

Baptist Confession of Faith (1689)

Rewritten in modern English by Andrew Kerkham

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The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 has its roots firmly in the [Westminster Confession of Faith](#) of 1647. It differs from the Westminster Confession in adding Chapter 20 (The Gospel and its Gracious Extent), and in its understanding of the Church and Baptism. Chapter 20 is identical to the same chapter in the Congregationalists' [Savoy Declaration of Faith and Order](#) of 1658, and where the Baptist Confession differs in minor points from the Westminster Confession it usually follows the Savoy Declaration.

This revision seeks to follow the original text as closely as possible, yet at the same time to make it readable and understandable for people today. This has been achieved mainly through breaking up longer sentences, substitution of present-day words for words that have become archaic, and keeping transposition of phrases to an absolute minimum. It is important to note that this revision does not seek to alter the truths of the original 1689 Confession in any way whatever; rather, the intention is to make those same truths more readily understandable to the present generation. Note: the abbreviation WCF refers to the Westminster Confession of Faith, 1647.

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The expanded system of scripture references is that found in Samuel E. Waldron's valuable work, A modern exposition of the 1689 Baptist Confessions of Faith (2nd ed., Evangelical Press, 1995), and used with permission.

See the [BCF Assistant](#) for the original text of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith.

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Chapter 1

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1.1 The Holy Scriptures are the only sufficient, certain and infallible rule¹ for saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.²

Although the light of nature and the works of creation and providence give such clear testimony to the goodness, wisdom and power of God that they leave people without excuse,³ yet they are not sufficient to give the knowledge of God and his will that is necessary for salvation.⁴ Therefore it pleased the Lord to reveal himself at various times and in different ways, and to declare his will to his church.⁵ To ensure the preservation and propagation of the truth, and to establish and support the church against human corruption, the malice of Satan, and the world, he committed his complete revelation to writing. The Holy Scriptures are therefore absolutely indispensable,⁶ for God's former ways of revealing his will to his people have now ceased.

(1) Or, *standard*

(2) Isa 8:20; Luk 16:29; Eph 2:20; 2Ti 3:15-17

(3) Psa 19:1-3; Rom 1:19-21,32; 2:12a,14-15

(4) Psa 19:1-3 with 7-11; Rom 1:19-21; 2:12a,14-15 with 1:16-17 and 3:21

(5) Heb 1:1-2a

(6) Pro 22:19-21; Luk 1:1-4; 2Pe 1:12-15; 3:1; Deu 17:18ff; 31:9ff,19ff; 1Co 15:1; 2Th 2:1-2,15; 3:17; Rom 1:8-15; Gal 4:20; 6:11; 1Ti 3:14ff; Rev 1:9,19; 2:1, etc.; Rom 15:4; 2Pe 1:19-21

(7) Heb 1:1-2a; Act 1:21-22; 1Co 9:1; 15:7-8; Eph 2:20

1.2 The Holy Scriptures, or the Word of God written, consist of all the books of the Old and New Testament. These are:

The Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

The New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation

All of these are given by the inspiration of God to be the rule¹ of faith and life.²

(1) Or, *standard*

(2) 2Ti 3:16 with 1Ti 5:17-18; 2Pe 3:16

1.3 The books commonly called the Apocrypha were not given by divine inspiration, and are not part of the canon or rule of Scripture. Therefore they have no authority in the church of God, nor are they to be accepted or made use of in any way different from other human writings.¹

(1) Luk 24:27,44; Rom 3:2

1.4 Holy Scripture demands belief, yet its authority does not depend on the testimony of any person or church,¹ but entirely on God its author, who is truth itself. Therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God.²

(1) Luk 16:27-31; Gal 1:8-9; Eph 2:20

(2) 2Ti 3:15; Rom 1:2; 3:2; Act 2:16; 4:25; Mat 13:35; Rom 9:17; Gal 3:8; Rom 15:4; 1Co 10:11; Mat 22:32; Luk 16:17; Mat 22:41ff; Joh 10:35; Gal 3:16; Act 1:16; 2:24ff; 13:34-35; Joh 19:34-36; 19:24; Luk 22:37; Mat 26:54; Joh 13:18; 2Ti 3:16; 2Pe 1:19-21; Mat 5:17-18; 4:1-11

1.5 We may be influenced and persuaded by the testimony of the church of God to hold a high and reverent regard for the Holy Scriptures.¹ Moreover the glory of its contents, the efficacy of its doctrine, the majesty of its style, the agreement among all its parts, the expanse of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full revelation it gives of the only way for human salvation, together with many other incomparable characteristics and its complete perfection—all these arguments provide abundant evidence that it is indeed the Word of God.² Yet, notwithstanding this, our full persuasion and assurance of its infallible truth and divine authority comes from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.³

(1) 2Ti 3:14-15

(2) Jer 23:28-29; Luk 16:27-31; Joh 6:63; 1Pe 1:23-25; Heb 4:12-13; Deu 31:11-13; Joh 20:31; Gal 1:8-9; Mar 16:15-16

(3) Mat 16:17; 1Co 2:14ff; Joh 3:3; 1Co 2:4-5; 1Th 1:5-6; 1Jo 2:20-21 with 27

1.6 The whole revelation of God concerning all things essential for his own glory, human salvation, faith and life, is either explicitly set down or implicitly contained in the Holy Scriptures. Nothing is ever to be added, whether by a new revelation of the Spirit, or by human traditions.¹ Nevertheless, we acknowledge that the inward enlightenment of the Spirit of God is necessary for the saving understanding of the things revealed in the Word.² There are also some aspects of the worship of God and of church government common to human activities and organisations which may be determined by the light of nature and Christian common-sense, but in accordance with the general rules of the Word which must always be observed.³

(1) 2Ti 3:15-17; Deu 4:2; Act 20:20,27; Psa 19:7; 119:6,9,104,128

(2) Joh 6:45; 1Co 2:9-14

3) 1Co 14:26,40

1.7 Not all things in Scripture are equally plain in themselves,¹ nor equally clear to everyone.² Yet those things that are essential to be known, believed and obeyed for salvation are so clearly set forth and explained in one place of Scripture or another, that not only the educated but also the uneducated may attain a satisfactory understanding of them by using ordinary means.³

(1) 2Pe 3:16

(2) 2Ti 3:15-17

(3) 2Ti 3:14-17; Psa 19:7-8; 119:105; 2Pe 1:19; Pro 6:22-23; Deu 30:11-14

1.8 The Old Testament in Hebrew (the national language of the people of God of ancient Israel)¹ and the New Testament in Greek (the common language of that time) were inspired directly by God, and were kept pure throughout the ages by his particular care and providence. They are therefore authentic,² so that in all religious controversies the church must appeal to them as final.³ But these original languages are not known to all the people of God, who have a right to and an interest in the Scriptures, and who are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them.⁴ They are therefore to be translated into the common language of every nation to which they come,⁵ so that (with the Word of God living richly in all) people may worship God in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.⁶

(1) Rom 3:2

(2) Mat 5:18

(3) Isa 8:20; Act 15:15; 2Ti 3:16-17; Joh 10:34-36

(4) Deu 17:18-20; Pro 2:1-5; 8:34; Joh 5:39,46

(5) 1Co 14:6,9,11,12,24,28

(6) Rom 15:4; Col 3:16

1.9 The infallible rule for the interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself. Therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any [part of] Scripture (which is not a miscellany, but a unity) it must be understood in the light of other passages that speak more clearly.¹

(1) Isa 8:20; Joh 10:34-36; Act 15:15-16

1.10 The supreme judge by which all religious controversies are to be settled, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, human doctrines and individual thinkers are to be examined, can be none other than the Holy Scriptures delivered by the Spirit. In the verdict of Scripture our faith is finally determined.¹

(1) Mat 22:29,31-32; Act 28:23-25; Eph 2:20

Chapter 2

GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY

2.1 The Lord our God is the one and only living and true God.¹

His substance is in and of himself, he is infinite in being and perfection.² His essence cannot be understood by any but himself.³ He is an absolutely pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions. He alone has immortality, living in light which no one can approach.⁴ He is immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, in every way infinite, perfectly holy, perfectly wise, absolutely free, completely absolute.⁵ He works all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and entirely righteous will for his own glory.⁶

He is perfectly loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth; he forgives iniquity, transgression and sin.⁷ He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him, yet at the same time he is entirely just and terrible in his judgements, hating all sin, and he will by no means clear the guilty.⁸

(1) Deu 6:4; Jer 10:10; 1Co 8:4,6; 1Th 1:9

(2) Isa 48:12

(3) Exo 3:14; Job 11:7-8; 26:14; Psa 145:3; Rom 11:33-34

(4) Joh 4:24; 1Ti 1:17; Deu 4:15-16; Luk 24:39; Act 14:11,15; Jas 5:17

(5) Mal 3:6; Jas 1:17; 1Ki 8:27; Jer 23:23-24; Psa 90:2; 1Ti 1:17; Gen 17:1; Rev 4:8; Isa 6:3; Rom 16:27; Psa 115:3; Ex 3:14

(6) Eph 1:11; Isa 46:10; Pro 16:4; Rom 11:36

(7) Exo 34:6-7; 1Jo 4:8

(8) Heb 11:6; Neh 9:32-33; Psa 5:4-6; Nah 1:2-3; Exo 34:7

2.2 God has all life, glory, goodness, blessedness in and of himself; he is unique in being, all-sufficient in and to himself, not standing in need of any creature which he has made, nor deriving any glory from them, but rather demonstrating his own glory in them, through them, to them, and upon them.¹

He alone is the source of all being, from whom, through whom, and to whom are all things;

He has absolute sovereign dominion over all creatures, to do through them, for them, or to them whatever he pleases.²

In his sight all things are open and plain, his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent of created beings, so for him nothing is contingent or uncertain.³

He is perfectly holy in all his plans, in all his works, and in all his commands.⁴

Angels and human beings owe him, as creatures to the Creator, worship, service, and obedience, and whatever else he is pleased to require of them.⁵

(1) Joh 5:26; Act 7:2; Psa 148:13; 119:68; 1Ti 6:15; Job 22:2-3; Act 17:24-25

(2) Rev 4:11; 1Ti 6:15; Rom 11:34-36; Dan 4:25,34-35

(3) Heb 4:13; Rom 11:33-34; Psa 147:5; Act 15:18; Eze 11:5

(4) Psa 145:17; Rom 7:12

(5) Rev 5:12-14

2.3 In this divine and infinite Being there are three persons, the Father, the Son (or the Word) and the Holy Spirit.¹ They are one in substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, yet this essence is undivided.²

The Father is not derived from anyone, he is neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.³ All three are infinite, without beginning, and therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being. Yet they are distinguished by several distinctive characteristics and personal relations.

This doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our fellowship with God, and of the comfort of our dependence on him.

(1) Mat 3:16-17; 28:19; 2Co 13:14

(2) Exo 3:14; Joh 14:11; 1Co 8:4-6

(3) Pro 8:22-31; Joh 1:1-3,14,18; 3:16; 10:36; 15:26; 16:28; Heb 1:2; 1Jo 4:14; Gal 4:4-6

Chapter 3

GOD'S DECREE

3.1 God has decreed all things that occur,¹ and this he has done in himself, from all eternity, by the perfectly wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably.²

Yet he has done this in such a way that God is neither the author of sin, nor does he share with anyone in sinning,³ nor does this violate the will of the creature, nor is the free working or contingency of second causes taken away but rather established.⁴

In all this, God' s wisdom is displayed in directing all things, as is his power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree.⁵

(1) Dan 4:34-35; Rom 8:28; 11:36; Eph 1:11

(2) Pro 19:21; Isa 14:24-27; 46:10-11; Psa 115:3; 135:6; Rom 9:19

(3) Gen 18:25; Jas 1:13; 1Jo 1:5

(4) Gen 50:20; 2Sa 24:1; Isa 10:5-7; Mat 17:12; Joh 19:11; Act 2:23; 4:27-28

(5) Num 23:19; Eph 1:3-5

3.2 Although God knows everything which may or can come to pass under all imaginable conditions,¹ yet he has not decreed anything because he foresaw it in the future, or because it would come to pass [anyway] under certain conditions.²

(1) 1Sa 23:11-12; Mat 11:21,23; Act 15:18

(2) Isa 40:13-14; Rom 9:11-18; 11:34; 1Co 2:16

3.3 By God' s decree, and for the demonstration of his glory, certain human beings and angels are predestined (or foreordained) to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glorious grace.¹ Others are left to continue in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice.²

(1) Mat 25:34; 1Ti 5:21

(2) Joh 12:37-40; Rom 9:6-24; 1Pe 2:8-10; Jude 1:4

3.4 Those angels and human beings who are predestined and foreordained to eternal life, are specifically and irreversibly designated, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.¹

(1) Mat 22:1-14; Joh 13:18; Rom 11:5-6; 1Co 7:20-22; 2Ti 2:19

3.5 God chose those human beings who are predestined to life before the foundation of the world, in accordance with his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will. God chose them in Christ for eternal glory, solely out of his free grace and love,¹ without anything in the creature as a condition or cause moving him to choose them.²

(1) Rom 8:30; Eph 1:4-6,9; 2Ti 1:9

(2) Rom 9:11-16; 11:5-6

3.6 As God has appointed the elect to glory, so he has by the eternal and completely free purpose of his will foreordained all the means.¹ Therefore those who are elected (being fallen in Adam) are redeemed by Christ,² effectually called to faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, justified, adopted, sanctified,³ and kept by his power through faith to salvation.⁴ None but the elect are redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved.⁵

- (1) Eph 1:4; 2:10; 2Th 2:13; 1Pe 1:2
- (2) 1Th 5:9-10; Tit 2:14
- (3) Rom 8:30; Eph 1:5; 2Th 2:13
- (4) 1Pe 1:5
- (5) Joh 6:64-65; 8:47; 10:26; 17:9; Rom 8:28; 1Jo 2:19

3.7 The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care,¹ so that those who are heeding the will of God revealed in his Word, and who are obeying it, may be assured of their eternal election from the certainty of their effectual calling.² So shall this doctrine promote the praise, reverence, and admiration of God,³ and encourage humility⁴ and diligence,⁵ and bring much comfort⁶ to all who sincerely obey the Gospel.

- (1) Deu 29:29; Rom 9:20; 11:33
- (2) 1Th 1:4-5; 2Pe 1:10
- (3) Eph 1:6; Rom 11:33
- (4) Rom 11:5,6,20; Col 3:12
- (5) 2Pe 1:10
- (6) Luk 10:20

Chapter 4

CREATION

4.1 In the beginning it pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,¹ to create the world and all things in it, both visible and invisible,² in six days,³ and all very good.⁴ This was a demonstration of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness.⁵

- (1) Heb 1:2; Joh 1:2-3; Gen 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4
- (2) Gen 1:1; Joh 1:2; Col 1:16
- (3) Gen 2:1-3; Exo 20:8-11
- (4) Gen 1:31; Ecc 7:29; Rom 5:12
- (5) Rom 1:20; Jer 10:12; Psa 104:24; 33:5-6; Pro 3:19; Act 14:15-16

4.2 After God had made all other creatures, he created human beings, male and female, with reasoning and immortal souls, making them fitted for that life for God for which they were created.¹ They were made in the image of God, with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness.² They had the law of God written in their hearts, and the power to fulfil it; yet they also had the possibility of transgressing, and were left to the liberty of their own changeable wills.³

- (1) Gen 1:27; 2:7; Jas 2:26; Mat 10:28; Ecc 12:7
- (2) Gen 1:26-27; 5:1-3; 9:6; Ecc 7:29; 1Co 11:7; Jas 3:9; Col 3:10; Eph 4:24
- (3) Rom 1:32; 2:12a,14-15; Gen 3:6; Ecc 7:29; Rom 5:12

4.3 Apart from the law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. While they kept this commandment they were happy in their fellowship with God, and had dominion over all other creatures.¹

- (1) Gen 1:26,28; 2:17

Chapter 5

PROVIDENCE

5.1 God, the good Creator of all things,¹ in his infinite power and wisdom,² upholds, directs, organises and governs³ all creatures and things, from the greatest to the least,⁴ by his perfectly wise and holy providence,⁵ to the end for which they were created.⁶ He governs in accordance with his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of his own will,⁷ to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness and mercy.⁸

- (1) Gen 1:31; 2:18; Psa 119:68
- (2) Psa 145:11; Pro 3:19; Psa 66:7
- (3) Heb 1:3; Isa 46:10-11; Dan 4:34-35; Psa 135:6; Act 17:25-28; Job 38-41
- (4) Mat 10:29-31
- (5) Pro 15:3; Psa 104:24; 145:17
- (6) Col 1:16-17; Act 17:24-28
- (7) Psa 33:8-11; Eph 1:11
- (8) Isa 63:14; Eph 3:10; Rom 9:17; Gen 45:7; Psa 145:7

5.2 Although, in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God who is the first cause, all things occur immutably and infallibly, so that nothing happens to anyone by chance, or outside his providence.¹ Yet by his providence he arranges them to occur according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.²

- (1) Act 2:23; Pro 16:33
- (2) Gen 8:22; Jer 31:35; Exo 21:13; Deu 19:5; Isa 10:6-7; Luk 13:3,5; Act 27:31; Mat 5:20-21; Phi 1:19; Pro 20:18; Luk 14:25ff; Pro 21:31; 1Ki 22:28,34; Rut 2:3

5.3 God in his ordinary providence makes use of means,¹ yet is free to work outside,² above³ and against⁴ them at his pleasure.

- (1) Act 27:22,31,44; Isa 55:10-11; Hos 2:21-22
- (2) Hos 1:7; Luk 1:34-35
- (3) Rom 4:19-21
- (4) Exo 3:2-3; 2Ki 6:6; Dan 3:27

5.4 The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, are so far expressed in his providence, that his sovereign purposes extend even to the first fall and all other sinful actions of angels and human beings.¹ This is not merely by a bare permission, for he most wisely and powerfully limits and by other means arranges and governs sinful actions, so that they bring about his own holy purposes.² Yet [in all this] the sinfulness of these actions comes entirely from the creature, and not from God, who is altogether holy and righteous neither is he nor can he be the author or approver of sin.³

- (1) Rom 11:32-34; 2Sa 24:1; 1Ch 21:1; 1Ki 22:22-23; 2Sa 16:10; Act 2:23; 4:27-28
- (2) Act 14:16; 2Ki 19:28; Gen 50:20; Isa 10:6,7,12
- (3) Jas 1:13,14,17; 1Jo 2:16; Psa 50:21

5.5 The perfectly wise, righteous, and gracious God often leaves for a time [even] his own children to various temptations, and to the corruption of their own hearts. He does this to chastise them for their former sins, or to show them the hidden strength of the corruption and deceitfulness still in their hearts so that they may be humbled, and to bring them to a closer and more constant dependence on him for their support, and to make them more watchful against future occasions of sin, and for various other just and holy ends.¹ So whatever happens to any of his elect it is by his appointment, for his glory and for their good.²

- (1) 2Ch 32:25,26,31; 2Sa 24:1; Luk 22:34-35; Mar 14:66f; Joh 21:15-17
- (2) Rom 8:28

5.6 As for those evil and ungodly people whom God as a righteous judge blinds and hardens¹ because of their sins, he not only withholds his grace from them by which they might have been enlightened in their understanding and affected in their hearts,² but sometimes he also withdraws the gifts which they had,³ and exposes them to situations which their corruption makes an occasion for sin.⁴ Moreover, God gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan,⁵ so that eventually they harden themselves by the very means which God uses for the softening of others.⁶

(1) Rom 1:24-26,28; 11:7-8

(2) Deu 29:4

(3) Mat 13:12; 25:19

(4) Deu 2:30; 2Ki 8:12-13

(5) Psa 81:11-12; 2Th 2:10-12

(6) Exo 7:3; 8:15,32; 2Co 2:15-16; Isa 6:9-10; 8:14; 1Pe 2:7; Act 28:26-27; Joh 12:39-40

5.7 As the providence of God reaches out in a general way to all creatures, so, in a very special way, it takes care of his church and controls all things for the good of his church.¹

(1) Pro 2:7-8; Isa 43:3-5,14; Amo 9:8-9; Rom 8:28; Eph 1:11,22; 3:10-11,21; 1Ti 4:10

Chapter 6

THE FALL, SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT

6.1 God created Adam upright and perfect, and gave him a righteous law which secured life for him while he kept it, but threatened death if he broke it. Yet Adam did not live long in this position of honour.¹ Satan used the subtlety of the serpent to subdue Eve, she seduced Adam, and Adam (without any compulsion) wilfully transgressed the law of their creation and the command given to them by eating the forbidden fruit.² God was pleased to permit this act, according to his wise and holy counsel, as it was his purpose to direct it toward his own glory.³

(1) Ecc 7:29; Rom 5:12a,14-15; Gen 2:17; 4:25-5:3

(2) Gen 3:1-7; 2Co 11:3; 1Ti 2:14

(3) Rom 11:32-34; 2Sa 24:1; 1Ch 21:1; 1Ki 22:22-23; 2Sa 16:10; Act 2:23; 4:27-28

6.2 By this sin our first parents fell from their original righteousness and communion with God. We fell in them, for by it death came upon all;¹ all became dead in sin and totally defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.²

(1) Gen 3:22-24; Rom 5:12ff; 1Co 15:20-22; Psa 51:4-5; 58:3; Eph 2:1-3; Gen 8:21; Pro 22:15

(2) Gen 2:17; Eph 2:1; Tit 1:15; Gen 6:5; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:10-18; 1:21; Eph 4:17-19; Joh 5:40; Rom 8:7

6.3 By God' s appointment, they were the root, standing in the place of the whole human race. The guilt of this sin was imputed to, and their corrupted nature passed on to all their posterity by ordinary birth. Their descendants are therefore conceived in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, the servants of sin, the subjects of death and all other miseries—spiritual, temporal, and eternal—unless the Lord Jesus sets them free.¹

(1) Gen 5:12ff, 1Co 15:20-22; Psa 51:4-5; 58:3; Eph 2:1-3; Gen 8:21; Pro 22:15; Job 14:4; 15:14

6.4 All actual transgressions proceed from this original corruption.¹ By it we are completely incapacitated and disabled, antagonistic to all good and entirely biased towards evil.²

(1) Mat 7:17-20; 12:33-35; 15:18-20

(2) Mat 7:17-18; 12:33-35; Luk 6:43-45; Joh 3:3,5; 6:37,39,40,44,45,65; Rom 3:10-12; 5:6; 7:18; 8:7-8; 1Co 2:14

6.5 During this life, this corruption of nature remains in those who are regenerated.¹ Although it is pardoned and put to death through Christ, yet both this corrupt nature and all its actions are truly and actually sin.²

(1) 1Jo 1:8-10; 1Ki 8:46; Psa 130:3; 143:2; Pro 20:9; Ecc 7:20; Rom 7:14-25; Jas 3:2

(2) Psa 51:4-5; Pro 22:15; Eph 2:3; Rom 7:5,7-8,17-18,25; 8:3-13; Gal 5:17-24; Gen 8:21; Pro 15:26; 21:4; Gen 8:21; Mat 5:27-28

Chapter 7

GOD'S COVENANT WITH THE HUMAN RACE

7.1 The distance between God and the creature is so great, that (although reasonable creatures owe obedience to him as their Creator) they could never have attained the reward of life except by an act of voluntary condescension on God' s part. This he has been pleased to express by way of a covenant.

(1) Job 35:7-8; Psa 113:5-6; Isa 40:13-16; Luk 17:5-10; Act 17:24-25

7.2 Moreover, as Adam had brought himself and his posterity under the curse of the law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace.¹ In this covenant he freely offers to sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring from them faith in him that they may be saved,² and promising to give his Holy Spirit to all who are elected to eternal life, to make them willing and able to believe.³

(1) Gen 3:15; Psa 110:4 with Heb 7:18-22 and 10:12-18; Eph 2:12 with Rom 4:13-17 and Gal 3:18-22; Heb 9:15

(2) Joh 3:16; Rom 10:6,9; Gal 3:11

(3) Eze 36:26-27; Joh 6:44-45

7.3 This covenant is revealed through the Gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman, and afterwards step by step until the full revelation of it was completed in the New Testament.¹ This salvation rests on that eternal covenant transaction between the Father and the Son which concerns the redemption of the elect.² It is by the grace of this covenant alone that all the descendants of fallen Adam who have ever been saved have obtained life and blessed immortality. Human beings are now utterly incapable of gaining acceptance with God on those terms by which Adam stood in his state of innocency.³

(1) Gen 3:15; Rom 16:25-27; Eph 3:5; Tit 1:2; Heb 1:1-2

(2) Psa 110:4; Eph 1:3-11; 2Ti 1:9

(3) Joh 8:56; Rom 4:1-25; Gal 3:18-22; Heb 11:6,13,39-40

Chapter 8

CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

8.1 It pleased God,¹ in his eternal purpose,² to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only Son, in accordance with the covenant made between them both,³ to be the Mediator between God and the human race; to be prophet, priest, and king; to be the head and saviour of his church, the heir of all things, and judge of the world.⁴ From all eternity he gave to him a people to be his progeny. In time these would be redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified by him.⁵

(1) Isa 42:1; Joh 3:16

(2) 1Pe 1:19

(3) Psa 110:4; Heb 7:21-22

(4) 1Ti 2:5; Act 3:22; Heb 5:5-6; Psa 2:6; Luk 1:33; Eph 1:22-23; 5:23; Heb 1:2; Act 17:31

(5) Rom 8:30; Joh 17:6; Isa 53:10; Psa 22:30; 1Ti 2:6; Isa 55:4-5; 1Co 1:30

8.2 The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, is truly and eternally God. He is the brightness of the Father' s glory, of the same substance and equal with him who made the world, who upholds and governs all things he has made.²

When the fullness of time was come,³ he took upon himself human nature, with all its essential properties⁴ and common infirmities,⁵ yet without sin.⁶ He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary. The Holy Spirit came down upon her and the power of the Most High overshadowed her, so that he was born to a woman from the tribe of Judah, a descendant of Abraham and David, in accordance with the Scriptures.⁷

So two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, mixing, or confusion. This person is therefore truly God⁸ and truly human,⁹ yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and the human race.¹⁰

(1) Or, *essence*

(2) Joh 8:58; Joe 2:32 with Rom 10:13; Psa 102:25 with Heb 1:10; 1Pe 2:3 with Psa 34:8; Isa 8:12-13 with 3:15; Joh 1:1; 5:18; 20:28; Rom 9:5; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:8-9; Phi 2:5-6; 2Pe 1:1; 1Jo 5:20

(3) Gal 4:4

(4) Heb 10:5; Mar 14:8; Mat 26:12,26; Luk 7:44-46; Joh 13:23; Mat 9:10-13; 11:19; Luk 22:44; Heb 2:10; 5:8; 1Pe 3:18; 4:1; Joh 19:32-35; Mat 26:36-44; Jas 2:26; Joh 19:30; Luk 23:46; Mat 26:39; 9:36; Mar 3:5; 10:14; Joh 11:35; Luk 19:41-44; 10:21; Mat 4:1-11; Heb 4:15 with Jas 1:13; Luk 5:16; 6:12; 9:18,28; 2:40,52; Heb 5:8-9

(5) Mat 4:2; Mar 11:12; Mat 21:18; Joh 4:7; 19:28; Joh 4:6; Mat 8:24; Rom 8:3; Heb 5:8; 2:10,18; Gal 4:4

(6) Isa 53:9; Luk 1:35; Joh 8:46; 14:30; Rom 8:3; 2Co 5:21; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 9:14; 1Pe 1:19; 2:22; 1Jo 3:5

(7) Rom 1:3-4; 9:5

(8) See ref.1 above

(9) Act 2:22; 13:38; 17:31; 1Co 15:21; 1Ti 2:5

(10) Rom 1:3-4; Gal 4:4-5; Phi 2:5-11

8.3 The Lord Jesus, his human nature thus united to the divine in the person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit without limit, so in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in him, so that being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth, he might be perfectly qualified to execute the office of a mediator and surety.¹ He did not take this office upon himself, but was called to it by his Father, who also put all power and judgement in his hands, and commanded him to execute these.²

(1) Psa 45:7; Col 1:19; 2:3; Heb 7:26; Joh 1:14; Act 10:38; Heb 7:22

(2) Heb 5:5; Joh 5:22,27; Mat 28:18; Act 2:36

8.4 The Lord Jesus undertook this office entirely willingly.¹ To discharge it he was subject to the law² and perfectly fulfilled it. He also underwent the punishment due to us which we should have borne and suffered.³ He was made sin and was accursed for us;⁴ he endured the extremities of agonising distress in his soul and painful suffering in his body.⁵ He was crucified, and died,⁶ and remained in the state of the dead, yet his body did not decay.⁷ On the third day he rose from the dead with the same body in which he had suffered,⁸ with which he also ascended into heaven,⁹ where he sits at the right hand of his Father making intercession [for his people].¹⁰ At the end of the world he will return to judge human beings and angels.¹¹

(1) Psa 40:7-8 with Heb 10:5-10; Joh 10:18; Phi 2:8

(2) Gal 4:4

(3) Mat 3:15; 5:17

(4) Mat 26:37-38; Luk 22:44; Mat 27:46

(5) Mat 26-27

(6) WCF adds: *was buried*

(7) Phi 2:8; Act 13:37

(8) Joh 20:25,27

(9) Act 1:9-11

(10) Rom 8:34; Heb 9:24

(11) Act 10:42; Rom 14:9-10; Act 1:11; Mat 13:40-42; 2Pe 2:4; Jude 1:6

8.5 The Lord Jesus has fully satisfied the justice of God¹ by his perfect obedience and his once-for-all sacrifice² which he offered up to God through the eternal Spirit.³ He has procured reconciliation,⁴ and has purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven⁵ for all those whom the Father has given to him.⁶

(1) Rom 3:25-26; Heb 2:17; 1Jo 2:2; 4:10

(2) Rom 5:19 Eph 5:2

(3) Heb 9:14,16; 10:10,14

(4) 2Co 5:18-19; Col 1:20-23

(5) Heb 9:15; Rev 5:9-10

(6) Joh 17:2

8.6 Although the price¹ of redemption was not actually paid² by Christ till after his incarnation, yet its value, efficacy, and benefits were communicated to the elect in all ages from the beginning of the world.³ This was accomplished through those promises, types, and sacrifices in which he was revealed and represented as the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head, and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world,⁵ for he is the same, yesterday and today and for ever.⁶

- (1) WCF: *work*
- (2) WCF: *wrought*
- (3) Gal 4:4-5; Rom 4:1-9
- (4) Gen 3:15; 1Pe 1:10-11
- (5) Rev 13:8
- (6) Heb 13:8

8.7 In his work of mediation, Christ acts according to both natures, in each nature doing that which is appropriate to itself. Yet, because of the unity of his person, that which is appropriate to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person indicated by the other nature.¹

- (1) Act 20:28; Joh 3:13

8.8 To all those for whom Christ has obtained¹ eternal redemption, he certainly and effectually applies and communicates this redemption,² making intercession for them.³ He unites them to himself by his Spirit,⁴ he reveals to them the mystery of salvation in and by the Word,⁵ he persuades them to believe and obey⁶ controlling their hearts by his Word and Spirit,⁷ and he overcomes all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom⁸ using methods and ways which are perfectly consistent with his wonderful and unsearchable providence.⁹ All this is by free and absolute grace, without any foreseen condition in them to obtain it.¹⁰

- (1) WCF: *purchased*
- (2) Joh 6:37,39; 10:15-16; 17:9
- (3) 1Jo 2:1-2; Rom 8:34
- (4) Rom 8:1-2
- (5) Joh 15:13,15; 17:6; Eph 1:7-9
- (6) 1Jo 5:20
- (7) Joh 14:6; Heb 12:2; Rom 8:9,14; 2Co 4:13; Rom 15:18-19; Joh 17:17
- (8) Psa 110:1; 1Co 15:25-26; Col 2:15
- (9) Eph 1:9-11
- (10) 1Jo 3:8; Eph 1:8

8.9 This office of Mediator between God and the human race belongs exclusively to Christ, who is the Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church of God. This office may not be transferred from him to any other, either in whole or in part.¹

- (1) 1Ti 2:5

8.10 The number and order of offices is essential. Because of our ignorance we need his prophetic office.¹ Because of our alienation from God and the imperfection of the best of our service we need his priestly office to reconcile us and present us to God as acceptable.² Because of our antagonism and our utter inability to return to God, and because we need to be rescued and kept from spiritual enemies, we need his kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, sustain, deliver, and preserve us for his heavenly kingdom.³

- (1) Joh 1:18
- (2) Col 1:21; Gal 5:17; Heb 10:19-21
- (3) Joh 16:8; Psa 110:3; Luk 1:74-75

Chapter 9

FREE WILL

9.1 God has provided the human will by nature with liberty and power to act upon choice; it is neither forced, nor determined by any intrinsic necessity to do good or evil.¹

(1) Mat 17:12; Jas 1:14; Deu 30:19

9.2 In his state of innocence, Adam had freedom and power to will and to do what was good and well-pleasing to God;¹ but he was unstable so that he might fall from this condition.²

(1) Ecc 7:29
(2) Gen 3:6

9.3 The human race through the fall into a state of sin, has completely lost all ability of will to perform any spiritual good accompanying salvation. In our natural state we are altogether opposed to spiritual good and dead in sin; we are not able, by our own strength, to convert ourselves, or even to prepare ourselves for conversion.¹

(1) Rom 6:16,20; Joh 8:31-34; Eph 2:1; 2Co 3:14; 4:3-4; Joh 3:3; Rom 7:18; 8:7; 1Co 2:14; Mat 7:17-18; 12:33-37; Luk 6:43-45; Joh 6:44; Jer 13:23; Joh 3:3,5; 5:40, 6:37,39,40,44,45,65; Act 7:51; Rom 3:10-12; Jas 1:18; Rom 9:16-18; Joh 1:12-13; Act 11:18; Phi 1:29; Eph 2:8-9

9.4 When God converts sinners and transfers them into the state of grace, he frees them from their natural bondage to sin, and by his grace alone he enables them freely to will and to do what is spiritually good.¹ Nevertheless, because of their remaining corruption, they do not perfectly nor exclusively will what is good, but also will what is evil.²

(1) Col 1:13; Joh 8:36; Phi 2:13
(3) Rom 7:14-25; Gal 5:17

9.5 Only in the state of glory will our wills be made perfectly and permanently free to do good alone.¹

(1) Eph 4:13; Heb 12:23

Chapter 10

EFFECTUAL CALLING

10.1 Those whom God¹ has predestined to life,² he is pleased (in his appointed and accepted time)³ to effectually call⁴ by his Word⁵ and Spirit.⁶ He calls them out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ.⁷ He enlightens their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God.⁸ He takes away their heart of stone, and gives to them a heart of flesh.⁹ He renews their wills, and by his almighty power causes them to do what is good.¹⁰ He effectually draws them to Jesus Christ,¹¹ yet in such a way that they come completely freely, for they are made willing by his grace.¹²

(1) Rom 8:28-29
(2) Rom 8:29-30; 9:22-24; 1Co 1:26-28; 2Th 2:13-14; 2Ti 1:9
(3) Joh 3:8; Eph 1:11
(4) Mat 22:14; 1Co 1:23-24; Rom 1:6; 8:28; Jude 1:1; Psa 29; Joh 5:25; Rom 4:17
(5) 2Th 2:14; 1Pe 1:23-25; Jas 1:17-25; 1Jo 5:1-5; Rom 1:16-17; 10:14; Heb 4:12
(6) Joh 3:3,5-6,8; 2Co 3:3,6
(7) Rom 8:2; 1Co 1:9; Eph 2:1-6; 2Ti 1:9-10
(8) Act 26:18; 1Co 2:10,12; Eph 1:17-18
(9) Eze 36:26
(10) Deu 30:6; Eze 36:27;
(11) Joh 6:44-45; Eph 1:19; Phi 2:13
(12) Psa 110:3; Joh 6:37; Rom 6:16-18

10.2 This effectual call is of God' s free and special grace alone, not on account of anything at all foreseen in us. It is not made because of any power or action in us,¹ for we are altogether passive in it, we are dead in sins and trespasses until we are made alive and renewed by the Holy Spirit.² By this [regeneration] we are enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it, this power being none other than that which raised up Christ from the dead.³

- (1) 2Ti 1:9; Tit 3:4-5; Eph 2:4-5,8-9; Rom 9:11
- (2) 1Co 2:14; Rom 8:7; Eph 2:5
- (3) Joh 6:37; Eze 36:27; Joh 5:25; Eph 1:19-20

10.3 Infants¹ dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who works when and where and how he pleases.² So also are all elect persons regenerated who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word.

- (1) WCF: *Elect infants*
- (2) Joh 3:8

10.4 Those who are not elected, even though they may be called by the ministry of the Word and may experience some common operations of the Spirit,¹ cannot be saved because they are not effectually drawn by the Father, therefore they will not and cannot truly come to Christ. Much less can those who do not profess the Christian religion be saved,² no matter how diligently they order their lives according to the light of nature and the teachings of the religion they profess.³

- (1) Mat 13:20-21; 22:14; Heb 6:4-5; Mat 7:22
- (2) Joh 6:44-45,64-66; 8:24
- (3) Act 4:12; Joh 4:22; 17:3

Chapter 11

JUSTIFICATION

11.1 Those whom God effectually calls he also freely justifies.¹ He does this, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting them as righteous,² not for anything done in them or by them, but for Christ' s sake alone.³ They are not justified because God imputes⁴ as their righteousness either their faith itself, or the act of believing, or any other act of obedience to the gospel. They are justified by God imputing Christ' s active obedience to the whole law and his passive obedience in death. By faith they receive and rest on his righteousness, and this faith they do not have of themselves for it is the gift of God.⁵

- (1) Rom 8:30; 3:24
- (2) Rom 4:5-8; Eph 1:7
- (3) 1Co 1:30-31; Rom 5:17-19
- (4) i.e. *accounts* or *reckons*
- (5) 2Co 5:19-21; Tit 3:5,7; Rom 3:22-28; Jer 23:6; Phi 3:9; Act 13:38-39; Eph 2:7-8

11.2 Faith which receives and rests on Christ and his righteousness is the sole instrument of justification.¹ Yet it is never alone in the person justified, but is always accompanied by all the other saving graces; it is not a dead faith, for it functions by love.²

- (1) Rom 1:17; 3:27-31; Phi 3:9; Gal 3:5
- (2) Gal 5:6; Jas 2:17,22,26

11.3 By his obedience and death, Christ fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified. By his sacrifice in the blood of his cross, he underwent in their place the penalty due to them, so making an appropriate, real, and full satisfaction of God' s justice on their behalf. Yet their justification is entirely of free grace, because he was given by the Father for them,² and his obedience and satisfaction was accepted in their place,³ both actions being done freely, and not because of anything in them.⁴ So both the exact justice and the rich grace of God are glorified in the justification of sinners.⁵

- (1) Rom 5:8-10,19; 1Ti 2:5-6; Heb 10:10,14; Isa 53:4-6,10-12
- (2) Rom 8:32
- (3) 2Co 5:21; Mat 3:17; Eph 5:2
- (4) Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7
- (5) Rom 3:26; Eph 2:7

11.4 From all eternity God decreed to justify all the elect,¹ and Christ in the fullness of time died for their sins, and rose again for their justification.² Nevertheless they are not justified personally until the Holy Spirit in due time actually applies Christ to them.³

- (1) Gal 3:8; 1Pe 1:2,19-20; Rom 8:30
- (2) Gal 4:4; 1Ti 2:6; Rom 4:25
- (3) Col 1:21-22; Gal 2:16; Tit 3:4-7; Eph 2:1-3

11.5 God continues to forgive the sins of those who are justified;¹ and although they can never fall from the state of justification,² yet they may fall under God' s fatherly displeasure because of their sins. In that condition they will not usually have fellowship with God³ restored to them until they humble themselves, confess their sins, ask for pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.⁴

- (1) Mat 6:12; 1Jo 1:7-2:2; Joh 13:3-11
- (2) Luk 22:32; Joh 10:28; Heb 10:14
- (3) Literally, *the light of his countenance*
- (4) Psa 32:5; 51:7-12; Mat 26:75; Luk 1:20

11.6 The justification of believers under the Old Testament was in all these respects exactly the same as the justification of believers under the New Testament.¹

- (1) Gal 3:9; Rom 4:22-24

Chapter 12

ADOPTION

12.1 God has granted¹ that, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ,³ all those who are justified³ share in the grace of adoption. By this they are numbered with and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God. They have his name put upon them,⁴ and receive the Spirit of adoption. They have access to the throne of grace with boldness, and are able to cry, 'Abba, Father!'⁵ They are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by him as by a father, yet they are never cast off, but are sealed to the day of redemption,⁶ and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.⁷

- (1) 1Jo 3:1-3
- (2) Eph 1:5; Gal 4:4-5; Rom 8:17,29
- (3) Gal 3:24-26
- (4) Rom 8:17; Joh 1:12; 2Co 6:18; Rev 3:12
- (5) Rom 8:15; Eph 3:12; Rom 5:2; Gal 4:6; Eph 2:18
- (6) Psa 103:13; Pro 14:26; Mat 6:30,32; 1Pe 5:7; Heb 12:6; Isa 54:8-9; Lam 3:31; Eph 4:30
- (7) Rom 8:17; Heb 1:14; 9:15

Chapter 13

SANCTIFICATION

13.1 Those who are united to Christ, effectually called and regenerated, have a new heart and a new spirit created in them through the efficacy of Christ' s death and resurrection. Furthermore, they are also really and personally sanctified² through the same means,³ by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them.⁴ The power of every part of the body of sin is destroyed, and its various lusts are increasingly weakened and put to death, and saving graces are increasingly brought to life and strengthened in them so that they practice true holiness⁵ without which no one shall see the Lord.⁶

- (1) Joh 3:3-8; 1Jo 2:29; 3:9-10; Rom 1:7; 2Co 1:1; Eph 1:1; Phi 1:1; Col 3:12; Act 20:32; 26:18; Rom 15:16; 1Co 1:2; 6:11; Rom 6:1-11
- (2) 1Th 5:23; Rom 6:19,22
- (3) 1Co 6:11; Act 20:32; Phi 3:10; Rom 6:5-6
- (4) Joh 17:17; Eph 5:26; 3:16-19; Rom 8:13
- (5) Rom 6:14; Gal 5:24; Rom 8:13; Col 1:11; Eph 3:16-19; 2Co 7:1; Rom 6:13; Eph 4:22-25; Gal 5:17
- (6) Heb 12:14

13.2 This sanctification extends throughout the whole person, yet it remains incomplete in this life. Some remnants of corruption still remain in every part,¹ from which arise a continual and irreconcilable war,² the flesh desiring what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh.³

- (1) 1Th 5:23; 1Jo 1:8,10; Rom 7:18,23; Phi 3:12
- (2) 1Co 9:24-27; 1Ti 1:18; 6:12; 2Ti 4:7
- (3) Gal 5:17; 1Pe 2:11

13.3 In this war, the remaining corruption may often predominate for a time,¹ yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part gains the victory.² So believers grow in grace, moving towards mature holiness in the fear of God, pressing on towards the heavenly life in gospel obedience to all the commands which Christ as Head and King has prescribed for them in his Word.³

- (1) Rom 7:23
- (2) Rom 6:14; 1Jo 5:4; Eph 4:15-16
- (3) 2Pe 3:18; 2Co 7:1; 3:18; Mat 28:20

Chapter 14

SAVING FAITH

14.1 The grace of faith (by which the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls) is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts. It is normally brought into being by the ministry of the Word.¹ It is increased and strengthened by the ministry of the Word, and by the administration of baptism and the Lord' s supper, prayer, and other means appointed by God.²

- (1) Joh 6:37,44; Act 11:21,24; 13:48; 14:27; 15:9; 2Co 4:13; Eph 2:8; Phi 1:29; 2Th 2:13; 1Pe 1:2
- (2) Rom 10:14,17; Luk 17:5; Act 20:32; Rom 4:11; 1Pe 2:2

14.2 By this faith, a Christian believes to be true whatever is revealed in the Word for it is the authority of God himself. We also perceive an excellency in the Word above all other writings and everything else in the world, because it shows forth the glory of God and his attributes, the excellency of Christ and his nature and offices, and the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit in his works and operations.

So believers are enabled to trust implicitly the truth they have believed,¹ and to respond appropriately to each particular passage in Scripture, yielding obedience to the commands,² trembling at the threatenings,³ and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come.⁴

But the principal acts of saving faith are those directly to do with Christ—accepting, receiving, and resting on him alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.⁵

- (1) Act 24:14; 1Th 2:13; Psa 19:7-10; 119:72
- (2) Joh 15:14; Rom 16:26
- (3) Isa 66:2
- (4) 1Ti 4:8; Heb 11:13
- (5) Joh 1:12; Act 15:11; 16:31; Gal 2:20

14.3 This faith may differ in degree, and may be weak or strong,¹ yet even at its weakest it is different in kind and nature (as is all saving grace) from the faith and common grace of temporary believers.² Therefore, though it may be frequently attacked and weakened, it gains the victory,³ and develops in many until they attain full assurance⁴ through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith.⁵

- (1) Mat 6:30; 8:10,26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20; Heb 5:13-14; Rom 4:19-20
- (2) Jas 2:14; 2Pe 1:1; 1Jo 5:4
- (3) Luk 22:31-32; Eph 6:16; 1Jo 5:4-5
- (4) Psa 119:114; Heb 6:11-12; 10:22-23
- (5) Heb 12:2

Chapter 15

REPENTANCE TO LIFE AND SALVATION

15.1 Some of the elect are converted in later years, having lived for some time in their natural state¹ in which they have served various lusts and pleasures. Then God gives them repentance to life by effectually calling them.²

- (1) Tit 3:2-5
- (2) 2Ch 33:10-20; Act 9:1-19; 16:29-30

15.2 There is no one who does good and does not sin,¹ and the best of people may fall into great sins and provocations [against God] through the power and deceitfulness of their indwelling corruption and the strength of temptation.² Therefore God has mercifully provided in the covenant of grace that when believers sin and fall they shall be restored to salvation through repentance.³

- (1) Psa 130:3; 143:2; Pro 20:9; Ecc 7:20
- (2) 2Sa 11:1-27; Luk 22:54-62
- (3) Jer 32:40; Luk 22:31-32; 1Jo 1:9

15.3 Saving repentance is a gospel grace¹ by which we are made aware of the many evils of our sin by the Holy Spirit.² By faith in Christ³ we humble ourselves over our sin with godly sorrow, hatred of it, and self-loathing. We pray for pardon and strength of grace,⁴ and determine and endeavour, by [the power] supplied by the Spirit, to walk before God and to please him in all things.⁵

- (1) Act 5:31; 11:18; 2Ti 2:25
- (2) Psa 51:1-6; 130:1-3; Luk 15:17-20; Act 2:37-38
- (3) Psa 130:4; Mat 27:3-5; Mar 1:15
- (4) Eze 16:60-63; 36:31-32; Zec 12:10; Mat 21:29; Act 15:19; 20:21; 26:20; 2Co 7:10-11; 1Th 1:9
- (5) Pro 28:13; Eze 36:25; 18:30-31; Psa 119:59,104,128; Mat 3:8; Luk 3:8; Act 26:20; 1Th 1:9

15.4 Repentance is to continue through the whole course of our lives because of our 'body of death' and its activities.¹ So it is everyone's duty to repent of particular known sins with particular care.

- (1) Eze 16:60; Mat 5:4; 1Jo 1:9
- (2) Luk 19:8; 1Ti 1:13,15

15.5 In the covenant of grace God has made full provision through Christ for the preservation of believers in their salvation, so, although even the smallest sin deserves damnation,¹ yet there is no sin great enough to bring damnation on those who repent. This makes the constant preaching of repentance essential.²

- (1) Psa 130:3; 143:2; Rom 6:23
- (2) Isa 1:16-18; 55:7; Act 2:36-38

Chapter 16

GOOD WORKS

16.1 Good works are only those which God has commanded in his holy Word.¹ Works which do not have such warrant, and are invented by people out of blind zeal or on pretence of good intentions, are not good works.²

- (1) Mic 6:8; Rom 12:2; Heb 13:21; Col 2:3; 2Ti 3:16-17
- (2) Mat 15:9 with Isa 29:13; 1Pe 1:18; Rom 10:2; Joh 16:2; 1Sa 15:21-23; 1Co 7:23; Gal 5:1; Col 2:8,16-23

16.2 These good works, done in obedience to God' s commandments, are the fruits and evidence of a true and living faith.¹ By them believers express their thankfulness,² strengthen their assurance,³ edify their brethren,⁴ enhance their profession of the Gospel,⁵ and silence the opponents [of the Gospel].⁶ So they glorify God whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus to do good works⁷ and to produce the fruits of holiness which lead to eternal life.⁸

- (1) Jas 2:18,22; Gal 5:6; 1Ti 1:5
- (2) Psa 116:12-14; 1Pe 2:9,12; Luk 7:36-50 with Mat 26:1-11
- (3) 1Jo 2:3,5; 3:18-19; 2Pe 1:5-11
- (4) 2Co 9:2; Mat 5:16
- (5) Mat 5:16; Tit 2:5,9-12; 1Ti 6:1; 1Pe 2:12
- (6) 1Pe 2:12,15; Tit 2:5; 1Ti 6:1
- (7) Eph 2:10; Phi 1:11; 1Ti 6:1; 1Pe 2:12; Mat 5:16
- (8) Rom 6:22; Mat 7:13-14,21-23

16.3 Their ability to do these good works does not in any way come from themselves, but entirely from the Spirit of Christ. To enable them to do good works (besides the graces they have already received) they require the actual influence of the Holy Spirit to cause them to will and to do his good pleasure.¹ Yet are they not on this account to become negligent, nor to think that they are not required to perform a duty unless given a special impulse of the Spirit; rather, they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.²

- (1) Eze 36:26-27; Joh 15:4-6; 2Co 3:5; Phi 2:12-13; Eph 2:10
- (2) Rom 8:14; Joh 3:8; Phi 2:12-13; 2Pe 1:10; Heb 6:12; 2Ti 1:6; Jude 1:20-21

16.4 Those who in their obedience [to God] attain the greatest height possible in this life, are still far from being able to perform works of supererogation (that is, to do more than God requires) since they fall short of much which, as their duty, they are required to do.¹

- (1) 1Ki 8:46; 2Ch 6:36; Psa 130:3; 143:2; Pro 20:9; Ecc 7:20; Rom 3:9,23; 7:14-15; Gal 5:17; 1Jo 1:6-10; Luk 17:10

16.5 We cannot, even by our best works, merit pardon of sin or eternal life from the hand of God, for those works are out of all proportion to the glory to come.¹ Moreover, because of the infinite distance that is between us and God, our works can neither benefit God nor satisfy the debt of our former sins. When we have done all we can, we have only done our duty, and are still unprofitable servants.² Besides, if our works are good they originate from the Spirit,³ and whatever we do is defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection that it cannot endure the severity of God' s judgment.⁴

- (1) Rom 8:18
- (2) Job 22:3; 35:7; Luk 17:10; Rom 4:3; 11:3
- (3) Gal 5:22-23
- (4) 1Ki 8:46; 2Ch 6:36; Psa 130:3; 143:2; Pro 20:9; Ecc 7:20; Rom 3:9,23; 7:14-15; Gal 5:17; 1Jo 1:6-10

16.6 Yet, although believers are accepted as individual people through Christ, their good works also are accepted in Christ.¹ It is not as though in this life they were entirely blameless and beyond censure in God's sight,² but that he looks upon them in his Son, and is pleased to accept and reward what is sincere, even though it is accompanied by many weaknesses and imperfections.³

(1) Exo 28:38; Eph 1:6-7; 1Pe 2:5

(2) 1Ki 8:46; 2Ch 6:36; Psa 130:3; 143:2; Pro 20:9; Ecc 7:20; Rom 3:9,23; 7:14-15; Gal 5:17; 1Jo 1:6-10

(3) Heb 6:10; Mat 25:21,23

16.7 As for works done by the unregenerate, even though in essence they may be things which God commands, and may be beneficial both to themselves and others,¹ yet they remain sinful works because they do not proceed from a heart purified by faith,² nor are they done in a right manner according to the Word,³ nor is their purpose the glory of God.⁴ Therefore such works cannot please God nor make a person acceptable to receive grace from God.⁵ Yet the neglect of such works is even more sinful and displeasing to God.⁶

(1) 1Ki 21:27-29; 2Ki 10:30-31; Rom 2:14; Phi 1:15-18

(2) Gen 4:5 with Heb 11:4-6; 1Ti 1:5; Rom 14:23; Gal 5:6

(3) 1Co 13:3; Isa 1:12

(4) Mat 6:2,5-6; 1Co 10:31

(5) Rom 9:16; Tit 1:15; 3:5

(6) 1Ki 21:27-29; 2Ki 10:30-31; Psa 14:4; 36:3

Chapter 17

THE PERSEVERANCE OF BELIEVERS

17.1 The elect are those whom God has accepted in [Christ] the Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, and given the precious faith of his elect. These can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but they shall certainly persevere in grace to the end and be eternally saved. For God will not repent of¹ his gifts and calling, therefore he continues to bring about and nourish in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit that lead to immortality.²

Many storms and floods may arise and beat against them, yet these things will never be able to sweep them off the foundation and rock upon which they are fastened by faith. Even though unbelief and the temptations of Satan cause the sight and feeling of the light and love of God to be clouded and obscured from them for a time,³ yet God is still the same and they are sure to be kept by his power until their salvation is complete. Then they will enjoy the purchased possession which is theirs, for they are engraved on the palms of his hands, and their names have been written in the book of life from all eternity.⁴

(1) Or, *change his mind about*

(2) Joh 10:28-29; Phi 1:6; 2Ti 2:19; 2Pe 1:5-10; 1Jo 2:19

(3) Psa 89:31-32; 1Co 11:32; 2Ti 4:7

(4) Psa 102:27; Mal 3:6; Eph 1:14; 1Pe 1:5; Rev 13:8

17.2 This perseverance of believers does not depend on their own free will,¹ but on the immutability of the decree of election,² which flows from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father. It also rests on the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ and their union with him,³ the oath of God,⁴ the abiding of his Spirit, the seed of God⁵ within them,⁶ and the nature of the covenant of grace,⁷ from all of which arises also its certainty and infallibility.

(1) Phi 2:12-13; Rom 9:16; Joh 6:37,44

(2) Mat 24:22,24,31; Rom 8:30; 9:11,16; 11:2,29; Eph 1:5-11

(3) Eph 1:4; Rom 5:9-10; 8:31-34; 2Co 5:14; Rom 8:35-38; 1Co 1:8-9; Joh 14:19; 10:28-29

(4) Heb 6:16-20

(5) or, *the divine nature*

(6) 1Jo 2:19-20,27; 3:9; 5:4,18; 2Co 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30; 2Co 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:14

(7) Jer 31:33-34; 32:40; Heb 10:11-18; 13:20-21

17.3 They may fall into serious sins through the temptations of Satan and the world, the power of the corruption remaining in them, and neglect of the means for their preservation, and may even continue in them for a time.¹ In this they incur God' s displeasure, grieve his Holy Spirit,² have their graces and comforts impaired,³ have their hearts hardened and their consciences wounded,⁴ and hurt and offend others,⁵ and bring present chastisement upon themselves.⁶ Yet they will [in time] renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end.⁷

(1) Mat 26:70,72,74

(2) Psa 38:1-8; Isa 54:5-9; Eph 4:30; 1Th 5:14

(3) Psa 51:10-12

(4) Psa 32:3-4; 73:21-22

(5) 2Sa 12:14; 1Co 8:9-13; Rom 14:13-18; 1Ti 6:1-2; Tit 2:5

(6) 2Sa 12:14-15; Gen 19:30-38; 1Co 11:27-32

(7) Luk 22:32,61-62; 1Co 11:32; 1Jo 3:9; 5:18

Chapter 18

ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND SALVATION

18.1 Temporary believers and other unregenerate people may deceive themselves with futile and false hopes and unspiritual presumptions that they are in favour with God and in a state of salvation, but their hope will perish.¹ Yet those who truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before him, may be certainly assured in this life that they are in the state of grace; they may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, knowing that such hope will never make them ashamed.²

(1) Jer 17:9; Mat 7:21-23; Luk 18:10-14; Joh 8:41; Eph 5:6-7; Gal 6:3,7-9

(2) Rom 5:2,5; 8:16; 1Jo 2:3; 3:14,18-19,24; 5:13; 2Pe 1:10

18.2 This certainty is not mere conjecture or probability based on a fallible hope. Rather it is an infallible assurance of faith¹ based on the blood and righteousness of Christ revealed in the Gospel,² on the inward evidence of those graces of the Spirit (about which promises have been made),³ and on the testimony of the Spirit of adoption who witnesses with our spirits that we are the children of God.⁴ As the fruit of this assurance, the Spirit keeps our hearts both humble and holy.⁵

(1) Rom 5:2,5; Heb 6:11,19-20; 1Jo 3:2,14; 4:16; 5:13,19-20

(2) Heb 6:17-18; 7:22; 10:14,19

(3) Mat 3:7-10; Mar 1:15; 2Pe 1:4-11; 1Jo 2:3; 3:14,18-19,24; 5:13

(4) Rom 8:15-16; 1Co 2:12; Gal 4:6-7

(5) 1Jo 3:1-3

18.3 This infallible assurance is not an essential part of faith, for a true believer may wait a long time, and struggle with many difficulties before obtaining it.¹ Yet we may obtain it without extraordinary revelation and by the right use of ordinary means, for we are enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given to us by God.² Therefore it is the duty of everyone to be as diligent as possible to make their calling and election sure, so that their hearts may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in carrying out the duties of obedience. These duties are the natural fruits of this assurance, for it is far from inclining people to loose living.³

(1) Act 16:30-34; 1Jo 5:13

(2) Rom 8:15-16; 1Co 2:12; Gal 4:4-6 with 3:2; 1Jo 4:13; Eph 3:17-19; Heb 6:11-12; 2Pet 1:5-11

(3) 2Pe 1:10; Psa 119:32; Rom 15:13; Neh 8:10; 1Jo 4:19,16; Rom 6:1-2,11-13; 14:17; Tit 2:11-14

18.4 In various ways true believers may have their assurance of salvation shaken, diminished, or interrupted. This may be because of their negligence in preserving it,¹ or by falling into some particular sin which wounds the conscience and grieves the Spirit,² or by some sudden or forceful temptation,³ or by God withdrawing the light of his countenance and causing even those who fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light.⁴ Yet believers are never destitute of the seed of God⁵ and the life of faith, the love of Christ and the brethren, sincerity of heart and conscience of duty. Out of these things, this assurance may in due time be revived by the operation of the Spirit, and in the mean time they are preserved from utter despair.⁶

(1) Heb 6:11-12; 2Pe 1:5-11

(2) Psa 51:8,12,14; Eph 4:30

(3) Psa 30:7; 31:22; 77:7-8; 116:11

(4) Isa 50:10

(5) or, *the divine nature*

(6) 1Jo 3:9; Luk 22:32; Rom 8:15-16; Gal 4:5; Psa 42:5,11

Chapter 19

THE LAW OF GOD

19.1 God gave to Adam a law of universal obedience written in his heart,¹ and a specific precept not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.² By this he bound him and all his descendants to personal, total, exact, and perpetual obedience. God promised life on fulfilling it, and threatened death on breaching it, and he endued him with power and ability to keep it.³

(1) Gen 1:27; Ecc 7:29; Rom 2:12a,14-15

(2) Gen 2:16-17

(3) Gen 2:16-17; Rom 10:5; Gal 3:10,12

19.2 The same law that was first written in the human heart continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall.¹ It was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai² in ten commandments (written in two tables) the first four containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to our fellow beings.³

(1) For the Fourth Commandment: Gen 2:3; Exo 16; Gen 7:4; 8:10,12. For the Fifth Commandment: Gen 37:10. For the Sixth Commandment: Gen 4:3-15. For the Seventh Commandment: Gen 12:17. For the Eighth Commandment: Gen 31:30; 44:8. For the Ninth Commandment: Gen 27:12. For the Tenth Commandment: Gen 6:2; 13:10-11

(2) Rom 2:12a,14-15

(3) Exo 32:15-16; 34:4,28; Deu 10:4

19.3 Besides this law, commonly called the moral law, God was pleased to give the people of Israel ceremonial laws containing several typical ordinances. These were partly concerning worship, and in them Christ was prefigured—his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits.¹ They also gave instructions about various moral duties.² All of these ceremonial laws were appointed only until the time of the New Testament, when Jesus Christ abrogated them and took them away, for he was the true Messiah and only law-giver, and was empowered to do this by the Father.³

(1) Heb 10:1; Col 2:16-17

(2) 1Co 5:7; 2Co 6:17; Jude 1:23

(3) Col 2:14,16-17; Eph 2:14-16

19.4 To the people of Israel he also gave various judicial laws which lapsed when they ceased as a nation. These are not binding on anyone now by virtue of their being part of the laws of that nation,¹ but their principles of equity continue to be applicable in modern times.²

(1) Luk 21:20-24; Act 6:13-14; Heb 9:18-19 with 8:7,13; 9:10; 10:1

(2) 1Co 5:1; 9:8-10

19.5 Obedience to the moral law remains forever binding on all, both justified persons and others,¹ both in regard to the content of the law, and also to the authority of God the Creator who gave the law.² Nor does Christ in any way dissolve this law in the Gospel, on the contrary, he strengthens our obligation [to obey the moral law].³

(1) Mat 19:16-22; Rom 2:14-15; 3:19-20; 6:14; 7:6; 8:3; 1Ti 1:8-11; Rom 13:8-10; 1Co 7:19 with Gal 5:6; 6:15; Eph 4:25-6:4; Jas 2:11-12

(2) Jas 2:10-11

(3) Mat 5:17-19; Rom 3:31; 1Co 9:21; Jas 2:8

19.6 Although true believers are not under the law as a covenant of works to be justified or condemned by it,¹ yet it is of great use to them as well as to others, because as a rule of life it informs them of the will of God and their duty, and directs and binds them to walk accordingly.²

It also exposes the sinful defilement of their natures, hearts and lives, and as they use it to examine themselves, they come to greater conviction of sin, humiliation for sin, and hatred against sin. They also gain a clearer sight of their need of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience [to the law].³

Similarly, it is of use to the regenerate to restrain their corruption in that it forbids sin. The threatening of the law serve to show what even their sins deserve, and what troubles they may expect in this life because of their sins, even though they are freed from the curse and undiminished rigours of the law.⁴

The promises of the law also show believers God' s approval of obedience, and what blessings they may expect when the law is kept,⁵ although these blessings are not due to them through the law as a covenant of works.⁶ If someone does good and refrains from evil simply because the law encourages the former and deters from the latter, that is not evidence of one' s being under the law and not under grace.⁷

(1) Act 13:39; Rom 6:14; 8:1; 10:4; Gal 2:16; 4:4-5

(2) Rom 7:12,22,25; Psa 119:4-6; 1Co 7:19

(3) Rom 3:20; 7:7,9,14,24; 8:3; Jas 1:23-25

(4) Jas 2:11; Psa 119:101,104,128

(5) Eph 6:2-3; Psa 37:11; Mat 5:6; Psa 19:11

(6) Luk 17:10

(7) See the book of Proverbs; Mat 3:7; Luk 13:3,5; Act 2:40; Heb 11:26; 1Pe 3:8-13

19.7 These uses of the law are not contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but are entirely in line with it, for the Spirit of Christ subdues and enables the human will to do freely and cheerfully what the will of God revealed in the law requires to be done.¹

(1) Gal 3:21; Jer 31:33; Eze 36:27; Rom 8:4; Tit 2:14

Chapter 20

THE GOSPEL AND ITS GRACIOUS EXTENT

20.1 As the covenant of works was broken by sin and was unable to confer life, God was pleased to promise Christ, the seed of the woman, as the means of calling the elect and bringing to life within them faith and repentance. In this promise the substance of the Gospel was revealed as the effectual means for the conversion and salvation of sinners.¹

(1) Gen 3:15 with Eph 2:12; Gal 4:4; Heb 11:13; Luk 2:25,38; 23:51; Rom 4:13-16; Gal 3:15-22

20.2 This promise of Christ and of salvation by him, is revealed in the Word of God alone.¹ Neither the works of creation and providence, nor the light of nature, reveal Christ or grace through him, not even in a general or obscure way.² How much less, therefore, can people who are devoid of the revelation of Christ by the promise or the Gospel, be enabled [by the light of nature] to attain to saving faith or repentance.³

(1) Act 4:12; Rom 10:13-15

(2) Psa 19; Rom 1:18-23

(3) Rom 2:12a; Mat 28:18-20; Luk 24:46-47 with Act 17:29-30; Rom 3:9-20

20.3 The revelation of the Gospel to sinners has been given at various times and in a variety of places, together with the promises and precepts concerning the obedience required by it. As to the nations and persons to whom it is granted, this is solely according to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God.¹ It has never been granted to them by virtue of their promising to improve their natural abilities on the grounds of common light received without the Gospel—no one has ever made such a promise, nor can anyone do so. Therefore, in all ages, the preaching of the Gospel has been granted to persons and nations, whether to a great extent or limited extent, in greatly varying measures, according to the counsel of the will of God.

(1) Mat 11:20

20.4 The Gospel is the only external means of revealing Christ and saving grace, and as such is totally sufficient for this purpose.¹ Yet if people who are dead in trespasses are to be born again, brought to life or regenerated, an effectual, irresistible work of the Holy Spirit upon every part of the soul is necessary to produce in them a new spiritual life. Without this no other means will bring about their conversion to God.²

(1) Rom 1:16-17

(2) Joh 6:44; 1Co 1:22-24; 2:14; 2Co 4:4,6

Chapter 21

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY AND LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE

21.1 The liberty which Christ has purchased for believers under the Gospel consists of their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, and the severity and curse of the [moral] law.¹ It also includes their deliverance from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, the dominion of sin,² the distress of afflictions, the fear and sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation.³ Furthermore, it includes their free access to God, and their ability to yield obedience to him, not out of slavish fear, but with childlike love, and willing minds.⁴

All these blessings were also shared in essence by believers under the [Old Testament] law;⁵ but, under the New Testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law to which the Jews were subjected. We also have greater boldness of access to the throne of grace, and fuller provision of the free Spirit of God than believers under the law normally experienced.⁶

(1) Joh 3:36; Rom 8:33; Gal 3:13

(2) Gal 1:4; Eph 2:1-3; Col 1:13; Act 26:18; Rom 6:14-18; 8:3

(3) Rom 8:28; 1Co 15:54-57; 1Th 1:10; Heb 2:14-15

(4) Eph 2:18; 3:12; Rom 8:15; 1Jo 4:18

(5) Joh 8:32; Psa 19:7-9; 119:14,24,45,47,48,72,97; Rom 4:5-11; Gal 3:9; Heb 11:27,33-34

(6) Joh 1:17; Heb 1:1-2a; 7:19,22; 8:6; 9:23; 11:40; Gal 2:11-12; 4:1-3; Col 2:16-17; Heb 10:19-21; Joh 7:38-39

21.2 God alone is Lord of the conscience,¹ and he has left it free from [obligations to] human doctrines and commandments which are in any way contrary to his Word or not contained in it.² So to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commandments out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience.³ To require an implicit faith, or absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason.⁴

(1) Jas 4:12; Rom 14:4; Gal 5:1

(2) Act 4:19; 5:29; 1Co 7:23; Mat 15:9

(3) Col 2:20,22-23; Gal 1:10; 2:3-5; 5:1

(4) Rom 10:17; 14:23; Act 17:11; Joh 4:22; 1Co 3:5; 2Co 1:24

21.3 Those who practise any sin or harbour any sinful desires on pretence of Christian liberty, pervert the main purpose of the grace of the Gospel to their own destruction.¹ They completely destroy the purpose of Christian liberty, which is that we (having been delivered from all our [spiritual] enemies) might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.²

(1) Rom 6:1-2

(2) Luk 1:74-75; Rom 14:9; Gal 5:13; 2Pe 2:18,21

Chapter 22

WORSHIP AND THE LORD'S DAY

22.1 The light of nature shows that there is a God who has lordship and sovereignty over all. He is just and good and does good to all. Therefore he is to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart and soul and strength.¹

But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God has been instituted by himself and delimited by his own revealed will. He may not be worshipped according to human imagination or methods, nor according to the suggestions of Satan, nor by way of any visible representation, nor by any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.²

(1) Jer 10:7; Mar 12:33

(2) Gen 4:1-5; Exo 20:4-6; Mat 15:3,8-9; 2Ki 16:10-18; Lev 10:1-3; Deu 17:3; 4:2; 12:29-32; Jos 1:7; 23:6-8; Mat 15:13; Col 2:20-23; 2Ti 3:15-17

22.2 Worship is to be given to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to him alone,¹ not to angels, saints, or any other creatures.² Since the fall worship is not to be given without a mediator, nor by any mediation other than that of Christ alone.³

(1) Mat 4:9-10; Joh 5:23; 2Co 13:14

(2) Rom 1:25; Col 2:10; Rev 19:10

(3) Joh 14:6; Eph 2:18; Col 3:17; 1Ti 2:5

22.3 Prayer with thanksgiving, being one part of natural worship, is required by God of all people.¹ But to be acceptable, it must be made in the name of the Son,² by the help of his Spirit,³ and according to his will.⁴ It must also be made with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance,⁵ and when with others in a known language.⁶

(1) Psa 95:1-7; 100:1-5

(2) Joh 14:13-14

(3) Rom 8:26

(4) 1Jo 5:14

(5) Psa 47:7; Ecc 5:1-2; Heb 12:28; Gen 18:27; Jas 5:16; 1:6-7; Mar 11:24; Mat 6:12,14-15; Col 4:2; Eph 6:18

(6) 1Co 14:13-19,27-28

22.4 Prayer is to be made for lawful things, and for all kinds of people who are alive now or shall live in the future.¹ Prayer is not to be made for the dead, nor for those who are known to have sinned the sin leading to death.²

(1) 1Jo 5:14; 1Ti 2:1-2; Joh 17:20

(2) 2Sa 12:21-23; Luk 16:25-26; Rev 14:13; 1Jo 5:16

22.5 The reading of the Scriptures,¹ the preaching and hearing of the Word of God,² the teaching and admonishing of one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with gratitude in our hearts to the Lord,³ as well as the administration of baptism⁴ and the Lord's Supper,⁵ are all parts of the worship of God. These are to be performed in obedience to him, with understanding, faith, reverence and godly fear. Also to be used on special occasions in a holy and reverent manner,⁶ are times of solemn humiliation, with fasting and thanksgiving.⁷

(1) Act 15:21; 1Ti 4:13; Rev 1:3

(2) 2Ti 4:2; Luk 8:18

(3) Eph 5:19; Col 3:16

(4) Mat 28:19-20

(5) 1Co 11:26

(6) Exo 15:1-19; Psa 107

(7) Est 4:16; Joe 2:12; Mat 9:15; Act 13:2-3; 1Co 7:5

22.6 Under the Gospel, neither prayer nor any other aspect of religious worship is tied to, or made more acceptable by, any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed.¹ God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and in truth,² whether daily³ in private families,⁴ or individually in secret,⁵ or solemnly in public assemblies.⁶ The latter are not to be carelessly neglected nor wilfully forsaken, because God calls us to them by his Word and providence.⁷

- (1) Joh 4:21
- (2) Mal 1:11; 1Ti 2:8; Joh 4:23-24
- (3) Mat 6:11
- (4) Deu 6:6-7; Job 1:5; 1Pe 3:7
- (5) Mat 6:6
- (6) Psa 84:1-2,10; Mat 18:20; 1Co 3:16; 14:25; Eph 2:21-22
- (7) Act 2:42; Heb 10:25

22.7 As it is the law of nature that a portion of time by God' s appointment should be set apart for the worship of God, so in his Word he has given a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all people in all ages. In particular he has appointed one day in seven as a sabbath to be kept holy to him.¹ From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ this was the last day of the week, but from the resurrection of Christ it was changed to the first day of the week which is called the Lord' s Day. This is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath, the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.²

- (1) Gen 2:3; Exo 20:8-11; Mar 2:27-28; Rev 1:10
- (2) Joh 20:1; Act 2:1; 20:7; 1Co 16:1; Rev 1:10; Col 2:16-17

22.8 People keep the sabbath holy to the Lord when (after appropriate preparation of their hearts and prior arrangement of their everyday affairs) they observe all day a holy rest from their own works, words, and thoughts¹ about their secular employment and recreations, but also devote the whole time to public and private acts of worship, and to carrying out duties of necessity and mercy.²

- (1) Exo 20:8-11; Neh 13:15-22; Isa 58:13-14; Rev 1:10
- (2) Mat 12:1-13; Mar 2:27-28

Chapter 23

LAWFUL OATHS AND VOWS

23.1 A lawful oath is an act of worship in which the person swearing in [the light of God' s] truth, righteousness and judgement, solemnly calls God to witness what he swears, and to judge him according to the truth or falsity of it.¹

- (1) Deu 10:20; Exo 20:7; Lev 19:12; 2Ch 6:22-23; 2Co 1:23

23.2 People should swear by the name of God alone, and his name is to be used with the utmost holy fear and reverence. To swear vainly or rashly by that glorious and awesome name, or to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful and to be abhorred.¹ An oath is sanctioned by the Word of God in weighty and momentous matters to confirm truth and end strife, so a lawful oath imposed by lawful authority ought in such circumstances to be taken.²

- (1) Deu 6:13; Exo 20:7; Jer 5:7
- (2) Heb 6:13-16; Gen 24:3; 47:30-31; 50:25; 1Ki 17:1; Neh 13:25; 5:12; Ezr 10:5; Num 5:19,21; 1Ki 8:31; Exo 22:11; Isa 45:23; 65:16; Mat 26:62-64; Rom 1:9; 2Co 1:23; Act 18:18

23.3 Whoever takes an oath sanctioned by the Word of God ought to consider the seriousness of so solemn an act, and to affirm nothing but what one knows to be the truth. For by rash, false and empty oaths the Lord is provoked and because of them a nation is brought to misery.¹

- (1) Exo 20:7; Lev 19:12; Num 30:2; Jer 4:2

23.4 An oath is to be taken in the plain and ordinary sense of the words, without ambiguity or mental reservation.¹

(1) Psa 24:4; Jer 4:2

23.5 A vow is not to be made to any creature, but to God alone,¹ and it is to be performed with the utmost care and faithfulness.² But monastic vows of a perpetual single life, professed poverty, and regular obedience, are far from representing degrees of higher perfection, rather, they are superstitious and sinful snares in which no Christian ought to entangle himself.³

(1) Num 30:2-3; Psa 76:11; Jer 44:25-26

(2) Num 30:2; Psa 61:8; 66:13-14; Ecc 5:4-6; Isa 19:21

(3) 1Co 6:18 with 7:2,9; 1Ti 4:3; Eph 4:28; 1Co 7:23; Mat 19:11-12

Chapter 24

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

24.1 God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, has ordained civil authorities¹ to be under him and over the people,² for his own glory and the public good.³ For this purpose he has armed them with the authority to use force,⁴ to defend and encourage those who do good, and to punish evil doers.⁵

(1) Original, *magistrates*

(2) Psa 82:1; Luk 12:48; Rom 13:1-6; 1Pe 2:13-14

(3) Gen 6:11-13 with 9:5-6; Psa 58:1-2; 72:14; 82:1-4; Pro 21:15; 24:11-12; 29:14,26; 31:5; Eze 7:23; 45:9; Dan 4:27; Mat 22:21; Rom 13:3-4; 1Ti 2:2; 1Pe 2:14

(4) Original, *the power of the sword*

(5) Gen 9:6; Pro 16:14; 19:12; 20:2; 21:15; 28:17; Act 25:1; Rom 13:4; 1Pe 2:13-14

24.2 It is lawful for Christians to accept and carry out the duties of public office¹ when called upon to so.² In the performance of such office they are particularly responsible for maintaining justice and peace in accordance with the wholesome laws of the nation. For that purpose they may (in terms of the New Testament) lawfully engage in war if it is just and necessary.³

(1) Original, *of a magistrate*

(2) Exo 22:8-9,28-29; Daniel; Nehemiah; Pro 14:35; 16:10,12; 20:26,28; 25:2; 28:15-16; 29:4,14; 31:4-5; Rom 13:2,4,6

(3) Luk 3:14; Rom 13:4

24.3 As civil authorities¹ are established by God for the purposes given, we ought to be subject to² all their lawful commands³ for the Lord' s sake, not merely to avoid punishment, but for conscience' sake. We ought also to make supplications and prayers for rulers and all who are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty.⁴

(1) Original, *magistrates*

(2) Pro 16:14-15; 19:12; 20:2; 24:21-22; 25:15; 28:2; Rom 13:1-7; Tit 3:1; 1Pe 2:13-14

(3) Dan 1:8; 3:4-6,16-18; 6:5-10,22; Mat 22:21; Act 4:19-20; 5:29

(4) Jer 29:7; 1Ti 2:1-4

Chapter 25

MARRIAGE

25.1 Marriage is to be between one man and one woman. It is not lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time.¹

(1) Gen 2:24 with Mat 19:5-6; 1Ti 3:2; Tit 1:6

25.2 Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife,¹ for the increase of the human race with legitimate children,² and for preventing immorality.³

(1) Gen 2:18; Pro 2:17; Mal 2:14

(2) Gen 1:28; Psa 127:3-5; 128:3-4

(3) 1Co 7:2,9

25.3 It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry who are able to give their rational consent,¹ yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord. Therefore those who profess the true faith should not marry unbelievers or idolaters. Nor should the godly be unequally yoked by marrying those who lead evil lives, or who maintain heresy.

(1) 1Co 7:39; 2Co 6:14; 1Ti 4:3; Heb 13:4

(2) 1Co 7:39; 2Co 6:14

25.4 Marriage must not to be contracted within the degrees of blood relationship or kinship forbidden in the Word, nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any human law or consent of parties so that such people may live together as man and wife.¹

(1) Lev 18:6-18; Amo 2:7; Mar 6:18; 1Co 5:1

[The following two paragraphs are in the Westminster Confession, but not in the Baptist Confession]

25.5 When adultery or fornication committed after an engagement contract is detected before marriage, there are just grounds for the innocent party to dissolve the contract.¹ In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue for a divorce,² and after the divorce to marry another—it is as if the offending party were dead.³

(1) Mat 1:18-20

(2) Mat 5:31-32

(3) Mat 19:9; Rom 7:2-3

25.6 Human corruption is such that clever arguments will be brought to separate those whom God has joined together in marriage. Yet nothing but adultery, or wilful desertion that cannot be healed by the church or civil authority, is sufficient cause for dissolving the bond of marriage.¹ Such dissolution is to be conducted in public and an orderly course of proceedings is to be observed; the persons concerned in it should not be left to their own wills and discretion.²

(1) Mat 19:8-9; Rom 7:2-3; 1Co 7:15; Mat 19:6

(2) Deu 24:1-4

Chapter 26

THE CHURCH

26.1 The universal church¹ (brought into being by the internal work of the Spirit and truth of grace) may be called the invisible church. It consists of the complete number of the elect who have been, who are, or who shall be gathered into one under Christ its Head. The church is the bride, the body, the fullness of Christ who fills all in all.²

- (1) Mat 16:18; 1Co 12:28; Eph 1:22; 4:11-15; 5:23-25,27,29,32; Col 1:18,24; Heb 12:23
- (2) Eph 1:22; 4:11-15; 5:23-25,27,29,32; Col 1:18,24; Rev 21:9-14

26.2 All people throughout the world who profess the faith of the Gospel and render obedience to God by Christ according to the Gospel, and who do not destroy their own profession by any fundamental errors, or by unholy behaviour, are and may be called visible saints.¹ All local² congregations ought to be constituted of such people.³

- (1) 1Co 1:2; Rom 1:7-8; Act 11:26; Mat 16:18; 18:15-20; 1Co 5:1-9
- (2) Original, *particular*
- (3) Mat 18:15-20; Act 2:37-42; 4:4; Rom 1:7; 1Co 5:1-9

26.3 The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error,¹ and some have degenerated so much that they have ceased to be churches of Christ and have become 'synagogues of Satan'². Nevertheless, Christ has always had, and always will have to the end of time a kingdom in this world, made up of those who believe in him and profess his name.³

- (1) 1Co 1:11; 5:1; 6:6; 11:17-19; 3Jo 1:9-10; Rev 2:1-3:22
- (2) Rev 2:5 with 1:20; 1Ti 3:14-15; Rev 18:2
- (3) Mat 16:18; 24:14; 28:20; Mar 4:30-32; Psa 72:16-18; 102:28; Isa 9:6-7; Rev 12:17; 20:7-9

26.4 The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church. In him is vested, by the appointment of the Father in a supreme and sovereign manner, all authority for the calling, institution, order and government of the church.¹ The Pope of Rome cannot in any sense be the head of the church, but he is the antichrist, that 'man of sin' , and 'son of perdition' , who exalts himself in the church against Christ and all that is called God, whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.²

- (1) Col 1:18; Eph 4:11-16; 1:20-23; 5:23-32; 1Co 12:27-28; Joh 17:1-3; Mat 28:18-20; Act 5:31; Joh 10:14-16
- (2) 2Th 2:2-9

26.5 In executing the authority entrusted to him, the Lord Jesus, through the ministry of his Word and by his Spirit, calls to himself out of the world those who are given to him by the Father.¹ They are called to walk before him in the ways of obedience which he prescribes for them in his Word.² He commands those who are so called to form local³ societies or churches for their mutual edification and to engage in the public worship which he requires of them while in the world.⁴

- (1) Joh 10:16,23; 12:32; 17:2; Act 5:31-32
- (2) Mat 28:20
- (3) Original, *particular*
- (4) Mat 18:15-20; Act 14:21-23; Tit 1:5; 1Ti 1:3; 3:14-16; 5:17-22

26.6 The members of these churches are 'saints'¹ by calling and they visibly demonstrate and give evidence of their obedience to the call of Christ by their profession and walk.² They willingly consent to walk together according to Christ' s instructions, giving themselves to the Lord and to one another by the will of God, affirming their subjection to the directives of the Gospel.³

- (1) i.e. holy ones
- (2) Mat 28:18-20; Act 14:22-23; Rom 1:7; 1Co 1:2 with 1:13-17; 1Th 1:1 with 1:2-10; Act 2:37-42; 4:4; 5:13-14
- (3) Act 2:41-42; 5:13-14; 2Co 9:13

26.7 To each church so gathered according to the mind [of Christ] as declared in his Word, the Lord has given all the power and authority required to conduct the form of worship and discipline which he has appointed for them to observe. He has also given commands and rules for the right and proper use of that power.¹

(1) Mat 18:17-20; 1Co 5:4-5,13; 2Co 2:6-8

26.8 A local¹ Church, gathered and organised according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members. The officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church are bishops or elders, and deacons. They are appointed particularly to oversee what the Lord has ordained, and to execute the powers and duties which the Lord has entrusted to them or to which he calls them. This pattern is to be continued to the end of the world.²

(1) Original, *particular*

(2) Phi 1:1; 1Ti 3:1-13; Act 20:17,28; Tit 1:5-7; 1Pe 5:2

26.9 The way appointed by Christ for calling any person qualified and gifted by the Holy Spirit¹ for the office of bishop or elder, is that he is to be chosen by the communal vote of the church itself.² He shall be solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with the laying on of hands by the elders of the church (if there are any previously appointed bishops or elders).³ Similarly, a deacon is also to be chosen by vote of the church and set apart by prayer, with the laying on of hands.⁴

(1) Eph 4:11; 1Ti 3:1-13

(2) Act 6:1-7; 14:23 with Mat 18:17-20; 1Co 5:1-13

(3) 1Ti 4:14; 5:22

(4) Act 6:1-7

26.10 The work of pastors is to give constant attention to the service of Christ in his churches, in the ministry of the Word and prayer, and by watching over their [members'] souls as they must give an account to Christ. Therefore the churches to which they minister have an obligation to give them all due respect, and also to provide 'all good things' according to their ability,² so that they may have a comfortable income without being entangled in secular affairs,³ and may also be able to exercise hospitality towards others.⁴ This is required by the law of nature and by the specific command of our Lord Jesus who has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.⁵

(1) Act 6:4; 1Ti 3:2; 5:17; Heb 13:17

(2) 1Ti 5:17-18; 1Co 9:14; Gal 6:6-7

(3) 2Ti 2:4

(4) 1Ti 3:2

(5) 1Co 9:6-14; 1Ti 5:18

26.11 Although the bishops or pastors of the churches are obliged to regularly preach the Word as part of their office, yet the work of preaching the Word is not exclusively confined to them. Others who are also gifted and qualified by the Holy Spirit for the task, and who are approved and called by the church, may and ought to perform it.¹

(1) Act 8:5 11:19-21; 1Pe 4:10-11

26.12 All believers are obliged to join themselves to local¹ churches when and where they have opportunity to do so, so that all who are admitted to the privileges of the church, are also subject to the correction and government of the church in accordance with the rule of Christ.²

(1) Original, *particular*

(2) 1Th 5:14; 2Th 3:6,14-15; 1Co 5:9-13; Heb 13:17

26.13 No church members who have been offended by a fellow member, and who have followed their prescribed duty towards the person they are offended at, may disturb church order in any way. Nor should they absent themselves from the meetings of the church or the administration of the ordinances because of the offence, rather, they should wait upon Christ and the further actions of the church.¹

(1) Mat 18:15-17; Eph 4:2-3; Col 3:12-15; 1Jo 2:7-11,18-19; Mat 28:15-17; Eph 4:2-3; Mat 28:20

26.14 Each church and all its members are obliged to pray continually for the good and prosperity of all Christ' s churches everywhere. At all times churches should assist all believers within the limits of their area and calling in exercising their gifts and graces.¹ Therefore, when churches have been planted by the providence of God so that they may enjoy the opportunity and advantage [of fellowship],² they should seek fellowship amongst themselves to promote peace, increase love, and mutual edification.³

(1) Joh 13:34-35; 17:11,21-23; Eph 4:11-16; 6:18; Psa 122:6; Rom 16:1-3; 3Jo 1:8-10 with 2Jo 1:5-11; Rom 15:26; 2Co 8:1-4,16-24; 9:12-15; Col 2:1 with 1:3,4,7 and 4:7,12
(2) Gal 1:2,22; Col 4:16; Rev 1:4; Rom 16:1-2; 3Jo 1:8-10
(3) 1Jo 4:1-3 with 2Jo and 3Jo; Rom 16:1-3; 2Co 9:12-15; Jos 22

26.15 When difficulties or differences arise in points of doctrine or [church] administration which concern the peace unity and edification of churches in general or any single church, or when a member or members of a church are injured by disciplinary proceedings not consistent with truth [in the Word] and [church] order, it is according to the mind of Christ that a number of churches in fellowship together, through their representatives,¹ should meet to consider the matter in dispute, give their advice about it and report to all the churches concerned.² However, when these representatives¹ are assembled, they are not entrusted with any real church power nor with any jurisdiction over the churches themselves; they cannot exercise discipline over any churches or persons, nor impose their conclusions on the churches or officers.³

(1) Original, *messengers*
(2) Gal 2:2; Pro 3:5-7; 12:15; 13:10
(3) 1Co 7:25,36,40; 2Co 1:24; 1Jo 4:1

Chapter 27

THE FELLOWSHIP OF BELIEVERS

27.1 All believers are united to Jesus Christ¹ their Head by his Spirit and by faith,² although this does not make them one person with him.³ Therefore they have fellowship in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory.⁴ Being united to one another in love, they have fellowship in each other' s gifts and graces⁵,and are obliged to discharge their duties, both public and private, in an orderly way so as to ensure their mutual good in both spiritual and temporal matters.⁶

(1) Eph 1:4; Joh 17:2,6; 2Co 5:21; Rom 6:8; 8:17; 8:2; 1Co 6:17; 2Pe 1:4
(2) Eph 3:16-17; Gal 2:20; 2Co 3:17-18
(3) 1Co 8:6; Col 1:18-19; 1Ti 6:15-16; Isa 42:8; Psa 45:7; Heb 1:8-9
(4) 1Jo 1:3; Joh 1:16; 15:1-6; Eph 2:4-6; Rom 4:25; 6:1-6; Phi 3:10; Col 3:3-4
(5) Joh 13:34-35; 14:15; Eph 4:15; 1Pe 4:10; Rom 14:7-8; 1Co 3:21-23; 12:7,25-27
(6) Rom 1.12; 12:10-13; 1Th 5.11,14; 1Pe 3:8; 1Jo 3.17-18; Gal 6.10

27.2 By their profession, believers are obliged to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God and in performing whatever spiritual services may promote their mutual edification.¹ They should also relieve one another in temporal things according to their various abilities and needs.² According to the rule of the Gospel, this fellowship applies particularly to family and church relationships,³ but as God offers opportunity, this fellowship is to be extended to all the 'household of faith', that is, all those in every place who call on the name of the Lord Jesus.⁴ Nevertheless, this fellowship with one another as believers does not take away or infringe on the personal ownership that each one has of his goods and possessions.⁵

(1) Heb 3:12-13; 10:24-25

(2) Act 11:29-30; 2Co 8-9; Gal 2; Rom 15

(3) 1Ti 5:8,16; Eph 6:4; 1Co 12:27

(4) Act 11:29-30; 2Co 8-9; Gal 2; 6:10; Rom 15

(5) Act 5:4; Eph 4:28; Exo 20:15

Chapter 28

THE ORDINANCES

28.1 Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances explicitly and sovereignly appointed by the Lord Jesus, the only lawgiver,¹ to be continued in his church to the end of the world.²

(1) Mat 28:19-20; 1Co 11:24-25

(2) Mat 28:18-20; Rom 6:3-4; 1Co 1:13-17; Gal 3:27; Eph 4:5; Col 2:12; 1Pe 3:21; 1Co 11:26; Luk 22:14-20

28.2 These holy appointments are to be administered by those who are qualified and called to do so, according to the commission of Christ.¹

(1) Mat 24:45-51; Luk 12:41-44; 1Co 4:1; Tit 1:5-7

Chapter 29

BAPTISM

29.1 Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be to the person baptised a sign of fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection, of being grafted into him,¹ of remission of sins,² and of giving up oneself to God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.³

(1) Rom 6:3-5; Col 2:12; Gal 3:27

(2) Mar 1:4; Act 22:16

(3) Rom 6:4

29.2 Those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects for this ordinance.¹

(1) Mat 3:1-12; Mar 1:4-6; Luk 3:3-6; Mat 28:19-20; Mar 16:15-16; Joh 4:1-2; 1Co 1:13-17; Act 2:37-41; 8:12-13,36-38; 9:18; 10:47-48; 11:16; 15:9; 16:14-15,31-34; 18:8; 19:3-5; 22:16; Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27; Col 2:12; 1Pe 3:21; Jer 31:31-34; Phi 3:3; Joh 1:12-13; Mat 21:43

29.3 The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, in which the person is to be baptised¹ in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.²

(1) Mat 3:11; Act 8:36,38; 22:16

(2) Mat 28:18-20

29.4 Immersion, or dipping the person in water, is essential for the proper administration of this ordinance.¹

(1) 2Ki 5:14; Psa 69:2; Isa 21:4; Mar 1:5,8-9; Joh 3:23; Act 8:38; Rom 6:4; Col 2:12; Mar 7:3-4; 10:38-39; Luk 12:50; 1Co 10:1-2; Mat 3:11; Act 1:5,8; 2:1-4,17

Chapter 30

THE LORD'S SUPPER

30.1 The supper of our Lord Jesus was instituted by him the same night he was betrayed,¹ to be observed in his churches² until the end of the world³ as a perpetual remembrance [of him] and to show forth the sacrifice of himself in his death.⁴ It was also instituted to confirm the faith of believers in all the benefits in Christ' s death,⁵ for their spiritual nourishment and growth in him,⁶ for their further engagement in and commitment to all the duties they owe him,⁷ and to be a bond and pledge of their fellowship with him and with one another.⁸

- (1) 1Co 11:23; Mat 26:20-26; Mar 14:17-22; Luk 22:19-23
- (2) Act 2:41-42; 20:7; 1Co 11:17-22,33-34
- (3) Mar 14:24-25; Luk 22:17-22; 1Co 11:24-26
- (4) 1Co 11:24-26; Mat 26:27-28; Luk 22:19-20
- (5) Rom 4:11
- (6) Joh 6:29,35,47-58
- (7) 1Co 11:25
- (8) 1Co 10:16-17

30.2 In this ordinance Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor is any real sacrifice made for remission of sin of the living or the dead. It is only a memorial of that one offering up of Christ by himself upon the cross once for all.¹ It is also a spiritual offering of all possible praise to God for [Christ' s work].² So the Roman Catholic sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is utterly abominable and defamatory of Christ' s own sacrifice which is the only propitiation for all the sins of the elect.

- (1) Joh 19:30; Heb 9:25-28; 10:10-14; Luk 22:19; 1Co 11:24-25
- (2) Mat 26:26-27,30 with Heb 13:10-16

30.3 In this ordinance the Lord Jesus has appointed his ministers to pray and to bless the elements of bread and wine (so setting them apart from a common to a holy use), and to take and break the bread, then to take the cup, and to give both to the communicants, participating also themselves.¹

- (1) 1Co 11:23-26; Mat 26:26-28; Mar 14:22-25; Luk 22:19-22

30.4 The denial of the cup to the people,¹ worshipping the elements, lifting them up or carrying them about for adoration, and reserving them for any pretended religious use,² are all contrary to the nature of this ordinance and to the institution of Christ.³

- (1) Mat 26:27; Mar 14:23; 1Co 11:25-28
- (2) Exo 20:4-5
- (3) Mat 15:9

30.5 The outward elements in this ordinance, when correctly set apart for the use ordained by Christ, bear such a strong relation to the Lord crucified, that they are sometimes truly, but figuratively, called by the name of the things they represent, namely, the body and blood of Christ.¹ However, in substance and nature, they still remain truly and only bread and wine as they were before.²

- (1) 1Co 11:27; Mat 26:26-28
- (2) 1Co 11:26-28; Mat 26:29

30.6 The doctrine commonly called transubstantiation, which maintains that the substance of bread and wine is changed into the substance of Christ' s body and blood when consecrated by a priest or by some other way, is repugnant not only to Scripture,¹ but even to common sense and reason. It overthrows the nature of the ordinance, and has been and is the cause of numerous superstitions and gross idolatries.

- (1) Mat 26:26-29; Luk 24:36-43,50-51; Joh 1:14; 20:26-29; Act 1:9-11; 3:21; 1Co 11:24-26; Luk 12:1; Rev 1:20; Gen 17:10-11; Eze 37:11; Gen 41:26-27

30.7 Worthy recipients, when outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this ordinance,¹ also receive them inwardly by faith, truly and in fact, not as flesh and body but spiritually. In so doing they feed upon Christ crucified, and receive all the benefits of his death.² The body and blood of Christ are not present physically, but spiritually by the faith of believers in the ordinance, just as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.³

- (1) 1Co 11:28
- (2) Joh 6:29,35,47-58
- (3) 1Co 10:16

30.8 All ignorant and ungodly people who are unfit to enjoy fellowship with Christ, are equally unworthy of the Lord's table, and cannot, without great sin against him, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted to them while they remain as they are.¹ Indeed, whoever participates unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, eating and drinking judgement on themselves.²

- (1) Mat 7:6; Eph 4:17-24; 5:3-9; Exo 20:7,16; 1Co 5:9-13; 2Jo 1:10; Act 2:41-42; 20:7; 1Co 11:17-22,33-34
- (2) 1Co 11:20-22,27-34

Chapter 31

THE STATE OF PEOPLE AFTER DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

31.1 After death the bodies of people return to dust and undergo decomposition,¹ but their souls (which neither die nor sleep for they are immortal in essence) immediately return to God who gave them.² The souls of the righteous are then made perfect in holiness, they are received into paradise where they are with Christ and look on the face of God in light and glory, and wait for the full redemption of their bodies.³ The souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved for judgement on the great day [of judgement].⁴ For souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledges no other place than these two.

- (1) Gen 2:17; 3:19; Act 13:36; Rom 5:12-21; 1Co 15:22
- (2) Gen 2:7; Jas 2:26; Mat 10:28; Ecc 12:7
- (3) Psa 23:6; 1Ki 8:27-49; Isa 63:15; 66:1; Luk 23:43; Act 1:9-11; 3:21; 2Co 5:6-8; 12:2-4; Eph 4:10; Phi 1:21-23; Heb 1:3; 4:14-15; 6:20; 8:1; 9:24; 12:23; Rev 6:9-11; 14:13; 20:4-6
- (4) Luk 16:22-26; Act 1:25; 1Pe 3:19; 2Pe 2:9

31.2 On the last day, those believers who are still alive will not die, but will be changed.¹ All the dead will be raised up² with their own bodies³ (although these will have different qualities)⁴ that will be united again to their souls for ever.⁵

- (1) 1Co 15:50-53; 2Co 5:1-4; 1Th 4:17
- (2) Dan 12:2; Joh 5:28-29; Act 24:15
- (3) Job 19:26-27; Joh 5:28-29; 1Co 15:35-38,42-44
- (4) 1Co 15:42-44,52-54
- (5) Dan 12:2; Mat 25:46

31.3 By the power of Christ the bodies of the unrighteous will be raised to dishonour.¹ By his Spirit² the bodies of the righteous will be raised to honour,³ for they will be transformed to be like his own glorious body.⁴

- (1) Dan 12:2; Joh 5:28-29
- (2) Rom 8:1,11; 1Co 15:45; Gal 6:8
- (3) 1Co 15:42-49
- (4) Rom 8:17,29-30; 1Co 15:20-23,48-49; Phi 3:21; Col 1:18; 3:4; 1Jo 3:2; Rev 1:5

Chapter 32

THE LAST JUDGMENT

32.1 God has appointed a day when he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom the Father has given all power and judgment.¹ On that day, not only the apostate angels will be judged,² but also all people who have lived on the earth. They will appear before Christ's judgement throne³ to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds, and to receive [judgement] according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.⁴

(1) Joh 5:22,27; Act 17:31

(2) 1Co 6:3; Jude 1:6

(3) Mat 16:27; 25:31-46; Act 17:30-31; Rom 2:6-16; 2Th 1:5-10; 2Pe 3:1-13; Rev 20:11-15

(4) 2Co 5:10; 1Co 4:5; Mat 12:36

32.2 God's purpose in appointing this day is to show forth the glory of his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect, and his justice in the eternal damnation of the reprobate who are wicked and disobedient.¹ Then the righteous will inherit eternal life and receive fullness of joy and glory with eternal reward in the presence of the Lord. But the wicked, who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ, will be banished to eternal torment, and be punished with eternal destruction, shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.²

(1) Rom 9:22-23

(2) Mat 18:8; 25:41,46; 2Th 1:9; Heb 6:2; Jude 1:6; Rev 14:10-11; Luk 3:17; Mar 9:43,48; Mat 3:12; 5:26; 13:41-42; 24:51; 25:30

32.3 Christ wants us to be firmly persuaded that there will be a day of judgement, both to deter everyone from sin,¹ and to give greater comfort to the godly in their adversity.² But he has kept the date a secret, so that people may shake off all self-confidence and always be watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come.³ So they should always be prepared to say,⁴ 'Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!' Amen.

(1) 2Co 5:10-11

(2) 2Th 1:5-7

(3) Mar 13:35-37; Luk 12:35-40

(4) Rev 22:20