

**Title: Forgiven Forever****Series: A Timeless Creed for a Timely Faith****Text: Colossians 3: 1-17****INTRODUCTION**

- A. Through the Creed we profess our belief in God.
  - a. The nature of God: Father, Son, Holy Spirit.
  - b. The power of God: Almighty, Creator, resurrection, reigning at the right hand of God, return of Christ.
  - c. The work of God: Creation, incarnation, suffering and death of Christ, judgment.
  - d. The purpose of God: Salvation, holy catholic church, communion of saints.
- B. In this last section of the Creed we confess how God brings it all together through the forgiveness of sins the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
- C. The Creed is all about God-from beginning to end.
- D. But the Apostles' Creed is also intensely personal.
  - a. When we say "I believe" we are taking a personal stand expressing a personal faith, and making a personal commitment to the God revealed in the Creed.
  - b. We are also availing ourselves of the benefits of salvation pictured for us in the Creed.

**I BELIEVE IN THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.**

- A. Do we really believe this? (We believe God and others should forgive *our* sins; but it's *not so easy for us to forgive* those who've wronged us.)
- B. What is Sin?
  - a. Sin is a fact of life
  - b. Every history text and every news report bears eloquent and undeniable testimony to human depravity.
  - c. Even in our best moments, noble deeds are tainted by ulterior motives.
  - d. We are conscious of right and wrong, and we are aware when the line between them has been crossed.
  - e. In scripture, the word sin has many meanings missing the target, failing to be what we ought to be, stepping across a line, trespassing, stumbling, falling, breaking the law, disobeying, ignoring Commandments, moral debt.
  - f. Ultimately, sin is whatever is contrary to the righteous will of God.
  - g. None of us escapes from evil-none righteous-a fallen race – "**all have sinned....**"
- C. Sin and sinning.
  - a. Sin is the condition of spiritual death.
  - b. Sinning is the wicked action or conduct that arises from that condition.
  - c. Sin is ultimately unsatisfying-promises one thing-delivers another.

d. Just forgiving our many sins will not cure all that ails us--we need a heart transplant.

#### D. God's Perspective on Sin.

- a. Doesn't excuse or condone it.
- b. He judges it.
- c. However, God passes the sentence on Himself.
- d. To forgive sin is not to downplay it or ignore it. Forgiveness comes at a high cost to God.

#### E. The Wages of Sin

- a. Death
- b. The more we sin the deeper the grip sin holds on us.
- c. God has only 2 choices with regard to sin; punish or forgive.
- d. As a result each of us stands in desperate need of mercy and grace. We stand in need of forgiveness.
- e. In the New Testament to forgive sins means to cover them, send them away, blot them out.

#### F. Forgiveness.

- a. Forgiveness means that Christ has taken our place. He took our punishment.
- b. Our forgiveness is based on all we have just stated about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

#### G. The Human Element in Forgiveness.

- a. Repentance
- b. Confession – agree with God-see sin as sin
- c. **“If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”**
- d. We in turn must forgive one another. As we have received mercy, we are to show mercy. Those who withhold forgiveness from others should not expect to receive it from God.

### **I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY**

#### A. Concepts of the after life.

- a. Jewish – soul goes to Sheol – shadowy existence.
- b. Eastern religion – reincarnation, absorption into nothingness-to be free from the body.
- c. Humanist- when you're dead, you're dead. This life is all there is.

B. The Christian view is that body, soul, and spirit are a unity. While our spirit and body may separate at death, there will be a bodily resurrection.

C. This is our blessed hope.

D. When we are resurrected we will have a glorified body (1Cor. 15:42-44) **42 So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup>It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup>It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there**

is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.

- E. Our bodies are our means of self-expression-they make possible our interaction with others.
- F. To say that we are to have bodies in the resurrected life means that we will be then what we are now-real persons capable of real life. We shall be genuine authentic human beings. Our complete identity will be preserved.
- G. We anticipate the resurrection of the whole person, not simply a disembodied soul. Lazarus was raised only to die again. Having died once, we shall put death forever behind us.

### **I BLEIEVE IN THE LIFE EVERLASTING**

- A. Christ's defeat of death teaches us that our earthly life is just a preface to our eternal life.
  - a. This life is not all there is.
  - b. The grave is a doorway, a beginning, not an end.
- B. This doesn't refer to longevity of life, but to a special quality of life.
  - a. Life that comes from knowing God and living in communion with him.
  - b. In Peter's words, eternal life is our participation in the divine nature.
- C. Eternal life is divine life, extraordinary life, the life of God shared by his creation. Eternal life is our life with him who is life. ("I am the resurrection and the life.")

### **CONCLUSION:**

Eternal life is the final chapter written by the hand of God. This chapter brings the end of sorrow pain, evil, and doubt. Eternal life is God's final word to us-not death not annihilation, but life. That is the Creed's final word to us as well. Where the Creed leaves off the life to come is just beginning. Epilogue is but prologue after all.