

4. With respect to **truth**:
 - “*Catholic*” implies “*orthodox*” (“the bounds of orthodoxy”).
 - Heretical groups have abandoned the catholic/universal church – the faith of Jude 3.
- It is no small thing to abandon catholic teaching (i.e., “sexual liberation”, “open-theism” and other errors). [*DeYoung, 77*]

APOSTOLIC CHURCH

- Founded on the apostle’s teaching (Acts 2:42, Eph. 2:20).
- The apostle’s gave us the New Testament – and it is truly the Church’s final authority – Sola Scriptura.

APPLICATION

- Our culture does not dispose us to see the Church as needful.
 - “*Do you*”, *find “your personal truth”, discover “your own identity (or gender)”*”.
 - People hesitate to make commitments to a local church.
- The universal church is wonderful, but the New Testament assumes all believers are in local churches.
- Joining a church is one expression of submission to Christ as our Lord and head.



Schedule:

Chap. 7 – One Baptism for the Remission of Sins Oct. 26 – Karl

Resources for Further Study:

- **Class Book:** *The Nicene Creed: What You Need to Know about the Most Important Creed Ever Written* by Kevin DeYoung [Crossway, 2025]
- **Extra:** *The Nicene Creed: An Introduction* by Phillip Cary [Lexham Press, 2023]

Ch. 6: One, Holy, Catholic, & Apostolic Church

REVIEW

- [We believe]... in the Holy Spirit... Lord and Giver of Life
 - Shares the title “Lord” with Father and Son.
 - Is on the Creator side of the *creator-creature* divide.
 - Who proceeds from the Father (and the Son)
 - With the Father & Son together is worshiped and co-glorified
 - Three times the Greek word “syn” [sun] is used.
- “...emphasiz[es] the inseparability of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as one God, which is evident in the fact that they are rightly worshiped with one another, co-glorified together with equal and inseparable honor.” (Cary, p. 190)*
- Who has spoken through the prophets
 - God breathes out [in-spires] the Word and carries the prophets along to author it (2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:21).
 - The Spirit gives spiritual life through the Word
 - Spirit filling is parallel with the Word dwelling in us (Eph. 5:18-19, Col. 3:16).

3 POINTS ABOUT THE CREED’S INCLUSION OF THE CHURCH

1. The importance of the Church.
 - It is surprising that the Church is part of the creed.
 - *Do Christians today think highly of the church – would they have put it in such a creed?*
 - Jesus founded the Church (Matt. 16:18).
 - Jesus promises to be present with the Church (Matt. 18:20, in context; see also 28:20).
 - It is His body – of which He is the head.
2. The Church is connected to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.
 - The Spirit inspires prophets...
 - He gives spiritual birth to believers (John 3)...
 - And the Spirit baptizes them into one body... the church (1 Cor. 12:13).

- The Church began in the NT sense at Pentecost with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2).

“The central place of [the Holy Spirit’s] working is the church, the Body of Christ.” (Cary, p. 195) [see also DeYoung, p. 72.]

3. The Church is an “article of faith”.

- We profess *belief* in the Church.

“Just as we confess our faith in a God we cannot see, we confess our faith in the church, even if we cannot always see the church of the Nicene Creed with our earthly eyes. Cynics will always have examples (some accurate and some unfair) of the church’s failure and infidelity, but we still believe in a church that is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.” (DeYoung, p. 72.)

- We must *listen* to the Church.

“When the one church is holy, catholic, and apostolic we must listen to her. The church is a pillar and buttress of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). The church is not infallible, but she is empowered and led by the Spirit and the word.” (DeYoung, p. 72.)

- We are beneficiaries of God’s working in history through the Church.
- We aren’t left to ourselves to figure out Christianity on our own – we have been given creeds and confessions, and teachers and pastors.

Four adjectives describe the attributes of the church we believe in:

ONE CHURCH [UNITY]

- The unity of the church is not primarily *external* and *visible* – it is *internal* and *spiritual*.
 - The oneness of the church being realized now depends on the church also being holy, catholic and apostolic.
 - At Christ’s return, his Church will be triumphant at last.
- The unity of the church is something we are to *maintain* as it is already *present* by the Spirit (Eph. 4:3... with the context of 4:1-16; see DeYoung, p. 73).

- Unity is rooted in shared doctrine (4:4-6) and crosses ethnic, cultural and personal [i.e., sin] boundaries (2:11-3:6; 4:1-2).
 - Only one true faith, but many expressions of it.

“In Essentials Unity, In Non-Essentials Liberty, In All Things Charity” - Rupertus Meldeniens (ca. 1627)

HOLY CHURCH

- Positional – we have been made holy.
 - Presently sanctified: 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11
 - Corporately holy: 1 Pet. 2:9-10, Eph. 2:21-22
 - Role of the Spirit: 2 Thess. 2:13, 1 Pet. 1:2, (Tit. 3:5).
- Ideal – we strive to become more holy:
 - 1 Pet. 1:15-16, 1 Jn. 3:3, 2 Cor. 7:1, 1 Thess. 4:7.

“Holiness, for the Christian as well as for the church, is both gift and calling. We who are perfected in Christ are also being sanctified in Christ (Heb. 10:14). Holiness is what the church already has (10:10), what the church will one day become (12:10), and what the church must presently strive after (12:14).” (DeYoung, p. 745)

- Progressive – sanctification is a process; *we give people grace and time, and we can do the same with churches.*

CATHOLIC CHURCH [UNIVERSAL]

- From the Greek *katholikos*, meaning *universal*.
 - Not referring to the Roman Catholic Church.
- *Four senses of universal.*
 1. With respect to **place**:
 - Bigger than one location – global, in all places (Jn. 4:23).
 - Bigger than Earth, part of the invisible church in heaven.
 2. With respect to **people**:
 - All peoples, tribes, languages, and nations (Rev. 5:9).
 - All races, sexes and social statuses (Gal. 3:28).
 3. With respect to **time** (across the centuries).

“oldest, most diverse, most global institution on the planet.” (DeYoung, p. 76)