

TIME OF REFLECTION

“Usually, the way God will heal somebody from church hurt is by using the church.”

~Jackie Hill Perry, poet, writer, hip hop artist

“He can no longer have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his Mother.”

~Cyprian (c.210-258), early North African church leader

“...for those to whom [God] is Father, the church may also be Mother.... Furthermore, away from her bosom one cannot hope for any forgiveness of sins or any salvation.”

~John Calvin (1509-1564) in *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 4.1.1 & 4.1.4

“In an era that prizes constant change and originality, it can be surprising to realize that corporate worship has neither.... Belonging to the church will always increase our obligations and decrease our independence. And this is good.”

~Megan Hill in *A Place to Belong: Learning to Love the Local Church*

Chapter 26.12. All believers are obligated to join themselves to local churches when and where they have the opportunity. Likewise, all who are admitted to the privileges of a church are also subject to the discipline and government of it, according to the rule of Christ.... 14. Every church and all its members are obligated to pray continually for the good and prosperity of all churches of Christ in every place. They must also—at every opportunity within the limits of their stations and callings—exercise their gifts and graces to benefit every church. Also, when churches are raised up by the providence of God, insofar as they enjoy opportunity and favorable circumstances for it, they should have fellowship among themselves for their peace, growth in love, and mutual edification....

Chapter 27.1. All saints are united to Jesus Christ their head by his Spirit and by faith.... They have fellowship in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory. Since they are united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces and are obligated to carry out these duties, both public and private, in an orderly way to promote their mutual good, both in the inner and outer aspects of their lives.

~The 1689 Second London Baptist Confession of Faith, from Chapters 26 & 27

“A time will come when instead of shepherds feeding the sheep, the church will have clowns entertaining the goats.... That very church which the world likes best is sure to be that which God abhors.”

~Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), famed London preacher

“Don't build a church that attracts people — build a church that attracts God and God will attract the people.”

~Anonymous

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “We Believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Ephesians 2:11-22 (ESV)*

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of

the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.