

# Crede

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” Matthew 28:19

**STUDY PLAN:** To know the faith stated in our creeds and to gain a better understanding of the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity.



To earn the Crede badge, you will need to do the following:

Step 1: Could you be convicted? **My initials** \_\_\_\_\_



“**Crede**” is the Latin word for “I believe”. If you were tried in a court, could you be convicted of knowing and following our creed? Let’s make sure you could be!

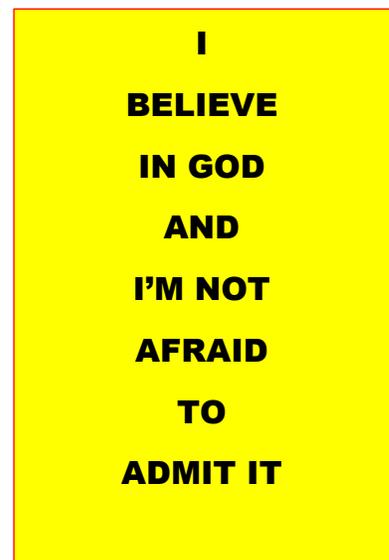
A **creed** sets forth fundamental beliefs. The two most important creeds are the **Apostles’ Creed** and the **Nicene Creed**. Both creeds state what we believe about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. What is the difference between the creeds and how did they come about?

**Apostles’ Creed** – the Apostles’ Creed is older than the Nicene Creed and shorter. Written in Latin, ancient tradition holds that the Apostles’ composed the creed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Whether the Apostles actually wrote this early Creed is uncertain; nevertheless, the beliefs expressed are certainly rooted in their teachings.

**Nicene Creed** – the Nicene Creed was adopted at the Council of Nicea in 325AD and amended at the First Council of Constantinople in 381 AD. Emperor Constantine convened the Council for the overarching purpose of unifying the church and thus unifying the Roman Empire. Written in Greek, it was adopted to resolve a controversy at the time over the divinity Christ and oneness of God the Father and God the Son. Four words describe what we believe about our church: **one, holy, catholic, apostolic**. As used in the Nicene Creed, the word catholic means universal.

In response to the readings and the sermon, we recite the creed to say *I Believe (crede)*. The creeds have 4 parts:

- God the Father
- God the Son
- God the Holy Spirit
- The 4 Marks of the Church (one, holy, catholic and apostolic) and Belief in the Resurrection



Here is a comparison of the two creeds:

<b>Apostles Creed</b>	<b>Nicene Creed</b>
I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;	We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.	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.:
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.	For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.	For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.
He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.	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 ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.	He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,	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 worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,	We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
the forgiveness of sins,	We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.	We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The badge for this lesson, shown on the first page, includes symbols of God the Father (the hand from heaven), God the Holy Spirit (the dove) and God the Son (the Chi Rho). The **Chi Rho** is an emblem which is a combination of the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ XPICTOC. It is thought to be the oldest monogram of Christ. Legend tells that the Roman Emperor Constantine had a vision of Our Lord holding the Chi Rho prior to a battle. Constantine was victorious in this battle and thereafter used the Chi Rho on his military standard. Soon after that, the Christian faith was granted Imperial Favor and being a Christian was no longer a crime in the Roman Empire.



The impact of Constantine's conversion was to set the church on a new path which linked religious power and the power of the state in a significant way for a long time.



1. When people ask you what you, as a Christian, believe. What do you say?
2. Try to imagine what it would be like to be a Christian in a place where Christianity was not allowed to be. Where would you find your strength?
3. We say the Nicene Creed every Sunday. How does that affect you?
4. What is your favorite part of the creed? Why?
5. In Nora Gallagher's book, *Moonlight Sonata at the Mayo Clinic*, page 121, she rails at God and describes the creed as "completely wrong". She writes about wanting another God, maybe not so associated with power. Discuss your personal view of God. Compare your personal view to *God the Father Almighty*.



Do as many of the following as you are able:

1. Use the information above to compare the two creeds and write a paragraph comparing them.
2. Memorize the Nicene Creed (this is a requirement in order to earn the Purple Ribbon).
3. Play Nicene Creed Tetris. See the Leader's List for the game pieces. The leader should print the Tetris pieces on card stock, cut up the game pieces and toss in a Ziploc bag. Work together to put the words in order to re-create the Nicene Creed.
4. Go online to find a Nicene Creed jeopardy review game, or make your own game to test your knowledge. [https://www.superteachertools.us/jeopardyx/jeopardy-review-game.php?gamefile=482210#.XFRN\\_lxKiUm](https://www.superteachertools.us/jeopardyx/jeopardy-review-game.php?gamefile=482210#.XFRN_lxKiUm)





## Step 2: Three in One – The Doctrine of Holy Trinity

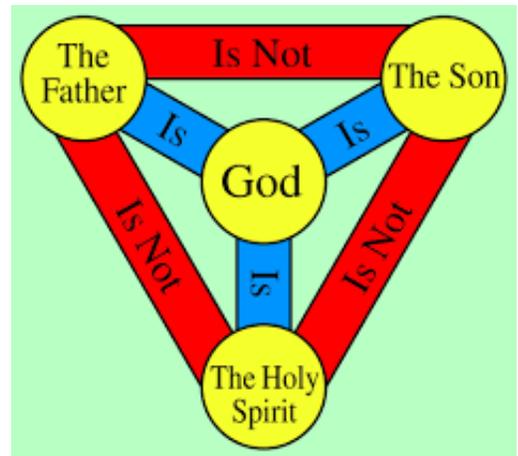
My initials \_\_\_\_\_

The Christian doctrine of the **Trinity** is that there is one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Long ago, when each ethnic group, even each family, had its own god or gods, the Hebrew people began to understand that there is only one God – the God who created the universe, the heavens, the earth, and all that is on the earth. Their God was not simply their tribal God, but the universal God for all the world.

This was not a ‘discovery’ by the Hebrew people, but a revelation to them by God. Our God is a God who reveals himself to his people and to the world. The belief that there is only one God is called monotheism. Jews, Muslims and Christians are all monotheists.

God does not change, but Christian understanding of God changes because God continues to reveal himself to us. Beginning with mighty acts of salvation among the Israelites, God went on to reveal himself more and more. In time, He revealed himself in the person of Jesus, born of a human mother. Through the Holy Spirit, God continues to reveal himself in the life of the Church and the lives of the faithful. So, we say that God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Three persons; one God.



Christian, gathered in council, have concluded that God really is the way he has revealed himself. Three persons but one God. By the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century, the church had articulated the doctrine of the Trinity. A **doctrine** is a statement of religious truth established by revelation and defined by the Church.



Perhaps the deepest, most profound mystery of all is the mystery of the Trinity. However, the doctrine of the Trinity is fundamental to Christians because it states what Christians believe God is like and who he is. The Trinity can only be proved through the divine revelation that Jesus brought us; it cannot be proved by natural reason or from the Old Testament alone.

Read the following Bible verses discuss how the nature of God has been revealed to us.

- Deuteronomy 6:4 - Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.
- II Corinthians 1:3 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation

- Ephesians 4:4-6 – There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.
- John 1:1, 14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.
- John 10:30 The Father and I are one.
- John 14:16-17 - And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.
- Matthew 3:16-17 And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."



Do any of the following:

1. The Doctrine of the Trinity is central to Christians' understanding of who God is. Research which faith groups reject the Trinity to be informed of their perspective and to better understand our doctrine.
2. Look for Trinity symbols in art. These are a few examples of what you might find:



3. Make cookies using Chi Rho, Trinity, or other Christian cookie cutter shapes for coffee hour at your church just for fun!



### Step 3: Councils, Controversy and Argument My initials\_\_\_\_\_

The Creeds and the Doctrine of the Trinity were both formulated by the Church in response to controversy.

Conflict can be good for an organization because it encourages open-mindedness, discussion and clarification. It also helps an organization avoid “group think” – which is when the desire for harmony within the group results in irrational or dysfunctional thinking.

Former Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori wrote:

*Conflict and controversy are intrinsic to the church, even if many of us would prefer to live and worship in communities that never disagreed about anything. Jesus himself was executed in response to the controversy he stirred up; and the church has not been without conflict since. Even though we may heatedly disagree, we do aspire to respond to differences without resorting to crucifixion!*

*In theological terms, we are in conflict because we have not yet arrived at the fullness of the Kingdom of God, and we will be in conflict until the Second Coming. Simply put, that means that God is still at work, and therefore, hope should abound! Conflict is a sign of life and a necessary precursor to growth.*



Discuss how you feel about conflict within your family, your friend group and your church.

Discuss what can cause conflict to be handled well or poorly.

Share an example of a time when a conflict was worth the distress it caused.

A commonly recommended approach to conflict management is to first seek common ground. Another is to hold decisions lightly. Discuss how these practices can help you navigate conflicts.



Do any of the following:

1. Ask your rector or vicar to explain how the Episcopal Church (TEC) handles controversy. What is the process for change in the TEC?
2. Look up some games or activities which teach ways to positively handle controversy. Give them a try and see if you can apply the skills you learned to real life situations.

## Leader's List

Nicene Creed Tetris – print these 3 pages on card stock, cut into pieces, mix up and then arrange in order. This activity takes about 30 minutes.

We	Believe	In	One	God,
the	Father	The	Almighty,	Maker
Of	Heaven	And	Earth,	Of
All	That	Is,	Seen	And
Unseen.	We	Believe	In	On
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
From	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.