

The Apostles' Creed



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- *Intro to the Creed Itself*
- *God the Father*
- *God the Son*
 - *Christ's Birth*
 - *Christ's Crucifixion and Death*
 - *Christ's Death and Resurrection*
 - *Christ in Heaven*
 - *Christ as Judge*
- *God the Holy Spirit*
- *The Church (part 3)*



The Church

- “We believe in the holy and complete Church, which is the communion of the saints...”
 - This is another line of the Creed where it would be very helpful for us to focus on definitions of terms (since an amazing number of people use various, mutually exclusive definitions that cause confusion)



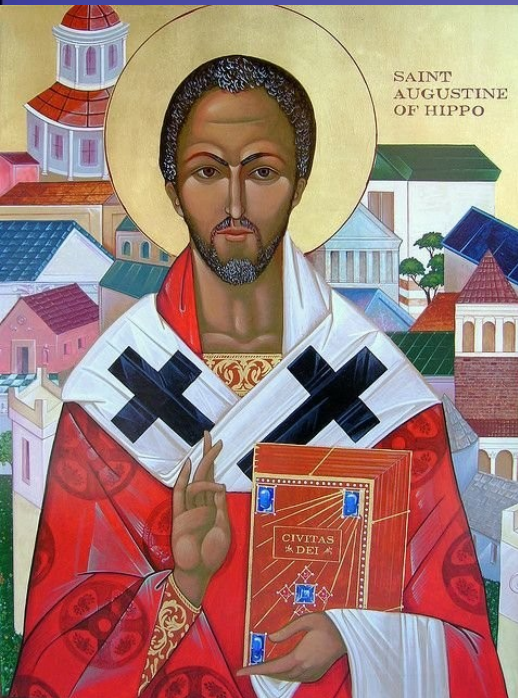
The Church

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 - This is another line of the Creed where it would be very helpful for us to focus on definitions of terms
 - “Holy”
 - The first week, we talked about how the Church is intended to be holy (“set apart for Godly purposes”) —not a building, but an interactive, inter-supportive community of saints (“holy people”)
(NOTE: Saints are not *specific* people within the church who are somehow *extraordinarily* holy—i.e.; holier than you and me—but rather *everyone* in the church, since *everyone* in God’s family has been called to be set apart for Godly purposes)



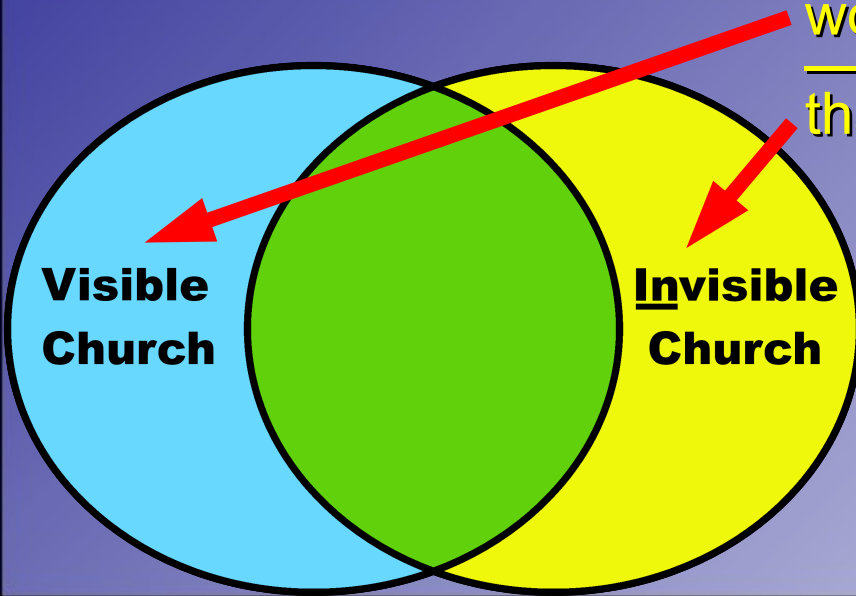
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 - This is another line of the Creed where it would be very helpful for us to focus on definitions of terms
 - “Holy”
 - “Complete”
 - The original word used by creeds was “catholic”
 - But that just refers to the Church as a unified Body
 - People speak of the “visible” and “invisible” Church (which is technically a misnomer—even though Augustine came up with it and he was a smart guy—because *how* many churches are there in the world?)



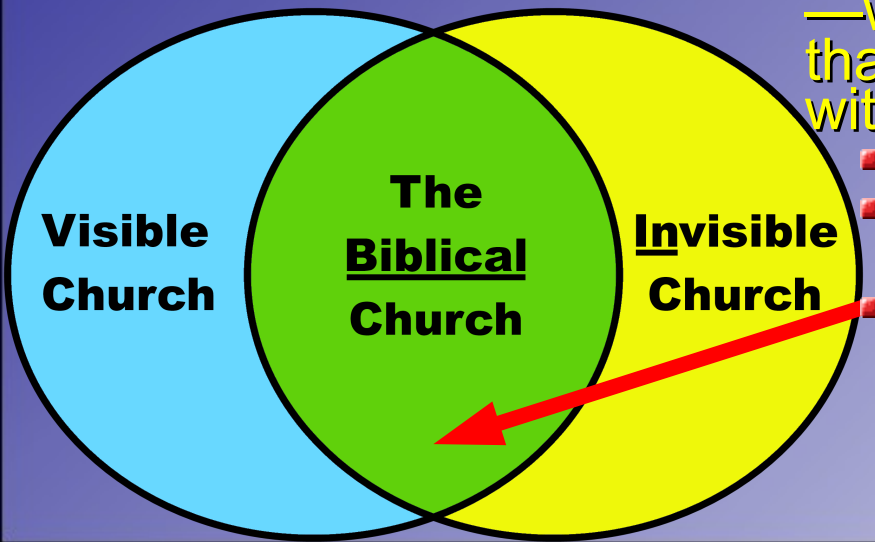
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 - But that just refers to the Church as a unified Body
 - People speak of the “visible” and “invisible” Church
 - Think of it like another Venn Diagram
 - The “Visible Church” is the church that the world *around* us sees—the “evident” church—while the “Invisible Church” is the church that *God* sees—the “holy, set apart” church (“whose names are written in heaven” according to Hebrews 12:23)
(who have been “born again” according to Jesus in John 3:5-7)
(who have moved from being dead to being “made alive with Christ” according to Ephesians 2:15)



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 - The “Visible Church” is the church that the world *around* us sees—the “evident” church—while the “Invisible Church” is the church that *God* sees—the “holy, set apart” church with a “sweet spot” where the two intersect
 - So what Christians are in *this* section?
 - And what Christian ambassadors of the Kingdom *should* be in *this* section?
 - So technically, isn't *this* the section where the most truly Biblical Church is really supposed to be active in?
 - Why is that such a hard concept? (read Matthew 7:21, etc.)



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(NOTE: We keep talking about the “church”—and we’ve even already seen the Biblical word for it being used—but we haven’t *defined* it yet)

(“ἐκκλησία” [“*ekklēsia*”]—a compound word made up from “ἐκ” [“*ek*”] and “καλέω” [“*kaleō*”] meaning “called out”)

(what should that naturally remind us of?)

(“We believe in the “set-apart” and complete “called-out” group, which is the communion of the “set-apart” ones”—do you see a theme emerging here?)
(is a “church” a building?)



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 - Read John 17:16
 - How does Jesus describe these set-apart, called-out ones?
 - But then read the larger context of this description in John 17:15-18
 - How does that agree with or contradict what Paul quotes in 2 Corinthians 6:17?
 - Is the Church *in* the world, *of* the world, *separate* from the world, or what?
 - What exactly—functionally—does it mean that we as the Church have been “called out” from the world, but have been actively sent *back into* the world by Christ?
 - How does Christ speak to that in verses such as Matthew 5:14-16?



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 - “Holy”
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 - Read John 17:16
 - So when we use the word “church,” what exactly are we talking about?



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 - “Holy”
 - “Complete”
 - “Church”
 - “Communion”
(NOTE: This isn't technically a Biblical word, *per se* —it's a Latin word (a compound word made up from the prefix “com-” [meaning “with” or “together”], and the root “unus” [meaning “oneness” or “union”] —which is where we get our English word “common”)



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“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?”

(1 Corinthians 10:16 [KJV])

“Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?”

(1 Corinthians 10:16 [NIV])



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“they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship”

(Galatians 2:9 [KJV])

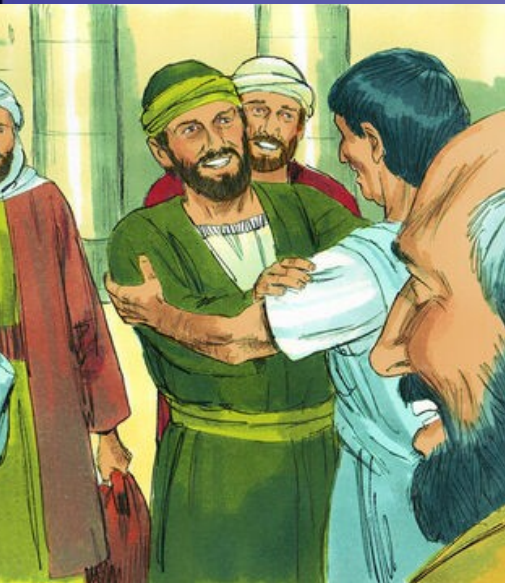
“Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.”

(2 Corinthians 9:13 [NIV])



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 - So as the “Church,” how should we be in communion—in radical *koinonia*—with all of the *rest* of God's “holy ones” in the world today?
 - What did Jesus do for us in Ephesians 4:11-16?
 - For what purposes did He do that for us (especially in verses 12-14)?
 - And how do we as the Church do that (especially in verses 15-16)?



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 - As the “Church,” how should we be in communion—in radical *koinonia*—with all of the *rest* of God’s “holy ones” who have sojourned in this world *before* us?
 - Please read Ephesians 2:19-22
 - How are we built on the foundation of those who came before us—how are they *still* part of the “building” that we are being built into?
 - So how does the Church create its legacy?



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 - As the “Church,” how should we build communion—a radical *koinonia*—with all of the *rest* of God’s “holy ones” who will be born into this world *after* us?
 - Please read 2 Timothy 2:1-2
 - How does this reflect Christ’s command in Matthew 28:19-20?
 - So how does the Church create its legacy?

