

THE CORE BELIEFS OF OUR FAITH

As believers in Jesus Christ, especially if we have been saved for a while, may forget unknowingly put aside, the basic but yet fundamental “core beliefs of our faith.” Over time we grow and we learn many things about who we are now as a child of God. However, we must never forget to always remember the core beliefs of our faith.

The first thing that we must never forget is that our God is one God who is three distinct “persons” – the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Of course, this is the basic start of a person’s faith and belief. All “three persons” of what is referred to as the “Trinity,” are equal in nature and live in perfect unity and relationship with each other. However, scripture makes it clear that there are distinct roles among these three members of that “Trinity.”

As we speak of “the Father” aspect of our God, we must recognize and try to grasp the fundamental insights of God's loving and sacrificial heart towards all of His children. This is where we must start. It was God, the Father, who designed a way of salvation for man even before man sinned.

He did this by choosing to allow Jesus to come to us as one of us, a man. Jesus would then ultimately take the punishment for man’s sin and willingly die on the cross as the **final** sacrifice that the Father would accept for man to be brought back into relationship with Him. No animal could actually do that. No one could – except the Son of God!!!

John 3:17 tell us, *"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."* The term “saved” in this scripture refers to the fact that through Jesus we are brought back into being in relationship with the Living God.

When Jesus returned back to heaven, the Father then sent the Holy Spirit to fulfill His specific function which was and still is to regenerate us, seal us, and teach us more about our God and also about who we are now in Him. John 14:25-26 tells us this as it states, *"...But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."*

The Father had orchestrated the plan of, and for, our salvation. He desired, and still does, that all should be saved and brought back into relationship with Him. Ephesians 1:5 tells us, "*He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.*" However, as it states in this scripture and many others, salvation and restoration back to the Father only comes by believing and accepting Jesus Christ for who He is and all that He did.

Scripture also reveals other areas in which God, the Father is at work. Psalms 68:5 tell us that He is a "Father to the fatherless" and a "protector of widows." James 1:17 tells us that He is the giver of every perfect gift. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 reveals that the Father is at work as the giver of mercy and comfort to His children. And much, much more...

However, I believe that the most important aspect of our Father God is that, through Jesus, He is now our "Abba." In Romans 8:15, the Apostle Paul makes use of the word "Abba" in relation to God the Father being even in a closer relationship with His children. In English, the word "Abba" would be translated as "Daddy." It signifies a very close, loving and affectionate relationship between a child and his or her father.

1John 3:1 tells us, "*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...*" It is interesting to note here that John does not say, "...the Father loves us." In doing so, he would be describing a condition. Instead, he tells us that the Father has "bestowed" or in other words, the Father has "lavished" His love **on us**. Through Jesus, we receive the Father's love. We now are, and we are now called, the "children of God."

Through Jesus, we are now "heirs" and "co-heirs" along with Jesus, to all that is in the Kingdom of God (Romans 8:17). Through Jesus, every believer is a "holy priest" (1Peter 2:5). We are "new creations" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We are partakers of His divine nature (2Peter 1:4). However, even more than all those things, the fact of the matter is that we are His children and He is our heavenly Abba, Father. Wow!!!

As we now turn our attention to Jesus, we must remember that Jesus always was, still is and always will be, God. He is a member of the Trinity along with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is God who came in the flesh – John 1:10-14.

Jesus came to this earth through a virgin mother (Mary) but He was God's "Son" because He was God. Jesus then revealed the love of the Father God to all He encountered as He walked this earth for those 33 years. He then was crucified for our sins. He died and He was buried... BUT...He rose again and is now seated at the right hand of Father God.... BUT... He will come again. That is **THE** fundamental core belief of our faith!!!

1Corinthians 15:1-4 tells us that Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures, He was buried and he rose again from the dead. This was in fulfillment of all the Old Testament scriptures. Let's take a look at some of them:

Jesus' birth was prophesied to us.

- Isaiah 7:14 - *"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel (God with us)."*
- Micah 5:2 - *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."*

David and then Isaiah tell us of the death of Messiah – many years before Jesus came and died

- Psalm 22:1 - *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* Jesus cried out *"My God, my God why have you forsaken me?"* (Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34)
- Psalm 22:7-8 - *"All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. 'He trusts in the Lord,' they say, 'let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.'"*
- Psalm 22:16-18 - *"Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment."*
 - They mocked and hurled insults shaking their heads at Jesus
(Matthew 27:39, Mark 15:29)
 - They shouted "He trusts in the Lord, let the Lord save him" (Matthew 27:41-43)

- They nailed him to a cross piercing his hand and feet

(Matthew 27:35)

- They divided his clothes and cast lots for them

(Matthew 27:35, Mark 15:24, Luke 23:34)

- Isaiah 53:5 - *“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his stripes we are healed.”*
- Isaiah 53:7 - *“He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.”*
- Isaiah 53:9 - *“He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.”*

Jesus then rose from the dead. (Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10) Jesus, on the road to Emmaus after His death and resurrection shared with those two travelers and revealed all the scriptures concerning who Messiah was and how Messiah, He Himself, fulfilled them all. The scriptures foretold everything that would take place. Jesus fulfilled them all. (Luke 24:25-31)

Acts 1:9 tells us, *“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.”* This was 40 days after Jesus was resurrected. He spent those 40 days with His disciples reviewing everything He taught them while He was with them. Only then, when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, did they truly begin to understand what He had done and who He truly was and is.

Isaiah 9:6,7 declares to us who Jesus is. He is “Wonderful” (So vast and so good that we will never be able to totally understand it all); He is our “Counselor” (He will help us to grasp and understand the path of our life); He is the “mighty God” (The all powerful one and only true God); He is the “everlasting Father” (He will protect and provide for us); He is the “Prince of Peace” (The one who saved us and continually watches over and maintains our salvation, as well as, our relationship with our Father, God).”

Finally, we must never forget that Jesus will come again to rule and reign upon this earth for 1000 years. Please, read Revelation 20-21. The New Jerusalem will come and it is there that we will worship God - the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit forever and ever.

“Come. Lord Jesus, come.”

Lastly, but certainly not the least, let us turn our attention and speak of the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, many believers focus on knowing the Father and the Son, but knowing the Holy Spirit is sometimes given scant attention. Then there are those that focus so much on the workings of the Holy Spirit that they do not give enough attention to the Father and Jesus. We must honor them all as the same but we must remember that they have different functions.

We must remember, all three are God and that all three are the same. The Holy Spirit **equally** with the Father and the Son, is God. Therefore, as true believers we must give the same attention and know about all three – because all three are God!!!

The Holy Spirit is an integral aspect of the Body of Christ today. Actually, He is literally, the only true aspect of God that is upon this earth today. Remember, Jesus is with the Father in Heaven waiting to return. Until He does, the Father gave us the Holy Spirit to lead, guide and direct His people throughout their lives while they are on this earth.

The Holy Spirit is God. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is omnipresent (everywhere) Psalm 139:7–8. The Holy Spirit is omnipotent (all powerful) Acts 1:8. The Holy Spirit is omniscient (all knowing) 1Corinthians 2:10–11. The Holy Spirit is eternal (Hebrews 9:14). And much, much more...

The Holy Spirit permanently dwells within all believers and seals them all until the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30) He assists believers in their prayer life (Jude 1:20). The Holy Spirit regenerates and renews every believer (John 3:5–8; Titus 3:5). He baptizes believers into the Body of Christ when they receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord (Romans 6:3). The Spirit fills believers with “all joy and peace” as they trust the Lord. The result of all these is that believers “overflow with hope” (Romans 15:13). And much, much more...

In the life of every believer, the Holy Spirit is vital. We have all heard of the “Fruit of the Spirit” (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) as

found in Galatians 5:22. These are all aspects that lead the believer on the true path to a Godly, Christlike lifestyle which is vital to every child of God.

Most importantly, the Holy Spirit, if allowed to by the individual will reprove men of their sin – their sin of rejecting Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord. The Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus (John 15:26) and aids us in our evangelism in telling the world of the Good News of salvation that only comes in and through Jesus.

Yes, these are the basic but yet fundamental “core beliefs” of our faith. We must never forget them. Oh, yes, we may discuss and think differently on certain aspects of the faith such as healing, deliverance, prosperity, etc. However, we must all agree on these basic but yet fundamental core beliefs if we are the true believers in the One true and living God.

It all starts with the Father’s love for us. He sent us Jesus to die for our sins...BUT...Jesus rose again and is now seated at the right hand of the Father waiting to come back. Until He does return, we have been given the Holy Spirit to help us in our everyday lives and to ultimately, tell and bring others to the saving knowledge and belief of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Praise to the Father! Praise to Jesus! In the power of the Holy Spirit!

Amen!!!

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