



# THE CREED

WHAT WE BELIEVE



**4/3/2022**

**Kevin Maloney**

**Week 5 - "He suffered under Pontius Pilate"**

Intro: Something Significant

Our world specializes in the light and insignificant. We are inundated with things that don't matter, that are trite and small. But in the Apostles' Creed, we have something weighty, the faith once delivered to all Christians.

And so today, in order to talk about something far more weighty than Will Smith smacking Chris Rock, we are going to the timeless truths in the Creed and, more, to the Bible that teaches them. We're not escaping from reality today, but we are centering our attention on the reality that really matters.

We are continuing our study through the Apostles' Creed today. So far we've covered:

**"I believe in God the Father Almighty  
Creator of heaven and earth  
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord;  
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
Born of the Virgin, Mary,**

And today, we'll cover the phrase:

**"Suffered under Pontius Pilate."**

(If you're following in the study guide, we did break week 5 into two weeks - we're just doing He suffered under Pontius Pilate today, and then was crucified, dead, and buried, and descended to the dead on Good Friday, and then we'll be back on track on Easter - on the third day he rose again.)

There are two people besides Jesus mentioned in the creed, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Pontius Pilate. Jesus came into the world through Mary, and was crucified and killed under Pontius Pilate.

Ray Shiner writes, *"Mary is associated with Jesus' birth; Pilate with his death. Mary with his reception; Pilate with his rejection. Mary with his flourishing; Pilate with his suffering. He was born of the virgin Mary; he suffered under Pontius Pilate."*

So these two people serve as book-ends on the life of Jesus between his conception and His cross.

So to look at His suffering under Pontius Pilate and what that means for what we believe, we'll take as our text today John 18:33-40. The setting here is the trial of Jesus just before his crucifixion. Jesus is at the headquarters of the Roman governor Pilate in Jerusalem.

**John 18 "33 So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" 35 Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." 37 Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." 38 Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him. 39 But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" 40 They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.**

So the accusation is that Jesus has claimed to be the king of the Jews, and anyone claiming to be king poses a threat to the rulers. So this Roman governor, Pontius Pilate,

examines Jesus to see if there is guilt in Him worthy of death. The Jewish leaders wanted him dead because He was a threat, but they were not their own rulers, they were ruled over by Rome, and so to get the death penalty they had to push Jesus through a Roman trial.

So there was Roman guilt and Jewish guilt in the death of Jesus, gentiles were guilty, jews were guilty, there is no grounds for anti-semitism in the gospel narratives because everybody can read these stories and see that everybody had a part in the unjust death of Jesus, and nobody has grounds to point fingers at others.

Pilate was Roman, not Jewish, but he ruled over the Jewish province of Judea that Rome had conquered. He ruled from about 26 to 36 AD, and a number of historians made record of his reign. He wasn't some fictional character, but an actual historical character.

### **I. Christianity is Conveyed to Us In Historical Facts About Jesus**

And that is incredibly important - the fact that Jesus "suffered under Pontius Pilate" means that this stuff happened in history.

Because there's a temptation to make Christianity just nice sentiment, or just a collection of nice sayings, or to try to reduce Christianity just to its moral teachings or just to its inspirational texts.

But notice that the Creed doesn't even mention the teaching of Jesus. That teaching is, of course, important as God put it in the Bible for us. But the creed goes from the virgin birth to the suffering of Jesus under Pontius Pilate.

**Christianity has at its Core Jesus Christ, who really came to earth at a real time in history.**

**Real, historical Jesus is at the center of our faith.**

If Christianity is mainly about its inspirational sayings and motivational phrases, then Christianity is all about me - it is all about giving me comfort, giving me motivation. It's a faith that we hire as our personal trainer to tell us we can do all things. But instead, the Creed centers it all on the person of Jesus and what happened in history, not on me and my life. It isn't just guidance, it isn't just sentiment, it is a true story of what really happened in time and space.

It has at its heart the historical facts about Jesus.

And so we don't say you have to either choose to believe facts or to believe your faith. Our faith is in the facts of history - that the Son of God showed up on some date (who knows when but probably around 3 or 4 BC), he grew up in Israel, he suffered under a real evil government official named Pilate, was crucified, died, was buried, and the third day he rose again.

And often in Christian history there have been attempts made to spiritualize the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus died, his body was buried, but his spirit rose, and it rose in you and me, and now we all have the Spirit of Christ. But the Gospel texts are written like real history, they recount Jesus going through a real trial under a real guy, and they never say, "OK, let's change gears and now talk about how the resurrection happened in our hearts and feelings." They tell that part like it's history, too. Jesus really came through the womb of the virgin, he really suffered and died, and He really rose again.

So Christianity is based on historical facts. And remember that historical facts come to us in a different way than scientific facts do.

A few weeks ago, comedian Ricky Gervais was on the Stephen Colbert show. And Colbert was arguing for the existence of God, Gervais is an atheist. And Gervais said this:

*"If we took any holy book and destroyed it, that wouldn't come back just as it was. Whereas if you took every science book and every fact, in 1000 years they'd all be back because all of the same tests would give the same result." (Paraphrased slightly.)*

In other words, the only things we can know for sure are the facts of science, things we can discover in the physical world and discover again if we forget them. And Christianity would disappear if we took away all recorded history. We would never believe in the same God again, because nobody would look at nature and come up with the same facts about God.

**And to a degree that's true:** true scientific facts would be discovered again. There are laws of nature, put there by a law-giver, that wouldn't change and would be discovered over and over again. If everything we have learned about gravity disappeared, we'd learn that again. If we forgot that the earth was a globe, we'd discover that again. So that much is true.

**To another degree it's inaccurate**, because some of what we know about God is known from nature. Not everything, but his eternal power, his godhead, the that we were created with purpose can all be derived from studying the creation. We would say those things about God again even if we lost the Bible. But still, the facts of science wouldn't tell us about the cross and resurrection.

**But ultimately the whole argument fails because Christianity comes to us in a book of history, not a science book.**

And if we wiped out every history book, those facts of history wouldn't come back either. We wouldn't learn about Abraham Lincoln again. We wouldn't know about Julius Caesar. But that doesn't mean those guys didn't exist. That doesn't mean that the stories of Lincoln and Caesar are false and fairy tales. Those are true stories. Even though they would be lost if all literature and media were lost. History is still real even though it could never be reproduced by scientific inquiry alone.

And a large part of Christianity comes to us in written books that recount history. And they are incredibly reliable. One, because we believe they were God-breathed and God preserved so the faith could be passed on to us. But also because they are reliable texts, first hand documentation of the stories of the eye-witnesses to Jesus.

The Gospels that we have in the New Testament are the recorded testimony of the eyewitnesses to Jesus, written while those eye-witnesses were still alive.

Sometimes we are told in popular culture that the Gospel narratives weren't written down until hundreds of years after Jesus, and that they were written down only after a long game of telephone, where the stories were passed on through oral tradition and exaggerated with each telling until eventually this guy who may have existed named Jesus got exaggerated into being a miracle worker and even God himself.

But the Gospels were written while the eyewitnesses of Jesus were still alive, with those eyewitnesses as the sources for the books. So we don't just have an account of stories that were told about Jesus for 300 years before we wrote them down, but we have real contemporary written history about Christ.

Historian Papias, who wrote around 95 AD, already was citing Mark's Gospel and saying the source of it was Peter, and he cited Matthew's Gospel as already existing, as well as John's Gospel that John wrote as an eyewitness testimony.<sup>1</sup>

So we have first-hand accounts that were made early, they copied them like crazy and distributed them around the world, so we can look at families of manuscripts and, of course, see minor discrepancies between them, but we can see how those (mostly copyist errors) would have occurred and know what the original text is, almost 100%. With no discrepancies that make a substantive difference to the overall message.

So we have reliable written history that tells the story of Jesus, and we put our faith in Jesus as he is conveyed to us in historical facts. No, we wouldn't discover Jesus again if all the books and tablets were destroyed. But that's true of all of history.

So Jesus suffering under Pontius Pilate means that the story of Jesus happened in real history, and we aren't called to just have faith in faith or to "believe in believe", but we have faith in the historical facts about Jesus.

It's not true that the only reason we believe in Jesus is because of the internal work He does in us. He does that work, there is a real internal relationship happening. A line of an older song says "You ask me how I know He lives, He lives within my heart." Which is true, but that's not the only reason we know He lives. And it's not even the most reliable - my heart is fickle and often doesn't feel what's real. You ask me how I know he lives - he suffered under Pontius Pilate, he was crucified, died, and was buried, he descended to the dead, and on the third day He rose again. Just like the history books said He did.

Beware of making the Christian faith just an internal, sentimental, rearranging of our feelings. Jesus is both external historical reality and internal, personal, relational reality. He must be both if we will be Christians.

We need real faith, real internal repentance, but it's real faith in the historical work of Jesus and real repentance toward the Jesus who is exactly who the Bible says he is.

This also means that Jesus is not whoever we want Him to be.

When Christian Smith, a sociologist from Notre Dame, studied the real religion of

---

<sup>1</sup> Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), Kindle Edition. 57.

Christian adolescents in 2005 - teenagers in church youth groups, he said that their faith really wasn't Christian, but was "Moralistic, therapeutic deism."<sup>2</sup>

It is a religion that says you can be a good and happy person if you live morally. It's a religion that gives you therapeutic benefits like a feeling of well being, a religion that would help you "Live Long and Prosper," but didn't involve anything that looked like historic Christianity.

And the God of this system of belief, the one many of us who grew up in church were raised on, is a God of Deism: one who is not really involved with our affairs, especially the affairs we'd rather not have him involved in. Selective deism. We pick and choose the parts of our lives this god can reign over.

He says the God of our typical Christian is *"something like a combination Divine Butler and Cosmic Therapist: he's always on call, takes care of any problems that arise, professionally helps his people to feel better about themselves, and does not become too personally involved in the process."*

Smith wrote that, *"a significant part of Christianity in the United States is actually only tenuously Christian in any sense that is seriously connected to the actual historical Christian tradition, but has rather substantially morphed into Christianity's misbegotten stepcousin, Christian Moralistic Therapeutic Deism."*

So that was the predominant Christianity of teenagers in 2005 and spreading among adults. Well, it's 2022, and those teens are in their thirties, and about half of our church attenders were teenagers in 2005.

So this is the God that many of us grew up on. We've listened to lessons about this god, our songs are often predominantly feel good songs about our feelings, we view the Bible as a self-help book. And it isn't helping.

This kind of Christianity often doesn't last: it can't survive the crashes of life. It seems to work when we're happy and life is going well. It can seem to work in the teenage years when everything seems new and more exciting. But when life gets hard and the Jesus as therapy model doesn't work anymore, we quit the faith all together. (This is nothing against therapy, it's just saying that Jesus isn't mainly therapy.)

---

<sup>2</sup> All quotes from Christian Smith are found in his book [Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers](#)

And a Jesus who is anything we want him to be, who exists in our hearts but not in history, isn't the kind of Jesus that shapes us.

We always become like the god that we worship. That's a law of life: you are shaped into the image of the god you worship.

**Psalm 115:4-8 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5 They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. 6 They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. 7 They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. 8 Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.**

So the reason that our faith has the strengths and the holes that it has is because of the strengths and the holes in our view of God. And the reason Christianity can seem so formless and without distinction is because the god we worship is formless and without distinction.

But those that truly followed Christ in the early church were moved from being nominal and mushy and lukewarm to bold, and grace-filled, and courageous, and generous, and devoted. They stood out from the culture around them, but at the same time were generous and life-giving and loving toward that culture.

And a big reason is that they had a much fuller picture of God than the one we got from moralistic therapeutic deism. They worshiped a God who does more than just make us feel nice and play nice with others. But one who was born of a virgin, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried, descended to the dead and on the third day rose.

And it's that vision of God that we need if we're ever going to capture a faith that makes a difference in our lives, a faith that endures when things get hard, and a faith that is real, and a faith that is solid and worth spreading and passing down to our kids.

So Jesus suffering under Pontius Pilate, a specific historical figure, is a reminder that this all took place in history.

**II. And the nature of his suffering for the truth, tells us the nature of truth itself.**



While suffering under Pontius Pilate, Jesus talked about his purpose - to bear witness to the truth:

**John 18:37** “37 Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”  
**38** Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”

Jesus, before Pilate, says his life is to bear witness to the truth.

But Pilate says “what is truth?”

Pilate is basically saying “Truth is not that important to me. Right and wrong, not important. Me benefitting is the most important thing. Me getting what I want is the most important thing. Me doing what I think will feel best for me is the most important thing. He’s willing to bend the truth or ignore the truth to protect himself. Truth doesn’t matter when it clashes with what I want, or what I think I need.

Pilate didn’t care about **“the truth,”** he only cared about what our culture calls **“your truth.”**

We act sometimes like we are truth creators. We can create our own truths about ourselves and about reality, and we do so by trusting our feelings. “Your truth” is fluid, and so you don’t have to contend with any absolutes, any unavoidable realities.

Then we can do what feels best, what we think would liberate me, what I believe would make me thrive. But eventually we will crash into reality.

You can jump from a cliff, really believing your truth, that you can fly. And it first, it seems like you’re right. It seems exhilarating. You really can fly, until you realize that wasn’t flying, it only felt that way.

**So we can free ourselves from the confines of Christianity** and say, “This feels better, this feels right, I feel liberated.”

**We can free ourselves from the confines of having to love my neighbor as myself** and instead just live “my truth” and it feels good and we can feel invincible and healthy and like we have all kinds of time on our hands.

**We can free ourselves from the confines of truth** and say whatever we want about people to make others think less of them, because I'm living my truth. And it feels empowering.

**We can free ourselves from the bonds of our marriage**, without grounds, and say, "I'm trying to be the free-est me and the truest me."

And we may soar for a time. We may feel great living our truths for awhile. You can liberate yourself from obedience to God, and I've seen people jettison his word and commands and still come and lift their hands in tearful worship because they feel so free. But the feeling of flying doesn't mean we're flying.

We can claim our own truth over and above God's truth, but in the end that will only destroy. It feels right, we may have many cheering us on. But living for "your truth" instead of "the truth" always ends poorly.

Contrast Pilate with Jesus. Let's read this passage in John 19 - you'll see Pilate here caring more about placating the crowds than acting according to truth. Pilate is living his truth, he is doing whatever will work best for him. And contrast that with Jesus:

**John 19 "John 19:1 "19 Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. 3 They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" 6 When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." 8 When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. 9 He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you fhas the greater sin."**

**12 From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.” 13 So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour.3 He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” 15 They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” 16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.**

Jesus preached the truth, and acted like the truth was true always. And it was so crucial to Him that He do so that he was willing to hand himself over to these people who would put him on trial and torture and kill him rather than not fulfill his mission to bear witness to the truth.

**III. And Christ, in making this good profession before Pontius Pilate, is said to be a model for us:**

**1 Timothy 6:11-16 “11 But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.**

His suffering under Pontius Pilate was a model for us: profess the truth, and live like truth is true even if it costs you everything.

Don’t live your truth. Keep yourself unstained and free from reproach...live according to the truth. Do what’s right and say what’s true even when it feels hard.

**So Christ's suffering under Pontius Pilate shows us that we believe in something factual and historical, it shows us what our relationship to truth should be, its a model for us,**

**IV. and lastly it also shows us that Jesus wasn't crucified because he was guilty, but rather it confirms that He was innocent.**

In John 19:4 and John 19:6, Pilate repeats to the people that Jesus is not guilty.

Jesus is about to die, but He, uniquely, didn't deserve it. They could trump up charges, they could falsely accuse, they could twist the narrative to try to make Him the bad guy, but ultimately even those who crucified Him had to say things like "there's no guilt in Him" and "surely this was the son of God" (Matthew 27:54).

Each year at this time, the Jews would observe the passover. And part of that observance while the temple was still standing was the sacrifice of the passover lamb. At the first passover, the Jews were rescued from Egypt, and part of that rescue was they put the blood of a lamb on the doorposts of their houses, so when the angel of the Lord passed over to execute judgment and kill the firstborn in the houses, he would pass over the homes marked by the blood of the lamb.

A lamb had died so they didn't have to.

And God commanded his people to offer a spotless, unblemished lamb as a sacrifice each year at the temple:

**Exodus 12:5 "5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats,**

And when Jesus is here being examined by Pilate, he is found to be without spot or blemish. There's not guilt in Him. Making Him the suitable lamb for the sacrifice.

Paul makes this connection in:

**1 Corinthians 5:7 "For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed."**

John the Baptist said this about Jesus

**John 1:29 “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**

All of this unjust trial before Pontius Pilate was, without Pilate knowing it, declaring the innocence of the Lamb of God that would take away the sins of the world.

**Hebrews 9:13-14 “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”**

Jesus proved as he testified before Pilate that He was the lamb of God who could cleanse our sin.

And in the day that followed when He went to the cross, he suffered as much as was possible to pay the price for us. He was crucified, died, was buried, and on the third day He rose again. And that suffering is offered as a gift to all who would believe.

If you would turn from sin and unbelief. If you would turn from your truth to His truth. If you would believe by faith in his sacrifice and turn, He will forgive.

### **Prayer of Confession**

Father, we thank you that you sent your son to suffer under Pontius Pilate. Though we confess that as we read this account, we are more often like Pilate and not like Jesus. We do what's convenient for us, what feels right, what we think will fulfill us, with little regard for your truth or your commands. So Father, forgive us.

Jesus, we thank you for your faithfulness on our behalf. Thank you for being the pure, spotless lamb that was slain for people like us, people who have failed to love what's true.

Spirit, we ask that you'd help us to believe and apply these things. Help us to believe that our faith is rooted in the facts of history. Help us to believe that Jesus suffered in our place so that there is no punishment left for us if we believe. Help us to believe that He is enough, He is the lamb, He has cleansed us. And as we've confessed our sins, help us to believe that because of the suffering of Christ, we are forgiven.

## Assurance

**Ephesians 2:4-6 “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus”**

One of the important tools Jesus has given us to re-center our hopes on Jesus is the Lord’s supper that we will take soon.

This is an observance that preaches the Gospel.

**1 Corinthians 11:23-31 23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.**

When we take the supper, we are proclaiming the death of Jesus.

Everyone who takes this is saying, “I had been enslaved to sin. But Jesus came and died and paid my ransom.” I couldn’t get myself out of it, I was trapped, I was under God’s wrath and awaiting sentencing. But Jesus gave himself on the cross so that I could live and be freed.

Though I deserved to have my blood spilled for my sin, the blood of Jesus was spilled.

So in taking this supper we are saying, “I am a sinner in need of a Savior, and Jesus is that Savior.” So we take this confessing our known sins, and saying that my only hope is Christ.

So if today you’re not saying those things - if you are not willing to confess and renounce the sins you know about, and if you are not a believer in Christ, we ask you not to take this supper with us.

But for those who do believe, this supper preaches the gospel that stokes our hopes.

We take this bread saying, “Look what a ransom has been paid for me!” We drink the cup saying “Look what the Father provided.” We remind ourselves of the grace of God given at calvary, and that stokes our hopes that in the future we will receive grace after grace for eternity.

Lord’s Supper.

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

**The Creedal Imperative** by Carl Trueman

**Christless Christianity** by Michael Horton

**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

**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.

**Jesus and the Eyewitnesses** by Richard Bauckham

This book presents the case for the reliability of the gospel accounts and of the transmission of the story of Jesus through early oral history.

**The Knowledge of the Holy** by A.W. Tozer

**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 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

**Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers** by Christian Smith.

Smith, a sociologist at Notre Dame, determined that the Christianity of American teenagers in 2005 wasn't Christian at all, but was only moralistic therapeutic deism.

**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