

Ancient Creeds

Four formal creeds have become known as the ecumenical creeds of Christendom. These creeds, which were formulated at various points in church history, include the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Creed of Chalcedon. They identify the unique roles of the Persons of the Trinity in redemption, concentrating in particular on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.



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 Spirit, born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven; and sitteth at 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 Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE NICENE CREED

adopted A.D. 325; revised at Constantinople, A.D. 381

I believe in one God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets.

And one holy catholic and apostolic church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED

adopted A.D. 451

We then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers handed down to us.

THE ATHANASIAN CREED

1. Whosoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith:
2. Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
3. And the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;
4. Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance.
5. For there is one Person of the Father: another of the Son: and another of the Holy Spirit.
6. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal.
7. Such as the Father is: such is the Son: and such is the Holy Spirit.
8. The Father uncreated: the Son uncreated: and the Holy Spirit uncreated.
9. The Father incomprehensible: the Son incomprehensible: and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible.
10. The Father eternal: the Son eternal: and the Holy Spirit eternal.
11. And yet they are not three eternal: but one eternal.

12. And also there are not three uncreated: nor three incomprehensibles, but one uncreated: and one incomprehensible.
13. So likewise the Father is Almighty: the Son Almighty: and the Holy Spirit Almighty.
14. And yet they are not three Almighties: but one Almighty.
15. So the Father is God: the Son is God: and the Holy Spirit is God.
16. And yet they are not three Gods: but one God.
17. So likewise the Father is Lord: the Son Lord: and the Holy Spirit Lord.
18. And yet not three Lords: but one Lord:
19. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity: to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord:
20. So are we forbidden by the Catholic Religion: to say, There be three Gods, or three Lords.
21. The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten.
22. The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created: but begotten.
23. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten: but proceeding.
24. So there is one Father, not three Fathers: one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.
25. And in this Trinity none is afore, or after another: none is greater, or less than another.
26. But the whole three Persons are coeternal, and coequal.
27. So that in all things, as aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped.
28. He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.
29. Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
30. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.
31. God, of the Substance of the Father; begotten before the worlds: and Man, of the Substance of His Mother, born into the world.
32. Perfect God: and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.
33. Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead: and inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood.
34. Who although He be God and Man; yet He is not two, but one Christ.
35. One; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God.
36. One altogether; not by confusion of Substance: but by unity of Person.

37. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man; so God and Man is one Christ;
38. Who suffered for our salvation: descended into hell: rose again the third day from the dead.
39. He ascended into heaven, He sitteth on the right hand of the Father God Almighty.
40. From whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
41. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies;
42. And shall give account for their own works.
43. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire.
44. This is the Catholic Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he can not be saved.