

2021-2022 RCIA #2

9/20/21

Early Church History Leading To The Nicene Creed

- 1st - 3rd centuries – Roman Persecution – Christianity underground
- 313 A.D. Edict of Milan ending Christian persecutions
- 313 A.D. onward the rise of a multitude of questions about the Faith
- 4th and 5th centuries the need for Church councils

Introduction and Overview (Cont)

- Early Heresies

- Judaizers – said had to be a Jew to be a Christian
- Gnostics – secret knowledge
- Dualism – two gods: one good, one bad
- Montanism – end of the world was imminent
- Manacheism – two equal gods run everything
- Arianism – Jesus was not divine
- Nestorianism – Mary was not the mother of God
- Apollinarianism – Jesus had an incomplete human nature

Introduction and Overview (Cont)

- Early Councils

- **Jerusalem** – 50 A.D. - *Gentiles can become Christians without becoming Jews – rejected Judaizers*
- **Nicaea** – 325 A.D. - *Christ is the same as God – rejected Arianism*
- **Constantinople** – 381 A.D. – *HS is the same as God and Jesus – rejected revised Arianism*
- **Ephesus** – 431 A.D. – *Blessed Mother was the Mother of God – rejected Nestorianism*
- **Chalcedon** – 451 A.D. – *Christ possessed two natures: human and divine – rejected Apollinarianism*

The Explosion of Christianity

- 12 Apostles
- Grew to over
- 2.2 Billion Christians
- In the World by
 - 2010

Part I: The Creed (Chapter 1)

The Purpose of Man's Existence

- Why Am I Here?
- What Must I Do?
- Who Will Tell Me?

The Nicene Creed

- The first section of the Nicene Creed deals with God the Father:

**I believe in one God,
the Father almighty**
maker of heaven and earth
of all things visible and invisible.

How in antiquity did man understand God?

- What was among the most important things to primitive man?
 - **Fertility**
- What form of worship did primitive man employ
 - **Polytheism**
- How did primitive man attempt to satisfy his gods?
 - Through **animal** and sometimes human **sacrifices**

The gods of Egypt

- The Ancient Egyptians had around 8700 gods in total
 - Approximately 64 Egyptian gods played a vital role in Ancient Egyptian life
 - By the mid 400's there was record of over 2000 deities worshipped in Ancient Egypt
 - Almost every village in Egypt had it's own gods
 - Every time a new Pharaoh came into power the whole culture recognized his gods as the best so they were always changing

The God of Israel

- How did the form of worship change with the call of Abraham?
 - **Monotheism**
- How did the people of Israel come to know how to worship God?
 - **The Promises to Abraham**
 - Land
 - Descendants
 - Blessing and Redemption
 - **The Law given to Moses**
 - **The Covenants between the God of Israel and His people**

1st Century Worldview (Cont)

- Covenants
 - **Abraham** - Circumcision
 - **Moses** - The LAW
 - **David** - The Kingdom
 - **Jesus** – The Kingdom of God
 - One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

Covenantal Structure of Salvation History

1. THREE-FOLD PROMISE TO ABRAHAM:

2. THREE-FOLD PROMISE UPGRADED TO COVENANTS:

3. THREE COVENANTS FULFILLED IN MOSES, DAVID & JESUS:

ABRAHAM
Gen 12: 1-3

1. Land Promise
Genesis 15

2. Kingdom Promise
Genesis 17

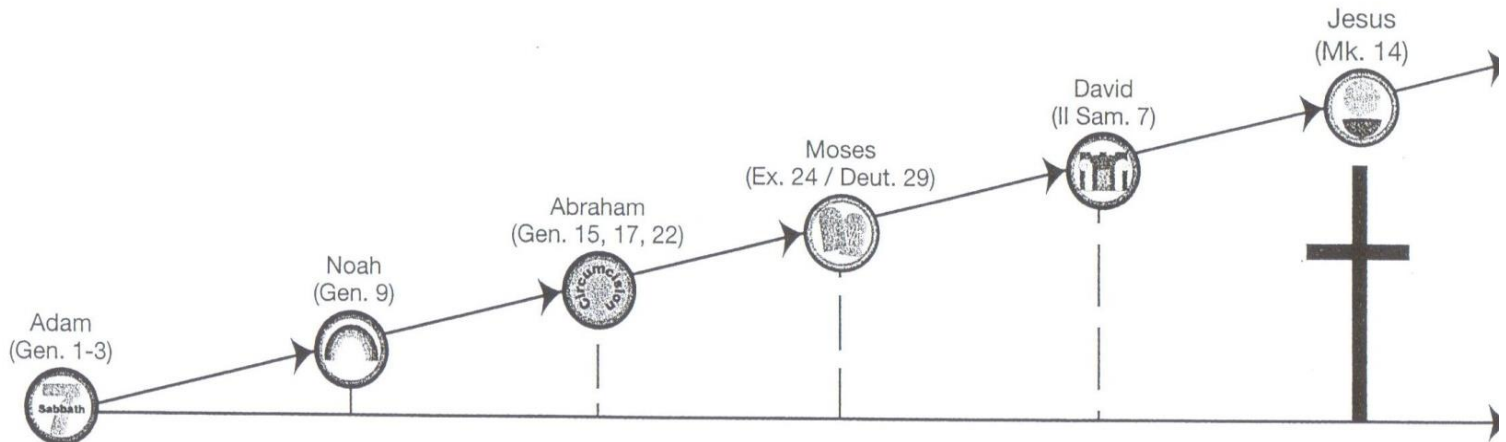
3. Promise of Worldwide Blessing
Genesis 22

MOSES
Mosaic Covenant - Ex 24
Deuteronomic Covenant
(with Moses) - Deut 29

DAVID
Davidic Covenant
2 Sam 7

JESUS
New Covenant in
Jesus Christ
Mark 14

COVENANT SIGN
AND MEDIATOR:



FAMILY FORM:

One Holy
Couple

One Holy
Family

One Holy
Tribe

One Holy
Nation

One Holy
Kingdom

One Holy Catholic
and Apostolic Church

What was the Law?

- The first five books of the Bible (Torah, Pentateuch, the Law)
- It contained:
 - The 10 Commandments
 - 613 Commandments (Laws) in the Old Testament
 - 248 Positive Commandments
 - 365 Negative Commandments
 - 30 Dietary laws

The 10 Commandments

- I. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me**
- II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain**
- III. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day**
- IV. Honor thy father and thy mother
- V. Thou shalt not kill
- VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery
- VII. Thou shalt not steal
- VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor
- IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife
- X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods

The Purpose of Man's Existence

- What is the definition of a person?
 - A being with an intellect and will
- How many kinds of persons exist?
 - God (Trinity) – pure spirit except for the human Jesus
 - Angels – pure spirit
 - Humans – body and spirit

The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- **Why Am I Here?**
 - **From God's point of view**
 - To give glory to God and show His goodness
 - To reflect His gift to us of an immortal and spiritual soul
 - To accept His willingness to share His happiness with us

The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- **Why am I here?**

- **From our point of view**

- To accept His love even though it is not fully understandable in this life
 - To grow in happiness despite the fact that it cannot be fulfilled in this life
 - To achieve the ultimate end of man – the beatific vision (heaven)

The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- **What must I do to attain heaven?**

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind; and to love your neighbor as yourself
- Love is:
 - Based on knowledge
 - Decision of the will
 - Self-gift
 - Permanent
 - Open to life
- We are obliged to learn to love God
- We are called to do things for God
- We need to be open to His Supernatural gifts of grace

The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- **Who will tell me how to do this?**
 - Jesus who:
 - Calls us to know, love and serve God in this life
 - Was sent to show us the way:
 - Redemption
 - Establish the Church

The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- Left the Church under the Holy Spirit to give us the Divine Revelation (the Deposit of Faith)
 - Public Revelation – ended with death of last Apostle
 - Sacred Scriptures
 - Sacred Tradition
 - Private Revelation – we are not bound to accept
- We can also use the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as source for the Deposit of Faith