
Graphics and Audio Notes

- There **will** be a sermon starter video.
- There **will** be notes and / or scripture to show on screen during the sermon.
- The sermon will conclude by saying the Apostles' Creed together.



Text highlighted in this way will have a slide prepared to be on screen.

Text highlighted in this way is a reminder for Andrew during delivery.

Key Questions

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is characteristics of God and the first phrase of the Apostles' Creed

Why is this sermon important?

This sermon is important because the Apostles' Creed is one of the central statements of our faith and belief in God underlies our practice of Christianity.

What is the good news?

The good news is that God is an all powerful, personal, and relational. God wants to be in relationship with you.

What are the next action steps?

You are invited to prepare for Easter by memorizing the Apostles' Creed

What is the context of this sermon?

This sermon is part of a series focused on the Apostles' Creed. It is based on the book *Creed: What Christians Believe and Why* by Adam Hamilton and a series of sermons preached at The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in 2015 - <http://cor.org/leawood/sermon-series/searching-for-truth>

Metadata

Topics

- Grow
- Worship

1st Sunday in Lent (Purple)
Believe - Exploring the Apostles' Creed - God
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado

March 5, 2017
Psalm 19:1-4
Preaching Target Word Count: 2,197

Sermon Books of the Bible

- Exodus
- Genesis
- Psalms

Tags

sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, ElDorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, Lent, 40Days, Believe, ApostlesCreed, God

Sermon Audio

9 a.m. Worship

11 a.m. Worship

Introduction

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Psalm 19:1-4, CEB

Psalm 19:1-4, NRSV

Response to Scripture

Sermon Starter Video

Flint Hills at Night

Psalm 19

Believe Worship Series

Today's Phrase of the Apostles' Creed

God is all powerful

7

Creation

Key Scripture - Genesis 1:1, NIV

Key Scripture - Genesis 1:1-5, NIV

A Scientific Description of Beginning of Time

Force Connecting All Existence

Video Illustration - Yoda Describes the Force

Video Wrap Up

Transition

God is Personal

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Created in the Image of God

Moses and the Burning Bush

Multitude of Gods in Egypt

Moses checks out the burning bush

Moses hears a voice

Key Scripture - Exodus 3:13-14

I Am

Tetragrammaton

Significance of God's Name

God has a Conversation with Moses

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God is Relational

 Father is relational

 Personal Example: Love of Children

Good News

Call to Action

Invitation

The Apostles' Creed

Introduction

Psalm 19:1-4, CEB

¹Heaven is declaring God's glory; the sky is proclaiming his handiwork. ²One day gushes the news to the next, and one night informs another what needs to be known.

³Of course, there's no speech, no words — their voices can't be heard — ⁴but their sound extends throughout the world; their words reach the ends of the earth. God has made a tent in heaven for the sun.

Psalm 19:1-4, NRSV

¹The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. ²Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

³There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; ⁴yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,

Response to Scripture

One: The word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.



Flint Hills at Night

Have you ever been out in the Flint Hills in the middle of the night?
Some time ago, our family took a trip to the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve. We took a hike and enjoyed the beauty of the hills. We stopped to eat in Strong City and it was dark by the time we were headed home.
We pulled over at the scenic overlook just south of Cottonwood Falls. There wasn't much to see of the land but we all got out of the car and looked up.
It seemed like the stars would never end.
The band of the Milky Way, the planets.
It was beautiful!
Then, a shooting star made it's way across the sky.
Incredible.

Psalm 19

I imagine that the Psalmist looked up at the stars on a beautiful night like that. Then wrote, "Heaven is declaring God's glory; the sky is proclaiming his handiwork."¹
I believe that this is supposed to be our response.
Beauty like this moves you.
You see it and say, "LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name throughout the earth!"²

Believe Worship Series

During this worship series, we are exploring the essential beliefs of the Christian faith and why these beliefs matter. These are the truths that give meaning and purpose to life.

Throughout this series, we will make use of the Apostles' Creed, a statement of faith that may have developed in the second half of the first or the second century.

It is a series of statements whose words or ideas come from the scriptures.

We will consider one phrase each week and, along the way, try to memorize the Apostles' Creed before Easter.

Today's Phrase of the Apostles' Creed

Today, we consider the words:

I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

¹ Psalm 19:1, CEB.

² Psalm 8:9, CEB.

God is all powerful

Creation

Key Scripture - Genesis 1:1, NIV

Our understanding of God begins at the very beginning of scripture

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”³

I love these 4 words at the beginning of the Bible:

In the beginning God.

It is such a beautiful portrait of the very beginning of time.

Key Scripture - Genesis 1:1-5, NIV

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 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. And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.”⁴

A Scientific Description of Beginning of Time

This doesn't sound far from what some physicists and biologists say was part of life in the beginning.

Primordial chaos.

God spoke. There was a big bang.

Then, suddenly, and over time, light and life come out of chaos.

Force Connecting All Existence

This is one of the ways that we think about God - the force behind everything that exists. Everything that exists, exists because of this force, this life, this power, this energy. God binds all things together and holds it all together. God is all powerful.

Video Illustration - Yoda Describes the Force

This understanding of God is one that many people could agree on - whether or not they profess to Christian or not. In fact, you can find one of the best descriptions of this way of understanding God in one of the best movie series of all time - Star Wars.

You may remember in Episode IV, Luke Skywalker has sought out Yoda to be trained as a Jedi. He has started his training and is complaining how difficult it is. In this clip, Yoda tells Luke about the source of his power. His ally is the force. Let's take a look...

[Play 2017-03-05 Sermon 5 - Yoda Explains the Force Video Clip]

³ Genesis 1:1, NIV.

⁴ Genesis 1:1-5, NIV.



Video Wrap Up

It's energy surrounds us and binds us.
You must feel the force around you.
Everywhere.
This is one part of belief in God, and yet, it is not all there is.
This description, by itself, is not a Christian understanding of God.

Transition

God is all powerful, yet there are at least two more ways to understand God which we must know as Christians. The first is that God is personal.

God is Personal

Created in the Image of God

God is not some impersonal force. Instead, God defines what we describe as personhood. Individuality, intellect, logic, will, emotion, relation, all of these things come from and are characteristic of God.

The fact that we have them is what we mean when say that we were created in the image of God. We don't physically look like God, but the stuff that defines what it means to be a person is the stuff that's derived from the personhood of God.

Moses and the Burning Bush

One of the places that we see this in the scriptures is in the story of Moses and the Burning Bush. In the book of Exodus, we find the story of the people of Israel who have been slaves in Egypt for hundreds of years and God has heard their cries for help.

Multitude of Gods in Egypt

You remember that the Egyptians believe in a multitude of gods. God has seen the Israelites, these slaves, and God has compassion upon them.

Moses checks out the burning bush

In the middle of the wilderness, far from where the people are enslaved, an old man, Moses, is tending his sheep. He sees a bush that's on fire and he goes to find out what's going on.

Moses hears a voice

Suddenly, he hears a voice coming out of the bush and it says, "Moses you're standing on holy ground, take off your shoes."

He takes off his sandals and then hears this voice say again, "I have seen the suffering of my people and I have compassion on them. I have remembered them and I am sending you to deliver them from Pharaoh, to deliver them from slavery in Egypt."

Moses needs some convincing, which God is able to do. So, then, Moses then rightly asks this question, "Well, okay, there are lots of gods, which one are you?"

Key Scripture - Exodus 3:13-14

The scripture reads like this:

¹³But Moses said to God, "If I now come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they are going to ask me, 'What's this God's name?' What am I supposed to say to them?"

¹⁴God said to Moses, "I Am Who I Am. So say to the Israelites, 'I Am has sent me to you.'"⁵

I Am

Tetragrammaton

I Am Who I Am is a pretty unusual name, even for God. In Hebrew, it is four letters:

יהוה

Tetragrammaton

Hebrew name for God

It is represented by four letters Yod. He. Waw. He.

It is known as the tetragrammaton, which means four letters.

It is sometimes poorly transliterated as Yahweh or Jehovah.

Significance of God's Name

So, what kind of name is that for God?

I think what God was saying, I am existence itself.

⁵ Exodus 3:13-14, CEB.

I am being itself.
I am.
Everything else that you know as being or existence was derived from Me, it finds itself formed because of Me.
It's held together as a result of my power.
I am.

God has a Conversation with Moses

What is even more interesting here is that God is having a conversation with Moses. It's not just that God is like the force that Yoda describes.

God is personal.

We see the truth of a personal God throughout the scriptures, especially in the incarnation.

Transition

God is all powerful.

God is personal.

... and God is relational.

Conclusion

God is Relational

This brings us back to the first phrase of the Apostle's Creed.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

Father is relational

God is not only all powerful - maker of heaven and earth.

God is not only personal - a person who has a name.

God is relational - I believe in God the Father.

Father is a relational term.

Personal Example: Love of Children

As a father, I think about my own children. I love them.

We made a decision that we wanted to bring life into this world.

There's a relationship that we have. It is based on love.

Not a set amount of love that runs out if it gets spread around, but that kind of love that overflows and expands and reaches deep into the life of every person.

Good News

The good news is that God is an all powerful, personal, and relational.

God wants to be in relationship with you.

Call to Action

[Insert Call to Action here]

Invitation

Our belief in God, as described in the Apostles' Creed is one of the foundations of our faith. During this series, we are going to close the sermon by saying the Apostles' Creed together, so I invite you to stand as you are able and say the Apostles' Creed with me as a statement of faith.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in
God the Father Almighty,
maker 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,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead,
and buried;

the third day he rose
from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,

and sitteth at the
right hand of
God the Father Almighty;

from thence he shall come
to judge the quick 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. Amen.