

- Why is this important for the local church to understand?
- What makes a person a saint? (Hint the word saint means holy ones.)
- Do you see yourself as a saint? Why or why not?



The Apostles Creed

Study lesson SIX prepared by

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What The Apostles Creed says about the SAINTS

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:
Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.

The third day He arose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty,
whence He shall come to judge the living and
the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,¹
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

¹ Saints is the word *hagios* or the 'holy ones.'

Preparing for Prayer

Adoration _____

Confession _____

Thanks _____

Supplication _____

Here is a picture of the church at its birth. These believers have come from all over the Roman empire originally to celebrate Passover and Pentecost but had been converted to follow Jesus. Now they are together as born again followers waiting for the return of Jesus. They literally expected it ANY day so they stay as close to the temple in Jerusalem as possible because they are expecting Jesus to return here. They believe that the world is about to change and Jesus will take over or will deliver them. So here together they wait on Him. A little confused but all of them were confident Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the anointed one of God.

The Church/Saints in Action

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- Vs. 42 What four key items are taking place among the believers?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
- Vs. 43 What is the leadership doing that is holding this group in awe?

- Vss. 6-7 List the gifts that Paul shares here. Describe how each one can be used in a local church fellowship.

GIFT IN ROMANS	HOW IT WAS USED IN A LOCAL CHURCH
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

- How were these gifts present in the 1st church in Jerusalem?
- Why doesn't everyone have the same gifts?
- Why is this important to understand today?
- The Apostles Creed says "I believe in... the communion of saints." What does that phrase mean to you?

The Church/Saints Ministry

Romans 12.3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

- Vs. 3 What dangerous attitude do they need to avoid? Why?
- How are believers to view themselves? Why?
- How should faith effect the believers life? Explain.
- Vss. 4-5 What did Paul want them to understand concerning the church when he compared it to the human body?
- Vs. 6 What do we learn about these spiritual gifts?

- Vss. 44-45 Describe the way they cared for each other and why this was necessary. (Hint: remember the majority of them were from out of town. They had come to Jerusalem on a holy pilgrimage for the two Jewish holidays.)
- Vss. 46-47a Describe their fellowship.
- What do we learn about their commitment to each other and to their shared faith?
- Vs. 47b How did God respond to their fellowship, commitment and worship?
- How would their actions be beneficial to the growth of their fellowship?
- What did they do that can also be done today?
- What did they do that is done differently today? Why?

- Why was this necessary for the early church in Jerusalem?

Around 25 years later Paul wrote a letter to the church that was located in Rome. Here he is urging them to be dedicated to their call as Christians. The church has now been waiting almost three decades for Christ return. Paul is directing them how to be the church as they wait.

The Church/Saints Living Choices

^{Romans 12.1}Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual (reasonable) act of worship. ²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

- What do you think had changed in the church that causes Paul to give directions to the believers how to live?
- Vs. 1 What external changes does Paul direct the believer to take?
- Vs. 2a How are they to respond to the world around them?

- What would this mean for them as believers living in a sinful world?

- What does it mean to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind?”

- Vs. 2b What will be the results/benefits of following his directions?

- What will be the results/consequences of NOT following his directions?

- How is the church in Rome different from the Church when it got started in Jerusalem? Why?

- How has the effected their lives as believers?

- What does it mean to be a living sacrifice?