

The Athanasian Creed

1 What is this Creed about?

Believed to be written between 400-545, the Athanasian Creed is notable for its logical and precise presentation of the Trinity and twofold nature in the one Divine Person of Christ; it was named after Athanasian (d. 373 AD) who was renowned for his defense against those who denied the Trinity. The Athanasian Creed was in response to two heresies revolving about the nature and person of Christ: Nestorian (428-431 AD) and Eutychian (444-449). Nestorius, a patriarch of Constantinople, asserted that Christ was of two persons (divine and human) in one body. Eutyches, an archimandrite in Constantinople, asserted that the divine nature absorbed the human nature leaving Christ with one nature, one person, and one body.

The Athanasian Creed

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith.

Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

But this is the catholic faith: That we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; Neither confounding the persons; nor dividing the substance.

For there is one person of the Father: another of the Son: another of the Holy Spirit.

But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit.

The Father is uncreated: the Son is uncreated: the Holy Spirit is uncreated.

The Father is immeasurable: the Son is immeasurable: the Holy Spirit is immeasurable.

The Father is eternal: the Son eternal: the Holy Spirit eternal.

And yet there are not three eternals; but one eternal.

As also there are not three uncreated: nor three immeasurable: but one uncreated, and one immeasurable.

So likewise the Father is almighty: the Son almighty: and the Holy Spirit almighty.

And yet there are not three almighties: but one almighty.

So the Father is God: the Son is God: and the Holy Spirit is God.

And yet there are not three Gods; but one God.

So the Father is Lord: the Son Lord: and the Holy Spirit Lord.

And yet not three Lords; but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord:

So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say, there are three Gods, or three Lords.

The Father is made of none; neither created; nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone: not made; nor created; but begotten.

The Holy Spirit is of the Father and the Son: not made; neither created; nor begotten; but proceeding.

Thus there is one father, not three Fathers: one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.

And in this Trinity none is before or after another: none is greater or less than another.

But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal.

So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation, that we believe also rightly in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.

God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and Man, of the substance of His mother, born in the world.

Perfect God: perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.

Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead: inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood.

And although He be God and Man; yet He is not two, but one Christ.

One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh; but by assumption of the Manhood into God.

One altogether, not by confusion of substance; but by unity of person.

For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man; so God and Man is one Christ.

Who suffered for our salvation: descended into Hades: rose again the third day from the dead.

He ascended into heaven. He sits on the right hand of God, the Father almighty:

From whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

At whose coming all men must rise again with their bodies;

And shall give account for their own works.

And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; but they that have done evil, into everlasting fire.

This is the catholic faith; which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved.