



WE BELIEVE

A STUDY ON THE HISTORY OF THE NICENE CREED

February 11, 2024 "Completing the Creed"

Explain the Semi-Arian sympathies that lingered after the 325 Creed.

List the attacks against Athanasius after the 325 Nicaea Council and explain their causes.

Share some of additions or alterations in the final version of the Creed (381 AD).

Explain how the *filioque* "and from the Son" controversy developed and its significance.

"We are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses..." -Heb 12:1

DISCUSS: PART 3 – COMPLETING THE CREED

1. A need was perceived to reaffirm and augment the Nicene Creed many years after its original formation. What does that say about all creeds and our use of creeds?
2. Describe the divisions created by the Nicene Creed. Why should we expect (perhaps even design) other creeds to create division?
3. Evaluate the *filioque* controversy in light of Scripture. What mistakes do you see on both sides of the issue?
4. One might argue that there were other factors which led to the split between the Eastern and Western Church. Nonetheless the *filioque* controversy did play some part in it. What lesson does the *filioque* controversy leave for us regarding any alteration of an existing creed?
5. Not every attempt to clarify or add to a creed is wrong. Yet alterations or additions can be done in a divisive or foolish way. How might we best avoid pitfalls that come from the perceived need to augment or clarify a creed?
6. Discuss: A single word change to a part of the liturgy has the potential to divide the WELS.
7. Explain why communicating a hymnal projects methods and sources are so important.
8. Search for and appraise the creeds found on websites of various WELS or other ministries.
 - √ Note that most websites are often designed to reach unchurched.
 - √ Identify topics addressed in these brief statements of faith which the Nicene Creed did not necessarily aim to address. Discuss possible reasons behind any additional doctrines addressed.

Next Session: Part 4 – Combating Errors Today