

# Blueprints for Belief

## *Laying the Theological Foundations for Constructing Your Faith*

### **Westminster Confession of Faith 26.1-3 – Communion of the Saints**

- Every true Christian is united to Christ. We have fellowship with Him in His graces, suffering, death, resurrection, and glory. We are united to Him by His Spirit and by faith.
  - Romans 6:5 – “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”
  - Colossians 2:12 – “...having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God...”
- We are also united in love to one another. We should use our gifts as a blessing to serve the body of Christ.
  - Romans 12:4-6 – “For as in one body we have many members...and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ...Having gifts that differ...let us use them.”
  - 1 Peter 4:10 – “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”
- We should strive to maintain fellowship with other believers through worship, service, and help with physical needs. This is true of our local church and any professing believer in the whole world.
  - Acts 2:42, 44-45 – “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers...And all who believed were together and had all things in common...they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.”
  - Galatians 6:10 – “So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”
- Our union with Christ does not mean, in any way, that we are gods, that we share in His divine essence, or that we are equal to Him.
  - Isaiah 40:25 – “To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One.”
  - 2 Peter 1:4 – “...that you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”
- Our fellowship with other believers does not infringe upon our right to private property.
  - Acts 5:4 – “While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal?”
  - Exodus 20:15 – “You shall not steal.”

### Discussion Questions

1. In your experience, what most hinders you from actually sharing your gifts and receiving others’ gifts in the life of the church?
2. The Confession teaches that our fellowship should be extended “unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus,” as God gives opportunity. How should this shape the way you relate to Christians in other denominations, cultures, or local churches?
3. What practical concerns might the confession be seeking to correct with the private property clause?

## **Westminster Confession of Faith – Chapter 26**

1. All saints, that 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 have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.

2. Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

3. This communion which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them in any wise partakers of the substance of his Godhead; or to be equal with Christ in any respect: either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous. Nor doth their communion one with another, as saints, take away, or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions.