

THE NICENE CREED
We Believe in the Holy Spirit and the Church
Romans 8:10-11, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

THE NICENE CREED

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.*

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 of the Virgin Mary,

and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,

the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Nicene Creed emerged from two key ecumenical councils—Nicaea in AD 325 and Constantinople in AD 381—amid a century-long debate over the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In AD 324, Emperor Constantine, a recent Christian convert, reunited the Roman Empire and convened the Council of Nicaea to address a theological crisis sparked by Arius, a presbyter from Alexandria. Arius claimed Jesus was not God but a created being, subordinate to the Father. He drew on Origen's theology, but his bishop, Alexander, countered that God's eternal fatherhood implied the eternal existence of the Son.

The controversy raised deep questions: How could Jesus be divine and yet distinct from the Father? How could Christians be monotheists while worshipping both? Scripture offered verses for both views, intensifying the debate. To resolve this division, the council was called to clarify orthodox Christian belief and affirm Jesus's divinity.

WHY THE CREED MATTERS

The Nicene Creed is a foundational statement of Christian belief, recited in many churches weekly. Like the Apostles' Creed, it summarizes the gospel, but it uniquely defines the essential, non-negotiable core of Christian doctrine, especially the full divinity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

It arose to clarify the faith amid confusion and heresy—most notably Arianism, which claimed Jesus was a lesser being. Such a view would undermine both monotheism and the effectiveness of Jesus' saving work. Only if Jesus is truly God can he redeem humanity and creation. Athanasius defended this in *On the Incarnation*, insisting that only the

Creator can restore creation. The Creed affirms that the Father and Son share the same divine essence (*homoousios*), giving Christians confidence that in knowing Jesus, we truly know God. Without this, the gospel itself would lose its power and meaning.

[SOURCE]

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ROMANS 8:10-11

“¹⁰But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-14

“¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

“¹⁴For the body does not consist of one member but of many.”

DISCUSS:

- 1. Read the Nicene Creed together as a cell, focusing on the section(s) on the Spirit and the Church. What Scriptural truths on the Holy Spirit does the Creed affirm? (Ref: Acts 5:1-5, Romans 8:10-11)**

- 2. How does seeing the Holy Spirit as the *giver of life* impact the way you relate to Him and live out your Christian faith?**

- 3. Compare Ephesians 5:18-20 and Colossians 3:16. How do the similarities and differences between these two passages help us understand how we can allow the Holy Spirit to fill us?**

4. The section of the Creed on the Church is linked to the section on the Holy Spirit, because it reminds us that the primary purpose of the Holy Spirit is to form Christians to be the Church.

How does declaring that we “*believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church*” affirm what Scripture teaches in 1 Corinthians 12:12-14 and John 17:20-24?

REFLECTION & APPLICATION:

5. What is one way you can faithfully respond to what the Spirit is wanting to do in your life and the life of the Church today?

6. How can the Creed serve as a guide to you and your fellow cell group members in your Christian life?