

Sunday Morning, June 2, 2024  
What is Christ's Church? She is Invisible and Visible and Relational

- I. The Church Spiritual. The Church Invisible or Internal
  - A. The Triune God and the Church Internal
    - 1. The Church Invisible Are Those God the Father Elected Before Time WCF 25.1, Heb. 12:23
    - 2. The Church Invisible Are Those God the Son Purchased with His Own Blood Eph. 5:25, Eph. 5:27, Jn. 10:16
    - 3. The Church Invisible Are Those God the Spirit Regenerated Jn. 3:3, Matt. 13:41–42
  - B. The Necessity for Us to Be in the Church Internal Rom. 2:28–29; Rom. 9:6; WLC Q 61; Matt. 7:21
  
- II. The Church Institutional. The Church Visible or External
  - A. The Triune God and the Church Visible Eph 1:22, Eph. 3:10, Eph 3:21, Matt 16:15–19, Eph. 4:11; Ac. 20:28, Jn. 21:15–17
  
  - B. The Necessity for Us to Be in the Church Visible
  
- III. The Church Relational. The Church Loving, the Communion of Saints
  - A. The Triune God and the Church Relational WCF 26; 1 Cor. 12:7; 1 Cor. 3:21–23, Col. 2:19; Eph. 4, 1 Cor. 12
  
  - B. The Necessity for Us to Be the Church Relational WCF 26; 1 Jn. 3:14, 3:17–18, 4:20; Jas. 1:27
  
- IV. Keeping the Perspectives of the Church in Biblical Balance
  - A. We Become Unbalanced When We Understand the Church as only/primarily Invisible, Experiential
  
  - B. We Become Unbalanced When We Understand the Church as only/primarily Visible, Institutional
  
  - C. We Become Unbalanced When We Understand the Church as only/primarily Loving, Relational

\* \* \* \* \*

*Quotes*

- 1. The catholic (that is, universal) church, which is invisible, consists of all the elect who have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ its head. This church is his bride, his body, and the fullness of him who fills all in all.
  - 2. The visible church, which is also catholic (that is, universal) under the gospel (that is, not confined to one nation, as it was before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world who profess the true religion, together with their children. It is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, outside of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.
- Westminster Confession, chapter 25

1. All saints—who 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 participate in each other's gifts and graces and are obliged to perform those public and private duties which lead to their mutual good, both inwardly and outwardly.

2. It is the duty of professing saints to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God and in performing such other spiritual services as help them to edify one another. It is their duty also to come to the aid of one another in material things according to their various abilities and necessities. As God affords opportunity, this communion is to be extended to all those in every place who call on the name of the Lord Jesus.

Westminster Confession, chapter 26

"When we speak of the Church invisible and the Church visible we are not to be understood as if we referred in these designation to two separate and distinct Churches, but rather to the same Church under two different characters. We do not assert that Christ has founded two Churches on earth, but only one; and we affirm that the one Church is to be regarded under two distinct aspects." Bannerman

"There is not one visible Church and another invisible; but one Church, invisible in the spiritual, and visible in the material world. And as God cares for both body and soul, so does Christ govern the external affairs of the Church just as certainly as with His grace He nourishes it internally." Kyper

"If Jesus has an earthly throne and thence reigned personally over His Church, all men would bow before Him; but being enthroned in heaven at the right hand of the Father, the King is forgotten; out of sight, out of mind. Hence ignorance concerning the work of the Holy Spirit is the cause. Since Jesus governs His Church not directly, but by His Word and Spirit there is no respect for the majesty of His Sovereign government." Kyper

"Some people construct a Christianity which consists entirely of a personal relationship to Jesus Christ and has virtually nothing to do with the church. . . [they] have given up on the ecclesiastical institution as hopeless. . . But we need to beware lest we despise the church of God, and are blind to His work in history. We may safely say that God has not abandoned his church . . . He is still building and refining it. And if God has not abandoned it, how can we?" John Stott

"Is a head still a head if it doesn't have a body? Is a basement still a basement if there's no house on top? Is a friend really your friend if you can't stand his wife? According to 1 Corinthians 3 the church is God's building, with Jesus Christ as its foundation. . . A foundation exists to be built upon, not lived in all by itself. Who wants to live in a basement without the rest of the house on top? No one I know, except for the Christians who want Jesus but not the church." Kevin DeYoung

John Calvin likened the Church as our Mother: "For there is no other way to enter into life unless this mother conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and lastly unless she keep us under her care and guidance until, putting off mortal flesh, we become like the angels . . . Furthermore away from her bosom one cannot hope for any forgiveness of sins or any salvation."

"Here is found the most fundamental difference between liberalism and Christianity—liberalism is altogether in the imperative mood (do these things, live this good life), while Christianity begins with a triumphant indicative . . . Liberalism regards Christ as an Example and Guide; Christianity as Savior. Liberalism makes Him an example for faith; Christianity, the object of faith." Machen

"The church of Jesus Christ is the most important institution in the world. The assembly of the redeemed, the company of the saints, the children of God are more significant in world history than any other group, organization, or nation. The United States of America compares to the church of Jesus Christ like a speck of dust compares to the sun." John Piper

"The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." Wesley