

“He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary”

LIVING THE CREED: CONNECTING LIFE AND FAITH IN THE APOSTLES CREED · JUNE 19, 2022 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

“The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.’” (Luke 1:35)

Conceived by the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit as the source of Creation (Genesis 1:1-2; Psalm 104:30)

The Holy Spirit as the source of Divine life for a Divine work (Matthew 1:20-23)

Born of the Virgin Mary

The story of Israel and miracle babies (Isaac, Moses, Samson, Samuel)

The necessary incarnation of God (John 1:14; Romans 5:12-21)

The surprising work of God (Luke 1:26-38; Galatians 4:4-7)

The Mystery of Jesus: Fully God and Fully Human

Fully God

Fully Human

The Mystery

Living this part of the Apostles’ Creed

Thank God for the Holy Spirit’s creative power

Thank God for the Virgin Mary’s humility and openness to God

Thank God for drawing near for our redemption

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is a story from when you were a child that has somehow shaped who you are in your later life? What was significant about that story for you?
2. This week we continue our series, “Living the Creed” by exploring the statement from the Apostles’ Creed: “He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.” Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through His Word, and then continue with the study.

3. The Holy Spirit is linked with the work of creation all the way back in Genesis. Read Genesis 1:1-2 and Psalm 104:30. What do these passages tell us about the Holy Spirit?
4. Whether you are on your own or with others, read Luke 1:26-38 aloud. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ birth according to this passage?
5. Why would it be important that the Holy Spirit is involved in the conception of Christ?
6. What is Mary’s part of the work according to Luke 1:26-38? What is it about Mary that stands out to you most as you reflect on this passage?
7. Read Galatians 4:4-7 aloud. What does the Apostle Paul tell us here about why God did this work in and through Jesus’ incarnation?
8. What does this passage tell us about the humility of Jesus’ birth? What does this passage tell us about the exaltation of Jesus’ birth?
9. What is one thing you learned through this study or sense God is speaking to you about your life and faith? If you’re in a small group, share that with one another. If you are on your own, write it down and share it with someone this week. Conclude your study in prayer.

DIG DEEPER:

This week dig deeper in one or more of the following ways:

- Memorize John 1:14 or Galatians 4:4-7
- Draw, ink, or paint Luke 1:26-38 as a basis for prayer. Take time to talk with God as you depict the scene in your own way. What is God speaking to you?
- For further background on this portion of the Apostles’ Creed, consider reading:
 - o St. Athanasius’ theological masterpiece *On the Incarnation*:
<https://ccel.org/ccel/athanasius/incarnation/incarnation>
 - o C. S. Lewis’ introduction to St. Athanasius’ work:
<https://mwerickson.com/2018/08/30/reading-old-books-c-s-lewis-introduction-to-athanasius-on-the-incarnation/>
 - o The Athanasian Creed:
<https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/creeds/athanasian-creed>