

# Unpacking the Apostle's Creed



*An Introduction to the Baptismal Confession for  
Lay Readers*

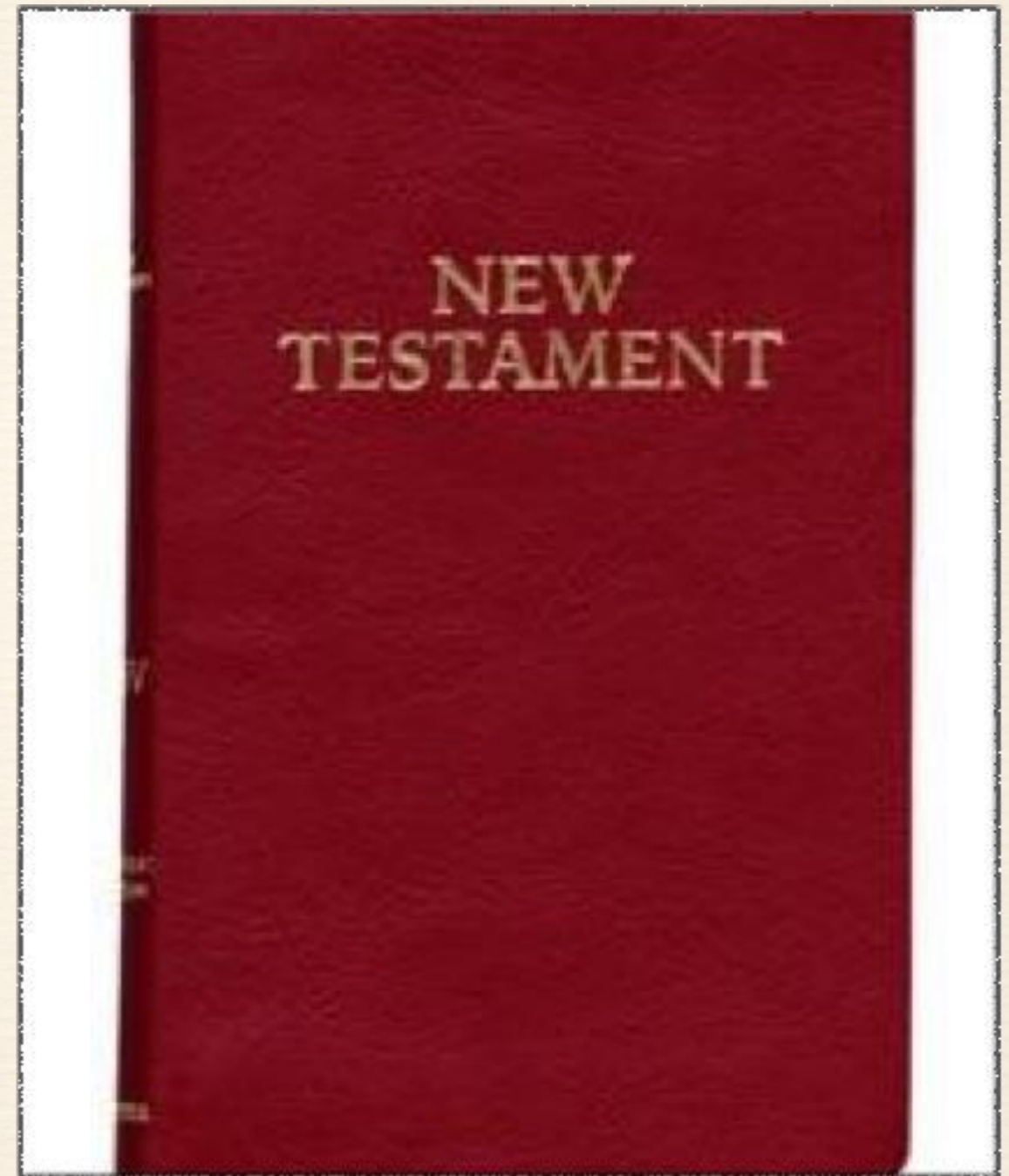


# The First Century A.D.

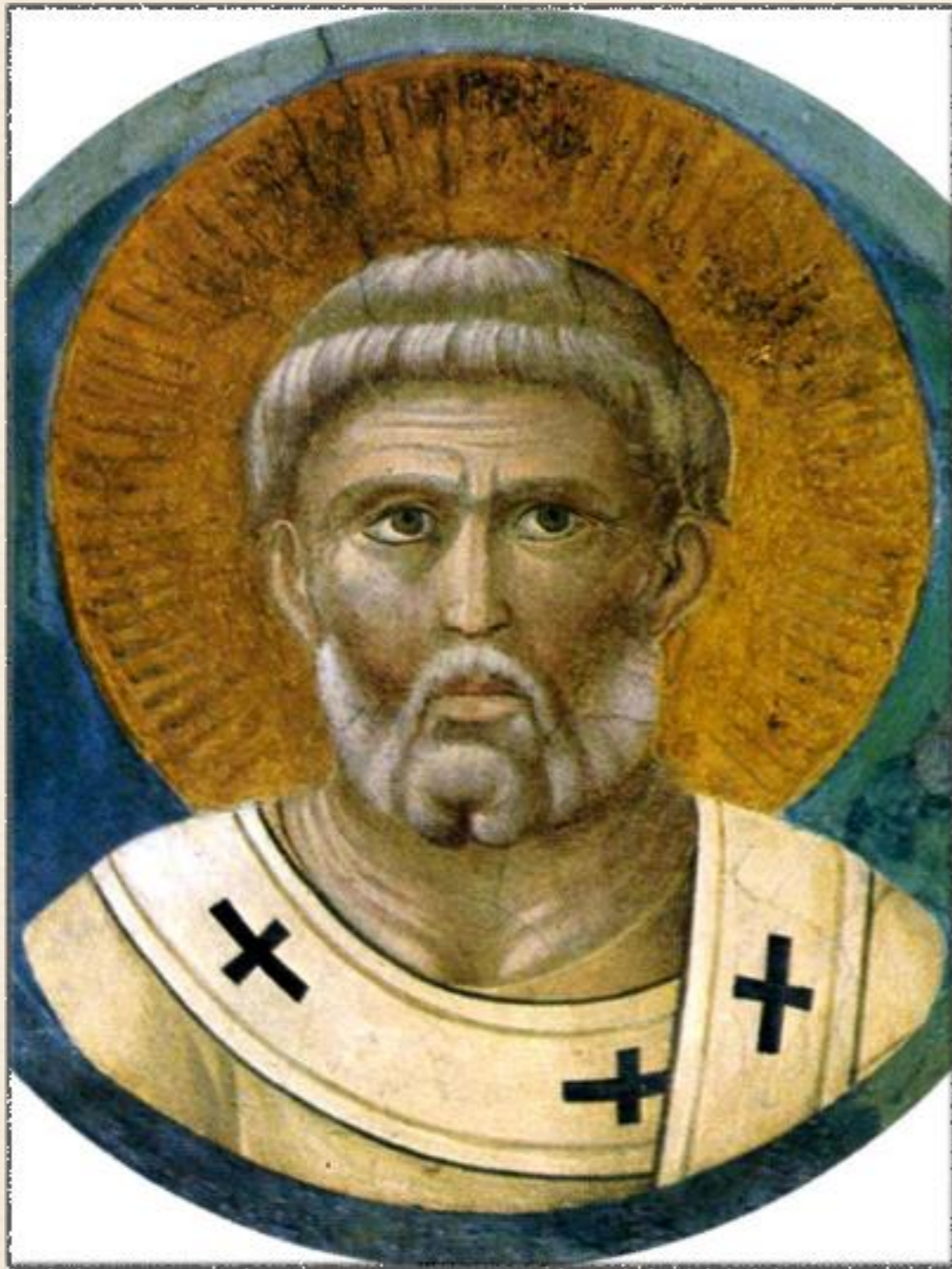
*Christianity spreads throughout the Mediterranean*

# The New Testament

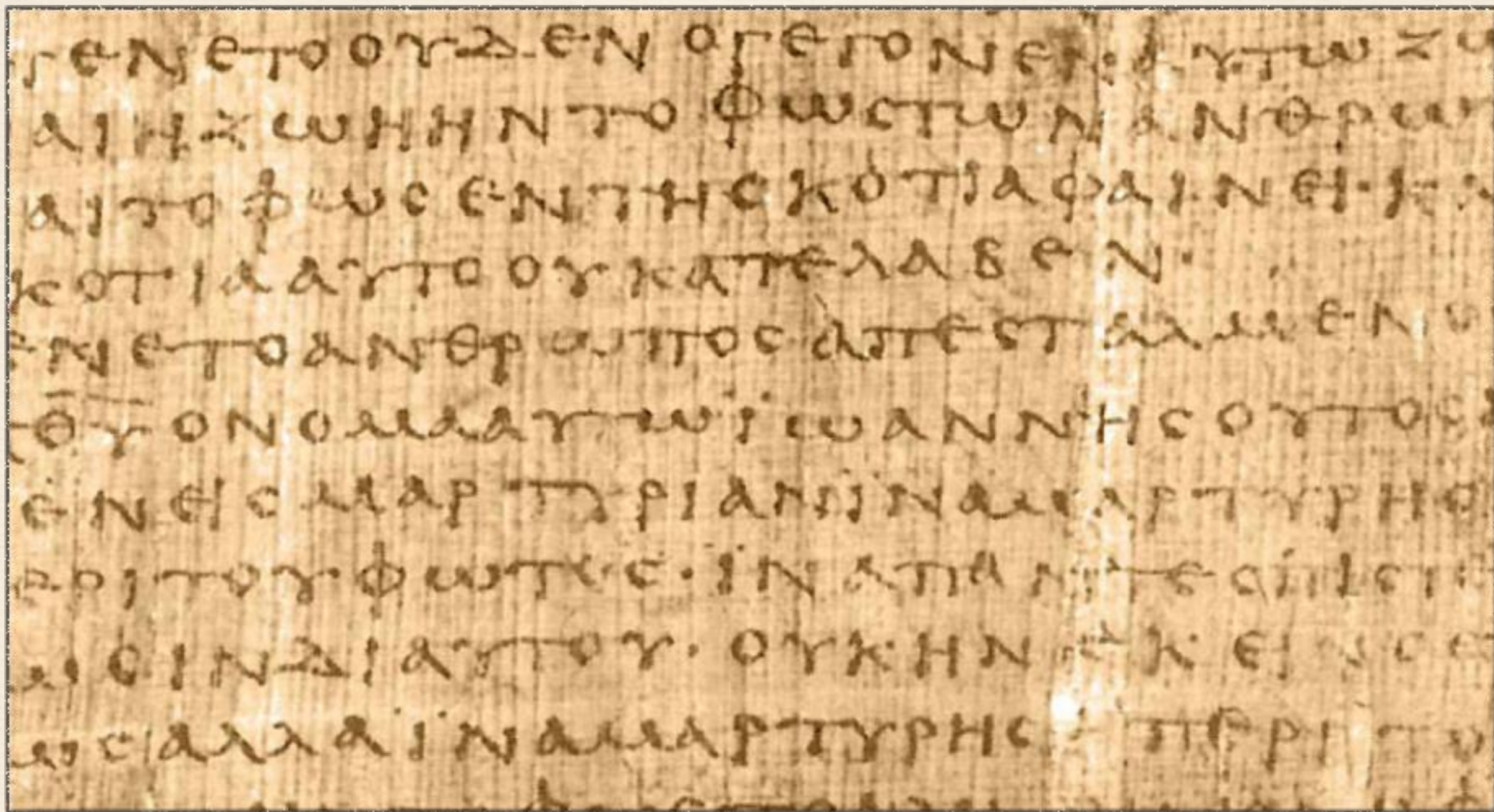
- ❖ “Therefore let us leave behind the basic teaching about Christ and advance to maturity, without laying the foundation all over again: Repentance from dead works and faith in God, instruction about baptisms and laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgement” (Hb. 6:1-2).



# Resurrection



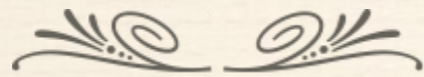
“For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received. that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at once, most of whom are still living, through some have fallen asleep. After that he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one born abnormally, he appeared to me” (1 Cor. 15:3b-8).”



## The Church in the Second and Third Centuries

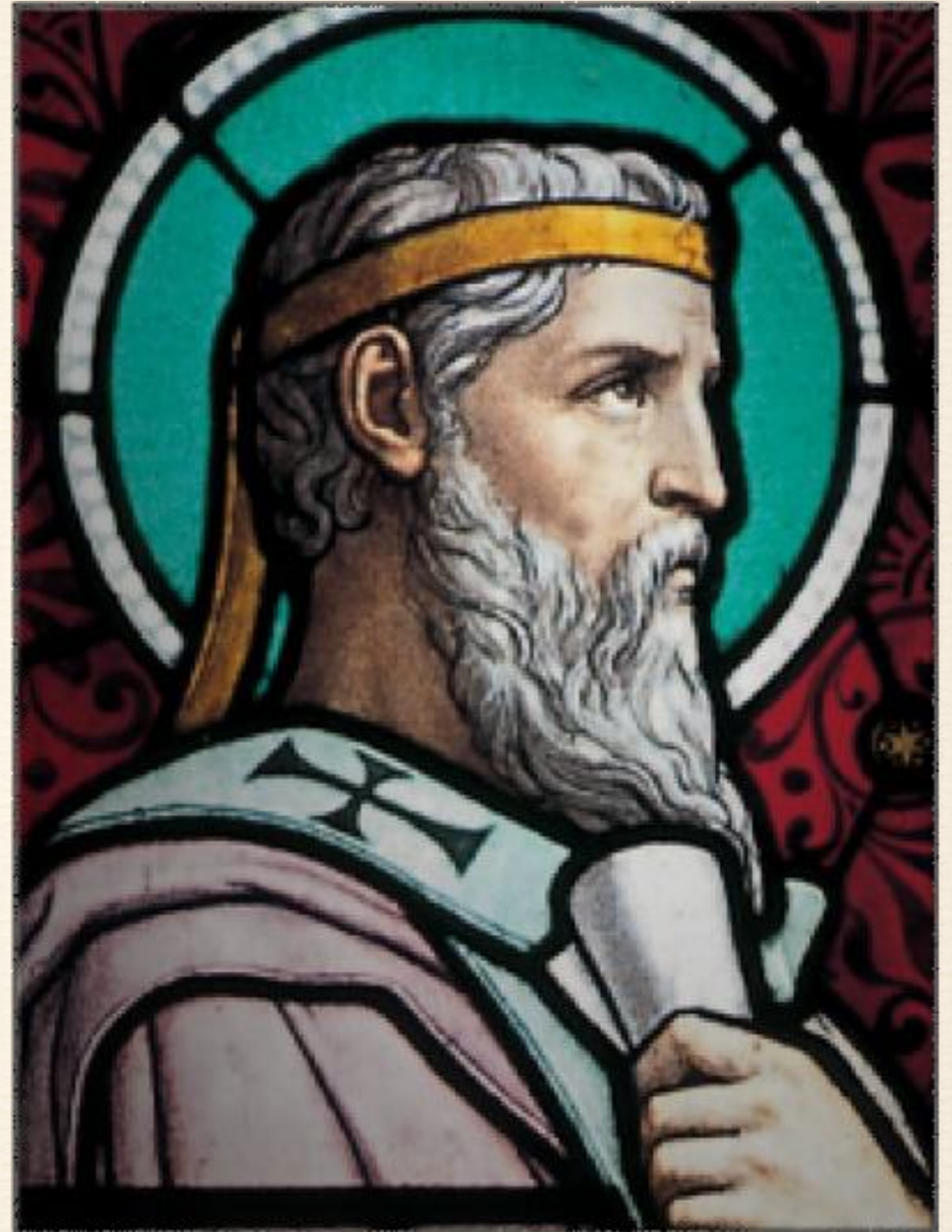
*Still no Universal Creedal Statement*

# Irenaeus



*Church Father and*

*author of Against Heresies  
(180 AD)*



The Church believes in one God, the Father  
Almighty,

Maker of heaven, and earth,

and the sea, and all things that are in them;

and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God,

who became incarnate for our salvation;

and in the Holy Spirit,

who proclaimed through the prophets the

dispensations of God,

and the advents, and the birth from a virgin,

and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead,

and the ascension into heaven in the flesh  
of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord,  
and His [future] manifestation from heaven in the glory  
of the Father

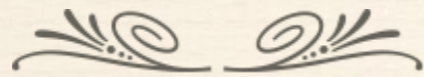
“to gather all things in one,”

and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race,  
in order that to Christ Jesus,  
our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King,  
according to the will of the invisible Father,  
every knee should bow

and that He should execute just judgment towards all.

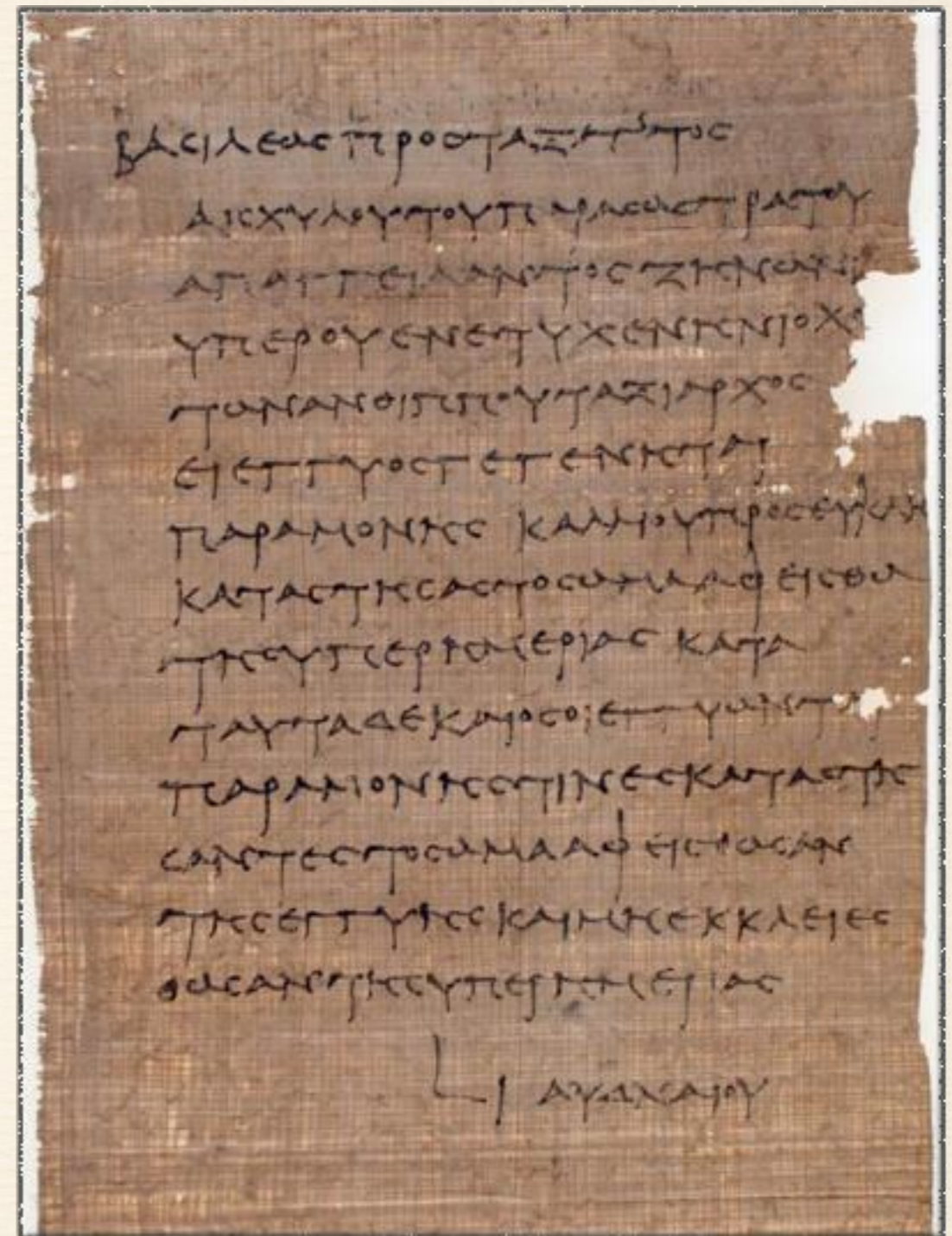


# The Old Roman Creed



Earliest version found in a letter written  
by Marcellus of Ancyra  
to Julius, the Bishop of Rome.

A.D. 341



I believe in God the Father almighty;  
and in Christ Jesus His only Son, our Lord,  
Who was born from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
Who under Pontius Pilate was crucified and buried,  
on the third day rose again from the dead,  
ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father,  
whence he will come to judge the living and the dead;  
and in the Holy Spirit, the holy Church,  
the remission of sins,  
the resurrection of the flesh,  
life everlasting.

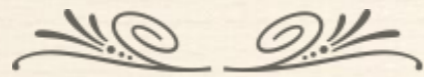
*–The Old Roman Creed (1st Century)*

# Gnosticism: A First Century Heresy

- ❖ Spirit/ Matter Dualism
- ❖ Salvation from the Material World



# The Heretic Marcion



*Embraced Gnostic Teachings*

*Put together his own New  
Testament*

*Ordained his own Bishops*





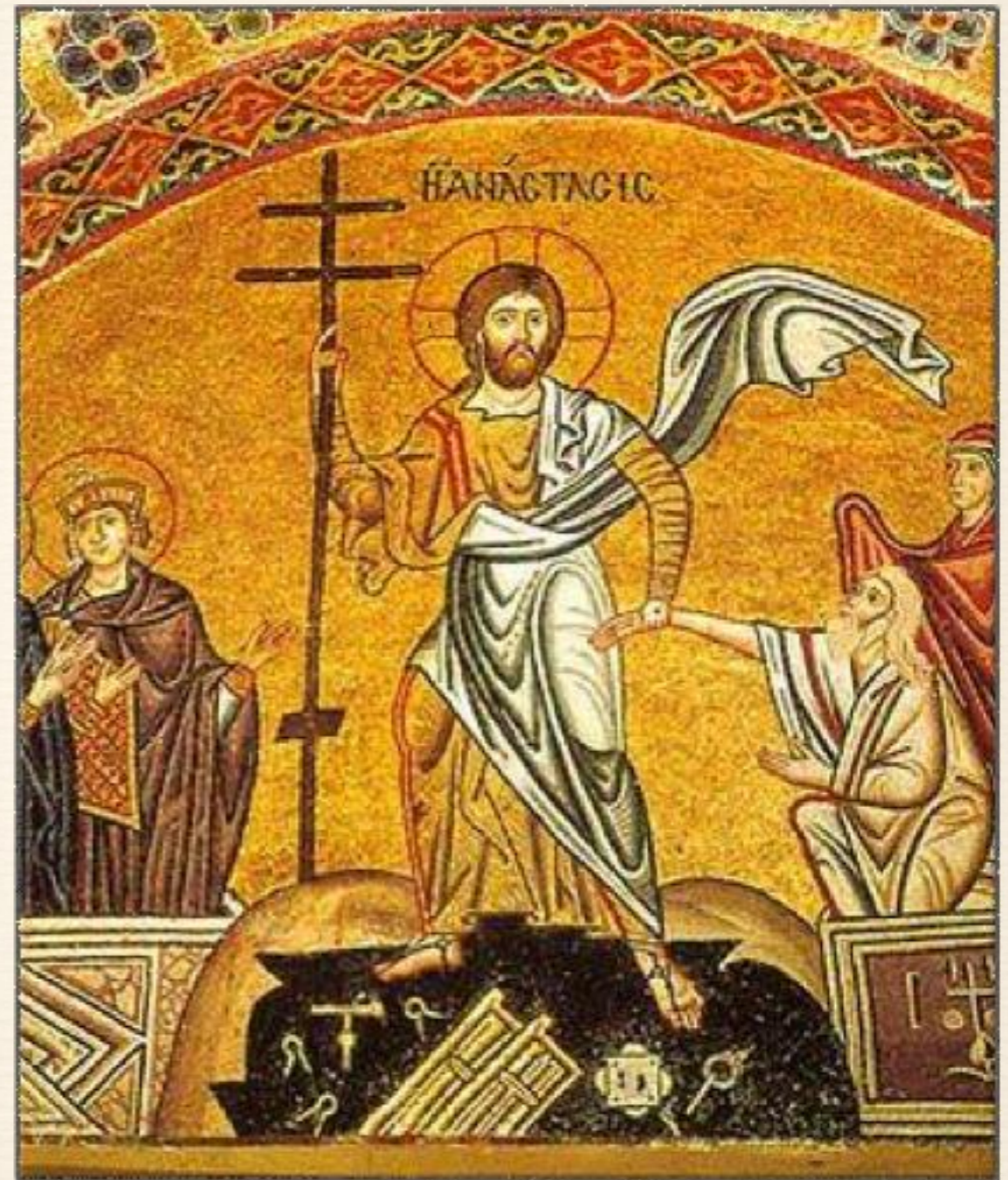
“He Descended into Hell”

“For Christ also suffered... that he might lead you to God. Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the spirit. In it he also went to preach to the spirits in prison, who had once been disobedient while God patiently waited in the day so Noah during the building of the ark.”

–1 Peter 3:18-20

# Possible Meanings

- ❖ Jesus, like everyone else, tasted death.
- ❖ Jesus' spirit descended into hell with a mission- to preach the word to the dead.
- ❖ Descent into hell is a symbolic expression of Jesus' suffering on the cross.



# References & Suggested Readings

## BOOKS

- ❖ 1. A History of Christianity by Owen Chadwick
- ❖ 2. The Story of Christianity by Justo Gonzalez
- ❖ 3. An Introduction to the Christian Faith by Colin Gunton

## WEBSITE RESOURCES

- ❖ 1. Apostle's Creed- <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01629a.htm>
- ❖ 2. Nicene Creed- <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11049a.htm>
- ❖ 3. Athanasian Creed- <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02033b.htm>
- ❖ 4. Catholic Encyclopedia called "New Advent." <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/>