

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

Good morning Life Fellowship. Please listen to these words with me very carefully:

“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 borne 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 Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.”

When we read those words I hope that not only will you get a sense of the foundational element that they contain, as they have been structured, but also of the historicity that lies in this Creed. Why are we doing this series? That is a perfectly honest question and for a church like ours to do this series sometimes catches people unaware or off guard a little bit because we are an unusual church. And we are unusual by design. There are many churches today with a variety of philosophies, and we are not in the business of criticizing this philosophy or that philosophy, we just want to be our own philosophy. And this is the philosophy that has been in place here since we were founded in 2004, and we are not inclined to leave it. There are many churches who have determined that they want to make an adjustment or whatever, but we are just not one of them.

There is a model called ‘The Attractional Model’ and the attractional model is basically this: what you do on Sunday morning that attracts people to Jesus Christ. And so in order to do that you need to have something that is super appealing, you have to have a real practical message, you have to have real upbeat music, and you have to have a welcoming atmosphere. And all those things are fine and good. I think we can all agree that all of those are important, and we certainly don’t want to be a model that detracts, but at the same time that is not what drives us.

For us, we have a blend, and we have from the very beginning wanted to have a blend. And this blend covers a lot of other areas. It is one of the reasons why you have an older guy like me who is preaching this Sunday and in a couple of weeks you will have a younger guy preaching. It is why we try to be multigenerational, multicultural, and multiethnic. We try to be all these different things because we do want to have a church that is more than just one style or one type.

But there is also a deeper purpose behind it. We want to have a church, that while we are relevant in 2021 in one of the most challenging and unusual generations that have ever existed on the face of the earth, we don’t want to reach this generation at the expense of forgetting who we are, where we have been, why we are here, what God has done, and what He is going to do. So when we began designing the services for this year, as with

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

many other years, we decided to pay some attention to our past, as well as our present and our future. And we did that this year by focusing on The Apostles Creed.

Now some churches identify themselves as creedal churches. In fact if you will look at their website or talk to them they will say they are a creedal church, they are built on this creed or that creed and so forth. And they use one of the historic Christian creeds off of the Apostles Creed as a central part of their teaching and identity. We are not that kind of church. We would not identify ourselves specifically as a creedal church.

Some churches however completely ignore the creed. And in doing so I believe that they cut themselves off from the historicity of our faith that traces back two thousand years ago, and to some extent they sometimes detach themselves from the anchor that is orthodox doctrine. Which is kind of redundant as orthodox refers to your core set so orthodoxy refers to what you believe and why you believe it. And we don't want to be detached from that, or not to have that as our anchor. So it is one of the reasons why our church has this philosophy.

If you have ever been through our church membership class, and I hope you will do that in the future if you have not, and you can go to the class without becoming a member, you know that you will get the groundwork for why Life Fellowship is different from many other churches. Part of what we explain is some of the values of our church, about a dozen of them, and we talk about the L-I-F-E which is living in community, investing in growth, finding your purpose and embracing the Great Commission. That is our mission and then 'to pursue at all costs a passionate God-centered life' is our vision.

At the same time we have these values which also guide the decisions made, and two of those values come into play here. One of them is called 'ancient future,' the value of ancient future. And the other is the value of roots and relevance. So ancient future deals with the history of our faith and the fact that we do go back two thousand years to the establishment of the church in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. There is the promise fulfillment of the covenant that was made in the Garden of Eden between God and Adam and all of mankind that we could be redeemed. It was brought into Abraham's life with the covenant that the Messiah would come out of the Jewish nation. So we take these steps and we remember this ancient history, realizing that it has a huge impact on our future destiny.

The roots and the relevance means we want to be relevant. We understand that we live in a different world. Jesus didn't deal with the Internet as He was ministering. The apostles didn't have to deal with cell phones and all the things that we do. They never saw a jet fly across the sky as they were out on the mountainside preaching the gospel. These were things that we deal with in our generation and our culture like television and pornography being everywhere. We have fast food restaurants and other things now that we deal with that they could never even envision during their day and time. So we do have to be contemporary, we do have to be relevant to our culture, we do

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

have to recognize that, but not at the expense of our roots. And our roots begin here in the Word of God.

So without apology we lift the Bible, we refer to the Bible, we read the Bible, we preach the Bible because from the Bible springs life. From the Bible we have the words of God. From the Bible we have the roadmap to our ability to be reconciled with our creator. Why are we doing this series? It is because we need to understand from whence we came and where we are going.

We have done some similar series in the past like the one we did on the great artist Rembrandt and some of the wonderful paintings he did. We also did a series where we talked about some of the great hymns and the messages behind them. And we want to do some more series like that, but this year we chose the Apostles Creed. And whenever we look at the past whether it is at art, or architecture, or hymns, or Puritan's prayers, we always look at it through the lens of Scripture. Not as tradition, not as a denomination, not even as history, but always through the lens of the Bible.

Now let's talk about the Apostles Creed for just a moment. The Apostles Creed is used in several Christian denominations, and it used for a variety of reasons. By the way it has several versions and we are using one in particular, and this is the version that is often used by either Protestants or Evangelicals. I will mention a couple of the differences in just a moment, but there are Catholic versions, there are Anglican versions, and there are other versions also that are commonly used.

By the way there are also multiple creeds in existence as well. This was not the final creed that a church body or congress got together and produced. It is probably the oldest one, and it is probably the most common one, but you may have heard of the Nicene Creed, you may have heard of the Chaldean Creed, or you may have heard of the Athanasian Creed. Every once in a while there would be a congress that would be called of church leaders and they would decide that they needed clarification on their doctrine, and they would produce this new creed.

From there various denominations have established their own documents, their own creeds that seek to commonly define the core doctrinal beliefs of their denomination. Sometimes they are called confession, or they are called articles, or statements, or messages, or catechism, or pillars. These are all documents that you may hear of.

I want to make this really, really clear that whether we call it a creed, or a catechism, whether we call it a pillar or a confession, they do not supersede the Bible. They are built off of the Bible in many cases, the Bible is referenced in many cases, but they are not in supersession over this book. Nothing goes above the Bible in terms of its authority. So creeds are not intended to supersede, but rather to clarify orthodoxy, these basic agreed upon doctrinal beliefs that form the foundation of everything that we do, from cooperation to theology and everything in between.

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

So the Apostles Creed was formulated around the middle of the Third Century. In fact the first time we see it in writing, formerly referred to, was in the year about 390 AD. And again, as Jason mentioned this morning everyone did not own a copy of the Bible. Today I don't even know how many copies of the Bible I have of the different versions and the many study Bibles. I can pretty well pick one up any time I want to. Do we realize what a gift that is to live in this time?

Often in early days people would even put passages of Scripture inside of the church building on the walls. They would also put the words of hymns on the walls. If you think we are it with big screens in our generation, no, they had big screens before as well, they were just permanent on the walls. They would put Scripture on the walls and they would even put pictures on the walls because everyone was not literate. That is why the stained glass windows often tell a picture, and maybe we will study that as a series one year. And they would also put the words of hymns on the walls so that when you walked into a church you would literally have these reference points of what was going to be taught.

The creed is actually a shorter statement than was originally produced and the one we use has been added to and evolved a little bit over the centuries. Now some of the parts of the creed are still topics for some debate quite frankly. There have always been some debates and revisions, omissions and re-wording that have taken place. For instance if you grew up Roman Catholic, or if you grew up in some tradition, instead of saying 'the holy Christian church,' you may have heard it said as 'the holy Catholic church.' And by the way if you will look at it in writing the letter C is the small letter c.

You may not be aware of this because the Roman Catholic Church is such a common term that everyone pretty well knows about it but the word catholic is not necessarily always used in reference to the Catholic Church. The word catholic simply means 'universal.' And it refers to in that case 'the family of God,' 'the Bride of Christ,' or 'all the believers past, present and future.' So when you see catholic in the Creed they are not talking about the church that has a pope. However when Catholics say it they do mean the church while when Protestants say it they recognize it as meaning universal. So it means that we are a part of a family that transcends generations and that is universal. It includes the saints of the past, the saints of the present, and the saints of the future until Christ returns.

So in order to avoid confusion many Protestants and Evangelicals have changed the word catholic to Christian. And there are a couple of other phrases that have been debated, and one of them quite frankly I am still exploring myself on whether Christ literally, bodily descended into hell, or if He did so spiritually. So in some places you will find those words in the Creed and in some places you won't.

I tell you all of that because for the next several weeks we are going to be going through this Creed, and we are going to be going through it line by line. And as we go

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

through it I wanted you to have this foundation so I needed to take the first ten minutes or so to just kind of lay that out for you. If you are watching on the Internet understand that we are going to be referring to this in weeks to come. And that is the basis for it. Today we are going to be focusing on that first line, *“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.”* Genesis Chapter 1 and verse 1 begins it off and that is why it is the first line in the Apostles Creed as it says, *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

Now we are going to shift gears. I have kind of told you why we are doing this and now we are going to go beyond the history of this. Today we are going to begin looking at the Apostles Creed and the truths therein in light of where we are at as a culture. We are going to draw some sharp lines, we are going to make some strong declarations, and at times there may be occasions where you are going to bristle a little if you don't understand the importance of orthodox doctrine, if you don't understand the authority of Scripture, or if you have not bought into the exclusionary nature of the gospel.

This is a message, and a series of messages, that in some circles might be controversial. Perhaps not so much here, but believe you me when you go out and practice this, or teach this, or believe this outside of the confines of a gospel preaching church you are going to make some people upset. You are going to ruffle some feathers. You are going to make some people accuse you of being bigoted or too narrow or even fundamentalist. But in the end we must not view our Scripture, our beliefs, God and doctrine through the lens of the culture. We must view our culture through the lens of the Word of God. And if we fail to do that, we will lose our way, we will water down the gospel, and we will abandon orthodoxy. So it is important that we understand this and it is important that we know this because that is why we declare these things out loud. That is why we write them down. That is why we speak them aloud. That is why we set music to them and sing them because these are important truths.

Open with me in your Bibles if you would to Psalms Chapter 8, and we are going to read a passage that very much speaks of the authority of God the Father, His majesty and all that He is. Because this morning as we narrow this topic down, I want you to understand, there is one God, there is only one God, and He is majestic. If you don't take anything away from this sermon today I want you to take away this truth – there is one God, there is only one God, and He is majestic. So let's look at Psalms Chapter 8 and what I would like for us to do is to read this responsively. So I am going to read the first verse and you read the second verse and so on. Now if you are using your phone and it is hard to see it we will have it on the screen as well.

And by the way, let me just urge you this, and I know that it is a rant and I am not trying to be legalistic, and I do this sometimes myself, but understand this is something I have been thinking about lately. There is something about having a copy of the Word of God with you that you can write on, that you can shuffle through, and that you can stick

**ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS
THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1
Dan Burrell**

some notes in. So I want to urge you because we are a Bible teaching church that you would consider getting a copy of the Bible that you can carry with you to every service. I know it is so convenient to have it on your phones and I do love living in this generation. I have been able to read the Bible in places I normally never would when I am not carrying my Bible, and I don't think you are a better Christian if you carry a Bible to church than if you don't carry one. Please don't misunderstand what I am saying, but I am saying sometimes the Holy Spirit will speak to you when the Word of God is being taught and you can write it down if you have your Bible with you. I have my dad's Bible and every once in a while I will open it up and I can see the notes that he wrote forty years ago in his Bible and they minister to my heart and make me think about what he was thinking when he wrote them. And that is just a cool thing to leave as a legacy to your children. Okay I am done with my rant and now we are in Psalms 8 so thanks for bearing with me. Every once in a while I just have to get it out of my system. Psalms Chapter 8 and I will read the first verse and please join me in reading the second and so on.

“O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet,

All sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,

The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

That is a beautiful picture of God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth. Again this sermon is all over the place, so if you are one of my students watching this for a homiletics class I want you to understand not to do it this way, because I am doing a little

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

history, a little church talk, a little preaching and ranting, and I am doing some theological education. So let's go into professorial mode now if I could and I want you to understand the attributes of God. And I don't want to take for granted that we have listed all of those but I will say this to you, even if you know these better than I know them, there is something important about thinking of God, there is something important about remembering His attributes and His aspects, there is something about lifting up those characteristics and qualities of God the Father that encourages the heart, that solidifies it, and that glorifies Him.

It is worship to talk about God. It is worship to declare who He is. That is why the Psalmist says: "*O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name!*" Simply His name ought to cause our heart to soar as we realize who He is and what He has done. What He has created and what He has redeemed. So let's look real quickly at fifteen attributes of the character of God.

Number one – He is infinite. To be infinite means that you are self-existing, you are without origin. Forever God has been, forever God will be. Someone asked the question, '*Who created God?*' No one created God; He has always been, He is a self-existing being. He was never created and He has always been in existence so He is infinite without origin.

Number two – He is immutable. And that means He doesn't change. The God that created us is the God that redeems us and the God that is coming again for us. The God of the million years ago is the same God that will be in existence in a million years from now. He doesn't change, His character doesn't waver, He doesn't alter Himself; He is immutable.

Number three – He is self-sufficient. And because He is self-sufficient He has no needs. He has no need of anything. He has no need to justify His existence. He has no need to explain everything. He has no need to re-energize Himself. He has no needs because He is self-sufficient, and in His sufficiency He is infinite and immutable.

Number four – He is omnipotent. That means He is all powerful. All things were created by Him and without Him was not anything created that was made. Those are His words. That is His definition. The fact is that He has all power, all creative power, all knowledge; He is omnipotent, all powerful.

Number five – He is omniscient. Omniscient means everything that there is to know God designed it. Everything that can be known God knows. Everything that exists that has the potential to be known has God at its origin. He is omniscient.

Number six – He is omnipresent. God is everywhere. When we think of ourselves we can only be one place at a time. No matter how busy we may seem we can only be one place at one moment in time in one location. But God is not confined as you

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

and I are confined. By the way when you just sit back and mediate on these things it can make you dizzy. That is one of the cool things about God and that is we cannot comprehend Him.

I should have added number sixteen to say He is incomprehensible because you will never get Him all figured out. And the fact that He is omnipresent is one of those things that make me dizzy. Do you understand that He sees the past at the same time as He sees the future? He sees the present just like He saw two thousand years ago or two billion years ago or two billion years from now. He is omnipresent. He exists outside of the limitations of time.

By the way many of these things kind of overlap each other. When you are omnipresent it is easy to be omniscient, right? So these things overlap but our human efforts which are always going to be limited because we are finite, so our ability to understand who He is and to be able to express who He is, to describe who He is, will be limited. So if you think we can describe Him in fifteen words, we are not even close. These are just the first fifteen we have chosen today. If we were to continue talking for the rest of time trying to describe who God is, what He knows, what He has done, what He possesses, and all that He could perform we would never get done with the conversation. So we understand then that He is omnipresent.

Number seven – He is wise. We are going to bring it into kind of a more personal nature and in His wisdom that means He is full of perfect, unchanging wisdom. He knows what is best. He knows what we need.

Number eight – He is faithful. He is infinitely, unchangingly true. My God is faithful to me. Remember that old song we used to sing years ago? *‘My God is faithful and true.’* And the fact that He is faithful means He will never let us down, He will never forget us, He will never disappoint us. He is infinitely and unchangingly true to His Word, true to His character, true to His nature.

Number nine – He is good. In Him is no evil. He is infinitely, unchangingly virtuous and kind. I will tell you it is that thing that draws us; it is that thing that reminds us of our own fallen condition. And when we look at who God is and then we look at our own character, we can't help but want to be drawn to Him and to aspire to that because of the qualities that He has. And so He is virtuous, He is kind, He is forgiving and longsuffering.

Number ten – He is just. He is infinitely and unchangingly right and perfect in all of His actions. He makes the wise decisions, He makes the faithful decisions, He makes the good decisions and He makes the just decisions. And He does so with His eleventh characteristic which is merciful.

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1 Dan Burrell

Number eleven – He is merciful, infinitely unchangingly compassionate. Where others would have written off the human race, where others would have looked at our debauchery, our disrespect, our blasphemy, our hatred, our cursing and our violence and said ‘*Enough of this. I am capable of wiping you out as if you never existed. I am capable of reeking vengeance upon you for all of your sins.*’ But God looked down and said, ‘*I am going to have mercy. I am going to have mercy that is so deep, so true, so eternal and so costly that it will cost me myself.*’ And God allowed His Son to die for us. That is true mercy.

Number twelve – He is gracious. And by being gracious we simply mean this – He is inclined to spare the guilty. He doesn’t give us what we deserve because His graciousness has Him inclined to give us grace in the midst of what we deserve.

Number thirteen – He is loving. Infinitely unchangingly He loves us. “***For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.***” He is a loving God.

Number fourteen – He is holy. He is infinitely unchangingly perfect and holy. And this is an attribute that I think sometimes we don’t appreciate or respect the way that we should. He is righteous because He is holy. He is compassionate because He is holy. He is merciful because He is holy. And this attribute of holiness entitles Him to be God because He never makes mistakes, He never fails, He never falls, He never slips away, He is constantly in this unchanging infinite perfection.

And then finally Number fifteen – He is glorious. We read as the Psalmist said, “***How majestic is His name.***” He is infinitely beautiful and great. He is glorious.

If we just took one of those words and put it on our dashboard while we were driving to work, or put it on our phone calendar, or put it on our mirror as we get ready for work, or put it on our desk or our computer screen, if we just took one of those words and thought about God in light of that word, it would transform how we view God. That is why this Creed is important, that is why it starts off with this idea: ‘*We believe in God the Father, we believe in His love, His grace, His mercy, His infinity, His immutability, His self-sufficiency, His omnipotence, His omniscience, His omnipresence, His wisdom, His faithfulness, His goodness, His justice, His graciousness, His lovingness, His holiness and His gloriousness.*’

Now what does the world believe about God today? And this is where you hear the old needle go across the record. You hear the screech because today we live in a generation and in a culture that wants to re-define God. And let me say this to you, folks, every time we choose to try to define or re-define God in the end what we have is something that looks way too much like us. Remember this – you and I have been created in the image of God, but it is blasphemy for us to try to re-create God into the image of a fallen creation. And yet we invariably try to do that in our culture.

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

I am going to give you five ways that our culture tries to do that today. The first thing they try to do is to make God inclusive. The world's view of God is He is an inclusive God. Maybe you are wondering what does that mean by inclusive? That is a good word, right? We are supposed to love everybody. We are supposed to make everybody feel welcome. We are supposed to make everybody equal. We talk about this word 'inclusivity' as if it is a good term, and in some occasions and in some applications indeed it is. But when we are talking about God it is not, because God is not inclusive; He is by definition exclusive.

Remember what He said as one of the Ten Commandments, "***Thou shall have no other gods before me.***" Do you understand that God is exclusive? There is one God, and only one God, and He is majestic. There is one God, and only one God, and He is above all other gods. There is one God, and only one God, and when we try to put any other gods in His presence we are bringing up idols. There are multiple definitions and entities some will tell you like, '*Well you know, as long as you believe that there is a greater power.*' When you do that you are watering God down. How many times have you heard this, '*Well you know what, I am not a spiritual person but I believe in a higher power.*' That is narrowing God down.

What does 'higher power' even mean to them? It could mean 'an energy' or it could mean 'something pure' or there are many people who believe that there is only one God but there are many pathways to God. No, the Bible says: "***There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.***" And it is through Christ Jesus we get to the one God. There are not many paths; there is one path, and that one path is a path that was purchased and is paved with the blood of God Himself, Jesus Christ.

Maybe you would say, '*But what about the Muslims? They trace their ancestry back to Abraham.*' Remember Abraham had two sons and one was illegitimate and one was the promised son that God gave them. One was named Isaac and the other was named Ismael. Maybe you think they have the same god and that all religions have the same God, but you just can't narrow it down like that. What you have to do when people make those arguments is to say, '*Tell me who your god is. Tell me his characteristics,*' because what people have done is they have twisted the character and nature of God until He is god no more. The god that the Muslims worship is not the God of Abraham.

By the way he is also not the god of Ismael, because the characteristics, nature and teachings of everything that they give of this god is not the God of Scripture. Again, we view definitions not through culture, not through politics, but through the Word of God. And if you want to know what God is about, open the Bible and it will tell you. If you want to know what His attributes, characteristics and nature are, open the Bible and it will tell you. So we have to understand He is not inclusive. Not everyone with good intentions, not everyone with fine motivations, not everyone with pleasant personalities, not everyone with devoutness, not everyone with sincerity is going to go to Heaven. The Bible tells us that there will be some who literally say, '*Lord, I cast out demons in your*

ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1

Dan Burrell

name. Lord, I worshipped in your name. Lord, I was a pastor. Lord, I discipled someone. Lord, I gave to the church. Lord, I went on a missions trip. Lord, I did all these things.’ And the Bible says He will say: **“Depart from me, I never knew you.”**

The fact is there are a lot of charlatans who believe that if they just do the right work, if they just say the right words, if they just give enough money, if they just join the right association that somehow that gives them a ticket to heaven. But the Bible tells us that there is but one way to heaven and that is through Jesus. Christ said this Himself: **“I am the way, the truth, and the life and no man comes to the Father but by me.”** God is exclusive.

The second one people will tell you is that God is pliable. They say that He changes over time, and the things you may find in the Bible was just the God of that moment and the God of this moment is something different. And in other words you can't take the Bible for what it says, and if you look at some of the Scriptures they are really narrow. And a lot of modern day religious scholars spend a huge amount of time trying to tell you why you don't need to believe the Bible, rather than why you do need to believe the Bible. They will tell you a lot of things that will cause you to doubt whether or not God is all the things that we just mentioned. They will say that He changes over time and more often than not their god reflects the majority's opinions, or common desires, or even personal fantasies.

It is a dangerous thing to reduce God into something that you can draw a picture of. It is a dangerous thing to reduce God to something that you can describe in a two minute conversation. It is a dangerous thing to reduce God into something that absolutely contradicts His Word. God hates sin, it cost Him His Son. God hates wickedness, God hates rebellion, and God hates idolatry. There is a war going on and if you are looking for a pliable, inclusive God that basically lets you live any way you want to, do anything you want to, act any way you want to, and recreate Him in any way that makes you comfortable, then you don't know the real God.

The third thing is they will tell you He is limited, either in power or authority, or scope, or range, or character. They want you to believe that God is somehow limited, that He is not always God, not always fully God, not always in control, not always aware, not always involved. This is limited Godism. This limited view of Him runs contrary to everything we know about God from Scripture.

Number four is they will tell you that He is capricious, that He has changed and continues to change. He demonstrates moodiness at time, and even is capable of ungodly behavior. Often what they want to do is take you to the Old Testament and they will want to show you some of the declarations where God in His desire to redeem man said, *‘These people have to go. This war must be fought. This obstacle must be removed.’* And you need to understand that when God acted in those ways that today's historians want to view as capricious, He was doing it out of love to make sure that Jesus was born,

**ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS
THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1
Dan Burrell**

that He was able to live, die, and be risen again for our benefit, for our salvation, for our reconciliation with Him.

The God of the Old Testament is every bit as much holy and righteous and just as is the God of the New Testament. There is not an Old Testament God and a New Testament God; He is not capricious, He is one hundred percent consistent. And from Genesis Chapter 1 and verse 1 to the very last verse of Revelations what you see is a God who created us, loved us, redeemed us, and is coming again for us.

The last thing is they will tell you that God is moldable, that you can reshape Him, that God in some ways serves the creation, that He can be reduced to our capacity to appreciate Him, that He is flexible to our will, that God is who you choose to make Him. Ladies and gentlemen, I am just telling you that the Scripture warns us clearly of this. Please turn with me in your Bibles to Romans Chapter 1 and we are going to read this very carefully. I know I am short on time but I think we need to let the Scripture speak for itself in this area.

As our world continues to move towards its ultimate destruction and our society continues to collapse it is going to be increasingly essential that true believers double down on the attributes of God, both in what we teach and what we believe. I wish I could preach a whole sermon just on this, but a lot of us say that we believe these things about God, but our actions say something quite different, because our behavior is the reflection of our beliefs. And if we really believe that God is who He is I believe it should impact a lot of the decisions and choices that we make in our culture today. But that is another sermon.

Look with me if you would in Romans Chapter 1 and beginning with verse 18. Here is what the Scripture says: ***“For the wrath of God.”*** Wow, do you mean that God gets angry? Oh you bet He gets angry. He gets angry about sin, He gets angry about Satan’s agenda, and He gets angry about our rebellion. And God has anger. This idea that God is some doting, white robed wearing, long bearded, rocking chair dude who sits up on a cloud somewhere is a mockery of the authority and power and holiness of God.

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

**ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS
THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 1
Dan Burrell**

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them."

That is a powerful passage of Scripture, and mark my words, there is coming a day when reading that passage out loud may be outlawed because this is the story of the descent of mankind, and it specifically warns us against the behavior that today we choose to honor, celebrate and categorize as acceptable. And God said He will judge it.

We have to be aware, we have to be respectful, and we have to be mindful that there is a God, there is one God, and He is majestic. And He is not to be messed with. He is not to be disregarded. He is not to be dumbed down. He is not to be ignored. He is not to be redefined. He is to be obeyed and revered and worshipped.

I want to make a declaration this morning. Life Fellowship is not going to change its view of God based on what is going on in our culture. It is not going to change its view of God based on what is acceptable. We will not change our view of God to be considered 'mainstream.' We will not change our view of God to be accepted by others from the elite to the academics to the scientists to the politicians. We will not change. We will not change our view of God to be deemed accessible to commonly held conventions and views on topics that range from the existence of heaven and hell, to the person of Jesus Christ, to the definitions of human gender and sexuality, to the topic of creation, to the authority of Scripture, to the necessity of repentance, to the denunciation of sin, to the celebration of the ordinances, to the authority of God over government, to the practice of our faithful disciplines, to the gathering of the church, to the declaration of the gospel, to the rebuke of the ungodly, to the sanctity of life, and any other doctrine that is outlined in the Word of God we believe. *(Applause.)*

**ONE GOD AND ONLY ONE GOD – HOW MAJESTIC HE IS
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We will not change our view of God to be attractive to the prevalent culture. We will not change our view of God in order to be or have a status that has been offered by the government like tax exemption. We will not be changing our view of God to be thought of as successful, or growing, or big. We will not change our view of God to be comfortable, or affluent, or prestigious.

Simply put – we believe in God the Father. We believe in His authority. We believe He is the Creator of all mankind. We believe we will give account to Him and what we have done with His Word. And that has to be reflected in our behavior, in our words, in our messages, in our choices, in our values, in our priorities, in our declarations, in our testimonies, and in every single aspect of our lives. And it is not old fashioned, it is not archaic, it is not irrelevant, or antiqued, or obsolete, or outmoded, or passé to stand up and say, “*We believe.*’ In fact it is essential, it is relevant, it is fundamental and it is foundation.

From the very beginning it was Satan’s strategy to try to get us to doubt God the Father, to question His veracity, His authority, His character. ‘*God has not surely said. He is holding something good from you. You will not surely die.*’ But inasmuch as the damnable pride of Lucifer the angel condemned him to a fate of exile from God, our personal pride also will cause us to reject the holiness, the authority, the majesty of God the Father, maker of heaven and earth.

My question for you this morning is - do you believe?

The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.