

# ***The Apostles' Creed***



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- *Intro to the Creed Itself*
- *God the Father*
- *God the Son*
  - *Christ's Birth*
  - *Christ's Crucifixion and Death*
  - *Christ's Death and Resurrection*
  - *Christ in Heaven*
  - *Christ as Judge (part 2)*



# *The Apostles' Creed*

- We need to stop and back up
  - It's been almost four months since our last Sunday School class on this topic, and we have a handful of new people joining us at this point, so let's do a whirlwind review of our 17 classes to catch us up



# ***The Apostles' Creed***

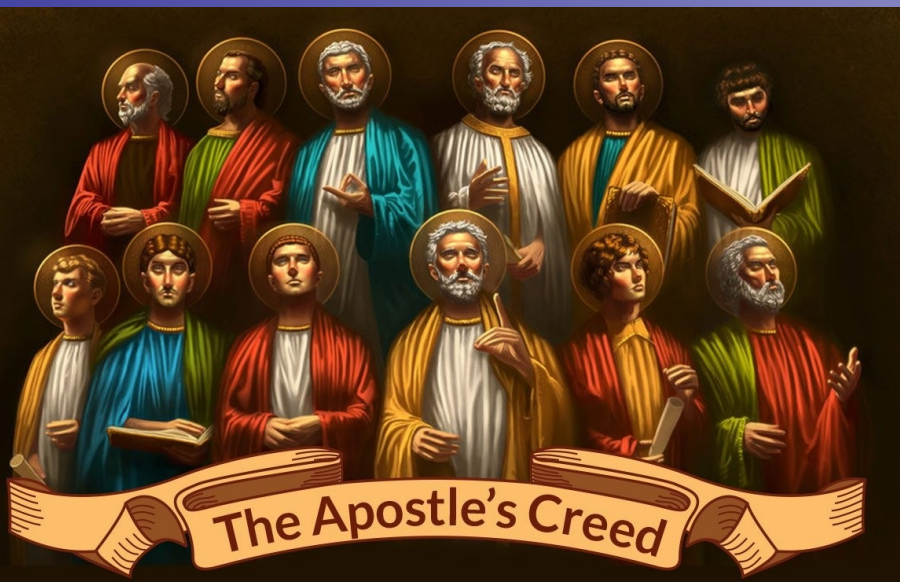
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  - *Christ as Judge*



# *The Apostles' Creed*

- *Basic Background—*

- The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
  - It wasn't written by the Apostles  
(it was written as part of a letter in the late 4<sup>th</sup> Century by Bishop Ambrose of Milan... who simply intended it to be a synopsis of the content of *earlier* creeds)  
(NOTE: A “creed” is an official statement of belief)  
(from the original Latin word “credo,” meaning “I believe”)



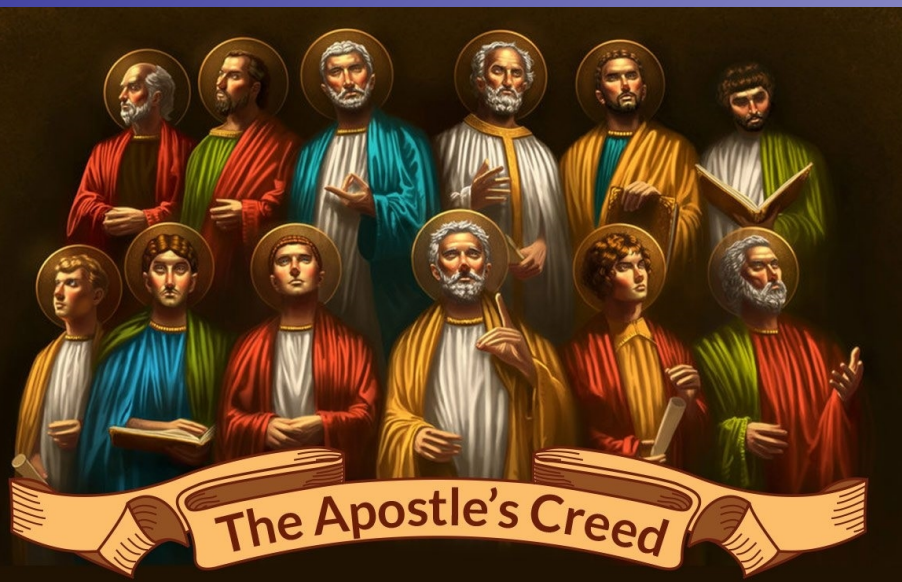
# The Apostles' Creed

- Basic Background—

- The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
  - It wasn't written by the Apostles
  - It wasn't written to be an “official” creed (the *Nicene Creed*—written back in 325 AD—was still the official one being used to cover basic doctrine) (that was the meeting that got all the churches to come and decide things together)

(after much discussion and debate, they came up with doctrines that *all* of the churches could agree upon, and wrote this nifty Greek creed to get everyone on the same page—a truly monumental, unifying effort)

(*that's* what Ambrose was synopsisizing)



# The Apostles' Creed

- Basic Background—

- The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.

- It wasn't written by the Apostles
- It wasn't written to be an “official” creed

- The one used today isn't even the *original* one (the original was so popular that the Roman church co-opted it and unilaterally tweaked it at the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century, re-writing it in Latin)

(and all of the churches who were still using the official, agreed-upon *Nicene Creed* shouted, “Hey, wait a minute...!”)

(but by then, Rome had decided that *Rome* was really the church that was in charge of the *rest* of the Church, so...)



# The Apostles' Creed

- Basic Background—

- The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
  - It wasn't written by the Apostles
  - It wasn't written to be an “official” creed
  - The one used today isn't even the *original* one
  - And even the versions that we use today are still just interpretive *translations* of a *tweaked* creed that was itself horribly divisive at the time

(we translate the original Latin of the *later Roman* version of the Apostles' Creed, which was itself heavily tweaking the Greek of the *original* Apostles' Creed, which was itself originally just synopsisizing the *earlier Nicene Creed*)





# The Apostles' Creed

- **Basic Background—**

- The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
- All of this is to say that even though the whole point of the Creed is that every congregation is upholding more or less the same stuff, we should probably allow a bit of latitude about how we actually put it together today (so long as we're all still covering the same basic stuff in more or less the same basic ways)



# *The Apostles' Creed*

“Apostles' Creed” (3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> century)

“Tweaked” Creed (7<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> century)

- Bear in mind that there are roughly a bazillion different versions of the “Apostles' Creed” out there in use today
  - Every denomination appears to have developed their own slant on it over time, either to reflect their own biases or to consciously reflect or *not* reflect the Roman Catholic biases
  - But for the purposes of this class, we're only going to look at the *original* Greek Creed (that wasn't a creed) and the “tweaked” Latin Creed developed centuries later



# The Apostles' Creed

## “Apostles' Creed” (3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty:

## “Tweaked” Creed (7<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;

(why did they feel the need to clarify that the God we Christians worship is the *same* one who created the physical universe?)

(remember guys like Marcion, who taught that YAHWEH was the *angry* god of the Old Testament who created the evil, tainted physical world all around us whereas Jesus is the *loving* god who shows us that physicality is bad and spirituality is good —He only “seemed” to have a physical body like we do)  
(spawning the heresy known as “doceticism”)

(how do we see this error in perception still around today— and how is this a perfect test case for why creeds like this can be so helpful?)



# The Apostles' Creed

## “Apostles' Creed” (3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,

## “Tweaked” Creed (7<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was **conceived** by the Holy Spirit, and **born** of the Virgin Mary;

(consciously trying to emphasize how Christ was both human and divine at the same time—but more on that when we start picking all of this apart a bit)

(but you'll already see the interconnections between the aspects of God within the Trinity consciously being expressed—the Father begetting the Son through the work of the Spirit)



# The Apostles' Creed

## “Apostles' Creed” (3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;

## “Tweaked” Creed (7<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate,
  - was crucified, dead and buried;

(Remember: this later, Latin, “tweaked” Creed was being put together by the *Roman* church... so they really wanted to distance the *Romans* from the *crucifixion*—which they were increasingly primarily blaming on the *Jews*—though clearly, even *Rome* had to admit that Pontius Pilate had still had Jesus flogged)



# The Apostles' Creed

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- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;

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- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate,
  - was crucified, dead and buried;
  - **Who descended into Hades**

(even the guy who first added this, Rufinus, clarified that he wasn't talking about Jesus descending into “Hell”—a doctrine that nonetheless popped up years later in part from a *misreading* of this—but rather using “Hades” in its Greek mythological sense of a generic “place of the dead,” talking about the fact that Jesus *really did physically die* and was buried and was just as **I**ruly, physically dead as anyone else in the grave...)



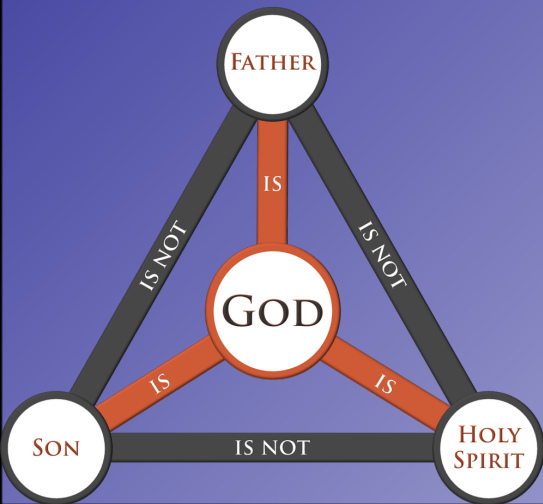
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## “Apostles' Creed” (3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> century)

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  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;
- **And the third day rose again from the dead.**

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- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
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  - Who descended into Hades
  - **And the third day rose again from the dead.**



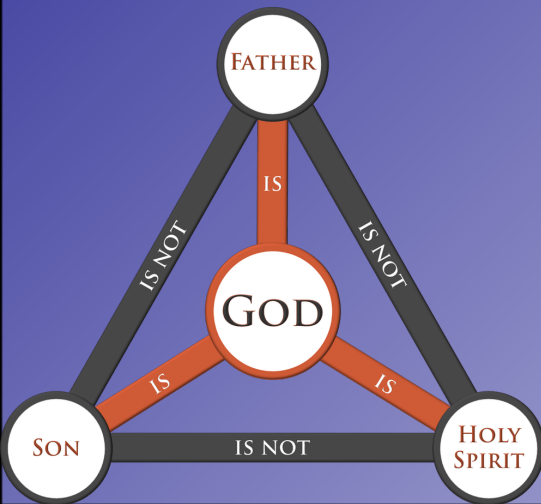
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  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;
- And the third day rose again from the dead.
- Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;

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- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate,
  - was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
- Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,





# The Apostles' Creed

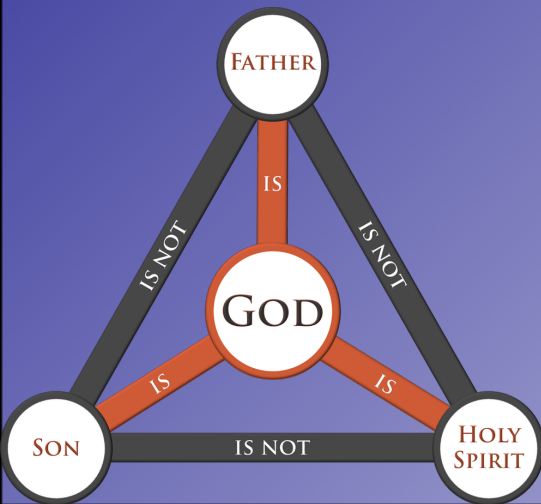
## “Apostles' Creed” (3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in **God the Father Almighty**;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;
- And the third day rose again from the dead.
- **Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;**

## “Tweaked” Creed (7<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in **God the Father Almighty**, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate,
  - was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - **Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,**

(they tweaked this to make a conscious “call-back” to that first line, emphasizing that the Jesus of the New Testament was in perfect communion with the YAHWEH of the Old Testament)



# The Apostles' Creed

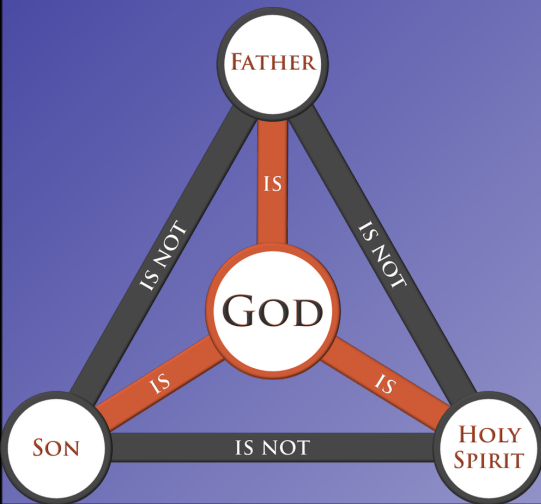
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  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;
  - from where he shall come to judge both the living and the dead;
- And in the Holy Spirit;

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- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
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  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate,
  - was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
  - from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit.

(and amazingly, that's *all* that either version says about Him)



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- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;
  - from where he shall come to judge both the living and the dead;
- And in the Holy Spirit;
- **the holy Church;**

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- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
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  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
  - from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit.
- **the holy catholic Church,**



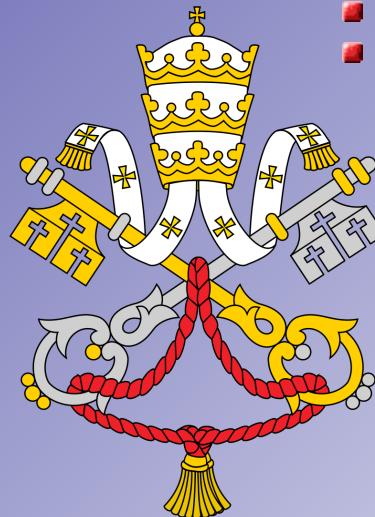
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  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;
  - from where he shall come to judge both the living and the dead;
- And in the Holy Spirit;
- **the holy Church;**

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  - was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
  - from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit.
- **the holy Catholic™ Church,**



(the term “Catholic” really was becoming a “brand name” by this time—so though it still *technically* meant “the *whole, united Church*,” (καθολικός or *katholikós* simply means, “relating to the whole or the entirety”))



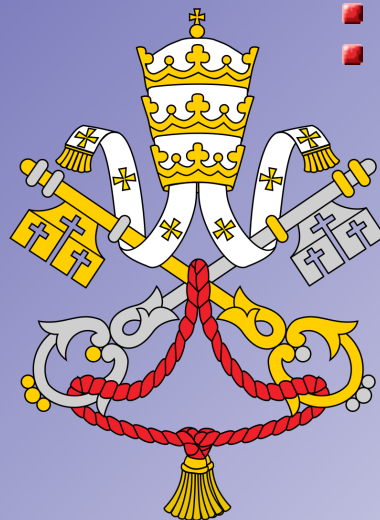
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  - and was buried;
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;
  - from where he shall come to judge both the living and the dead;
- And in the Holy Spirit;
- **the holy Church;**

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  - was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
  - from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit.
- **the holy Catholic<sup>TM</sup> Church,**



(the term “Catholic” really was becoming a “brand name” by this time—so though it still *technically* meant “the *whole, united* Church,” the emphasis here was on a Church that was *specifically* united under the authority of the Catholic<sup>TM</sup> Church in Rome)



# The Apostles' Creed

## “Apostles' Creed” (3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> century)

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- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of the Father;
  - from where he shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- And in the Holy Spirit;
- the holy Church;



(but obviously, we can still “be” the communion of the saints today—not through spiritual interaction with the dead, but by genuine community and continuity with the holy, “set-apart” Body of Christ as a whole, both past and present)

## “Tweaked” Creed (7<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
  - from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit.
- the holy Catholic™ Church,
- **the communion of the saints,**

(again, the Greek word [ἅγιος or *hagios*] just means “holy person” and refers to every Christian, since we have *all* been made holy—but the Roman Catholic Church began canonizing *really* holy people, posthumously endowing them with *special* spiritual power)



# The Apostles' Creed

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  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;
  - from where he shall come to judge both the living and the dead;
- And in the Holy Spirit;
- the holy Church;
- the forgiveness of sins;
- and the resurrection of the flesh (body)

(both the Greek *σαρκός* or *sarkos* and the later Latin *carnis* speak of the resurrection of the “flesh” rather than the resurrection of the “body”)

## “Tweaked” Creed (7<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate,
  - was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
  - from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit.
- the holy Catholic™ Church,
- the communion of the saints,
- the forgiveness of sins,
- the resurrection of the flesh (body)

(that was to emphasize that we will be *physically* resurrected—not just coming back in some spiritual, ethereal *echo* of a human form—but they're still talking about our *bodies* being resurrected)



# The Apostles' Creed

## “Apostles' Creed” (3<sup>rd</sup>—4<sup>th</sup> century)

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  - Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
  - And was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
  - and was buried;
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;
  - from where he shall come to judge both the living and the dead;
- And in the Holy Spirit;
- the holy Church;
- the forgiveness of sins;
- and the resurrection of the flesh (body)
- **Amen**

## “Tweaked” Creed (7<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> century)

- I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate,
  - was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into Hades
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
  - from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit.
- the holy Catholic™ Church,
- the communion of the saints,
- the forgiveness of sins,
- the resurrection of the flesh (body),
- **and the life everlasting. Amen**





# The Apostles' Creed

- So when we read the Creed today, “Re-Tweaked” Creed (*First Covenant*) *this* is the version that we make use of here at First Covenant—
  - The focus here goes back to the *original* Nicene and Apostles' Creeds and points to the fact that Jesus really, honestly was *dead*—in every real and human sense of the word
  - Again, this points back to the force of the original Creeds and focuses on the Church as a whole across the globe—not that we're all always in agreement about everything or under the same human management, but that we should still live in *harmony* with one another as part of the same *family*
  - Which is why we phrase *this* line *not* as pointing to the Roman Catholic idea of “saints” being *uniquely* holy dead people that we should *pray* to, but rather to the Biblical idea that *all* of us who are currently living in God's Kingdom can and should be a “holy family” in communion with one another at Christ's table (both metaphorically and literally)—the Church is the Body of Christ, and thus a community of holy people (i.e.; the “saints”), connecting every Christian living now with those who came before and will come after
- We believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
  - Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
  - Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;
  - Who descended into **the grave**
  - And the third day rose again from the dead.
  - Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
  - from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the **holy and complete Church**,
  - which is the communion of the saints,
- We believe in the forgiveness of sins.
- We believe in the resurrection of the **body**,
  - and the life everlasting. Amen

