

40 Days of Fitness

A daily devotional by Rev Garry Hardingham

DAY 4 – Jesus, God’s Righteousness Revealed

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was (a)God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.

John 1:1-3

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
**God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made,
of one Being with the Father.***

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:

*by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made human.*

Nicene Creed

The Nicene Creed was originally written during the sitting of the Council of Nicea in 325AD. This Council ran from 20 May until 25 August and was attended by some 300 Bishops (Mind you, all 1800 were invited....nothing’s changed) While most of the writing of the creed went comparatively smoothly, it wasn’t until the very last day that the Bishop of Alexandria managed to get a major amendment added (this is the section in bold). This amendment stuck and was eventually ratified at the Council of Chalcedon in 341.

The creed was written because of great controversy that racked the Church in the 3rd and 4th centuries. It was called Arianism and it taught that Jesus was not the same as God, but somehow lesser than God the Father. And the big problem with that was it meant that Jesus could be viewed as nothing more than a powerful prophet.. That Jesus, rather than being the true God who came to show us the way and who died for our sake, instead was sort of bunging it on for our sake.

Now, despite the work of the councils of Nicea and Chalcedon and all the years of hard work put into the doctrine of the Trinity, there are still great swathes of people, including many Christians, who don’t believe in the full realisation of Jesus as God. This is not helped by misinterpreting the Greek in John 1:1 where the second last Greek word “ο”, which is translated everywhere else in this verse as ‘the’ gets changed to ‘a’ making Jesus ‘a’ god, not ‘the’ God. It was the Council of Nicea that sort to correct that.

The one thing that sets Christianity out from the other faiths is not the wise words of Jesus, because most religions or philosophies have wise and profound teachings. No, what sets Christianity out from the rest is that it is built, not upon the ability to know as much as you can, but upon encountering and having a relationship with God Himself in the person of Jesus Christ.

Most of us are convinced that our faith is about doing good things and showing love and care for one another. And this is true - this is what our faith is about. But our faith is also about the yearning to see God and experiencing His power . It is about being touched by the Spirit and being moved by the voice of the Lord whispering in our ears. All I know, like the Buddhists and the Hindus and the Jews and the Muslims, you can read a million words, and yet not know the power of the encounter with the Holy God.

But it can take just one experience with Jesus to change your whole life....just one!

Our faith is not about words in a book, it about encounters with Jesus, God’s righteousness revealed to us.

PRAYER

Let us just wait upon You, Lord,

Open our minds and our hearts to receive from You the acceptance of Your love.

Help us look beyond just the words of the Bible and find the living God, Jesus,

true God from true God alive and active in our hearts

And in the hearts of all those who believe.

AMEN.