

Lamar E. Cooper, Sr.  
Executive Vice President & Provost  
Criswell College

## The Apostle's Creed

Many hypotheses exist concerning the date and nature of the origin of the Apostles' Creed. It was apparently developed from what scholars have identified as "the Old Roman Symbol" of the 1st or 2nd century and influenced later by the Nicene Creed AD 325. Some historians place the origin of the Apostles' Creed as late as 5th century Gaul (Spain). The earliest known concrete historical evidence of the creed's existence as it is currently titled *Symbolum Apostolicum* in a letter of the Council of Milan in AD 390 to Pope Siricius, given here in English translation:

*If you credit not the teachings of the priests . . . let credit at least be given to the Symbol of the Apostles which the Roman Church always preserves and maintains inviolate.*

The earliest appearance of the present Latin text was in the *De singulis libris canonicis scarapsus* ("Excerpt from Individual Canonical Books") of St. Priminus (Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 89, 1029 ff.), written between AD710-724 (J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, Longmans, Green & Co, 1972, pp. 398-434).

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
born of the Virgin Mary.  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
On the third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand  
of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence he shall come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.