

THE APOSTLES' CREED: THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS
1 Corinthians 12:12–27

Confessional definitions:

- Heidelberg Catechism, Q55 “What do you understand by ‘the communion of saints’? First, that believers one and all, as members of this community, share in Christ and in all his treasures and gifts. Second, that each member should consider it a duty to use these gifts readily and joyfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.”
- Westminster Confession of Faith 26:1–2: “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. 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.”

Main ideas:

- Believers have a spiritual union with Christ: “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:”
- Believers have a spiritual union with one another: “and, being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces,”
- Believers have common duties towards God: “Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God,”
- Believers have common duties towards one another: “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.”

Summary: believers have a spiritual union with Christ and with one another, and therefore have common duties towards God and towards one another.

Outline:

- 1. The reality of the body of Christ (12:12–14)**
- 2. The equality of the body of Christ (12:15–24)**
- 3. The function of the body of Christ (12:25–27)**