



# WE BELIEVE

EXPLORING THE NICENE CREED



## STUDY GUIDE THIRTEEN – FROM SERMON ON MAY 3/26

The church can be difficult to believe in when we consider its failures and brokenness. Yet Scripture calls us to trust not in the church's perfection, but in Christ's promise to build it through the work of the Holy Spirit. This study explores what the church is, what it is becoming, and the part each of us plays in it.

### OPENING QUESTIONS

When you hear the phrase "I believe in the church," what thoughts or emotions come to mind?

Why do you think belief in the church can be more difficult than belief in God?

In your experience, what are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the church?

### THE PROBLEM AND THE PROMISE

Read **Matthew 16:13-18**. What does Jesus promise about His church, and what is its foundation?

According to this passage, who is responsible for building the church? Why does that matter?

### THE PICTURE OF THE CHURCH

#### ONE - A UNIFIED PEOPLE

Read **Ephesians 4:3-6**. What words or phrases describe the unity of the church?

Read **1 Corinthians 12:12-27**. What does this passage teach about diversity within unity?

### HOLY- A SET APART PEOPLE

Read **1 Peter 2:9-12**. What does it mean that the church is "holy"?

According to this passage, what is the purpose of being set apart?

How does this passage describe the tension between living in the world but being different from it?

### CATHOLIC - A UNIVERSAL PEOPLE

Read **Revelation 7:9-10**. What picture of the church do we see here? What does this passage teach about the diversity of the global church?

Why is it important to remember that your local church is only a small part of the whole?

### APOSTOLIC - A ROOTED PEOPLE

Read **Acts 2:42-47**. What practices defined the early church?

Why is it important for the church to remain rooted in Scripture rather than trends or preferences?

### OUR PART IN THE CHURCH

Why is it significant that the Holy Spirit not only brings us into the church but gives us a role to play?

In what ways might someone "hold back" from contributing to the life of the church?

What gifts, opportunities, or relationships has God given you to build up others?

### PERSONAL REFLECTION AND RESPONSE

Which of the four pictures of the church (one, holy, catholic, apostolic) stands out most to you right now? Why?

What is one specific step you can take this week to participate more fully in the life of the church?

How does the work of the Holy Spirit give you hope for the future of the church?

**CLOSE YOUR TIME TOGETHER BY PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER**