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The Nicene Creed and the Bible: A Workbook for Disciples

Richard Steel

Grove Books, 2025 (ISBN: 9781788274258 pb, 28pp) Grove Booklet

Discipleship Series ID15

Former parish priest, Richard Steel, originally prepared this material for use in his churches. After an especially useful opening chapter on the enduring value of an ancient creed, five further chapters treat God, Jesus as God, Jesus as Man, The Holy Spirit and The Church. Each chapter includes extensive questions for reflection or discussion.

There is much that is helpful in this brief study guide. As the subtitle might indicate, there are many bible references to follow up.

Of course with a short study guide, there is always more that could be said, though I was surprised by some of the choices. Despite its central importance, there is no real discussion of what it means for the Son to be

'of one Being with the Father'. Numerous Greek terms are mentioned, but not *homoousios*.

Similarly, some history of the Filioque Clause is given, but nothing is said about its meaning other than: "That the Spirit is the third person of the Trinity is agreed by all mainstream Christians.

Exactly how they relate to one another is debated' (18). I can quite understand if Steel thought these were deep and difficult waters, but readers might have appreciated some help on this straightforward sounding phrase [which] has become the single most controversial part of the Creed' (18).

On the other hand, where the Creed is not explicit, Steel sets out some options, for example on the 'many theories and images of salvation' (the atonement) (11). When it comes to hell and eternal punishment, the traditional teaching of the church and universalism are contrasted with a 'wider hope of salvation' including 'not eternal punishment but rather "de-creation" by God' (17).

The study guide might be most useful for those who want to use the creed as a launching off point for exploring something about some key Christian doctrines. For example, a list of New Testament texts and their teaching about the work of the Holy Spirit is included.

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