



WEEK #4: The Church

The Apostles' Creed

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.*

I believe in: The holy catholic church.

"Because God is three persons in relationship, the only way we can realize the imago Dei in humanity is to form a community of persons in loving relationship: the church. The church then is the community of God, not only because it has been created by the triune God, but because the church shares in the triune community itself." – Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Ph.D.

- The trinity and the church are _____.

One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realized that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these." Mark 12:28-31 (NLT)

- The trinity and the church are _____.

After this I looked, and behold, right in front of me I saw a vast multitude of people—an enormous multitude so huge that no one could count—made up of victorious ones from every nation, tribe, people group, and language. They were all in glistening white robes, standing before the throne and before the Lamb with palm branches in their hands. And they shouted out with a passionate voice: "Salvation belongs to our God seated on the throne and to the Lamb!"

Revelation 7:9-10 (TPT)

I believe in: The communion of saints.

- The church is universal, eternal and _____.

"I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me." John 17:20-21 (NLT)

I believe in: The forgiveness of sins.

- Believing, belonging, _____.

Discussion Questions:

1. For what purpose do you think the church exists?
2. What motivates you to be part of a church?
3. How has the "communion of saints" helped you to grow spiritually?
4. In what ways can you participate in the work of the local church for the sake of your community and for the advancement of the gospel?

Recommended Resources:

- *Surrender to Love*, by David G. Benner
- *Affirming the Apostles' Creed*, by J. I. Packer
- *The Apostles' Creed*, by R. Albert Mohler, Jr
- *Love, Acceptance & Forgiveness*, by Jerry Cook and Stanley C. Baldwin