

Things Most Surely Believed Among Us:
An Exposition of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith
Chapter 26: Of the Church

I. INTRODUCTION

II. THE IDENTITY OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

A. AS INVISIBLE (Paragraph 1)

1. The catholic or universal church, which (with respect to the internal work of the Spirit and truth of grace) may be called invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

1. The Existence of a Universal Church

2. The Constitution of the Universal Church

3. The Invisibility of the Universal Church

B. AS VISIBLE (Paragraph 2)

2. All persons throughout the world, professing the faith of the gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ according unto it, not destroying their own profession by any errors everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, are and may be called visible saints; and of such ought all particular congregations to be constituted.

1. The Nature of Visible Saints

2. The Constitution of Particular Churches

III. THE PERPUTUITY OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH (Paragraph 3)

3. The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan; nevertheless Christ always hath had, and ever shall have a kingdom in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in him, and make profession of his name.

A. A PARTICULAR CHURCH MAY APOSTATIZE

B. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH SHALL PERSEVERE

IV. THE HEAD OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH (Paragraph 4)

4. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; neither can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God; whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

A. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS THE TRUE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

B. THE POPE IS NOT THE TRUE HEAD OF THE CHURCH BUT THE ANTICHRIST