



WEEKLY STUDY

Week 2

We continued our summer series on the Apostles' Creed by looking at the first line. *I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.* What does it mean to say that God is our maker and creator? We sometimes get caught up in the things that we are responsible for creating—like a good life, well-mannered children, and a sufficient retirement fund—but we only participate in creation as part of it. We are among those who were created. The perspective laid out in the creed is one that produces awe and humility. God created us (“very good”), loves us, and gives us purpose. May this reality settle into your hearts this week!

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional question at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this prayer from Pastor Angela or your own prayer.

O God, my Almighty Father, I believe in you. I believe in you, Jesus. I believe you are God's only son. I believe you were conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. I believe you suffered, were crucified, dead, and were buried. I believe you descended to the dead and rose again on the third day. I believe you ascended into heaven and are seated at the Father's right hand. I believe you will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in you, Holy Spirit. And in the Holy Catholic Church. I believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Lord, I believe; help my unbelief. Amen.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: GENESIS 1.1-4

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³ *And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.*

- The belief that God created everything gives us a proper perspective about who we are in relation to God. We are the *created*, not the *creator*. It may seem subtle and it may seem obvious, but when we get this wrong (and boy do we get this wrong), we see nations invading their neighbors. We see greed and corruption. We see our own sinfulness. We state the belief in God as Creator in a creed in order to put ourselves back in a proper posture before God. It gives us hope that a God who once created out of chaos is still doing so today—even in the chaos of this world.
- *O God who takes darkness and emptiness and creates light and life, create your light and life in me.*

TUESDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.15-23

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

- Who has seen God? How can the invisible become visible? These beautiful words from Paul reveal that Jesus was present at creation and all things came to be through him. It is like the whole story of humanity's fall and God's redemption was accounted for from the start. God is not a one-time creator who sits back or walks away after bringing form to the formless. God is actively pursuing our reconciliation with God.
- *Jesus, you have been here from the very beginning, thank you for bringing the possibility of peace with our Creator.*

WEDNESDAY: 1 TIMOTHY 4.4-5

everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving,⁵ because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

- *Everything* God created is good? Everything. Even my annoying neighbor? Even my enemy? Even wasps? This can be a difficult truth. But in the beginning, it was all called “good” or (in the case of humankind) “very good”. If it doesn't seem good or very good at times, that's a sign that the goodness of creation hasn't always been received with a thankful heart or recognized as a gift from God. God is good, therefore God's creation is good. In what areas of your life do you need this reminder?
- *God, you are so good. Your creation is so very good. I am thankful for the gifts and the challenges of being a part of all that you have made.*

THURSDAY: ISAIAH 45.18

*For this is what the LORD says—
he who created the heavens,
he is God;
he who fashioned and made the earth,
he founded it;
he did not create it to be empty,
but formed it to be inhabited—
he says:
“I am the LORD,
and there is no other.*

- The prophet Isaiah records this foundational truth about God’s design and desire for creation. The earth was made in order to be inhabited. The same God who made all of the heavens made this earth for us to live in. We get the idea that God is relational. “Let us make them in our image” said God before creating man and woman. God created us for a relationship with God and with one another.
- *God, you are the Lord and there is no other. Create in me a heart of gratitude for the things that you have made.*

FRIDAY: HEBREWS 11.3

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

- This passage is in a series of “by faith” statements. Take a moment to read all of Hebrews chapter 11. We can’t know all there is to know about the works of God. Some things we have to take by faith until a day when things will be made clear. God created the universe with a command and, out of it, what was invisible became visible.
- *God, by faith I call you my Father and my Creator. Give me eyes to see what was once invisible. Give me eyes to see your purpose for me.*

SATURDAY: PSALM 89.11

*The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth;
you founded the world and all that is in it.*

- The Bible is full of examples of God’s people stating and restating that God is responsible for the creation of all things. You can see the pattern of forgetfulness that leads to the need for constant reminders. This world is not ours, but God’s. Nothing we hold onto is ultimately our own. We are God’s beloved creation.
- *God, give me perspective today to see You as You are. You are my Creator, and the maker of heaven and earth.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Jacob shared about the coffee table he made for his wife. There is pride in creating something that didn't exist before. Maybe you've created a new idea or concept or actually built something with your hands.

- What does it feel like to have created something from concept to completion?
- How does that help you think about God's love for the things He has created?
- Do you typically think about yourself as something God has created? Do you think about yourself as something God would call "very good"?