

The Person and Work of Jesus Christ



The Nicene Creed, on Christ...

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.*

Who is Jesus?

In the Nicene and Apostles' Creed, the church affirms, among other things...

- Jesus is fully human and fully God.
- Jesus is unique — he is the only Son of God.
- Jesus is the central and decisive revelation of God.
- Jesus reveals the true nature of humanity.
- Jesus the Redeemer is God the Creator.

What does Jesus do for the world?

Prophet	Priest	King
Teaches THE TRUTH	Empowers THE LIFE	Embodies THE LIFE
Instructs by Word and Deed	Sacrifices Self for Love of God & Others	Leads, Governs, Guides, Comforts
Fulfills the Law & Prophets	Reconciles us to God and to one another	Establishes a "Kingdom" (right relations between humanity and God, and humans with each other)

From *THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM*

Of God the Son

Q. 29. Why is the Son of God called JESUS, which means SAVIOR?

A. Because he saves us from our sins, and because salvation is to be sought or found in no other.

Q. 31. Why is he called CHRIST, that is, the ANOINTED ONE?

A. Because he is ordained by God the Father and anointed with the Holy Spirit to be *our chief Prophet and Teacher*, fully revealing to us the secret purpose and will of God concerning our redemption; to be *our only High Priest*, having redeemed us by the one sacrifice of his body and ever interceding for us with the Father; and to be *our eternal King*, governing us by his Word and Spirit, and defending and sustaining us in the redemption he has won for us.

Q. 32. But why are you called a Christian?

A. Because through faith I share in Christ and thus in his anointing, so that I may confess his name, offer myself a living sacrifice of gratitude to him, and fight against sin and the devil with a free and good conscience throughout this life and hereafter rule with him in eternity over all creatures.

Q. 33. Why is he called GOD'S ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, since we also are God's children?

A. Because Christ alone is God's own eternal Son, whereas we are accepted for his sake as children of God by grace.

Q. 34. Why do you call him OUR LORD?

A. Because, not with gold or silver but at the cost of his blood, he has redeemed us body and soul from sin and all the dominion of the devil, and has bought us for his very own.

From *THE CONFESSION OF 1967*

PART I

GOD'S WORK OF RECONCILIATION

Section A. The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ

1. JESUS CHRIST

In Jesus of Nazareth, true humanity was realized once for all. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, lived among his own people and shared their needs, temptations, joys, and sorrows. He expressed the love of God in word and deed and became a brother to all kinds of sinful men. But his complete obedience led him into conflict with his people. His life and teaching judged their goodness, religious aspirations, and national hopes. Many rejected him and demanded his death. In giving himself freely for them, he took upon himself the judgment under which all men stand convicted. God raised him from the dead, vindicating him as Messiah and Lord. The victim of sin became victor, and won the victory over sin and death for all men.

God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery which the Scriptures describe in various ways. It is called the sacrifice of a lamb, a shepherd's life given for his sheep, atonement by a priest; again it is ransom of a slave, payment of debt, vicarious satisfaction of a legal penalty, and victory over the powers of evil. These are expressions of a truth which remains beyond the reach of all theory in the depths of God's love for man. They reveal the gravity, cost, and sure achievement of God's reconciling work.

The risen Christ is the Savior for all men. Those joined to him by faith are set right with God and commissioned to serve as his reconciling community. Christ is head of this community, the church, which began with the apostles and continues through all generations. The same Jesus Christ is the judge of all men. His judgment discloses the ultimate seriousness of life and gives promise of God's final victory over the power of sin and death. To receive life from the risen Lord is to have life eternal; to refuse life from him is to choose the death which is separation from God. All who put their trust in Christ face divine judgment without fear, for the judge is their redeemer.