



What are some of the doctrinal distinctives of Christianity?

Having looked at some of the cultural distinctives of Christianity last week we will now consider some of the doctrinal teachings of Christianity which are also distinctive. We remember that distinctive features do not necessarily make Christianity unique. However, we are looking for distinctive features or combinations of distinctive features, that do make Christianity unique.

Let us take as our starting point an ancient statement of the Christian faith which we call 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 Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sits on 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 Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.” (Apostles’ Creed.- # 616 in the old Book of Praise)

Some of these phrases are quite distinctive to Christianity.

- 1) “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth”
- 2) “I believe in ... Jesus Christ His only son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary”
- 3) “I believe in ... Jesus Christ ... crucified, dead, and buried”
- 4) “I believe in ... Jesus Christ ... The third day he rose again from the dead”
- 5) “I believe in ... Jesus Christ ... He ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.”
- 6) “I believe in the Holy Ghost”
- 7) “I believe in the ... the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints”
- 8) “I believe in the ... the forgiveness of sins”
- 9) “I believe in the ... the resurrection of the body”
- 10) “I believe in the ... the life everlasting.”