



THE NICENE CREED

c.325 AD

CHECK-IN & CHECK-UP

// CHECK-IN

:: Everyone take a minute or two to share how they've been since the last time you met.

// CHECK-UP

:: Do a spiritual check-up. *How's your bible-reading, prayer, church attendance? In what ways do you feel encouraged/discouraged? Where do you see evidence of the Spirit's work in your own life?*

• SEMESTER II • SESSION I •
CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED

*"...He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered and was buried..."*

The cross is central to Christianity. Paul's wrote to the troubled Corinthian church: "**I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.**" The cross is the solution to all spiritual problems, as the foundation of redemption, justification, and reconciliation.

Four reasons the crucifixion is important: (1) To fulfill prophecy; (2) to atone for sin; (3) to reconcile sinners to God; and (4) to demonstrate God's love and justice. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Christ blood was the final and full atonement for sin. The cross also ensured that we, who were far off, have been brought near. Peter says, Jesus died "**to bring us to God.**" (1Peter 3:18) In Romans 3, Paul explains that the cross is the solution to the greatest problem: how can a just and holy God forgive sin? The cross enables God to be both just and the justifier of the ungodly.

The phrase "*under Pontius Pilate*" in the Creed notes the verifiable history of Christianity, distinguishing it from unfalsifiable conspiracy theories.

We looked at why crucifixion was God's chosen method for Christ's death. It fulfilled prophecy regarding piercing hands and feet, it represented bearing the curse of sin (as "**cursed is everyone hanged on a tree**"), and it was public, demonstrating God's justice and love visibly.

The Creed mentions Christ's burial to remind us how His sharing in the full experience of death, enabling His people to share fully in His resurrection. He tasted death to defeat death!

REVIEW

• **SEMESTER II • SESSION I •**
CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED

*“...He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered and was buried...”*

READ TOGETHER:

Romans 3:21-26

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

What is the biggest problem in the universe? Why could God not simply ignore sin? Why couldn't He just forgive it without Jesus dying on the cross?

How does the cross demonstrate the righteousness of God? How does it demonstrate the grace of God?

READ TOGETHER:

John 19:16-42

Having read John's account of Jesus' crucifixion, read 2Corinthians 5:21. Explain the connection between Jesus becoming sin and suffering in our place on the cross.

Why did Jesus need to be crucified? Why could he not have been drowned, or taken poison? What is the significance of the physical reality of a Roman cross?

The Creed mentions Jesus' suffering and burial. What makes the suffering and burial of Christ significant to our lives today and in the future?

CHRIST-FORMING DISCIPLESHIP

// GETTING TO CHRIST

Read Isaiah 53:2-12. According to this passage who (Who) is behind the suffering of the Suffering Servant? Why?

Jesus was without sin and yet God made Him to be sin for us. Why did Jesus need to “become” sin?

// GETTING TO ME

Read Ephesians 5:2. How does the love of Christ as seen in the gospel empower us to walk in love?

Paul believed the cross was the solution to all our problems (1Cor 2:1-2). How is the cross the solution to: false worship/sexual sin/stealing/lying/coveting?

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried. The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will never end. And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified. He spoke through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and to life in the world to come. Amen.

