

The Creeds of the Faith Part 5

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[0 : 00] All right, we're recording. This is, I can't remember which class this is, I think it's the fourth one on creeds. We did some introductory work on the creeds. We did the Nicene, we did the Nicene Creed, we did the Apostles Creed, different definition or different variations of the Apostles Creed.

Now we're going to do the Creed of Constantinople. I want to, I like charts, charts are helpful for me, so I wanted to just give some timelines for you all to jog our memories, and then we'll jump into the Creed of Constantinople.

When we first started, we talked about biblical creeds and the definition of a creed, and depending how you define a creed is going to influence what you choose as the earliest Christian creed.

So the more narrow a definition you give it, if you give a definition of this is a formal statement that Christians would utter at baptism, or this is a formally agreed upon published statement of Christian belief, you know, those will find different timelines for when the first creed began.

But there are some New Testament creedal statements, let's call them that. There's some New Testament creedal statements Paul has in Philippians, or even the Apostles confessed to Jesus, you know, you are the Messiah, the Son of God.

[1 : 27] So we do have some creedal statements, but these don't really meet the definition of, the narrow definition of creed. If we move on, we also have some creedal statements in 105 AD by Ignatius of Antioch.

And we read some of his stuff, or one of his creedal statements, and he is exhorting Christians about what they should believe. But this doesn't seem to be particularly formal.

It's just, it's him writing a passionate letter. He's being led away to be executed, and he's exhorting people to cling fast to the faith. So it's definitely illuminating, but it doesn't meet the definition of a narrow creed.

And then since our class, I found another one that I wanted to, I wanted to read to you all today. So this is, this is by Aristides of Athens in 125 AD.

And this is an apology, and by apology, I mean a defense. He's writing a defense of the faith. And he's presenting this before the Roman emperor, or at least delivered it to him.

[2 : 39] Who knows if the emperor was there, actually listened to it, but it's possible he did. But this is what Aristides says Christians believe. Now, when I read this, think about, do we believe that today?

And I think you'll find that it feels like we do. So here's Aristides. He says, The Christians then reckon the beginning of their religion from Jesus Christ, who is named the Son of God Most High. And it is said that God came down from heaven, and from a Hebrew virgin took and clad himself with flesh. And in a daughter of man there dwelt the Son of God.

This is taught from that gospel, which a little while ago was spoken among them and preached, wherein if you read, you will comprehend the power that is in it.

This Jesus was born of the tribe of the Hebrews. He had 12 disciples in order that a certain dispensation of his might be fulfilled. He was pierced by the Jews. He died, was buried, and they say that after three days he rose and ascended to heaven.

[3 : 41] And then these 12 disciples went forth into the known parts of the world and taught concerning his greatness with all humility and sobriety. And on this account, those who today believe in this preaching are called Christians.

Amen. It's just a great summary of Christian belief. He includes the deity of Jesus, and he's writing very, very early. So we talked about that, but again, this, though, probably isn't a formal creed in the narrow sense.

To get to that, we probably have to go to Irenaeus in 185 AD. And there he presents really a very formal creed. We read this.

It's a beautiful creed. He actually has a couple of them that he gives. It's very beautiful. He highlights the deity of Jesus. He mentions the Holy Spirit. It's triune in form.

Then we just moved on through. We talked about some other folks. I won't list here, like Origen and Tertullian, Cyprian of Carthage. These are people writing between 200 and 250.

[4 : 48] And then we came to the creed of Nicaea. And actually, in your handout, one of your handouts, you can see the creed of Nicaea here on the left-hand side.

And we talked about how the creed of Nicaea was opposing Arius, who, what most people say is that he denied the deity of Jesus.

And we saw that he did deny the deity of Jesus, but it's a little more complicated because he would say he didn't. He would confess Jesus as divine, Jesus as God.

But as we saw, he only did this in a very peculiar, strange way that robs Jesus of his actual divinity.

And so, in essence, he doesn't actually confess the deity of Jesus, though he would say he did.

So we looked at that creed. We noticed some other things about it. We noticed that it just mentions the Holy Spirit in a word or two.

[5 : 54] That's it. It doesn't really dwell on the Holy Spirit. And we also noticed that there were some vocabulary items that the creed introduced.

And these are going to be important for our class today. One of them is *ousia*, which is often translated substance or essence.

And then another one was, I can never spell this right, *homoousias*, which is often translated consubstantial, but it can also be translated of the same substance.

And we talked about how these were words that were trying to get at how Jesus was of the same nature as the father.

The son is the same nature as the father. And they were a little controversial because just like substance in English can communicate physical properties, like God had this physicalness that you could cut up and separate out.

[7 : 04] And the members of the Nicene Council were very clear that we're not talking about a physical property here. We're not talking about we're talking about divinity itself. So essence could be a better way to translate it because that doesn't have that same physicalness to it.

But substance is also a good translation because it does contain that possible ambiguity that the original hearers would have detected in it. You guys following me here?

So what I want to do today is talk about the Council of Nicaea in 381. Oh, sorry, Council of Constantinople.

In 381, we'll go over just a little bit of the background of it. We'll talk about the creed that it issued.

And then in the time that remains, we'll go over the second handout, which I'll explain in a little bit. Before I do, though, any just recap questions? Things that I should, yes.

[8 : 10] Where would the Apostles' Creed fit in? Oh, great. So it all depends on when you date the Apostles' Creed. And John talked about that. So there's a form that's very popular that the earliest it's witnessed is the 8th century.

But it does go back. The roots go back very, very early into the 2nd century. So it just depends where you want to lay it out.

But certainly, I would say, like, the general form and structure and the affirmations of the Apostles' Creed, you can find in the 2nd century, certainly in the 3rd century.

Okay. So remember that I should have mentioned this earlier, that the Council of Nicaea was the first Roman Empire-wide Christian council that was called.

The persecution of Christians had ended. They had had many councils before this, but they were never able to have an empire-wide council, and that was the Council of Nicaea.

[9 : 15] The second empire-wide council that was called is this one, the Council of Constantinople in 381. Nicaea dealt with the deity of Jesus.

That was one of the primary reasons the council was called. Arius was running around. We talked about him denying the deity of Jesus, although saying he wasn't, but he was.

And so Nicaea dealt with the deity of Jesus. That's why when you read the Nicene Creed, it pretty much is just about the deity of Jesus. Constantinople dealt with the deity of the Holy Spirit.

And similar to what happened in Nicaea, where you had folks like Arius saying Jesus wasn't divine, in the ensuing decades, you started having people denying that the Holy Spirit was divine.

They were called pneumotamachians. That's what everybody called them. Pneumotamachians, which are fighters against the spirit.

[10:37] That's what they were called. So they did not call themselves that. That was what their opponents called themselves. And they do bring up a good question. They bring up a question of scripture, of in scripture, is the Holy Spirit said to be divine?

Is the Holy Spirit said to be like a separate person of the Trinity? And they said, no, no, that's not the case. The Council of Constantinople was called in 381 to kind of solve this issue.

And they issued a creed. The person who was in charge of the council, Gregory of Nazianzus, I have an excerpt for you that we'll read when we have time. Because he's going to answer in that excerpt the scriptural question of where is this in the Bible.

But before we get to that, let's just go through the Creed of Constantinople. Let's read it. Let's talk about it. While we go through it, I want you to be thinking of a couple things.

One, how is this the same or different from Nicaea? And then two, what does it say about the Holy Spirit? So let's start. We'll read on the right-hand column.

[11:47] And because of the recording, I'll read this just so people listening can hear it more easily. So it goes like this. We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

And we believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial, homoousios, with the Father.

Through him, all things were made. For us humans and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became fully human.

For our sake, he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. He rose again on the third day in accordance with the scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Here we go with the Holy Spirit. And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken to the prophets.

[13:03] 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.

So, similarities with the Nicene Creed. Any notice anything? Yeah, I feel like the first two paragraphs are basically the same.

Yeah. Yeah, the beginning is basically the same. In fact, if you go online, and I tested it this morning, and you go to Google, and you type in Nicene Creed, and you click the first, like, non-Wikipedia link, you will actually go to the Creed of Constantinople.

Because people routinely, churches do this all the time. They call the Creed of Constantinople the Creed of Nicaea. And they do that because the Creed of Constantinople basically takes the Creed of Nicaea and tweaks it a little bit.

They add a paragraph at the end. They explain a little bit about these final phrases. Now, they don't, it's not verbatim the same, but it's very similar.

[14:11] It's very, very similar. So, technically, when people talk about the Creed of Constantinople, they'll call it the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, which is a big mouthful.

But often, when churches say, we confess the Nicene Creed, they really mean the Constantinopolitan Creed. That's what they mean. So, keep that in mind going forward.

So, other things. Other things that you notice. There's that same homoousios language, that he was consubstantial with the Father.

They preserved that. Let's go to paragraph three here. So, for us humans and for our salvation. The Holy Spirit in there. Yeah, they put the Holy Spirit in there.

Yeah. So, they mention the Holy Spirit. Yes. What does it mean for Christ to be inclined about the Holy Spirit? Yeah, well, that's a good question. You know, I guess the Holy Spirit had something to do with it.

[15:12] I think it's trying to talk about that language in the Gospel of Luke, the Holy Spirit shall overshadow you, referring to Mary. But in terms of, like, what that actually means, I don't know.

I'm not actually sure. But the Holy Spirit was active in this process. And that is a scriptural warrant. It's not. They're not imagining this. Scripture is very clear. The Holy Spirit was involved.

That is interesting how Jesus sends the Spirit. But the Spirit, in some sense, sent Jesus. I guess. You can think about it that way. Okay. Another thing it adds in that third paragraph.

The Nicene Creed says he was made man. This says he became fully human. So this seems to be trying to combat those notions that Jesus was only partially human.

He only had a human body, but he had a divine mind. That was actually a very big controversy at this time, where Jesus was fleshly human.

[16:17] But all other aspects, his soul, his spirit, his mind, were divine. And the response to that is to say, if that's all human he was, then he really wasn't human.

Most of the issues we face are mental, right? We get depressed. We get anxious. We worry. I mean, imagine if your mind was perfect. You never suffered from any kind of emotional or mental issues ever.

Life would be a lot easier, wouldn't it? I mean, that's 90% of the battle right there. So they wanted to emphasize he's fully human in all respects. So they emphasize that.

If we move down to the fourth paragraph, they expand the suffering, right? They explain a little bit more about that. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

This is reminiscent of the Apostles' Creed, right? The Apostles, we learned last week, said this. He suffered death, so he really died. It wasn't that it just looked like he died or he faked it or something like that.

[17:22] He was buried. He rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. And that's also scriptural language. Paul talks about that. He uses those words. And then he ascended into heaven.

He's seated at the right hand of the Father. Again, very biblical. These are all biblical phrases, although they're expanding the Nicene Creed here. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.

And then look what they add here. And his kingdom will have no end. Now, why would they add that in there? Again, it's helpful to know the context. This probably, we can't be sure.

There are some scholars that would disagree with me, but I like this interpretation. That this is combating premillennialism. That in the early church, and you find this with dispensationalists today, and many people today will read the book of Revelation where there's going to be this thousand-year kingdom set up.

This kind of heavenly kingdom on earth. And then Satan will be released again and go plunder and destroy. That what this is trying to say here is, no, when Christ sets up his kingdom, it will never have an end.

[18:33] So that thousand-year kingdom, that temporary kingdom that presages this eternal kingdom, they're trying to combat this idea. So it seems to be calibrated towards premillennialism.

There are scholars who disagree with that. You don't have to agree with that. But that seems to be what's going on there. Then we get to the important part, the part about the Holy Spirit.

I'm going to read this one more time, this paragraph. And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who in unity with the Father and Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

So one thing, I have a couple questions about this. One, is this derived from Scripture?

Does Scripture say the Holy Spirit is the Lord? Yes. Yes. Actually, Scripture does say that.

[19:37] Paul does in one of his letters. He says the Lord is the Spirit. That's what he says. The giver of life. Now, these titles may not be precisely given, but it does seem like that's literally what God does when he breathes life into people.

Breath in Hebrew and in Greek is the same word for spirit. They didn't distinguish between breath, wind, and spirit. It's the same term almost always that's being used in those senses.

So when Jesus breathes on the disciples and says, receive the Holy Spirit, in Greek, that has much more linguistic resonance because it's penumitating on them or whatever it is.

I'd have to double check that, but the breath issues. Yes. And he's reborn in the Spirit. Yes. Like the Spirit goes over. Oh, yes. Yes.

And the Spirit causes us to be born again. What is that but new life, right? What is that but new life? So he proceeds from the Father. Is that scriptural? Yes.

[20 : 47] Yes. John 14, John 15. Yes, precisely. Yes. Where Jesus talks about the Father proceeding. Now, this is a controversial passage because Kevin's laughing because in the Western Church, the Roman Catholic Church, they add who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

And the Eastern Church gets very upset over this. This is, in fact, when you look at Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic dialogue, this is like one of the big pain points is this discussion of does the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father or does the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father and the Son?

And people will say, no, he doesn't proceed from the Son. The Son sends the Holy Spirit. And then other people get very upset over this. And they also, sometimes you'll find them not being upset over the theological content.

It's just that they feel like, the Orthodox feel like the Catholics changed the creed. It doesn't matter if you changed it to say something true. You changed it.

So if I stuck in there, oh, and two plus two is four, that's true, but you can't do that. So this is a big point of tension between the Roman Catholics and the Orthodox.

[21 : 57] So who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified and who has spoken to the prophets? Well, who's spoken to the prophets?

The Holy Spirit's always speaking to the prophets. That makes sense. But with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified. Hmm. Does Scripture say that about worshipping the Spirit and glorifying the Spirit?

And for that matter, notice that the Creed of Constantinople doesn't actually say specifically the Holy Spirit is God.

It doesn't say that in those words. It instead has this other paragraph here, Richard. So Scripture does say that the church, the Christians, worship in the Spirit.

Yes. They worship and they must worship in the Spirit. It's a requirement to worship God. It's to worship in the Spirit. You also pray by the Spirit, right?

[22 : 59] So prayer, which is another form of worship, is supposed to be by the Spirit. So, assuming the Spirit is not consubstantial with the Father and the Son, is not part of the Trinity, right?

Then that means we worship by means of a created being who is lesser than God but greater than us. Bingo.

So, I think what the Council is doing here in that sentence, where with the Father and Son is worshipped and glorified, it's making a logical deduction.

It's saying, okay, if you think the Holy Spirit is just some creature of God, then what that means, it creates all of these insoluble difficulties where we have to have this creature who's in our worship. Like, you're worshipping God by a creature? That's what worshipping by the Spirit would necessitate if the Holy Spirit was just a created being.

[24 : 06] So, they are making a logical conclusion here based on the Scriptures. And I think it's a very fair and appropriate logical conclusion.

And to help illustrate this, I want us to turn to our second handout here. It turns out that the Council of Constantinople had a bishop presiding over it and actually had more than one because the first guy died during the council.

And then they had Gregory of Nazianzus. Gregory of Nazianzus presided over the council. We have lots of Gregory's writings preserved for us. He's given the title the theologian.

Sometimes he's called the Nazianzin, the man from Nazianzus. He wrote many theological orations. His theological orations are some of the most copied Greek works ever, I'm told.

He's a brilliant guy. He could be very punchy. So, you're going to notice that as we read through this. But one of his theological orations, this is oration 32.

[25 : 14] It's his fifth theological oration. It concerns the deity of the Holy Spirit. And I'm just giving you an excerpt here. We won't be able to read all of this in our time.

But we'll get through as much as we can. And he addresses this question of, is the deity of the Spirit found in the scriptures?

And he's going to lay it out. And he is going to make the same argument that we find assumed in the Creed of Constantinople, where so many titles, so many duties are given to the Spirit that really

can only be given to God.

They're divine titles. And therefore, the Holy Spirit must be divine. I have to say, there also is that passage in the Gospel of John, where Jesus says, God is spirit.

And that feels like a confession of the deity of the Holy Spirit. It's hard to read it other way, other than that, because if you read it as simply saying, oh, what this is saying is that it's not saying the Holy Spirit is divine.

[26 : 25] It's simply saying that God the Father is a spiritual being. He's not a physical being. He's a spiritual being. That's all it's saying. Then you find yourself having to then say, well, this spiritual being has a spirit.

Like, God is spirit, and he has it. It's like my soul has a soul kind of thing. Like, it's just a weird tension. And when you pair that with Paul in his letters saying the Lord is the Spirit, it just, I mean, that's a divine title there.

So anyway, but let's read what Gregory has to say. So he starts. This, then, is what may be said by one who admits the silence of the Scripture. So he's saying, yeah, the Scripture doesn't come out and just say the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, fully divine.

But he says, but now the swarm of testimonies shall burst upon you, from which the deity of the Holy Ghost shall be shown to all who are not excessively stupid. And he says, or if maybe you're not stupid, but you're an enemy of the Spirit.

And he says, look at these facts. Now, second paragraph. He says, Christ is born. The Spirit is his forerunner. He is baptized. The Spirit bears witness.

[27 : 38] He is tempted. The Spirit leads him up. He works miracles. The Spirit accompanies them. He ascends. The Spirit takes his place. So Jesus rises.

The Spirit comes down to take his place. What great things are there in the idea of God which are not in his, the Spirit's power? What titles which belong to God are not applied to him, the Spirit, except only unbegotten and begotten?

Let's talk about that for a moment. So he says, what titles does the Father have that the Spirit doesn't? He says, well, there's these two titles. The term unbegotten and begotten. Begotten is given to the Son because he's the begotten of the Father.

And then unbegotten, that's not actually, I don't think that's actually in Scripture, but people will use it to describe the Father as being unbegotten. We talked about this with Nicaea where Arius would say that the term begotten means Jesus must have come into existence in time.

And how the church responded to that by saying, no, just like if you had a tree, an eternal tree with these big branches, those branches are contingent on the trunk, but they're eternal.

[28 : 54] They always existed with the tree. And in fact, if you take the tree analogy, if you were to cut off one of those branches and plant it, there's trees that just are their own tree then. They just keep going. And so they're saying that begottenness means that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, much like an eternal tree will have an eternal branch.

No analogies are perfect, so you don't want to push it too far. Okay. He says, for it was needful that the distinctive properties of the Father and the Son should remain peculiar to them, lest there should be confusion in the Godhead, which brings all things, even disorder itself, into due arrangement and good order.

What he's saying here is, of course, there needs to be distinctions between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If there were no distinctions, they would be the same. They'd be exactly the same. But there are distinctions.

That's what Trinitarianism is, that there's a unity of nature, but there's distinction in persons. Indeed, I tremble when I think of the abundance of the titles and how many names they outrage who fall foul of the Spirit.

So he's saying, you know, those who deny the proper deity of the Holy Spirit are outraging the Holy Spirit. And he's going to go and he's going to give even more of these.

[30 : 15] We'll get to those in just a moment. I want to go back to the top of the second paragraph. But do you see how interconnected the Holy Spirit is with the life of Christ?

Like, it says Christ is born, the Spirit is his forerunner. We could also say the Spirit, remember, overshadowed, he was incarnated of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit overshadowed Mary, causing Jesus to be incarnated. So Christ's birth is brought about by the Spirit. He's baptized, the Spirit bears witness.

He descends on him in the form of a dove. Christ is tempted, but the Spirit is leading him into and through those temptations.

He works miracles, how? By the Spirit. Christ ascends, the Spirit comes down to take his place. Where Jesus even says, you know, we won't abandon you.

[31 : 11] We, we won't do this. Like, this is all part of this seamless operation of the Trinity that's going on. Any comments or questions before we continue here?

Let's go to the third paragraph here. So he says, he is called the Spirit of God. Now, I just want to stop right there before we go anywhere else.

Think about that title for a moment. In biblical language, we have spirits. Like, you have a spirit. You have a spirit that's part of your human nature.

Soul, spirit, mind. You have a mind. You have a soul. You have a spirit. So when we talk about the spirit of man or the spirit of someone, that's a human part of human nature.

So when we talk about the spirit of God, that title in of itself implies divinity. It implies either divinity or, like, wouldn't God's spirit be divine?

[32 : 16] Like, yes. Like, why would God's spirit? Are you saying he doesn't have a spirit? A spirit. Scripture says he has a spirit. So that in of itself is divine. So the term spirit of God is very scriptural.

The third paragraph goes on. He is called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ. You can see that in Romans, for instance. You see it in other places where the term spirit of God and spirit of Christ are used interchangeably of the same spirit.

Back and forth. Back and forth. Back and forth. I don't know how you can get around. Like, if Jesus and the Father have the same spirit. Also called the mind of Christ, the Spirit of the Lord.

He himself is the Lord. Richard mentioned that. That's where Paul says where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom and the Lord is the Spirit. Right there.

He's also called the Spirit of Adoption. What's that referring to? Well, what does that mean?

[33 : 19] Spirit of Adoption. Adoption. What? By the Lord, Adoption comes. He's the agent of that. Yes. And we're adopted as children of God, right?

So, like, he's the one that welcomes us into the family of God. That feels like a divine role.

I mean, some of these you can squirrel out of if you really, really want to. But it's just odd if God is doing these functions. I mean, if you're welcoming someone into your family, if you're formally adopting someone into your family, are you really going to have the primary agent who welcomes them into your family being someone who's not in your family?

Like, it's just weird. And you could, of course, you could come up with mental acrobatics to think of situations where this might be the case. But again and again and again and again, we come across these titles.

But here's some other ones. So, the Spirit of Adoption. The Spirit of Truth. And Jesus says, who convicts the world of sin and of righteousness.

[34 : 29] Like, does the Spirit of Truth itself feel like something God would designate for something else other than a member of the Godhead? And Jesus calls himself the truth.

That's good. Yeah. He calls himself the truth, too. Yeah. The Spirit of Liberty. The Spirit of Wisdom. Wisdom belongs to this guy.

Spirit of Understanding. Of Counsel. Of Might. Of Knowledge. Of Godliness. Of the Fear of God. Yeah.

I mean, that feels pretty definitive. He goes on, though. He, the Spirit, is the maker of all these. Now, let's pause there. So, the maker of... Is the Holy Spirit ever called, like, the maker of all things?

[35 : 24] Paul says this of Jesus, you know, by whom and for whom all things were made. John says this of Jesus. Is the Spirit ever given those kinds of descriptions?

I think of Genesis 1, the Spirit hovering over the water. Yes. Yes. And then God says, and then he's let there be, and then he's created.

Yes. It seems like the Spirit is present in the act of creation. Exactly. Exactly. Right there in Genesis 1. Right there in Genesis 1, the Spirit's hovering over the waters.

Through the chaos, the abyss, the emptiness. The Spirit is hovering. And everything comes through that. Yeah. Any other Bible verses come to mind?

Forgive me for typing here. Yes. I'm trying to find it. Yes. I think it's... I'm going to get close, but I don't think I'll hit it on your head here.

[36 : 27] Psalm 108. Okay. Which says, you send forth your spirit and renew the face of the earth. So, it sounds like it does harken back to Genesis again.

Yes. Yes. But this time, I think the picture is after the flood. So, that the face of the earth having been effaced by the flood is now renewed by the Spirit.

It's very good. Yes. I think you're right. Yes. So, if we combine Tyler and Richard's observations, the Spirit is part of creation, but also part of renewing creation.

Psalm 33.6. By the word of the Lord, the heavens were made their starry host by the breath of his mouth. Remember, breath also means spirit. So, yes.

The Spirit is given creative responsibilities in creation, in both creating from nothing, but also renewing what has gone lost. Well, let's continue.

[37 : 33] So, he's the maker of all these things. He fills all things with his essence. He contains all things, filling the world in his essence, yet incapable of being comprehended in his power by the world.

Good, upright, princely by nature, not by adoption. What he's saying there is that the nature of the Spirit isn't just imparted to him as like a gift or like it's part of his nature.

And that makes sense. I mean, if he's really the Spirit of truth, that feels like that must be from eternity. If it's truth, truth, we're talking about here.

Sanctifying, not sanctified. Measuring, not measured. Shared, not sharing. Filling, not filled. Containing, not contained.

Inherited, glorified. Reckoned with the Father and the Son. We'll pause there. So, yeah, he sanctifies, but people don't sanctify him. He doesn't need to be sanctified.

[38 : 33] He's the one sanctifying. He's the one who measures, but he's not measured by anything. Those all, in their highest sense, must be divine titles.

When it says he's reckoned with the Father and the Son, he's probably referring to the Great Commission in the end of the Gospel of Matthew, where you're supposed to baptize in the name, not names, but the singular name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Where that triune phrase is held together in unity under a single name. And what else is that but reckoning the Spirit with the Father and the Son?

We don't say, you know, with the Father, the Son, and the angel Gabriel. We don't say that.

Scripture doesn't talk that way. Because Gabriel, though very exalted, is a created being, the angel Gabriel.

So, the Father and the Son, let's keep going here. He's held out as a threat. He's the finger of God. Jesus uses that language.

[39 : 38] He's fire like God. To manifest, as I take it, his consubstantiality. So, he's a fire, and he's depicted as a fire in Scripture. The reason why is to make known the fact that he is consubstantial or of the same substance as God, who's also called a consuming fire, right?

That's the image we get of God in the Scriptures. The Spirit has the same thing. He's the creator Spirit who, by baptism and by resurrection, creates anew.

Here's a big one. The Spirit who knows all things. Scripture says that. The Spirit knows all things. Who else can you say that of?

That's omniscience right there. The Spirit knows all things. He teaches. He blows. To where and to what extent he lists. I don't like that translation there, lists.

Probably just designs. He guides. He talks. He sends forth. He separates. He's angry. He's tempted. He reveals. He illumines. He quickens. This is...

[40 : 45] Here he's talking about some other issue that comes up when we speak of the Spirit. And that's this idea that the Spirit is not a person.

It's just a force. So, yes, of course the Spirit is divine. Of course the Spirit is divine. Why? Because just like we have a Spirit, but our Spirit isn't like a separate person within you. It's just part of you.

Then we have... God is the same way. God just has this divine Spirit, but the Spirit is not... He doesn't have a mind, so to speak. And what Gregory does here is he says, yeah, but he's talking. He's guiding. He's getting angry. This only happens with minds. And Gregory doesn't point to that explicitly, but the Spirit is said to have a mind in the Scriptures.

That language is used of the Spirit. Well, if we go on to page two, we're at the top here. Oh.

[41 : 46] I only did one-sided copies. Okay, I'll read it. I'm sorry, guys. All right. So here we go. He reveals.

He illumines. He quickens. He is very light and life. He makes temples. What's that referring to?
Ooh.

Ooh, I heard several. Yes. So he makes the church. He also does. He equipped the Old Testament saints to build the actual temple.

He did. He did do that. Yes, he did. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yep.

Yes. Ooh. Okay. So we have lots of actual possible temples here. We have the church. We have the Old Testament temple that was filled by God's Spirit.

[42 : 52] We have the individual temples of the Spirit that we become as Christians. And that must be divine.

Like, you're not... Imagine if we said it... Like, I'll use Gabriel again. A temple to Gabriel or of Gabriel. Like, that's just... That's a creature. But the Spirit is the one who indwells in us as the temple of God.

So the temple of God has what there? His Spirit? That's got to be divine. I mean, that's... How do you... You can't really get around that. Next.

So he says, he makes temples. And it says... And it says... Then he goes, he deifies. Now, this is... He's being very explicit here. But this is...

You find this in 2 Peter, where Peter says that we become partakers of the divine nature. You also see this with the language in Scripture that we are adopted as children of God.

[43 : 49] When you're welcomed into the family of God, you are given this kind of divine, the associated sonship. And that's what he's talking about here.

And that's done by the Spirit. He perfects so as even to anticipate baptism. Yet after baptism, he is sought as a separate gift.

This is another hard one. What is he talking about there? He perfects so as to even anticipate baptism. Yet after baptism, he is sought as a separate gift.

It's like regeneration. The Spirit rots in regeneration and we ask to be filled with the Spirit. Yeah.

Yeah, I think that the Spirit is part of bringing you to new life and redeeming you.

And then you're filled with the Holy Spirit. So it's before, during, and after your kind of conversion process. He could also be talking about the gifts of the Spirit that Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians.

[44 : 52] That they're imparted and you need to seek these gifts. Yes, Richard. That second line that he perfects so as even to anticipate baptism.

That could be understood in a sense contrary to baptismal regeneration. Because he brings us to perfection.

Yeah. He brings us to that place of sanctification that is pleasing and perfect before God. And in anticipation of water baptism. Of water baptism.

I agree. He definitely could mean that. I don't know what his baptismal theology was. But what you say seems to be the logical assumption that he has with that.

I know in his time, people would often wait a very, very long time to be baptized. He did. He waited until he was an adult. He did. Okay. Oh. So maybe that explains why he was waiting to grow more in his faith.

[45 : 55] Or you find these things. One thing you will find in the early church is you do get this thread of kind of perfectionism.

Where people will, you'll find this belief embedded or assumed in certain writers where you can slowly kind of become perfect in this life.

And this might be hearkening back to that. Where he's wanting to get to that point of perfection and then be baptized. I don't think that's very good theology. But he may have had that.

I noticed that Richard does have a second side. So he's, he's, yeah. I think, okay. So let's see. Let's keep reading here. So the spirit does all things that God does.

He's divided into fiery tongues. He divides gifts. He makes apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. His understanding is manifold, clear, piercing, undefiled, and unhindered.

[46 : 59] Which is the same as the most, as most wise and varied in his actions. So he's most wise. He makes all things clear and plain. He is of independent power.

He is unchangeable, almighty, all seen, penetrating all spirits that are intelligent, pure. He's most subtle. And also, this translation seems weird.

And also all prophetic spirits and apostolic in the same manner and not in the same places. I'm not sure. It feels like there's something wrong grammatically with that sentence. Well, he lists all these

things.

He's making concluding statements here about this must mean he's most wise. He's almighty. He's all seen. He's all knowing. He's penetrating. It's much easier to understand in Greek.

You know, even if you were fluent in Greek, it might not be. Sometimes these guys would write, like, they delighted in difficulty and being hard to understand.

[48 : 04] I don't know if Gregory was the same way. Basil of Caesarea was that way. And Gregory was his friend. All right. They who say these things call the spirit another paraclete.

Remember that Jesus is called the paraclete, the counselor. And he says, I will send you another one. So Jesus is saying, this guy's going to be in my place. He's going to be in my place.

But what Gregory goes on to say is, some call him a paraclete in the sense of another god, like a multiple gods, not one.

And he says, they say this who know that blasphemy against the spirit cannot be forgiven. And that this blasphemy branded Ananias and Sapphira with having lied to the Holy Ghost.

So that, remember what Jesus says about blasphemy against the spirit. It cannot be forgiven. But he says all sins can be forgiven. Blasphemy against the son can be forgiven. But not the Holy Spirit.

[49 : 15] How could the Holy Spirit be a created being and that be the case? How? It's impossible. And he doesn't point this out.

But in that passage where Ananias and Sapphira in the book of Acts, where they're lying. Can I read that? Yeah, read it. Read it. Yeah. Just read it a little passage. Because this is it. Whenever I think about the deity of the Holy Spirit, I always think of this passage.

Yes. So he says, Peter, speaking of the story, Ananias and Sapphira lying. To the church. To the church. But trying to pretend like they were giving more than they were. Yeah. And Peter, Ananias comes in and Peter says, Ananias, why is Satan put your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?

And you keep after yourself part of the person's land. Why remain unsold that did not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived to Satan your heart?

You have not lied to man, but to God. Right. So lying to the Holy Spirit and lying to God. Yeah.

They're the same thing. Yeah. Exactly.

[50 : 15] Yes. Yep. Okay. Well, we got to wrap up here. So I'll quickly read the final part. He says, so important then and so vivid are the Spirit's names. Why is it necessary to lay before you the testimony contained in the very words of Scripture?

The Spirit is given. He sent. He's divided. He's the gift. He's the bounty. He's the inspiration. He's the promise. He's the intercession for us. And not to go into any further detail, any other expressions of this sort are to be referred to the first cause, that it may be shown from whom he is, and that men may not, in a heathen or pagan fashion, admit three principles or three gods.

He's saying that all of this, I've proved the deity of the Holy Spirit, but he's not a separate God. It's all, they're all united together as in one Lord, one God, one Godhead.

Okay. If you want, I can make copies. I should have given that second copy to you. We have a few more minutes here before we wrap up with prayer. The sum of what I'm trying to say here is that, number one, the Creed of Constantinople articulates the deity of the Spirit.

It does so by using scriptural language as well as a logical deduction from the scriptures based on the titles and actions given to the Spirit.

[51 : 38] And Gregory of Nazianzus, who piloted the council in his fifth theological oration, he discusses this in depth. And I've never actually seen a better presentation of the deity of the Holy Spirit in terms of just the mass of citations that he gives.

If you're interested, I can give you, this is a free translation online. There's another one that you'd have to purchase, but I can point you to that if you're interested. Next, oh, the final thing I'll say is that the Council of Constantinople is the big one.

People always say it's the Council of Nicaea. In many ways, it's not. It's the Council of Constantinople. That is the biggest, most universal, most used council of all time.

And the reason why is because the Council of Nicaea is kind of embedded in it. That's why the creed is sometimes called the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed. The Creed of Constantinople is the creed that most churches, when they recite creeds, use.

They use that one. It's also the Council that the most number of churches adhere to. The Catholics do. The Orthodox do. The Oriental Orthodox, we'll get into them next week.

[52 : 48] Those are the ancient churches from Africa and Asia, like the Armenians and the Coptics and the Christians and the Ethiopians and the Syriac Christians. They adhere to it.

The Church of the East, the Persian Church, they adhere to it. And many Protestant denominations formally recognize it as in their doctrinal documents.

And then those churches that don't have a formal recognition of it agree with it. I mean, they don't disagree with it. They think it's fine. So it's kind of the gold standard of Christian creedal statements. Yes. I'll just add the, I think a lot, one clause that makes so uncomfortable is that last, that's like the last one. We acknowledge one baptism for forgiveness of sins. Yes. And I'll just say that's taken verbatim from Peter's sermon in the book of Acts.

Ah, yes, yes, yes. And I think we need to come up with that scriptural verbatim language. I think there, we could talk more about what that means.

[53 : 48] Yes, yes. But I think the, whatever it means is something that Protestants have acknowledged and that's consistent with our faith.

Oh, amen. So some people will be like, that sounds pretty non-Protestant to me, but it's certainly been accepted churches across the world.

So that's more of a longer conversation. Amen. Okay. Well, let's pray real quick. Father in heaven, we thank you for the deity of your spirit. We ask that he would fill us. He'd fill us throughout this day, this week for our whole lives, renewing and restoring us.

We pray today at church, at our great assembly, that we would worship in spirit and in truth, that we'd be filled with your spirit, that your word would be preached by power with your spirit.

And we submit all these things to you. We love you, Lord. And it's in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thanks so much.

[54 : 49] Next week, we're doing the final two councils. We'll talk about that next week. I'm glad that Gregory mentioned Ananias and Sapphira.

Yes. I was like, I hope that they use this because I feel like this is such a straightforward I agree. I agree.