be liberated from it all. And none of those ideas are Christian teaching.

But the Christian hope is that yes, when we die our spirits enter the presence of Christ. But that disembodied state is temporary, all waiting for an even better state, the state of resurrection.

What will that be like?

**1 Corinthians 15:23 again says: “23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.”**

Jesus, in his resurrection, was being the firstfruits.

And the firstfruits, not surprisingly, are the first part of the harvest. The first fruits to ripen. And by being called first, it means there are more to follow.

We experience long, cold, grey winters around here. And when it's April and we're all depressed and gloomy, there's always that moment when you notice the first bud on a tree. And things are still grey and gloomy and you're still dreaming of that move to South Carolina, but there is that one bud that reminds you of what's coming.

And Jesus, in his resurrection on Easter, was the first bud of spring. He was the first one, with those who are his all coming after Him. We will rise, too. And one day there will be millions more who rise from death like He did.

And it's important to know that when Jesus rose, He rose in a physical body, and we will too.

God made the material world to be a material world. And he made us both spiritual and material beings. So the goal is not for us to be disembodied and freed from the creation He made. The goal is for creation to be renewed.

And when the Lord returns, we will resurrect to life everlasting. And not only will we resurrect, but creation that has been cursed in Adam will also resurrect, free from the corruption that has come into it:

**Romans 8:19-21 “19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”**

So life everlasting for a Christian is not a life freed from this world, but a life where we have been resurrected, perfected, on a world that has been resurrected and perfected, with Jesus dwelling in our midst. Like the garden of Eden, only know with many millions



of people, those who by faith had Christ as their Federal Head, who will live, and work, and play, and sing, and worship, and feast, and laugh and dance - all the human things humans were made to do - but with no more futility.

And we certainly aren't told in scripture everything about that world that we will inhabit. But it won't be a small upgrade. We can't comprehend how much better it will be.

**1 Corinthians 15:35-44** “But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” **36** You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. **37** And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain.

So while the resurrected state will be material, it will be orders of magnitude more amazing than this earth. Just like when you plant a seed, the plant that grows from it is clearly related to that seed, but the plant is far more glorious.

So you can put a corn kernel in the ground, and the stalk will grow out of that kernel and be made of the same stuff as the kernel, but the stalk is a much bigger deal. Skip down to verse 42:

**1 Corinthians 15:42** So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. **43** It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. **44** It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

So while all of creation is dying, and we are dying, we are like a seed going into the ground that, upon the return of the Lord, will rise in glory.

And on that day, the world will be bursting with meaning, and permanence, and the future will only be brighter. This whole creation that is dying will in effect be buried and rise again in glory.

**We believe in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

**(1) Let the abundant grace of God shake you out of despair.**

Adam, our representative head, was a failure just like we would be. He rebelled against God, rebelled against his purpose, and as a result, purposelessness flooded creation.

And God would have been just to walk away and let history play itself out until everything collapses on itself.

But God loves us.

And sent his Son as a second Adam to come on the scene to represent essentially another humanity.

And this new head would be a successful and better version of Adam - changing everything for all of those who have him as their representative. The second Adam who would succeed in every way that Adam failed, and represent all of His people in doing so.

Adam was the head of all of humanity, Jesus would be the head of a new humanity.

**Romans 5:17 For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.**

Because of what Adam did, death reigned. But because of what Jesus did, life reigned. Under Adam, the normal course of humanity is death - everybody falls apart and eventually dies, and then they face eternal death. It's a hopeless situation.

In Dante's *Inferno*, there's an inscription over the gate to hell that says "*Abandon all hope — Ye Who Enter Here.*" We have lots of humanistic hopes - that we can fix what's broken in the world and make it all a better place. But we all still die. It's not a good story in the end. Death reigns through Adam. Abandon all hope.

But those who receive Christ receive an abundance of grace, and life reigns. We die, but rise again. What's lost is restored. What's sad "becomes untrue" (to quote Tolkien). And the banner no longer reads, "Abandon all hope" but "Hope never disappoints."

Jesus was tempted like Adam was, but perfectly passed the test. And those who come under the headship of Christ have something completely different than we had under Adam.

And by saying that death reigns through Adam but much more will we receive the abundance of grace, Paul is making the point that Christ over-corrects, over-achieves, and gives us something far weightier than what Adam gives us.

The consequences of our sin in Adam are very mathematical. One for one consequences: death for sin. But what we have in Christ is not like that - it isn't just a matter of strict accounting and giving what is owed. What Jesus gave us isn't an equal weight on the other side of the scale.

Jesus produced far more good than Adam produced evil.

His grace abounded. In Adam we are paid what we are owed. If Christ is our head, we are the recipients of a lavish generosity.

Through Adam's sin, many die. Sin and death spread, and we all get justice: death.

But Jesus comes to give us something far better: He comes to give grace.

This doesn't make sense. Grace is almost too good to be true. We should never believe this if it weren't announced by the guy who rose from the dead.

This means that for you, in the place of your many sins, God offers many more "units" of grace.

And when you think that God would have to be almost unjust to forgive me and bless me - well He is not unjust, because He paid for all of it on the cross - but it is just that kind of undeserved grace that he offers to all who will come under the headship of Christ.

He doesn't offer a stingy amount of grace that's available just for those who sin stingily. But pours out an ocean of blessings to wash away our mountain of sin. You're not going to out-sin His potential for grace in your life.

He's a God of "much more" grace than judgment.

And you can trust in Him and receive that today. For free. You don't pay for it with your religion or your offerings or by being good now. You kneel before the cross, receive the forgiveness and grace He offers by faith, without paying a dime. And receive His guarantee of life everlasting.

So let the abundance of God's grace and the grace that is to come for all eternity shake away some of the despair. It's true that we can only see one bud on the tree right now, only one rose from the grave so far, but He's the firstfruit. There is more to come.

## (2) **Recognize the goodness of creation**

God is not planning on disposing of the material world, but renewing it. And so because He made it and will renew it, it must be good. There's a lot of evil in the world, but it isn't because it's a world, it isn't in the stuff.

The New Testament was written to a world that embraced a doctrine called gnosticism (with a 'g'), and part of that belief system was that creation is bad, that we should rise above it, and that final salvation would come when our spirits left us and ascended to a higher plain where there is no physical world anymore. To gnostics, stuff is bad.

And this drives asceticism - which is giving up any enjoyment of things. We believe that the problem is material goods, sin is in the stuff, and being good means denying yourself of as much stuff as you possibly can.

And even in the church sometimes we will hear the mixed message: material things are bad, so share them with your neighbor. (We don't urge people to share bad things. If you have COVID, we say, stay home so you don't share the bad thing with your neighbor. But we say stuff is sinful so share it? That doesn't make sense.)

We can also sometimes experience a guilt over receiving material blessings. But that also doesn't make sense, unless you did something wrong to get them, which is sometimes the case.

The right response to material blessings is gratitude and generosity.

You don't need to feel guilty for smelling those aromas wafting off the grill. You need to feel thankful, and ask, "who can we share this good thing with." God's world is twisted by our sin, but was created good, God called it good, very good in fact, and it is.

So allow the resurrection of the body and life everlasting to shake you from despair, allow it to drive into you a gratitude for the goodness of creation and a generosity with the creation. And then, the application that 1 Corinthians 15 makes is in 1 Corinthians 15:51

### (3) Abound in Good Works

**1 Corinthians 15:51-58** “**51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."55 "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.**

So he reminds them of the Gospel, he promises them the resurrection.

And then concluded with “Therefore...”

Therefore be steadfast, immovable, abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Remember how Solomon said it’s all vain and meaningless when you look at life under the sun? The resurrection is the answer to that problem.

The coming resurrection means that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

It isn’t wasted, even if it seems to be.

Because, somehow, the labor done in faith is resurrected too.

Because the whole physical creation is going to be resurrected, not just us, it seems - and this is a little bit of a guess - that when we work for justice or healing or hope or beauty, even though our efforts fall short and eventually even die, they somehow are resurrected as part of that new creation.

Jesus is the firstfruits, but one day God is going to do for his whole Cosmos what He did for Jesus at easter. I don’t know how or what that means - how somehow the good we

do on earth, even if it wears out and seems to die, can still somehow resurrect and bear fruit in the resurrection.

But Paul says, "Keep doing good - keep loving God and neighbor. Stay steadfast, don't move, because the resurrection means your labor is not in vain."

So you invest time and love in your child, and it seems they are wandering and breaking your heart. Be steadfast and immovable, keep going - not because you see the results here, but because somehow that bears fruit in the resurrection.

Do you make art that very few people notice, and you wonder if it's worth your time. Well what will that art be like in the resurrection? (Like a kernel to a stalk.) So do the good work, make the beautiful thing, trusting that it will resurrect in a glorified form.

The things we accomplish in faith are things that somehow will be part of God's new world.

So keep teaching, even if you think it isn't making an impact. Keep working for good and justice, even if it seems that evil is winning. Keep giving yourself to the sick and dying who can't give you anything back in this life. Keep serving others when it is completely unnoticed by them. Keep praying the prayers that seem to bounce off the ceiling.

Keep making, keep improving, keep fixing, keep singing, keep learning, keep giving to others, keep being kind to the hard-hearted.

I don't know how it will work, but scripture says that the resurrection of Jesus was the firstfruit, it means we will resurrect too, and that means that ALL of our labor in the Lord is not in vain. Not everything is vanity, Solomon. Everything really matters, Freddy. Life doesn't signify nothing, Macbeth, but points to a grand resurrection.

**Silent time of prayer.**

**Prayer of Confession:**

Father, as we hear this word today we confess that we know we've fallen short.

We have placed our hopes in the wrong places: in achievements in this life, in experiences, in things around us getting better. So we end up frustrated and angry because we hoped in all the things you warned us not to hope in and it didn't work out.

Jesus, we thank you that as our substitute you hoped perfectly in your Father and followed your Father in perfect holiness all the way to the cross, never veering from your hope in the joy set before you. Thank you that on that cross you paid for our misplaced hopes and credited us with your perfect faithfulness.

Spirit, we pray that you would make us confident in your goodness. In your control. In your plan. In your guarantees. So we can live in this frustrating world with a mountain of hope in Christ. Implant the gospel on our souls so that we live holy lives in reverence and awe of you. Let us see the line between the gospel and our lives and live accordingly.

#### **Assurance of Pardon:**

**Titus 2:11-14** “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

**Let's stand and read the Apostles' Creed together before we sing.**

**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;  
he descended to hell.  
The third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended to 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 catholic church, [universal]  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**Works Cited During the Apostles' Creed Series (This is a Work in Progress)**

**[Affirming the Apostles' Creed](#)** by J. I. Packer

The well-renowned Biblical scholar Packer walks readers through each line of the Apostles' Creed, bringing to center the rich history, implications, and modern applications of this important statement of faith.

**[The Ascension of Christ](#)** by Patrick Schreiner



As the title suggests, Schreiner's work focuses on the imperative nature of Christ's ascension to the right hand of the Father, arguing that this occurrence was a necessary step to both the fulfillment and continuation of His work here on earth.

**[The Creedal Imperative](#)** by Carl Trueman

For a clear yet thorough guide to the Apostles' Creed, *The Creedal Imperative* suits well. Trueman spends much of his treatise digging into the history and structure of the Creed, but also spends a large portion of time on the formational importance of Creeds today. He gives special attention to the phrase 'No Creed but the Bible.'

**[Christless Christianity](#)** by Michael Horton

Horton diagnosis the difference between diluted forms of Christianity often found specifically in American culture. He posits the question, "Is the faith and practice of American Christians today more American than Christian?" A helpful discourse for those seeking to discern the subtle ways we compromise the undiluted Gospel.

**[Christian Apologetics](#)** by Cornelius Van Til

This book takes into account the "noetic effects" of sin. That is, sin corrupts our minds and our wills, so that scientific and philosophical proofs alone cannot lead us to God. The need is for the power of the Spirit to overcome the circular reasoning of the secular worldview. This book is a needed addition to the above books because it provides an explanation for how someone becomes savingly convinced of the faith.

**[The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way](#)** by Michael Horton

A unique and refreshing systematic theology that explains the major doctrines of the Christian Faith.

**[Christian Theology](#)** by Millard J. Erickson

This serious systematic theology textbook explores each of the main areas of theology, with a strong biblical foundation and fair treatment of opposing views.

**[The Deity of Christ](#)** edited by Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson

Tracing the Deity of Christ through the Old and New Testaments, this text from the *Theology in Community* series contains contributions from Gerald Bray, Stephen J. Nichols, Ray Ortlund, and more. Explore this important doctrine from a variety of pastoral and lay perspectives in the church, including systematic, apologetic, and missional.

**[To Everyone an Answer](#)**, edited by Beckwith, Craig, and Moreland

This book presents the case for God's existence, for Christ, and for miracles. It answers philosophical, cultural, and religious challenges to the Christian faith. 20+ authors each write in an area of their specialty in this edited volume.

**[The Glory of Christ](#)** by John Owen.

Available here: Owen, John; Spurgeon, Charles H.; Winslow, Octavius; Flavel, John; Plumer, William S.; Watson, Thomas. *The Glory of Christ* (Free Grace Broadcaster Book 244) . Chapel Library. Kindle Edition.

**[The Heidelberg Catechism](#)**

<https://prts.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Heidelberg-Catechism-with-Intro.pdf>

**[The Knowledge of the Holy](#)** by A.W. Tozer

A classic of Christian literature, Tozer's book on the holiness of God is one that has maintained a place on many a bookshelf. In this relatively short text, Tozer explores the nature of God and how we might come to know Him deeper. By focusing on the known attributes of God, Tozer encourages readers to more thoroughly examine and appreciate who God is.

**[Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne](#)** by Robert Murray McCheyne and Andrew A. Bonar

Another well-loved Christian classic, this biography of Scottish minister McCheyne by Andrew A. Bonar (brother to Horatius Bonar) also includes of a breadth of sermons, journals, and various other writings.

**[New Age Beliefs Common Among Both Religious and Non-Religious Americans](#)**,

article by Claire Gecewicz from Pew Research Center, 2018

**[No Little People](#)** by Francis A. Schaeffer.

This book is comprised of sixteen sermons from Francis Schaeffer on the topic of humanity and its relationship with God. "There are no little people and no big people in the true spiritual sense," Schaeffer argues, "but only consecrated and unconsecrated people."

**[Off the Edge: Flat Earthers, Conspiracy Culture, and Why People Will Believe Anything](#)**

by Kelly Weill.

Weill details her account of integrating herself in the Flat Earther movement, a conspiracy theory known for its fringe beliefs about the shape of the Earth. This book offers a look into the conspiratorial mindset and the often conflicting nature of its logic.

[Orthodoxy](#) by G.K. Chesterton

Considered one of G. K. Chesterton's best works and a masterful apologetic, the British critic and philosopher makes compelling arguments here as to the rationale of belief and more. In its Preface, Chesterton writes that the purpose of this book is to "attempt an explanation, not of whether the Christian faith can be believed, but of how he personally has come to believe it."

[The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories](#) by Jan-Willem Van Prooijen

For those looking for a short yet concise primer on conspiratorial mindset, Prooijen provides a helpful summary. In the text, Prooijen explains the attractiveness of conspiracy theories, the mechanics of how we embrace them, and communal aspect of sharing them.

[Recovering Our Sanity: How the Fear of God Conquers the Fears That Divide Us](#) by Michael Horton

Fostering a healthy fear of God puts all other fears in perspective. Horton shows that a rightly-ordered perception can enable us to navigate this life without fear, even of death itself.

[The Reason for God](#) by Tim Keller

This book answers a number of common philosophical arguments against the existence of God, including the problem of evil. Keller's intelligent and humble approach is helpful for those who doubt, for those who are skeptical, and for the believers aiming to help both see Jesus more clearly.

[Reasonable Faith](#) by William Lane Craig

This extensive work builds a case for the Christian faith starting with the existence of God, and then answering the problem of historical knowledge (which is important in proving the resurrection.) From there he explains who Jesus understood Himself to be, followed by an extensive historical proof for the resurrection of Jesus, and refutations of the claims against the resurrection.

[Reformed Dogmatics](#) by Harman Bavinck -

This is a four volume work on Christian Theology written by the great Dutch Calvinist theologian.

[\*\*The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self\*\*](#) by Carl Trueman.

This book explains so much of how modern people think of themselves. It expands on the corrupt way of thinking that jettisons the past and strives to find the true self in an unencumbered state of nature as opposed to in glorifying God and enjoying Him forever. This seeking after the self finds its expression in many facets of the sexual revolution, and explains why our culture is the way it is in our day.

[\*\*Signature in the Cell\*\*](#) by Steven C. Meyer

Written in 2009, this is Meyer's call to look deeper at the faltering claims of scientific materialism and recognize intelligent design.

[\*\*Strange Rites\*\*](#) by Tara Isabella Burton.

This book details the new spirituality that is emerging in the U.S.: a cafeteria-style 'choose your own adventure' religion that mimics (in its own curated ways) the same dogmas present in the institutional religions. Burton notes that religion has been "remixed" into a variety of cultural movements that bear all the hallmarks of a religious group.

[\*\*Westminster Shorter Catechism\*\*](#)

This is one of the greatest summations of the Christian faith ever written by English speaking people.

[\*\*What we Believe: Understanding and Confessing the Apostles' Creed\*\*](#) by R.C. Sproul

What does it mean to believe in the Christian Faith? Sproul discuss the declaritive nature of the Creed and the significance of each line.

[\*\*The Whole Christ\*\*](#) by Sinclair Ferguson. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016).