

Week 2 – The Nicene Creed



Wednesday 12 March to Tuesday 18 March 2025

During Lent may we try to pray the Nicene Creed every day.

Hymn (Track 1)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-XBSluQD68&list=PL39YlvN9EfJ05wfONq0XoZfixKSD4_W7y&index=5

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty!
early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! – merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!
John Bacchus Dykes, Reginald Heber – Public Domain*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Trisagion

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy on us.**

Opening Prayer

Holy God, faithful and unchanging:
during this season of Lent,
enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,
that we may truly worship you,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

*Father . . . Jesus . . . Spirit we love You,
we worship and adore You:
glorify Your name in all the earth.
Glorify Your name, glorify Your name,
glorify Your name in all the earth.*
Donna Adkins © 1976, 1981 CCCM Music, CCLI Licence No. 737621

Scripture Reading

Hebrews 11:1-7

- 1 Faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the conviction of things not seen.
- 2 Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval.
- 3 By faith we understand that
the worlds were prepared by the word of God,
so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.
- 4 By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain's.
Through this he received approval as righteous,
God himself giving approval to his gifts;
he died, but through his faith he still speaks.
- 5 By faith Enoch was taken so that he did not experience death;
and "he was not found, because God had taken him."
For it was attested before he was taken away that "he had pleased God."
- 6 And without faith it is impossible to please God,
for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists
and that he rewards those who seek him.
- 7 By faith Noah, warned by God about events as yet unseen,
respected the warning and built an ark to save his household;
by this he condemned the world
and became an heir to the righteousness that is in accordance with faith.

Silence may be kept.

Reflection

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

Someone once compared Christian creeds to being great hampers full of good things, with each 'goodie' needing to be unpacked and unwrapped, tasted and savoured. To do that, takes a bit of time, and that is what we are doing during this Lenten Season.

So far, we've only looked at the opening word of the Nicene Creed, and already we've discovered that words are open to interpretation.

The Nicene Creed is a profession of faith containing formulated statements of belief about the nature of God. It is expressed in three sections, which in turn focus on God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

In its original form, the Creed was basically one very long sentence, beginning with the words: "*We believe . . .*" with the sections referring to the Son and the Spirit joined with a simple "*and.*" In translations of the Creed, the "*and*" is often replaced with a repetition of "*We believe . . .*" or "*And we believe . . .*"

In Greek, the single phrase "*We believe . . .*" at the beginning of the Creed emphasized the one faith. We cannot believe in the Father without believing in the Son and in the Holy Spirit.

The Nicene Creed is not just a list of statements about God, but a string of intricately interconnected statements of God's plan of salvation, for humanity and the whole of creation. It is God's story in miniature. As one theologian put it: "*What the Scriptures say at length, the Creed says briefly.*"

The Nicene Creed affirms the truth, from creation to Christ's birth, death and resurrection, to the sending of the Holy Spirit, to the acts of the Church and finally the second coming of Christ. In reciting the Creed, we are not only reminded of what we believe in, but also of the story of God's loving plan of which we are part. This is our faith. This is our story.

The word "*believe*" is central to the message of Gospel, and vital to the purpose of the Nicene Creed. The Latin word for "*we believe*" is "*credimus.*" It's where we get the word "*creed.*" This Latin word is closely related to the Greek word for heart, which is '*kardia.*' So, when we say, "*We believe . . .*" we are literally saying that we give our hearts and lives to God. In other words, we are committing ourselves to God, not simply to a list of statements about God.

"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." This is how the author of the Letter to the Hebrews put it around the year 60 AD. In Greek, the word translated as "*faith,*" can also be translated as "*belief, trust*" and "*confidence.*" These words speak about the relationship a person of faith has in God.

Chapter eleven of Hebrews tells us the story of some key Old Testament heroes and heroines, who faced difficulties and challenges fully believing and trusting in God. But the true hero of this chapter is God, by which the smallest and weakest men and women have achieved great things in God's strength.

Through the lives of these faithful people, we see that faith is the certainty that God is all-powerful; that faith is trusting God who created us, and that faith is having confidence in the power of God.

When we say, “*We believe . . .*” we are not simply declaring that God exists but giving our hearts and lives to God; placing all our trust in God; committing ourselves to God and placing all our confidence in God.

It is with these words that we first honour God the Father with titles and attributes by which he is known:

*“one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.”*

These commas (highlighted for emphasis) were added during the translation of the text from the original Greek. In this first section, we are saying a lot in a few words and the commas help us to pause slightly, so that we can rightly honour the titles and attributes of God the Father.

The first attribute is that there is “*one God,*” – belief in God excludes other ultimate loyalties.

The second attribute is that God is “*the Father,*” – the term used by Jesus. He is our Heavenly Father, and through his Son, we are adopted into his family. The use of “*Father*” does not imply biological fatherhood, nor does it mean that God is male.

The third attribute is that God is “*the Almighty,*” – God is not just powerful, but the All-powerful One. The word in Greek is “*Pantocrator.*” In this translation of the Nicene Creed, this title is not joined to “*Father,*” (making “*almighty Father*”). Instead, the two titles stand alone, just as they do in the Gloria: “*almighty God and Father.*”

The fourth attribute is that God is “*the maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen*” – God is the creator “*of all that is.*” As small bits of creation, we receive our being, our identity, our life, from the one who called us into being – the Holy One we call God – the One whom we give our hearts and lives.

Contemplation / Discussion

***Where are you tempted to place your trust
and confidence, if not God?***

***What is good, and not so good,
about thinking of God as ‘our Father’?***

What part of creation are you most grateful for?

How might you answer someone who says – “I don’t need God?”

Nicene Creed (Track 3)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0RhSJqXQGw>

If the audio version is not used, the creed is said by omitting the words in brackets.

**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,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
(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,

(We believe in one Holy Spirit,)

**the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

(We believe in one holy universal 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.

(We believe in a Triune God, the Father, and the Son, Holy Spirit, Three in One. Amen).

Litany

Receive our prayers, O Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Eternal Father, Creator of heaven and earth,
you formed us in your image and breathed life into us.

We praise you, O God, for your wondrous works.

Jesus Christ, Son of God, Redeemer of the world,
you came to reconcile us to the Father through your life, death, and resurrection.

We thank you, O Christ, for your boundless love.

Holy Spirit, Comforter and Sustainer,
you dwell within us, guiding and empowering us to live as faithful disciples.

We glorify you, O Spirit, for your abiding presence.

Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
you are three in one, a mystery beyond our understanding.

We worship you in awe and wonder.

For the unity shared in the Godhead,
and for the unity you desire in your Church.

Hear us, Triune God, and make us one.

For the beauty of creation,
and for our calling to be stewards of the earth,

Hear us, Triune God, and guide us in your ways.

For the sacrifice of the Son,
and for the grace that flows from his cross,

Hear us, Triune God, and transform us by your love.

For the presence of the Spirit,
and for the gifts bestowed upon the Church.

Hear us, Triune God, and equip us for service.

In our times of joy and sorrow,
in our strengths and weaknesses.

Be with us, Triune God, and sustain us with your grace.

As we bear witness to your love,
make us instruments of your peace.

Empower us, Triune God, to live and proclaim your Gospel.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever.**

Amen.

Special prayers and intercessions may be offered here.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Closing Prayer

Father of compassion,
renew our faith in you
and bind us together through your love,
so that we can recognise each other as your children,
and come together as one.
We praise you through Jesus Christ,
your only-begotten Son,
in the communion of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Doxology (Track 4)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wpBieJ9fE_c

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

Thomas Ken – Public Domain

The Grace

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore.
Amen.**

Acknowledgement:

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