

Augsburg Confession

• Lesson Three •

Articles 7, 8, and 15: There Is One Church of God

At the time of the Augsburg Confession, the Catholics taught that the church is a visible body of people. They all professed the same faith and were ruled by the Roman pope. They believed Christ made the pope his personal earthly ruler. The pope could judge everyone, but no one could judge the pope. When Luther was excommunicated from the church, it caused the reformers to study just what the Scriptures say about the church. We have their response in Articles 7, 8, and 15.

1. Read Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22; 3:20-21; 5:25; and 1 Corinthians 1:2. How many churches are talked about? Compare with Article 7, paragraph 1.
2. Read Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 5:23. Who is the head of that church?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 1:2. Who makes up the church?
4. Read 1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 5:25-27; and 1 Corinthians 11:23-25. What are the marks of the church, those things that create the church and by which it is recognized?
5. Read 1 Samuel 16:7 and 2 Timothy 2:19. Who alone can see the members of that church?
6. Read Article 8, paragraph 1 and Matthew 13:24-30. What gets mixed into churches on earth, and what does Jesus call them?

7. What is the difference between the invisible church and visible churches?

8. What names in the Apostles' Creed do we give to the church over which Christ is the head?

9. Read Article 7, paragraphs 2 to 4. Read also Matthew 28:19,20; Romans 16:17; and Revelation 22:18,19. What is necessary for unity in the church, and what isn't?

10. Read Article 8. If a hypocrite gives someone the Lord's Supper, does the believer receive the body and blood of the Lord or not? Explain.

11. Read Article 15. When are church customs or traditions useful and good? Give some examples from the time of the Bible, the time of the Augsburg Confession, and today.

12. Read Article 15. When are church customs or traditions hurtful and bad? Give some examples from the time of the Bible, the time of the Augsburg Confession, and today.

13. Explain. God's Word cannot be without God's people, and God's people cannot be without God's Word.