

# week 8

## the creed: i believe he will come again



- Welcome (5-10 minutes)

Are you prepared for Christmas yet? What are you expected to do as preparation for the 'big day'?

- Worship (10-15 minutes)



**pray**

Yea, Amen! let all adore Thee,  
High on Thine eternal throne;  
Saviour, take the power and glory,  
Claim the kingdom for Thine own;  
O come quickly! O come quickly! O come quickly!  
Everlasting God, come down!

- Word (50 minutes)

As we move into the season of Advent, we are getting ready to celebrate Jesus' birth. It is a time of looking forward and a time of hopeful expectation. It is also a time when the Church should be prepared to open her doors and embrace the lonely, the stranger, the almost-forgotten prodigal. During Advent, we are keenly aware that Christ's first coming into the world was a surprise to an unready nation ... Are we even less well-prepared to receive the 'soon coming king' when he returns?

Read the Apostles' Creed together.

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our  
Lord.*

*He was conceived by the power of the  
Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.*

*He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.*

*He descended to the dead.*

*On the third day he rose again.*

*He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the  
Father...*

*...He will come again to judge the living  
and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,*

*the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.*



- We will have looked at all aspects of the creed by the end of this session. Talk about which section or statement you are most challenged by and then commit yourself to pray for faith in that area. The passage below should help!

22 "It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But **if you can do anything**, take pity on us and help us."

23 "If you can?" said Jesus. **"Everything is possible for him who believes."**

24 Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; **help me overcome my unbelief!**"

25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again."

26 The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. **Mark 9 (NIV)**

**pray!**

**This simple prayer uttered by the desperate father has immediate effect. Our prayers asking for faith do not need to be long or wordy; straightforward and heartfelt is much more acceptable.**

**Read the passage:**

**The Branch From Jesse**

1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—  
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and of power,  
the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the  
LORD -

3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.  
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy,  
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of  
the earth.  
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;  
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

5 Righteousness will be his belt  
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

6 The wolf will live with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;  
and a little child will lead them.

7 The cow will feed with the bear,  
their young will lie down together,  
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,  
and the young child put his hand into the viper's  
nest.

9 They will neither harm nor destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.

10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a  
banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him,  
and his place of rest will be glorious. 11 In that day  
the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to  
reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from  
Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from  
Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath  
and from the islands of the sea.

12 He will raise a banner for the nations  
and gather the exiles of Israel;  
he will assemble the scattered people of  
Judah  
from the four quarters of the earth.

13 Ephraim's jealousy will vanish,  
and Judah's enemies will be cut off;  
Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah,  
nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim.

14 They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia  
to the west;  
together they will plunder the people to the  
east.  
They will lay hands on Edom and Moab,  
and the Ammonites will be subject to them.

15 The LORD will dry up  
the gulf of the Egyptian sea;  
with a scorching wind he  
will sweep his hand  
over the Euphrates River.  
He will break it up into  
seven streams  
so that men can cross  
over in sandals.

16 There will be a highway for  
the remnant of his people  
that is left from Assyria,  
as there was for Israel  
when they came up from Egypt.



Isaiah 11 (NIV)

### 3

In verse 1, the 'stump' is the remnant of God's faithful people. A sense of being beaten down, but with hope for a comeback! The old line of kings is restored, and even surpassed. We may recognise Jesus in verses 1 & 2 ... but by verse 3, we have a King who is more 'supernatural' than we may have expected. It becomes clear that the King is not God incarnate; but the great and terrible return of the Son in all his power and glory.

- Do you like new experiences, or are you happier with a bit of familiarity? Talk about how we use our previous experiences to help us understand what is coming next. This can be to do with anything from catching a bus or cooking a turkey to praying out loud in a group.

- How can you prepare yourself in order to help you to deal with personally uncharted territory?

- 1) Ask questions of others to inform myself from their experiences.
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)



- Look again at verses 6-9. What is unusual about them? How can they challenge you about your expectations of 'normality'.

*for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea. V9*

Maybe we see a picture of an 'Eden' which covers the whole earth in verses 1-9. There is a definite picture being drawn of a perfection in Creation.

- Look up 1 Corinthians 13 8-13. We need to put some effort into finding this perfection. Where do we begin & why?

eg: relationships at home ... it makes us feel more peaceful if they're good!

- Write a list of areas in your life that need careful preparation for this time of perfection.

- I.
- II.
- III.
- IV.
- V.

Verses 10-16 is a picture of the nations being gathered to stand and rule with Christ at the Coming of his Kingdom.

- Look up Hebrews 11 1-3 and spend some time in conversation about how strong our faith needs to be for us to be part of this final picture.

Where do you need to be strengthened? How can the group assist with this?

**pray**

- Witness (20 – 25 minutes)

During Advent, we prepare our homes for Christmas. Talk about how you could be a visible witness to the local community through how you use/prepare your home for the festive season.

**pray**

Pray for your neighbours and those whom you routinely see each day.

- Time for refreshments, you've earned them!



Bibliography

Bill Hybels, *Just Walk Across the Room*, Zondervan, 2006  
Barry Webb, *The Message of Isaiah*, BST, IVP, 1996

Dear Leaders

Welcome to week 8 of the Apostle's Creed!

We have reached the final session of our bumper-sized topic! Well-done!

Housegroups' Party is on 12<sup>th</sup> December ... please start to think about who you can invite and who will bring what food! You won't need games this year, but your group will need a prize to put in the 'prize fund' (we'll make a hamper-style prize for the winning table)

**Also, please remind group members about the reading rota at church which is now on a 'sign-up' basis. New voices would be much appreciated!**

Have a great time and enjoy your group this week

Groups start again after Christmas on 12<sup>th</sup> January.

**Leaders & Hosts meet for preparation on 7<sup>th</sup> Jan, 7.30 at Church.**

Every Blessing

catherine