



# Session 8

Of the Church

# Session 8 Overview

- Westminster Confession of Faith
  - Chapter 25 Of the Church
- Catechisms
  - Q. 58. How do we come to be made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured?
  - Q. 59. Who are made partakers of redemption through Christ?
  - Q. 60. Can they who have never heard the gospel, and so know not Jesus Christ, nor believe in him, be saved by their living according to the light of nature?
  - Q. 61. Are all they saved who hear the gospel, and live in the church?
  - Q. 62. What is the visible church?
  - Q. 63. What are the special privileges of the visible church?
  - Q. 64. What is the invisible church?
  - Q. 65. What special benefits do the members of the invisible church enjoy by Christ?
  - Q. 66. What is that union which the elect have with Christ?



# What does the word “Church” mean?

- The Greek word “**ekklesia**” literally means an “**assembly**”; however, **because God’s people are not just any assembly so the word “Church” is used in the place of “assembly.”**
- **Church etymology.** “I was in the Spirit on the **Lord's** day” (Rev 1:10 NAS) The Greek word “kuriakos” or “**Of the Lord.**”
  - Old Saxon *kirika*, Old Norse *kirkja*, Old Frisian *zerke*, Middle Dutch *kerke*, Dutch *kerk*, Old High German *kirihha*, German *Kirche*. The Scots use *Kirk*.
  - Greek *kyriakon* (adj.) "of the Lord" was used of houses of Christian worship since c.300, especially in the East, though it was less common in this sense than *ekklesia*.

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=church>



# Who is the “Church?”

- **Catholic:** “universal” (WCF 25:1) consists of **all those throughout the world that profess the true religion** (WCF 25:2)
  - “Catholic” is from the greek word "katholikos" From Greek "kata" + "holos," which, when put together **means "throughout all."** (Act 9:31)
  - Under the gospel (**not confined to one nation**, as before under the law)
  - “For **there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all**, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him” (Rom 10:12 NAS)
- This **catholic church** hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular churches, which are members thereof, are **more or less pure**, according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, **and public worship performed more or less purely in them.** (WCF 25:4) (Rev 2 & 3)
- There is **no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ.** Nor can the pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof. (WCF 25:6) (Eph 1:22)



# How do we become a part of the invisible Church? The “I” in T.U.L.I.P. “Irresistible Grace”

- Q. 58. **How do we come to be made partakers** of the benefits which Christ hath procured? (Session 9)
  - By **the application of** them unto us, which is **the work especially of God the Holy Ghost**. (Titus 3:4–7)
- Q. 59. **Who are made partakers** of redemption through Christ? (Session 9)
  - **Redemption is certainly applied, and effectually communicated, to all those for whom Christ hath purchased it; who are in time by the Holy Ghost enabled to believe** in Christ according to the gospel (Joh 6:37-40 NAS see 1 Cor. 2:12–16)
- "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" (Joh 3:3 NAS)
- **Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.** The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love (1Jo 4:7-8 NAS)
- **Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God;** and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him. (1Jo 5:1 NAS)



# The Order of Decrees

SUPERNATURALIST	PARTICULAR	Supralapsarian	→	Forordained Everything	→	Creation	→	Total Depravity	→	Definite Atonement	→	Efficacious Grace	→	Perserverance of Saints
		Infralapsarian	→	Creation	→	Total Depravity	→	Election of some	→	Definite Atonement	→	Efficacious Grace	→	Perserverance of Saints
		Amyraldian	→	Creation	→	Total Depravity	→	General Atonement	→	Election of some	→	Efficacious Grace	→	Perserverance of Saints
	UNIVERSAL	Lutheran	→	Creation	→	Total Depravity	→	General Atonement	→	Efficatious Grace	→	Election of some	→	Conditional/Perserverance
		Universalistic	→	Creation	→	Total Depravity or Deprivation	→	Election of All	→	Definite Atonement for All	→	Efficacious Grace for All	→	Salvation of All
		Weslyan	→	Creation	→	Deprivation	→	General Atonement	→	Resistable Grace	→	Election upon faith	→	Salvation upon Faith
	SACERDOTAL	Anglican	→	Creation	→	Deprivation	→	General Atonement	→	Sacramental Grace	→	Sacrament works	→	2 Sacrament Salvation
		Roman Catholic	→	Creation	→	Deprivation	→	Sacrament of Mass	→	Sacramental Grace	→	Sacrament works	→	7 Sacrament Salvation
		Orthodox	→	Creation	→	Deprivation	→	Sacrament of Mass	→	Sacramental Grace	→	Sacrament works	→	7 Sacrament Salvation
	NATURALIST	Semipelagian	→	Creation	→	Free Will	→	General Atonement	→	Persuasive Gospel	→	Grace no Works	→	Once saved always saved
		Pelagian	→	Creation	→	Free Will	→	Persuasive Gospel	→	Expiate past sin	→	All good works	→	Salvation upon Works



## Division destroys the Temple of God (1st and 2nd Corinthians)

1:12-13	"I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ." Has Christ been divided?	Following Men Divides
2:5	That your <b>faith should not rest on the wisdom of men</b>	Don't Follow Men
3:4	"I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men?	Don't Divide
3:9	For we are God's fellow workers; <b>you are God's field, God's building.</b>	We are the building
3:16-17	<b>you are a temple of God</b> , and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? <b>If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him</b>	We are the Temple
3:21	<b>So then let no one boast in men.</b>	Don't Follow Men
5:1,2	<b>there is immorality among you...</b> and have not mourned instead, in order that <b>the one who had done this deed might be removed from your midst.</b>	Remove Immorality
5:11	<b>Not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler</b>	Don't Associate With Immoral "Brothers"
6:6	But <b>brother goes to law with brother</b> , and that before unbelievers?	Suing Each Other
6:16-20	<b>one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "The two will become one flesh."</b> Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but <b>the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you...therefore glorify God in your body.</b>	Fornication Divides the Temple of God
7:2	But <b>because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife</b>	Immoralities are sexual
2 Cor 6:15-16	<b>What has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God;</b>	Unbelievers Divide the Temple of God



# Is there salvation without the gospel?

- Q. 60. **Can they who have never heard the gospel**, and so know not Jesus Christ, nor believe in him, **be saved by their living according to the light of nature?**
- A. **They who, having never heard the gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved**, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, or the laws of that religion which they profess; neither is there salvation in any other, but in Christ alone, who is the Savior only of his body the church.
  - **How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard?** And how shall they hear without a preacher? (Rom 10:14 NAS)
  - **So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.** (Rom 10:17 NAS)
  - **"I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins;** for unless you believe that I am *He*, you shall die in your sins." (Joh 8:24 NAS)
  - **He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (Joh 3:18 NAS)
  - **And there is salvation in no one else;** for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, **by which we must be saved.**" (Act 4:12 NAS)



## Q. 61. Are all they saved who hear the gospel, and live in the church?

- A. All that hear the gospel, and live in the visible church, are not saved; but **they only who are true members of the church invisible.**
  - **"For many are called, but few are chosen."** (Mat 22:14 NAS)
  - **"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven;** but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' "And then I will declare to them, **'I never knew you; depart from Me,** you who practice lawlessness.' (Mat 7:21-23 NAS)
  - For **certain persons have crept in unnoticed**, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. (Jud 1:4 NAS)
  - The parable of the **"Tares and the Wheat"** (Mat 13:24-30)



# The “Visible” and “Invisible” Church

- **Invisible:** consists of **the whole number of the elect within the visible church** (WCF 25:1) (1Co 1:1-2, Rev 17:14)
- **Visible:** The **assembly of the elect and non elect** who participate in the Christian religion. (WCF 25:2) (1Joh 2:19, 1 Cor. 7:14)
  - Unto **this catholic visible church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life**, to the end of the world: and doth, by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto. (WCF 25:3) (1 Cor. 12:28, Eph. 4:11–13)
- **The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a church on earth**, to worship God according to his will (WCF 25:5) (1 Cor. 13:12, Matt. 13:24–30, Matt. 16:18)
- Just going to Church does not save you or make you a true believer. This is the essence of “**Puritanism.**”



## Q. 62. What is the visible church?

- A. The **visible church is a society** made up of all such as **in all ages and places of the world do profess the true religion**, and of their children.
  - "So the LORD's anger burned against Israel, and **He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until the entire generation of those who had done evil in the sight of the LORD was destroyed.** (Num 32:13 NAS)
  - But I have a few things against you, because **you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam**, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit *acts of* immorality. 'Thus you also have some who in the same way **hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.** (Rev 2:14-15 NAS)
  - But I have *this* against you, that **you tolerate the woman Jezebel**, who calls herself a prophetess, and **she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray**, so that they commit *acts of* immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. (Rev 2:20 NAS)
  - **They went out from us, but they were not really of us**; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, in order that it might be shown that they all are not of us. (1Jo 2:19 NAS)



## Q. 63. What are the special privileges of the visible church?

- Being under God's **special care and government**; (includes Common Grace Session 9)
  - "Because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the **Savior of all men, especially of believers**" (1Ti 4:10 NAS)
- Being **protected and preserved in all ages**, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies;
  - "Upon this rock I will build My church; and **the gates of Hades shall not overpower it**" (Mat 16:18 NAS)
- Enjoying **the communion of saints**, (Session 11)
  - "They *began* selling their property and possessions, and **were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.**" (Act 2:45 NAS))
- The ordinary means of salvation, and **offers of grace by Christ** to all the members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying, that whosoever believes in him shall be saved, and **excluding none that will come unto him.**
  - "**Come to Me**, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and **I will give you rest.**" (Mat 11:28 NAS)



## Q. 64. What is the invisible church?

### The “U” in T.U.L.I.P. “Unconditional Election”

- A. **The invisible church is the whole number of the elect**, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head.
  - **“But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep. “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”** (Joh 10:26-27 NAS)
  - **“All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”** (Joh 6:37 NAS)
  - **“And He will** send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will **gather together His elect** from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.” (Mat 24:31 NAS)
  - **“And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. “For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.** (Joh 6:39-40 NAS)



# The “I” in T.U.L.I.P. “Irresistible Grace”

Q. 65. What special benefits do the members of the invisible church enjoy by Christ?

- A. The members of the invisible church by Christ enjoy union and communion with him in grace and glory.
  - Seeing that **His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness**, through the true knowledge of Him **who called us by His own glory and excellence**. For by these **He has granted to us** His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust (2Pe 1:3-4 NAS)

Q. 66. What is that union which the elect have with Christ?

- A. ..whereby **they are spiritually** and mystically, yet really and inseparably, **joined to Christ** as their head and husband; which is done in their **effectual calling**.
  - For even **as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body**, so also is Christ (1Co 12:12 NAS)
  - That **they may all be one**; even as Thou, Father, *art* in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; ...; that they may be one, **just as We are one**; (Joh 17:21-22 NAS)



# Next Lesson – Session 9

- Westminster Confession of Faith
  - Chapter 10 Of Effectual Calling
  - Chapter 11 Of Justification
  - Chapter 12 Of Adoption
  - Chapter 13 Of Sanctification
- Catechisms
  - **Q. 67. What is effectual calling? (WSC Q.31)**
  - Q. 68. Are the elect only effectually called?
  - Q. 69. What is the communion in grace which the members of the invisible church have with Christ?
  - **Q. 70. What is justification? (WSC Q.33)**
  - Q. 71. How is justification an act of God's free grace?
  - Q. 72. What is justifying faith?
  - Q. 73. How doth faith justify a sinner in the sight of God?
  - **Q. 74. What is adoption? (WSC Q.34)**
  - **Q. 75. What is sanctification? (WSC Q.35)**