

WCF.25 We are Part of Something Big!

[Falls Church – An OPC Family Watch Your Life and Doctrine Course 2020]

Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 25, The Church

25.1- The Catholicity of the Church Eph. 1:10, 22-23; 5:23, 27, 32; Col. 1:18

‘Catholic’ is not Roman Catholic, but the universal church, or the church in every place.

In the self-conscious awareness of those who belong to God, there must also be an awareness that we belong to those who have gone before. We have union with those who have died in the Lord. They are presently only names in a history book to us, but we will meet them!

The church is the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 1:23, “fullness of Him that fills all in all.” *The church is that without which Jesus Christ regards Himself as incomplete!* The Church is that which Christ fills by His presence. In the church militant, by His Spirit; in the church triumphant, by His personal presence.

25.2 - The Visibility of the Church

I Cor. 1:2; 12:12-13; Psa. 2:8; Rev. 7:9; Rom. 15:9-12 I Cor. 7:14; Acts 2:39; Gen. 17:7-12; Ezek. 16:20-21; Rom. 11:16; Gal. 3:7, 9, 14; Rom. 4:12, 16, 24 Matt. 13:47; Isa. 9:7; Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:30-36; Col. 1:13 Eph. 2:19; 3:15 Acts 2:47

The visible church is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. But the two are not co-extensive. The visible church is the kingdom, but the kingdom is not the visible church (only). The kingdom comes to expression visibly in the church. Where do we see Christ reigning and ruling on the earth? In the life of the church visible.

25.3 - The Ministry of the Church I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11-13; Matt. 28:19-20; Isa. 59:12

The ministry of the church has two dimensions.

Building on – evangelistic...the gathering of the saints.

Building up – edificational...the perfecting of the saints.

25.4 - The History of the Purity of the Church Rom. 11:3-5; Acts 2:41, 47; 9:31; 18:8-10

Acts 2:41-42; I Cor. 5:6-7; Rev. ch. 2-3

Here the authors apply corporately, what they have expounded in chapter 14 individually: the faith of believers, and their assurance, may be weak or strong. There are bound to be discrepancies between worship in churches as more or less pure. There have been, and will be, different levels of obedience and faithfulness in congregations, denominations, and the church around the world in different generations.

25.5 - The Permanence of the Church I Cor. 13:12; Rev. ch. 2-3; Matt. 13:24-30, 47 Matt. 23:37-39; Rom. 11:18-22 Matt. 16:18; Psa. 45:16-7; 72:17; Matt. 28:19-20; I Cor. 15:51-52; I Thess. 4:17

25.6 - The Head of the Church Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22 Matt. 23:8-10; I Peter 5:2-4

WCF.26 We Belong To Each Other!

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Westminster Confession Faith, Chapter 26, Communion of Saints

26.1 The Foundation of The Communion of Saints is Union with Christ.

All Saints are united to Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:4

Therefore, we are united to each other. Romans 8:17.

We are the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

Our love is mutual, and our use of gifts is found together. Ephesians 4:1-16

26.2 Responsibilities of Saints.

Build up other Christians. Hebrews 10:24-25 1 John 3:16-18

26.3 Denials.

We are not made equal with God. 1 Corinthians 8:6

We are not robbed of personal use of property. Ephesians 4:28.

We are united to Christ and each other.