

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

*that is, the true Christian church of all times and all places

This creed is called the *Apostles' Creed* not because it was produced by the apostles themselves but because it contains a brief summary of their teachings. It sets forth their doctrine "in sublime simplicity, in unsurpassable brevity, in beautiful order, and with liturgical solemnity." In its present form it is dated no later than the fourth century. More than any other Christian creed, it may justly be called an ecumenical symbol of faith. This translation of the Latin text was approved by the CRC Synod of 1988.

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all ages,
God from God,
Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made;
of the same essence as the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and was made human.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried.
The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again with glory
to judge the living and the dead.
His kingdom will never end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life.
He proceeds from the Father and the Son,
and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.
He spoke through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and to life in the world to come. Amen.

The Nicene Creed, also called the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed, is a statement of the orthodox faith of the early Christian church in opposition to certain heresies, especially Arianism. These heresies, which disturbed the church during the fourth century, concerned the doctrine of the trinity and of the person of Christ. Both the Greek (Eastern) and the Latin (Western) church held this creed in honor, though with one important difference: the Western church insisted on the inclusion of the phrase *and the Son* (known as the *filioque*) in the article on the procession of the Holy Spirit; this phrase still is repudiated by the Eastern Orthodox church. In its present form this creed goes back partially to the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325) with additions by the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381). It was accepted in its present form at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, but the *filioque* phrase was not added until 589. However, the creed is in substance an accurate and majestic formulation of the Nicene faith. This translation of the Greek text was approved by the CRC Synod of 1988.

Athanasian Creed

Whoever desires to be saved should above all
hold to the catholic faith.
Anyone who does not keep it whole and unbroken
will doubtless perish eternally.

Now this is the catholic faith:

That we worship one God in trinity
and the trinity in unity,
neither blending their persons
nor dividing their essence.

For the person of the Father is a distinct person,
the person of the Son is another,
and that of the Holy Spirit still another.
But the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one,
their glory equal, their majesty coeternal.

What quality the Father has, the Son has, and the Holy Spirit has.

The Father is uncreated,
the Son is uncreated,
the Holy Spirit is uncreated.

The Father is immeasurable,
the Son is immeasurable,
the Holy Spirit is immeasurable.

The Father is eternal,
the Son is eternal,
the Holy Spirit is eternal.

And yet there are not three eternal beings;
there is but one eternal being.
So too there are not three uncreated or immeasurable beings;
there is but one uncreated and immeasurable being.

Similarly, the Father is almighty,
the Son is almighty,
the Holy Spirit is almighty.

Yet there are not three almighty beings;
there is but one almighty being.

Thus the Father is God,
the Son is God,
the Holy Spirit is God.

Yet there are not three gods;
there is but one God.

Thus the Father is Lord,
the Son is Lord,
the Holy Spirit is Lord.

Yet there are not three lords;
there is but one Lord.

Just as Christian truth compels us
to confess each person individually
as both God and Lord,
so catholic religion forbids us
to say that there are three gods or lords.

This creed is named after Athanasius (A.D. 293–373), the champion of orthodoxy against Arian attacks on the doctrine of the trinity. Although Athanasius did not write this creed and it is improperly named after him, the name persists because until the seventeenth century it was commonly ascribed to him. It is not from Greek (Eastern), but from Latin (Western) origin, and is not recognized by the Eastern Orthodox Church today. Apart from the opening and closing sentences, this creed consists of two parts, the first setting forth the orthodox doctrine of the trinity, and the second dealing chiefly with the incarnation and the two-natures doctrine. The translation above was adopted by the CRC Synod of 1988.

The Father was neither made nor created nor begotten from anyone.
 The Son was neither made nor created;
 he was begotten from the Father alone.
 The Holy Spirit was neither made nor created nor begotten;
 he proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Accordingly there is one Father, not three fathers;
 there is one Son, not three sons;
 there is one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits.

Nothing in this trinity is before or after,
 nothing is greater or smaller;
 in their entirety the three persons
 are coeternal and coequal with each other.

So in everything, as was said earlier,
 we must worship their trinity in their unity
 and their unity in their trinity.

Anyone then who desires to be saved
 should think thus about the trinity.

But it is necessary for eternal salvation
 that one also believe in the incarnation
 of our Lord Jesus Christ faithfully.

Now this is the true faith:

That we believe and confess
 that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son,
 is both God and human, equally.

He is God from the essence of the Father,
 begotten before time;
 and he is human from the essence of his mother,
 born in time;
 completely God, completely human,
 with a rational soul and human flesh;
 equal to the Father as regards divinity,
 less than the Father as regards humanity.

Although he is God and human,
 yet Christ is not two, but one.
 He is one, however,
 not by his divinity being turned into flesh,
 but by God's taking humanity to himself.

He is one,
 certainly not by the blending of his essence,
 but by the unity of his person.
 For just as one human is both rational soul and flesh,
 so too the one Christ is both God and human.

He suffered for our salvation;
 he descended to hell;
 he arose from the dead;
 he ascended to heaven;
 he is seated at the Father's right hand;
 from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
 At his coming all people will arise bodily
 and give an accounting of their own deeds.

Those who have done good will enter eternal life,
 and those who have done evil will enter eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith:
 one cannot be saved without believing it firmly and faithfully.