

Christ's Creed for His Church

John 17.13-26

APOSTLE'S CREED > FUNDAMENTAL Beliefs, Basic CONVICTIONS

God the FATHER > MAKER – World of ORDER, PURPOSE, PLAN

World is NOT Random, Meaningless, Directionless > TRANSCENDENT God

God the SON > REDEEMER – Worth of People, HOPE, Reconciliation

'Audacity of Hope' not Sole Possession 1 American Politician > **All Believers**

God the SPIRIT > SANCTIFIES, Divine Process of CHANGE, Transformation

NOW Work of God the Spirit > REMAINDER of CREED, His ACTS of Grace
EVERYTHING up to NOW > UNSEEN by those who Now RECITE CREED

We HERE have NEVER SEEN > God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit
I believe God...and in Jesus Christ...in the Holy Spirit...OK, Maybe, I guess so!

NOW WE SAY > **I believe in the holy catholic church** > the What! No Way!
SCANDALOUS Proposition > Never SEEN a HOLY, UNITED, CHURCH

Apparently NOT TRUE > CASTS DOUBT on ALL We have SAID BEFORE
If CHURCH is BEST PROOF you can SHOW ME, Not SURE about GOD!?

About 100 yrs ago Young Indian lawyer in S. Africa named Mohandas GANDHI
Interested in CHRISTIANITY > Studied Bible and Teachings of JESUS
Decided to VISIT CHURCH > Seeing BROWN Skin, White Elder met at DOOR
REFUSED to Allow Gandhi to ENTER > Threatened him with ARREST

Years later E. Stanley Jones asked him in India: "Mr. Gandhi, though you quote
the words of Christ often, why is that you appear to so adamantly reject
becoming his follower?"

I don't reject your Christ. I love your Christ. It's just that so many of you
Christians are so unlike your Christ. M. Gandhi

NOT Against JESUS > Against CHURCH – Common Idea > Drive WEDGE

People are leaving the churches and returning to God.

Lenny Bruce

Recent study: “Unaffiliated” 4th Largest & Fastest Growing Religious group in USA // “Unaffiliated” = Believe in God but not in Religion.

Some BELIEVERS CHURCHLESS > Think Love Jesus & Want to Serve Him NOT INTERESTED in Group that CALLS themselves CHRISTIAN CHURCH

If REALLY LOVE Jesus > Must LOVE what HE LOVED >> His CHURCH
 Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy...and to
 present her to himself as a radiant church

Ephesians 5.25,27

PURPOSE of JESUS is the PLANTING of the Church:

I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it Matthew 16.18

JOHN 17 > Jesus PRAYS for CHURCH just hours before he PAYS for Church
 HIGH Priestly PRAYER > Jesus SANCTIFIES Self to be Final SACRIFICE

...without question the most important prayer offered in the entire history of the world...it was offered on the eve of the greatest event in history; it is found in conjunction with the greatest message ever heard in history; and its contents involves the greatest experience that history can ever provide...every sentence is bound up with honor and glory of God

Mark Johnston

PRAFTER 1. Jesus prays for Self / 2. Disciples / 3. Church thru their Witness
 IF Jesus came to BUILD Church with His own Blood > Follow His MasterPLAN

John 17:13-26

13 "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. 14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. 20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one:

23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. 25 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. 26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

1. A JOYOUS People

v. 13 "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so *that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.*"

1st Priority of Jesus – NOT DOCTRINE or DUTY > **Spontaneous Joy**
 URGENT Prayer > OFTEN JOYLESS > Worried, Bitter, Complaining, Afraid!

NOT a PASSING or PARTIAL Joy > FULL MEASURE of My JOY in THEM

JESUS First of All says ‘LIGHTEN UP Church!’ > The KING is in the HOUSE
 CHURCH is not SOMEWHERE YOU GO > It is Something YOU ARE!

Noun "Joy" used 60 x's in NT / Verb "Rejoice" used 72 x's

Angel to Shepherds on Christmas Night: Do not be afraid. I bring you *good news of great joy that will be for all the people.* Luke 2:10

Jesus about to die - Prays for His followers to Rejoice: I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. John 16:33

Jesus PRAYS with JOY, Urging OTHERS to ENTER Communion w/ FATHER
 JOY > ROOTS in PAINS of Cross > Blossom with Never-Ending Pleasures

Paul: Even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, *I am glad and rejoice* with all of you. So you too should *be glad and rejoice* with me. Philippians 2:17,18

Jesus and Paul knew DEATH was DOORWAY and Not DESTINATION
 Through Death they ENTER GLORY > FULLNESS of JOY in God's Kingdom

About year ago in Singapore > Learned I had 2 CANCERS
 Told Dayna "I guess I am going to see the Lord" / Dr. "Are you CRAZY!"

Gift of YEAR > Son Grad from Univ, Marry, Granddaughter Grow > PREACH!
 Someday BUZZER will Sound > Life on this Side Over > JOY will INCREASE!

A joyless life is not a Christian life, for joy is one constant in the recipe for
 Christian living. William Barclay

C.T. Studd – Famous Cricket player from Cambridge – Valiant Missionary
 China, India – finally to Africa > WIFE too Sick to join him on Journey to Africa

LAST TRIP – Never see one another again > Faced Final Years in Loneliness
 What VERSE did she HOLD ON To? What Shaped her Heart and her HOPES?

I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. Psalm 34:1

One of BEST GOSPEL SONG Writers in History of English-language Church
 FANNY CROSBY – Wrote Hymns until her Death at age 95 – Blinded at age 5
 90 yrs of Sightless Darkness > but they were NOT JOYLESS > Light was Christ

Oh, what a happy soul am I! Although I cannot see, I am resolved that in this
 world, Contented I shall be. How many blessings I enjoy That other people
 don't! To weep and sigh, because I am blind, I cannot, and I won't. Fanny Crosby

Written at AGE 8! JOY is DECISION > CHOICE of FAITH > Act of Obedience

RETIRED Archbishop of Canterbury > SHORTLY before his DEATH
 The longer I live the more convinced I am that Christianity is one long shout of
 joy. Geoffrey Fisher

2. A DEDICATED People

vs. 14-16 ...they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer
 is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil
 one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

Jesus LEAVES Church IN WORLD > But NO LONGER PART of WORLD
 Theological word > HOLY > Word that TURNS PEOPLE OFF > Misunderstood

Holiness is God's work of separating *from sin for Himself.* Yours Truly

HOLINESS is Characteristic of GOD, what HE ALONE does FOR US & IN US

I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy...I am the LORD who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy. Leviticus 11.44,45

OT > HOLY Mountain, Altar, Stones for Temple, Holy Furniture, Bread
NOT because of INTRINSIC CHANGE of NATURE or COMPOSITION
>> SET APART for a SPECIAL USE by God

v. 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

Jesus does NOT make self MORE RIGHTEOUS > Already is FULLY Righteous
Setting Self APART for SPECIAL TASK > SIN OFFERING for the WORLD

Word 'HOLY' > Puts PEOPLE OFF > Sounds like BRAGGING, BOASTING
CULTURALLY DETERMINED BEHAVIOR PATTERNS > Do's & Don'ts

Dancing, Drinking, Smoking, Swearing >> ALL they DO in STAR'S CLUB!
It is RIGHT to SAY NO to WRONG BEHAVIOR, say YES to RIGHT Behavior

Our BEHAVIOR is NOT what MAKES US HOLY > God ALONE can DO IT

PROBLEM with LISTS > Often leads to LEGALISM, PRIDE, HYPOCRISY

Paul writes to New Church in CESSPOOL of Human VICE – CORINTH
To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to
be holy 1 Corinthians 1.2

Corinthians Christians HOLY because JESUS MAKES them HOLY
Word SANCTIFIED describes the PROCESS > Word HOLY is the RESULT

HOLY > Both what the CHURCH IS – and what the Church SHOULD BE
HOLY > Statement of Church's ALLEGIANCE, LOYALTY, LOVE, PURPOSE

It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual
immorality...For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

1 Thessalonians 4.3,7

How DIFFERENT?? Organization? Diet? Dress? Music? Education? Politics?

DIFFERENT from WORLD in WORSHIP and MORAL PRACTICES

WORSHIP > Not Just PERSONAL Time > but With OTHERS in CHURCH
 In the NT > NO such thing as CHURCH-LESS Christian

We find no Christians in the New Testament except as members of a community called a church. We find no exhortations directed to individual Christians, as though transformation were merely a matter of personal virtue...Its writings are always, explicitly or implicitly, addressed to a public assembly of believers.

Luke Timothy Johnson

3. A People of TRUTH

v. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

True Joy & Holiness depend on KNOWLEDGE & PRACTICE of Scriptures

a. Joy and Truth

v. 13 "...*I say these things*...so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them."

The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. Psalm 19:8

If you obey *my commands*, you will remain in my love...*I have told you this* so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. John 15:10-11

b. Holiness and Truth

v. 14 I have given them your word...

v. 17 *Sanctify them by the truth*; your word is truth

c. Authority

AUTHORITY in Church NOT Pastor or Pope, or what 51% of People Think
 NOT the Government or Popular OPINION of Society > LORD JESUS

What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight Luke 16.15

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. Nicene Creed

APOSTOLIC > FOUNDED by APOSTLES and FOUNDATION of Apostles
Foundation is APOSTOLIC WORD > Recorded in NEW TESTAMENT

God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the
apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone
Ephesians 2.19,20

...contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints Jude 3

CHURCH must be MEASURED by Standard of NEW TESTAMENT

Ask: Based on WORD of God, what does GOD WANT for Church NOW?

STRANGE PEOPLE > God's Word? ATTACKED, IGNORED, MISQUOTED

GERMANY during NAZI YEARS > Church went in One of Two Ways

1. Many Churches CONFORMED to the Nazi point of View
2. Other Churches – from Many Traditions – united as CONFESSING Church

Culture DRIFTED SO FAR from God & His Truth – No EXTERNAL NORMS
Only ABSOLUTE TRUTH they could RELY ON was BIBLE > CONFESSED

World TODAY > Cannot RELY on EXTERNAL Norms for TRUTH
Opinion of Universities – Laws of Gov't – Consensus of Society FALLIBLE

Television, Newspapers, Films, Talk on Street, Behavior of Neighbors
Very LIKELY to CONTRADICT God and His TRUTH

Need to be CONFESSING CHURCH > Firm Belief in GOD and SCRIPTURE

Say with Paul: Let God be true, and every man a liar. Romans 3:4

Say with Joshua: As for me and my household, we will serve the LORD. Joshua 24:15

4. People on a MISSION

v. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

APOSTOLIC Church > also emphasizes ‘Sent OUT by Jesus’
In John’s Gospel > SANCTIFICATION is always for MISSION

Joy, Holiness, and Truth > BETTER, PURER, FULLER in HEAVEN
WHY Not Go Now? > ONE Important thing we CANNOT DO in HEAVEN

Follow Jesus Creed for Church > High Priestly Prayer > Change VIEWPOINT

Look INWARD > Find JOY

Look to JESUS > Find HOLINESS

Look to SCRIPTURE > Find TRUTH

Look to WORLD > Find NEEDY PEOPLE

ONE thing we CANNOT DO in HEAVEN > Lead SINNERS to the SAVIOR

We should KNOW Non-Christians > BEFRIEND them INFLUENCE their Lives
To be a FAITHFUL Member of CHURCH is to be a MISSIONARY

Need to REACH the WORLD > Often more AFRAID OF than AFRAID FOR
More CONCERNED of World’s INFLUENCE ON US
Than CONFIDENT of CHURCHES IMPACT on the WORLD

THREE POSITIONS of Church described by JESUS in Prayer

1. IN World – we LIVE HERE! Work, School, Neighbors, Community
2. NOT OF World – Set Apart – Different Joy, Truth, Purpose, Destination
3. SENT INTO WORLD – Like Jesus – Vulnerable, Loving, Serving, Witnesses

We are to be AS CHRIST to World > LIKE the ONE we REPRESENT

How does CHURCH Change the WORLD > JESUS gives the ANSWER
Does NOT say > Get ELECTED to High Positions in ROMAN EMPIRE
Does NOT say > Try and Get EVANGELICAL elected EMPEROR!

Could Happen – NOT Bad if Did Happen – NOT MOST EFFECTIVE Plan
 Mission Not FEW SUPERSTARS > Duty & Privilege of EVERY MEMBER

You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:13-16

YOU (plural) > Y'all! > Keep our SALT STINGING and our LIGHT SHINING

They are not to inhabit a ghetto, they are to go forth on a mission. Leslie Newbigin

The entire mission of Jesus in the world has in reality been the mission of the Father in and through him, the Sender in the Sent. The mission of the disciples, sent into the world by the Son, is likewise *not theirs but His through them*.

Bruce Milne

Bernardo Calderon – grad from Sem – pastor 1st church in Cabrican, Guatemala
 Remote area – 3000 mtrs Elevation – always COLD and DAMP
 Church 28 People – 2 Elders, 2 Women Deacons – Meetings EVERY Night

Pastor Calderon “I know God cannot be satisfied with what we are doing”

Only Church Meeting on Sunday – Home Meetings different Week Nights
 Members Homes – Different Areas of Cabrican – People WALKED to Mtg.
 AS they Walked they INVITED people they PASSED

In 4 years – Church had 800 Members

Next Year – Opened Branch Church, SOON 6 Churches Started in City
 2 of New Churches have 1000 Members

Churches have AGRICULTURAL Co-operative – Land & Seed for POOR
 Entire AREA has been REVITALIZED by Witness of CHURCH

And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:47

ICF Mission? Bless this Country > Expats and Locals > FEW think about JESUS
 LITERATURE Distrib > READING Culture > GIFT Giving/Receiving > OPEN
 NOT Secular HOSTILITY found in Some of our HOMELANDS

5. A UNITED People

Our WORLD > PRIDE, ENVY, RIVALRY, COMPETITION, MURDER, WAR

vs. 20-22 I pray...that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me.

Jesus supports CATHOLIC Church = UNIVERSAL, Gk. 'throughout the whole'

Catholic = MESSAGE is VALID and RELEVANT to Every Age & Situation
From the FIRST Century until the FINAL Century

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3.28

Revolutionary IDEA > ETHNICITY, CLASS, GENDER --- Do NOT MATTER!

Church is CATHOLIC > Her LORD & SAVIOR are FOR the WHOLE WORLD

Church is NO PLACE of FLAGS, POLITICS, NATIONALISM, LOYALTY
Pastor in USA > Loose JOB – Take FLAG out of the SANCTUARY!

DISUNITY of Church does NOT DENY the Fact that CHURCH IS ONE
It just MAKES that ONENESS HARD to SEE

a. Organizational Unity?

World Councils / Associations / Alliances / Denomin Mergers / Group HUGS!
HAVE been USEFUL Tools in Accomplishing TASKS within KINGDOM

Better to have JUST ONE CHURCH? Get all the CHURCHES to MERGE?
IF ONLY ONE GOD, ONE FAITH WHY SO MANY CHURCHES? -

ONE PASTOR ANSWERED "that just shows how much God loves you!!"

God so loved world, many ways to hear his message - churches w/ all styles, times, places, sizes, days of week - technobop to symphonic

There WAS a TIME when was ONE CHURCH covered ALL of EUROPE
Was it GREAT AGE? Faith? Joy? Holiness? Truth? Compassion? Righteous?

The world was persuaded that God had nothing to do with that great crushing, tyrannous, superstitious, ignorant thing which called itself Christianity; and thinking men became infidels, and it was the hardest possible thing to find a genuine intelligent believer north, south, east, or west. Charles Spurgeon

Era called DARK AGES > Greatest Darkness in ONE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Organizational Unity? > UNITY of Believers WILL NOT be MADE by MAN
OUR Duty is to MAINTAIN – UNITY God already MADE – United by SPIRIT

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.
There is one body and one Spirit- just as you were called to one hope when you
were called - one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is
over all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4:3-6

b. Unity by Conformity?

Another MISTAKEN Notion > Everyone is ALIKE, TOO MUCH Alike

USA – 11 am Sundays “Most SEGREGATED Hour of the WEEK”
Workplace, Schools > People of Many Races, Ages, Ideologies, Languages

CHURCHES > Often ALL Black, White, Brown, Yellow, or Red
Same Political Views / Economic Theories / Recreation / Educational Paths

UNITY Not on Secondary Matters > Music Style, Hair Length, Politics, Finances

Last Wk Prayer Mtg. “Lord, stop George Bush from going to Olympic opening”
UNITY NOT based on View of Bush – Barak – Borat - or Hu Jintau
UNITY > Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords

Do NOT ABSOLUTIZE your Preferences, Personality > NOT why we’re HERE
I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one
has this gift, another has that. 1 Corinthians 7:7

What KIND of UNITY? > Like the GODHEAD – Father, Son, Spirit
They're ONE but NOT IDENTICAL, THE SAME, or REDUNDANT

v. 20 be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you
Same ORIENTATION, DESIRES, and WILL

The church of Jesus Christ is necessarily – and not only accidentally – a place of tension and conflict as well as a place of reconciliation. The church consists of free human beings whose experience leads them to think differently, even about shared ideals. Tension and conflict...arise as much from the work of the Holy Spirit driving Christians to energetic creativity as they do from spiritual inertia and sloth.

Luke Timothy Johnson

UNITY of Church REQUIRES DIVERSITY > Uniqueness of Father, Son, Spirit

Call to FAITH in God > FAITHFULNESS to HIS CHURCH > TENSION
Imperfect People > Varied Backgrounds and Ideas > Different Perspectives

HONESTY > If No DISAGREEMENTS then relationship is SUPERFICIAL

All the believers were together and had everything in common. Acts 2.44

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. Acts 4.32

6. A LOVING People

v. 26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that *the love you have for me may be in them* and that I myself may be in them."

GOD'S LOVE in US! ...and FLOWING OUT of US!!

Now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13.13

LOVE BINDS them ALL the Characteristics TOGETHER

Take LOVE AWAY from JOY > HEDONISM – Selfish Pleasures

Take LOVE AWAY from HOLINESS > SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS – Pharisees

Take LOVE AWAY from TRUTH > BITTER ORTHODOXY – Always Right!

Take LOVE AWAY from MISSION > IMPERIALISM, Colonialism

Take LOVE AWAY from UNITY > TYRANNY – Forced CONFORMITY

‘Cheap catholicity’ is destructive...the church cannot let go of its holiness and reconcile itself to patterns of sin and idolatry. A catholicity that is simply a lack of standards is not worth much.

Luke Timothy Johnson

LOVE for FATHER leads to JOY > THANKFUL for All He’s Done

Love for JESUS leads to HOLINESS > Want to PLEASE HIM with LIVES

Love for WORD of God leads to TRUTH > Grow, Deepen Understanding

Love for WORLD leads to MISSION > Good News of Life, Reconciliation

Love for CHURCH leads to UNITY > See others as Brothers and Sisters

PRAYER of One who BOUGHT Church with OWN BLOOD

ONE who GATHERS Church by HIS OWN SPIRIT

ONE who will PRESENT Church to HIS OWN FATHER

Are we DOING OUR PART to ANSWER this PRAYER?

Women & Men show OTHERS His JOY, HOLINESS, TRUTH, UNITY, LOVE

JESUS 2-POINT PLAN to CONVINCE World of His Reality & Redemption

SIMPLE PLAN but DIFFICULT to IMPLEMENT > Church trying for 2000 yrs!

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. *By this all men will know that you are my disciples*, if you love one another."

John 13:34-35

v. 23 May they be brought to complete unity *to let the world know* that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Not another SERMON – New SONG – New STADIUM for Big Meeting

BELIEVERS > LOVE Eachother and LIVE in UNITY of GOD'S LOVE!!
Seek to FULFILL this PRAYER, SHOW World REALITY Loving, Saving God
