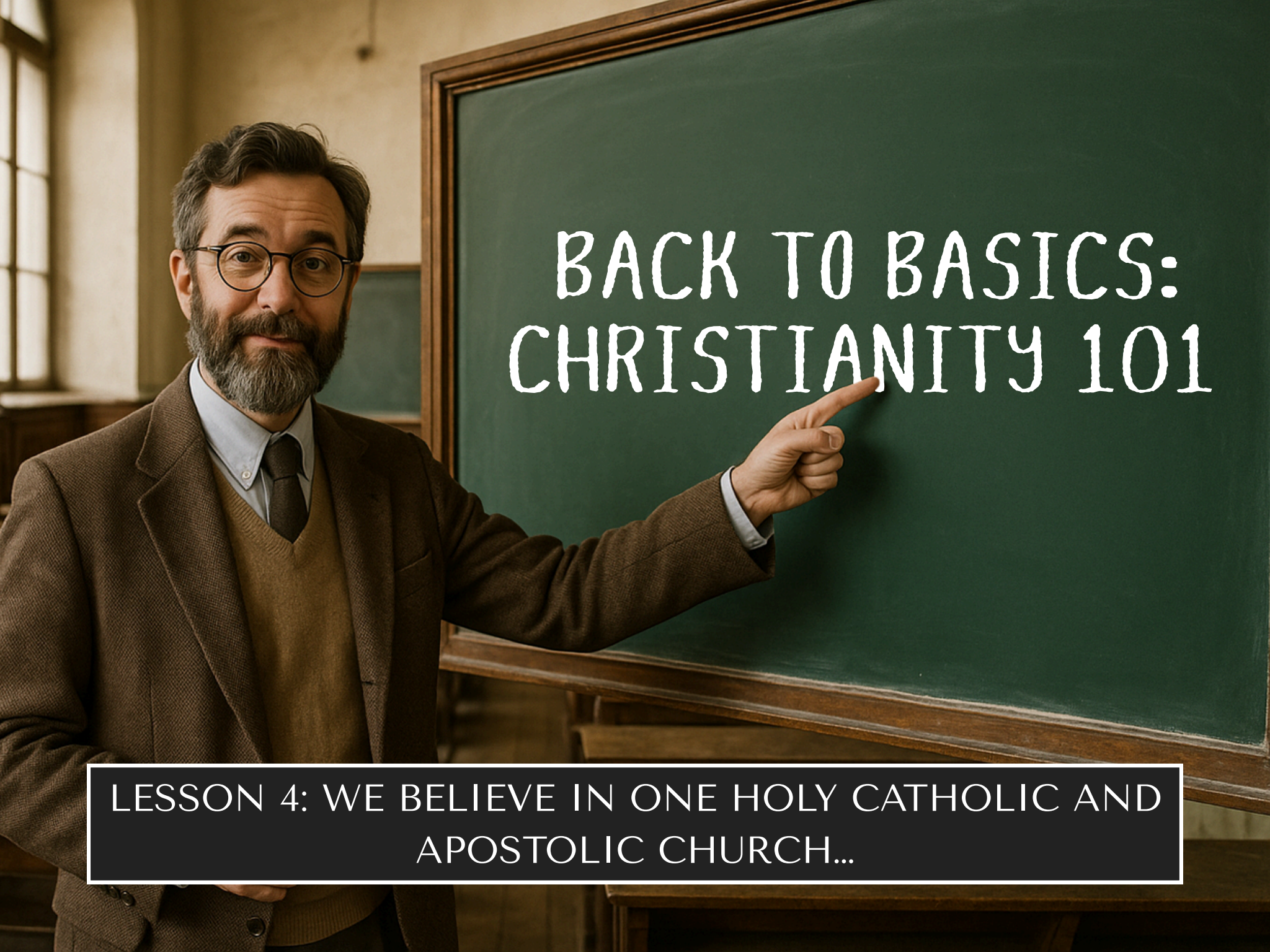


A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a brown jacket and a sweater, stands in a classroom. He is pointing his right index finger towards the text on a green chalkboard. The chalkboard has the title 'BACK TO BASICS: CHRISTIANITY 101' written on it in white, stylized capital letters. The background shows a window with multiple panes on the left and a wooden desk in the foreground.

BACK TO BASICS: CHRISTIANITY 101

LESSON 4: WE BELIEVE IN ONE HOLY CATHOLIC AND
APOSTOLIC CHURCH...

We believe in one holy catholic and
apostolic church...

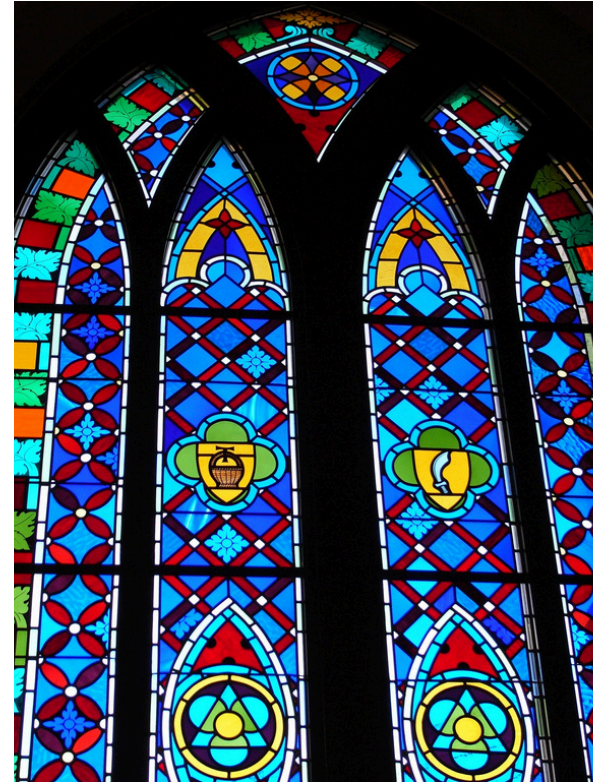
What is the
church? How
does it
function?



We believe in one holy catholic and
apostolic church...

"one holy catholic apostolic church"

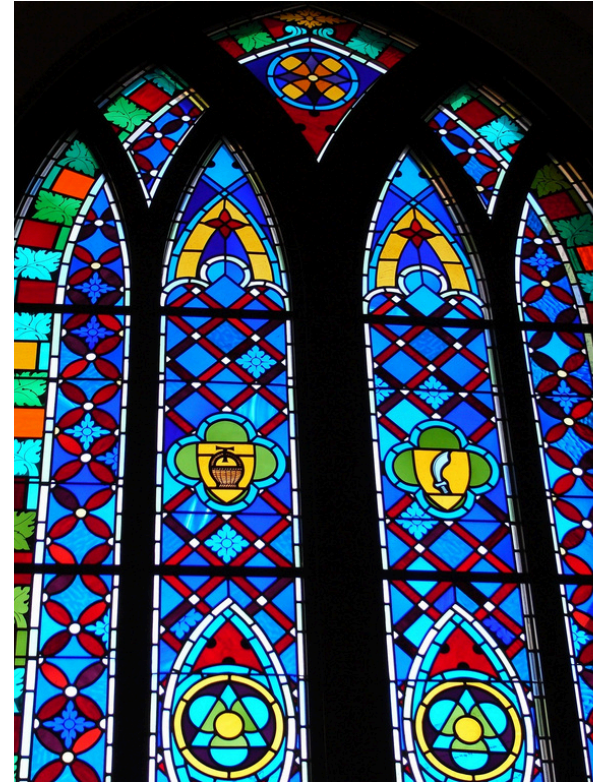
- These are the **four marks** of the church: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic
- **One – United in Faith**
 - The church is meant to be **united on the essentials** of the faith, as outlined in the ecumenical creeds.
- **Holy – Set Apart for God**
 - The church is holy, called to be different from the world
- **Catholic – Universal**
 - *Catholic* means **universal**. The gospel is for **everyone**, everywhere—no matter race, gender, language, or nation.
- **Apostolic – Rooted in the Apostles' Teaching**
 - The church follows what the apostles taught, guided by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26, John 16:13).



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What does the church do?

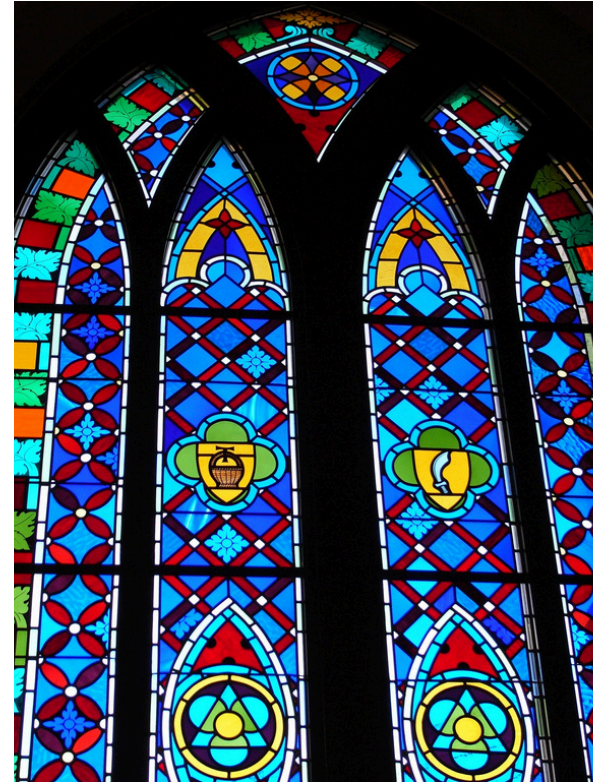
- The church also has a threefold mission: **proclaiming the Gospel** (Matthew 28:19-20), **equipping leaders** (Ephesians 4:11-12), and **serving others** (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). These three are tasks that every church seeks to do in order to serve God and minister to His people.



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Ecclesiology

- **Baptists** have a two-tiered church government:
 - **Elders/Pastors:** Overseers of the local Christian community; responsible for teaching, sacraments, and governance. (1 Timothy 3:1-16, Titus 1:5-9). We use Pastor and Elder interchangeably, as does the New Testament; other denominations have created a distinction between the two offices (ex., the Anglican Church)
 - **Deacons:** Servants or ministers who cared for practical needs, like distributing food and assisting the poor (Acts 6:1-6, 1 Timothy 3:8-13).



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apostolic church...

The sacraments

- **Sacraments**, or **ordinances**, are special ways God has given us to remember what Jesus has done and grow in our faith together.



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Baptism

- **As a Baptist church, we have two distinctive practices regarding baptism:**
 - We do not baptize infants. Believers must be able to make a full profession of faith prior to baptism.
 - We baptize by full immersion, as opposed to sprinkling or pouring.
- All Baptisms must be performed with the **Trinitarian formula** (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - Matthew 28:19-20) or the baptism is **invalid**.
- **Baptists are one of the few denominations that will re-baptize, typically if the believer was baptized as an infant.**
- Baptism has historically served as an entrance into the church. Only baptized believers can take communion (BFM p7).



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What does baptism do?

- **Two main views in the Baptist tradition:**
 - **Symbolic (Majority): Baptism is a public declaration of faith and a symbol of obedience.**
 - **Reformed view (Small minority):** Baptism saves by acting as the sign and seal of the inward profession of faith. Baptism confirms that the Spirit has regenerated the believer.
 - Think of a king being coronated. The coronation ceremony is a sign and seal of his status as king, but he becomes king officially when the previous monarch dies or abdicates.



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Holy Communion

- **Also known as the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist.**
- **Unites believers, proclaims Jesus' death, and looks forward to the feast in heaven.**
- Instituted the night Jesus was betrayed (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
- **Strict warnings issued in 1 Corinthians 11 for those who take unworthily.**
 - This is why only baptized believers can partake, and why we issue a warning and a time of reflection beforehand.



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Holy Communion

- **Two main views on what it does:**
 - **Symbolic/Memorialist View (Modern Baptists):** Communion is symbolic; we do it to remember Christ.
 - **Spiritual Real Presence (Historic/Reformed View):**

“Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this ordinance, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death; the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally, but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance” (LBC Ch 30.7).

 - Jesus is spiritually present for those who believe, but not physically present.
 - John 6:51-58, 1 Corinthians 10:16, 1 Corinthians 11:23-29



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Encouragement

- As we've seen today, God gave us His church and the sacraments to guide us and remind us of His grace. Our faith is not a journey we walk alone—through baptism and communion, we are connected to Jesus and to one another. Whether you lean toward the symbolic view or the historic spiritual presence view, I hope you'll come to appreciate these gifts and let them strengthen your walk with Christ, as we look forward to the day He comes again.



Additional Resources

- -Glorifying and Enjoying God: William Boekestein, Jonathan Landry Cruse, Andrew J. Miller
- -To be a Christian
- -Christian Beliefs: Wayne Grudem
- -The Nicene Creed
- -Anathasian Creed
- The Didache
- -1689 LBC (Baptism) / (Communion)
- -Baptist Faith and Message (p.7)
- -Gavin Ortlund: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4
- -Infant Baptist views 1 / 2
- -Reformed view of sacraments (RZ): The Sacraments - Mastering Reformed Theology Chapter 5
- -Nathan Li (General denominational overview of the sacraments): Baptism / Communion
- <https://www.centerforbaptistrenewal.com/>

