

History and Survey of the Westminster Confession of Faith



Leadership College: Module 2

Part 2: The Doctrine of the Confession

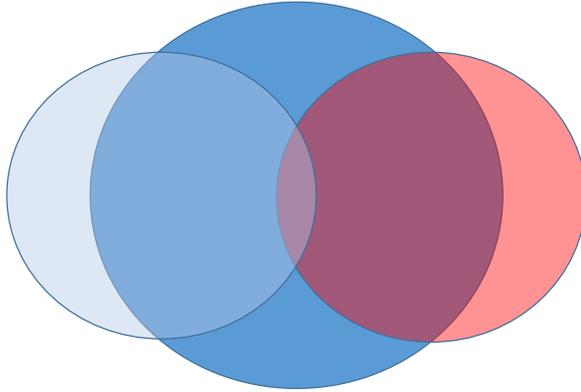
Of the Church (ch. 25)

Of the Communion of Saints (ch. 26)

Ch. 25 – Of the Church

1. The catholic or universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.
2. The visible church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel (not confined to one nation, as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, (Rom. 9:7, ESV)



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Ch. 25 – Of the Church

3. 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.

Ch. 25 – Of the Church

4. 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.

Ch. 25 – Of the Church, 1903 Revision

5. 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.

6. 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, ~~but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself, in the church, against Christ and all that is called God.~~

Ch. 26 – Of the Communion of Saints

1. All saints, that are united to Jesus Christ their Head, by his Spirit, and by faith, have fellowship with him in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory: and, being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.

The Apostles Creed

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of the saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Ch. 26 – Of the Communion of Saints

2. Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

Ch. 26 – Of the Communion of Saints

3. This communion which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them in any wise partakers of the substance of his Godhead; or to be equal with Christ in any respect: either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous. Nor doth their communion one with another, as saints, take away, or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions.

