

NBC Proposed Confession of Faith

Sunday School Class

January 23, 2011

Class Outline



Class #1: Introduction: *Why Do This Study?*

Class #2:

1. The Tri-une God
2. Revelation (Part 1)

Class #3:

2. Revelation (Part 2)

Class #4:

3. Creation of Humanity

Class #5:

4. The Fall
5. The Plan of God
6. The Gospel

Class #6:

7. The Redemption of Christ

Class #7:

8. The Justification of Sinners

Class #8:

9. The Power of the Holy Spirit

Class #9:

10. The Kingdom of God

Class #10:

11. God's New People

Class #11 & 12:

12. Baptism and the Lord's Supper
13. The Restoration of All Things

God's New People

“Essentially, the church is, was, and always will be a single worshiping community, permanently gathered in the true sanctuary which is the heavenly Jerusalem (Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22-24), the place of God’s presence. Here all who are alive in Christ, the physically living with the physically dead (i.e., the church militant with the church triumphant) worship continually. In the world, however, this one church appears in the form of local congregations, each one called to fulfill the role of being a microcosm (a small-scale representative sample) of the church as a whole.” – J.I. Packer

Paragraph #11 “God’s New People”

We believe that God’s new covenant people have **already** come to the *heavenly Jerusalem*; they are **already** seated **with Christ** in the heavenlies. This **universal church** is manifest in **local churches** of which Christ is the only Head; thus each “local church” is, in fact, the church, the household of God, the assembly of the living God, and the pillar and foundation of the truth. The church is the body of Christ, the apple of his eye, graven on his hands, and **he has pledged himself to her forever.**

✓ Universal/Local Church

“There is a distinction to be drawn between the church as we humans see it and as God alone can see it. This is the historic distinction between the “visible church” and the “invisible church.” Invisible means, not that we can see no sign of its presence, but that we cannot know (as God, the heart-reader, knows, 2 Tim. 2:19) which of those baptized, professing members of the church as an organized institution are inwardly regenerate and thus belong to the church as a spiritual fellowship of sinners loving their Savior. Jesus taught that in the organized church there would always be people who thought they were Christians and passed as Christians, some indeed becoming ministers, but who were not renewed in heart and would therefore be exposed and rejected at the Judgment (Matt. 7:15-27; 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50; 25:1-46). The “visible-invisible” distinction is drawn to take account of this. It is not that there are two churches but that the visible community regularly contains imitation Christians whom God knows not to be real (and who could know this for themselves if they would, 2 Cor. 13:5).” – J.I. Packer

- ✓ Christ the Only Head - Read: **Matthew 16:18-19**
- ✓ God with Us - Read: **Ephesians 1:11-23**

“If we want to be a church with the power of God, then we must not rely upon the power of men—all the more when it is available for our use. ...It is when Christian men and women take their stand on God’s Word before the watching world, living in holiness and ready to suffer for the sake of our Lord that our church today will have the power of God that is able to cast down strongholds and crash open the gates of hell.”

– **Richard Phillips**

How do you know you are a true biblical church?

The church is distinguished by her *gospel message*, her sacred *ordinances*, her *discipline*, her great *mission*, and, above all, by her *love for God*, and by her members’ *love for one another and for the world*.

- ✓ How is our love for one another expressed?
- ✓ How is our love for the world expressed?

Individuals united to Christ and one another:

Crucially, this gospel we cherish has both **personal** and **corporate** dimensions, neither of which may properly be overlooked. Christ Jesus is our peace: he has not only brought about peace with God, but also peace between alienated peoples. His purpose was to create in himself *one new humanity*, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both Jew and Gentile to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. **The church serves as a sign** of God’s future new world *when its members live for the service of one another and their neighbors, rather than for self-focus*. The church is the corporate ***dwelling place of God’s Spirit***, and the continuing ***witness to God in the world***.

*“...the Spirit is poured out both on each Christian and on the church, so that fellowship with Christ (**1 John 1:3**), ministry from Christ (**John 12:32; 14:18; Eph. 2:17**), and foretastes of heaven (**2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:14**) become realities of churchly experience.”* – **J.I. Packer**