

THE NICENE CREED

Faith of Our Fathers



Definitions

■ Creed

- Latin, *credo, credere*
- I believe, a form of belief

■ Belief

- Biblical sense
 - If you do not stand firm in faith, you shall not stand at all (Is 7.9)*
- Rooted in personal encounter with God



Historical Considerations

- Apostle's Creed
 - From Baptismal celebrations (2nd-3rd cc.)
 - Dialogue
 - Triple renunciation
 - Triple assent
 - *Credes? Credo!*
 - Triple immersion
- 3rd c. expansions
 - Christ
 - Holy Spirit



East vs. West

■ East

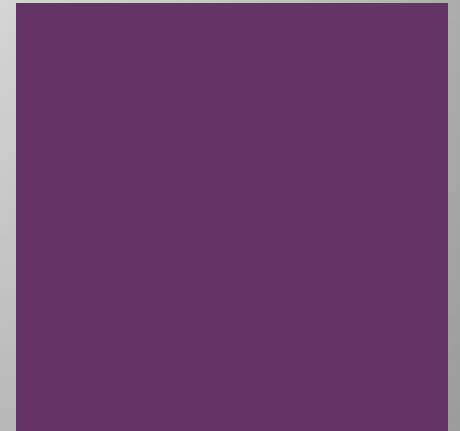
- Multiples Churches, multiple Creeds

■ West

- Focus: facts of Salvation History
 - Spread with Latin language
 - Final form 9th c. (Gaul)
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- Differ on theological emphasis, not belief
 - Apostolic ‘legend’: 5th c.



The Nicene Creed





History

- Council of Nicaea (325 AD)
 - Response to Arianism
(Denial of Christ's divinity; subordination to Father)
- Constantinople II (381)
 - Refined articles on Christ
 - Expounded on Holy Spirit

History (cont.)

- Necessity to define truth of Revelation
- Modifications: clarifications to avoid error
- Shifts notion/purpose of Creed
 - Baptism/conversion orthodoxy
 - Ensures deposit of Faith, communion



Structure and Content

- 4 parts:
 - Father (origin)
 - Son (history)
 - Holy Spirit (agent)
 - Church (consequence)

New Translation

- Better reflects Latin
- We I
- seen/unseen visible/invisible
- of one being consubstantial



The Creed in Liturgy

- 3 Creeds (Nicene, Apostles', Athanasian)
- Eastern Churches: only Nicene Creed
- Roman Church
 - Baptism: Apostles
 - Eucharist: Nicene, Apostles', Athanasian
 - Nicene Creed only used in Mass
- Creed begins *Missa Fidelium*

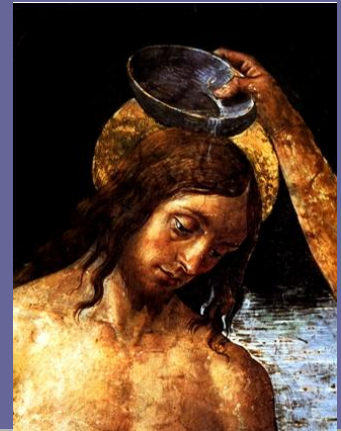


Credo, I do Believe

- Original sense:
 - Baptismal assent, not recitation of doctrine
 - Signifies conversion
- Doesn't require full understanding
 - *Credo ut intelligam*
 - *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief* (cf. Mk 9.24)
- Leads to desire for knowing, loving

The Nicene Creed

A Gift to unpack over a lifetime of Faith





Question to ponder...

- What strikes you the most about the Nicene Creed? Why?