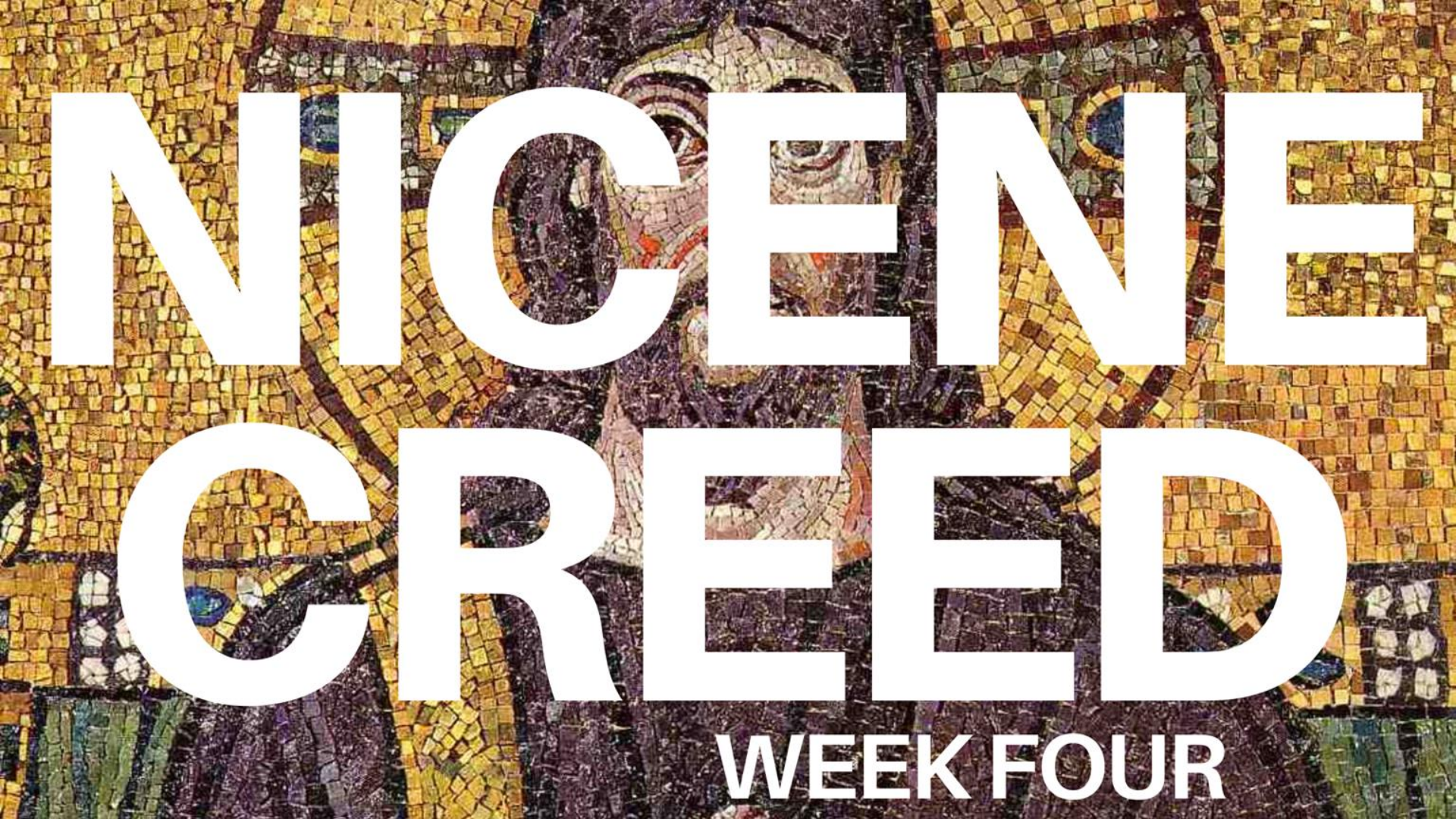


A detailed mosaic background featuring several faces, including a prominent one in the upper center with a halo, rendered in a style reminiscent of Byzantine or medieval art. The mosaic is composed of small, irregular tiles in various shades of gold, brown, and purple.

NICENE CREED

WEEK FOUR

“Is” vs. “seems like”

*When was a time when
something was not as it
seemed?*

Let's Read the Creed

Recap

- Week 1: “We believe”
- Week 2: “In one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth”
- Week 3: “And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God... begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father.”

A diagram illustrating the 'Mission of God'. It features a yellow circle on the left labeled 'GOD' and a blue circle on the right labeled 'CREATION'. A grey arrow points from the yellow circle to the blue circle, with the text 'Mission of God' written inside it.

GOD

Mission of God

CREATION

Reading

- Today: C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, “The Invasion”
- Next Time: Fritz

“who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man”

Outline Today

1. What's at Stake in the Incarnation?
 - a. How do we know God?
 - b. What did God do for us?
 - c. How do we know?
 - i. Reading it in Scripture

How do we know God? - *Incarnate* Revelation

- Soviet Propaganda said, “I looked and looked but I did not see God.”
- Two types of Revelation
 - General Revelation: Look about you
 - Romans 1:20
 - What do we know from this sort of revelation?
 - Special Revelation

How do we know God? - *Incarnate* Revelation

- C.S. Lewis in *Surprised by Joy* wrote an analogy for the incarnation like Hamlet and Shakespeare
 - Hamlet would need Shakespeare to write himself into the story
- We've had theophanies
 - Burning bush, prophets, etc.
 - The incarnation is a step even beyond this!
 - Hebrews 1:1

What did God do for us? - *Incarnate* Salvation

- C.S. Lewis "The Invasion"
 - Not so much about "Incarnation" as much as about "Sin"
 - Sin is a *real* problem since *the beginning of time*
 - God gave a *real* solution for *all time*

What did God do for us? - *Incarnate* Salvation

- We are saved by faith alone. What does it mean “to believe”?
 - For a mormon: do you believe that this book written by Joseph Smith is divine?
 - For a Buddhist: do you agree with and follow these teachings of living?
 - For a Christian: what happened in the 1st Century in Israel?!

What did God do for us? - *Incarnate* Salvation

- “who for us **men** and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man”

What did God do for us? - *Incarnate* Salvation

- “who for us **men** and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made **man**”

What did God do for us? - *Incarnate* Salvation

- “who for us **men** and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made **man**”
- “For that which He has not assumed He has not healed; but that which is united to His Godhead is also saved.” - Gregory of Nazianzus, 329-390 AD

How do we know? - Witnessing *Incarnation*

- Was Heaven empty of the Son of God from 6 BC until 33 AD? Did the Son stop “holding all things together?”
 - No
- Was there any “part” of the Son that wasn’t born in the manger?
 - No
- Many have attempted to reconcile this
 - Let’s *witness* it

How do we know? - Witnessing *Incarnation*

- 1 John 1:1-4, 4:1-4
- Luke 1:26-38
- John 6:41-51

If time: Theological Potpourri

- Nestorius
 - condemned at Council of Ephesus in 431)
- Calvinist Theology
 - *The finite cannot hold the infinite*
- Lutheran Point
 - *Hypostatic Union* (The divine nature gives qualities to the human nature)

Review

- God is *revealed* in the incarnation
- God *saves* through the incarnation
- We *witness* the incarnation and believe it