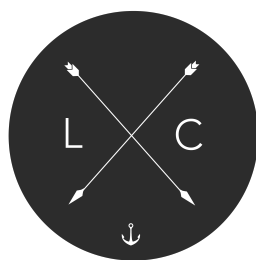


THIS I BELIEVE

Adrian Wright



LEADERSHIP COLLECTIVE

WELCOME

We are so glad that you decided to join us for this discipleship course. Our hope is that as you go through the scriptures, discuss the content, ask questions and allow God to speak to your heart and mind, that you will be inspired to walk with God and “believe” in Him with all your heart.

WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT

This course is an in-depth and interactive look at the statements in the Apostle’s Creed. The Apostles’ Creed (as well as the Nicene Creed) date back to the 1st and 2nd centuries and were an attempt by believers to declare what they believe in an effort to both defend their faith and to equip themselves to share their faith.

A Springboard

The Apostles Creed is not equal to scripture in any way. We are simply going to use this early statement of faith as a guideline to discuss what scripture says about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Church and everlasting life.

Interact and Enjoy

This course is meant to be an interactive experience. Make sure you jot down any questions you might have and ask them during the Questions section at the end of each session. Our hope is that you will be inspired to dig deeper into the incredible richness of the Gospel and the truth about the God that we believe in.

Thank you for joining us!

Adrian Wright

The Apostle's Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

NOTES:

2 Timothy 2:15

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the word of truth.***

SESSION 1: The Father

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I Believe

Even though this creed has been recited by groups of Christians over the centuries, usually in the context of corporate worship, it still comes down to a _____ declaration of faith. This is because in order for faith to be real it must be your own. There is no other way to be in a _____ with God except through personal faith in Him and in the work of Jesus.

What is Faith?

The original Greek word translated here as the phrase "I believe" meant more than just believing in God. It meant believing _____ God. This kind of faith is more than an opinion you hold about something, it means to _____ God and to live in a relation of _____ to Him.

Who is our faith in?

The simple answer is that our faith is in God, specifically the God of _____.

How do we know this God?

How can we as finite beings come to know the infinite and almighty Creator of heaven and earth in a personal way? It seems like an impossible task, doesn't it? Yet we can know God through His _____, which is a fancy way of saying that we can know God through what He has told us about Himself. God wants us to know Him, and more than that, to love Him, because He loves us.

God has revealed Himself in two main ways:

1. General Revelation:

General revelation of God basically means that God is evident in _____.

Psalm 19:1-4

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

Romans 1:20

*For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, **in the things that have been made**. So they are without excuse.*

2. Special Revelation:

Special revelation is the specific way in which God has revealed Himself to people, through the Holy Spirit, His declarations in the Old Testament, scripture, and most importantly, through _____.

Hebrews 1:1-4

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days **he has spoken to us by his Son**, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.*

God has a Name

God's name Yahweh or Jehovah means _____. This tells us that God is eternal, uncreated, and all-powerful. He exists completely of His own accord.

Exodus 3:13-14

*Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "**I am who I am.**" And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I am has sent me to you.'"*

God also described Himself to Moses:

Exodus 34:5-7

*The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, **a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty.**"*

We see here that God reveals Himself as both _____ and _____.

When Jesus sent His disciples out into the world to share the good news of the gospel and to make disciples of all nations, he showed us something very important about God:

Matthew 28:19

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the **name** of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

When Jesus describes God's name He uses the singular word _____ to describe the _____ separate parts of God that are all fully God and fully united. This is known as the _____. And so we see that God is a triune God made up of God the _____, God the _____, and God the _____.

God is eternal

God is the only uncreated person in existence. He has always existed and will always exist. He is self-sufficient and the *Prime Mover* of all things.

Revelation 1:8

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

What can we infer about God from His creation?

He must be supernatural (created space and time)

He must be powerful (incredibly)

He must be eternal (self-existent)

He must be omnipresent (if He created space and time can't be limited by it)

He must be timeless and changeless (He created time)

He must be personal (the impersonal cannot create personality)

He must be infinite and singular (you cannot have two infinities)

He must be diverse yet have unity (unity and diversity exist in nature)

He must be intelligent (supremely - only a cognitive being can produce cognitive beings)

He must be purposeful (He deliberately created everything)

He must be moral (no moral law can be held without a giver)

He must be caring (or no moral laws would have been given)

The God of the Bible is revealed in scripture and through His acts in history to possess every one of these qualities (and many more).

Colossians 1:16-17

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Why did God create us?

SESSION 2: Jesus Christ His Son

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

The centrepiece of our faith

What separates our faith from any other belief in the world is that we believe that God sent His own Son to the world to redeem people from their sins.

The Name of Jesus

“Jesus” means _____ and “Christ” means the _____ One of God. Jesus is therefore the Saviour-King who died to save us and was resurrected and was exalted to the right hand of God, where He now rules all things.

Philippians 2:10

So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

In the Old Testament people were anointed for three separate roles: Prophet, Priest, and King. Jesus is the “_____One” and is the fulness of all of these.

Prophet: We were ignorant - Jesus is the Saviour-Prophet declaring God’s will and plan for our lives.

Priest: We were Separated from God - Jesus is the Saviour-Priest reconciling us with the Father and atoning for our sins.

King: We are weak - Jesus is the Saviour King who guides us, protects us and provides for us as His people.

John 1:1-4

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made through him**, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

John 1:14

*And the **Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Fully God, fully man

Jesus was born into this world as fully God, while at the same time he was fully human. This is known as the Hypostatic _____. As both God and man, Jesus was able to reconcile mankind with the Father. While on earth he was limited to space and _____, and experienced hunger, thirst, pain and suffering like any person.

The descent of Jesus

Philippians 2:8

*And being found in human form, **he humbled himself** by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

1. Born of a Virgin

Jesus entered this world _____ in a way that God had foretold centuries before through the prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 7:14

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, **the virgin shall conceive and bear a son**, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

Why is the virgin birth of Jesus important?

2. Suffered, Crucified, Died, Buried

Jesus was _____ for our sins. He suffered the fate of a condemned criminal under the Roman government and was put to death on a cross on a hill outside Jerusalem. Before His death Jesus was mocked, scourged, and humiliated - all by the people he created.

The death of Jesus fulfilled the righteous _____ of the Law and of God. The _____ Jesus received was the _____ we deserved. Like the sacrifices of the Old Testament foretold, Jesus died in our place. Jesus was the spotless lamb, the _____ sacrifice.

Isaiah 63:6

*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the **Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

John 1:29

*The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, **the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**"*

Ephesians 1:7

*In him we have **redemption through his blood**, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the **riches of his grace.***

What is the meaning of "redemption"?

What does it mean to say that we are saved by *Grace*?

3. Descended into Hell

Physical _____ is an inescapable reality for all of us. In the past it was something to be feared, but Jesus tasted death and then _____ it.

Meaning of the word "Hell"

Hell here is not the place of _____ judgement described in the Bible, instead the word "Hell" here refers to _____ or the "place of the departed". The biblical place of eternal judgement is *Gehenna*.

The fact that Jesus was in Hades means that he was really _____. We cannot know for sure what Jesus did in death, however scriptures mention that he "led the captives free" (Ephesians 4:11) and "preached to the spirits in prison" (1 Peter 3:19), signifying that His death was also applied to the believers of the Old Testament.

Ephesians 4:8-10

*Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he **led a host of captives**, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had **also descended into the lower regions**, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

The Ascent of Jesus

1. The Third Day He Rose Again

This starts the _____ of Jesus, after having defeated death and Hades, he was raised again on the third day.

Why is the resurrection of Jesus so significant to our faith?

1 Corinthians 15:17-18

*For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And **if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile** and you are **still in your sins**. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.*

Jesus died for our sins, and having fulfilled the requirement of the Law against us he was raised to life. This means that Jesus' death on the cross was the death of our _____ selves and his resurrection gave us all new and _____ life.

Romans 6:5-11

*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. We know that our **old self was crucified** with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that **we will also live with him**. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must **consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus**.*

The resurrection of Jesus was the _____ verification of everything that Jesus had ever taught and proved that He truly was the Messiah. It also guarantees our future resurrection and eternal life with God.

Is there any historical evidence to prove the resurrection?

2. Ascended into Heaven

Acts 1:9-11

*And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, **he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.** And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, **will come in the same way as you saw him go** into heaven."*

What is the meaning of heaven?

To be in heaven means to be in the eternal _____ of God. It means to share in the life of God and to enjoy _____ fellowship with Him eternally. Scripture tells us of the City of God in Revelation 21 and how in the future this heavenly city will be placed on earth after earth has been renewed.

Revelation 21:1-4

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, **coming down out of heaven from God**, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "**Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."*

A resurrected body

In our resurrection as believers we will be made like Jesus was in His resurrection. Our physical bodies will be no more and instead we will receive a _____, eternal body.

1 Corinthians 15:35-44

*But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? **With what kind of body do they come?"** You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. **But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.** For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; **it is raised in glory.** It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; **it is raised a spiritual body.** If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.*

3. Seated at the right hand of God the Father

Mark 16:19

So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.

The right hand of the Father is more than just a position to sit. Instead it signifies the full _____ of God the Father.

From the right hand of God, Jesus:

Judging the Living and the Dead:

There are two different judgements. The judgement of righteous believers for reward and the judgement of unrepentant sinners.

1. The judgement of the righteous

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

*For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for **the Day will disclose it**, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, **he will receive a reward**. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, **though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire**.*

This clearly shows that there is a _____ in heaven for what we do on earth as believers, by the grace of God.

2. The final judgement

Revelation 20:11-15

*Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And **the dead were judged by what was written in the books**, according to **what they had done**. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, **Death and Hades gave up the dead** who were in them, and **they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done**. Then Death and Hades were thrown into **the lake of fire**. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was **not found written in the book of life**, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Jesus died for the sins of the whole world and having taken our judgement upon Himself has justified us before God. However there are those who choose not to put their _____ in this gracious sacrifice. This means that they are still accountable for their wrongful actions.

Ready for His Return

Matthew 24:44

Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Jesus has encouraged us to be ready for his return, how can we do this?

SESSION 3: The Holy Spirit (Part 1)

I believe in the Holy Spirit.

A New Life

In Christ we have received a new life and a new way of _____. We no longer depend on our own _____ to live life and do what God has called us to do - but instead we become totally dependant upon the empowering work of the Holy Spirit. The more mature we are in Jesus the more _____ we would be on the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 2:20

*I have been crucified with Christ. **It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.** And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

The Person of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God's own Spirit and the third part of the _____. The Holy Spirit can be described as the _____ of God, who actions the will of God in every situation. We see this right from the beginning of creation.

Genesis 1:1-2

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And **the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.***

Throughout the _____ we see how the Holy Spirit was at work, especially through the lives of the _____ and the leaders of Israel as the Spirit would come upon them.

Judges 14:5-6

*Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And behold, a young lion came toward him roaring. **Then***

the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat.

The Promise

It was through these Prophets that God promised a future _____ of the Holy Spirit upon all people.

Joel 2:28-29

*“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will **pour out my Spirit on all flesh**; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.*

Jesus lived his life by the _____ of the Holy Spirit, being conceived by the Spirit, led and _____ by the Spirit, and raised by the Spirit from the dead. Jesus also confirmed the _____ of the Holy Spirit to all believers.

John 14:16-17

*And I will ask the Father, and He will **give you another Helper**, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, **for he dwells with you and will be in you.***

Acts 1:8

*But **you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

Receiving the Spirit

How do we receive the Spirit?

Mark 1:8

*I (John) baptize you with water, but **he (Jesus) will baptize you** with the Holy Spirit.*

The Bible tells us that _____ Himself is the one who baptizes us with His Spirit. Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise was fulfilled on the day of _____ when the believers received the indwelling presence of God's Spirit.

Peter's sermon

Hearing the commotion, thousands of people gathered to see and hear what it was that was happening with the disciples at Pentecost. Seeing this Peter arose and addressed them. In regards to the Spirit, he confirmed two things:

1. This was the fulfilment of the _____ of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:14-16

*"Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But **this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel.**"*

2. This promise was for _____ believer.

Acts 2:38-39

*And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will **receive the gift** of the Holy Spirit. **For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.**"*

Believers not present at Pentecost

Acts 8:12-17

*But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed. Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard **that Samaria had received the word of God**, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and **prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit**, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they*

had only been **baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**. Then **they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit**.

So Philip preached the Gospel to the people of Samaria and hearing the Word the scriptures tell us that they believed in Jesus and were then baptised in water. When the Apostles heard this they sent Peter and John to pray for them and lay their hands on them that they might receive the Spirit, which they did.

In this passage we see three distinct experiences:

1. Faith in Jesus and _____
2. Baptism in _____ (into the name of the Lord Jesus)
3. Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Was there an identifiable experience of receiving the Spirit?

At Pentecost: there was speaking in tongues and praising the mighty works of God and power to witness.

Acts 2:4

*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and **began to speak in other tongues** as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

In Samaria: there was something so obvious and demonstrative about the experience that when Simon (the former sorcerer) saw it, he offered to buy the power to make it happen.

Acts 8:18

*Now when Simon **saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands**, he offered them money, saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."*

In Caesarea: at the house of Cornelius there was speaking in tongues and praising God.

Acts 10:44-47

*While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them **speaking in tongues and extolling God**. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"*

In Ephesus: where Paul found the disciples of John the Baptist there was speaking in tongues and prophesying.

Acts 19:1-2, 5-7

*Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "**Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?**" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had **laid his hands on them**, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began **speaking in tongues and prophesying**. There were about twelve men in all.*

At Paul's conversion, it doesn't mention tongues. However Paul writes to the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 14:18

*I thank God that I **speak in tongues** more than all of you.*

He also says,

1 Corinthians 14:6

*If, therefore, the **whole church comes together and all speak in tongues**, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?*

So although not all churches agree on what exact experience accompanies the baptism of the Holy Spirit there certainly is a strong case for _____ as the

evidence of the _____ experience of infilling of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of _____.

Praying in the Spirit

Again not all churches agree on this point, but the epistles often encourage believers to “pray in the Spirit”. Paul describes His own prayer life in this regard:

1 Corinthians 14:14-15

*For if I pray in a **tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful**. What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also.*

We see that Paul states that when he prays with the Holy Spirit his mind is _____ and that he will therefore pray both in the Spirit and with his mind. Tongues in this context is therefore an ability to pray in the Spirit which _____ our faith.

Jude 1:20

*But you, beloved, **building yourselves up** in your most holy faith and **praying in the Holy Spirit**.*

In contrast, the gift of tongues is to edify the _____. We will cover this in the next session.

Regardless of your personal view on praying in the Spirit, one thing is clear: there is a definite identifiable experience in receiving the _____ of the Spirit, whether this happens at the same time of your initial conversion or later, and once we have been filled with God’s Spirit there are some undeniable effects.

How have you experienced the Holy Spirit in your life?

SESSION 4: The Holy Spirit (Part 2)

Beyond the initial experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, what are some of the effects of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, or to put it another way, what is the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

1. He empowers our faith

Charles Spurgeon once said, "A sinner can no more repent and believe without the Holy Spirit's aid than he can create a world." Without the work of the Holy Spirit in _____ Jesus to us and _____ us to trust in Him, we would not be able to have a relationship with God or experience His love.

Romans 5:5

*God's **love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit** who has been given to us.*

Once we've put our faith in Jesus, it is the Holy Spirit who _____ us, giving us a new life in Christ. By His power we are raised from the dead and are able to live a life that _____ God.

2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation**. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

Romans 8:11

*If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead **will also give life to your mortal bodies** through his Spirit who **dwells in you**.*

2. He guides us

Through the Holy Spirit we are able to hear God's _____ and enjoy a daily relationship with Him. The Spirit _____ God's heart and imparts _____ to us.

Romans 8:14

*For all who are **led by the Spirit** of God are sons of God.*

The Holy Spirit is present with us in every circumstance, guiding and directing us. He speaks to us through an _____ witness, speaking directly to our spirit, reminding us of who we are in _____ and leading us into all truth. The Holy Spirit also helps us in our _____ and reading of the scriptures.

Romans 8:16

*The Spirit himself **bears witness with our spirit** that we are children of God.*

John 16:13

*When the Spirit of truth comes, **he will guide you into all the truth**, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.*

3. He changes us

It's only through the presence of the grace of God and the Holy Spirit that we are able to experience _____ change. Through the Spirit God is working in us, helping us in every situation and causing us to become more like _____.

2 Corinthians 3:18

*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being **transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit** of the Lord.*

In Galatians 5 Paul gives us some insight into the _____ and the sinfulness that is inherent to all of us. Without Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit, we could never live free from the _____ of sin.

Galatians 5:19-21

Now the **works of the flesh** are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

Paul continues however to show us that when the Spirit of God is present in our lives the fruit of his work and presence is something _____, and quite different from anything we could ever have been on our own.

Galatians 5:22-24

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

As we grow in our walk with God, we are _____ and able to “walk with the Spirit” denying our flesh and living according to the will of God.

Ephesians 5:25

*If we live by the Spirit, let us also **keep in step with the Spirit.***

4. He equips us

Jesus promised that through the Spirit we would be _____ and equipped to fulfil our god-given _____ on earth.

The Gifts of the Spirit

In His letter to the church in Corinth, Paul speaks of the various gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are given specifically for the _____ (or building up) of the church.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11

*The **manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:** for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.*

In this passage Paul mentions **9 different gifts** which can be separated into 3 different categories:

1. The Revelation Gifts

These are the gifts that **reveal something** otherwise unknown.

The Word of Knowledge

A word of knowledge is a _____ of knowledge (without context) released through Spirit to the believer, revealing _____ otherwise unknown. God does this to encourage, inspire and strengthen people and to let them know that He is truly involved. It can also serve as a warning to people.

John 4:16-18

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

The Word of Wisdom

A word of wisdom is a fragment of God's _____ released to the believer in order to deal with the _____, this is often combined with word of knowledge and prophecy, giving strategy and insight and encouragement to a believer, showing that regardless of what may come, God is in control.

Here are two examples from scripture:

Acts 27:9-10

*Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, saying, "**Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster** and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives."*

Acts 21:10-11

*And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "**Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'**"*

The Discerning of Spirits

The discerning of Spirits is not _____ in general. Instead it's a God-given insight into the spiritual realm and into what is truly happening in any situation. God uses this to guide us, _____ us, and give us wisdom to lead.

Acts 16:16-18

*This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, **turned and said to the spirit**, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.*

2. The Inspirational or Vocal Gifts

These are gifts that **say something** in declaring the heart or mind of God.

Prophecy

Prophecy means to speak before, it is message regarding the _____, but can also refer to the _____ or past, or simply doctrinal truth, and in doing so often combines the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom. Prophecy is not fortune telling, but instead is done in order to edify, _____ and to comfort.

Acts 11:28

*Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and **showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine** throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.*

1 Corinthians 14:3

*He who prophesies speaks **edification and exhortation and comfort** to men.*

The Gift of Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues

The gift of tongues is a supernatural utterance by the Holy Spirit through a person in a _____ not know by the speaker, which delivers a message to the church. In order for it to be of any value to the rest of the church it must be so that the meaning can be revealed.

When tongues and the interpretation of tongues are _____ it is equal to prophecy and is a powerful sign to unbelievers.

Acts 2:4-6

*They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began **to speak with other tongues**, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, **because everyone heard them speak in his own language.***

3. Power Gifts

*The power gifts of the Holy Spirit empower **believers to** _____ by the power of the Spirit and **to do something** that they could not have done in their human strength or ability.*

The Gift of Faith

This is not saving faith, but a sovereign, supernatural manifestation of the Spirit working through believer to _____ a specific task. It causes the faith of an individual to be strengthened in a moment in a moment and moves people to act boldly in _____ to God.

Acts 20:8-12

And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell

down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, **“Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him.”** Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed. And they brought the young man in alive, and they were **not a little comforted**.

Gift of Healings

The gift of healings (plural), is God’s power and willingness to heal people of all kinds of afflictions and diseases, whether _____, mental, or emotional. God declares Himself to be a _____ and showed through the life of Jesus that He has a desire to restore people in every way.

Acts 28:8-9

*And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and **prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him**. So when this was done, the rest of those on the island **who had diseases also came and were healed**.*

The Working of Miracles

The working of miracles is the ability to call on God to do _____ acts that reveal His power. These miracles can include casting out demons, nature obeying God's authority, the dead being raised and any other miracles.

Acts 19:11-12

*Now God worked **unusual miracles by the hands of Paul**, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.*

Acts 8:39-40

*Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But **Philip was found at Azotus**. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.*

These gifts are an _____ of God's Kingdom and heart, showing his power and causing people to believe and repent. They are gifts, which means they cannot be earned but only received through God's grace.

As Reinhard Bonnke once said, *"The gifts of the Spirit are not medals of honour to be worn on a Sunday morning at church. They are tools for the job and are handed out the moment you report for God's work. He won't give you a hammer when you need a chisel. The Lord will give you the perfect tool for the assigned job. You will call it a miracle."*

The Purpose of the Holy Spirit

Besides for everything we've already mentioned (guiding, leading, comforting, encouraging, transforming, revealing etc.) the ultimate purpose for the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to _____ Jesus and to empower us to fulfil the Great Commission.

Matthew 28:18-20

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.** And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

His Spirit empowers us to be _____ of Christ and to reveal the reality of God's love and power to a lost and broken world.

SESSION 5: The Holy Catholic Church

The Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints

1 Peter 2:5,9

You yourselves like **living stones** are being built up as a **spiritual house**, to be a holy priesthood, to **offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God** through Jesus Christ.

The Life of the Church

Just before we encounter this declaration regarding the Holy Catholic Church and the communion of saints, we have that of belief in the _____, and this is certainly not by accident, as it is through the life-giving work of the Spirit that the _____ exists and is empowered for _____.

The church is not primarily an _____ or institution. Although healthy organisational structures can be helpful in regards to administration, the church is a living _____.

It Has a Head

Colossians 1:18-20

And **he is the head of the body, the church**. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Jesus is the head of the body. He is the Lead _____, the Senior Pastor, the Arch Bishop, and the ultimate _____ in the Church. He is also the central focus of the church with His _____ work on the cross and resurrection from the dead being the most fundamental belief we hold as a community of faith.

It Has a Body

1 Corinthians 12:27

Now **you are the body** of Christ and individually members of it.

Romans 12:4-5

For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so **we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.**

Collectively we as believers are the _____ of Christ, and individually we are all members of that same body. No part is disposable or less valuable than another but every part has a _____ to fulfil, and so every person in the church is valuable and has a role to play. If one part _____, the whole body suffers.

The church is much more than a _____ we attend once a week, instead we are called to be the _____ and feet of Jesus on a daily basis. A spirit-filled community partaking and contributing in the _____ that God has for us.

It Has a Spirit

Ephesians 2:19-22

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into **a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**

Just as a person cannot be alive without his or her spirit, so the church cannot be alive without the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God _____ the church, moves and directs the church, and empowers the church to fulfil its _____.

It Has a Mission

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in**

the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

*All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and **entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.***

We see in these scriptures that the mission of the church is essentially to help reconcile unbelievers to God through the message of the _____, and to make disciples of those who _____.

The Apostles Creed refers to the church as *Holy*. To be holy means to be separated and _____ for use by God and this is the purpose for which God has called us. We all get to play a part in His grand _____ of redemption.

Ephesians 4:15-16

*Rather speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, **according to the effective working by which every part does its share**, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*

Every individual has a role to play and together we are reach the world and represent Christ in every _____. We form local communities or churches to serve certain geographical areas effectively, but ultimately we are all a part of a global community and _____ which spans across space and time.

This is what is meant by a *Catholic* church. The word *Catholic* means _____, or global. And so this declaration in the Apostles' Creed can be paraphrased as such: "I believe in the global church community separated and consecrated for God's use"

The Communion of Saints

The church is called as a _____ of people who are in relationship with God and also with one another. To be a *saint* means the same as to be made holy, being separated and consecrated for God's use. The only way we can fulfil God's purpose for our lives therefore, is for us to do it _____.

For this reason _____ in the church is something to be cherished and protected. Just listen to the prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17:

John 17:20-23

*"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those **who will believe in Me through their word**; that they **all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You**; that they also may be one in Us, **that the world may believe** that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that **they may be one just as We are one**: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."*

Paul encourages the church to remain in unity as the family of God and to love each other (Romans 12:10), _____ each other (Ephesians 4:32) and encourage one another daily (Colossians 3:16).

Church Leadership

Scriptures give us a clear picture of what church leadership should look like, and what _____ those who oversee the church should have.

Elders

According to the Bible the church is to be _____ by Elders. Elders are also known as pastors (shepherds), bishops, or overseers and these terms can be used interchangeably. However the most common word used in scripture for those called by God to oversee the church is "Elders".

Acts 20:17-18

*Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and **called the elders of the church** to come to him. And when they came to him, he said to them: **Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock**, in which **the Holy Spirit has made you overseers**, to **care for the church** of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*

We see in this passage as well as others that there is a plurality of elders, not just one man. This is _____ church leadership and has the benefits of balancing people's weaknesses, lighten the workload, and providing _____.

Qualifications of an Elder

The qualifications for Elders are listed in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus, who were both charged with appointing Elders over the church in every city. These lists are not necessarily exhaustive, but do give us insight into the kind of believer that can be considered for this noble role of _____ a church community.

1 Timothy 3:2-7

*Therefore an overseer must be **above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.** He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must **not be a recent convert**, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be **well thought of by outsiders**, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.*

The Role of Elders

Elders have two primary roles:

1. To govern the church - which includes overseeing all aspects of the life of the church, raising and delegating leaders to serve in various areas, providing guidance and care to the people and praying for the sick (James 5:14).

1 Peter 5:1-3

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

2. To teach, preach and equip the church - one of the primary roles of elders is to be well versed in scriptures, holding fast to the gospel and being able to teach and preach the Word. Along with this comes the responsibility to protect the church from _____ teachers and to judge doctrinal matters.

Titus 1:9

He (elder) must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Scripture also addresses how elders are to be regarded by those whom they lead, showing that they are to respect, _____, and submit to elders.

1 Timothy 5:17

*Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of **double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.***

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

*We ask you, brothers, to **respect those who labor** among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to **esteem them very highly in love** because of their work.*

Hebrews 13:17

Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account.

Elders will give an _____ before the Lord of how they took care of the people that God put in their care. As such it's always a good idea for a church to continually be _____ for their elders and pastors.

Deacons

The word "Deacon" means "one who serves" and includes those who serve in all other practical functions of church with a definite emphasis on _____ people, feeding the poor and helping those in need.

The qualifications for Deacons are laid out in 1 Timothy 3:8-13:

1 Timothy 3:8-13

Deacons likewise must be **dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain**. They must **hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience**. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

The Equipping Gifts

Ephesians 4 tells us that Jesus, by His grace and at his _____, equipped leaders in the church with various gifts in order to equip believers for the work of the ministry.

Ephesians 4:7-8,11-13

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led a host of captives, **And gave gifts to men.**" And He Himself **gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry**, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

We believe that all these gifts are still active in the church today, although someone who holds the _____ gift/ office is not the same as that of the original apostles of the early church. The original apostles established the church and were used by God to write the _____. An apostolic gift today involves those who strategically consider and oversee church planting and kingdom advancement and are able to strengthen church communities with wisdom and insight.

In the same way those who are called to the office of a prophet is not the same as the prophets of the Old Testament who were speaking the _____ word of God. In the New Testament prophets operate by the gift of prophecy, and are not

infallible. At times their words are _____ by personal opinion, and as such we are called to “test” the prophecies to determine what is of God.

Evangelists, pastors and teachers operate in the same way as early church, with the purpose of reaching the lost and governing, caring for and teaching the people. This is for the distinct purpose of the _____ of the saints for the work of ministry. Elders are therefore not so much in “full-time ministry” as they are in “full-time equipping” so that every _____ can be a full-time minister.

One Body, Many Functions

Romans 12:4-8

*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, and individually members one of another. **Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us**, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.*

There are a number of _____ ways in which we are all called to serve God and the church. Beyond that however, we have all received the _____ of God in it’s various forms, giving us a unique gifting which enables us to serve God in a way which is _____ and personal.

What are some of the ways God has graced you to serve?

SESSION 6: Personal Salvation

The forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Personal Salvation

After dealing with God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Church, the Apostles' Creed finally makes three statements regarding personal salvation, namely, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and everlasting life.

The Forgiveness of Sins

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

One thing that every individual on earth has in common is that we have all sinned. The word *sin* was originally a term used in _____ for someone who missed the mark. We have all missed the mark and failed to meet God's standards of righteousness according to the Law. What's more is that this "missing of the mark" is no accident. We have all sinned _____ and are guilty before God.

This is why the Gospel is good news. It declares that even though we are all sinners, we can receive total forgiveness and _____ through the sacrifice of Jesus. This is more than just being forgiven, it means that we are accepted back into a _____ with God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The Resurrection of the Body

Death is common to all people and something which every _____ and philosophy in the world must deal with. The death of our _____ bodies is dealt with in scripture as an _____, robbing us of our ability to express ourselves or relating to others. As such if physical death meant the end of our existence, life would ultimately be a _____ and fatalistic endeavour.

1 Corinthians 15:32

*If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for **tomorrow we die**.*

Christianity however declares that this enemy called _____ has been conquered by Jesus through his resurrection and that we are therefore guaranteed a _____ of the body.

Philippians 3:21

*But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body**, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

1 Corinthians 15:51-56

*Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed, in a moment**, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For **this perishable body must put on the imperishable**, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: **“Death is swallowed up in victory. “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”** The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

At the time of meeting Jesus we will receive glorified spiritual bodies, which will be free from imperfection and the fragility of our _____ bodies. In these bodies we will worship, serve, and enjoy eternal life in the _____ of God and all the believers in heaven.

The Life Everlasting

Revelation 21:1-3

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Everlasting life means more than an _____ existence. It means instead that we enter into a final and permanent joy as we live out eternity in the presence of Jesus and of other believers. There will be things to enjoy eternally as we live in

constant awe of the _____ of God. There will be no more tears, no more sin, or pain or suffering. Only everlasting life. Can you imagine what it will be like? In light of this anything that we may experience in this life pales in comparison.

Romans 8:18

*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are **not worth comparing** with the **glory that is to be revealed** to us.*

Listen to these lyrics from the song "I Can Only Imagine" by Bart Millard:

*I can only imagine what it will be like
When I walk by Your side
I can only imagine what my eyes will see
When Your face is before me, I can only imagine*

*Surrounded by Your glory
What will my heart feel?
Will I dance for you Jesus?
Or in awe of You be still?*

*Will I stand in Your presence?
Or to my knees will I fall?
Will I sing Hallelujah?
Will I be able to speak at all? I can only imagine*

*I can only imagine when that day comes
And I find myself standing in the Son
I can only imagine when all I would do
Is forever, forever worship You, I can only imagine*

Titus 2:13

*Waiting for our **blessed hope**, the appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Jesus Christ.*