



“I believe in One God, The Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made;...” Thus begins The Nicene Creed confessed by believers after The Holy Gospel on Communion Sundays in The Divine Service.

The first Council of Nicaea was convened in AD 325 by Roman Emperor Constantine at what is today Iznik, Turkey. The emperor presided at the opening of the council. The primary reason for this council was to address the false teaching of an Alexandrian priest, Arius, who taught that the Son of God was not fully Divine like the Father, teaching that the Son was “created” by the Father and that there was a time in which Jesus, the Son did not exist.

This false teaching was doing great damage within the church leading many away from the Divine nature of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God. This false teaching was condemned by the Council of Nicaea and finalized in AD 381 following other heresies that had arisen over the intervening years. The Nicene Creed as we know it today had taken shape by then and is the solid confession of our faith which places emphasis on the person and work of Jesus Christ, **“..the only-begotten Son of God...”** for our forgiveness and salvation by His work of Redemption on the cross.

We celebrate The Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, AD 325, on June 12 in the church year on the liturgical calendar. The Council addressed this issue by making a statement of what the church believes as learned from the Apostles' teaching and passed down through the Scriptures and condemning the false teachings. Just as we confess in The Nicene Creed that the Son is **“of one substance with the Father...”** so also we confess in The Athanasian Creed **“... Neither confounding the Person nor dividing the Substance...”** and **“The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate...”** No one has made God nor any person of the Trinity. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are of one Substance and have existed for all eternity.

All this is difficult for human intellect to understand, yet we accept it by faith, which is given by God's grace. What is important for us is to see Jesus as **“uncreated”** and always existing **“before all worlds,”** so that we know and believe that He is true God who saves us by His work of Redemption on the cross and in His Resurrection.

We confess these words after the reading of The Holy Gospel to confess the faith we have just heard read to us from God's Word. We speak back to God what He has given us in His Word, confessing our faith. To confess our faith is really not something considered optional; it flows from the gift of faith, from hearing God's Word. Further, it is encouraged by Jesus Himself when He says in **St. Matthew 16:13 “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”** The call of every Christian to confess Jesus Christ before others is connected to our Lord's promise that He will confess us before the Father in heaven. **St. Matthew 10:32-33.**

When Peter confesses **“you are the Christ, the Son of the living God”** in response to the question put by Jesus to the disciples, Jesus responds that **“flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven” St. Matthew 16:16-17.** In our time today, we in the Church continue this pattern by confessing the faith in response to the Word just read and proclaimed to us in the readings and the Holy Gospel. Our confession of faith comes from the revelation of God's Word to us, that through the Holy Spirit our mind is enlightened and faith is increased.

The Apostles and Nicene Creeds place importance on confession of faith of which we have just heard in the readings while also emphasizing the person and work of Jesus Christ as the proclamation of the Gospel. We confess the Creeds in corporate worship so as to confess our faith, given to us by Grace, in the presence of The Triune God, while speaking together with the entire congregation along with the entire Church; all who believe in God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Praise God for the gift of His dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord **“begotten before all worlds”** who has brought our Redemption, forgiveness life and salvation as the hymn writer points to Him as our Prince of Peace.

**O God of God, O Light of Light, O Prince of Peace and King of Kings;
To You in heaven's glory bright The son of praise forever rings.
To Him who sits upon the throne, The Lamb once slain but raised again,
Be all the glory He has won, All thanks and praise! Amen, amen.**

LSB 810 “O God of God, O Light of Light” stanza 1

To God be all the glory! In Christ, Pastor Ahrendt