

You will find that these creeds are given more modern translations in some other books and have some textual questions as well. The Bible is not the only book that faces such matters..any work of reasonable antiquity has those considerations.

4. Commonality in Understanding

A number of teaching issues are not well defined in the period where we work..they were not in question and therefore were generally understood and held in agreement. Among these would be the character of the Scripture, the nature of the trinity, the work of the Spirit, etc. Some of them will become major areas of discussion in later years as challenges are raised with regard to the common understanding of the community.

C. **The Great Councils...in brief.**

The Conciliar idea has its foundation in the Book of Acts and the Jerusalem Council. The thought is that in a matter of controversy the church might gather as a body and in consideration of the Scripture and its teaching..the church could offer a resolution which would be a prescription for the entire witnessing fellowship. Smaller controversies could be dealt with at community level but anything disruptive of the faith of the whole company would need a council of the total body. And when the total body met it would deal with other matters that came before it as well. The body could not be every Christian, of course, so the representative character would be that of the pastors, i.e. the bishops, et al, responsible for the leadership of the group at large. All of these councils met after the legalization of the church, all were called by the state officials. The attendance would vary and, as they met for long times, the personnel were subject to change. The state carried the bulk of the charges and would seek to enforce decisions that were enacted. In the case of a matter being decided definitively as the absolute teaching of Scripture, the council would pronounce a **horos** and in the case of something that was merely a matter of its judgment, the pronouncement is called a **canon**. There are very few of the former and an enormous quantity of the latter. Even a small council could issue canons, only the full ones were thought competent of a horos. The great creeds we have mentioned so far are **horoi** (plural..obvious, I guess)