



Athanasian Creed

Named after the church father Athanasius, the Athanasian Creed, the third of the ecumenical creeds acknowledged as authoritative by the Lutheran confessions, probably originated in the fifth century of the Christian era. It is provided here for information, and although it is rarely used liturgically, it is sometimes used on the Sunday of the Holy Trinity (the first Sunday after Pentecost) because of its detailed discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Whoever wants to be saved should
above all cling to the catholic faith.
Whoever does not guard it whole and
inviolable will doubtless perish
eternally.

Now this is the catholic faith: We
worship one God in trinity and the
Trinity in unity, neither confusing the
persons nor dividing the divine being.

For the Father is one person, the Son
is another, and the Spirit is still
another.

But the deity of the Father, Son, and
Holy Spirit is one, equal in glory,
coeternal in majesty.

What the Father is, the Son is, and so
is the Holy Spirit.

Uncreated is the Father; uncreated is
the Son; uncreated is the Spirit.

The Father is infinite; the Son is
infinite; the Holy Spirit is infinite.

Eternal is the Father; eternal is the Son;
eternal is the Spirit:

And yet there are not three eternal
beings, but one who is eternal; as
there are not three uncreated and
unlimited beings, but one who is
uncreated and unlimited.

Almighty is the Father; almighty is the
Son; almighty is the Spirit:

And yet there are not three almighty
beings, but one who is almighty.

Thus the Father is God; the Son is God;
the Holy Spirit is God:

And yet there are not three gods, but
one God.

Thus the Father is Lord; the Son is
Lord; the Holy Spirit is Lord:

And yet there are not three lords, but
one Lord.

As Christian truth compels us to
acknowledge each distinct person
as God and Lord, so catholic
religion forbids us to say that there
are three gods or lords.

The Father was neither made nor
created nor begotten;

the Son was neither made nor created,
but was alone begotten of the Father;

the Spirit was neither made nor
created, but is proceeding from the
Father and the Son.

Thus there is one Father, not three fathers; one Son, not three sons; one Holy Spirit, not three spirits. And in this Trinity, no one is before or after, greater or less than the other; but all three persons are in themselves, coeternal and coequal; and so we must worship the Trinity in unity and the one God in three persons. Whoever wants to be saved should think thus about the Trinity. It is necessary for eternal salvation that one also faithfully believe that our Lord Jesus Christ became flesh. For this is the true faith that we believe and confess: That our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and man. He is God, begotten before all worlds from the being of the Father, and he is man, born in the world from the being of his mother—existing fully as God, and fully as man with a rational soul and a human body; equal to the Father in divinity, subordinate to the Father in humanity.

Although he is God and man, he is not divided, but is one Christ. He is united because God has taken humanity into himself; he does not transform deity into humanity. He is completely one in the unity of his person, without confusing his natures. For as the rational soul and body are one person, so the one Christ is God and man. He suffered death for our salvation. He descended into hell and rose again from the dead. 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. At his coming all people shall rise bodily to give an account of their own deeds. Those who have done good will enter eternal life, those who have done evil will enter eternal fire. This is the catholic faith. One cannot be saved without believing this firmly and faithfully.