

THE BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER



REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2016 Edition



*“But you have come to Mount Zion and the city of the living
God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of
angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn
who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all,
to the spirits of just men made perfect... “*

Hebrews 12:22-23

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Preface to the Book of Church Order

General Information:

For consistency, the word *congregation* is used throughout the BCO to mean *local church*, *local assemblies* and any other words used to denote the people of an organized local church. The word *presbytery* will be used throughout the BCO to refer to *presbyteries* or *classes*. However, the presbyteries or classes may use either of these terms themselves or in any meetings of the denomination. This recommendation is only made for the purpose of a simplified document but in no way is intended to suggest that *presbytery* is a preferable term over *classis* for those who prefer to use that term. The term *synod* will be used only for those assemblies broader than presbyteries but narrower than the General Assembly. All references in the BCO to the leadership of the local assemblies (i.e. session and consistory) are referred to as *sessions*. Again, this is being done for simplification of words and in no way is intended to suggest this is a better word than the others. Further, this in no way restricts the local congregations from referring to their body of leaders in written or verbal communications by some other term as long as such terms are generally recognized and will communicate to the rest of the denomination. Should the language of any motion be passed neglecting to use the agreed upon terms, the preparer of the *BCO* may automatically use the correct words without advance approval of General Assembly, but by agreement with the moderator or *BCO* committee chairman (should a *BCO* Committee be in existence.)

This document is a working draft of the constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly. With that in mind, it was laid out for simple access and with plentiful notations indicating what portions are in which committee for revision suggestions. Most of the major work, since the time originated, has been done as of G.A. 1995, though some minor matters are still being finalized.

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History of the Presbyterian Church up through to establishment of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly

The historical origin of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly begins at the founding of the New Testament Church in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. The early church was based upon a pattern of representative government. The word *Presbyterian* comes from the Greek term *presbuteros* meaning *elder*. It refers to the Apostolic system of choosing leaders from among those who are the wisest members of the church, based upon biblical qualifications. It literally means ruling by elders, based upon a representative system of government, that is, government by the consent of the people. As time passed, the church began to divert its government from a representative system to an Episcopal hierarchy in ecclesiastical authority. With the onslaught of degenerating morality and leadership in the government of the church, there came an outcry for reform. Reformation was a demand for the Bible to be translated into the language of the common people and a return to 'Gospel simplicity,' i.e., a representative system of government and a biblical form of worship.

In the sixteenth century, there came a divine working of God in the reforming movement of the church. However, the Roman Catholic Church was not about to give up its administrative system of centralized government. Nor was the Roman Church about to return to the Augustinian theology of the early church. As God continued to bless the pure preaching of His Word, there came into existence the establishment of what were called 'Reformed Churches.' The great reformer of the church, and its greatest systematician, was the French reformer of Geneva, Switzerland, John Calvin.

John Calvin was born in Noyon, France in 1509 and was a student of Latin, logic and philosophy at the University of Paris. Later he studied law and classical literature. About 1533, Calvin changed his theological views to those of the Reformation. After being involved in the French reformed movement, Calvin was forced to flee from Paris for his life. From 1534-1536 Calvin wrote the first edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. It was a systematic theology on the doctrinal teaching of the Reformation. God's providence led Calvin to Geneva where he ministered from 1536-1538, was exiled for three years and returned in 1541, where he remained pastor of St. Peter's Church until his death in 1564. It was this church at Geneva that became the model of Presbyterian Churches. It was here at Geneva the Scottish Reformer, John Knox, advanced his understanding of systematic and ecclesiastical theology under the instruction of John Calvin.

John Knox began to preach in Scotland at the St. Andrew's Castle Church. Having spent time imprisoned on a French galley, Knox was eventually freed and returned to northern England. Knox then became the chaplain to the Reformer-King, Edward VI, and soon after King Edward's death, was required to flee to Europe for his life. Knox was invited

to pastor an English congregation in Frankfurt, Germany, the first independent church established outside the Church of England. However, a dispute soon erupted after Dr. Cox, a minister of the Church of England, arrived at Frankfurt. Knox was falsely accused by Cox of undermining the Emperor. However, the dissension was over which prayer book the church would use in worship. Knox was desirous of using the *Book of Common Worship* developed in Geneva by Calvin and himself. Yet, Knox was forced to leave the church at Frankfurt and flee to Geneva, where another English church, which had been part of the Frankfurt Church, was established as independent of the Church of England. Upon his return to Scotland in 1559, Knox organized the Presbyterian Church as the official Church of Scotland. In 1560, John Knox led the Church of Scotland in developing a Confession and Covenants as its official religion and the Presbyterian Church as the official Church of Scotland. From Scotland, the Presbyterian movement spread westward to Ireland among the Scottish settlers and native Irish.

In the meantime, the Presbyterian movement was developing in England. From 1643 through 1647, there was assembled a group of 100 ministers at Westminster Abbey in London. Here they formed a new confession, the *Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647*, that was followed by the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*. The Church of Scotland was well represented at this assembly by five of its leading theologians.

Soon the Presbyterian Church found itself in North America. Finally in 1706, the First American Presbytery was formed in Philadelphia, and in 1716, it became the Synod of Philadelphia. In 1729, the Synod of Philadelphia adopted the *Westminster Confession* and the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms* as its confession of faith. In 1788, the Synod adopted the official name of their church as “The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America” and held its first meeting in 1789. In 1857, the New School movement became divided over the issue of slavery and formed the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church. In 1861, the Old School movement of the South withdrew from the national church and formed the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, a continuing church of the former body. Near the end of the War Between the States, the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America and a few smaller synods formed the Presbyterian Church in the United States. In 1972, a conservative movement removed itself from the Presbyterian Church in the United States to form the Presbyterian Church in America, a continuing church. In 1982, the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod merged with the Presbyterian Church in America. In 1983, a few churches in the North Georgia Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America withdrew from the denomination over purity of doctrine and ecclesiastical practices. Thereupon was formed Covenant Presbytery. In 1985, Covenant Presbytery formed the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States as a continuing church. In 1990, the Reformed Presbyterian Church divided into four presbyteries and changed its name to the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the Americas.

The following year, as a result of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the America's failure to establish and maintain a system of church discipline and the inability (after nine years) to finalize on a constitution,¹ three of the four presbyteries chose to depart.²

After the departure, the Western Presbytery dissolved itself with several churches electing to join with the Westminster Presbytery. One member church left the Hanover Presbytery (which has chosen to stand alone to this day) and also joined the Westminster Presbytery. During this time, the Westminster Presbytery sought counsel with representatives of several other denominations, some of whom requested that the presbytery join with their denomination.

The conclusion of the matter was that we should seek to be confessional Christians who adhere to and practice our confession in every area of life. This was no longer possible without increasing an irresolvable strife within the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the Americas that was believed would harm the peace of the church. Every other denomination that was considered as a possible place to go had confessional differences or was facing varying struggles over such issues as theistic evolution, inerrancy, charismaticism, Arminianism, dispensationalism, and women in church office. We did not believe these were battles that needed to be joined since they were battles with modernism and liberalism that had already been allowed into the denominations. Therefore, we opted to continue the Presbyterian Church with fresh vigor based upon time-tested principles while seeking to learn from the past and continue the Reformation into the future.

Our first General Assembly adopted a *Book of Church Order* utilizing large parts of the original from the Westminster Assembly. Our standards are those of the original Westminster Assembly. Boundaries for four presbyteries were laid out, with churches established in each. We have sought to guard against the extremes of administrative errors in the denominations from which we had separated, though confessing our great dependence upon the Lord to avoid these and other errors in the future. We are still learning, and we seek guidance from other denominations (of like precious faith) around the globe. We also pray that the many battles over biblical, confessional and organizational matters within other denominations will result in victory for the cause of Christ, so as to enable us to seriously consider joining with them for the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ, for which we both work and pray.

(Approved by the 2nd General Assembly, July 27-29, 1993)

¹ This seems to have resulted from an over-reaction by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the Americas, to the problems of the Presbyterian Church in America, which had a tendency toward centralism and toward becoming an administrative church.

² The final matters leading to this departure concerned the written threat of "ex post facto" lawmaking, the discipline of a presbytery, and the unilateral changing of previously agreed upon General Assembly dates. One presbytery decided to withdraw, leaving insufficient votes in the other two presbyteries to challenge the original presbytery at the time of the "new dates" of the General Assembly. Consequently, the other two presbyteries decided to withdraw for the sake of peace and their good name.

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COVENANT
AND
CONSTITUTION

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A. Covenant and Constitution

SECTION 1: Church Covenant

- A 1:1** For the preservation of ourselves and our religion from utter ruin and destruction, according to the commendable practice of Presbyterian Churches, after mature deliberation, we have resolved and determined to enter into a Covenant, wherein we all subscribe before our most High God the following:
- A 1:2** That we shall sincerely, really and constantly, through the grace of God, endeavor to maintain, in our several places and callings, the preservation of the reformed religion in the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, against our common enemies, according to the Word of God.
- A 1:3** And because our nations are guilty of many sins and provocations against God and His Son Jesus Christ, as is also manifest by the present distresses and dangers in the various Presbyterian Churches and denominations, the fruits thereof bearing witness, we profess and declare, before God and the world, our unfeigned desire to be humbled for our own sins, the sins of our fathers and the sins of our nations. Such sins are: we have not valued the inestimable benefit of the Gospel; we have not labored for the purity and power thereof; and we have not endeavored to receive Christ in our hearts, or to walk worthy of Him in our lives. These violations are the cause of other sins and transgressions so much abounding amongst us. Thus, our true and unfeigned purpose, desire and endeavor for ourselves, and all others under our power and charge, both public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, is to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in the example of a real reformation. We do this in order that the Lord may turn away His wrath and indignation, thus establishing our churches in truth and peace.
- A 1:4** We welcome those who sincerely and humbly desire to return with us to the faith and practices of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.
- A 1:5** This covenant we make in the presence of Almighty God, the Searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the same, as we shall answer at that great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. We most humbly beseech the Lord to strengthen us by His Holy Spirit for this end, and for His glory and honor.

SECTION 2: A Reformation Church

A 2:1 The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, as a continuing Presbyterian Church of the Reformation, established by divine Providence in the United States of America, believes that our confession of faith must be subject to reform for the purpose of purity of doctrine and church. Thus, if any man will note in our Confession any chapter or sentence contrary to God's Holy Word, that it would please him through his gentleness and for Christian charity's sake to inform us of it in writing, we, upon our honor, do promise him that by God's grace we shall give him satisfaction from the mouth of God, that is, from Holy Scripture, or else we shall alter whatever he can prove to be wrong. For we call on God to record: that from our hearts we abhor all heretical sects and all teachers of false doctrine; and that with all humility we embrace the purity of Christ's Gospel, which is the one food of our souls and therefore so precious to us that we are determined to suffer the greatest of worldly dangers, rather than let our souls be defrauded of it. For we are completely convinced that whoever denies Christ Jesus, or is ashamed of Him in the presence of men, shall be denied before the Father and before His holy angels. Therefore by the aid of the mighty Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, we firmly intend to endure to the end in the confession of our faith.

SECTION 3: Church Constitution

A 3:1 The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly adheres to the *Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647*, the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, along with the *Covenant and Constitution*, the *Directory of Church Order*, the *Directory of Church Worship*, the *Directory of Church Discipline*, the *Directory of Administrative Rules*, the *Directory for Missions*, and the *Directory for Examination*, as listed herein as those documents which embody the constitution of this church.

SECTION 4: Evangelical Mission

A 4:1 The mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly finds its primary purpose in the preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the ordering of church government and the dispensing of the sacraments. The church has the responsibility to disciple the nations, teaching them all things commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ.¹ The Church of Christ, corporately and individually, is responsible for bringing every thought captive unto Jesus Christ,² and the broader ramifications of this culminate in a world and life view which seeks to place Christ as preeminent in all things.³ This evangelical mission is based on the authoritative, inerrant Word of God,⁴ which is the final authority on issues of life, faith, and practice. It is the

¹ Mat. 28:19-20

² 2 Cor. 10:5

³ Col. 1:18

⁴ 2 Tim. 3:1.6

Church of Jesus Christ which has been promised the victory⁵ through His death, burial and resurrection.⁶ It is the duty of the church to guard the Gospel of Christ⁷ by seeking to maintain the purity of the Word and doctrine.⁸ We are therefore compelled by the teaching of the Word and the conviction of the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit, that the church adopt a creedal theology which presents the fullest expression of the reformed faith. The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly hereby adopts and subscribes to the *Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647* and the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*, as subordinate standards which represents the fullest expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We further acknowledge the wisdom and usefulness of the *Belgic Confession*, *Heidelberg Catechism*, *Helvetic Confession*, *Gallican Confession* and the *Canons of Dordt* as standards which express the same faith and practice of the Reformation Church.

We recognize the *London Confession of Faith*, *Philadelphia Confession of Faith* and the *Savoy Declaration of Faith* as standards which express the same faith of the Reformation Church but differ in church polity and practice. Reformed churches or ministers, which cannot submit themselves to the membership of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, may petition for recognition of ‘associate’ status with each presbytery. This is an evangelical expression of respect for those of like faith who share our common heritage of the Reformation.

A 4:2 However, the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly rejects the following teachings and practices as unacceptable to the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the New Testament Church, and forbids the teaching and/or practice of such systems within the membership of the church: (1) charismatic theology and its unbiblical practices;⁹ (2) dispensational theology; (3) Arminian theology in any form; (4) the practice of ‘altar calls’ in the worship of God;¹⁰ (5) the participation in abortions in any form;¹¹ (6) the teaching, practice, or promotion of homosexuality in any form or type;¹² (7) participation in any secret society which violates the Scriptures or Confession; (8) neo-orthodox and neo-evangelical theology in any form; (9) modernism and humanism¹³ in all forms; (10) the teaching, practice and promotion of feminism;¹⁴ and (11) the teaching of evolution¹⁵ in any type or form.¹⁶ (12) No one may be admitted to, or remain

⁵ Mat. 16:18

⁶ 1 Cor.15:1-4

⁷ 2 Tim. 1:13-14

⁸ 1 Tim. 4:16

⁹ Modern practices and theology that leads to alleging miraculous gifts of the Spirit manifested in such activities as speaking in unknown or angelic tongues, apostolic healing and extra-biblical revelation of any form.

¹⁰ This would include the use of decision cards, decision rooms, or any physical activity associated with making a profession of faith other than the proper use of the sacraments.

¹¹ This would include abortion on demand, or abortion for incest or rape.

¹² This includes any form of lesbianism, sodomy, sex-change operations, cross-dressing and/or transvestitism.

¹³ This is the man-centered approach to any area of life.

¹⁴ Any promotion of womanhood that departs from biblical standards or the biblical role model set forth in Scripture.

¹⁵ As defined in any variety of Darwinism, especially as it pertains to creation or man’s origin or a denial of the literal, consecutive, contiguous, six-day creation. This position also includes opposition to what has been called the Framework Hypothesis and Day-Age Theory.

¹⁶ Modified

in, an office in the denomination who holds to, converts or consents to, the teaching or practice of paedocommunion. This doctrine is not to be taught or practiced, in any form or fashion, in this denomination. Any such violation will result in the immediate ejection of that individual, whether an officer or church member. Our position against paedocommunion is unalterable as it defends our doctrinal understanding of the Westminster Standards' teaching on communion, that is, that one must profess to be born again, and not be 'an ignorant or scandalous person,' and that, upon examination, his profession of faith must be deemed credible by the Session.

- A 4:3** The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly affirms that a church or denomination which denies the inerrant authority of the Word of God, and/or the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, are considered apostate churches, having departed from the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3).
- A 4:4** Commitment to Orthodoxy: Any substantive change in the RPCGA's constitution (*Westminster Confession*, *Catechisms* and *BCO*) must be developed and supported by: (1) a systematic and exegetical use of Scripture; (2) demonstrating the basic hermeneutical principle used in accordance with the historico-grammatical method; and (3) some type of historical precedent set forth in the Reformed theological tradition. It is our purpose to preserve our Reformed heritage doctrinally and practically-that we may for better clarity and understanding of our heritage, refine and strengthen our distinctives, but in no wise may we lessen or detract from our orthodoxy as set forth in the *Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647* and *Catechisms*. All such changes must be subject to the procedures established in the *Directory of Administrative Rules*, Section 3 (E 3:1-7).

SECTION 5: Ecclesiastical Liberty

- A 5:1** Certain issues have been determined as issues which are best dealt with by presbytery. Liberty of conscience is a God-given right to every individual to be bound to the teaching of God's Word alone. These issues are not the distinctives of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly; rather the distinctives of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly are those doctrines upon which we are agreed in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the *Larger & Shorter Catechisms* and the *BCO*.
- A 5:2** General issues and practices not presently covered by the *Confession* and *Catechisms*, the *Directory of Worship*, the *Directory of Church Discipline*, or listed in the declarations of *Ecclesiastical Liberty* and *Evangelical Mission*, shall be considered on a case by case basis.
- A 5:3** Ecclesiastical liberties (including acceptable parameters in G4:3) are forbidden to be used as a means of dividing the church. The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly is seeking biblical unity in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not conformity, which often shapes the character of the church as a sectarian, schismatic body.

- A 5:4** By dividing the church, we mean the casting of aspersions against any individual who maintains a pro or con position concerning an ecclesiastical liberty, rather than addressing the issue. Condemning a view as violating Scripture is not *dividing* the church. It is permitted to write and preach against or for any liberty issue. Any liberty issue may be brought to the floor of the General Assembly by three-fourths vote.
- A 5:5** A member of a particular congregation is required to follow the stated teachings of that congregation concerning any of the above stated liberty issues (A 5:2). The matter of liberty of conscience is one that preserves the right to believe but does not permit the right to practice by action where that action disrupts the peace and harmony of the church. A member, who believes and practices liberties where the church does not, must practice according to the stated teachings of the particular congregation of which he is a member and cease any disruptive practices thereunto. If the member does not agree with the teaching, he may approach the session of the church concerning these issues, but not the other members regarding his disagreement. Members who create a disruption in the peace and harmony of the church by actions contrary to any of its stated teachings shall be subject to discipline for disruption of the church. However, under the right of private judgment, members cannot be required to participate in liberty practices that they believe violate the teachings of the Scriptures and their conscience. Therefore, while in substance the member may not participate in some acts of worship, he must participate in the outward forms of worship procedures. In matters that are irresolvable, the member should seek a transfer to a church of like faith and practice where he is in agreement with the church and session. Discipline is not for the purpose of punishing an individual for his views in these liberty issues, but for disturbing the peace of the particular congregation by propagating his views on these liberty issues among the members. Prospective members may be refused membership where the prospective member has made clear statements of intention regarding his views on liberty issues.
- A 5:6** What is not expressly written in this *Book of Church Order* is reserved for determination by the individual presbyteries: Some issues in the *BCO* have jurisdictions shared by general assembly and presbytery for determinations.

SECTION 6: Ecclesiastical Unity

- A 6:1** In John 17:17-21, Jesus Christ our Lord states:

“Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. As thou hast sent Me into the world even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent Me.”

A 6:2 There are three basic principles taught by our Lord in this passage of Scripture:

A 6:3 First, that sanctification is based on the truth of God's Word, and Christ, therefore, prays that His Church will be bathed in that truth. "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." The Church of Jesus Christ must be a sanctified church, that is, a church, which is committed to the purity of the fundamentals of the faith as, taught in our Reformed confessions. As the Apostle Peter states: "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*".¹⁷ Therefore, the ultimate foundation of a true church is the doctrine of Scriptural sanctification. The True Church will seek to be sanctified by the Word of the Living God. Another way of stating this principle is that a true church sees the Word of God as the final authority on all issues of life, faith and practice. This, of necessity, would include biblical doctrine and administering the sacraments and church discipline in the fellowship of those called by our God unto Christ Jesus.¹⁸

A 6:4 The second principle taught in this passage of Scripture is that Christ has sent us into the world to present the Gospel of His Kingdom as, He Himself preached during His earthly ministry.

"As thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word."

A 6:5 The priority of the church is to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. The Apostle Paul states that the Church is seeking to "*preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*"¹⁹ Here is another mark of the Church of Jesus Christ, the calling of men to Christ by the blessed evangel. However, this will only be accomplished through a church, which is seeking true sanctification. This is our calling as a truly sanctified church. As our Lord teaches us, "*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, 'All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded- you, and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'*"²⁰ The evangelistic work of a true church is two-fold: first, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and secondly, to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. The work of evangelism never ends in the life of the church.

A 6:6 The third principle is that of unity in the Church of Jesus Christ as living testimony to-the truth that Christ was, sent by God the Father.

¹⁷ 1 Pet.2:9

¹⁸ Acts 2:42

¹⁹ 1 Cor. 1:23-24

²⁰ Mat. 28:18-20

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent Me. “

A 6:7 Here is the most fundamental principle and work required of the church. If the church is to be the testimony of true spiritual unity of believers, as expressed in Christ’s prayer, the living example of the work and teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, it must not only verbally proclaim the truth, but it must have unity as a living testimony that what is spoken of concerning Christ and salvation is demonstrated in the life of the church, both spiritually and physically. Our Lord states in John 13:35, *“By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.”* The church is to be one and have true unity in Christ Jesus. This is another mark of the Christian Church. It therefore requires that the visible church, of necessity, must seek to establish a physical unity as declared by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:3-6, to which he directs the church in this matter by stating: *“... endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”* When the church is divided and riddled with schism, then we have denied the directive of the Apostle and have willingly ignored the spiritual unity of the believers in verse twenty-one, especially as it would relate to the life of the visible church. John Owen, the English Puritan, wrote concerning the unity of the church:

“I confess I would rather, much rather, spend all my time and days in making up and healing the breaches and schisms that are amongst Christians than one hour in justifying our divisions, even therein, wherein, on the one side, they are capable of a fair defence. But who is sufficient for such an attempt? The closing of differences, amongst Christians is like opening the book in the Revelation,— there is none able or worthy to do it, in heaven or in earth, but the lamb: when He will put forth the greatness of His power for it, it shall be accomplished, and not before. In the meantime, a reconciliation amongst all Protestants is our duty, and practicable, and had perhaps ere this been in some forwardness of accomplishment had men rightly understood when in such a reconciliation, according to the mind of God, doth consist. Where men have laboured as much in the improvement of the principle of forbearance as they have done to subdue other men to their opinions, religion will have another appearance in the world.”

A 6:8 The early Presbyterian Church believed in unity and a oneness of Christ’s Church. The *Scot’s Confession of 1560* states concerning the Kirk that:

“... we believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, so we firmly believe that from the beginning there has been, now is, and to the end of the world shall be, one Kirk, that is to say, one company and multitude of men chosen by God, who rightly worship and embrace Him by true

faith in Christ Jesus, who is the only Head of the Kirk, even as it is the body and spouse of Christ Jesus. This Kirk is Catholic, that is, universal, because it contains the chosen of all ages, of all realms, nations, and tongues, be they of the Jews or be they of the Gentiles, who have communion and society with God the Father, and with His Son, Christ Jesus, through the sanctification of His Holy Spirit.”

A 6:9 George Gillespie the great Scottish theologian writing on the unity of the church, states:

“Yet there be no strife between us and you, for we be brethren and is not the Canaanite and the Perizzite yet in the Land? Oh, let it not be told in Gath, nor published in the streets of Ahkelon. Let it not be said that there can be no unity in the church without Prelacy. Brethren, I charge you, by the roes and by the hinds of the fields, that ye awake not nor stir up Jesus Christ till He pleases: for His rest is sweet and glorious with His well-beloved. It shall be no grief of heart to you afterward that you have pleased others as well as yourselves, and have stretched your principles for an accommodation in church government as well as in worship, and that for the Church’s peace and edification and that the ears of our common enemies may tingle when it shall be said, The Churches of Christ have rest, and are edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the joy of the Holy Ghost, are multiplied. Alas! how shall our divisions and contentions hinder the preaching and learning of Christ, and the edifying of one another in love? “Is Christ divided?” said the apostle. There is but one Christ; yea, the Head and the body make but one Christ, so that you cannot divide the body without dividing Christ. Is there so much as a seam in all Christ’s garment? Is it not woven throughout, from the top to the bottom? ... Oh, brethren, we shall be one in heaven; let us pack up differences in this place of our pilgrimage the best way we can. Nay, we will not despair of unity in this world. Hath not God promised to give us one heart and one way; ... Brethren, it is not impossible, pray for it, endeavor it, press hard toward the mark of accommodation. How much better is it that you be one with the other Reformed Churches, though somewhat strained and bound up, than to be divided, though at full liberty and elbow-room! ‘Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.’”

A 6:10 We have a duty, as those called in the hope of Christ Jesus, to seek reconciliation among the Reformed churches and to seek accommodation on the diversity of thought concerning the non-fundamentals. St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:12-20, 25-27 states:

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink

into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body... That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

A 6:11 The *Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647* teaches us that: "The purest Churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error."²¹ It is therefore impossible for us to create a perfect church on this earth until the second coming of Christ Jesus our Lord. Yet we must strive for unity and oneness. Can there be a living testimony that Christ Jesus has come in the flesh from the Father, if there is only division and schism dividing the church? The time has come for Reformed churches of the historical faith to put aside our differences by working toward laying a foundation for a common confession and allowing for accommodation, without compromise, within the ecclesiastical community. We have allowed our precisionist attitudes to divide the church, thus allowing liberalism to gain the upper hand in many denominations. The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly expresses its desire for those of like faith, to come and associate with us in the fundamentals of the Reformed faith, with the hope that one day we will share one common confession, as one visible church.

²¹ WCF 25:5

DIRECTORY
OF
CHURCH ORDER

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

B. Directory of Church Order

SECTION 1: The Preface¹

B 1:1 Jesus Christ, upon whose shoulders the government is, whose name is called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;² of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end; who sits upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth, even for ever; having all power given unto Him in heaven and in earth by the Father, who raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand, far above all principalities and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all: He being ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things, received gifts for His Church, and gave officers necessary for the edification of His Church, and perfecting of His saints.³³

SECTION 2: The Church

B 2:1⁴ The Church of Christ

- A. There is one general Church visible, held forth in the New Testament.⁵
- B. The ministry, oracles and ordinances of the New Testament, are given by Jesus Christ to the general Church visible, for the gathering and perfecting of it in this life, until His second coming.⁶
- C. Particular visible churches, as members of the general church, are also held forth in the New Testament.⁷ Particular churches in the primitive times were made up of visible saints, possessing attributes such as: being of age, professed faith in Christ, and obedience unto Christ, according to the rules of faith and life taught by Christ and His Apostles, and of the children of these visible saints.⁸

¹ From the Form of *Presbyterial Church Government* established by the Westminster Assembly, 1645.

² Isa. 9:6,7.

³ Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 1:20-23 cp. Eph. 4:8, 11 and Ps. 68:18.

⁴ Modified

⁵ 1 Cor. 12:12-13, 28 [together with the rest of the chapter].

⁶ 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:4-5 cp. 10-13, 15-16.

⁷ Gal. 1:21, 22; Rev. 1:4, 20, 2:1.

⁸ Acts 2:38, 41, 47 cp. Acts 5:14; 1 Cor. 1:2 cp. 2 Cor. 9:13; Acts 2:39; 1 Cor. 7:14; Rom. 11:16; Mk. 10:14 cp. Matt. 19:13-14; Luke 18:15-16.

D. The following vows are to be required of each individual publicly before the congregation for a public profession of faith, baptism of an adult, or church membership:

1. *Do you believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, in their original autographs, to be the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of God, and its doctrine of salvation to be the perfect and only true doctrine of salvation?*
2. *Do you confess that because of your sinfulness, you abhor and humble yourself before God, and that you trust for salvation, not in yourself, but in the Lord Jesus Christ alone?*
3. *Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your sovereign Lord, and do you promise in reliance on the Grace of God, to serve Him with all that is in you, to forsake the world, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, and lead a godly life?*
4. *Do you agree to submit, in the Lord, and to adhere to the government of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly and, in case you should be found delinquent in doctrine or practice, to submit, heed, and abide by its discipline?"*

E. The following vows are to be required of the parents at the baptism of their child:

1. *Do you acknowledge that although our children are conceived and born in sin and therefore are subject to condemnation, they are to be set apart unto the Lord and as children of believing parent(s), they ought to be baptized?*
2. *Do you promise to instruct your child in the principles of our holy religion as revealed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and as summarized in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly;*
3. *Do you promise to pray with and for your child, to set an example of piety and godliness before him/her, and to endeavor by all the means of God's appointment to bring him/her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?*

B 2:2 Christ, the Head of the Church⁹

"Christ is the sole and exclusive Head of the Church, whether consideration as visible or invisible. His authority alone is to be acknowledged by the Church, as her supreme lawgiver... Christ has

⁹ Modified

not delegated His authority either to popes or princes; and though He is now in heaven as to His bodily presence, yet He needs no deputy to act for Him to the Church below; daring encroachments have often been made upon this royal prerogative of Christ, both by ecclesiastical and civil powers.”¹⁰ Therefore,

- A. The Church must oppose the error of Erastianism and early American congregationalism,¹¹ whereby the ecclesiastical government, over which Christ is King, is in any way subordinate or compromised in ecclesiastical matters to the civil magistrate (over which Christ is also King);
- B. The Church must oppose the historic prelacy error of placing the civil magistrate in anyway subordinate or compromised to ecclesiastical government; and
- C. Thus, particular churches, presbyteries or synods which are in anyway dependent for their existence upon the civil magistrate or compromised thereby (the most common being incorporation, i.e., existence as a legal, fictitious person by authority of the civil magistrate and thereby required to submit to civil law in matters pertaining to areas of jurisdiction which were given by God to the Church) may not be members of the RPCGA.
- D. The reception of assemblies or churches from differing nations must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, which will allow this principle to be universally employed, with the necessary flexibility required, because of the variation that will exist in differing civil jurisdictions. Each national synod (highest/widest assembly in any nation) will need to meet with the approval of the General Assembly in its synodical constitution in order to comply with this biblical principle.

SECTION 3: Officers of the Church

B 3:1 Officers

- A. The officers which Christ appointed for the edification of His Church, and the perfecting of the saints, are some extraordinary, i.e., apostles, prophets and evangelists, which have ceased, and some ordinary, i.e., elders and deacons, which remain. The apostles, prophets, and evangelists, as they were called extraordinarily by Christ,¹² so their office ended with themselves. Therefore, when Paul directs Timothy regarding church administration, he gives no direction about the choice of apostles, prophets, or evangelists, but only elders (also called presbyters or bishops)

¹⁰ Robert Shaw, *Exposition on the Confession*, p. 268-9.

¹¹ See Cambridge Platform (1649) 17:9.

¹² 1 Cor. 4:9.

and deacons.¹³ And when Paul was to take his last leave of the Church of Ephesus, he committed the care of feeding the church to the elders of that church and no others.¹⁴ The same charge Peter commits to the elders.¹⁵ And when Paul wrote to the Church at Philippi, he addressed the letter to “all the saints in Christ ... with the bishops and deacons.”

- B. Therefore, the ordinary and perpetual offices in the Church are elders (presbyters, bishops) and deacons.¹⁶
- C. The Word of God ordains two primary functions for the office of elder, that of laboring in word and doctrine, and that of governments.¹⁷ The elder who primarily labors in word and doctrine is commonly called a minister, reverend or teaching elder. The elder who primarily governs, is commonly called a church governor or ruling elder.
- D. It is also agreeable to the Word of God to further divide the general office of elder into specific positions of pastor, teacher (doctor), and church governor.¹⁸
- E. Elders who are gifted with laboring in word and doctrine (commonly called ministers, reverends or teaching elders) ordinarily fill the positions of pastor and teacher (doctor).

SECTION 4: Office of Elder (Presbyter, Bishop)

B 4:1 Elders as Pastors

The Scriptures hold forth the name and title of *pastor*.¹⁹ One pastor is elected by the congregation to be the presiding pastor. All other elected pastors will be referred to as associate pastors.

B 4:2 The Duties of Pastors

- A. Pastors work individually and jointly with other pastors and church governors on the session in the oversight of the particular congregation.
- B. It belongs to the position of pastor to:
 - 1. Pray for and with his flock, as the mouth of the people unto God,²⁰ where preaching and prayer are joined as several parts of the same

¹³ 1 Tim. 3:1-2,8-13; 5:17; Tit. 1:5; Phil. 1:1.

¹⁴ Acts 20:17,28.

¹⁵ 1 Pet. 5:1-3.

¹⁶ Phil. 1:1

¹⁷ Rom. 12:7, 8; 1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Tim. 5:17.

¹⁸ Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28.

¹⁹ Jer. 10:21; 12:10; 17:16; 22:22; 23: 1; Eph. 4:11.

²⁰ Acts 6:2-4; 20:36.

office.²¹ To pray for the sick, even in private, to which a blessing is especially promised, much more, therefore, should he perform this in the public execution of his office, as a part thereof.²²

2. Read the Scriptures publicly, for the proof of which: (a) the priests and Levites in the Jewish church were trusted with the public reading of the Word is proved;²³ and (b) the ministers of the Gospel have as ample charge and commission to dispense the Word, as well as other ordinances, as the priests and Levites had under the law proved;²⁴ and where our Savior entitled the officers of the New Testament, whom He will send forth, by the same names of the teachers of the Old.²⁵ This logically proves that the public reading of the Scriptures belongs to the pastor's office.
3. Feed the flock, by preaching of the Word, according to which he is to teach, convince, reprove, exhort and comfort.²⁶
4. Catechize, which is a plain laying down the first principles of the oracles of God²⁷ or of the doctrine of Christ, and is a part of preaching.
5. Dispense other 'divine mysteries.'²⁸
6. Administer the sacraments.²⁹ Administration of the sacraments is primarily the duty of the presiding pastor.
7. Bless the people from God (where the same blessings, and persons from whom they come, are expressly mentioned³⁰) where, under the names of priests and Levites to be continued under the Gospel, are meant evangelical pastors, who, therefore, are by office to bless the people.³¹
8. Take care of the poor.³²
9. Serve as the moderator of the session of the particular congregation. He maintains his right to vote on all session matters.

²¹ Jam. 5:14-15.

²² 1 Cor. 14:15-16

²³ Deut. 31:9-11; Neh. 8:1-3, 13.

²⁴ Isa. 66:21

²⁵ Matt. 23:34.

²⁶ 1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Tit. 1:9.

²⁷ Heb. 5:12.

²⁸ 1 Cor. 4:1-2 refers to the actual outworking of the Spirit of God through the office of bishop/pastor by which God dispenses His 'divine mysteries' through these officers of the church to the members of the church by means of the Word and Sacraments. These 'divine mysteries' are not clearly seen, but most probably represent the whole effect of God's work through this overseer fulfilling his office.

²⁹ Matt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16; 1 Cor. 11:23-25 cp. 1 Cor. 10:16.

³⁰ Num. 6:23-26; Rev. 1:4-5; Isa. 66:21.

³¹ Deut. 10:8; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 1:2.

³² Acts 11:30; 4:34-37; 6:2-4; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; Gal. 2:9-10.

10. He also has a ruling power over the flock as a pastor.³³

- C. The presiding pastor can delegate duties 1 through 9 (located in section B4:2B) to an associate pastor, teacher (doctor), or church governor. However, he may not delegate the duty of moderator to a teacher (doctor) who has not been elected by the congregation.

B 4:3 Elders as Teachers or Doctors

- A. The Scriptures hold forth the name and title of *teacher*³⁴ or *doctor*,³⁵ who also pastors the flock of God and is a minister of the Word and has the power of administration of the sacraments (see B4:2C), but does not usually participate in the rule of a particular congregation.
- B. The Lord, having given different gifts, and diverse exercises according to these gifts, in the ministry of the Word;³⁶ though these different gifts may meet in, and accordingly be exercised by, one and the same presbyter;³⁷ yet, where there are several presbyters in the same congregation, they may be designated to several employments, according to the different gifts in which each of them does most excel.³⁸ And he that does more excel in exposition of Scripture, in teaching sound doctrine, and in convincing gainsayers, than he does in application, and is accordingly employed therein, may be called a teacher, or doctor.³⁹ Nevertheless, where there is but one presbyter in a particular congregation, he is to perform, as far as he is able, the whole work of the ministry.⁴⁰
- C. A teacher, or doctor, may be invited or hired by the session to teach at a particular congregation on a permanent basis. While he participates in the rule of the Church at presbytery, synods, and General Assemblies, he is not usually elected by the congregation, therefore, he does not sit on the session and participate in the governing of the particular congregation. He only teaches. He may administer the sacraments in that congregation with the permission of the presiding pastor.
- D. A teacher, or doctor, is of most excellent use in schools and universities; as of old in the schools of the prophets, and at Jerusalem, where Gamaliel and others taught as doctors. They are commonly called college or seminary professors.

³³ 1 Tim. 5:17; Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:7, 17.

³⁴ 1 Chr. 25:8; Matt. 8:19; 9:11; 10:24-25; Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 12:28-29; Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 1:7; 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11; Heb. 5:12; Jam. 3:1; 2 Pet. 2:1.

³⁵ Lk. 2:46; 5:17; 10:25; Acts 5:34.

³⁶ Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:1, 4-7.

³⁷ 1 Cor. 14:3; 2 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 1:9.

³⁸ 1 Con 14:3; 2 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 1:9; 1 Pet. 4:10-11.

³⁹ 2 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 1:9. (This has been established as a footnote by Motion 11, G.A. 1994.)

⁴⁰ 2 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 1:9; 1 Tim. 4:2.

- E. There is a particular calling by the General Assembly for qualified men to serve as Ecclesiastical Advocates in the defense of the Reformed Christian faith and for clarification of doctrine and practice, in accordance with the Word of God, the Westminster Standards, and the Book of Church Order.
1. This Collegium of Doctors are duly called by Approval of the General Assembly to serve the denomination, without authority and power, other than those granted as an Elder, but given great consideration in there determinations and/or recommendations as pious advice in matters of doctrine and practice of the denomination.
 2. Their primary duty will be to assist the General Assembly Moderator in matters pertaining to new doctrines, errant theology or practice within or outside of the church, wherein they are called upon to perform their duties by the Moderator.
 3. The Advocates who serve in this capacity may serve solely or in conjunction with other callings related to their qualifications, and must possess an earned Doctorate degree in a related theological field.
 4. Prospective members must be supported and recommended by their respective presbytery, reviewed by the Collegium as to academic qualifications and gifts to this calling, and then voted on by the General Assembly.
- F. The title of doctor may only be used by elders who have an earned doctorate degree in a related ecclesiastical vocation from an approved institute of higher learning. Guidelines will be set by presbyteries accordingly.

B 4:4 Elders as Church Governors

The Scripture does hold forth the title of *church governor*. The church governor's position is distinct from the position of pastor (presiding and associate) and teacher.⁴¹ Along with the pastor and teacher, it is the function of the church governor to pastor the flock of God, but he does so primarily by overseeing the conduct and manners of the flock of God. While ruling and governing is common to all elders (pastors, teachers and church governors), such responsibilities are the special calling of church governors whereas teaching and preaching the Word are the specialty of pastors and teachers.⁴² Thus, all elders are equal in ruling status and authority (by contrast to the Episcopal system), though pastors and teachers have additional functions pertinent to the ministry of the Word and sacraments.

⁴¹ Rom. 12:7-9; 1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Cor. 12:28.

⁴² Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 5:17.

B 4:5 Duties of Church Governors

- A. Church governors work individually and jointly with the pastors (presiding and associate) on the session in the oversight of the particular congregation.
- B. It belongs to the church governor to:
 - 1. Open and shut the doors to God's covenant household by the admission of members approved by the session⁴³ by excommunication of notorious, obstinate and unrepentant offenders adjudicated by the presbytery,⁴⁴ and by restoring of repentant sinners forgiven by the presbytery;⁴⁵
 - 2. Organize and call the congregation together for worship and meetings and to dismiss them again within a reasonable amount of time;⁴⁶
 - 3. Prepare matters in private, so that in public- they may be conducted with less trouble and greater efficiency;⁴⁷
 - 4. Pronounce sentence according to the mind of Christ at the appropriate times with sessional and/or presbyterial approval ;⁴⁸
 - 5. Be guides and leaders to the congregation, in all matters, whatsoever, pertaining to church administration and actions;
 - 6. Encourage those in the congregation not to live beyond their means, without a calling to a vocation, or idly in their vocation;⁴⁹
 - 7. Prevent and heal such offenses in life or in doctrine as might corrupt the congregation;⁵⁰
 - 8. Care for the flock with words of admonition and encouragement;⁵¹
 - 9. As they shall be sent for, to visit and to pray over their sick brethren;⁵²
 - 10. At other times, as opportunity shall serve thereto, to pray for all brethren, especially those in their charge, instruct the ignorant,

⁴³ 2 Chr. 23:19; Rev. 21:12; John. 20:23; Matt. 16:19; 2 Cor. 2:5-0.

⁴⁴ Matt. 18:17.

⁴⁵ Matt. 16:19; 2Co. 2:5-10.

⁴⁶ 2 Cor. 2:7,8; Acts 2:6.

⁴⁷ Acts 21:18,22-23.

⁴⁸ Acts 6:2-3; 13:15; 2 Cor. 8:10; Heb. 13:7,17; 2 Thess. 2:10-12.

⁴⁹ 1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:11; 1 Tim. 5:11-13; 1 Pet. 4:15.

⁵⁰ Acts 20:28-32.

⁵¹ 1 Thess. 5:12; Acts 20:20.

⁵² Jam. 5:14.

comfort the mourning, and nourish and guard the children of the covenant;

11. They shall have particular concern for the doctrine and conduct of the minister of the Word and help him in his labors; and
12. Administer the word and sacraments if permitted by the presiding pastor (B4:2C) or by presbytery if there is no presiding pastor.

B 4:6 Elders with the Power of Evangelist

The power of an evangelist is a function of an elder serving as a missionary at home or on a foreign field of service. The power of evangelist should only be given to a missionary who does not have a presbytery reasonably close to his mission field. His responsibility is to establish new congregations in or out of his culture under the authority of presbytery. He has the authority to examine and ordain elders and deacons. All examinations and ordinations are subject to review, and are not valid until approved by presbytery.

B 4:7 The Receiving of an Elder (Presbyter, Bishop)⁵³

A man who has received a calling to serve as a pastor (presiding or associate), teacher (doctor) or church governor may be received into the office of elder of this denomination by ordination or transfer.

⁵³ Modified

B 4:8 General Qualifications for Elders

- A. He must be known to his church and others:
 - 1. As a man of God, whose life is lived in obedience to the Scriptures; and
 - 2. Living a holy life with reference to his practices as an elder (with his congregation) and as a husband/father (with his family), if applicable.
- B. If he is married:
 - 1. He must be living with his only valid wife; and
 - 2. His wife and minor children must be living in biblical submission to his authority and be examples of his pastoral capabilities at the family level. This should be verified with his wife through personal visits or letters.
- C. He must report to presbytery any history, after his conversion, of divorce, sexual misconduct, dishonesty, drunkenness, gossip, abuse of authority, financial bankruptcy, or any sins unbecoming an elder. Any cases of the above should be thoroughly investigated by presbytery before a decision is made.⁵⁴
- D. He must be known as a man of his word, reliable and having integrity.
- E. He must have been baptized, using water, into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and have a credible testimony of God's saving grace in his life.
- F. He must bring to the attention of presbytery any past or pending disciplinary actions in which he has been involved from present or previous churches or denominations. Failure to do so could be cause for discipline by the presbytery. The presbytery must be satisfied with the results and conclusions of such disciplinary action.
- G. He must relinquish his membership in any and all other churches or denominations since he must have only one ecclesiastical affiliation. Copies of such letters of relinquishment or other acceptable forms of verification must be provided to presbytery.
- H. He must be capable of making the vows required of a minister of the Gospel (see Directory for Examination).
- I. He must agree to preach and teach the Westminster Standards and the BCO of the RPCGA.

⁵⁴ Modified

- J. He must agree that all questions or disputes with any standards are to be carried on only at presbytery and the higher courts (which are particularly suited for such discussions) and that he will not preach or teach any questionable or disputed doctrines (this does not include any issue determined by GA to be one of ecclesiastical liberty, section A5:2).
- K. He must agree to submit to the government and discipline of the presbytery and any higher courts of the church according to its Book of Church Order.
- L. He must agree to seek to conform all church practices, particularly that of worship, sacraments, discipline, and appointment of officers, to the Westminster Standards and Book of Church Order.
- M. He must agree not to turn to the world to resolve differences between the church and its members or other officers until he has exhausted all remedies in the church courts of the RPCGA. Issues concerning administration of the Word and doctrine, administration of the sacraments and church discipline may not be appealed to civil court.
- N. Elders shall normally have a seminary degree (Pastor, Teacher - M.Div. [three year]; Church Governor - M.A.R. [two year]), or their equivalent. All prospective elders without a proper degree shall be examined by an approved seminary of the RPCGA, to determine that their knowledge is equivalent to the degree. A written report shall be sent to the presbytery with the results and any recommendation for further study. Presbytery shall consider this information prior to ordination.
- O. It is required that any member who desires to enter the ministry be trained as an apprentice deacon, then tested, approved and installed as a deacon while completing his educational studies in preparation for the ministry.

B 4:9 Elders (Presbyters, Bishops) Transferring from Outside of this Denomination

- A. Any ordained elder transferring to the RPCGA should meet the general requirements listed above.
- B. He must be approved by his particular congregation to be an elder (presiding pastor, associate pastor, or church governor) and they must be in agreement with his affiliation with this denomination even though the church is not affiliated.

B 4:10 Those Who Are Provisional Elders (Presbyters, Bishops)

- A. A provisional elder is an individual who has already been ordained to the office and has been received into a presbytery without passing the normal required examination in both doctrine and practices of the church. A provisional elder will be accorded full privileges at any judicatory, except that of voting. Examinations and ordination procedures for provisional

elders are found in the Directory for Examination and Directory of Church Order.

- B. The provisional elder must be instructed in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Table by his mentor, approved by presbytery, according to the *Westminster Standards* and *Directory of Church Worship* and must agree to administer the sacraments according to these.
- C. The provisional elder must agree to abide by presbyterial supervision, which will come through his mentor appointed by presbytery.
- D. The provisional elder must agree to follow the study prescribed by presbytery, equivalent to a three-year seminary program for pastors, or a two year seminary program for church governors, necessary to fully prepare him for a regular examination within a mutually agreeable period of time.
- E. A provisional elder may become a full-status elder upon successful completion of an examination by presbytery, as required in B4:A.

B 4:11 Procedures for Receiving Elders (Presbyters, Bishops)

- A. All elders seeking affiliation must complete the Checklist for Examination (G1:1A) and submit it to the stated clerk of the presbytery.
- B. All elders of new particular congregations, or those joining this denomination with their particular congregations, must be examined by presbytery and, where applicable, ordained and installed in their particular congregations. Procedures for this are given in the *Directory of Church Order*, Ordination of Elders (B 10). Where distance is considerable, a delegation approved by presbytery or a missionary with the power of evangelist may be appointed to accomplish these tasks.

B 4:12 Rights and Privileges of Elders (Presbyters, Bishops)

- A. Elders who have been duly examined and, where applicable, ordained and installed have full rights and privileges within presbytery and all other courts of which they are members. Provisional elders have these same rights, with the exception of the power to vote, which they will receive upon passing a full examination by presbytery.
- B. These rights and privileges include:
 - 1. Full privileges at presbytery and higher court meetings which he attends; and
 - 2. Full access to the judicial courts of the denomination;

- C. In addition to the above, a provisional elder can expect the following from presbytery:
1. Full privileges (apart from voting) at presbytery and higher court meetings which he attends;
 2. Access to the courts of the denomination to appeal any decisions made by his mentor;
 3. Counseling with regard to church practices;
 4. Counseling and guidance in personal matters;
 5. Assistance with regard to approved educational materials and courses necessary to prepare him for full ministerial credentials (all presbyteries shall seek to provide required books for those in mission settings where economics would hinder the purchase of the required books); and
 6. Direction as to a course of study to prepare him for full ministerial credentials (wherever possible, presbytery should seek to provide assistance with educational costs, but not regular living costs, where economic necessity requires this).
- D. Elders are members of presbytery and, therefore, are under the authority of the presbyterial court, but not under the authority of the particular congregation. They serve the particular congregation and have a vote in session if they are elected elders of the particular congregation. They shall vote in congregational meetings as heads of their households.
- E. Attendance in Church Courts:
1. Presbytery: Elders who fail to attend two consecutive “stated” Presbytery meetings shall be placed on probation for one year with removal of all voting privileges in Presbytery and the next General Assembly. If an Elder fails to attend the next presbytery, after probation, he shall be dismissed by his presbytery as a minister.
 2. General Assembly: Elders who fail to attend two consecutive General Assemblies shall be placed on probation for two years with removal of all voting privileges in Presbytery and General Assembly. If an Elder fails to attend the next General Assembly, after probation, he shall be dismissed by his presbytery as a minister.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Non-attendance may be excused by Presbytery and General Assembly for valid reasons as determined by those two bodies on a case by case basis. In cases of hardship members may appeal to Presbytery or General Assembly for assistance.

B 4:13 Certified Pastoral Minister and Licensed Pastoral Minister

- A. All Elders whether they are recent graduates of a seminary or transferring into the denomination must complete the Certified Pastoral Ministry (CPM) program of the Reformed Presbyterian Ministerial College, or its Master of Sacred Theology degree program in ecclesiastical administration.
1. All applicants for the office of Elder shall be given the status of Provisional Elder as defined in the Book of Church Order.
 2. No Provisional Elder shall be permitted to vote for a minimum of one (1) year after being approved as a Provisional Elder even if he has completed the Certified Pastoral Ministry program.
 3. No Provisional Elder shall be permitted to vote until he has completed the basic Certified Pastoral Ministry program as required of all Elders in this denomination.
 4. Those individuals who take the Master of Sacred Theology degree program (no tuition fees are required), shall be approved to be mentors for other Provisional Elders who apply for membership in this denomination and designated as Licensed Pastoral Minister (LPM)."

B 4:14 Associates⁵⁶

An associate is a duly ordained elder seeking to fellowship with the denomination through one of her presbyteries. Associate status is granted by a particular presbytery. To qualify for associate status the elder must have been ordained by another Reformed ecclesiastical body to serve as a pastor or teacher. Associate status grants fellowship and floor privileges, without voting rights, in the particular presbytery that grants the associate status.

B 4:15 The Procedure for Honorable Retirement

- A. The Presbytery may designate a minister as honorably retired when the minister by reason of age wishes to be retired, or as medically disabled when by reason of infirmity is no longer able to serve the church or fulfill his particular calling in the active ministry of the Gospel.
- B. A minister medically disabled or honorably retired shall continue to hold membership in his Presbytery. He may serve on committees or commissions if so elected or appointed.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Modified

⁵⁷ The minister still retains the right to vote in any assembly of which he is a part.

Section 5: Ordination of Elders (Presbyters, Bishops)

B 5:1 Touching the Doctrine of Ordination

- A. No man ought to take upon himself the office of an elder without a lawful calling.⁵⁸ Ordination is always to be continued in the Church of Jesus Christ.⁵⁹ Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some public church office.⁶⁰
- B. Every elder is to be ordained by the imposition of hands, with prayer and fasting, by the presbytery to which he belongs.⁶¹
- C. It is agreeable to the Word of God, and very expedient, that those who are to be ordained as elders, be assigned to some particular congregation or other ministerial charge.⁶²
- D. He who is to be ordained an elder must be duly qualified, both for life and ministerial abilities, according to the rules of the Apostles.⁶³
- E. He must be examined and approved by those who will ordain him.⁶⁴
- F. No man is to be ordained an elder for a particular congregation, if they of that congregation can show just cause of exception against him.⁶⁵
- G. Under unusual circumstances, something extraordinary may be done in performing an ordination until a settled order is established. However, the rules of this section should be followed as nearly as possible.⁶⁶

B 5:2 Touching the Power of Ordination

- A. Ordination is the act of a presbytery.⁶⁷ The power of ordering the whole work of ordination is in the whole presbytery.⁶⁸

B 5:3 Directions for the Ordination

- A It is manifested by the Word of God, that no man ought to take upon himself the office of an elder until he is lawfully called and ordained thereunto; and that the work of ordination is to be performed with all due care, wisdom, gravity and solemnity. We humbly tender these directions as requisite to be observed.

⁵⁸ John 3:27; Rom. 10:14-15; Jer. 14:14; Heb. 5:4.

⁵⁹ Tit. 1:5; 1 Tim. 5:21-22.

⁶⁰ Num. 8:10, 11, 14, 19, 22; Acts 6:3, 5, 6.

⁶¹ 1 Tim. 5:22; Acts 14:23; 13:3.

⁶² Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5; Acts 20:17, 28.

⁶³ 1 Tim. 3:2-6; Tit. 1:5-9.

⁶⁴ 1 Tim. 3:7; 10; 5:22.

⁶⁵ 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7.

⁶⁶ 2 Chr. 29:34-36; 30:2-5.

⁶⁷ 1 Tim. 4:14.

⁶⁸ 1 Tim. 4:14.

- B. He who is to be ordained must address himself to the presbytery and bring with him: proof of his call; a testimonial of his conversion; a testimonial of his diligence and proficiency in his studies; the degrees he has earned; an accounting of his time since conversion; his age, which is to be at least twenty four years; and especially of his personal life and conduct.
- C. The presbytery shall then proceed to examine him concerning his conversion, his holiness of life as required of an elder of the Gospel, his learning and sufficiency, his calling to the holy ministry, his particular call to an acceptable ecclesiastical vocation, and any involvement in a non-ecclesiastical vocation.

B 5:4 The General Rules for Examination

- A. The individual shall be examined in a brotherly way, with mildness of spirit and with special respect to the gravity, modesty and quality of each one.
- B. He shall be examined as to his skill in the use of original languages. This may be done by satisfactorily completing courses of study in Hebrew and Greek and rendering some portion into English. If he is defective in either, a stricter examination shall be made of his other learning and whether he has skill in logic and philosophy.
- C. He shall be examined concerning: the authors in divinity he has read and is best acquainted with; his knowledge of theology, English Bible, church history, apologetics and practical theology; his ability to defend the orthodox doctrine against all unsound and erroneous opinions, especially those of the present age; and his skill in the sense and meaning of such passages of Scripture as shall be proposed unto him.
- D. He shall, at a time assigned to him, expound before the presbytery a passage of Scripture as shall be given him.
- E. Within a competent time, he shall also prepare a discourse upon a topic of controversy in divinity as shall be assigned to him.
- F. He shall preach or teach before the people and the presbytery at the times appointed by them.
- G. His gifts shall be examined as they relate to his call.
- H. His examination shall take as long as presbytery shall judge as necessary.
- I. An individual who has formerly been ordained an elder, and is transferring to another presbytery, shall bring a testimonial of his ordination and his abilities and conduct. Then, his fitness for that call shall be tried by his preaching, and an examination in theology, ecclesiology and sacraments.

B 5:5 Receiving of Elders Previously Ordained

- A. If an elder is called to a congregation and has been formerly ordained a presbyter according to the form of ordination prescribed in the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly (which we hold for substance to be valid and not to be disclaimed by any who have received it) then, proceeding cautiously, he shall be examined in theology, ecclesiology and sacraments. Only then may he be admitted without any new ordination.
- B. If any person already ordained an elder in any other Reformed church, is called to a congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, he is to bring to the receiving presbytery a sufficient testimonial of his ordination and of his life and conduct while he lived among them; and if he had been dismissed, the causes of his removal.
- C. He shall undergo an examination according to B5:4.
- D. Records shall be carefully kept by the presbyteries of the names of the persons ordained; their testimonials; the time and place of their ordination; the presbyters who laid hands upon him; the presbyter who gave the charge; and what portion of Scripture was read.

B 5:6 Prohibitions Concerning Ordination

The office of the ministry cannot be purchased for any amount of money or gift of any kind whatsoever.⁶⁹

B 5:7 Vows Required for Ordination of Elders

- A. The following vows shall be required of an individual prior to receiving ordination to the office of elder:
 - 1. *Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of life, faith and practice?*
 - 2. *Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?*
 - 3. *Do you approve of the government, discipline and worship of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly?*
 - 4. *Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?*
 - 5. *Do you promise to immediately report to Presbytery any changes in your doctrine or practice?*

⁶⁹ Acts 8

6. *Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy ministry from a love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son?*
7. *Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel, and the purity, the peace and the unity of the church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?*
8. *Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all private and personal duties which becomes you as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel, as well as in all the duties of your office, endeavoring to adorn the profession of the Gospel by your life, and walking with exemplary piety before the flock over which God shall make you overseer?*
9. *Are you willing to take charge of this congregation (or name a specific call) in agreement with your declaration when you accepted their call? And do you promise to discharge the duties of a (name office) to them as God shall give you strength?*

B 5:8 Approval of Elders by a Particular Congregation

- A. Having been approved by presbytery, the elder shall be sent to the particular congregation where he is to serve. There he is to preach and/or teach several times, and to converse with the people, that they may examine his gifts for their edification and may have time to inquire into his life and conduct.
- B. At the conclusion of his examination of his gifts in preaching and/or teaching, the presbytery shall send to the particular congregation a letter which shall be read before the members, informing them that on a date set by presbytery, a committee representing that congregation shall appear before the presbytery, to give their consent to his call. Otherwise, they are to put in writing, with all Christian discretion and meekness, the exceptions they have against him. If, on the date appointed, there shall be no just exception against him, and the people give their consent, then the presbytery shall proceed to ordination.

B 5:9 Procedures for Installation of Elders

- A. Upon the day appointed for installation of an elder, which is to be performed in that particular congregation in which he is to be installed and is to serve, it is recommended that a day of prayer and fasting be observed in the congregation previous to the day of installation, that they may more earnestly join in prayer for a blessing upon the ordinances of Christ and the labors of His servant for their good. The presbytery shall send at least two elders to that particular congregation of installation, one of which

shall preach concerning the office and duty of elders, and how the people should receive them for their work's sake.

- B. After the sermon, the elder who has preached shall, before the congregation, demand of him who is now to be installed, concerning: his faith in Christ Jesus; his persuasion of the truth of the Reformed faith, according to the Scriptures; his sincere intentions and ends in desiring to enter into this calling; his diligence in praying, reading, meditating, preaching, ministering the sacraments, discipline and performing all ministerial duties towards his charge; his zeal and faithfulness in maintaining the truth of the Gospel and unity of the Church against error and schism; his care that he and his family may be without blame, as examples to the flock; his willingness and humility, in meekness of spirit, to submit unto the admonitions of his brethren and the discipline of the presbytery; and his resolution to continue in his duty against all trouble and persecution.

B 5:10 Requirements of the Congregation at Installation of Elders

- A. The elder, having taken his vows, professed his willingness and promised his endeavors, by the help of God, to execute his office faithfully, shall then be presented to the people. The elder who has preached shall likewise demand of the people: concerning their willingness to receive and acknowledge him as their elder; to obey and submit unto him, as having rule over them in the Lord; and to maintain, encourage and assist him in all the parts of his office.
- B. The following vows shall be required of the congregation:
1. *Do you, the people of this congregation, continue to profess your readiness to receive _____, whom you have called to be your elder?*
 2. *Do you promise to receive the Word of Truth from his mouth with meekness and love, and to submit to him in the due exercises of discipline?*
 3. *Do you promise to encourage him in his arduous labor and to assist his endeavors for your instruction and spiritual edification?*
 4. *And do you promise to continue to provide him, while he is your elder, that worldly maintenance which you have promised (applies primarily to pastors), and whatever else you may see needful for the honor of religion and his comfort among you?*

B 5:11 Conclusion of Ordination Service

- A. The people having taken their vows, given by the elders sent by presbytery for installation, shall solemnly set him apart for the work of the ministry,

by laying their hands on him, which is to be accompanied with a short prayer and blessing, to this effect:

“We thankfully acknowledge the great mercy of God in sending Jesus Christ: for the redemption of His people; for His ascension to the right hand of God the Father; for pouring out His Spirit, and giving gifts to men, apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, and teachers; for the gathering and building up of His Church; and for fitting and inclining this man to this great work. We do entreat Christ: to fit him with His Holy Spirit; to give him (who in Christ’s name, we thus set apart to this holy service), to fulfill the work of his ministry in all things; and that he may both save himself and the people committed to his charge. “

- B. This, or the like form of prayer and blessing, being ended, let the elder who preached, or another elder, briefly exhort him to consider: the greatness of his office and work; the danger of negligence both to himself and his people; the blessing which will accompany his faithfulness in this life and that to come; and exhort the people to carry themselves to him, as to their minister in the Lord, according to their solemn promise made before. And so Finally, by prayer, commending both him and his flock to the grace of God, after singing of a psalm or hymn, let the assembly be dismissed with a blessing.

B 5:12 Licensed Elders: Training for Church Governors

- A. When a deacon has manifested the additional gifts in leadership that are required for the Office of Elder, he may proceed toward fulfilling the requirements of this denomination by pursuing the following course of action.
 - 1. Applicant Status
 - (a) The Elder applicant must be a member of a mission or particular congregation of this denomination.
 - (b) The Elder applicant must currently be an Ordained Deacon who is serving in an approved capacity by the Presbytery.
 - (c) The Elder applicant must have served as an Ordained Deacon for a minimum of one (1) year prior to applying for Licensure status for the Office of Elder.
 - (d) The Elder applicant must have a letter of recommendation from his current Session which states that they both support his desire to pursue the Eldership and have witnessed the gifting and calling in his life, faith, and practice since becoming a member of the congregation and especially since serving in the Office of Deacon.

- (e) The Elder applicant must resubmit current information to the Presbytery prior to proceeding for Licensure: (1) employment status; (2) marriage status; (3) current debt; (4) any past or pending bankruptcy; (5) any actions of church discipline (past or pending).
- (f) The Elder applicant must enroll in one of the prescribed programs of study (two years of seminary training [M.A.R.] or its equivalent).
- (g) The Elder applicant must complete courses in hermeneutics and systematic theology (all the courses) prior to admission to Licensure.
- (h) The Elder applicant must be re-examined as to his salvation testimony, personal and family life, and basic theological knowledge.
- (i) The elder applicant/licentiate shall continue his training under the supervision of his Session and Presbytery. Once he has completed the course of study for the teaching certificate, he shall be examined by the Presbytery on basic Christian Doctrine. Sustaining this examination, he shall be awarded a teaching certificate, and will be granted privilege, with permission of his session, to sit on the session of the particular congregation in matters pertaining to discipline and counseling church members, teach Sabbath-School classes, Home Bible Studies, and to exhort from the pulpit on the Lord's Day or to read sermons from approved authors, under the supervision of his Session. The applicant/licentiate shall submit to the Pastor and Session for review two weeks prior to any public presentation, the proposed sermon which will be presented by either exhortation or reading, and any other presentation by means of teaching to the congregation.

2. Licensure Status

- (a) The Licensed Elder must maintain his work as a Deacon as he pursues the requirements for the Office of Elder.
- (b) The Licensed Elder shall have no standing to vote at the Session, Presbytery or General Assembly meetings.
- (c) The Licensed Elder shall have speaking privileges at the Session, Presbytery or General Assembly meetings.

- (d) The Licensed Elder shall be under the supervision of the Session and direct oversight of the presiding Pastor.
- (e) The Licensed Elder shall submit a written report quarterly (every 3 months) to the Office of the Stated Clerk on his progress and what areas of practicum he has completed. Failure to report for more than two (2) quarters will result in the dismissal of the Licensed Elder. Failure to progress in academic studies for more than three (3) quarters shall result in the dismissal of the Licensed Elder. Any exception to the above requirements must be approved by the Moderator and Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, or by the body of Presbytery at a stated called meeting.
- (f) The Licensed Elder shall not be permitted to administer the sacraments in the absence of the pastor or church governors.
- (g) The Licensed Elder shall not be permitted to call the church to order or give the benediction.
- (h) The Licensed Elder shall not be permitted to carry out matters of discipline in the absence of the pastor or church governors.
- (i) Upon the completion of the prescribed program of study, with the recommendation of the Session and approval of the congregation, a written letter requesting the Presbytery to examine the Licensed Elder for Ordination shall be submitted to the Office of Stated Clerk.
- (j) All requirements for ordination must be met prior to any installation of a man to the Office of Elder.

SECTION 6: Directions for Licensing Gospel Preachers (Licentiates)

B 6:1 Qualifications

- A. He must be a member of a church of this denomination and have no ecclesiastical affiliations with any other churches or denominations.
- B. He must be known to his church and others:
 - 1. As a man of God, whose life is lived in obedience to the Scriptures; and
 - 2. Living a holy life in every way.
- C. If he is married:
 - 1. He must be living with his only valid wife; and

2. His wife and minor children (if applicable) must be living in biblical submission to his authority and be examples of ruling his own house well. This should be verified with his wife through personal visits or letters.
-
- D. He must report to presbytery any history, after his conversion, of divorce, sexual misconduct, dishonesty, drunkenness, gossip, abuse of authority, financial bankruptcy, or any sins unbecoming a preacher of the Gospel. Any cases of the above should be thoroughly investigated by presbytery before a decision is made.
 - E. He must be known as a man of his word, reliable and having integrity.
 - F. He must have been baptized, using water, into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and have a credible testimony of God's saving grace in his life.
 - G. He must agree that all questions or disputes with any standards are to be carried on only in presbytery (which is particularly suited for such discussions) and that he will not preach or teach any questionable or disputed doctrines with the exception of A5:2 under *Ecclesiastical Liberties*.
 - H. He must be willing to submit to the government and discipline of his church and presbytery according to the *Book of Church Order*.
 - I. He must agree to seek to conform all practices of services he is responsible for holding, particularly that of worship, to the *Westminster Standards* and the *Book of Church Order*.
 - J. He must agree not to turn to the world to resolve differences between the church, the presbytery or their respective members.
 - K. He must agree to report regularly to his assigned mentor, follow his advice and counsel and carry on with any study program required of him by presbytery.

B 6:2 Procedures:

- A. All men seeking licenses must complete the *Checklist for Examination* (G1:1A), which should then be given to a presbytery representative or sent to the Credentials Committee of the presbytery.
- B. The candidate must then be examined by presbytery, or its appointed representative or minister with the power of evangelist, utilizing *Directory of Examination, Licensure Examination for Preaching the Gospel* (G2). The questions contained therein are very basic and should be known by anyone seeking the authority of a license to preach the Gospel.

- C. Upon careful examination of his character and successful completion of his *Licensure Examination for Preaching the Gospel*, he should then be granted a license to preach and exhorted by a member of presbytery.
- D. All licentiates must be renewed annually. Any certificates issued must clearly indicate the expiration date for the license. Re-examination by presbytery or their representative requires a written or verbal report from the licentiate's mentor.

B 6:3 Rights and Privileges

- A. Under the supervision of presbytery, through his mentor, the licentiate may preach and hold services but not administer sacraments. He may serve as pulpit supply with the approval of the session.

SECTION 7: Deacons

B 7:1 Office of Deacon⁷⁰

The Scriptures hold out the office of *deacon as* a distinct officer in the Church,⁷¹ which is a perpetual⁷² office. The deacon is a servant of the Lord, at the discretion of the elders, for the benefit of the congregation, and shall assist the elders in their duties, particularly in the administration and distribution to the poor, but shall not have authority to vote on doctrinal issues or to administer the sacraments.

B 7:2 Duties of Deacons

- A. Deacons serve at the discretion of the session⁷³ and therefore, with the permission of the session may: (1) Assist the Pastor or Elder in the administration of the sacraments; (2) assist in regular worship service by prayers, Scripture reading, song leading; (3) carry out administrative duties as directed by the elder(s) and (4) minister to the needs of the sick, to the friendless and to any who may be in distress. It is their duty also to develop generosity in the members of the Church, to devise effective methods of collecting the gifts of the people and to distribute these gifts for the purpose for which they are contributed. They shall have the care of

⁷⁰ From the Form of Presbyterian Church Government established by the Westminster Assembly, 1645.

⁷¹ Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8.

⁷² 1 Tim. 3:8-15; Acts 6:1-4.

⁷³ Teaching is not a regular part of the Deacon's office (1 Timothy 3.8-13). If a deacon desires to teach regularly, and the session recognizes his gifts, he may complete a course of study for a teaching certificate. See BCO B5:12 A.1.i. Or if he is enrolled in seminary training, having completed one year of seminary study (30 credit hours), he may, at the discretion of the Pastor and Session, having been duly licensed to Preach by the Presbytery, preach or teach before the congregation.

the property of the congregation, both real and personal, and shall keep in proper repair the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the congregation. In matters of special importance affecting the property of the church, they cannot take final action in the disposal of church property without the approval of the session and the consent of the congregation.⁷⁴

B7:3 General Qualifications of Deacons

- A. He must be known to his church and others:
 - 1. As a man of God, whose life is lived in obedience to the Scriptures; and
 - 2. Living a holy life with reference to his practices as a deacon (with his congregation) and as a husband/father (with his family) if applicable.
- B. If he is married:
 - 1. He must be living with his only valid wife; and
 - 2. His wife and minor children (if applicable) must be living in biblical submission to his authority. This should be verified with his wife through personal visits or letters.
- C. He must report to presbytery any history, after his conversion, of divorce, sexual misconduct, dishonesty, drunkenness, gossip, abuse of authority, financial bankruptcy, or any sins unbecoming a deacon. Any cases of the above should be thoroughly investigated by presbytery before a decision is made.⁷⁵
- D. He must be known as a man of his word, reliable and having integrity.
- E. He must have been baptized, using water, into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and have a credible testimony of God's saving grace in his life.
- F. He must bring to the attention of presbytery any past or pending disciplinary actions in which he has been involved from present or previous churches or denominations. Failure to do so could be cause for discipline by the presbytery. The presbytery must be satisfied with the results and conclusions of such disciplinary action.
- G. He must relinquish his membership in any and all other churches or denominations since he must have only one ecclesiastical affiliation. Copies of such letters of relinquishment or other acceptable forms of verification must be provided to presbytery.

⁷⁴ Acts 6.1-4

⁷⁵ Modified

- H. He must be capable of making the vows required of a deacon (see *Directory for Examination*).
- I. He must agree to maintain the *Westminster Standards* and the *BCO* of the RPCGA.
- J. He must agree that all questions or disputes with any standards are to be carried on only at presbytery and the higher courts (which are particularly suited for such discussions) and that he will not propagate any questionable or disputed doctrines (this does not include any issue determined by GA to be one of ecclesiastical liberty, section A5:2).
- K. He must be willing to submit to the government and discipline of the presbytery and any higher courts of the church according to its *Book of Church Order*.
- L. He must agree to seek to conform all church practices, particularly those of worship, sacraments, discipline, and appointment of officers to the *Westminster Standards* and *Book of Church Order*.
- M. He must agree not to turn to the world to resolve differences between the church and its members or other officers until he has exhausted all remedies in the church courts of the RPCGA. Issues concerning administration of the Word and doctrine, administration of the sacraments and church discipline may not be appealed to civil court.
- N. Prior to ordination, he shall be proven qualified for the office. He shall be required to complete a training program for deacons, which has been approved by the RPCGA, and pass the Deacon Examination as found in the *Directory for Examinations* or possess the equivalent knowledge thereof, which equivalent knowledge is to be adjudged by the Presbytery.

B 7:4 Touching the Doctrine of Ordination

- A. No man should take upon himself the office of a deacon without a lawful calling.⁷⁶ Ordination is always to be continued in the church.⁷⁷ Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some public church office.⁷⁸
- B. Every deacon is to be ordained by the imposition of hands, with prayer and fasting, by the presbytery to which he belong.⁷⁹
- C. It is agreeable to the Word of God, and very expedient, that those who are to be ordained as deacons, be assigned to some particular congregation or other ministerial charge.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ John 3:27; Rom. 10:14-15; Jer. 14:14; Heb. 5:4.

⁷⁷ Tit. 1:5; 1 Tim. 5:21-22.

⁷⁸ Num. 8:10, 11, 14, 19, 22; Acts 6:3, 5, 6.

⁷⁹ 1 Tim. 5:22; Acts 14:23; 13:3.

- D. He who is to be ordained a deacon must be duly qualified, both for life and ministerial abilities, according to the rules of the Apostles.⁸¹
- E. He is to be examined and approved by those who will ordain him.⁸²
- F. No man is to be ordained a deacon for a particular congregation, if they of that congregation can show just cause of exception against him.⁸³
- G. Under unusual circumstances, something extraordinary may be done in performing an ordination until a settled order is established. However, the rules of this section should be followed as nearly as possible.⁸⁴

B 7:5 Touching the Power of Ordination

- A. Ordination is the act of a presbytery.⁸⁵ The power of ordering the whole work of ordination is in the whole presbytery.⁸⁶

B 7:6 Directions for Ordination

- A. It is manifested by the Word of God, that no man ought to take upon himself the office of a deacon until he is lawfully called and ordained thereunto; and that the work of ordination is to be performed with all due care, wisdom, gravity and solemnity. We humbly tender these directions as requisite to be observed.
- B. He who is to be ordained must address himself to the presbytery and bring with him: proof of his call; a testimonial of his conversion; a testimonial of his diligence and proficiency in his studies; the degrees he has earned; an accounting of his time since conversion; his age, which is to be at least twenty-four years; and especially of his personal life and conduct.
- C. The presbytery shall then proceed to examine him concerning his conversion, his holiness of life as required of a deacon, his learning and sufficiency, his calling to the office of deacon, and any involvement in a non-ecclesiastical vocation.

B 7:7 Vows of Deacons

- A. The following vows shall be required of an individual prior to receiving ordination to the office of deacon.

⁸⁰ Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5; Acts 20:17, 28.

⁸¹ 1 Tim. 3:2-6; Tit. 1:5-9.

⁸² 1 Tim. 3:7; 10; 5:22.

⁸³ 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7.

⁸⁴ 2 Chr. 29:34-36; 30:2-5.

⁸⁵ 1 Tim. 4:14.

⁸⁶ 1 Tim. 4:14.

1. *Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of life, faith and practice?*
2. *Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?*
3. *Do you approve of the government, discipline and worship of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly?*
4. *Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?*
5. *Do you promise to immediately report to Presbytery any changes in your doctrine or practice?*
6. *Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of deacon from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son?*
7. *Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel and the purity, the peace and the unity of the church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?*
8. *Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all private and personal duties which becomes you as a Christian and a deacon, as well as in all the duties of your office, endeavoring to adorn the profession of the Gospel by your life, and walking with exemplary piety before the flock as a servant?*
9. *Are you willing to take charge of this office in agreement with your declaration as a servant of those who have chosen you to serve them? And do you promise to discharge the duties of a deacon to them, as God shall give you strength?*

B 7:8 Deacon Apprentice

- A. The Scriptures hold that a man should first be “proved” and then allowed to hold the office of deacon (1 Tim. 3:10).
 1. To be ‘proved,’ an individual should meet the following requirements:
 - (a) Meet the general qualifications of the office of deacon (B7:3);
 - (b) Demonstrate his gifts to fulfill the duties as outlined in B7:2;
 - (c) Demonstrate his gifts to serve;
 - (d) Meet the educational requirements as established by the RPCGA; and

- (e) Serve for a minimum of six months in the apprentice position (1 Tim. 5:22).

B7:9 Licensed Deacon

- A. The Scripture holds that a man should first be ‘proved’ and then allowed to hold the office of deacon (1 Timothy 3:10).

- 1. Applicant Status

- (a) The deacon applicant must be a member of a mission or particular congregation of this denomination.
- (b) The deacon applicant must submit biographical and five (5) character references (two from former elders or pastors [if applicable] and three from personal friends who have known the individual for the last five (5) years) to the Presbytery after holding membership in the denomination for minimum of one year.
- (c) The deacon applicant must also submit the following information to the Presbytery: (1) employment status; (2) marriage status; (3) current debt or any past or current pending bankruptcy actions; (4) a history of church membership for the past 10 years; (5) any past or current pending disciplinary actions.
- (d) The deacon applicant must agree to submit to the Westminster Standards as held by the RPCGA and its current Book of Church Order.
- (e) The deacon applicant must enroll in the Reformed Presbyterian Ministerial College: Deacon Training Program or have a written letter from the church session that he has begun the prescribed program of study as set forth by General Assembly.

- 2. Licensed Status

- (a) The applicant must complete the first four courses of study prior to applying for licensure status which will allow the deacon applicant to be examined as to his salvation, personal and family life, diaconate calling, and basic theological views.
- (b) Once the deacon applicant has met the preceding requirements, the Presbytery may license him for one (1) year, which will be renewable annually by the Presbytery (it will be the duty of the Licensed Deacon to seek reaffirmation of his License for it will

automatically terminate one year from the date that it was issued).

- (c) Licensed Deacons shall submit a written report quarterly (every three months) as to the progress of their studies and practicum to the Office of the Stated Clerk of their Presbytery.
- (d) The Session shall submit a written report every six (6) months to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery, which shall reaffirm their support and approval of the Licensed Deacon and the assessment of his progress.
- (e) A Licensed Deacon shall be under the direct supervision of the Session, the Pastor being the primary overseer of his education and practicum.
- (f) A Licensed Deacon shall be limited in his functions as he trains for ordination: He may not: (1) sit in on any adjudications with the session; (2) exhort from the pulpit at Sunday Worship services; (3) minister to the needs of the sick or elderly without direct supervision by an attending officer of the Session or Diaconate; (4) he may not teach a Sunday School class or hold a home Bible study (until approved by the session with oversight); (5) he may not assist in serving the Lord's Supper. All other duties listed in the Book of Church Order he may participate in with proper supervision.
- (g) The Session shall keep an accurate record of all practicum completed and the progress of his studies.
- (h) No Licensed Deacon can sit for ordination until one year has passed from the date of his licensure.
- (i) Ordination will not be considered until all the requirements have been met for the office as stated in the Book of Church Order.
- (j) At ordination, the Session shall present a written endorsement to the Presbytery that the applicant has been approved by the Session and the church for holding this office in their particular congregation.
- (k) At ordination the Licensed Deacon shall be given the Deacon examination, and his family shall be interviewed. The Session shall submit letters of reference from designated church members concerning the personal and family testimony witnessed by the congregation for review by the Presbytery.

SECTION 8: Church Governments

B 8:1 Church Government and the Several Sorts of Assemblies for the Same

- A. Christ has instituted a government, and it is the ecclesiastical governors who are to govern in the Church. To that purpose, the Apostles did immediately receive the keys from the hand of Jesus Christ, and they used and exercised them in all the churches of the world upon all occasions.
- B. And Christ has since continually furnished some in His Church with gifts of government, and with commission to execute that government when called upon.
- C. It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that the church be governed by several sorts of assemblies, which are the presbytery, the session of a particular congregation (sessions are lower courts of the presbytery), the synod and general assembly.

B 8:2 Of the Power in Common of All These Assemblies

- A. It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that these several assemblies have power to convene and call before them, any person within their several bounds whom the ecclesiastical business which is before them does concern.
- B. They have power to hear and determine such causes and differences in a lawful and orderly manner.
- C. It is lawful, and agreeable to the Word of God, that all these assemblies have power to dispense church censures.

SECTION 9: Presbyterian Assemblies

B 9:1 The Scriptures hold out a presbytery as a church.

B 9:2 The Word of God holds that a presbytery consist of elders and deacons, but only the elders vote as the ruling authorities of the church. The deacons are automatically extended floor privileges on all matters that come before this ruling body. In the RPCGA, a presbytery may ordinarily be constituted with a minimum of two particular congregations and four elders. A presbytery should ordinarily reorganize itself into two presbyteries when it has more than seven particular congregations. All such constituting of a presbytery, reorganization of a presbytery and exceptions to these ordinary requirements, require approval from the General Assembly.

B 9:3 The Scriptures also hold that more than one particular congregation may be under the jurisdiction of one presbyterial assembly.

B 9:4 This proposition is proved by instances:

A. Of the Church of Jerusalem, which consisted of more congregations than one, and all these congregations were under one presbyterial government. It appears thus:

1. The Church of Jerusalem consisted of more congregations than one, as is manifest: (a) by the multitude of believers mentioned, in different places, both before the dispersion of the believers there, by means of the persecution, and also after the dispersion; (b) by the many apostles and other preachers in the Church of Jerusalem. And if there were but one congregation there, then each apostle preached but seldom; (c) by the diversity of languages among the believers, mentioned both in the second and sixth chapters of the Acts, does argue more congregations than one in that Church.
2. All those congregations were under one presbyterial government because: (a) they were one church; (b) the elders of the church are mentioned; (c) the apostles did the ordinary acts of presbyters, as presbyters in that church (which proves a presbyterial church before the dispersion, Acts 6); and (d) the several congregations in Jerusalem being one church, the elders of that church are mentioned as meeting together for acts of government (which proves that those several congregations were under one presbyterial government).
3. And whether these congregations were fixed or not fixed, in regard to officers or members, it is all the same as to the truth of the proposition.
4. Nor does there appear to be any material difference between the several congregations in Jerusalem and the many congregations now in the ordinary condition of the Church, as to the point of fixedness required of officers or members.
5. Therefore, the Scriptures hold that many congregations may be under one presbyterial government.

B. In the instance of the Church of Ephesus:

1. There were more congregations than one in the Church of Ephesus because: (a) of Paul's continuance in preaching for the space of three years during which the special effect of the Word is mentioned; (b) a distinction between Jews and Greeks and thus a reason for Paul's stay at Ephesus until Pentecost; and. (c) the mention of a particular church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, then located at Ephesus. Considering all of these points together proves that the multitude of believers did make more congregations than one in the Church of Ephesus.

2. There were many elders over these many congregations as one flock.
3. These many congregations were one church and they were under one presbyterial government.

B 9:5 Definitions

- A. A mother presbytery is a presbytery which is involved in mission work, that (and) has mission presbyteries under its oversight. All elders of the mission presbytery are members of the mother presbytery, but do not count toward the quorum of the mother presbytery if distance makes attendance a great burden, and thus unlikely.
- B. A mission presbytery must be defined by the mother presbytery. Mission Presbyteries shall not have the right to vote at synods or general assemblies.
- C. A mission presbytery may become a full presbytery, if after two years from the date of approval to become a mission presbytery it has shown: stability; overall growth in the number of elders and churches; ability to govern itself biblically; continuous adequate communication and records of its proceedings; a desire to become a full presbytery; and a willingness and capability of sending delegates to the general assembly. It must otherwise qualify for presbytery status, as any presbytery must.
- D. When it qualifies, the mission presbytery may then petition its mother presbytery to become a full presbytery. Upon granting their approval, the mother presbytery must then petition the general assembly for its approval.
- E. General assembly must test the mission presbytery seeking full-status, by questioning them as to their: knowledge of the *Book of Church Order*, knowledge of *Robert's Rules of Order*, and ability to properly apply the Bible and the *BCO* to various case scenarios.
- F. All ordinations must be approved by the mother presbytery. Documentation should be by tape-recording for review by the mother presbytery's Credentials Committee. No ordination is valid until approved by the mother presbytery.

B9:6 Joining and Receiving of a Presbytery

- A. The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly and the (Name of Presbytery) agree to this two year Covenant of Union (Provisional).
- B. The (Name of Presbytery) agrees to enter into provisional membership for two years and abide by the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, except to the stipulations as noted in this document.

- C. At the end of the two year provisional covenant, the (Name of Presbytery) will then give a 30 day written notice (without cause) prior to (Date), that they are staying or leaving the relationship with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, and will be permitted to withdraw without censure from the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly.
- D. Any Pastor or Doctor (Teaching Elder), Church Governor (Ruling Elder), or Deacon who desires to stay with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly will be permitted to retain their status with the denomination in a designated presbytery, and will be permitted to withdraw without censure or interference from the (Name of Presbytery).
- E. Any congregation of the (Name of Presbytery) that desires to stay with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly will be permitted to retain their status with the denomination in a designated presbytery, and permitted to withdraw without censure or interference from the (Name of Presbytery).
- F. At the end of the two year provisional covenant, the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly will then give a 30 day written notice prior to (Date), that they will accept or reject as permanent the relationship with the (Name of Presbytery) (without cause).
- G. (Name of Presbytery) will supply to the General Assembly Moderator and Stated Clerk a copy of the minutes any presbytery meetings held during this provisional status for review. The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly will supply the (Name of Presbytery) with a copy of the General Assembly minutes for their review.

B9:7: Transfer of Officers

- A. The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly agrees to transfer without examination all the officers of the (Name of Presbytery) into the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly under the stipulations of this document.
- B. The Officers of the (Name of Presbytery) agree to take the vows of ordination required of their respective offices as required in Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly.
- C. All officers will put into writing any scruples concerning the Westminster Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly.
- D. No officers of the (Name of Presbytery) shall hold office, sit on a commission or committee at the General Assembly level during the two years of this provisional union. However, all officers of the (Name of

Presbytery) may set on a committee as an ex-officio member (can address issues, but no vote) if appointed by the Moderator of the GA and their willingness to serve.

- E. After the two year provisional union, if the (Name of Presbytery) determines to permanently associate with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, those officers who have met the educational requirements will be granted full status with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly.
- F. After the two year provisional union, if the (Name of Presbytery) determines to permanently associate with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, those officers who have not met the educational requirements will be listed as 'provisional' until those requirements have been met according to the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly.
- G. All Deacons of the (Name of Presbytery) shall be examined as to their office by their presbytery (according to the requirements of the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly) during this provisional union and such accepted exams will be given full status with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly if the (Name of Presbytery) determines to permanently associate with this denomination.

B9:8: Voting, Motions, and Privileges: Sessions, Presbytery & General Assembly

- A. All Pastors, Doctors, and Church Governors of the (Name of Presbytery) shall maintain their offices and the right of voting in their Sessions and Presbytery during this two year provisional union.
- B. During this provisional union the Pastors, Doctors, and Church Governors will not be permitted to vote at the General Assembly individually or as a presbytery.
- C. There shall be no motions sent forth by the (Name of Presbytery) nor received by the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly from the (Name of Presbytery) during this provisional covenant.
- D. At the General Assembly the Pastors, Doctors, and Church Governors of the (Name of Presbytery) shall be given floor privileges to address any issue once or to ask for clarification on an issue while being considered during the business of the denomination, unless they are given questions that need to be responded to before the Assembly.
- E. All recommendations for the better preserving of this denomination may be made by (Name of Presbytery) and shall be sent to the Moderator and Stated

Clerk of the General Assembly, and a copy to the Chairman of the Office of Civil and Ecclesiastical Council.

- F. After the two year provisional union, if the (Name of Presbytery) determines to permanently associate with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, those officers who have met the educational requirements (BCO Requirements for officers) will be granted full privileges at the General Assembly of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly.
- G. After the two year provisional union, if the (Name of Presbytery) determines to permanently associate with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, those officers who have not met the educational requirements (BCO requirements for officers) will still not be permitted to vote at the General Assembly but may address issues under privileges of the floor as noted under the 'provisional' status of their office as stated in the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly.
- H. After the two year provisional union, if the (Name of Presbytery) determines to permanently associate with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, all officers of the (Name of Presbytery) who have not met the educational requirements of the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly shall continue the right to vote in Session and Presbytery, but not on matters sent to them from General Assembly.
- I. After the two year provisional union, if the (Name of Presbytery) determines to permanently associate with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, the (Name of Presbytery) shall be permitted to vote as a Presbytery on matters sent to said governing bodies by the General Assembly for a vote.

SECTION 10: Particular Congregations

B 10:1 Definition

It is lawful and expedient that there be fixed congregations, that is, a certain company of Christians to meet in one assembly (presbytery) ordinarily for public worship. When believers multiply to such a number that they cannot conveniently meet in one place, it is lawful and expedient that they should be divided into distinct particular congregations, for the better administration of such ordinances as belong unto them and the discharge of mutual duties.

B 10:2 Voting Privileges

Voting is by male heads of households. If no believing male head of household exists, the wife shall consult with the session of the particular congregation, and the session shall determine what method shall be used

in receiving the household vote. Binding congregational voting in the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly is only used in the admission and removal of church officers to serve in their particular congregation's session or for service as a deacon. Church officers must be approved by the presbytery.⁸⁷

B 10:3 Vows for Members

A. The following vow is required of a prospective new church seeking to be organized as a particular congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly:

1. *Do you believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, in their original autographs, to be the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of God, and its doctrine of salvation to be the perfect and only true doctrine of salvation?*
2. *Do you confess that because of your sinfulness, you abhor and humble yourself before God, and that you trust for salvation, not in yourself, but in the Lord Jesus Christ alone?*
3. *Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your sovereign Lord, and do you promise in reliance on the Grace of God, to serve Him with all that is in you, to forsake the world, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, and lead a godly life?*
4. *Do you agree to submit, in the Lord, and to adhere to the government of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly and, in case you should be found delinquent in doctrine or practice, to submit, heed, and abide by its discipline?"*

B 10:4 Partition of Congregations

- A. The ordinary, most expedient and edifying way of dividing Christians into particular congregations is by the respective bounds of their dwellings.
- B. They who dwell together are bound to all kind of moral duties one to another, and thereby have a better opportunity to discharge these duties, of which moral ties (are)is perpetual.
- C. In this company some must be set apart to bear office by authority of the presbyterial assembly.

B 10:5 Officers of Particular Congregations

⁸⁷ 1 Cor. 14:34,35; 1 Tim. 2:2

- A. For officers in a particular congregation, there should be at least one elder who labors in Word and doctrine. This minimum is required for a group of people to be considered a particular congregation.
- B. It is also desirable that there should be others to join in the government of a particular congregation.
- C. Likewise, it is desirable that there should be others to take special care for the relief of the poor.
- D. The number of each of the officers is to be proportioned according to the condition of the congregation, as approved by the presbytery.
- E. These officers are to meet together at convenient and set times, for the well ordering of the affairs of that congregation, each according to his office.
- F. It is most expedient in these meetings, that the presiding pastor should moderate in their proceedings.
- G. In the event a particular congregation finds itself without an elder, the presbytery will appoint an elder(s) (pastor, teacher or governor) to serve until this situation can be remedied.

B 10:6 Ordinances in Particular Congregations

The ordinances in a particular congregation are: prayer; thanksgiving; singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs; the Word read (although there follow no immediate explication of what is read); the Word expounded and applied; catechizing; the sacraments administered; collection made for the poor and the needs of the congregation; and dismissing the people with a blessing.

B 10: 7 Sessional Assemblies

- A. The ruling officers of a particular congregation have power and authority to call before them any member of the congregation, as they shall see just occasion:
 - 1. To inquire into the knowledge and spiritual estate of the several members of the congregation; and
 - 2. To admonish and rebuke.
- B. Authoritative suspension from the Lord's Table, of a person not yet cast out of the church, is agreeable to the Scripture:
 - 1. Because the ordinance itself must not be profaned;

2. Because we are charged to withdraw from those that walk disorderly;
 3. Because of the great sin and danger, both to him that comes unworthily, and also to the whole church; and
 4. Because there was power and authority, under the Old Testament, to keep unclean persons from holy things. The same power and authority, by way of analogy, continues under the New Testament.
- C. The ruling officers of a particular congregation have power and authority to suspend from the Lord's Table a person not yet cast out of the church:
1. Because those who have authority to judge and admit such as are fit to receive the sacrament, have authority to keep back such as shall be found unworthy; and
 2. Because it is an ecclesiastical business of ordinary practice belonging to that session.
- D. The authority to excommunicate resides with presbytery.
- E. When congregations are divided and fixed, they need all mutual help one from another, both in regard to their intrinsic weaknesses and mutual dependence, but also in regard of enemies from without.
- F. Governors, having been selected and approved by the congregation, examined and ordained by the presbytery, shall serve on the session along with the approved pastor. A session may request any elder who is presently worshipping with that congregation, though not functioning in a pastoral, teaching or governing capacity therein, to act as a participating member of that session, having been consented to by the congregation and approved by presbytery.

B 10:8 Requirements for Receiving Particular Congregations and Elders into Presbytery

- A. The following procedures are intended to cover all typical circumstances regarding the establishment and/or expansion of a presbytery, including the establishment and/or reception of particular congregations (full or mission) and elders (preaching, teaching, governing and provisional), deacons and licentiates.
- B. They must meet at least weekly on the Lord's Day for worship and be organized with elder(s) and members. Sacraments must be served regularly and at least monthly.

- C. They must have had the *Westminster Standards* read to them and be willing to submit to them.
- D. Their officers must be in agreement with the *Westminster Standards* and be willing to submit themselves to the *Book of Church Order* and the oversight of the presbytery.
- E. The particular congregation must relinquish all membership with any other ecclesiastical group or denomination. Its membership in any broad-based councils of churches or pastoral associations must be agreeable to presbytery.
- F. The particular congregation must agree not to tolerate any teaching from an elder which is contrary to the teachings of the Bible as understood by the *Westminster Standards* and the *BCO*.
- G. The particular congregation must be instructed in the sacraments and agree to abide by such instruction in accordance with the *Westminster Standards* and the *BCO*.
- H. The congregation must agree to have the *Westminster Standards* taught in their congregation on a frequent and regular basis.
- I. The particular congregation must bring to the attention of presbytery any past or pending disciplinary actions involving their congregation by any other denomination or group of churches. Failure to do so could be cause for discipline by the presbytery. The presbytery must be satisfied with the results and conclusions of such disciplinary action.
- J. The particular congregation must be willing to submit to the government and discipline of the presbytery according to the *Book of Church Order*.
- K. All particular congregations agree that they do not recognize women as officers of the church, teachers of adult men or ministers of the Gospel; but do acknowledge that they may serve the church in numerous other ways and be outstanding witnesses for Jesus Christ.
- L. The particular congregation must agree to conform its present and future practices to the *Westminster Standards* and the *Book of Church Order* to the best of its ability.
- M. Any particular congregation can expect from the presbytery:
 - 1. Counseling with regard to church practices;
 - 2. Assistance with regard to approved educational materials and courses for their officers and potential leaders of the church;

3. Assistance in the selection of ministers, and counsel to their present officers; and
 4. Full access to the judicial courts of the denomination.
- N. The particular congregation, its officers and members, agree not to turn to the world to resolve differences between particular congregations of the denomination, their members and any of the courts.
- O. All congregational properties remain the property of the particular congregation. Any properties involving loans from other congregations, presbyteries or denominational sources must be made by contract and include articles covering eventualities of disbandment and separation from the denomination.

10:9 Procedures for Receiving New Congregations

- A. Each new particular congregation must: (1) have a Declaration of Association and By-Laws, as approved by the applying particular congregation; (2) identify the presbytery to which they have applied; and (3) identify the consultants appointed by the Moderator of the General Assembly to review all such documents. Any changes after becoming a member congregation must be approved by this same committee.
- B. After the above preliminaries have been completed and the particular congregation is ready to be received, the following steps should be observed:
1. A congregation which desires to be received into the RPCGA, shall apply to the presbytery, through its clerk of the Session. In its application, the congregation shall state the reasons which have moved it to apply for membership in the RPCGA;
 2. The presbytery, or a committee appointed by the presbytery, shall examine the applicants as to their Christian faith and life and their knowledge of and willingness to submit to the standards of the RPCGA;
 3. The governors who serve a particular congregation, if there be such, shall be examined by presbytery as to their qualifications and as to their subscription to *Westminster Standards* and to the *Book of Church Order*.
 4. The pastor(s) serving a particular congregation, if there be such, shall be examined by presbytery according to the *Westminster Standards* and the *Book of Church Order*.

5. When the above actions have been approved by presbytery, a service of recognition and installation shall be conducted by presbytery or an appointed committee. At the appointed time, the congregation shall be informed of the action of the presbytery, and the moderator shall address to the congregation the following question:

1. *Do you believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, in their original autographs, to be the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of God, and its doctrine of salvation to be the perfect and only true doctrine of salvation?*
2. *Do you confess that because of your sinfulness, you abhor and humble yourself before God, and that you trust for salvation, not in yourself, but in the Lord Jesus Christ alone?*
3. *Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your sovereign Lord, and do you promise in reliance on the Grace of God, to serve Him with all that is in you, to forsake the world, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, and lead a godly life?*
4. *Do you agree to submit, in the Lord, and to adhere to the government of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly and, in case you should be found delinquent in doctrine or practice, to submit, heed, and abide by its discipline?"*

The congregation shall answer in the affirmative by raised hands. After this, the congregation shall be recognized as a particular congregation of the presbytery. Then the officers shall be ordained and installed according to the BCO.

B 10:10 Particular Mission Congregations

- A. Definition: The term mission congregation is to be used to describe a particular congregation, which has not been given full congregational status and is under the care of a presbytery. A mission congregation may be found in the same culture of the predominate culture of a presbytery, or in a cross-cultural setting, whether distant or close.
- B. Requirements: Mission congregations may be received into the presbytery when they meet the same requirements of full-status congregations (mentioned above) with the following exceptions or additions:
 1. If the mission congregation is unfamiliar with the Reformed and Presbyterian Church practices, they agree to do their best to conform their existing congregational policies and practices (especially that of worship) to the teachings of the standards as quickly and as prudently as possible;

2. The session of a mission congregation will be made up at least one elder to administer Word and sacrament, and be called by the congregation or temporarily appointed by presbytery;
3. A mission congregation without a regular elder will be assigned a temporary elder (pastor, teacher or governor) to train the members and potential governors. The temporary elder will serve on the session of the church, when possible and practical, and assist them in their growth; and
4. The mission congregation has access to the courts of the church starting at the mission presbytery level (if it exists) and may appeal any decisions of their mentor, session, mission presbytery or other courts.

C. Procedures for Accepting Mission Congregations

1. A particular mission congregation may be received into the denomination by a presbytery or its approved temporary elder with the power of evangelist.

B 10:11 Particular Mission Congregations Becoming Full-Status Particular Congregations

- A. A mission congregation may become a full-status congregation when it has met the requirements of B10:8.
- B. Once a mission congregation has been received as a full-status congregation, it shall not lose its voting privileges except as provided in the *BCO*.

B 10:12 Churches Entangled with the Civil Magistrate

- A. Incorporated congregations may not be full-status members of the RPCGA due to entanglements between church and state caused by their incorporated status (i.e. being a corporation of the civil magistrate). These congregations may have an associate status.
- B. Pastor(s) of an incorporated congregation may be members of presbytery and delegates to general assembly, as long as they can conscientiously agree with the anti-Erastian principles stated in the RPCGA. Church governors from that particular congregation may be sent and have the privilege of the floor, but have no vote.
- C. If an incorporated congregation wishes to utilize the courts of the RPCGA as an appeal to the session and members of its particular congregation, it may do so by agreement with the local presbytery in whose jurisdiction it would fall, provided that it not have any denominational relationship.

B 10:13 Declaration of Association and By-Laws of Particular Congregations

- A. All particular congregations joining the RPCGA must have a Declaration of Association and By-Laws agreeable to their own particular congregation and to the presbytery they will be joining and consistent with the minimum guidelines for such documents as established by the general assembly. For the protection of the entire church, and all of its particular congregations, within the United States, the following procedures must be followed in reviewing applications for particular congregation membership.
 - 1. The general assembly must maintain a list of two or more consultants, competent in church/state legalities and willing to serve in this capacity for a period of at least one year, fulfilling their requested responsibilities during this period of time. At each General Assembly, this list must be reviewed by the assembly to reaffirm those to remain on the list or for addition of new members to the list.
 - 2. The moderator of the assembly may appoint any two or more of the consultants from the approved list of the current assembly and convene them as a committee by the current moderator for the sole purpose of making a recommendation as to the acceptability of the Declaration of Association and By-Laws of any particular congregation which is applying. After this recommendation is made, the committee is dissolved. Should further counsel be needed, the moderator may reconvene it for a further recommendation.
 - 3. This committee should return a recommendation to the moderator, who in turn should review the recommendation, and then forward it to the submitting presbytery's moderator. The maximum normal turnaround for such requests should be 60 days. If abnormal circumstances exist, the committee must notify the presbytery.
- B. This policy is established to protect the entire body from any legal inconsistencies in membership which may impact the entire denomination in the current church/state crisis developing in the United States, particularly in light of the tendency on the part of many other churches and denominations to compromise on this issue.
- C. Presbyteries agree to make the final recommendations from this committee a requirement for all applying congregations. The presbytery must abide by the recommended wording of this committee before receiving the congregation into full-status membership. In the event of any disagreement, the matter may be laid before the next regularly scheduled general assembly for solution.

B 10:14 Withdrawal of a Particular Congregation from a Presbytery

A particular congregation (full-status or mission) may withdraw from a presbytery of the RPCGA upon biblical and constitutional grounds (cites and biblical notations must be stated). The congregation must demonstrate how, that by staying with the denomination, they would be sinning, i.e. violating the Word of God. The presbytery, having reviewed the petition of the congregation, and agreeing to the congregation's right to separate, the congregation may proceed to withdrawal by two-thirds affirmative vote of the congregation at two successive meetings, duly called by the session, in accordance with the *BCO* and *RRO*, with notice of the proposed action included in the calls for the meetings. These meetings shall be held not less than three months, nor more than six months, apart. If the vote of the first meeting is in favor of withdrawal, the session shall inform the presbytery promptly, and the presbytery shall have the opportunity at the second meeting to dissuade the congregation from withdrawing. If the congregation, at the second meeting, reaffirms its previous action, it shall be the duty of the presbytery to prepare a roll of members who desire to continue as members of the RPCGA and to provide for the oversight of these continuing members. Congregations which fail to get proper release from presbytery, may be charged for violation of membership vows and causing schism in the church. However, if a congregation agrees to dissolve its body, its officers resign from their positions, and the members transfer to a congregation approved by presbytery, the presbytery will grant all transfers without censure. Failure of members to join another congregation within one year will be subject to erasure.

B 10:15 Affiliate Status

- A. Any particular church that is considering membership, or desires to fellowship (because of doctrine or practice membership may not be possible) with the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, may apply for Affiliate status, which is a non-binding relationship with this denomination. It is required that the elders of that church have been approved for the Associate status, or have joined one of the Presbyteries of this denomination. Affiliate status is granted by a particular presbytery. To qualify for Affiliate status the church must petition the Presbytery through its elders.
 - 1. The Affiliate status does not convey voting privileges to said churches.
 - 2. The Affiliate status does not recognize the Affiliate church as being under the authority of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly or its courts.
 - 3. The Affiliate church may withdraw at any time.

4. For properly stated reasons, an Affiliate church may be dismissed by vote of the Presbytery. There are no appeals for Affiliate churches beyond the Presbytery.

SECTION 11: General Assemblies and Synods

B11:1 Basis for Synods and General Assemblies

The Scriptures hold out other assemblies for the government of the church beside presbyterial and session, which we call synods and general assemblies. Such assemblies find their authority and mandate solely from the presbyteries of which they are composed and by which they are constituted.

B11:2 Members of Synods and General Assemblies

Pastors, teachers and church governors are members of those assemblies, which we call synod and general assembly, where they have a lawful calling thereunto.

B 11:3 Types of Assemblies

General assemblies may lawfully be of several sorts, national and ecumenical.

B 11:4 Authority of Assemblies

It is lawful and agreeable to the Word of God that there be a subordination of session, presbyterial, synodical and national assemblies for the government of the church.

B 11:5 Regional Synods

Various levels of synods may be established, from the national level down to that of a regional synod composed of a minimum of three presbyteries.

B11:6 Moderator and Assistant Moderator

- A. In the judicatories of the church (general assembly, synod and presbytery) there shall be a moderator as presiding officer in order that business may be conducted with order and dispatch.
- B. The moderator is to be considered as possessing, by delegation from the whole body, all authority necessary for the preservation of order, for convening and adjourning the judicatory, and directing and supervising the operations of the judicatory and its members, according to the *Book of Church Order*. The moderator of each judicatory shall be bound by the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* and the constitution and by-laws of each respective judicatory. Only a Pastor or Associate Pastor may serve in the office of Moderator or Assistant Moderator at Presbytery or General Assembly.

- C. The moderator may vote only in the case of a tie.
- D. The assistant moderator of the general assembly will assist the moderator in his duties as directed by the moderator.
- E. The moderator, during adjournment, shall function as an advisor to elders and shall be given the responsibility of administrative superintendent in fulfilling the duties listed above. The moderator shall act as superintendent over his judicatory to ensure proper administration of the *BCO*. All officers and members should give due consideration to his counsel in respect to his responsibilities and function. The moderator in his function as superintendent shall always be received and dealt with in a Christian manner.
- F. In matters relating to a particular judicial action in order to protect and preserve the Church of Jesus Christ, the moderator shall seek a majority vote from the Presbytery^{88*} or Assembly prior to exercising his authority as granted under B11:6 B & E.
- G. If the Moderator is unable to perform his duties, the Assistant Moderator shall assume the duties of the Moderator by consent of the current Moderator.
- H. The Moderator may delegate duties to the Assistant Moderator for the better ordering and preserving of the Presbytery or Assembly.

B 11:7 Clerk

Every judicatory shall choose a clerk to record its transactions and to serve for such a term as the judicatory may determine. It shall be the duty of the clerk, besides recording the transactions, to preserve the records carefully, and to grant extracts from them whenever properly required. Such extracts, under the hand of the clerk, shall be considered as authentic vouchers of the facts, which they declare in any ecclesiastical judicatory and to every part of the church.

⁸⁸ This vote does not require a physically called Presbytery meeting.

DIRECTORY
OF
CHURCH WORSHIP

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

C. Directory of Church Worship

SECTION 1: The Preface

- C 1:1** In the beginning of the blessed Reformation, our wise and pious ancestors took care to set forth an order for the redress of many things, which, by the Word, they discovered to be vain, erroneous, superstitious and idolatrous in the public worship of God. Therefore, in order to: further the Reformation; satisfy our own consciences; answer the expectation of other Reformed churches and the desires of many of the godly among ourselves; and give some public testimony of our endeavors for uniformity in divine worship, we in general assembly agree upon the following *Directory of Church Worship*, as to the proper elements thereof, and leave the actual ordering of them unto the presiding pastor.
- C 1:2** Wherein, our care has been to hold forth such things, we have endeavored to set forth our meaning, according to the rules of Christian prudence and the Word of God, so that the general principles, the sense and scope of the prayers, and other parts of public worship, being known to all, there may be a consent among all the churches, in those things that contain the substance of the service and worship of God.

SECTION 2: The Public Worship of God

- C 2:1** Assembling of the Congregation and Their Behavior in the Public Worship of God
- A. When the congregation is to meet for public worship, the people, having before prepared their hearts thereunto, should all come and join therein, not absenting themselves from the public ordinances through negligence or upon pretense of private meetings.
 - B. The congregation being assembled, the pastor, having called them to the worship in the great name of God, is to begin with prayer.
- C 2:2** Public Reading of the Holy Scriptures
- A. Reading of the Word in the congregation is part of the public worship of God (wherein we acknowledge our dependence upon Him, and subjection to Him) and is one means sanctified by Him for the edifying of His people, and is to be performed by the pastors, teachers and church governors.
 - B. Those preparing for the ministry may occasionally read the Word in the congregation, if allowed by the presbytery.
 - C. It is left to the wisdom of the presiding pastor to determine how large a portion of the Word shall be read at one time. Ordinarily, it is convenient to read one chapter each Lord's Day.

- D. It is important that all the canonical books be read in order, so that the people may be better acquainted with the whole body of the Scriptures.
- E. When an elder judges it necessary to expound any part of what is read, let it not be done until the whole chapter is ended, always regarding the time, so that neither preaching nor other ordinances be rendered tedious. This rule is also to be observed in all other public performances.
- F. Besides the public reading of the Holy Scriptures, every person who can read, is to be exhorted to have a Bible and read along either privately or publicly, as the elders decide.

C 2:3 Public Prayer Before the Sermon

After the reading of the Word, and the singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, the pastor who is to preach, is to endeavor to get his own and his hearers' hearts rightly affected with their sins, so that they may all: mourn the gravity of their sins before the Lord, hunger and thirst after the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and proceed to a more full confession of sin, with the pastor making supplication on behalf of all those who worship Him.

C 2:4 Preaching of the Word

The preaching of the Word, being the power of God unto salvation, and one of the greatest and most excellent works belonging to the ministry of the Gospel, should be so performed that the workman need not be ashamed, but may save himself and those who hear him. Those preparing for the ministry may occasionally preach in the congregation if so licensed by the presbytery.

C2:5 Prayer after the Sermon

- A. The sermon having ended, the pastor is to give thanks: for the great love of God in sending His Son Jesus Christ; for the communication of His Holy Spirit; for the light and liberty of the glorious Gospel, and the rich and heavenly blessings revealed therein; for God to free the land from the anti-Christian darkness and tyranny; for all other national deliverances; for the reformation of religion; for the covenant; and for many temporal blessings.
- B. Because the prayer which Christ taught His disciples is not only a pattern of prayer, but itself a most comprehensive prayer, we recommend it also be used in the prayers of the church.

C 2:6 Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism

A. General Administration

- 1. Just as baptism is not to be delayed unnecessarily, so it is not to be administered, in any case, by any private person, but is only to be

administered by an elder of Christ, called to be the steward of the mysteries of God.

2. Baptism is not to be administered privately, or in private places, but is to be administered in the place of public worship, and before the congregation, where the people may most conveniently see and hear.

B. Administration of Adult Baptism

1. No adult may be baptized until he has made a profession of faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ.
2. Vows are to be taken in accordance with B2:1D.
3. Before baptism, the elder is to use some words of instruction, admonishing all that are present, and exhorting the person seeking baptism, touching the institution, nature, use and ends of this sacrament.
4. This being done, prayer is also to be joined with the Scripture, which establishes this institution (Matthew 28:18-19) for sanctifying the water to this spiritual use.
5. Then the elder calls the name of the person, saying, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."
6. As he pronounces these words, he is to baptize with water, which is both lawful and sufficient, and is most expedient if done by pouring or sprinkling of the water on the head, without adding any other ceremony.
7. Then the elder is to give thanks and pray for the person in his covenant relationship with God.

C. Administration of Child Baptism

1. All children of members of the visible church are to be baptized.
2. After prior notice is given to the presiding pastor, the child is to be presented by the father and/or mother, professing his and/or her earnest desire that the child be baptized.
3. Vows are to be taken in accordance with B2:1E.
4. Before baptism, the elder is to use some words of instruction, admonishing all that are present, and exhorting the parent(s), touching the institution, nature, use and ends of this sacrament.

5. This being done, prayer is also to be joined with the Scripture, which establishes this institution (Matthew 28:19-20) for the sanctifying of the water to this spiritual use.
6. Then the elder demands the name of the child, which being told him, he is to call the child by name, saying, *“I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”*
7. As he pronounces these words, he is to baptize with water, which is both lawful and sufficient, and is most expedient if done by pouring or sprinkling of the water on the head, without adding any other ceremony.
8. Then the elder is to give thanks and pray for the parent(s) and the child in their covenant relationship with God.

C 2:7 Administration of Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

- A. The Lord’s Supper is to be celebrated frequently; but how often, may be considered and determined by the pastors of each congregation, as they shall find it most convenient for the comfort and edification of the people committed to their charge, in accordance with B 10:8B. Where this sacrament cannot with convenience be frequently administered, it is requisite that a public warning be given on the Sabbath prior to the receiving of the sacrament, together with an exhortation consisting of the teaching of the ordinance, and the preparation for and participation in the sacrament.
- B. When it is administered, it is to be done after the sermon.
- C. The ignorant and the scandalous are not fit to receive the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.
- D. This being done, prayer is also to be joined with Scripture, which establishes this institution (1 Corinthians 11:23-27) for sanctifying the bread and wine to this spiritual use.
- E. After all have received the sacrament, the elder may, in a few words, remind the communicants of the grace of God in Jesus Christ and exhort them to walk worthy of it.
- F. Then the elder shall give solemn thanks to God.
- G. If a collection for the poor is taken, let it be so ordered that no part of the public worship be thereby hindered.

SECTION 3: Sanctification of the Lord's Day

- C3:1** The Lord's Day should be so remembered before-hand, that all worldly business of our ordinary callings be ordered, and timely and seasonably laid aside, so that they may not be impediments to the due sanctifying of that day when it comes.
- C 3:2** Further, there should be private preparations by every person and family, including prayer: for themselves, for God's assistance of the pastor and for a blessing upon his ministry; and such other holy exercises which may further dispose them to a more comfortable communion with God in His public ordinances.
- C 3:3** All the people should meet timely for public worship, so that the whole congregation may be present at the beginning, and, with one heart, solemnly join together in all parts of the public worship, and not depart until after the blessing.
- C 3:4** Note: The *Directory of Church Worship*, as adopted by the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, allows for flexibility in the ordering of the worship services, so long as these general guidelines are set forth in practice.

DIRECTORY
OF
CHURCH DISCIPLINE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

D. Directory of Church Discipline

SECTION 1: The Nature and Purpose of Church Discipline

D 1:1 General Definitions and Principles

- A. *Ecclesiastical discipline* is the exercise of authority given the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ, to instruct and guide its members and to promote its purity and welfare. The term has two senses:
1. *Administrative discipline* refers to the ordering of governing records and procedures, which includes: inspection, training, guardianship and control which the church maintains procedurally over its members, its officers and its courts; the purpose of its exercise is that all rights may be preserved and all obligations discharged in its administrative functions.
 2. *Judicial discipline*, in a restricted and technical sense, signifies judicial process. The purpose of judicial discipline is to vindicate the honor of Christ, promote the purity of His Church and reclaim the offender.
- B. When the general assembly of the RPCGA has been called to order, the following distinctions between administrative actions and judicial discipline or legislative actions are hereby established as to the binding nature of their decrees.
1. An administrative action is when the general assembly delivers a mandate, which is non judicial (i.e., a decision which is not the finding of the assembly at the end of an ecclesiastical trial), or legislative (i.e., an adopted change to the Constitution in accordance with the proper procedures listed in the Directory of Administrative Rules, Section 3). All such actions are considered to be administrative acts of the general assembly, and as such, shall be viewed as “pious advice.”⁶⁶ This understanding is to be maintained, because the very essence of presbyterianism is that the liberties of the member(s), elder(s), deacon(s), particular congregation(s), presbytery(ies) or synod(s) are protected. Those rights can only be abrogated by judicial or legislative process, which begins ordinarily in a session or presbytery, and proceeds through the synods (if established) to the general assembly.
 2. The general assembly is just as bound to the constitution of the RPCGA as is any individual member, elder, deacon, particular congregation, presbytery or synod. Therefore, all these constitutional rights are retained by the individual member(s), elder(s), deacon(s), particular congregation(s), presbytery(ies) or synod(s) of the

RPCGA, leaving them free to accept or reject any general assembly's "pious advice"¹ in all administrative matters, whether they are inside or outside the constitution of the church.

3. This understanding is based on the fact that the general assembly, when it is sitting in a non-judicial capacity as the supreme court of the RPCGA, sits only in an administrative capacity. This same principle of understanding applies to all lower judicatories (synods, presbyteries and sessions) as well.
- C. All baptized persons, including children, are members of the church, are under its care, and subject to its government and discipline.
- D. The purpose of church discipline is to restore an individual to rightful fellowship. It is expected that a pastoral approach to discipline be practiced. The principle of Matthew 18:15-17 should be applied in all cases before judicial discipline begins.

D 1:2 Jurisdiction

All members of the church, both communicants and non-communicants, are under the care of the church, and subject to ecclesiastical discipline.

D 1:3 Elders

- A. As the honor and success of the Gospel depends in a great measure on the character of its elders, each presbytery, with the greatest care and impartiality, should watch over the personal and professional conduct of all its members. On the one hand, no elder, on account of his office, should be screened from the hand of justice, nor his offenses be slightly censured; neither should scandalous charges be received against him, by any judicatory, on slight grounds.
- B. Process against an elder shall always be entered before the presbytery of which he is a member.

SECTION 2: Jurisdiction Within the Church

D 2:1 Original Jurisdiction

Original jurisdiction over an individual belongs to the judicatory of the body of which the individual is a member. Original jurisdiction over judicatories belongs to the next higher judicatory.

¹ "Pious advice" is the terminology used by Rev. Francis L. Patton, a moderator of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America during the early 1900's. This ruling is found in *The Presbyterian Conflict* (pp. 13 1-2) by Edwin H. Rian, in favor of J. Gresham Machen's position.

D 2:2 Transfer of Jurisdiction

All letters of dismissal shall specify the particular body to which the person is dismissed, and shall be sent directly to that body by the dismissing judicatory. The receiving body shall notify the dismissing judicatory of the fact of reception when accomplished.

SECTION 3: The Session's Jurisdiction

D 3:1 Membership Reception

- A. The session of a particular congregation shall have jurisdiction over all whose names are on the roll. Members shall be received and their names placed on the roll only by order of the session, according to the procedures determined by presbytery.
- B. The session shall examine each candidate for communicant membership to assure itself, so far as possible, that the candidate: possess the knowledge requisite for active faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; relies for salvation on the work of Christ; is trusting Christ for salvation; and is determined by the grace of God to lead a Christian life.
- C. Sessions shall not adjudicate charges for excommunication against members under their jurisdiction. However, charges shall be submitted to the clerk of the session, and shall be approved by session before they are submitted to the stated clerk of presbytery. It is the responsibility of the session to insure that the charges have met all the requirements of the BCO.

D 3:2 Membership Removal⁴

- A. Except in the case of excommunication, the names of members shall be removed from the roll of a particular congregation only by order of the session, according to the procedures determined by the General Assembly.

D3:3 Erasure from a Particular Church

- A. Erasure is the removal of a person from the membership roles of a mission or particular church without a full trial. Erasure is ordinarily excommunication without a full trial, according to the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly. A member who has been erased by the Session will be ordinarily considered by the Congregations, Presbyteries and Assembly of this denomination to be outside of the visible body of Christ and cut off from Holy Communion. Erasure must be established with evidence that reconciliation was sought by the Session taking this action.
- B. A member may be erased from the membership roles of a mission or particular church by the session based on one of the following criteria:

1. If members join themselves to another denomination that violates A4:2 of the Book of Church Order, entitled - Evangelical Mission, they shall be erased from the roles of the church with censure.
 2. If members join themselves to another denomination of like faith and practice and they refuse to transfer membership, then they shall be erased from the roles of the church with censure. If members join themselves to another denomination of like faith and practice and the receiving body refuses to transfer membership, then said member shall be erased from the roles of the church without censure.
 3. Any member who refuses to meet with the session to give reason for leaving shall be, after six months and clear warning, erased with the censure of contumacy.
 4. If members join themselves to a denomination that has been declared apostate by the General Assembly (see BCO A4:3), they shall be erased from the roles of the church with censure.
 5. If a member can no longer be located having moved from the immediate geographical area, if he was in good standing, he shall be erased from the roles of the church without censure.
 6. Any member that fails to attend worship for six months (without legitimate excuse) and does not transfer shall be erased (with censure, if he is not attending a church of like faith and practice).
 7. If a member living at home under the authority of his parents is removed from the jurisdiction of the church by his parents, without proper cause (transfer to another church of like faith and practice or moving from the geographical area), then he shall be erased from the roles of the church without censure.
 8. If members ask to be dropped or removed from church membership, rather than being transferred to a church of like faith and practice, then they shall be erased from the church roles with or without censure pending an investigation by the Session, as to where and whether they are or are not attending church services.
 9. If members ask to be erased based on a change in doctrine that would affect their membership, in this denomination, they shall put into writing the conflict of doctrine as they understand it from the Scripture. If they refuse to maintain the correct doctrine of the church as set forth in the Westminster Standards and our BCO, they shall be erased from the roles of the church with or without censure.
- C. Erasure will be adjudicated on appeal by the proper Presbytery. Any appeal by an erased member must come through the Office of the Stated

Clerk of the Session to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. The appeal must be transmitted to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery within twenty (20) days after it is submitted to the Stated Clerk of the Session. Presbytery will have final determination on appeals dealing with erasure following the guidelines set above. Any deviation from the adopted policies listed above must be explained in detail. Deviations from the approved policies of this denomination will be reviewable by the General Assembly.

- D. Any member that is not under investigation for scandalous sin may transfer to a church of like faith and practice, without censure.
- E. A member must meet with the session to give reason for his transfer. We encourage all departing members to seek reconciliation (if applicable) and receive instruction (if applicable).
- F. A member has six months to transfer before he will be subject to erasure.

SECTION 4: The Presbytery's Jurisdiction

D 4:1 Presbytery Membership

- A. The court of presbytery shall have jurisdiction over all church officers, who are on the roll of presbytery, and the members of each particular congregation. The names of officers shall be added or removed only by an order of the presbytery. No officer shall remain on the role of presbytery for more than two years without a call. Elders shall be suspended from voting privileges after one year without a call.
- B. The court of presbytery shall consist only of those elders who are on the roll of presbytery.
- C. All trials for excommunication of members of a particular congregation shall be originally tried by the court of presbytery.
- D. Acceptable callings for elders or deacons shall come from a particular congregation or presbytery, or from educational, missionary or other ministries approved by presbytery. All callings must be a real application of the functions of an elder or deacon as described in section B.
- E. In the transfer of an elder or a deacon from one jurisdiction to another, the presbytery, which dismisses him, shall maintain jurisdiction until he is entered on the roll of the presbytery receiving him. The receiving presbytery must examine elders in theology, ecclesiology and sacraments as found in the *BCO* dealing with the examination of elders. Deacons need only be examined in theology and ecclesiology as found in the *BCO* dealing with the examination of deacons.

D 4:2 Assistance to Church Sessions

If a session ceases to exist, the presbytery shall provide a pastor or governor(s), or both, from within the presbytery, to be an acting session.

D 4:3 If a Particular Congregation Ceases to Exist

If a particular congregation ceases to exist, the presbytery of jurisdiction shall secure the records, exercise care over its members, and issue letters of dismissal to other particular congregations on behalf of its members.

D 4:4 If a Presbytery Ceases to Exist

If a presbytery ceases to exist, the general assembly shall assign each particular congregation, elder(s) and deacon(s) to some other presbytery.

D 4:5 Cases of Incomplete Adjudication

The higher judicatory, in each instance, shall either conclude any uncompleted case of discipline begun in the lower judicatory, or refer the case to the judicatory to whose care the accused has been committed.

SECTION 5: The Judicial Process

D 5:1 Bringing Charges

A charge of an offense may be brought by an injured party or by a judicatory. The offense alleged in the charge should be serious enough to warrant a trial.

D 5:2 Charges Against Elders and Deacons

No charge shall be admitted against elders or deacons without two or three witnesses.

D 5:3 Filing Charges

A charge shall be considered filed when it has been delivered to the clerk of the judicatory.

D 5:4 The Form of Charges

Every charge must: be in written form; set forth the alleged offense(s); set forth references to applicable portions of the Word of God; set forth, where pertinent, references to applicable portions of the confessional standards; and set forth the serious character of the offense(s) which would demonstrate the warrant for a trial.

D 5:5 The Content of Charges

Each specification of the facts relied upon to sustain the charge must: be in written form; declare, in as much detail as possible, the time, place and circumstances of the alleged offense; and be accompanied with the names

of any witnesses, the titles of documents, records, and transcripts of all proceedings.

D 5:6 Offenses

Offenses are either public or private. Public offenses are those which are commonly known. Private offenses are those which are known to an individual or, at most, to a very few individuals. A personal, private offense involves injury only to the person bringing the charge.

D 5:7 Prerequisites for Charges

No charge of a personal, private offense shall be admitted unless the judicatory has assured itself that the person bringing the charge has faithfully followed the course of action set forth in Matthew 18:15-17; nor shall a charge of a private offense, which is not personal, be admitted unless it appears that the plaintiff(s) has first done his utmost privately to restore the alleged offender. However, even in the case of public offenses, it is not wrong to seek reconciliation in terms of Matthew 18:15-17, Matthew 5:21-27 or Galatians 6:1. The principle, of trying to bring repentance and reconciliation before private or public charges are filed, shall be required by all levels of assemblies as well.

D 5:8 Solemn Warning Prior to Presentation of a Charge

When a member of the church is about to present a written charge (D5:3), he shall be solemnly warned by the judicatory (Moderator B11:6B&E) that he may be censured if the judicatory (Moderator B:116B & E), after conducting a preliminary investigation (by the Moderator or an investigating committee as to the allegations), determines that judicial process with respect to such a charge, may not be submitted formally in writing. No censure stronger than a rebuke shall be pronounced without a trial.

- a. The church member shall convey to the moderator a list of allegations for an investigation as to the factuality and validity of the specifications of offenses. If it is determined that there is no validity to the specifications in violation of the Scriptures, the Westminster Standards, or the Book of Church Order, a written report of the findings shall be given to the church member with proper warning that if he proceeds to file charges he can be censured by the judicatory. If the investigation results in the determination that such offenses are of a nature to warrant written charges, then the judicatory shall present a written report of those findings as well, along with instructions on the filing of written charges and the proper due process.
- b. At no time is the offended party to share with other church members, and/or non-church members, be it orally or in writing, concerning any

of the issues pertaining to the allegations submitted to the Moderator for investigation.

D 5:9 The Receiving of a Charge

The judicatory shall consider: the form of the charge; the form and relevancy of the specifications; the competency of the witnesses named; the apparent authenticity, admissibility and relevancy of any documents, records and transcripts adduced in support of the charge and specifications; whether the specifications, if true, would support the charge; and whether the charge, if proven true, would constitute an offense serious enough to warrant a trial.

D 5:10 The Warrant of Bringing a Charge to Trial

- A. An offense, which is serious enough to warrant a trial, is:
 - 1. An offense in the area of conduct and practice which seriously disturbs the peace, purity and/or unity of the church;
 - 2. An offense in the area of doctrine for the non-ordained member which would constitute a denial of a credible profession of faith, as reflected in his membership vows; or
 - 3. An offense in the area of doctrine for the ordained officer which would constitute a violation of the system of doctrine contained in the *Westminster Standards* or the *BCO*.
- B. The judicatory, should it be persuaded that the charge and specifications, if proven true, would constitute an offense serious enough to warrant a trial, shall not dismiss the case on technical grounds, but shall require that the charge and specifications be put in proper form. If the person bringing the charge fails to do this, or is incapable of performing this requirement, the judicatory will assign some of its members who will assist in the reforming of the charge and specifications.

D 5:11 Scheduling the Trial

- A. When the form of the charge and specifications has been approved by the judicatory, it shall set the time, date and place for the trial of the case, and shall cite the accused to appear at that time. A notice of at least thirty working days must be given before the trial is held. A one-time extension of no more than thirty working days may be granted by the trial judicatory.
- B. All trials shall be held in a timely and orderly manner.

SECTION 6: The Trial

D 6:1 Regarding the Judicatory

- A. All trials shall be held at the presbytery level.
- B. The judicatories of the church shall ordinarily sit with open doors. In extraordinary cases of a personal nature, the trial judicatory, by two-thirds vote, may determine to sit with closed doors.
- C. The trial judicatories shall consist of no less than three elders. If a presbytery is unable to seat the minimum of jurists needed, then they should seek additional jurists from another presbytery from within their synod.
- D. No person shall be deprived of the right to set forth, plead or offer in evidence, in any judicatory of the church, the provisions of the Word of God or of the subordinate standards.
- E. If the circumstances require, a judicatory may deny an accused person the right of participating in the Lord's Supper, or of performing the functions of his office, until the case is concluded.
- F. In a trial, if the accused refuses or fails to appear, without a satisfactory reason for his absence, then at the time appointed for the trial of the case, he shall again be cited, with the warning that, if he does not appear, the trial will proceed in his absence. Twenty working days will be allotted for the accused to respond and resolve any conflicts of scheduling for the trial. Then, if the accused refuses or fails to appear, without a satisfactory reason for his absence, at the time appointed, the trial will proceed in his absence.

D 6:2 Concerning the Clerk

- A. The clerk shall keep an accurate roll of the members attending each session of the trial judicatory. A session shall terminate as soon as the judicatory recesses.
- B. The clerk shall keep an accurate record of the trial. In the minutes of the record, he shall include:
 - 1 The charge and specifications
 - 2. Objections made and exceptions taken,
 - 3. A list of witnesses and a summary of their testimony,
 - 4. All rulings and decisions of the trial judicatory,
 - 5. The minutes of any private deliberations, and
 - 6. A copy of all evidence submitted in the case.

- C. The clerk shall transmit all records from the trial to a higher judicatory in cases of appeal.

D 6:3 Regarding the Accused

- A. The accused shall be entitled to the assistance of counsel. No person shall be eligible to act as counsel who is not a member in good standing of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly. The accused may not sit in judgment on his own case at any stage thereof, including the preliminary investigation. No person who is counsel in a judicial case may sit in judgment on the same case in any stage following the preliminary investigation.
- B. The accused may take exception to any and all rulings or decisions made by the trial judicatory. However, in the instance that the accused holds office in the church, he shall be suspended from office until his appeal has been heard and ruled upon. This is to protect the Church of Jesus Christ from corruption in its leadership. After all appeals have been heard, and the accused has been found innocent of all charges, he shall immediately be restored to his office in the church.
- C. The accused shall be allowed one copy of the minutes at the expense of the judicatory. Additional copies may be obtained by him at cost.
- D. The accused shall be instructed as to his rights and the proper procedures contained in sections 5, 6, 7 and 8.

D 6:4 Regarding Witnesses

- A. Any person may be a witness in a judicial case if the trial judicatory is satisfied that he has sufficient competence to make the affirmation required of witnesses.
- B. No justly called witness may sit on the judicatory.
- C. The moderator shall require each witness, before he testifies, to make the following affirmation: *“I solemnly swear, that by the grace of God, I will speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, concerning the matters on which I am called to testify.”*
- D. Testimony under certain circumstances may be taken by deposition.
- E. Testimony by deposition includes the right of representatives of the accused, the accuser and trial judicatory to be present for direct examination and/or cross-examination of such witnesses, and the interposing of objections concerning:
 - 1. The admissibility of any oral testimony;

2. The competency of the witnesses; and
3. The authenticity, admissibility and relevancy of any documents, records and transcripts identified by the witnesses. Depositions shall be either video or audio recordings, and shall be made available to the accused upon request.

D 6:5 Rules of Evidence

- A. Evidence must be factual in nature.
- B. The accused may object to the competency of any witness and the authenticity, admissibility and relevancy of any testimony or evidence produced in support of the charge and specifications. The trial judicatory shall decide on all such objections after allowing the accused to be heard in support thereof.
- C. All questions concerning the competency of any witness and the authenticity, admissibility and relevancy of any testimony, or evidence taken by a commission, shall be determined by the trial judicatory after the accused has been given an opportunity to be heard.
- D. A specification, presented in support of a charge, may be established by the testimony of witnesses or by duly authenticated documentary evidence. The testimony of one witness shall not be sufficient to establish the truth of any specifications.
- E. The trial judicatory shall appoint one of its members to conduct the examination of witnesses on its behalf, but other members shall also have the right to take part in the examination. Witnesses produced in support of the charge and specifications, shall testify in the presence of the accused, unless the accused has failed to present himself after citation according to this section. After direct examination, all witnesses shall be subject to cross-examination and re-direct after cross-examination.
- F. New evidence discovered during the trial may be offered, but, if such evidence is produced against the accused, he shall be given reasonable time to investigate it and to supplement his defense.
- G. If new evidence is produced by the accused after he has been found guilty, the trial judicatory shall examine such evidence. If the judicatory is satisfied that there was good reason for not producing it at the trial, it shall grant a new trial, or, in case an appeal has been lodged, it shall certify these facts to the appellate judicatory, and the record of the case shall then be returned to the trial judicatory for the purpose of a new trial.

D 6:6 Rules of Trial Proceedings

- A. At the first meeting of the trial judicatory only the following actions shall be taken:
 - 1. The charges and specifications shall be read and formally presented to the accused, together with the names of any witnesses and copies of any documents which may be presented against him;
 - 2. The trial judicatory shall fix the time, date and place for the second meeting of the trial, which shall be not less than ten working days later, and shall issue citations directing all persons to appear at that time, whose presence it may deem necessary; and
 - 3. The accused shall be granted citations in which he may insert the names of the witnesses whom he wishes the trial judicatory to summon.
- B. At the second meeting of the trial judicatory the accused may interpose objections concerning:
 - 1. The regularity of the proceedings up to this point; and
 - 2. The form of the charge, the form and relevancy of the specifications, the competency of the witness named in the specifications, and the authenticity and relevancy of any documents, records and transcripts submitted in support of the charge and specifications. The trial judicatory shall determine the validity of any such objections.
- C. The trial judicatory, after receiving the charges and specifications, must determine if a case before the judicatory is warranted. If the trial judicatory affirms the need for a case, the moderator shall proceed to ask the accused how he pleads: guilty or not guilty. Then the trial shall proceed.
- D. Any member shall be disqualified from the trial judicatory if they fail to attend any of the trial procedures beginning from the first trial meeting.
- E. After the presentation of all the plaintiff's charges, witnesses and evidence, the accused may ask the trial judicatory to dismiss the charges for failure of the plaintiff to prove their case. If this motion is denied, then the trial shall continue, and the accused may then present the evidence in support of his defense.

D 6:7 Conclusion of the Trial

- A. After all the evidence has been presented, the accused may make his final argument with respect to the evidence and the law of the church. The trial judicatory, after deliberation, shall vote on each charge and each specification separately. If the trial judicatory decides that the accused is guilty, it shall proceed to determine the censure.

- B. When the trial judicatory has concluded its deliberations, the moderator shall announce its decision on each charge and specification. If the accused has been found guilty, the trial judicatory shall state what censure it proposes to pronounce against the accused. If the accused appeals the decision of the trial judicatory, the court will withhold its judgment until the appeal is heard and the higher judicatory makes a determination.

D 6:8 Trial in Absentia

If the judicatory proceeds with the trial in the absence of the accused, a counsel shall be appointed at the first meeting of the trial to present a case to the trial judicatory in defense of the accused. The counsel shall be enabled to proceed with all the rights afforded to the accused.

D 6:9 Cases Without Full Process⁵

When a member comes before a judicatory as his own accuser or confessor, the judicatory may proceed to judgment without full process, determining first, what offense, if any, has been committed, and, if a serious offense has been committed, what censure shall be pronounced.

SECTION 7: Censure and Restoration

D 7:1 Censure

- A. In judicial discipline there are four degrees of censure: admonition, rebuke, suspension and excommunication. Censures shall be pronounced by the moderator on behalf of the trial judicatory, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, as an act of the whole church.
- B. If the accused who has been adjudged guilty, refuses or fails to present himself for censure at the time appointed, the trial judicatory shall cite him to appeal at another time. If he does not appear after this citation, the censure shall be pronounced in his absence.

Degrees of Censure

D 7:2 Admonition

Admonition consists in tenderly and solemnly confronting the offender with his sin, warning him of his danger and exhorting him to repentance and to greater fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ. An admonition does not require written charges or a trial.

D 7:3 Rebuke

Rebuke is a form of censure more severe than admonition. It consists of setting forth the serious character of the offense, reproving the offender and exhorting him to repentance and to greater fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ. A rebuke does not require written charges or a trial

D 7:4 Suspension

- A. Suspension is a form of censure by which an officer or other member of the church is deprived of certain privileges, for a definite or indefinite period of time. Suspension of an officer from the privileges of membership shall always be accompanied by suspension from office, but the latter does not necessarily involve the former. When an officer has been indefinitely suspended, the judicatory shall immediately notify all presbyteries. A suspension of a member does not require written charges or a trial. However, the suspension of an officer does require written charges and a trial.
- B. An officer or other member of the church, while under suspension, shall be the object of deep solicitude and earnest dealing, the goal being that he may be restored. When the trial judicatory, which pronounced the censure, is satisfied with the penitence of the offender, or when the time of suspension has expired, the censure shall be removed and the offender restored. This restoration shall be accompanied by a solemn admonition. Restoration to the privileges of membership may take place without restoration to office.

D 7:5 Excommunication

Excommunication is the most severe form of censure, and is only resorted to in cases aggravated by persistent impenitence. It consists of a solemn declaration by the presbyterial judicatory that the offender is no longer considered a member of the Body of Christ. Erasure may be excommunication according to the definitions given by the General Assembly in Section D 3:3 of the Book of Church Order. At all times the Presbyteries will follow the BCO directives on Erasure.

D 7:6 Deposition

- A. Deposition is a form of censure more severe than suspension. It consists of a solemn declaration by the trial judicatory that the offender is no longer an officer of the church.
- B. When an officer is deposed from his office, the presbytery shall erase his name from the roll of presbytery and dismiss him to a particular congregation. Deposition of an officer may be by judicial declaration (defrocking) resulting from a trial (unless no trial is required due to admission of guilt) or by request of an officer (demitting) even though charges have not been presented before a judiciary.
- C. Deposition of a pastor or his suspension for an indefinite time involves the dissolution of the pastoral relation. The sentence of deposition or suspension shall be read before the congregation, and the pulpit shall be declared vacant. In case of suspension for a definite period, the presbytery,

after giving the session an opportunity to be heard, shall decide whether the pastoral relation shall be dissolved.

- D. When an officer has been indefinitely deposed, the judicatory shall immediately notify all presbyteries.

D 7: 7 Procedural Considerations

- A. The indefinite suspension, deposition or excommunication of an officer or other member of the church shall be announced to the church body in which the officer holds office, or in which the member holds membership. These censures shall always be accompanied by prayer to God, that He may graciously use this discipline for the restoration of the offender, the edification of the church and His own glory.
- B. After one year, if a person suspended indefinitely has failed to manifest repentance, it shall be the duty of the judicatory to consider whether suspension should be continued or more severe censure should be imposed. The judicatory may proceed to deposition or excommunication, or both, without further trial.

D 7:8 Restoration

- A. An officer or other member of the church who has been censured because of a commonly known offense, shall be restored only after the judicatory has assured itself that the restoration will not be attended by injury to the cause of the Gospel.
- B. An officer who has been deposed cannot resume his former office without being ordained again.
- C. Restoration shall always be accompanied by a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His redeeming grace.

SECTION 8: Appeals

D 8:1 Definition and Qualification

An appeal is the removal of a judicial case to an appellate judicatory, initiated by the filing of a petition asking that the final judgment of a lower judicatory be reversed or modified, on the basis of procedural or doctrinal error, or new evidence. An appeal to a higher judicatory may be taken by the accused, or by a judicatory whose judgment has been reversed or modified. Presbyteries shall determine how to constitute the appellate court. Only doctrinal issues may be appealed to general assembly.

D 8:2 Notice of Intention to Appeal

After the judgment has been announced, notice of intention to appeal must be filed in writing with the clerk of the judicatory from which the appeal is being made.

D 8:3 Lodging an Appeal

In order to perfect (complete) an appeal, the appellant must lodge the appeal and the specifications of error with the clerk of the appellate judicatory within thirty days after the clerk has notified the accused that the transcripts have been transferred to the higher court. Copies of the appeal must be sent to: the appellate court, the court from which the appeal was made, and the appellee(s) (if there is one other than the judicatory) at the time of the filing of the appeal.

D 8:4 Notice and Scheduling of Hearing on Appeal

The clerk of the appellate judicatory shall give the appellant of the judicatory, from whose judgment the appeal is taken, a minimum of thirty days notice of the time, place and date scheduled by the appellate judicatory for the hearing of the appeal.

D 8:5 Results of an Appeal

If the appellate judicatory does not sustain any of the specifications of error, the judgment of the lower judicatory shall be affirmed. If the appellate judicatory sustains any specification of error, it shall determine whether the error is of such importance as to require a reversal or modification of the judgment. An appellate judicatory may remit the case to the trial judicatory for a new trial, may modify the judgment or may reverse the judgment.

D 8:6 Disqualifications to Sit on Appellate Judicatory

When the judgment of a lower judicatory is before an appellate judicatory, no member of the lower judicatory shall take any part in the decision of the case.

SECTION 9: Dissents and Protests

D 9:1 Recording of Appellate Judicatory Votes

Any member of a judicatory, who is entitled to vote on a question, and who votes against the action or judgment of the judicatory, may request that his vote be recorded in the minutes of the judicatory.

D 9:2 Protests

Any member of a judicatory may file a written protest stating his reasons for objecting to an action or judgment of the judicatory. A protest must be filed with the clerk within ten working days after the judicatory has taken

the action or announced the judgment. However, a protest against an action or judgment of the general assembly must be filed prior to the dissolution thereof. A protest shall be read to the judicatory and recorded in the minutes.

D 9:3 Answers to Protests

The judicatory may, if it so desires, place an answer to a protest in its minutes.

SECTION 10: Complaints

D 10:1 Definition and Origination

A complaint is a written representation, other than an appeal or a protest, charging a judicatory with delinquency or error. It may be brought: by an officer or other member of the church against the session or the presbytery to which he is subject; by one session against another session within the same presbytery; by a session against the presbytery which has jurisdiction over it; or by one presbytery against another presbytery.

D 10:2 Presentation of a Complaint

A complaint shall first be presented to the judicatory alleged to be delinquent or in error, and this judicatory shall be asked to make amends. The complaint shall be presented as soon as possible after the alleged delinquency or error, and always within three months, unless it is shown that it could not have been presented in that amount of time.

D 10:3 Response to a Complaint

After considering a complaint, if the judicatory alleged to be delinquent or in error, is not convinced that it has been delinquent or in error, and refuses to make amends, the complainant may carry the complaint to the next higher judicatory having jurisdiction, provided, however, that this action is taken at the earliest possible time. Before this action is taken, notice of intention must be given to the judicatory against which the complaint is directed. The complaint carried to the higher judicatory must be the same complaint presented to the lower judicatory.

D 10:4 Complaints Going to a Higher Judicatory

- A. When a complaint has been carried to a higher judicatory, upon request of the higher judicatory, the clerk of the judicatory accused of the delinquency or error, shall submit to the clerk thereof, all the relevant evidence, including a certified copy of any minutes or other documents. The clerk of the higher judicatory shall give both parties notice of thirty working days of the time, date and place set for the hearing. Neither the complainant nor any member of the accused judicatory shall take part in the decision on the matter.

- B. If a complaint against a session has been carried to the presbytery having jurisdiction over it, and the presbytery has rendered a decision, either the complaint or the session may complain of the decision to the general assembly.
- C. If a judicatory is adjudged delinquent or in error by a higher judicatory, the higher judicatory shall determine what amends are to be made.

DIRECTORY
OF
ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

E. Directory of Administrative Rules

SECTION 1: Administrative Procedures

E 1:1 Preface

The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly has adopted the following parliamentary procedures for conducting the meetings of the church's presbyteries and general assembly. The *Robert's Rules of Order* (current edition) shall be the standard in administrative procedures.

E 1:2 Order of Business

- A. From the time the moderator has called a meeting to order until its adjournment, business is conducted according to the following prearranged sequence:
 - 1. Call to order;
 - 2. Invocation;
 - 3. Worship: hymn or Psalm, reading of Scripture, sermon, Lord's Supper, season of prayer, hymn, or Psalm;
 - 4. Role Call: elders and visitors;
 - 5. Reading of previous minutes;
 - 6. Communications;
 - 7. Reports of standing committees;
 - 8. Reports of special committees;
 - 9. Adoption of the agenda;
 - 10. Unfinished business;
 - 11. New business;
 - 12. Miscellaneous (announcements, items, requests); and
 - 13. Adjournment.

E 1:3 Call to Order

When the members of a group have assembled and the appointed time has arrived, the moderator (or appointed temporary moderator) will call the meeting to order.

E 1:4 The Quorum

A. A quorum for any governing assembly beyond a session must have at least half of its elders in attendance.

B. Specially Called Meetings

- 1 All members of the respective assembly must be contacted. Any member not able to attend the specially called meeting may notify the assembly in writing or by fax or e-mail, and may authorize business to be conducted without a quorum only on the announced matter requiring the specially called meeting.
2. This may take place with the consent of two-thirds of the elders, and then a minimum of one-third of the elders must actually be in attendance.
3. Sufficient notice shall be considered to be: thirty working days for the general assembly or synod and ten calendar days for the presbytery.
4. The stated clerk of the respective assembly will be responsible for effective notification of such specially called meetings, and for certifying that the above quorum requirements are met by the proper recording of written documentation from those absent and those present in the minutes of the special meeting.
5. Any business of a specially called meeting is subject to review by the next regularly called assembly.

E 1:5 Invocation

The meeting shall be opened by prayer by an elder.

E 1:6 Worship

General Assembly and presbytery shall always conduct a worship service when assembled, unless the assembly is a carryover from a previous session. If determined otherwise by the moderator, the worship service for specially called meetings may be restricted to the reading of Scripture, exhortation and prayer.

E 1: 7 Roll Call

The clerk shall take the roll of elders, associates and visitors who are in attendance.

E 1:8 Reading of Previous Minutes

The first item of business, after it has been called to order, is the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting by the clerk. If the minutes were read at the previous general assembly, the reading of the minutes may be waived at the current general assembly. The minutes shall be sent out for review, by the members, six weeks prior to the date of the next regularly called meeting of the assembly. Minutes of specially called meetings shall be read at the next regularly called meeting of the assembly.

E 1:9 Writing the Minutes

As written from his notes taken during an assembly, the clerk's minutes are a complete and objective account of what transpired during the assembly. Thus they become a permanent record of the assembly. The minutes shall never record a personal opinion of any member of the assembly, except at the request of the member. The minutes shall record the roll call of voting members, time, date, place of meeting, presiding officer, and whether the meeting was regularly called or specially called.

E 1:10 Correcting the Minutes

At the conclusion of the reading of the minutes, the moderator will ask, *"Are there any corrections or additions to the minutes as read?"* At this time, any member recognized by the moderator may suggest changes.

E 1:11 Approving the Minutes

The moderator may move that the minutes be approved if there are no other objections or recommended changes by the members present. Once the minutes are approved, the clerk shall write, "approved", together with the time and date of approval. All minutes shall be made available to any member of the assembly.

E 1:12 Communications

All communications shall be sent to the clerk of the assembly prior to the called meeting. The moderator will ask the clerk to read all communications to the members present.

E 1:13 Reports of Standing Committees

Standing committees shall issue reports on their progress on current issues before the committee. Reports shall be given orally before the membership and the final recommendations of the committee shall be submitted in writing to the membership for review six weeks prior to the next regularly called meeting.

E 1:14 Accepting and Adopting the Committee Reports

If there are no objections or further discussion, the moderator shall declare the report accepted and adopted by the assembly.

E 1:15 A Minority Report

Any individual who disagrees with the committee's report shall be given the right of submitting a minority report which shall be attached to the majority report of the committee.

E 1:16 Reports of Special Committees

From time to time, special committees are appointed to investigate or consider special matters. Ordinarily, the purpose of these committees is to do some of the preliminary work of routine investigation in preparation of a special matter for action by the membership as a whole.

E 1:17 Adoption of the Agenda

The membership shall review the prepared agenda and recommend any changes in carrying out the business of the membership. Recommended changes need not be voted on for approval unless the changes affect the business of the membership.

E1:18 Unfinished Business

Each item of unfinished business shall be identified by its descriptive name; it is business which was taken up or considered in a previous meeting, but upon which no final action was taken. In the interest of efficiency, therefore, it is taken up in the next meeting before any new business is considered.

E 1:19 New Business

When business carried over from previous meetings has been disposed of, the group is ready to consider new business. Here, as elsewhere in formal assembly procedure, efficiency is desired, and to that end, it is provided that the assembly shall consider only one item at a time, and that each item of business shall be disposed of before another is taken up. In order to facilitate the regular flow of business, the membership will make use of a basic parliamentary device known as a motion. A motion is a brief and

clear statement of a proposed action to be taken up by the membership, and it is the vehicle by which all business is introduced to the group.

E 1:20 Motions

- A. The first step in introducing a motion is to secure recognition from the moderator of the meeting (obtaining the floor). The member must rise and address the moderator. If there is more than one request for recognition, the moderator must decide which one to recognize first. This he may do: (1) by determining which one addressed him first; (2) by trying to recognize speakers alternately, as they are known to him to be for or against a proposal under consideration; or (3) by recognizing a member who has not yet spoken on the question.
- B. When a member receives recognition by the moderator, he *has the floor*, or possesses the right to address the assembly, restricted only by such time limits as may have been imposed, or by the interposition of a special motion which has precedence. All motions must be made from the floor by a member of the voting body.
- C. Before the main motion is opened for discussion by the entire membership, it must be seconded, that is, some other member of the group must indicate his support of the motion. (Note: some motions do not require a second).
- D. Discussing the Motion
 - 1. When a motion has been made and seconded, the moderator is then ready to state the motion and to open it for discussion. If a motion is long or complex, the moderator may request that the clerk reread the motion.
 - 2. If it should occur to the moderator, the maker of the motion, or any member of the group, that a change should be made in the phrasing of the original motion in the interest of clarity or accuracy, such a change may be suggested. With the approval of the maker of the motion, this change may be incorporated in the moderator's formal statement. The approval of the member who seconded the motion is not necessary. Once the motion has been approved as to its phrasing, the motion cannot be changed except by amendment. Motions on the floor cannot be withdrawn by the maker of the motion, except by the consent of the entire membership.

E. Amending Motions

1. When the moderator has made a formal statement of a motion to the group, and it is open for discussion, members may wish to suggest specific changes in the text of the motion; to do this they make use of the parliamentary device called an amendment. An amendment to a motion may be made in any one of the following four forms: (1) elimination, which removes some part of the motion; (2) addition, which may add something to the motion; (3) substitution, which replaces some part of the motion, such as a term which is used; and (4) division, which separates a motion into more than one motion.
 2. The moderator is empowered to rule any amendment he considers irrelevant as being out of order, although his decision may be appealed to the body for a vote.
- F. After the discussion upon a given motion seems to have been concluded, the moderator shall call for the question (bring the motion to a vote). Any member may call for the question if discussion has been drawn out too long. All main motions require simple majority vote for adoption.

E 1:21 Miscellaneous

The next to the last item in the accepted order of business provides for the consideration of any matters which do not properly fall within the subject matter of the preceding items. Such matters may be announcements, requests or items of interest to the membership.

E 1:22 Adjournment

The matter of adjournment must be made by motion. Three special rules apply to the motion for adjournment: (1) it may not interrupt a speaker or the process of voting on a motion; (2) it is not debatable; and (3) it may not be amended. The motion must be seconded and then put to an immediate vote of the entire membership.

E 1:23 Recess

A recess may be made by request of any member or the moderator. The time of the recess shall be determined by the moderator, who may consult with the membership. The moderator may deny a request for a recess; however, the decision may be appealed to the body for a vote. The motion for a recess shall not be made when there is a speaker on the floor.

SECTION 2: Administrative Rules

E 2:1 Frequency of General Assembly and Synods

General assembly shall be held every two years, and synods shall be held every two years, and both shall be represented by all ordained elders.

E 2:2 Location of General Assembly and Synods

General assembly and synods shall determine the general location of their assemblies. The location of the next assembly shall be determined at the end of the previous assembly. The specifics of the location shall be determined by the moderator, who shall notify the assembly six months prior to the date of the next assembly.

E 2:3 The Moderator

Moderators shall be elected for one term. At the conclusion of the elected term, the moderator shall be exempted from serving as moderator for a period of one term, unless requested to serve again by three-fourths majority vote. At the time of the election of the moderator, an assistant moderator shall be elected for one term. The assistant moderator shall serve out the term of the moderator in the instance that the position is vacated.

E 2:4 General Assembly Committees

There shall be no standing general assembly committees. Committees shall be appointed for a duration of one year. If there is a need for the committee to continue, it shall be reconstituted by the moderator for an additional year or for the duration necessary to complete its mission. The moderator shall then notify the presbyteries. This article cannot be changed except by the three-fourths consent of the general assembly.

E 2:5 Use of Administrative Procedures at All Levels of Assembly

The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly shall use the Administrative Procedures as listed in Section I above, at all levels of assembly of its governments.

E 2:6 Congregational Property and Dissolution Agreements

- A. All property of a congregation remains the property of the congregation, subject to any agreement or contracts made by the officers of that congregation. Each local congregation must have a written agreement, including due process, regarding the disposition of the congregation's property in the event of dissolution of the congregation or its removal from the denomination. This agreement shall be subject to the approval of the receiving presbytery and, ultimately, of the general assembly in the event of an appeal. Such an agreement must address:

- 1. Disbanding of the congregation; and

2. Departure from the denomination of the congregation in whole or in part.
- B. This article cannot be altered except by a three-fourths majority vote of the general assembly.

SECTION 3: Legislative Procedures for Changing the Book of Church Order

E 3:1 The following procedures shall apply regarding any recommendations or motions for changes in the *Book of Church Order*. The *BCO*, once adopted by the general assembly, can only be changed by a subsequent general assembly.

E 3:2 Origin of Petitions to General Assembly

All petitions or motions to general assembly must originate from a local Session through its presbytery, or from a presbytery itself. It is the responsibility of presbytery and each of its sessions, prior to petitioning the general assembly, to examine carefully the subject matter of the petition, and to provide adequate opportunity and due process for each of its sessions to recommend any changes in the petition. Failure to notify any Session within a presbytery, will nullify any petition sent to the general assembly. To avoid nullification, it is recommended that all petitions be sent with proper certification from each member of Session. Timely objection must be made prior to the approval of the petition by the general assembly.

E 3:3 First Approval of Petitions by General Assembly

The general assembly must receive and approve the petition from presbytery by majority vote.

E 3:4 Presbyterianial Review of the Approved Petitions

The approved petition shall be sent to each presbytery, which, in turn, shall send a copy of the petition to each of its church Sessions for review, to be voted on at presbytery concerning its approval or rejection.

The presbytery, upon timely notification to its Sessions, shall assemble in order to discuss and vote on the approval or rejection of the petition. Simple majority vote is required for approval. The vote shall be recorded and reported to the stated clerk of the general assembly.

E 3:5 Ratification of the Petition by the General Assembly

The petition shall be considered ratified upon the report from a majority of the full presbyteries (not mission presbyteries) approving the petition.

E 3:6 Special Considerations

On the approval of two-thirds of the general assembly members, this process may be waived for special consideration of petitions, which the general assembly determines are of such importance as to merit special consideration. The approval for special consideration shall remain in force until it is ratified or rejected at the next general assembly. Should the approval for special consideration be rejected, the general assembly may send the petition to committee by a majority vote, and the petition will begin its process from that point of origin. Presbyteries retain their full rights to remedies during special considerations.

However, special consideration does not include the acceptance of petitions which were not properly originated. Any petitions passed under these circumstances must be sent back to the presbyteries to be reviewed by its sessions, voted on in presbytery and approved by majority vote at the next general assembly.

E 3:7 Exceptions

The only exceptions to the above will be housekeeping-type items where the substance and content of the BCO remain unchanged, but where consistency, spelling, reference numbers and/or grammar are corrected.

DIRECTORY
FOR
MISSIONS

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

F. Directory for Missions

SECTION I: Introduction

F 1:1 Church Missions

- A. God superintends in the culture and growth of churches.¹ Providence² and biblical and historical precedent³ must always be considered primary in establishing a missionary strategy in any setting.⁴
- B. The providence of God established the Jewish synagogue network through which Jesus and the Apostles established the first churches.⁵ In fact, it was specifically commanded for them to go first to the Jews.⁶
- C. The providence of God caused the Reformation of the Church to initially start in the midst of the Roman Catholic Church. Initially, it grew within that church. Then it was forced out of that church, though for years it evangelized through that church, first reaching the priests⁷, and eventually the parishioners.⁸
- D. From this, it is necessary to conclude, that in any area where Christian activity already exists, any new missionary endeavor should first determine the receptivity of the existing Christians to the Reformed Gospel (especially if they are well established throughout the area) before establishing entirely new churches.⁹ In other words, where possible, a new missionary endeavor should work through what God has providentially put in place, rather than begin a totally new work.

¹ Matt. 16:8; Acts 8:1; Eph. 2:20; Col. 1:18; Heb. 3:4

² The term here refers to God's superintendence in the culture and the growth of Christian churches (particularly evangelicals) in a country where a void exists that can only be filled by Reformed theology or some non-Christian alternative (i.e., liberalism, liberationism or some sincerities). Acts 14:27; 16:67.

³ There are other historical precedents which have not been researched (e.g., European Aryan Gothic Kingdoms) that can be developed to further enforce this point.

⁴ Acts 16:9-12

⁵ Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 13:54; Mark 1:21,29,39; 6:2; Luke 4:15-16,44; 6:6; 13:10; John 6:59; 16:2; 18:20; Acts 9:20; 13:5,14-15,42; 14:1; 17:1,10,17; 18:4,7,19,26

⁶ Rom. 1:16

⁷ Acts 6:7; John 12:42

⁸ John 8:31; 11:45; 12:11; Acts 14:1; 17:1-4

⁹ Experience shows that when evangelical churches are generally well established in a country where there has been little or no Reformed missionary activity, or where such activity has led to typically reclusive churches which associate with no evangelicals, then, there tends to be great receptivity to the Reformed faith, when it is presented properly. Most of the new churches that were started during the Apostolic period were composed of former synagogue congregations, or from those who came out of synagogues. If this divinely appointed strategy worked among the Jews, why should it not work even better among evangelicals who have had little or no exposure to Reformed Christianity, except from a negative perspective?

1. When it has been established that existing churches are receptive, then effort should be carried through that group or church until they are no longer receptive, knowing that the following scenarios may materialize: (1) whole denominations may be converted; (2) whole congregations may be converted that are unaffiliated; and (3) great penetration may be made into existing denominations and congregations, bringing them much closer to the Reformed faith, and/or eventually providing the nucleus for the beginning of Reformed churches that are indigenous, rather than begun by a missionary.
 2. If existing churches are not receptive, then decisions should be made in this order: (1) is it better to go to another country, culture or location which is more receptive;¹⁰ or (2) spend time training local people to prepare to start their own churches, with assistance from this denomination; or (3) start churches with missionaries from outside of the area.¹¹
- E. Missionary activity into areas where little or no Christian activity exists, requires a different set of criteria, but the same basic principle of receptiveness should be applied. If there is no response to the Gospel among the people, then the following decisions should be made in this order: (1) other locations in this culture may be more receptive; or (2) the problem is sufficiently universal in the area that it is better to go to another country, culture or location which is more receptive. While it is true that God may call some persons to be witnesses in areas very resistant to the Gospel, the sending and sponsoring presbyteries must concur with a calling to stay in a resistant area.

F 1:2 Definition of Missions

- A. In an ecclesiastical context, *missions* pertains to the purpose of evangelism and establishing new churches. This may be done inside or outside of the culture of the church or presbytery carrying on this activity. Missionary activity is conducted primarily under the responsibility and oversight of a church and its presbytery. Cooperative mission ventures between presbyteries of the denomination are strongly encouraged.
- B. There are two basic categories of missions: *home missions* (within the predominate culture of a presbytery) and *foreign missions* (outside the national boundaries of a presbytery). Cross-cultural missionary activities deal with distinctions between cultures that are primarily based upon

¹⁰ Acts 16:6-7

¹¹ Where possible, it is preferable to carry on mission activity through established associations (i.e., neighboring nation, culture, etc.). However, when this is not possible, the general principle when sending foreigners into mission fields should be *the less foreign the better*. This position is positively the last resort from our perspective.

ethnicity, language and nationality (all of which may exist within one country). As it is allowable for churches with differences on liberty issues (see *Ecclesiastical Liberty*, A5:1-5), to meet separately for sake of conscience, so also it is allowable for churches of different cultures to worship separately for sake of order. It is not imperative that churches with different cultures establish their own presbytery, though it may be preferable. Any group of churches which prefers to establish a presbytery (mission or regular) on the basis of clear cultural differences, may request this of its presbytery.

F 1:3 Missionary

A *missionary* must be an elder (not a provisional elder) whose responsibility is to evangelize and establish new churches, in or out of his culture, under the authority of presbytery. The power of evangelist may be granted according to section B4:6. Each presbytery shall determine the necessary qualifications and gifts for its missionaries.

F 1:4 Mentor

A *mentor* is a person officially appointed by presbytery to oversee the work of a mission church (especially one where the elders are provisional or are new to the Reformed faith), train its initial officers, and serve on, or at least counsel, the session. A mentor is normally to be an elder assigned by presbytery to work closely with the church, and especially its officers, to bring them to a full understanding of the Reformed faith and Presbyterian Church government. Great diligence must be employed in selecting a mentor who has pastoral abilities, theological training, and a clear ability to fit his theology and didactic methods into the culture of those over whom he has charge for training (e.g., Paul and Timothy). The presbytery should strongly resist the temptation to impose more than theology and basic church practices upon the growing church in a different culture, and the selection of a mentor should reflect this.

F 1:5 Mission Agency

A *mission agency* is an organization (inside or outside the denomination) which has been approved by general assembly and assists in the work of missions in various capacities.

DIRECTORY
FOR
EXAMINATION

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

G. Directory for Examination

SECTION 1: Examination for the Ordination of Elders

G 1:1 Preface

- A. Those men who desire to be ordained for the office of elder shall complete and submit the following checklist to the proper ecclesiastical body not less than thirty working days prior to any examination.

Checklist for Elders

1. Written testimony of his life history and conversion to Christianity, including a written statement as to his call to the ministry.
2. A written history of church or denominational affiliations, noting: the approximate length of tenure, ministry engaged in, any offices held, and circumstances and reasons for leaving. A candidate must disclose any past or pending disciplinary action by any ecclesiastical body (congregation or higher/broader assembly).
3. A written testimony from his wife (if applicable) concerning her conversion to Christianity and her testimony of support to her husband's ministry.
4. Letters of reference from personal Christian friends (three or more) who have known the applicant and his family for not less than two years, and who will testify that his children (where applicable) are in submission to their parents' (both husband and wife) authority.
5. A candidate must disclose, in writing, any history of sin of a public nature or with the potential thereof (i.e., where all parties involved have not sought and received forgiveness), such as sexual misconduct, dishonesty, drunkenness, abuse of authority or other sins unbecoming a Christian (if not otherwise disclosed above, regarding past or pending discipline).
6. In the case of a candidate who has been divorced, a full explanation of the causes of the divorce shall be submitted in writing, along with proof. The presbytery shall determine if this divorce would disqualify or significantly hinder the candidate's ministry, taking into account WCF 24:6, all circumstances following the divorce, and, if sinful, what evidence there has been of repentance.
7. A candidate must disclose any debt (not secured by tangible collateral) beyond the equivalent of three months income, including any previous or potential filing for financial bankruptcy, so that presbytery may determine its possible effect on his ministry. The

candidate must also agree to notify presbytery of any bankruptcy proceedings undertaken while holding an office.

8. The candidate must have three letters of references from elders who adhere to Reformed or Calvinistic theology.
 9. A candidate must disclose the nature of his baptism.
 10. The candidate must be willing to relinquish his membership in any ecclesiastical bodies of jurisdiction (i.e., having authority over him).
 11. He must disclose membership in any secret societies, along with a justification for such membership.
 12. After consulting the *BCO* (A4:2 and G4) a candidate must provide in writing, prior to his examination, any areas where he has concerns, disagreement or questions with the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms* and the *Book of Church Order* of the RPCGA.
 13. A candidate must agree that all questions or disputes with the constitution (standards) of the RPCGA are to be carried on only at presbytery and the higher/broader assemblies, and that he will not preach or teach any questionable or disputed doctrines and practices.
 14. A candidate must be willing to make the vows applicable to the office of elder, according to the RPCGA *Book of Church Order*.
 15. A candidate must agree to teach or preach in his church, on a regular basis, the Word of God as summarized in the *Westminster Standards* and other acknowledged standards listed in the *BCO*.
 16. A candidate must agree not to turn to the world to solve differences between the church and its members.
 17. A candidate must disclose any past or pending civil or criminal actions.
 18. A candidate must disclose any areas of doctrine found in the *Westminster Standards* with which he does not agree.
- B. Those men who desire to be ordained for the office of elder must pass the following examination as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for ordination.
- C. These questions are intended to be used as a guideline for examination. The examiners must ask at least two-thirds of these questions, and may also ask questions that do not appear in this list. The candidate is not

required to answer every question, but is responsible for achieving a passing grade of at least 80% of the questions asked.

G 1:2 Old Testament Examination

1. What are the main groups of books in the Old Testament?
2. What are the progressive truths which run through the Old Testament?
3. What is the basic structure of Genesis?
4. What is a type (typology), and what is our authority for asserting the presence of types in the Old Testament?
5. What is your view on the six days of creation?
6. Explain the Genesis account of the fall of Adam into sin, and what was the result?
7. Why did God destroy the earth with a flood, and where is this recorded in Scripture?
8. Who authored the Pentateuch, and how do we know that these were his writings?
9. What is the covenant God made with Abraham, and where in Genesis is this found?
10. What is the general structure of the book of Exodus?
11. Why was the Law given?
12. To whom was the Law given?
13. What is the importance of the tabernacle? What was its basic structure and furniture, and explain their significance?
14. What is the relationship between the Law and the covenant of grace?
15. In what way does Leviticus express the holiness of God?
16. What is the central message of Leviticus?
17. What is the significance of the offerings as given in Leviticus?
18. What is the importance of the case laws given in Leviticus?
19. Explain the sanctity of blood as set forth in Leviticus.
20. What are the national observances given in Leviticus?

21. What is God's warning to Israel; what is the final punishment promised for failing to keep God's commands?
22. How is the Gospel expressed in Leviticus?
23. What are the structural features of the book of Numbers?
24. What are the three families of Levites, and what are their respective duties in the tabernacle?
25. What were the main events recorded during the years of the "wanderings"?
26. What is significant about the numbering of the Israelites?
27. How did Deuteronomy get its name?
28. Set forth a brief outline of Deuteronomy.
29. How is the Law set forth in the book of Deuteronomy?
30. How is the covenant set forth in the book of Deuteronomy?
31. What is the central theme of Deuteronomy?
32. What is the key idea in the book of Joshua?
33. Develop the meaning of Israel's crossing of the Jordan and coming into the land of Canaan.
34. Set forth the basic theme and significance of the book of Judges.
35. What are the main truths set forth in the book of Ruth, and what is their significance?
36. What is the main theme of First and Second Samuel?
37. Set forth a development of Israel's problems and history as given in the books of First and Second Kings.
38. What are the main themes and content of the books of First and Second Chronicles?
39. Set forth the importance of the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther as they relate to the history of Israel.
40. What is the purpose of the poetical books?

41. Give an account of the life of Job and the theological significance of this book.
42. What are some of the main objections to the historicity of the book of Job?
43. What are the five main groupings of the Psalms?
44. What is the genius of the Proverbs, and the general purpose of the book?
45. What is the central theme of the book of Ecclesiastes?
46. What is the central message of the Song of Solomon?
47. During which king's reign did Isaiah prophesy?
48. What big event happened in the Northern Kingdom when Isaiah was between fifty and sixty years old?
49. Give a brief outline of Isaiah's prophecy.
50. In what section of the book of Isaiah does he speak of Christ and His suffering, and how could this only be fully applicable to our Lord?
51. Which kings were reigning when Jeremiah prophesied, and what was the coming catastrophe to which the kingdom of Judah was heading?
52. What are the four great messianic prophecies in the book of Jeremiah?
53. What catastrophic event does the eulogy, Lamentations, bemoan?
54. Briefly interpret the opening vision of Ezekiel.
55. What was the substance of Ezekiel's second vision?
56. What do you believe is the main idea of the Ezekiel's great temple vision, and what is its significance?
57. What have the critics said concerning the date and authorship of the book of Daniel?
58. What was the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream?
59. What is the meaning of the seventy weeks as they relate prophetically?
60. Name some of the evils which existed in Israel at the time of Hosea, and which ones did he denounce?

61. Develop a brief outline of Hosea.
62. Develop a brief outline of the book of Joel.
63. What is the central theme of the book of Joel?
64. Where and when did Amos prophesy? What was his style of speaking?
65. Give a general outline of the book of Amos.
66. What is the subject of the prophecy of Obadiah?
67. In what way was Micah's ministry different from Isaiah's ministry?
68. What is the main theme of the book of Micah?
69. What is the subject of Nahum's prophecy?
70. Briefly tell how Nahum's prophecy was strikingly fulfilled.
71. Which city is the focus of Habakkuk's prophecy, and what is the subject matter of his prophecy?
72. To which kingdom did Zephaniah prophesy?
73. What was the content of Zephaniah's prophecy?
74. What picture does Haggai give of the moral condition of the returned remnant?
75. What is the prophecy of Zechariah?
76. What is the basic content of the prophecy of Malachi?
77. Construct the biblical development of the nature and person of God, as set forth in the progression of the Old Testament.
78. Briefly develop the history of the covenant, beginning with Adam, through to the New Testament and Christ.
79. What is Judaism? How did it come into being, and what is the Oral Law?
80. >When did the synagogue begin to appear, and what was its purpose and functions?

G 1:3 New Testament Examination

1. What is the meaning of the words *covenant* and *testament*?
2. Compare the new covenant with the old covenant.
3. How did the term *New Testament* come to be used in its present sense?
4. What was our Lord's purpose in using the Old Testament Scriptures during His ministry?
5. According to the New Testament, what were the charges that were made before Roman officials against Jesus and the early Christians?
6. Who made these charges and why?
7. What languages are used in the New Testament?
8. How did the New Testament come to be written?
9. What can be learned from the New Testament about the religion and philosophy of the Greek world?
10. Describe the government of Judea at the time of the origin of the Church, citing New Testament passages.
11. What were the powers of the high priest, of the Sanhedrin, and of the procurators?
12. Describe the Pharisees and the Sadducees according to the New Testament.
13. Describe the Jewish use of the Law in the time of the New Testament.
14. According to the New Testament, what were the promises given to Abraham, and what was the substance of them?
15. What is meant by *synoptic gospels*?
16. To whom was the Gospel of Matthew written, and what was its purpose and content?
17. To whom was the Gospel of Mark written, and what was its purpose and content?
18. To whom was the Gospel of Luke written, and what was its purpose and content?

19. Where does the author of the fourth Gospel present himself, in general, as an eyewitness of the life of Jesus?
20. What does John add to our knowledge of events connected with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus?
21. What is the meaning of the title *Son of Man* as applied to Jesus?
22. What is the meaning of the name *Son of God* as applied to Jesus?
23. What is meant by the phrase *the Kingdom of God*?
24. Using your Bible, make an outline of Paul's three missionary journeys.
25. What predictions did Jesus make about the resurrection?
26. How were these predictions received by the disciples?
27. What does the book of Acts teach us about the death of Jesus?
28. According to the book of Acts, what is the importance of the resurrection?
29. Who authored the book of Acts, and what is the date of its writing?
30. Compare the gift of tongues, as set forth in Acts 2, against the account of tongues given in 1 Corinthians 14.
31. Compare the trial and death of Stephen with the trial and death of Jesus.
32. What are the circumstances surrounding the choosing of the seven men as deacons?
33. What are the theological implications of the conversion of Cornelius?
34. Briefly give an account of Paul's conversion.
35. Briefly discuss Paul's apologetic in Acts 17.
36. What was decided at the Apostolic Council? What was left to be decided?
37. What is known about the relations of Paul and Peter after their meeting at Antioch?
38. Give a brief summary of the book of Romans, and the major doctrines taught by Paul.

39. What is Paul's teaching about justification as found in the book of Romans?
40. What place does Paul give to the doctrine of divine sovereignty in the book of Romans?
41. What is Paul's teaching on sanctification, according to the book of Romans?
42. What was Paul's teaching about the Jews in Romans 11?
43. What were some of the problems of the Corinthian Church?
44. How did the Apostle Paul deal with these problems?
45. Give a brief summary of the content and purpose of the book of Second Corinthians.
46. What does Paul teach in the book of Galatians about the Law, and what is the importance of the Law?
47. Does the Law, according to Paul, conflict with the covenant promises? Why or why not?
48. Who are the true children of Abraham, according to the book of Galatians?
49. Give a brief outline of the book of Ephesians.
50. What does Paul teach about the church as the body of Christ in Ephesians 2 and 3?
51. Construct a brief summary of the book of Philippians.
52. What is the major thrust of the book of Philippians?
53. Summarize the book of Colossians.
54. What does the book of Colossians teach about the nature and person of Christ?
55. What is Paul's teaching concerning Christ and philosophy in Colossians 2?
56. Give a brief summary of the book of First Thessalonians.
57. Summarize the teaching of the Thessalonian epistles about the second coming of Christ and related events.

58. Give a brief summary of the book of Philemon.
59. Summarize the book of First Timothy.
60. Summarize the book of Second Timothy.
61. Summarize the book of Titus.
62. In the Pastoral Epistles, what are some of the false teachings Paul identifies and refutes?
63. Give a brief summary of the Epistle of James.
64. What is the meaning of James' instruction concerning faith and works?
65. Briefly give a summary of the book of Hebrews, and the emphasis given to Christ Jesus as our High Priest.
66. Explain the comparison between Jesus and Melchizedek.
67. Summarize the First Epistle of Peter.
68. Summarize the Second Epistle of Peter.
69. What is the major theme of the book of Jude?
70. Briefly outline the book of First John.
71. What is the content of the Second and Third Epistles of John?
72. What is the difference between the First Epistle of John, and the Second and Third Epistles?
73. What is the teaching in the First Epistle of John about Christ, and why are we to test the spirits?
74. What is the purpose of the writing of the book of Revelation?
75. What is the major theme of the book of Revelation?
76. What is meant by the *angels* of the seven churches? How do we know that this is the correct interpretation?
77. What is meant by the thousand years in Revelation 20?
78. What does the book of Revelation teach about the return of Christ?
79. Explain the use of the term *church* in the New Testament.

80. How is the covenant of grace shown in the teaching of the New Testament?

G 1:4 Theological Examination

Hermeneutics

1. What gave rise to the method of allegorical interpretation?
2. Why is the method of allegorical interpretation faulty?
3. What is meant by the term *regula fidei*?
4. What was the position of the church in the Middle Ages concerning tradition and authority?
5. What was the relationship between dogmatics and exegesis during this period?
6. What is meant by *Scriptura Scripturae interpret*?
7. What is the major hermeneutical distinction between the pre-Reformation church and the church during the Reformation?
8. What has been the effect of the Reformation upon the post-Reformation church?
9. What is meant by verbal and plenary inspiration?
10. What is meant by the historico-grammatical method of interpretation?
11. Explain from the Bible its own teaching on divine inspiration.
12. What are some objections to the doctrine of verbal inspiration?
13. Is it essential that inspiration extend to every word in the Bible? Why?
14. What do we mean when we speak of unity and diversity in the Bible?
15. What do we mean when we speak of the historical interpretation of the Bible?
16. What are the basic principles of theological interpretation of the Bible?
17. What are the basic principles for interpreting prophecy?
18. What are some of the principles of interpreting the Psalms?
19. Why must we avoid developing doctrine on the basis of historical narratives?

20. What do we mean by *analogy of faith*?

Theology

21. What is meant by general revelation?

22. What is meant by special revelation?

23. What is the value and significance of general revelation as it relates to special revelation?

24. Why is special revelation necessary?

25. Define these three views of inspiration: mechanical, dynamical, organic.

26. What is meant by sufficiency of Scripture?

27. What does inerrancy mean?

28. Why do some people reject the doctrine of inerrancy?

29. What is the view held by liberation theology concerning the authority of Scripture?

30. What is the theological teaching of liberation theology?

31. How do we explain the existence of God?

32. What are the *theistic proofs* of God's existence?

33. What is meant by the incomprehensibility of God?

34. What do the following names for God mean: *Elohim, Adonai, El-Shaddai, Yahweh, Theos, Kurios, Pater*?

35. What is the true source and method for determining the attributes of God?

36. What do we mean by the incommunicable attributes of God?

37. Define the following incommunicable attributes: self-existence, immutability, infinity, and simplicity.

38. What do we mean when we speak of the communicable attributes of God?

39. Define the following communicable attributes of God: spirituality of God, knowledge of God, wisdom of God, veracity of God, goodness of God, holiness of God, righteousness of God, sovereignty of God.

40. What does the theological term *Trinity* mean, and defend this doctrine from the Old and New Testament using your Bible?
41. What is meant by ontological Trinity?
42. What is meant by economical Trinity?
43. Define the following persons and their roles in the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
44. What do we mean by divine decrees? How do they relate to time and history?
45. Explain the doctrine of predestination.
46. What is divine election?
47. What is divine reprobation?
48. What does the Bible teach about the creation of a spiritual world?
49. What is meant by the term *common grace*? What is your position?
50. What is the origin of man?
51. What does evolution teach concerning the origin of man?
52. What is meant when we say that man is made in the image of God?
53. Explain the fourfold nature of man.
54. Explain the following theories: dichotomy and trichotomy.
55. Explain the following theories of the origin of the soul: pre-existentialism, traducianism, creationism.
56. What is the covenant of works, and how does it relate to man?
57. Explain the doctrine of original sin and its effects on the human race.
58. What is the essential character of sin?
59. What does the Bible teach concerning the transmission of sin?
60. Define the doctrine of total depravity.
61. What is meant by actual sin?
62. What is the Arminian view of sin?

63. What is the Bible's teaching on the punishment for sin, and why?
64. What is meant by the term *covenant*?
65. What is the *covenant of redemption*?
66. What is the *covenant of grace*?
67. What are the different dispensations of the covenant of grace?
68. Define the essential character of Christ.
69. What the two natures of Christ?
70. Define the two states of Christ.
71. What are the three offices of Christ, and how does Christ execute these offices?
72. Explain the nature and extent of the atonement.
73. What is the operation of the Holy Spirit in salvation?
74. Explain the doctrine of effectual calling.
75. Explain the doctrine of regeneration.
76. Explain the doctrine of conversion.
77. Explain the doctrine of saving faith.
78. Define the doctrine of justification by faith, and what do we mean when we say justification is by faith?
79. Explain the doctrine of sanctification.
80. Define the doctrine of perseverance of the saints.
81. What do the Scriptures teach about death, and the state of man thereafter?
82. What do the Scriptures teach about the second coming of Christ?
83. Explain the following millennial views: *pretribulation/ premillennialism*; *historical premillennialism*; *Amillennialism*; *postmillennialism*.

Ecclesiology and Sacraments

84. Explain the doctrine of the church, its power, authority, mission, offices, sacraments, and discipline.
85. Compare the following systems of church government, and explain the differences: Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, Congregational, and Presbyterian.
86. What are the offices of the church? Explain them.
87. What is meant by the phrase *means of grace*?
88. What is a sacrament?
89. What does the Bible teach about baptism, and who should receive baptism?
90. What does the Bible teach about the Lord's Supper, and who should receive the Lord's Supper?
91. What place does the Word of God occupy in the church?
92. How would you respond if a Baptist family came to your church and applied for membership, but did not wish to have their children baptized?
93. What are the eight divisions in the *Book of Church Order*? Describe their purposes?
94. Explain the section entitled Church Covenant?
95. What is the evangelical mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly?
96. What teachings and practices are rejected by the RPCGA as unacceptable to the Gospel of Christ?
97. What are the three requirements for any substantive change in the RPCGA's constitution?
98. Define ecclesiastical liberty.
99. What is the required response of an officer of the RPCGA in the event that a church member disturbs the peace of the church concerning an issue of liberty?
100. What are the three basic principles of biblical ecclesiastical unity?

101. Define the relationship between congregation, presbytery, synod and general assembly.
102. Why has the RPCGA taken the position that incorporation of ecclesiastical bodies is a violation of the doctrine of the headship of Christ over the Church?
103. Name the ordinary officers of the church, and describe their functions.
104. Give three synonyms for the title presbyter.
105. Describe the duties of a pastor, a church governor and a deacon.
106. What is the difference between a pastor and a doctor?
107. What are the two means by which an elder may be received into the RPCGA?
108. What are the qualifications of elders?
109. Define the provisional elder.
110. What are the requirements for the provisional elder as they relate to presbytery?
111. Define ordination, and explain why it is necessary for ordination to be performed by presbytery.
112. Why are Independency (unaffiliated or non-denominational) and Congregationalism incompatible with the Presbyterian doctrine of ordination?
113. Define the phrase binding power of assemblies.
114. Name the seven promises made in an ordination vow.
115. What are the four promises made by a congregation at the ordination and installation of its pastor?
116. What are the minimum requirements as to numbers of congregations and elders for a presbytery?
117. Define the following terms: mother presbytery, mission presbytery, congregation, and ordinances.
118. Must a session find a member guilty of an act warranting suspension in order to bar him from the Lord's Table?
119. With whom does the power to excommunicate reside?

120. >Suppose a congregation, after having been properly received into the RPCGA, decides to unilaterally remove itself from the denomination. Explain the implications of this action and the appropriate responses by the pastor and presbytery.
121. Define mission congregation. Define full-status congregation.
122. What is the function of a stated clerk in every assembly?
123. According to the regulative principle of worship, what are the required elements of public worship?
124. Define the following terms: ecclesiastical discipline, administrative discipline, and judicial discipline.
125. What are the distinctions between administrative and judicial actions?
126. What is original jurisdiction?
127. What are the only means by which membership in a congregation may be removed in the RPCGA?
128. What is the extent of a presbytery's jurisdiction?
129. What is to be done with cases of incomplete adjudication?
130. What are the steps, in order, for a judicial process to take place?
131. What must the accuser solemnly be warned of?
132. What is the relationship of Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1 to the formal judicial process?
133. Why is the belief in a judicial process essential to a Reformed view of the church?
134. Define *slander of a minister* in relation to the requirement, that only in the mouth of two or three witnesses may a charge be brought against an elder or deacon.
135. What are the rights of the accused in a court trial?
136. Enumerate the rules of evidence for an ecclesiastical trial.
137. Enumerate the rules for trial proceedings.
138. When may a case without full process legitimately take place?
139. What are the four degrees of censure? Define them.

140. Define: an appeal, a protest, and a complaint.
141. Define a quorum.
142. Name the book which is used by the RPCGA to establish administrative procedure and precedent?
143. Define a *specially called meeting*.
144. What is the frequency of meetings for synods and for general assembly?
145. What is the official position of the RPCGA in the matter of a congregation bringing property into the denomination?
146. Enumerate the steps for making changes in the *Book of Church Order*.
147. Explain RPCGA's Reformed missionary strategy.
148. What must a candidate for ordination submit to presbytery before he may be examined?
149. What is the proper response of any judicatory in the RPCGA, if a presbytery has failed to competently examine a candidate, and yet has admitted him into the RPCGA?
150. Explain the significance of civil lawsuits in their relationship to differences between the church and its members.
151. In which areas of knowledge must a man be examined for the Gospel ministry?
152. Define at least six areas of subscription to the *Westminster Standards* that are within the acceptable parameters of deviance.
153. Explain church rebellion in its relationship to the pastor, and in its relationship to the presbytery?
154. Explain the *divine right* of presbytery.
155. Give the history of the origin of the RPCGA.

G 1:5 Apologetic Examination

1. Upon what foundation should a Christian philosophy be constructed?
2. What is your view of neutrality in theoretical thought?
3. What is a presupposition, and what is the presuppositional method?
4. Define epistemology.

5. What is the difference between Christian and non-Christian epistemology?
6. What is rationalism?
7. What is empiricism?
8. What is irrationalism?
9. What is pragmatism?
10. What is existentialism?
11. What is humanism?
12. Construct a biblical philosophy of history.
13. Develop a biblical philosophy of civil government.
14. What does it mean to know: analogically, univocally, and equivocally?
15. What is the difference between an evidential system of apologetics and a presuppositional system of apologetics?
16. Why would we reject or accept the evidential system of apologetics?
17. What is truth?
18. What is the relationship between logic and truth?
19. How many sources of truth are there?
20. Develop a biblical view of economics and culture which would transform a society from a non-Christian system to a Christian system.

G 1:6 Church History Examination

1. Explain *Hellenistic Judaism*. What is its relationship to the Septuagint?
2. How did the Greek and Roman cultures affect the spread of the Gospel by the early church?
3. Identify the *Apostolic Fathers*, and comment upon the content of their teachings regarding: God, Jesus Christ, sacraments, faith, good works, the Church, and the future.
4. Identify Gnosticism and Montanism, and give specific examples of their presence in the church today.
5. Who were the apologists, and what was their task?

6. Who was Origen, and what was his contribution to the church?
7. Who were the poleemics? Comment upon some of their teachings.
8. Who was Aurelious Augustine, and what was his contribution to the Council of Chalcedon, even though he was not directly involved?
9. Why was the Council of Nicea considered to be the most important event of the fourth century?
10. >Why were the ecumenical councils convened, and would an ecumenical council of today be similar in function and purpose? Why or why not?
11. What was the purpose of the first Council of Constantinople?
12. What was the purpose of the Council of Ephesus?
13. Why is the Council of Chalcedon considered to be the foundation of Western liberty?
14. Why did the Romans persecute the Christians?
15. Why did the episcopal form of church government take precedence over the presbyterial form in the early church?
16. What conditions in Europe prepared the way for the work of the Reformers?
17. Who were the Reformers, and what were they trying to accomplish?
18. What were the major differences between the positions of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin regarding worship and the sacraments?
19. What is monasticism, and why is it in error?
20. What were the motives behind the crusades of the Middle Ages?
21. What was Johannes Gutenberg's contribution to the Reformation, and how was it significant?
22. What was the significance of Luther's *95 Theses*?
23. What two significant issues were settled at the Diet of Worms, in April of 1521, and why were they significant?
24. What was Calvin's form of church government?
25. What was Calvin's role in Geneva?

26. Who were the Anabaptists?
27. What were Anabaptists' views on church and state?
28. How was the beginning of the Reformation in Scotland different from its beginnings in other countries?
29. Identify John Wycliffe and William Tyndale. How did their works affect the church, and the Reformation?
30. What was the significance of the *Act of Supremacy* and the *Law of Treason and Heresy*, which were both passed by King Henry VIII of England?
31. What is the significance of the Council of Trent?
32. What were the causes for the halt in the progress of the Reformation?
33. Who were the Puritans, and what was their significance?
34. What was the purpose and outcome of the Council of Dordt?
35. Why was the assembly called to Westminster, and what did this assembly accomplish for the church?
36. What was the Great Awakening in the American church?
37. How did liberalism creep into the church of the twentieth century?
38. Develop a brief outline of the history of the Presbyterian Church.

G 1:7 Practical Theology Examination

1. What is the biblical view of missions?
2. How did missions work help spread the Gospel in the early church?
3. How did the Reformation church see its responsibility towards missions?
4. How did the Puritans view missions?
5. Who is considered the father of modern day missions?
6. What is biblical evangelism?
7. How should the Gospel be presented to the unregenerate?
8. What does the term *discipleship* mean?

9. Is discipleship different from evangelism?
10. Name four major cults in the world today?
11. Name five major religions in the world, and what is the content of their religious beliefs?
12. Why do we reject these religions?
13. What is homiletics?
14. What is the importance of preaching?
15. What type of preaching is considered biblical preaching?
16. What are the requirements for a pastor according to the books of First Timothy and Titus?
17. Why do we not allow women to preach or hold office in the church?
18. What do you see as the biblical responsibility of pastors towards their church and community?
19. What are the functions of the office of minister?
20. What is nouthetic counseling?
21. What are some of the problems with modern psychology?
22. What role does Scripture play in counseling?
23. What are the two great revivals in history?
24. What were the circumstances surrounding these revivals?
25. What are the administrative functions of the church, and how should they be carried out?
26. What type of music should the church use?
27. What is the regulatory principle of worship?
28. What is the biblical view of the relationship between church and state?
29. Develop a Christian view of education.
30. Should Christians be involved in civil government? Why or why not?

SECTION 2: Licensure Examination for Preaching the Gospel

G 2:1 Preface

Those men who desire to be licensed to preach the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall complete and submit the following *Checklist for Licentiates* to the proper ecclesiastical body not less than thirty working days prior to any examination.

Checklist for Licentiates (See Checklist for Elders, Section G1: IA.)

G 2:2 Theological Examination

- A. Those men who desire to be licensed to preach the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, must pass the *Theological Examination* as partial fulfillment of the requirement for licensure.
- B. These questions are intended to be used as a guideline for examination. The examiners must ask at least two-thirds of these questions, and may also ask questions that do not appear in this list. The candidate is not required to answer every question, but is responsible for achieving a passing grade of at least 80% of the questions asked.

Theological Examination, (See Section G1:4.)

SECTION 3: Deacon Examination

G 3:1 Preface

- A. Those men who desire to be ordained for the office of deacon shall complete and submit the following *Checklist for Deacons* to the proper ecclesiastical body not less than thirty working days prior to any examination.

Checklist for Deacons (See Checklist for Elders, Section G1: IA.)

G 3:2 Theological Examination

- B. Those men who desire to be ordained for the office of deacon must pass the *Theological Examination* as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for ordination.
- C. These questions are intended to be used as a guideline for examination. The examiners must ask at least two-thirds of these questions, and may also ask questions that do not appear in this list. The candidate is not required to answer every question, but is responsible for achieving a passing grade of at least 80% of the questions asked.

Theological Examination, (See Section G1:IA.)

SECTION 4: Acceptable Parameters for Subscription to the Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly

(i.e., Westminster Standards and Book of Church Order)

G 4:1 Any areas of deviation from the standards at any time, by any officer, except as mentioned below, must immediately be brought to the attention of his presbytery. As long as the officer submits to the *Westminster Standards* in teaching, and does not teach in the area of his stated deviation, he may be provisionally received by a presbytery until the matter is reviewed and decided by the general assembly. Through this procedure, the general assembly will be able to gradually expand the list acceptable parameters on the basis of its decisions.

G 4:2 When a man who is ordained requests acceptance into a presbytery, and he is clearly deficient in one or more areas of doctrine (beyond that of lack of knowledge of the original biblical languages), he may only be received into the presbytery as a provisional elder.

G 4:3 Acceptable Parameters

1. Apologetics (classical or presuppositional) - WCF 1.
2. Amillenialism and Postmillennialism are the acceptable millennial views; any other millennial position to be considered must acknowledge only one general bodily resurrection from the dead - WCF 33.
3. Regarding the origin of the soul (creationism or traducianism, but not pre-existentialism) - WCF 6.
4. Effectual calling, i.e., who does the drawing? (the Father or the Holy Spirit) - WCF 3, 10.
5. The pope is not necessarily *the* anti-Christ, but may be *an* anti-Christ - WCF 25.
6. Infralapsarianism or supralapsarianism - WCF 3.
7. Differences in the application of the general equity principle - WCF 19:4.
8. The Scriptures allow only for a literal, twenty-four hour, consecutive, continuous, six-day creation (we accept no alternatives) - WCF 4.
9. It is recognized that some persons use the term *common grace* to describe what is taught in WCF 5:7. Since the biblical use of the

term *grace* refers to salvation only, and *WCF* 5:7 addresses God's goodness, a preferable term is *common goodness*.

10. We do not believe that God sincerely desires the salvation of all men, but that the Gospel is to be freely preached unto all men, and it calls them from sin unto righteousness - *WCF* 3.
11. Christian liberty may be asserted either in favor of practicing a liberty or abstaining from a liberty - *WCF* 20.
12. The essentials of an acceptable baptism must include: the use of water; administration in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19) by a duly ordained minister of the Gospel in the Church of Jesus Christ; and, in the case of children, presentation by one or both believing parents - *WCF* 28.
13. The singing of hymns and/or psalms.
14. The strictness of Sabbath keeping must include regular attending of congregational worship on Sunday.

DIRECTORY
FOR
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP
AND CHRISTIAN LIVING

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

H. Directory for Church Membership and Christian Living

SECTION 1: The Nature of the Church and the Qualifications for Membership

H 1:1 The Church of Jesus Christ is the ordained institution according to Holy Scripture whereby those who profess true faith, along with their children, are to join in fellowship, submitting themselves to this ecclesiastical government for the preaching, teaching and discipline thereof.

H 1:2 The nature of the true Church is:

- A. That the church is bound to the Holy Scripture and Christ as its head. (See BCO B1:1-B2:2)
- B. That it is governed by the Presbyterian system of church government. (see BCO B8:1-B11:7)
- C. That all particular congregations meet in one location weekly for Lord's Day services. (See BCO C:2:1)
- D. That it has properly trained men for the ministry, Elders and Deacons, who have been ordained for the work of those offices. (See BCO B3:1-B7:8)
- E. That it preaches and teaches the Word of God, rightfully administers the sacraments, and maintains church discipline. (See BCO C2:2-C2:7)
- F. That its mission is the preaching of the Gospel around the world as the means of calling individuals to Christ. (See BCO A6:5)

H 1:3 The Purpose of Church Membership is as follows:

- A. The fellowship of believers is the social structure in Christianity wherein those who profess true faith are bound to join themselves. As that ordained institution that is founded upon Christ Jesus our Lord, those who have the true Biblical faith cannot deny its appointment, importance or purpose as set forth in the Holy Scripture, deny its existence, condemn any part thereof, apart from the authority of a properly constituted denomination, nor be set apart from its membership and participation while professing Christianity. (Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 1:20-23; Ephesians 4:8-11; Psalm 68:18)
- B. Church Membership is an outward sign of an individual's having made a true profession of faith. Anyone, under normal circumstances, having been taught, found outside the membership is acting in contradiction to the command of Holy Scripture, which maintains that to be Christian is to belong to the visible church, as one under authority of Christ's ordained administration. (Hebrews 13:7, 17; Matthew 16:19)

- C. Church membership is the visible bond of union that all believers have in common with Christ Jesus our Lord. It is the visible manifestation of His covenant in history. (1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Psalm 2:8)
- D. Church Membership is also the visible bond of union with Christ and with His Church throughout the world, which represents the universal church (visible and invisible) made up of all believers. It is the visible manifestation of His covenant in history and supra-history. (Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18)

H 1:4 The requirements for communicant membership are:

- A. A credible profession of faith in Christ, commensurate with their age and mental abilities, given before the Session of a particular congregation. (1 Corinthians 12:12-13)
- B. The prospective communicate member is required to read, or be instructed from, the Westminster Standards (confession and catechisms), as well as, the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly and agree to submission unto their teachings and practices.
- C. An interview prior to membership with the Session of a particular congregation covering any and all questions pertaining to, along with the instruction of rights, privileges, and duties of church members and due process with in this denomination.
- D. The prospective church member must sign the membership covenant and vows that affirms their understanding of all duties and requirements of church membership, as well as, the teaching, practice and administrative processes held by this denomination.
- E. The church member must take the vows of Church Membership (each and every person of age) before the congregation at a regular Sunday morning worship service.

SECTION 2 The Privileges of Church Membership (Officers and Members)

- H 2:1** The right of voting is the privilege of church membership. This right is completed by head-of-house-hold voting and is carried out under the direction of the Session's guidance in the particular congregation that the individual has chosen to join. In the case of individual church membership, those who are 18 years of age or older, will be considered as head-of-house-hold.
- H 2:2** The right of the Lord's Supper for those who come before the Session of the particular congregation of which they are a member and have received proper instruction concerning the nature and meaning of the table, and having given a credible profession as to faith and understanding of the Table, and thereby receiving the approval of the Session.

- A. All church members ought to study carefully the teaching of this denomination on issues of communion as set forth in questions 168 -177 of the Larger Catechism.

H 2:3 The voting church member has the privilege of choosing pastor(s), church governors and deacons to govern and serve the particular congregation, according to the Book of Church Order of this denomination. The approval of all officers is dependent upon the approval of the Presbytery.

H 2:4 All church members have the privilege of pastoral oversight, both of the pastor(s) and church governors of the church in spiritual matters.

H 2:5 All church members have the privilege of diaconate oversight in matters pertaining to their physical needs (as God has supplied the church with such abilities).

H 2:6 All church members have the privilege of being under the watch care of the members, along with their fellowship, prayers and assistance in matters pertaining to their relationship.

H 2:7 All church members have has the privilege of church discipline for the better caring of their soul, developing proper Christian behavior and conduct in their lives.

H 2:8 All church members have the privilege of due process in matters pertaining to discipline, administration or doctrine by following the duly constituted procedures of this denomination as set forth in the Book of Church Order. (See BCO D1:1-D10:4)

SECTION 3 The Duties for Christian Living (Officers and Members)

H 3:1 The Scriptures do hold forth that Christians are required to profess and practice their Christian faith among their officers and fellow members.

H 3:2 All Christians are required to strive to perform the following to the best of their ability as members of the Church of Jesus Christ.

- A. The daily study of God's Holy Word under the godly oversight of the Session of the Church.
- B. The daily advancement of Christ's Kingdom through living the Christian life before the church and the world, as a testimony of both their faith and as representatives of Jesus Christ.
- C. The proper Christian attitude concerning their disposition of being indwelt by the Holy Spirit in behaviors that are required of those who profess faith in Christ.
- D. To honor Christ in our attitude and actions that involve inter-exchange with the world, whether it is of a spiritual or social nature, including, but not limited to, economics, culture, taxation, politics and such other practices.

- E. In honoring Christ through proper (biblical) obedience to the civil magistrate according to the dictates of Holy Scripture. The right of private judgment is always required of a believer.
- F. Submission to proper spiritual authority as defined in the Holy Scripture, as it relates to the pastors, church governors, Presbyteries, and the General Assembly.
- G. Submission unto and agreement to follow the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly in all issues and matters of faith and practice.
- H. Not turning to the world or civil courts to settle matters of ecclesiastical dispute between fellow Christians or church officers.
- I. To show respect to the pastors, church governors and deacons with the honor due to their offices in all matters coming before them. Always giving them the privileges of meeting with anyone who has taken offense with the carrying out of their duties.
- J. Before breaking the vows of membership, prior to any departure from the church, the church member agrees to seek to reconcile with those who have offended and/or whom are presumed to be at fault in doctrine or practice.
- K. The church member shall regularly attend Sunday worship service(s). It would be proper for the members to notify the pastor and/or session concerning an absence in order that prayer or other needs may be addressed.
- L. The church member has the duty to keep peace in the body of Christ, seeking to hold forth love, kindness, gentleness, having the mind of Christ and thereby having one mind and one spirit.
- M. The church member should maintain the honor of other church members as they would their own.
- N. It is the duty of church members to properly examine themselves prior to coming to the Lord's Table each time it is offered. (See WCF-LC Questions 168-177).
- O. Church members should pray daily for those in authority over them, both in ecclesiastical and civil positions.
- P. Church members should maintain personal and family worship times in their homes according to the Directory of Family Worship.

- Q. Church members are to train up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, according to the Holy Scripture, seeing that their children receive a Christian education consisting of doing what lies within me to enlighten their understanding, correct their temper, form their manners and habits, and fit them for their future stations in life, according to the counsels and commands of Holy Scripture, and are properly catechized according to the standards of this denomination.
- R. The Church member should notify the Pastor or Session of anything that is of an important nature or issue that can disturb the peace and well being of the church.
- S. Church members shall seek to participate in all church activities, as God permits, and the Session approves, to further the unity and work of the ministry in the particular congregation.
- T. The church member shall defend the reputation of the pastors, church governors and deacons in the Lord, while attending the church as a member, or after leaving the church having properly been removed according to the Book of Church Order and going elsewhere to church.
- U. The church member must support the church with tithes and offerings as God has provided on a regular basis. According to the Holy Scripture, tithing is 10% of an individual's income and offerings are freely given beyond the tithe. The church member's interests concerning church finances are fulfilled with the giving of the tithe and offering. It is the duty of the elders to administer the funds according to the needs of the church and its functions. The Session is accountable to presbytery in such matters and their determination will be the final authority on such issues.
- V. The church member should bear one another's burdens as it relates to fellow Christians, both within and outside of the particular congregation.
- W. The church member should visit sick (ill) congregants, taking into account their spiritual and physical needs, as the Lord allows, with respect to their physical circumstances, requests, and considering your gifts under the direction of the Church Session.
- X. Church members are to pray for fellow church members.
- Y. Church Members shall refrain from idle talk or gossip which is destructive to Christian humility, and fails in giving proper submission to the Session or to fellow church members.
- Z. The church member agrees that no accusation will be made against any one with out first consulting with the pastor and/or Session, and only then after meeting the requirements of Matthew 18.

- AA. In all offenses, Matthew 18 is to be followed prior to formal charges being made and should be under the direction of the pastor and/or Session.
- BB. The church member shall avoid divisive issues which are matters of opinion (or conscience) as set forth in Romans 14.
- CC. The church member is to avoid criticism and/or condemnation of any officer of the church to any other church member without first coming to the Pastor and/or the Session.
- DD. Any other issues that might arise not covered in this Directory shall be first brought to the attention of the Pastor and/or Session prior to any actions being taken by a church member.

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DIRECTORY OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

I. Directory of the Westminster Confession of Faith

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

CHAPTER I *Of the Holy Scripture*

1. Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable;^a yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation;^b therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his Church;^c and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing;^d which maketh the holy Scripture to be most necessary;^e those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.^f

a. Psa 19:1-3; Rom 1:19-20; 1:32 *with* 2:1; 2:14-15. • *b.* 1 Cor 1:21; 2:13-14. • *c.* Heb 1:1. • *d.* Prov 22:19-21; Isa 8:19-20; Mat 4:4, 7, 10; Luke 1:3-4; Rom 15:4. • *e.* 2 Tim 3:15; 2 Pet 1:19. • *f.* Heb 1:1-2.

2. Under the name of holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, which are these:

Of the Old Testament.

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

Of the New Testament.

The Gospels according to	Galatians	Philemon
Matthew	Ephesians	The Epistle to the Paul's Epistles to
Mark	Philippians	the Hebrews
Luke	Colossians	The Epistle of James
John	1 Thessalonians	The first and second Epistles of Peter
The Acts of the Apostles	2 Thessalonians	The first, second, and third Epistles
Romans	1 Timothy	of John
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy	The Epistle of Jude
2 Corinthians	Titus	The Revelation of John

All which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.^a

a. Luke 16:29, 31; Eph 2:20; 2 Tim 3:16; Rev 22:18-19.

3. The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the Canon of the Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings.^a

a. Luke 24:27, 44; Rom 3:2; 2 Pet 1:21.

4. The authority of the holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the Author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.^a

a. 1 Thes 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:19, 21; 1 John 5:9.

5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the holy Scripture;^a and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God; yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.^b

a. 1 Tim 3:15. • *b.* Isa 59:21; John 16:13-14; 1 Cor 2:10-12; 1 John 2:20, 27.

6. The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.^a Nevertheless we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word;^b and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.^c

a. Gal 1:8-9; 2 Thes 2:2; 2 Tim 3:15-17. • *b.* John 6:45; 1 Cor 2:9-12. • *c.* 1 Cor 11:13-14; 14:26, 40.

7. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all;^a yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.^b

a. 2 Pet 3:16. • *b.* Psalms 119:105, 130.

8. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical;^a so as in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them.^b But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them,^c therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come,^d that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner,^e and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.^f

a. Mat 5:18. • *b.* Isa 8:20; John 5:39, 46; Acts 15:15. • *c.* John 5:39. • *d.* 1 Cor 14:6, 9, 11-12, 24, 27-28. • *e.* Col 3:16. • *f.* Rom 15:4.

9. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.^a

a. Acts 15:15; 2 Pet 1:20-21.

10. The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.^a

a. Mat 22:29, 31; Eph 2:20 *with* Acts 28:25.

CHAPTER 2

Of God, and of the Holy Trinity

1. There is but one only^a living and true God,^b who is infinite in being and perfection,^c a most pure spirit,^d invisible,^e without body, parts,^f or passions,^g immutable,^h immense,ⁱ eternal,^k incomprehensible,^l almighty,^m most wise,ⁿ most holy,^o most free,^p most absolute,^q working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will,^r for his own glory;^s most loving,^t gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;^u the rewarder of them that diligently seek him;^w and withal most just and terrible in his judgments;^x hating all sin,^y and who will by no means clear the guilty.^z

a. Deut 6:4; 1 Cor 8:4, 6. • *b.* Jer 10:10; 1 Thes 1:9. • *c.* Job 11:7-9; 26:14. • *d.* John 4:24. • *e.* 1 Tim 1:17. • *f.* Deut 4:15-16; John 4:24 *with* Luke 24:39. • *g.* Acts 14:11, 15. • *h.* Mal 3:6; James 1:17. • *i.* 1 Kings 8:27; Jer 23:23-24. • *k.* Psalms 90:2; 1 Tim 1:17. • *l.* Psalms 145:3. • *m.* Gen 17:1; Rev 4:8. • *n.* Rom 16:27. • *o.* Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8. • *p.* Psalms 115:3. • *q.* Exod 3:14. • *r.* Eph 1:11. • *s.* Prov 16:4; Rom 11:36. • *t.* 1 John 4:8, 16. • *u.* Exod 34:6-7. • *w.* Heb 11:6. • *x.* Neh 9:32-33. • *y.* Psalms 5:5-6. • *z.* Exod 34:7; Nahum 1:2-3.

2. God hath all life,^a glory,^b goodness,^c blessedness,^d in and of himself; and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made,^e nor deriving any glory from them,^f but only manifesting his own glory in, by, unto, and upon them: he is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things;^g and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth.^h In his sight all things are open and manifest;ⁱ his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature;^k so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain.^l He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands.^m To him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, he is pleased to require of them.ⁿ

a. John 5:26. • *b.* Acts 7:2. • *c.* Psalms 119:68. • *d.* Rom 9:5; 1 Tim 6:15. • *e.* Acts 17:24-25. • *f.* Job 22:2-3. • *g.* Rom 11:36. • *h.* Dan 4:25, 35; 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 4:11. • *i.* Heb 4:13. • *k.* Psalms 147:5; Rom 11:33-34. • *l.* Ezek 11:5; Acts 15:18. • *m.* Psalms 145:17; Rom 7:12. • *n.* Rev 5:12-14.

3. In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.^a The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father;^b the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.^c

a. Mat 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; 1 John 5:7. • *b.* John 1:14, 18. • *c.* John 15:26; Gal 4:6.

CHAPTER 3

Of God's Eternal Decree

1. God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass;^a yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin,^b nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.^c

a. Rom 9:15, 18; 11:33; Eph 1:11; Heb 6:17. • *b.* James 1:13, 17; 1 John 1:5. • *c.* Prov 16:33; Mat 17:12; John 19:11; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28.

2. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions,^a yet hath he not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.^b

a. 1 Sam 23:11-12; Mat 11:21, 23; Acts 15:18. • *b.* Rom 9:11, 13, 16, 18.

3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels^a are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.^b

a. Mat 25:41; 1 Tim 5:21. • *b.* Prov 16:4; Rom 9:22-23; Eph 1:5-6.

4. These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it can not be either increased or diminished.^a

a. John 13:18; 2 Tim 2:19.

5. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory,^a out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto,^b and all to the praise of his glorious grace.^c

a. Rom 8:30; Eph 1:4, 9, 11; 1 Thes 5:9; 2 Tim 1:9. • *b.* Rom 9:11, 13, 16; Eph 1:4, 9. • *c.* Eph 1:6, 12.

6. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto.^a Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ,^b are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified,^c and kept by his power through faith unto salvation.^d Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.^e

a. Eph 1:4-5; Eph 2:10; 2 Thes 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2. • *b.* 1 Thes 5:9-10; Titus 2:14. • *c.* Rom 8:30; Eph 1:5; 2 Thes 2:13. • *d.* 1 Pet 1:5. • *e.* John 6:64-65; 8:47; 10:26; 17:9; Rom 8:28-39; 1 John 2:19.

7. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.^a

a. Mat 11:25-26; Rom 9:17-18, 21-22; 2 Tim 2:19-20; 1 Pet 2:8; Jude 1:4.

8. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care,^a that men attending the will of God revealed in his Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election.^b So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God;^c and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.^d

a. Deut 29:29; Rom 9:20. • *b.* 2 Pet 1:10. • *c.* Rom 11:33; Eph 1:6. • *d.* Luke 10:20; Rom 8:33; 11:5-6, 20; 2 Pet 1:10.

CHAPTER 4 ***Of Creation***

1. It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,^a for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness,^b in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.^c

a. Gen 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4; John 1:2-3; Heb 1:2. • *b.* Psalms 33:5-6; 104:24; Jer 10:12; Rom 1:20. • *c.* Gen 1 *throughout*; Acts 17:24; Col 1:16; Heb 11:3.

2. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female,^a with reasonable and immortal souls,^b endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after his own image,^c having the law of God written in their hearts,^d and power to fulfil it;^e and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change.^f Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil;^g which while they kept they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.^h

a. Gen 1:27. • *b.* Gen 2:7 *with* Eccles 12:7 *and* Mat 10:28 *and* Luke 23:43. • *c.* Gen 1:26; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10. • *d.* Rom 2:14-15. • *e.* Eccles 7:29. • *f.* Gen 3:6; Eccles 7:29. • *g.* Gen 2:17; 3:8-11, 23. • *h.* Gen 1:26, 28.

CHAPTER 5 ***Of Providence***

1. God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold,^a direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things,^b from the greatest even to the least,^c by his most wise and holy providence,^d according to his infallible fore-knowledge^e and the free and immutable counsel of his own will,^f to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.^g

a. Heb 1:3. • *b.* Psalm 135:6; Dan 4:34-35; Acts 17:25-26, 28; Job 38-41 *throughout*. • *c.* Mat 10:29-31. • *d.* Psalm 104:24; 145:17; Prov 15:3. • *e.* Psalm 94:8-11; Acts 15:18. • *f.* Psalm 33:10-11; Eph 1:11. • *g.* Gen 45:7; Psalm 145:7; Isa 63:14; Rom 9:17; Eph 3:10.

2. Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly,^a yet by the same providence he ordereth them to fall out, according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.^b

a. Acts 2:23. • *b.* Gen 8:22; Exod 21:13 *with* Deut 19:5; 1 Kings 22:28, 34; Isa 10:6-7; Jer 31:35.

3. God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means,^a yet is free to work without,^b above,^c and against them,^d at his pleasure.

a. Isa 55:10-11; Hosea 2:21-22; Acts 27:31, 44. • *b.* Job 34:10; Hosea 1:7; Mat 4:4. • *c.* Rom 4:19-21. • *d.* 2 Kings 6:6; Dan 3:27.

4. The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men,^a and that not by a bare permission,^b but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding,^c and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends;^d yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God; who, being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin.^e

a. 2 Sam 16:10; 24:1 *with* 1 Chron 21:1; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 1 Chron 10:4, 13-14; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28; Rom 11:32-34. • *b.* Acts 14:16. • *c.* 2 Kings 19:28; Psa 76:10. • *d.* Gen 50:20; Isa 10:6-7, 12. • *e.* Psa 50:21; James 1:13-14, 17; 1 John 2:16.

5. The most wise, righteous, and gracious God doth oftentimes leave for a season his own children to manifold temptations and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they be humbled;^a and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support unto himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for sundry other just and holy ends.^b

a. 2 Sam 24:1; 2 Chron 32:25-26, 31. • *b.* Psa 73 *throughout*; Psa 77:1-10, 12; Mark 14:66-72 *with* John 21:15-17; 2 Cor 12:7-9.

6. As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as a righteous judge, for former sins, doth blind and harden,^a from them he not only withholdeth his grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings and wrought upon in their hearts,^b but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had,^c and exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasion of sin;^d and withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan;^e whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for the softening of others.^f

a. Rom 1:24, 26, 28; 11:7-8. • *b.* Deut 29:4. • *c.* Mat 13:12; 25:29. • *d.* Deut 2:30; 2 Kings 8:12-13. • *e.* Psa 81:11-12; 2 Thes 2:10-12. • *f.* Exod 7:3 *with* 8:15; 8:32; Isa 6:9-10 *with* Acts 28:26-27; Isa 8:14; 2 Cor 2:15-16; 1 Pet 2:7-8.

7. As the providence of God doth, in general, reach to all creatures, so, after a most special manner, it taketh care of his Church, and disposeth all things to the good thereof.^a

a. Isa 43:3-5, 14; Amos 9:8-9; Rom 8:28; 1 Tim 4:10.

CHAPTER 6

Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment Thereof

1. Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit.^a This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.^b
a. Gen 3:13; 2 Cor 11:3. • *b.* Rom 11:32.
2. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God,^a and so became dead in sin,^b and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.^c
a. Gen 3:6-8; Eccl 7:29; Rom 3:23. • *b.* Gen 2:17; Eph 2:1. • *c.* Gen 6:5; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:10-19; Titus 1:15.
3. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed,^a and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.^b
a. Gen 1:27-28 and 2:16-17 and Acts 17:26 with Rom 5:12, 15-19 and 1 Cor 15:21-22; 1Cor 15:45, 49. • *b.* Gen 5:3; Job 14:4; 15:14; Psalms 51:5.
4. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good,^a and wholly inclined to all evil,^b do proceed all actual transgressions.^c
a. Rom 5:6; 7:18; 8:7; Col 1:21. • *b.* Gen 6:5; 8:21; Rom 3:10-12. • *c.* Mat 15:19; Eph 2:2-3; James 1:14-15.
5. This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated;^a and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself and all the motions thereof are truly and properly sin.^b
a. Prov 20:9; Eccl 7:20; Rom 7:14, 17-18, 23; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8, 10. • *b.* Rom 7:5, 7-8, 25; Gal 5:17.
6. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto,^a doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner,^b whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God^c and curse of the law,^d and so made subject to death,^e with all miseries spiritual,^f temporal,^g and eternal.^h
a. 1 John 3:4. • *b.* Rom 2:15; 3:9, 19. • *c.* Eph 2:3. • *d.* Gal 3:10. • *e.* Rom 6:23. • *f.* Eph 4:18. • *g.* Lam 3:39; Rom 8:20. • *h.* Mat 25:41; 2 Thes 1:9.

CHAPTER 7

Of God's Covenant with Man

1. The distance between God and the creature is so great that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of him as their blessedness and reward but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.^a

a. 1 Sam 2:25; Job 9:32-33; 22:2-3; 35:7-8; Psa 100:2-3; 113:5-6; Isa 40:13-17; Luke 17:10; Acts 17:24-25.

2. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works,^a wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity,^b upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.^c

a. Gal 3:12. • *b.* Rom 5:12-20; 10:5. • *c.* Gen 2:17; Gal 3:10.

3. Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second,^a commonly called the covenant of grace: wherein he freely offered unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him that they may be saved,^b and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.^c

a. Gen 3:15; Isa 42:6; Rom 3:20-21; 8:3; Gal 3:21. • *b.* Mark 16:15-16; John 3:16; Rom 10:6, 9; Gal 3:11. • *c.* Ezek 36:26-27; John 6:44-45.

4. This covenant of grace is frequently set forth in the Scripture by the name of a testament, in reference to the death of Jesus Christ the testator, and to the everlasting inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed.^a

a. Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25; Heb 7:22; 9:15-17.

5. This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law and in the time of the gospel:^a under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all fore-signifying Christ to come,^b which were for that time sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah,^c by whom they had full remission of sins and eternal salvation; and is called the Old Testament.^d

a. 2 Cor 3:6-9. • *b.* Rom 4:11; Col 2:11-12; 1 Cor 5:7; Hebrews 8-10 *throughout*. • *c.* John 8:56; 1 Cor 10:1-4; Heb 11:13. • *d.* Gal 3:7-9, 14.

6. Under the gospel, when Christ the substance^a was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper;^b which, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity and less outward glory, yet in them it is held forth in more fulness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy,^c to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles;^d and is called the New Testament.^e There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations.^f

a. Col 2:17. • *b.* Mat 28:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-25. • *c.* Jer 31:33-34; Heb 12:22-28. • *d.* Mat 28:19; Eph 2:15-19. • *e.* Luke 22:20. • *f.* Psa 32:1 *with* Rom 4:3; Acts 15:11; Rom 3:21-23, 30; 4:6, 16-17, 23-24; Gal 3:14, 16; Heb 13:8.

CHAPTER 8

Of Christ the Mediator

1. It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only-begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man,^a the Prophet,^b Priest,^c and King;^d the Head and Saviour of his Church,^e the Heir of all things,^f and Judge of the world;^g unto whom he did, from all eternity, give a people to be his seed,^h and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.ⁱ

a. Isa 42:1; John 3:16; 2 Tim 2:5; 1 Pet 1:19-20. • *b.* Acts 3:22. • *c.* Heb 5:5-6. • *d.* Psalms 2:6; Luke 1:33. • *e.* Eph 5:23. • *f.* Heb 1:2. • *g.* Acts 17:31. • *h.* Psalms 22:30; Isa 53:10; John 17:6. • *i.* Isa 55:4-5; 1 Cor 1:30; 1 Tim 2:6.

2. The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him man's nature,^a with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin:^b being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance.^c So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion.^d Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.^e

a. John 1:1, 14; Gal 4:4; Phil 2:6; 1 John 5:20. • *b.* Heb 2:14, 16-17; 4:15. • *c.* Luke 1:27, 31, 35; Gal 4:4. • *d.* Luke 1:35; Rom 9:5; Col 2:9; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 3:18. • *e.* Rom 1:3-4; 1 Tim 2:5.

3. The Lord Jesus, in his human nature thus united to the divine, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure;^a having in him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,^b in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell,^c to the end that, being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth,^d he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a mediator and surety.^e Which office he took not unto himself, but was thereunto called by his Father,^f who put all power and judgment into his hand, and gave him commandment to execute the same.^g

a. Psalms 45:7; John 3:34. • *b.* Col 2:3. • *c.* Col 1:19. • *d.* John 1:14; Heb 7:26. • *e.* Acts 10:38; Heb 7:22; 12:24. • *f.* Heb 5:4-5. • *g.* Mat 28:18; John 5:22, 27; Acts 2:36.

4. This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake,^a which, that he might discharge, he was made under the law,^b and did perfectly fulfill it;^c endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul,^d and most painful sufferings in his body;^e was crucified, and died;^f was buried, and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption.^g On the third day he arose from the dead,^h with the same body in which he suffered;ⁱ with which also he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father,^k making intercession;^l and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world.^m

a. Psalms 40:7-8 with Heb 10:5-10; John 10:18; Phil 2:8. • *b.* Gal 4:4. • *c.* Mat 3:15; 5:17. • *d.* Mat 26:37-38; 27:46; Luke 22:44. • *e.* Matthew 26-27 *throughout*. • *f.* Phil 2:8. • *g.* Acts 2:23-24, 27; 13:37; Rom 6:9. • *h.* 1 Cor 15:3-4. • *i.* John 20:25, 27. • *k.* Mark 16:19. • *l.* Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; 9:24. • *m.* Mat 13:40-42; Acts 1:11; 10:42; Rom 14:9-10; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 1:6.

5. The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father,^a and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.^b

a. Rom 3:25-26; 5:19; Eph 5:2; Heb 9:14, 16; 10:14. • *b.* Dan 9:24, 26; John 17:2; Eph 1:11, 14; Col 1:19-20; Heb 9:12, 15.

6. Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after his incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefits thereof were communicated unto the elect, in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein he was revealed, and signified to be the seed of the woman which should bruise the serpent's head, and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, being yesterday and today the same, and forever.^a

a. Gen 3:15; Gal 4:4-5; Heb 13:8; Rev 13:8.

7. Christ, in the work of mediation, acteth according to both natures; by each nature doing that which is proper to itself;^a yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes, in Scripture, attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.^b

a. Heb 9:14; 1 Pet 3:18. • *b.* John 3:13; Acts 20:28; 1 John 3:16.

8. To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same;^a making intercession for them,^b and revealing unto them, in and by the Word, the mysteries of salvation;^c effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by his Word and Spirit;^d overcoming all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom, in such manner and ways as are most consonant to his wonderful and unsearchable dispensation.^e

a. John 6:37, 39; 10:15-16. • *b.* Rom 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2. • *c.* John 15:13, 15; 17:6; Eph 1:7-9. • *d.* John 14:16; 17:17; Rom 8:9, 14; 15:18-19; 2 Cor 4:13; Heb 12:2. • *e.* Psa 110:1; Mal 4:2-3; 1 Cor 15:25-26; Col 2:15.

CHAPTER 9 ***Of Free Will***

1. God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that is neither forced nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil.^a

a. Deut 30:19; Mat 17:12; James 1:14.

2. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well-pleasing to God,^a but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it.^b

a. Gen 1:26; Eccl 7:29. • *b.* Gen 2:16-17; 3:6.

3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation;^a so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good,^b and dead in sin,^c is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.^d

a. John 15:5; Rom 5:6; 8:7. • *b.* Rom 3:10, 12. • *c.* Eph 2:1, 5; Col 2:13. • *d.* John 6:44, 65; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 2:2-5; Titus 3:3-5.

4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin,^a and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually

good;^b yet so as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly, nor only, will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.^c

a. John 8:34, 36; Col 1:13. • *b.* Rom 6:18, 22; Phil 2:13. • *c.* Rom 7:15, 18-19, 21, 23; Gal 5:17.

5. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only.^a

a. Eph 4:13; Heb 12:23; 1 John 3:2; Jude 1:24.

CHAPTER 10

Of Effectual Calling

1. All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call,^a by his Word and Spirit,^b out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ;^c enlightening their minds, spiritually and savingly, to understand the things of God,^d taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh;^e renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good,^f and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ;^g yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.^h

a. Rom 8:30; 11:7; Eph 1:10-11. • *b.* 2 Cor 3:3, 6; 2 Thes 2:13-14. • *c.* Rom 8:2; Eph 2:1-5; 2 Tim 1:9-10. • *d.* Acts 26:18; 1 Cor 2:10, 12; Eph 1:17-18. • *e.* Ezek 36:26. • *f.* Deut 30:6; Ezek 11:19; 36:27; Phil 2:13. • *g.* John 6:44-45; Eph 1:19. • *h.* Psa 110:3; Song 1:4; John 6:37; Rom 6:16-18.

2. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man;^a who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit,^b he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.^c

a. Rom 9:11; Eph 2:4-5, 8-9; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 3:4-5. • *b.* Rom 8:7; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 2:5. • *c.* Ezek 36:27; John 5:25; 6:37.

3. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit,^a who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth.^b So also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.^c

a. Luke 18:15-16 and John 3:3, 5 and Acts 2:38-39 and Rom 8:9 and 1 John 5:12 compared together. • *b.* John 3:8. • *c.* Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:12.

4. Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word,^a and may have some common operations of the Spirit,^b yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved:^c much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature and the law of that religion they do profess;^d and to assert and maintain that they may is very pernicious, and to be detested.^e

a. Mat 22:14. • *b.* Mat 7:22; 13:20-21; Heb 6:4-5. • *c.* John 6:64-66; 8:24. • *d.* John 4:22; 14:6; 17:3; Acts 4:12; Eph 2:12. • *e.* 1 Cor 16:22; Gal 1:6-8; 2 John 1:9-11.

CHAPTER 11

Of Justification

1. Those whom God effectually calleth he also freely justifieth;^a not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous: not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them,^b they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.^c

a. Rom 3:24; 8:30. • *b.* Jer 23:6; Rom 3:22, 24-25, 27-28; 4:5-8; 5:17-19; 1 Cor 1:30-31; 2 Cor 5:19, 21; Eph 1:7; Titus 3:5, 7. • *c.* Acts 10:44; 13:38-39; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:7-8; Phil 3:9.

2. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification;^a yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.^b

a. John 1:12; Rom 3:28; 5:1. • *b.* Gal 5:6; James 2:17, 22, 26.

3. Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf.^a Yet inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them,^b and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead,^c and both freely, not for anything in them, their justification is only of free grace;^d that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.^e

a. Isa 53:4-6, 10-12; Dan 9:24, 26; Rom 5:8-10, 19; 1 Tim 2:5-6; Heb 10:10, 14. • *b.* Rom 8:32. • *c.* Mat 3:17; 2 Cor 5:21; Eph 5:2. • *d.* Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7. • *e.* Rom 3:26; Eph 2:7.

4. God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect,^a and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification;^b nevertheless, they are not justified until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.^c

a. Rom 8:30; Gal 3:8; 1 Pet 1:2, 19-20. • *b.* Rom 4:25; Gal 4:4; 1 Tim 2:6. • *c.* Gal 2:16; Col 1:21-22; Titus 3:4-7.

5. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified;^a and although they can never fall from the state of justification,^b yet they may by their sins fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.^c

a. Mat 6:12; 1 John 1:7, 9; 2:1-2. • *b.* Luke 22:32; John 10:28; Heb 10:14. • *c.* Psalms 32:5; 51:7-12; 89:31-33; Mat 26:75; Luke 1:20; 1 Cor 11:30, 32.

6. The justification of believers under the Old Testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament.^a

a. Rom 4:22-24; Gal 3:9, 13-14; Heb 13:8.

CHAPTER 12

Of Adoption

1. All those that are justified God vouchsafeth, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption;^a by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God;^b have his name put upon them;^c receive the Spirit of adoption;^d have access to the throne of grace with boldness;^e are enabled to cry, Abba, Father;^f are pitied,^g protected,^h provided for,ⁱ and chastened by him as by a father;^k yet never cast off,^l but sealed to the day of redemption,^m and inherit the promises,ⁿ as heirs of everlasting salvation.^o

a. Gal 4:4-5; Eph 1:5. • *b.* John 1:12; Rom 8:17. • *c.* Jer 14:9; 2 Cor 6:18; Rev 3:12. • *d.* Rom 8:15. • *e.* Rom 5:2; Eph 3:12. • *f.* Gal 4:6. • *g.* Psalms 103:13. • *h.* Prov 14:26. • *i.* Mat 6:30, 32; 1 Pet 5:7. • *k.* Heb 12:6. • *l.* Lam 3:31. • *m.* Eph 4:30. • *n.* Heb 6:12. • *o.* Heb 1:14; 1 Pet 1:3-4.

CHAPTER 13

Of Sanctification

1. They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection,^a by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them;^b the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed,^c and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified,^d and they more and more quickened and strengthened, in all saving graces,^e to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.^f

a. Acts 20:32; Rom 6:5-6; 1 Cor 6:11; Phil 3:10. • *b.* John 17:17; Eph 5:26; 2 Thes 2:13. • *c.* Rom 6:6, 14. • *d.* Rom 8:13; Gal 5:24. • *e.* Eph 3:16-19; Col 1:11. • *f.* 2 Cor 7:1; Heb 12:14.

2. This sanctification is throughout in the whole man,^a yet imperfect in this life; there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part,^b whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.^c

a. 1 Thes 5:23. • *b.* Rom 7:18, 23; Phil 3:12; 1 John 1:10. • *c.* Gal 5:17; 1 Pet 2:11.

3. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail,^a yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome;^b and so the saints grow in grace,^c perfecting holiness in the fear of God.^d

a. Rom 7:23. • *b.* Rom 6:14; Eph 4:15-16; 1 John 5:4. • *c.* 2 Cor 3:18; 2 Pet 3:18. • *d.* 2 Cor 7:1.

CHAPTER 14

Of Saving Faith

1. The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls,^a is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts,^b and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word;^c by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.^d

a. Heb 10:39. • *b.* Eph 1:17-19; 2:8; 2 Cor 4:13. • *c.* Rom 10:14, 17. • *d.* Luke 17:5; Acts 20:32; Rom 1:16-17; 4:11; 1 Pet 2:2.

2. By this faith a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaking therein;^a and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands,^b trembling at the threatenings,^c and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come.^d But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.^e

a. John 4:42; Acts 24:14; 1 Thes 2:13; 1 John 5:10. • *b.* Rom 16:26. • *c.* Isa 66:2. • *d.* 1 Tim 4:8; Heb 11:13. • *e.* John 1:12; Acts 15:11; 16:31; Gal 2:20.

3. This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong;^a may be often and many ways assailed and weakened, but gets the victory;^b growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ,^c who is both the author and finisher of our faith.^d

a. Mat 6:30; 8:10; Rom 4:19-20; Heb 5:13-14. • *b.* Luke 22:31-32; Eph 6:16; 1 John 5:4-5. • *c.* Col 2:2; Heb 6:11-12; 10:22. • *d.* Heb 12:2.

CHAPTER 15

Of Repentance unto Life

1. Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace,^a the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ.^b

a. Zec 12:10; Acts 11:18. • *b.* Luke 24:47; Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21.

2. By it a sinner, out of the sight and sense, not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature and righteous law of God, and upon the apprehension of his mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for and hates his sins as to turn from them all unto God,^a purposing and endeavoring to walk with him in all the ways of his commandments.^b

a. Psa 51:4; 119:128; Isa 30:22; Jer 31:18-19; Ezek 18:30-31; 36:31; Joel 2:12-13; Amos 5:15; 2 Cor 7:11. • *b.* 2 Kings 23:25; Psa 119:6, 59, 106; Luke 1:6.

3. Although repentance be not to be rested in as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof,^a which is the act of God's free grace in Christ;^b yet is it of such necessity to all sinners that none may expect pardon without it.^c

a. Ezek 16:61-63; 36:31-32. • *b.* Hosea 14:2, 4; Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7. • *c.* Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31.

4. As there is no sin so small but it deserves damnation,^a so there is no sin so great that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.^b

a. Mat 12:36; Rom 5:12; 6:23. • *b.* Isa 1:16, 18; 55:7; Rom 8:1.

5. Men ought not to content themselves with a general repentance, but it is every man's duty to endeavor to repent of his particular sins particularly.^a

a. Psa 19:13; Luke 19:8; 1 Tim 1:13, 15.

6. As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof,^a upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy;^b so he that scandalizeth his brother, or the Church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended,^c who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.^d

a. Psa 32:5-6; 51:4-5, 7, 9, 14. • b. Prov 28:13; 1 John 1:9. • c. Psa 51 *throughout*; Josh 7:19; Luke 17:3-4; James 5:16. • d. 2 Cor 2:8.

CHAPTER 16

Of Good Works

1. Good works are only such as God hath commanded in his holy Word,^a and not such as, without the warrant thereof, are devised by men out of blind zeal, or upon any pretense of good intention.^b

a. Micah 6:8; Rom 12:2; Heb 13:21. • b. 1 Sam 15:21-23; Isa 29:13; Mat 15:9; John 16:2; Rom 10:2; 1 Pet 1:18.

2. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith;^a and by them believers manifest their thankfulness,^b strengthen their assurance,^c edify their brethren,^d adorn the profession of the gospel,^e stop the mouths of the adversaries,^f and glorify God,^g whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto,^h that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.ⁱ

a. James 2:18, 22. • b. Psa 116:12-13; 1 Pet 2:9. • c. 2 Pet 1:5-10; 1 John 2:3, 5. • d. Mat 5:16; 2 Cor 9:2. • e. 1 Tim 6:1; Titus 2:5, 9-12. • f. 1 Pet 2:15. • g. John 15:8; Phil 1:11; 1 Pet 2:12. • h. Eph 2:10. • i. Rom 6:22.

3. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ.^a And that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure;^b yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.^c

a. Ezek 36:26-27; John 15:4-6. • b. Phil 2:13; 4:13; 2 Cor 3:5. • c. Isa 64:7; Acts 26:6-7; Phil 2:12; 2 Tim 1:6; Heb 6:11-12; 2 Pet 1:3, 5, 10-11; Jude 1:20-21.

4. They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do.^a

a. Neh 13:22; Job 9:2-3; Luke 17:10; Gal 5:17.

5. We cannot, by our best works, merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come, and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom by them we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins;^a but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants;^b and because, as they are good, they proceed from his Spirit;^c and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled

and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.^d

a. Job 22:2-3; 35:7-8; Psa 16:2; Rom 3:20; 4:2, 4, 6; 8:18; Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7. • *b.* Luke 17:10. • *c.* Gal 5:22-23. • *d.* Psa 130:3; 143:2; Isa 64:6; Rom 7:15, 18; Gal 5:17.

6. Yet notwithstanding, the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him,^a not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unprovable in God's sight;^b but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.^c

a. Gen 4:4 *with* Heb 11:4; Exod 28:38; Eph 1:6; 1 Pet 2:5. • *b.* Job 9:20; Psa 143:2. • *c.* Mat 25:21, 23; 2 Cor 8:12; Heb 6:10; 13:20-21.

7. Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others;^a yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith,^b nor are done in a right manner, according to the Word,^c nor to a right end, the glory of God;^d they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God.^e And yet their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God.^f

a. 1 Kings 21:27, 29; 2 Kings 10:30-31; Phil 1:15-16, 18. • *b.* Gen 4:3-5 *with* Heb 11:4, 6. • *c.* Isa 1:12; 1 Cor 13:3. • *d.* Mat 6:2, 5, 16. • *e.* Amos 5:21-22; Hosea 1:4; Hag 2:14; Rom 9:16; Titus 1:15; 3:5. • *f.* Job 21:14-15; Psa 14:4; 36:3; Mat 23:23; 25:41-45.

CHAPTER 17

Of the Perseverance of the Saints

1. They whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.^a

a. John 10:28-29; Phil 1:6; 1 Pet 1:5, 9; 2 Pet 1:10; 1 John 3:9.

2. This perseverance of the saints depends, not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father;^a upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ;^b the abiding of the Spirit and of the seed of God within them;^c and the nature of the covenant of grace;^d from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.^e

a. Jer 31:3; 2 Tim 2:18-19. • *b.* Luke 22:32; John 17:11, 24; Heb 7:25; 9:12-15; 10:10, 14; 13:20-21; Rom 8:33-39. • *c.* John 14:16-17; 1 John 2:27; 3:9. • *d.* Jer 32:40. • *e.* John 10:28; 2 Thes 3:3; 1 John 2:19.

3. Nevertheless they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins;^a and for a time continue therein;^b whereby they incur God's displeasure,^c and grieve his Holy Spirit;^d come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts;^e have their hearts hardened,^f and their consciences wounded;^g hurt and scandalize others,^h and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.ⁱ

a. Mat 26:70, 72, 74. • *b.* Psa 51 *title with v.* 14. • *c.* 2 Sam 11:27; Isa 64:5, 7, 9. • *d.* Eph 4:30. • *e.* Psa 51:8, 10, 12; Song 5:2-4, 6; Rev 2:4. • *f.* Isa 63:17; Mark 6:52; 16:14. • *g.* Psa 32:3-4; 51:8. • *h.* 2 Sam 12:14. • *i.* Psa 89:31-32; 1 Cor 11:32.

CHAPTER 18

Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation

1. Although hypocrites and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and carnal presumptions of being in the favour of God and estate of salvation,^a which hope of theirs shall perish;^b yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in a state of grace,^c and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed.^d

a. Deut 29:19; Job 8:13-14; Micah 3:11; John 8:41. • *b.* Mat 7:22-23. • *c.* 1 John 2:3; 3:14, 18-19, 21, 24; 5:13. • *d.* Rom 5:2, 5.

2. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope;^a but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation,^b the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made,^c the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God;^d which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.^e

a. Heb 6:11, 19. • *b.* Heb 6:17-18. • *c.* 2 Cor 1:12; 2 Pet 1:4-5, 10-11; 1 John 2:3; 3:14. • *d.* Rom 8:15-16. • *e.* Eph 1:13-14; 4:30; 2 Cor 1:21-22.

3. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it:^a yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto.^b And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure;^c that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience,^d the proper fruits of this assurance: so far is it from inclining men to looseness.^e

a. Psa 88 *throughout*; Psa 77:1-12; Isa 50:10; Mark 9:24; 1 John 5:13. • *b.* 1 Cor 2:12; Eph 3:17-19; Heb 6:11-12; 1 John 4:13. • *c.* 2 Pet 1:10. • *d.* Rom 5:1-2, 5; 14:17; 15:13; Eph 1:3-4; Psa 4:6-7; 119:32. • *e.* Psa 130:4; Rom 6:1-2; 8:1, 12; 2 Cor 7:1; Titus 2:11-12, 14; 1 John 1:6-7; 2:1-2; 3:2-3.

4. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving of it; by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience, and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation; by God's withdrawing the light of his countenance, and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light:^a yet are they never utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may in due time be revived,^b and by the which, in the meantime, they are supported from utter despair.^c

a. Psa 31:22; 51:8, 12, 14; 77:1-10; 88 *throughout*; Song 5:2-3, 6; Isa 50:10; Mat 26:69-72; Eph 4:30-31. • *b.* Job 13:15; Psa 51:8, 12; 73:15; Isa 50:10; Luke 22:32; 1 John 3:9. • *c.* Psa 22:1; 88 *throughout*; Isa 54:7-10; Jer 32:40; Micah 7:7-9.

CHAPTER 19

Of the Law of God

1. God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it.^a

a. Gen 1:26-27 *with* 2:17; Job 28:28; Eccl 7:29; Rom 2:14-15; 5:12, 19; 10:5; Gal 3:10, 12.

2. This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon mount Sinai in ten commandments, and written in two tables;^a the first four commandments containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to man.^b

a. Exod 34:1; Deut 5:32; 10:4; Rom 13:8-9; James 1:25; 2:8, 10-12. • *b.* Mat 22:37-40.

3. Beside this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a Church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits;^a and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties.^b All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament.^c

a. Gal 4:1-3; Col 2:17; Heb 9 *throughout*; 10:1. • *b.* 1 Cor 5:7; 2 Cor 6:17; Jude 1:23. • *c.* Dan 9:27; Eph 2:15-16; Col 2:14, 16-17.

4. To them also, as a body politic, he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the State of that people, not obliging any other, now, further than the general equity thereof may require.^a

a. Gen 49:10 *with* 1 Pet 2:13-14; Exod 21 *throughout*; 22:1-29; Mat 5:17 *with* 5:38-39; 1 Cor 9:8-10.

5. The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof;^a and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it.^b Neither doth Christ in the gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation.^c

a. Rom 13:8-10; Eph 6:2; 1 John 2:3-4, 7-8. • *b.* James 2:10-11. • *c.* Mat 5:17-19; Rom 3:31; James 2:8.

6. Although true believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned;^a yet is it of great use to them, as well as to others; in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly;^b discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts, and lives;^c so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin;^d together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience.^e It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin;^f and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve, and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatened in the law.^g The promises of it, in like manner, show them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof;^h although not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works;ⁱ so as a man's doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law, and not under grace.^k

a. Acts 13:39; Rom 6:14; 8:1; Gal 2:16; 3:13; 4:4-5. • *b.* Psa 119:4-6; Rom 7:12, 22, 25; 1 Cor 7:19; Gal 5:14, 16, 18-23. • *c.* Rom 3:20; 7:7. • *d.* Rom 7:9, 14, 24; James 1:23-25. • *e.* Rom 7:24-25; 8:3-4; Gal 3:24. • *f.* Psa 119:101, 104, 128; James 2:11. • *g.* Ezra 9:13-14; Psa 89:30-34. • *h.* Lev 26:1, 10; 26:14 *with* 2 Cor 6:16; Psa 19:11; 37:11 *with* Mat 5:5; Eph 6:2-3. • *i.* Luke 17:10; Gal 2:16. • *k.* Rom 6:12, 14; Heb 12:28-29; 1 Pet 3:8-12 *with* Psa 34:12-16.

7. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the gospel, but do sweetly comply with it:^a the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God, revealed in the law, requireth to be done.^b

a. Gal 3:21. • *b.* Ezek 36:27; Heb 8:10 *with* Jer 31:33.

CHAPTER 20

Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience

1. The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law;^a and in their being delivered from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, and dominion of sin,^b from the evil of afflictions, the sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation;^c as also in their free access to God,^d and their yielding obedience unto him, not out of slavish fear, but a child-like love and willing mind.^e All which were common also to believers under the law;^f 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 Jewish Church was subjected;^g and in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace,^h and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than believers under the law did ordinarily partake of.ⁱ

a. Gal 3:13; 1 Thes 1:10; Titus 2:14. • *b.* Acts 26:18; Rom 6:14; Gal 1:4; Col 1:13. • *c.* Psa 119:71; Rom 8:1, 28; 1 Cor 15:54-57. • *d.* Rom 5:1-2. • *e.* Rom 8:14-15; 1 John 4:18. • *f.* Gal 3:9, 14. • *g.* Acts 15:10-11; Gal 4:1-3, 6-7; 5:1. • *h.* Heb 4:14, 16; 10:19-22. • *i.* John 7:38-39; 2 Cor 3:13, 17-18.

2. God alone is Lord of the conscience,^a and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.^b So that to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience;^c and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.^d

a. Rom 14:4; James 4:12. • *b.* Mat 15:9; 23:8-10; Acts 4:19; 5:29; 1 Cor 7:23; 2 Cor 1:24. • *c.* Psa 5:1; Gal 1:10; 2:4-5; 5:1; Col 2:20-23. • *d.* Isa 8:20; Jer 8:9; Hosea 5:11; John 4:22; Acts 17:11; Rom 10:17; 14:23; Rev 13:12, 16-17.

3. They who, upon pretense of Christian liberty, do practice any sin, or cherish any lust, do thereby destroy the end of Christian liberty; which is, that, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.^a

a. Luke 1:74-75; John 8:34; Gal 5:13; 1 Pet 2:16; 2 Pet 2:19.

4. And because the power which God hath ordained, and the liberty which Christ hath purchased, are not intended by God to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another; they who, upon pretense of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power, or the lawful exercise of it, whether it be civil or ecclesiastical, resist the ordinance of God.^a And for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices, as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship, or conversation; or to the power of godliness; or such erroneous opinions or practices as, either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are

destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in the Church; they may lawfully be called to account,^b and proceeded against by the censures of the Church, and by the power of the Civil Magistrate.^c

a. Mat 12:25; Rom 13:1-8; Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 2:13-14, 16. • *b.* Rom 1:32 *with* 1 Cor 5:1, 5, 11, 13; 2 John 1:10-11 *and* 2 Thes 3:14 *and* 1 Tim 6:3-5 *and* Titus 1:10-11, 13 *and* Titus 3:10 *with* Mat 18:15-17; 1 Tim 1:19-20; Rev 2:2, 14-15, 20; 3:9. • *c.* Deut 13:6-12; 2 Kings 23:5-6, 9, 20-21; 2 Chron 15:12-13, 16; 34:33; Neh 13:15, 17, 21-22, 25, 30; Isa 49:23; Dan 3:29; Zec 13:2-3; Rom 13:3-4 *with* 2 John 1:10-11; 1 Tim 2:2; Rev 17:12, 16-17.

CHAPTER 21

Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day

1. The light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all; is good, and doeth good unto all; and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might.^a But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited to his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture.^b

a. Josh 24:14; Psa 18:3; 31:23; 62:8; 119:68; Jer 10:7; Mark 12:33; Acts 17:24; Rom 1:20; 10:12. • *b.* Exod 20:4-6; Deut 4:15-20; 12:32; Mat 4:9-10; 15:9; Acts 17:25; Col 2:23.

2. Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to him alone:^a not to angels, saints, or any other creature:^b and since the fall, not without a Mediator; nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.^c

a. Mat 4:10 *with* John 5:23 *and* 2 Cor 13:14. • *b.* Rom 1:25; Col 2:18; Rev 19:10. • *c.* John 14:6; Eph 2:18; Col 3:17; 1 Tim 2:5.

3. Prayer with thanksgiving, being one special part of religious worship,^a is by God required of all men;^b and that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son,^c by the help of his Spirit,^d according to his will,^e with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance;^f and, if vocal, in a known tongue.^g

a. Phil 4:6. • *b.* Psa 65:2. • *c.* John 14:13-14; 1 Pet 2:5. • *d.* Rom 8:26. • *e.* 1 John 5:14. • *f.* Gen 18:27; Psa 47:7; Eccl 5:1-2; Mat 6:12, 14-15; Mark 11:24; Eph 6:18; Col 4:2; Heb 12:28; James 1:6-7; 5:16. • *g.* 1 Cor 14:14.

4. Prayer is to be made for things lawful,^a and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter;^b but not for the dead,^c nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death.^d

a. 1 John 5:14. • *b.* Ruth 4:12; 2 Sam 7:29; John 17:20; 1 Tim 2:1-2. • *c.* 2 Sam 12:21-23 *with* Luke 16:25-26; Rev 14:13. • *d.* 1 John 5:16.

5. The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear;^a the sound preaching;^b and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God with understanding, faith, and reverence;^c singing of psalms with grace in the heart;^d as, also, the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ; are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God:^e besides religious oaths,^f vows,^g solemn fastings,^h and thanksgivings upon several occasions;ⁱ which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in an holy and religious manner.^k

a. Acts 15:21; Rev 1:3. • *b.* 2 Tim 4:2. • *c.* Isa 66:2; Mat 13:19; Acts 10:33; Heb 4:2; James 1:22. • *d.* Eph 5:19; Col 3:16; James 5:13. • *e.* Mat 28:19; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 11:23-29. • *f.* Deut 6:13 *with* Neh 10:29. • *g.* Isa 19:21 *with* Eccl 5:4-5. • *h.* Est 4:16; Joel 2:12; Mat 9:15; 1 Cor 7:5. • *i.* Est 9:22; Psa 107 *throughout*. • *k.* Heb 12:28.

6. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the gospel, either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed:^a but God is to be worshipped everywhere^b in spirit and truth;^c as in private families^d daily,^e and in secret each one by himself,^f so more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly or willfully to be neglected or forsaken, when God, by his Word or providence, calleth thereunto.^g

a. John 4:21. • *b.* Mal 1:11; 1 Tim 2:8. • *c.* John 4:23-24. • *d.* Deut 6:6-7; 2 Sam 6:18, 20; Job 1:5; Jer 10:25; Acts 10:2; 1 Pet 3:7. • *e.* Mat 6:11. • *f.* Mat 6:6; Eph 6:18. • *g.* Isa 56:6-7; Prov 1:20-21, 24; 8:34; Luke 4:16; Acts 2:42; 13:42; Heb 10:25.

7. As it is of the law of nature that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in his Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him:^a which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week,^b which in Scripture is called the Lord's day,^c and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian Sabbath.^d

a. Exod 20:8, 10-11; Isa 56:2, 4, 6-7. • *b.* Gen 2:2-3; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-2. • *c.* Rev 1:10. • *d.* Exod 20:8, 10 *with* Mat 5:17-18.

8. This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts, about their worldly employments and recreations;^a but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.^b

a. Exod 20:8; 16:23, 25-26, 29-30; 31:15-17; Isa 58:13; Neh 13:15-22. • *b.* Isa 58:13; Mat 12:1-13.

CHAPTER 22

Of Lawful Oaths and Vows

1. A lawful oath is a part of religious worship,^a wherein, upon just occasion, the person swearing solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth or promiseth; and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he sweareth.^b

a. Deut 10:20. • *b.* Exod 20:7; Lev 19:12; 2 Chron 6:22-23; 2 Cor 1:23.

2. The name of God only is that by which men ought to swear, and therein it is to be used with all holy fear and reverence;^a therefore to swear vainly or rashly by that glorious and dreadful name, or to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful, and to be abhorred.^b Yet as, in matters of weight and moment, an oath is warranted by the Word of God, under the New Testament, as well as under the Old,^c so a lawful oath, being imposed by lawful authority, in such matters ought to be taken.^d

a. Deut 6:13. • *b.* Exod 20:7; Jer 5:7; Mat 5:34, 37; James 5:12. • *c.* Isa 65:16; 2 Cor 1:23; Heb 6:16. • *d.* 1 Kings 8:31; Ezra 10:25; Neh 13:25.

3. Whosoever taketh an oath ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act, and therein to avouch nothing but what he is fully persuaded is the truth.^a Neither may any man bind himself by oath to anything but what is good and just, and what he believeth so to be, and what he is able and resolved to perform.^b Yet it is a sin to refuse an oath touching anything that is good and just, being imposed by lawful authority.^c

a. Exod 20:7; Jer 4:2. • *b.* Gen 24:2-3, 5-6, 8-9. • *c.* Exod 22:7-11; Num 5:19, 21; Neh 5:12.

4. An oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words, without equivocation or mental reservation.^a It cannot oblige to sin; but in anything not sinful, being taken, it binds to performance, although to a man's own hurt;^b nor is it to be violated, although made to heretics or infidels.^c

a. Psa 24:4; Jer 4:2. • *b.* 1 Sam 25:22, 32-34; Psa 15:4. • *c.* Ezek 17:16, 18-19; Josh 9:18-19 *with* 2 Sam 21:1.

5. A vow is of the like nature with a promissory oath, and ought to be made with the like religious care, and to be performed with the like faithfulness.^a

a. Isa 19:21; Psa 61:8; 66:13-14; Eccl 5:4-6.

6. It is not to be made to any creature, but to God alone:^a and that it may be accepted, it is to be made voluntarily, out of faith and conscience of duty, in way of thankfulness for mercy received, or for the obtaining of what we want; whereby we more strictly bind ourselves to necessary duties, or to other things, so far and so long as they may fitly conduce thereunto.^b

a. Psa 76:11; Jer 44:25-26. • *b.* Gen 28:20-22; Deut 23:21, 23; 1 Sam 1:11; Psa 50:14; 66:13-14; 132:2-5.

7. No man may vow to do anything forbidden in the Word of God, or what would hinder any duty therein commanded, or which is not in his own power, and for the performance whereof he hath no promise or ability from God.^a In which respect, Popish monastical vows of perpetual single life, professed poverty, and regular obedience, are so far from being degrees of higher perfection, that they are superstitious and sinful snares, in which no Christian may entangle himself.^b

a. Num 30:5, 8, 12-13; Mark 6:26; Acts 23:12, 14. • *b.* Mat 19:11-12; 1 Cor 7:2, 9, 23; Eph 4:28; 1 Pet 4:2.

CHAPTER 23

Of the Civil Magistrate

1. God, the Supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him, over the people, for his own glory and the public good, and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword, for the defense and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punishment of evil-doers.^a

a. Rom 13:1-4; 1 Pet 2:13-14.

2. It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the office of a magistrate when called thereunto;^a in the managing whereof, as they ought especially to maintain piety, justice, and peace, according to the wholesome laws of each commonwealth,^b so, for that end, they may lawfully, now under the New Testament, wage war upon just and necessary occasion.^c

a. Prov 8:15-16; Rom 13:1-2, 4. • *b.* 2 Sam 23:3; Psa 2:10-12; 82:3-4; 1 Tim 2:2; 1 Pet 2:13. • *c.* Mat 8:9-10; Luke 3:14; Acts 10:1-2; Rom 13:4; Rev 17:14, 16.

3. The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the Word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven:^a yet he hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed.^b For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call synods, to be present at them and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God.^c

a. 2 Chron. 26:18; Matt. 18:17; 16:19; 1 Cor. 12:28-29; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; Rom. 10:15; Heb. 5:4. *b.* Isa. 49:23; Ps. 122:9; Ezra 7:23, 25-28; Lev. 24:16; Deut. 13:5-6, 12; 2 Ki. 18:4; 1 Chron. 13:1-9; 2 Ki. 24:1-16; 2 Chron. 34:33; 15:12-13. *c.* 2 Chron. 19:8-11; 2 Chron. 29; 30; Matt. 2:4-5.

4. It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates,^a to honor their persons,^b to pay them tribute and other dues,^c to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake.^d Infidelity or difference in religion doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to him:^e from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted,^f much less hath the Pope any power or jurisdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people; and least of all to deprive them of their dominions or lives, if he shall judge them to be heretics, or upon any other pretense whatsoever.^g

a. 1 Tim 2:1-2. • *b.* 1 Pet 2:17. • *c.* Rom 13:6-7. • *d.* Rom 13:5; Titus 1:3. • *e.* 1 Pet 2:13-14, 16. • *f.* 1 Kings 2:35; Acts 25:9-11; Rom 13:1; 2 Pet 2:1, 10-11; Jude 1:8-11. • *g.* 2 Thes 2:4; Rev 13:15-17.

CHAPTER 24

Of Marriage and Divorce

1. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman: neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time.^a

a. Gen 2:24; Prov 2:17; Mat 19:5-6.

2. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife;^a for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed;^b and for preventing of uncleanness.^c

a. Gen 2:18. • *b.* Mal 2:15. • *c.* 1 Cor 7:2, 9.

3. It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry who are able with judgment to give their consent.^a Yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord.^b And therefore, such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with infidels, Papists, or other idolaters: neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by marrying with such as are notoriously wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresies.^c

a. Gen 24:57-58; 1 Cor 7:36-38; Heb 13:4; 1 Tim 4:3. • *b.* 1 Cor 7:39. • *c.* Gen 34:14; Exod 34:16; Deut 7:3-4; 1 Kings 11:4; Neh 13:25-27; Mal 2:11-12; 2 Cor 6:14.

4. Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden in the Word;^a nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any law of man, or consent of parties, so as those persons may live together as man and wife.^b The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred

nearer in blood than he may of his own, nor the woman of her husband's kindred nearer in blood than of her own.^c

a. Lev 18 throughout; Amos 2:7; 1 Cor 5:1. • b. Lev 18:24-28; Mark 6:18. • c. Lev 20:19-21.

5. Adultery or fornication, committed after a contract, being detected before marriage, giveth just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract.^a In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce,^b and after the divorce to marry another, as if the offending party were dead.^c

a. Mat 1:18-20. • b. Mat 5:31-32. • c. Mat 19:9; Rom 7:2-3.

6. Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments, unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage; yet nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage;^a wherein a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed; and the persons concerned in it, not left to their own wills and discretion in their own case.^b

a. Mat 19:6, 8-9; 1 Cor 7:15. • b. Deut 24:1-4.

CHAPTER 25 *Of the Church*

1. The catholic or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.^a

a. Eph 1:10, 22-23; Eph 5:23, 27, 32; Col 1:18.

2. The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law) consists of all those, throughout the world, that profess the true religion,^a and of their children,^b and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ,^c the house and family of God,^d out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.^e

a. Psa 2:8; Rom 15:9-12; 1 Cor 1:2; 12:12-13; Rev 7:9. • b. Gen 3:15; 17:7; Ezek 16:20-21; Acts 2:39; Rom 11:16; 1 Cor 7:14. • c. Isa 9:7; Mat 13:47. • d. Eph 2:19; 3:15. • e. Acts 2:47.

3. Unto this catholic visible Church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and doth by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto.^a

a. Isa 59:21; Mat 28:19-20; 1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11-13.

4. This catholic Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible.^a And particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.^b

a. Rom 11:3-4; Rev 12:6, 14. • b. 1 Cor 5:6-7; Rev 2-3 throughout.

5. The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error;^a and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan.^b Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth to worship God according to his will.^c

a. Mat 13:24-30, 47; 1 Cor 13:12; Rev 2-3 *throughout*. • *b.* Rom 11:18-22; Rev 18:2. • *c.* Psalms 72:17; 102:28; Mat 16:18; 28:19-20.

6. There is no other Head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ:^a nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God.^b

a. Eph 1:22; Col 1:18. • *b.* Mat 23:8-10; 2 Thes 2:3-4, 8-9; Rev 13:6.

CHAPTER 26

Of the Communion of Saints

1. All saints that are united to Jesus Christ their head, by his Spirit and by faith, have fellowship with him in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory:^a and being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces,^b and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.^c

a. John 1:16; Rom 6:5-6; Eph 2:5-6; 3:16-19; Phil 3:10; 2 Tim 2:12; 1 John 1:3. • *b.* 1 Cor 3:21-23; 12:7; Eph 4:15-16; Col 2:19. • *c.* Rom 1:11-12, 14; Gal 6:10; 1 Thes 5:11, 14; 1 John 3:16-18.

2. Saints, by profession, are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification;^a as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.^b

a. Isa 2:3; Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Cor 11:20; Heb 10:24-25. • *b.* Acts 2:44-45; 11:29-30; 2 Cor 8-9 *throughout*; 1 John 3:17.

3. This communion which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them in any wise partakers of the substance of his Godhead, or to be equal with Christ in any respect: either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous.^a Nor doth their communion one with another, as saints, take away or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions.^b

a. Psalms 45:7 *with* Heb 1:8-9; Isa 42:8; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:18-19; 1 Tim 6:15-16. • *b.* Exod 20:15; Acts 5:4; Eph 4:28.

CHAPTER 27

Of the Sacraments

1. Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace,^a immediately instituted by God,^b to represent Christ and his benefits, and to confirm our interest in him;^c as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church and the rest of the world;^d and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to his Word.^e

a. Gen 17:7, 10; Rom 4:11. • *b.* Mat 28:19; 1 Cor 11:23. • *c.* 1 Cor 10:16; 11:25-26; Gal 3:27. • *d.* Gen 34:14; Exod 12:48; Rom 15:8. • *e.* Rom 6:3-4; 1 Cor 10:16, 21.

2. There is in every sacrament a spiritual relation or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified; whence it comes to pass that the names and the effects of the one are attributed to the other.^a

a. Gen 17:10; Mat 26:27-28; Titus 3:5.

3. The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments, rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them; neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it,^a but upon the work of the Spirit,^b and the word of institution, which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers.^c

a. Rom 2:28-29; 1 Pet 3:21. • *b.* Mat 3:11; 1 Cor 12:13. • *c.* Mat 26:27-28.

4. There be only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord: neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the Word lawfully ordained.^a

a. Mat 28:19-20, 19; 1 Cor 4:1; 11:20, 23; Heb 5:4.

5. The sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the New.^a

a. 1 Cor 10:1-4.

CHAPTER 28

Of Baptism

1. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ,^a not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church,^b but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace,^c of his ingrafting into Christ,^d of regeneration,^e of remission of sins,^f and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life;^g which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in his Church until the end of the world.^h

a. Mat 28:19. • *b.* 1 Cor 12:13. • *c.* Rom 4:11 *with* Col 2:11-12. • *d.* Rom 6:5; Gal 3:27. • *e.* Titus 3:5. • *f.* Mark 1:4. • *g.* Rom 6:3-4. • *h.* Mat 28:19-20.

2. The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the gospel lawfully called thereunto.^a

a. Mat 3:11; 28:19-20; John 1:33.

3. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.^a

a. Mark 7:4; Acts 2:41; 16:33; Heb 9:10, 19-22.

4. Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ,^a but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized.^b

a. Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:37-38. • *b.* Gen 17:7, 9 *with* Gal 3:9, 14 *and* Col 2:11-12 *and* Acts 2:38-39 *and* Rom 4:11-12; Mat 28:19; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15; 1 Cor 7:14.

5. Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance,^a yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it,^b or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.^c

a. Luke 7:30 *with* Exod 4:24-26. • *b.* Acts 10:2, 4, 22, 31, 45, 47; Rom 4:11. • *c.* Acts 8:13, 23.

6. The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered;^a yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in his appointed time.^b

a. John 3:5, 8. • *b.* Acts 2:38, 41; Gal 3:27; Eph 5:25-26; Titus 3:5.

7. The sacrament of baptism is but once to be administered to any person.^a

a. Titus 3:5.

CHAPTER 29

Of the Lord's Supper

1. Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of his body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in his Church, unto the end of the world; for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of himself in his death, the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other, as members of his mystical body.^a

a. 1 Cor 10:16-17, 21; 11:23-26; 12:13.

2. In this sacrament Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sins of the quick or dead,^a but only a commemoration of that one offering up of himself, by himself, upon the cross, once for all, and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same;^b so that the Popish sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is most abominably injurious to Christ's one only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect.^c

a. Heb 9:22, 25-26, 28. • *b.* Mat 26:26-27; 1 Cor 11:24-26. • *c.* Heb 7:23-24, 27; 10:11-12, 14, 18.

3. The Lord Jesus hath, in this ordinance, appointed his ministers to declare his word of institution to the people, to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use; and to take and break the bread, to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants;^a but to none who are not then present in the congregation.^b

a. Mat 26:26-28 and Mark 14:22-24 and Luke 22:19-20 with 1 Cor 11:23-27. • b. Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 11:20.

4. Private masses, or receiving this sacrament by a priest, or any other, alone;^a as likewise the denial of the cup to the people;^b worshipping the elements, the lifting them up, or carrying them about for adoration, and the reserving them for any pretended religious use, are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament, and to the institution of Christ.^c

a. 1 Cor 10:6. • b. Mark 4:23; 1 Cor 11:25-29. • c. Mat 15:9.

5. The outward elements in this sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, as that truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ;^a albeit, in substance and nature, they still remain truly, and only, bread and wine, as they were before.^b

a. Mat 26:26-28. • b. Mat 26:29; 1 Cor 11:26-28.

6. That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine, into the substance of Christ's body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant, not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense and reason; overthroweth the nature of the sacrament; and hath been, and is the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross idolatries.^a

a. Luke 24:6, 39; Acts 3:21 with 1 Cor 11:24-26.

7. Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this sacrament,^a do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all benefits of his death: the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are, to their outward senses.^b

a. 1 Cor 11:28. • b. 1 Cor 10:16.

8. Although ignorant and wicked men receive the outward elements in this sacrament, yet they receive not the thing signified thereby; but by their unworthy coming thereunto are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, to their own damnation. Wherefore all ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with him, so are they unworthy of the Lord's table, and can not, without great sin against Christ, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries,^a or be admitted thereunto.^b

a. 1 Cor 11:27-29; 2 Cor 6:14-16. • b. Mat 7:6; 1 Cor 5:6-7, 13; 2 Thes 3:6, 14-15.

CHAPTER 30

Of Church Censures

1. The Lord Jesus, as king and head of his Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of Church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate.^a

a. Isa 9:6-7; Mat 28:18-20; Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Cor 12:28; 1 Thes 5:12; 1 Tim 5:17; Heb 13:7, 17, 24.
2. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the Word and censures; and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the gospel, and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require.^a

a. Mat 16:19; 18:17-18; John 20:21-23; 2 Cor 2:6-8.
3. Church censures are necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren; for deterring of others from the like offenses; for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump; for vindicating the honor of Christ, and the holy profession of the gospel; and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the Church, if they should suffer his covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders.^a

a. Mat 7:6; 1 Cor 5 *throughout*; 11:27-34 *with* Jude 1:23; 1 Tim 1:20; 5:20.
4. For the better attaining of these ends, the officers of the Church are to proceed by admonition, suspension from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season, and by excommunication from the Church, according to the nature of the crime and demerit of the person.^a

a. Mat 18:17; 1 Cor 5:4-5, 13; 1 Thes 5:12; 2 Thes 3:6, 14-15; Titus 3:10.

CHAPTER 31

Of Synods and Councils

1. For the better government and further edification of the Church, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called synods or councils.^a

a. Acts 15:2, 4, 6.
2. As magistrates may lawfully call a synod of ministers and other fit persons to consult and advise with about matters of religion;^a so, if magistrates be open enemies to the Church, the ministers of Christ, of themselves, by virtue of their office, or they, with other fit persons, upon delegation from their churches, may meet together in such assemblies.^b

a. Isa 49:23; 2 Chron 19:8-11; 29-30 *throughout*; Prov 11:14; Mat 2:4-5; 1 Tim 2:1-2. *b.* Acts 15:2, 4, 22-23, 25.
3. It belongeth to synods and councils, ministerially, to determine controversies of faith, and cases of conscience; to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and government of his Church; to receive complaints in cases of maladministration, and authoritatively to determine the same: which decrees and determinations, if consonant to the Word of God, are to be

received with reverence and submission, not only for their agreement with the Word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in his Word.^a

a. Mat 18:17-20; Acts 15:15, 19, 24, 27-31; 16:4.

4. All synods or councils since the apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred; therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice, but to be used as a help in both.^a

a. Acts 17:11; 1 Cor 2:5; 2 Cor 1:24; Eph 2:20.

5. Synods and councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical: and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth, unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary; or by way of advice, for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate.^a

a. Luke 12:13-14; John 18:36.

CHAPTER 32

Of the State of Men after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead

1. The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption;^a but their souls (which neither die nor sleep), having an immortal subsistence,^b immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies:^c and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day.^d Besides these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.

a. Gen 3:19; Acts 13:36. • *b.* Eccl 12:7; Luke 23:43. • *c.* Phil 1:23 *with* Acts 3:21 *and* Eph 4:10; 2 Cor 5:1, 6, 8; Heb 12:23. • *d.* Luke 16:23-24; Acts 1:25; 1 Pet 3:19; Jude 1:6-7.

2. At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed;^a and all the dead shall be raised up with the self-same bodies, and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls forever.^b

a. 1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thes 4:17. • *b.* Job 19:26-27; 1 Cor 15:42-44.

3. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor; the bodies of the just, by his Spirit, unto honor, and be made conformable to his own glorious body.^a

a. John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor 15:42; Phil 3:21.

CHAPTER 33

Of the Last Judgment

1. God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ,^a to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father.^b In which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged,^c but likewise all persons, that have lived upon earth, shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.^d

a. Acts 17:31. • *b.* John 5:22, 27. • *c.* 1 Cor 6:3; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 1:6. • *d.* Eccl 12:14; Mat 12:36-37; Rom 2:16; 14:10, 12; 2 Cor 5:10.

2. The end of God's appointing this day, is for the manifestation of the glory of his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect;^a and of his justice in the damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient.^b For then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fulness of joy and refreshing which shall come from the presence of the Lord:^c but the wicked, who know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.^d

a. Mat 25:21; Rom 9:23. • *b.* Rom 2:5-6; 9:22; 2 Thes 1:7-8. • *c.* Mat 25:31-34; Acts 3:19; 2 Thes 1:7. • *d.* Mat 25:41, 46; 2 Thes 1:9.

3. As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity:^a so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.^b

a. Luke 21:27-28; Rom 8:23-25; 2 Cor 5:10-11; 2 Thes 1:5-7; 2 Pet 3:11, 14. • *b.* Mat 24:36, 42-44; Mark 13:35-37; Luke 12:35-36; Rev 22:20.

DIRECTORY OF THE LARGER CATECHISM

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J. Directory of the Larger Catechism

THE WESTMINSTER LARGER CATECHISM

Q1: What is the chief and highest end of man?

A1: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God,[1] and fully to enjoy him forever.[2]

1. Rom. 11:36; I Cor. 10:31 2. Psalms 73:24-28

Q2: How doth it appear that there is a God?

A2: The very light of nature in man, and the works of God, declare plainly that there is a God;[1] but his word and Spirit only do sufficiently and effectually reveal him unto men for their salvation.[2]

1. Rom. 1:19-20; Psalms 19:1-3; Acts 17:28 2. I Cor. 2:9-10; II Tim. 3:15-17; Isaiah 59:21

Q3: What is the word of God?

A3: The holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God,[1] the only rule of faith and obedience.[2]

1. II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:19-21 2. Eph. 2:20; Rev. 22:18-19; Isa. 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Gal. 1:8-9; II Tim. 3:15-16

Q4: How doth it appear that the scriptures are the word of God?

A4: The scriptures manifest themselves to be the word of God, by their majesty [1] and purity;[2] by the consent of all the parts,[3] and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God;[4] by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation;[5] but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very word of God.[6]

1. Hosea 8:12; I Cor. 2:6-7, 13; Psalms 119:18, 129 2. Psalms 12:6; 119:140 3. Acts 10:43; 26:22 4. Rom. 3:19, 27 5. Acts 23:28; Heb. 4:12; James 1:18; Psalms 19:7-9; Rom. 15:4; Acts 20:32 6. John 16:13-14; 20:31; I John 2:20, 27

Q5: What do the scriptures principally teach?

A5: The scriptures principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.[1]

1. II Tim. 1:13

Q6: What do the scriptures make known of God?

A6: The scriptures make known what God is,[1] the persons in the Godhead,[2] his decrees,[3] and the execution of his decrees.[4]

1. Heb. 11:6 2. I John 5:17 3. Acts 15:14-15, 18 4. Acts 4:27-28

Q7: What is God?

A7: God is a Spirit,[1] in and of himself infinite in being,[2] glory,[3] blessedness,[4] and perfection;[5] all-sufficient,[6] eternal,[7] unchangeable,[8] incomprehensible,[9] everywhere present,[10] almighty,[11] knowing all things,[12] most wise,[13] most holy,[14] most just,[15] most merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.[16]

1. John 4:24 2. Exod. 3:14; Job 11:7-9 3. Acts 7:2 4. I Tim. 6:15 5. Matt. 5:48 6. Gen. 17:1 7. Psalms 90:2 8. Mal. 3:6; James 1:17 9. I Kings 8:27 10. Psalms 139:1-13 11. Rev. 4:8 12. Heb. 4:13; Psalm 147:5 13. Rom. 16:27 14. Isa. 6:3; Rev. 15:4 15. Deut. 32:4 16. Exod. 34:6

Q8: Are there more Gods than one?

A8: There is but one only, the living and true God.[1]

1. Deut. 6:4; I Cor. 8:4, 6; Jer. 10:10

Q9: How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A9: There be three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one true, eternal God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; although distinguished by their personal properties.[1]

1. I John 5:7; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; II Cor. 13:14; John 10:30

Q10: What are the personal properties of the three persons in the Godhead?

A10: It is proper to the Father to beget the Son,[1] and to the Son to be begotten of the Father,[2] and to the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and the Son from all eternity.[3]

1. Heb. 1:5-6, 8 2. John 1:14, 18 3. John 15:26; Gal. 4:6

Q11: How doth it appear that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father?

A11: The scriptures manifest that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father, ascribing unto them such names,[1] attributes,[2] works,[3] and worship,[4] as are proper to God only.

1. Isa. 6:3, 5, 8; John 12:41; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25; I John 5:20 2. John 1:1; 2:24-25; Isa. 9:6; I Cor. 2:10-11 3. Col. 1:16; Gen. 1:2 4. Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14

Q12: What are the decrees of God?

A12: God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will,[1] whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably foreordained: Whatsoever comes to pass in time,[2] especially concerning angels and men.

1. Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:14-15, 18; 11:33 2. Eph. 1:4, 11; Rom. 9:22-23; Psalm 33:11

Q13: What hath God especially decreed concerning angels and men?

A13: God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, hath elected some angels to glory;[1] and in Christ hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof;[2] and also, according to his sovereign power, and the

unsearchable counsel of his own will (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favor as he pleases), hath passed by and foreordained the rest to dishonor and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice.[3]

1. I Tim. 5:21 2. Eph. 1:4-6; II Thess. 2:13-14 3. Rom. 9:17-18, 21-22; Matt. 11:25-26; II Tim. 2:20; Jude 1:4; I Peter 2:8

Q14: How doth God execute his decrees?

A14: God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will.[1]

1. Eph. 1:11

Q15: What is the work of creation?

A15: The work of creation is that wherein God did in the beginning, by the word of his power, make of nothing the world, and all things therein, for himself, within the space of six days, and all very good.[1]

1. Gen. ch. 1; Heb. 11:8; Prov 16:4

Q16: How did God create angels?

A16: God created all the angels[1] spirits,[2] immortal,[3] holy,[4] excelling in knowledge,[5] mighty in power,[6] to execute his commandments, and to praise his name,[7] yet subject to change.[8]

1. Col. 1:16 2. Psa. 104:4 3. Matt. 22:30 4. Matt. 25:31 5. II Sam. 14:17; Matt. 24:36 6. II Thess. 1:7 7. Psa. 103:20-21 8. II Peter 2:4

Q17: How did God create man?

A17: After God had made all other creatures, he created man male and female,[1] formed the body of the man of the dust of the ground,[2] and the woman of the rib of the man,[3] endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls,[4] made them after his own image,[5] in knowledge,[6] righteousness, and holiness,[7] having the law of God written in their hearts,[8] and power to fulfil it,[9] and dominion over the creatures,[10] yet subject to fall.[11]

1. Gen. 1:27 2. Gen. 2:7 3. Gen. 2:22 4. Gen. 2:7; Job 35:11; Eccl. 12:7; Matt. 10:28; Luke 23:43 5. Gen. 1:27 6. Col. 3:10 7. Eph. 4:24 8. Rom. 2:14-15 9. Eccl. 7:29 10. Gen. 1:28 11. Gen. 3:6; Eccl. 7:29

Q18: What are God's works of providence?

A18: God's works of providence are his most holy,[1] wise,[2] and powerful preserving [3] and governing [4] all his creatures; ordering them, and all their actions,[5] to his own glory.[6]

1. Psa. 145:17 2. Psa. 104:24; Isa. 28:29 3. Heb. 1:8 4. Psa. 103:19 5. Matt. 10:29-31; Gen. 45:7 6. Rom. 11:86; Isa. 43:14

Q19: What is God's providence towards the angels?

A19: God by his providence permitted some of the angels, wilfully and irrecoverably, to fall into sin and damnation,[1] limiting and ordering that, and all their sins, to his own glory;[2] and established the rest in holiness and happiness;[3] employing them all,[4] at his pleasure, in the administrations of his power, mercy, and justice.[5]

1. Jude 1:6; II Peter 2:4; Heb. 2:16; John 8:44 2. Job 1:12; Matt. 8:31 3. I Tim. 5:21; Mark 8:38; Heb. 12:22 4. Psa. 104:4 5. II Kings 19:35; Heb. 1:14

Q20: What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?

A20: The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth;[1] putting the creatures under his dominion,[2] and ordaining marriage for his help;[3] affording him communion with himself;[4] instituting the sabbath;[5] entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience,[6] of which the tree of life was a pledge;[7] and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.[8]

1. Gen. 2:8, 15-16 2. Gen. 1:28 3. Gen. 2:18 4. Gen. 1:26-29; 3:8 5. Gen. 2:3 6. Gal. 3:12; Rom. 10:5 7. Gen. 2:9 8. Gen. 2:17

Q21: Did man continue in that estate wherein God at first created him?

A21: Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own will, through the temptation of Satan, transgressed the commandment of God in eating the forbidden fruit; and thereby fell from the estate of innocency wherein they were created.[1]

1. Gen. 3:6-8, 13; Eccl. 7:29; II Cor. 11:3

Q22: Did all mankind fall in that first transgression ?

A22: The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation,[1] sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.[2]

1. Acts 17:26 2. Gen. 2:16-17; Rom. 5:12-20; I Cor. 15:21-22

Q23: Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A23: The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.[1]

1. Rom. 3:23; 5:12

Q24: What is sin?

A24: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature.[1]

1. I John 3:4; Gal. 3:10, 12

Q25: Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A25: The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of Adam's first sin,[1] the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly

indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually;[2] which is commonly called Original Sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.[3]

1. Rom. 5:12, 19 2. Rom. 3:10-19; 5:6; 8:7-8; Eph. 2:1-3; Gen. 6:5 3. James 1:14-15; Matt. 15:19

Q26: How is original sin conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity?

A26: Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.[1]

1. Psa. 51:5; Job 14:4; 15:14; John 3:6

Q27: What misery did the fall bring upon mankind?

A27: The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God,[1] his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath,[2] bond slaves to Satan,[3] and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come.[4]

1. Gen. 3:8, 10, 24 2. Eph. 2:2-3 3. II Tim. 2:26 4. Gen. 2:17; Lam. 3:39; Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41, 46, Jude 1:7

Q28: What are the punishments of sin in this world?

A28: The punishments of sin in this world are either inward, as blindness of mind,[1] a reprobate sense,[2] strong delusions,[3] hardness of heart,[4] horror of conscience,[5] and vile affections;[6] or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sakes,[7] and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments;[8] together with death itself.[9]

1. Eph. 4:18 2. Rom. 1:28 3. II Thess. 2:11 4. Rom. 2:5 5. Isa. 33:14; Gen. 4:13; Matt. 27:4 6. Rom. 1:26, 7. Gen. 3:17 8. Deut. 28:15-18 9. Rom. 6:21, 23

Q29: What are the punishments of sin in the world to come?

A29: The punishments of sin in the world to come, are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell fire forever.[1]

1. II Thess. 1:9; Mark 9:43-44, 46, 48; Luke 16:24

Q30: Doth God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

A30: God doth not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery,[1] into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Works;[2] but of his mere love and mercy delivereth his elect out of it, and bringeth them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Grace.[3]

1. I Thess. 5:9 2. Gal. 3:10, 12 3. Titus 3:4-7; Gal. 3:21; Rom. 3:20-22

Q31: With whom was the covenant of grace made?

A31: The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.[1]

1. Gal. 3:16; Rom. 5:15-21; Isa. 53:10-11

Q32: How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant?

A32: The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator,[1] and life and salvation by him;[2] and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit [3] to all his elect, to work in them that faith,[4] with all other saving graces;[5] and to enable them unto all holy obedience,[5] as the evidence of the truth of their faith [6] and thankfulness to God,[7] and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation.[8]

1. Gen. 3:15; Isa. 42:6; John 6:27 2. I John 5:11-12 3. John 1:12; 3:16 4. Prov. 1:23 5. II Cor. 4:13 6. Gal. 5:22-23 7. Ezek. 36:27 8. James 2:18, 22 9. II Cor. 5:14-15 10. Eph. 2:18

Q33: Was the covenant of grace always administered after one and the same manner?

A33: The covenant of grace was not always administered after the same manner, but the administrations of it under the Old Testament were different from those under the New.[1]

1. II Cor. 3:6-9

Q34: How was the covenant of grace administered under the Old Testament?

A34: The covenant of grace was administered under the Old Testament, by promises,[1] prophecies, [2] sacrifices,[3] circumcision,[4] the passover,[5] and other types and ordinances, which did all foreshadow Christ then to come, and were for that time sufficient to build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah,[6] by whom they then had full remission of sin, and eternal salvation.[7]

1. Rom. 15:8 2. Acts 3:20, 24 3. Heb. 10:1 4. Rom. 4:11 5. I Cor. 5:7 6. Heb. ch. 8-10; 11:13 7. Gal. 3:7-9, 14

Q35: How is the covenant of grace administered under the New Testament?

A35: Under the New Testament, when Christ the substance was exhibited, the same covenant of grace was and still is to be administered in the preaching of the word,[1] and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism [2] and the Lord's Supper;[3] in which grace and salvation are held forth in more fulness, evidence, and efficacy, to all nations.[4]

1. Mark 16:15 2. Matt. 28:19-20 3. I Cor. 11:23-25 4. II Cor. 3:6-9; Heb. 8:6, 10-11; Matt. 28:19

Q36: Who is the Mediator of the covenant of grace?

A36: The only Mediator of the covenant of grace is the Lord Jesus Christ,[1] who, being the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father,[2] in the fulness of time became man,[3] and so was and continues to be God and man, in two entire distinct natures, and one person, forever.[4]

1. I Tim. 2:5 2. Jn 1:1, 14; 10:30; Phil. 2:6 3. Gal. 4:4 4. Luke 1:35; Rom. 9:5; Col. 2:9; Heb. 7:24-25

Q37: How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

A37: Christ the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul,[1] being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance, and born of her,[2] yet without sin.[3]

1. John 1:14; Matt. 26:38 2. Luke 1:27, 31, 35, 42; Gal. 4:4 3. Heb. 4:15; 7:26

Q38: Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God?

A38: It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death;[1] give worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience, and intercession;[2] and to satisfy God's justice,[3] procure his favor,[4] purchase a peculiar people,[5] give his Spirit to them,[6] conquer all their enemies,[7] and bring them to everlasting salvation.[8]

1. Acts. 2:24-25; Rom. 1:4; 4:25; Heb. 9:14 2. Acts 20:28; Heb. 7:25-28; 9:14 3. Rom. 3:24-26 4. Eph. 1:6; Matt. 3:17 5. Titus. 2:13-14 6. Gal. 4:6 7. Luke 1:68-69, 71, 74 8. Heb. 5:8-9; 9:11-15

Q39: Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be man?

A39: It was requisite that the Mediator should be man, that he might advance our nature,[1] perform obedience to the law,[2] suffer and make intercession for us in our nature,[3] have a fellow feeling of our infirmities;[4] that we might receive the adoption of sons,[5] and have comfort and access with boldness unto the throne of grace.[6]

1. Heb. 2:16 2. Gal. 4:4 3. Heb. 2:14; 7:24-25 4. Heb. 4:15 5. Gal. 4:5 6. Heb. 4:16

Q40: Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God and man in one person ?

A40: It was requisite that the Mediator, who was to reconcile God and man, should himself be both God and man, and this in one person, that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of God for us, and relied on by us,[1] as the works of the whole person.[2]

1. Matt. 1:21, 23; 3:17; Heb. 9:14 2. I Peter 2:6

Q41: Why was our Mediator called Jesus?

A41: Our Mediator was called Jesus, because he saveth his people from their sins.[1]

1. Matt. 1:21

Q42: Why was our Mediator called Christ?

A42: Our Mediator was called Christ, because he was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure;[1] and so set apart, and fully furnished with all authority and ability,[2] to execute the offices of prophet,[3] priest,[4] and king of his church,[5] in the estate both of his humiliation and exaltation.

1. John 3:34; Psal. 40:7 2. John 6:27; Matt. 28:18-20 3. Acts 3:21-22; Luke 4:18, 21 4. Heb. 4:14-15; 5:5-7 5. Psal. 2:6; Matt. 21:5; Isa. 9:6-7; Phil. 2:8-11

Q43: How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A43: Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in his revealing to the church,[1] in all ages, by his Spirit and word,[2] in divers ways of administration,[3] the whole will of God,[4] in all things concerning their edification and salvation.[5]

1. John 1:18 2. I Peter 1:10-12 3. Heb. 1:1-2 4. John 15:15 5. Acts 20:32; Eph. 4:11-13; John 20:31

Q44: How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?

A44: Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering himself a sacrifice without spot to God,[1] to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people;[2] and in making continual intercession for them.[3]

1. Heb. 9:14, 28 2. Heb. 2:17 3. Heb. 7:25

Q45: How doth Christ execute the office of a king?

A45: Christ executeth the office of a king, in calling out of the world a people to himself,[1] and giving them officers,[2] laws,[3] and censures, by which he visibly governs them;[4] in bestowing saving grace upon his elect,[5] rewarding their obedience,[6] and correcting them for their sins,[7] preserving and supporting them under all their temptations and sufferings,[8] restraining and overcoming all their enemies,[9] and powerfully ordering all things for his own glory,[10] and their good;[11] and also in taking vengeance on the rest, who know not God, and obey not the gospel.[12]

1. Acts 15:14-16; Isa. 4:4-5; Gen. 49:10; Psalms 110:3 2. Eph. 4:11-12; I Cor. 12:28 3. Isa. 33:22 4. Matt. 18:17-18; I Cor. 5:4-5 5. Acts 5:31 6. Rev. 2:10; 22:12 7. Rev. 3:19 8. Isa. 63:9 9. I Cor. 15:25; Psalms 110:1-2 10. Rom. 14:10-11 11. Rom. 8:28 12. II Thess. 1:8-9; Psalms 2:8-9

Q46: What was the estate of Christ's humiliation?

A46: The estate of Christ's humiliation was that low condition, wherein he for our sakes, emptying himself of his glory, took upon him the form of a servant, in his conception and birth, life, death, and after his death, until his resurrection. [1]

1. Phil. 2:6-8; Luke 1:31; II Cor. 8:9; Acts 2:24

Q47: How did Christ humble himself in his conception and birth?

A47: Christ humbled himself in his conception and birth, in that, being from all eternity the Son of God, in the bosom of the Father, he was pleased in the fulness of time to become the son of man, made of a woman of low estate, and to be born of her; with divers circumstances of more than ordinary abasement.[1]

1. John 1:14, 18; Gal. 4:4; Luke 2:7

Q48: How did Christ humble himself in his life?

A48: Christ humbled himself in his life, by subjecting himself to the law,[1] which he perfectly fulfilled;[2] and by conflicting with the indignities of the world,[3] temptations of Satan,[4] and infirmities in his flesh, whether common to the nature of man, or particularly accompanying that his low condition.[5]

1. Gal. 4:4 2. Matt. 5:17; Rom. 5:19 3. Psalms 22:6; Heb. 12:2-3 4. Matt. 4:1-12; Luke 4:13 5. Heb. 2:17-18; 4:15; Isa. 52:13-14

Q49: How did Christ humble himself in his death?

A49: Christ humbled himself in his death, in that having been betrayed by Judas,[1] forsaken by his disciples,[2] scorned and rejected by the world,[3] condemned by Pilate, and tormented by his persecutors;[4] having also conflicted with the terrors of death, and the powers of darkness, felt and borne the weight of God's wrath,[5] he laid down his life an offering for sin,[6] enduring the painful, shameful, and cursed death of the cross.[7]

1. Matt. 27:4 2. Matt. 26:56 3. Isa. 53:2-3 4. Matt. 27:26-50; John 19:34 5. Luke 22:44; Matt. 27:46 6. Isa. 53:10 7. Phil. 2:8; Heb. 12:2; Gal. 3:13

Q50: Wherein consisted Christ's humiliation after his death?

A50: Christ's humiliation after his death consisted in his being buried,[1] and continuing in the state of the dead, and under the power of death till the third day;[2] which hath been otherwise expressed in these words, he descended into hell.

1. I Cor. 15:3-4 2. Psal. 16:10; Acts 2:24-27, 31; Rom. 6:9; Matt. 12:40

Q51: What was the estate of Christ's exaltation?

A51: The estate of Christ's exaltation comprehendeth his resurrection,[1] ascension,[2] sitting at the right hand of the Father,[3] and his coming again to judge the world.[4]

1. I Cor. 15:4 2. Mark 16:19 3. Eph. 1:20 4. Acts 1:11; 17:31

Q52: How was Christ exalted in his resurrection?

A52: Christ was exalted in his resurrection, in that, not having seen corruption in death (of which it was not possible for him to be held),[1] and having the very same body in which he suffered, with the essential properties thereof [2] (but without mortality, and other common infirmities belonging to this life), really united to his soul,[3] he rose again from the dead the third day by his own power;[4] whereby he declared himself to be the Son of God,[5] to have satisfied divine justice,[6] to have vanquished death, and him that had the power of it,[7] and to be Lord of quick and dead:[8] all which he did as a public person,[9] the head of his church,[10] for their justification,[11] quickening in grace,[12] support against enemies,[13] and to assure them of their resurrection from the dead at the last day.[14]

1. Acts 2:24, 27 2. Luke 14:39 3. Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:18 4. John 10:18 5. Rom. 1:4 6. Rom. 8:34 7. Heb. 2:14 8. Rom. 14:9 9. I Cor. 15:21-22 10. Eph. 1:20, 22-23; Col. 1:18 11. Rom. 4:25 12. Eph. 2:1, 5-6; Col. 2:12 13. I Cor. 15:25-27 14. I Cor. 15:20

Q53: How was Christ exalted in his ascension?

A53: Christ was exalted in his ascension, in that having after his resurrection often appeared unto and conversed with his apostles, speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,[1] and giving them commission to preach the gospel to all nations,[2] forty days after his resurrection, he, in our nature, and as our head,[3] triumphing over enemies,[4] visibly went up into the highest heavens, there to receive gifts for men,[5] to raise up our affections thither,[6] and to prepare a place for us,[7] where himself is, and shall continue till his second coming at the end of the world.[8]

1. Acts 1:2-3 2. Matt. 28:19-20 3. Heb. 6:20 4. Eph. 4:8 5. Acts 1:9-11; Eph. 4:10; Psal. 68:18 6. Col. 3:1-2 7. John 14:3 8. Acts 3:21

Q54: How is Christ exalted in his sitting at the right hand of God?

A54: Christ is exalted in his sitting at the right hand of God, in that as God-man he is advanced to the highest favor with God the Father,[1] with all fulness of joy,[2] glory,[3] and power over all things in heaven and earth;[4] and doth gather and defend his church, and subdue their enemies; furnisheth his ministers and people with gifts and graces,[5] and maketh intercession for them.[6]

1. Phil. 2:9 2. Acts 2:28; Psal. 16:11 3. John 17:5 4. Eph. 1:22; I Peter 3:22 5. Eph. 4:10-12; Psal. 110:1 6. Rom. 8:34

Q55: How doth Christ make intercession?

A55: Christ maketh intercession, by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven,[1] in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth,[2] declaring his will to have it applied to all believers;[3] answering all accusations against them,[4] and procuring for them quiet of conscience, notwithstanding daily failings,[5] access with boldness to the throne of grace,[6] and acceptance of their persons [7] and services.[8]

1. Heb. 9:12, 24 2. Heb. 1:3 3. John 3:16; 17:9, 20, 24 4. Rom. 8:33-34 5. Rom. 5:1-2; I John 2:1-2 6. Heb. 4:16 7. Eph. 1:6 8. I Peter 2:5

Q56: How is Christ to be exalted in his coming again to judge the world?

A56: Christ is to be exalted in his coming again to judge the world, in that he, who was unjustly judged and condemned by wicked men,[1] shall come again at the last day in great power,[2] and in the full manifestation of his own glory, and of his Father's, with all his holy angels,[3] with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God,[4] to judge the world in righteousness.[5]

1. Acts 3:14-15 2. Matt. 14:30 3. Luke 9:26; Matt. 25:31 4. I Thess. 4:16 5. Acts 17:31

Q57: What benefits hath Christ procured by his mediation?

A57: Christ, by his mediation, hath procured redemption,[1] with all other benefits of the covenant of grace.[2]

1. Heb. 9:12 2. II Cor. 1:20

Q58: How do we come to be made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured?

A58: We are made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured,[1] by the application of them unto us, which is the work especially of God the Holy Ghost.[2]

1. John 1:11-12 2. Titus 3:5-6

Q59: Who are made partakers of redemption through Christ?

A59: Redemption is certainly applied, and effectually communicated, to all those for whom Christ hath purchased it;[1] who are in time by the Holy Ghost enabled to believe in Christ according to the gospel.[2]

1. Eph. 1:13-14; John 6:37, 39; 10:15-16 2. Eph. 2:8; II Cor. 4:13

Q60: Can they who have never heard the gospel, and so know not Jesus Christ, nor believe in him, be saved by their living according to the light of nature?

A60: They who, having never heard the gospel,[1] know not Jesus Christ,[2] and believe not in him, cannot be saved,[3] be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature,[4] or the laws of that religion which they profess;[5] neither is there salvation in any other, but in Christ alone,[6] who is the Savior only of his body the church.[7]

1. Rom. 10:14 2. II Thess. 1:8-9; Eph. 2:12; John 1:10-12 3. John 8:24; Mark 16:16 4. I Cor. 1:20-24 5. John 4:22; Rom. 9:31-32; Phil 3:4-9 6. Acts 4:12 7. Eph. 5:23

Q61: Are all they saved who hear the gospel, and live in the church?

A61: All that hear the gospel, and live in the visible church, are not saved; but they only who are true members of the church invisible.[1]

1. John 12:38-40; Rom. 9:6; 11:7; Matt. 7:21; 22:14

Q62: What is the visible church?

A62: The visible church is a society made up of all such as in all ages and places of the world do profess the true religion,[1] and of their children.[2]

1. I Cor. 1:2; 12:13; Rom. 15:9-12; Rev. 7:9; Psalms 2:8; 22:27-31; 45:17; Matt. 28:19-20; Isa. 59:21 2. I Cor. 7:14; Acts 2:39; Rom. 11:16; Gen. 17:7

Q63: What are the special privileges of the visible church?

A63: The visible church hath the privilege of being under God's special care and government,[1] of being protected and preserved in all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies,[2] and of enjoying the communion of saints, the ordinary means of salvation,[3] and offers of grace by Christ to all the members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying, that whosoever believes in him shall be saved,[4] and excluding none that will come unto him.[5]

1. Isa. 4:5-6; I Tim. 4:10 2. Psalms 115:1-2, 9; Isa. 31:4-5; Zech. 12:2-4, 8-9 3. Acts 2:39, 42 4. Psalms 147:19-20; Rom. 9:4; Eph. 4:11-12; Mark 16:15-16 5. John 6:37

Q64: What is the invisible church?

A64: The invisible church is the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head.[1]

1. Eph. 1:20, 22-23; John 10:16, 11:52

Q65: What special benefits do the members of the invisible church enjoy by Christ?

A65: The members of the invisible church by Christ enjoy union and communion with him in grace and glory.[1]

1. John 17:21, 24; Eph. 2:5-6

Q66: What is that union which the elect have with Christ?

A66: The union which the elect have with Christ is the work of God's grace,[1] whereby they are spiritually and mystically, yet really and inseparably, joined to Christ as their head and husband,[2] which is done in their effectual calling.[3]

1. Eph. 1:22; 2:6-8 2. I Cor. 6:17; John 10:28; Eph. 5:23, 30 3. I Peter 5:10; I Cor. 1:9

Q67: What is effectual calling?

A67: Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace,[1] whereby (out of his free and special love to his elect, and from nothing in them moving him thereunto [2]) he doth, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his word and Spirit,[3] savingly enlightening their

minds,[4] renewing and powerfully determining their wills,[5] so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein.[6]

1. John 5:25; Eph. 1:18-20; II Tim. 1:8-9 2. Titus. 3:4-5; Eph. 2:4-5, 7-9; Rom. 9:11 3. II Cor. 5:20; 6:1-2; John 6:44; II Thess. 2:13-14 4. Acts 26:18; I Cor. 2:10, 12 5. Ezek. 11:19; 36:26-27; John 6:45 6. Eph. 2:5; Phil. 2:13; Deut. 30:6

Q68: Are the elect only effectually called?

A68: All the elect, and they only, are effectually called;[1] although others may be, and often are, outwardly called by the ministry of the word,[2] and have some common operations of the Spirit;[3] who, for their wilful neglect and contempt of the grace offered to them, being justly left in their unbelief, do never truly come to Jesus Christ.[4]

1. Acts 13:48 2. Matt. 22:14 3. Matt. 7:22; 13:20-21; Heb. 6:4-6 4. John 6:64-65; 12:38-30; Acts 18:25-27; Psa. 81:11-12

Q69: What is the communion in grace which the members of the invisible church have with Christ?

A69: The communion in grace which the members of the invisible church have with Christ, is their partaking of the virtue of his mediation, in their justification,[1] adoption,[2] sanctification, and whatever else, in this life, manifests their union with him.[3]

1. Rom. 8:30 2. Eph. 1:5 3. I Cor. 1:30

Q70: What is justification?

A70: Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners,[1] in which he pardoneth all their sins, accepteth and accounteth their persons righteous in his sight;[2] not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them,[3] but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them,[4] and received by faith alone.[5]

1. Rom. 3:22, 24-25; 4:5 2. II Cor. 5:19, 21; Rom. 3:22-25, 27-28 3. Titus 3:5, 7; Eph. 1:7 4. Rom. 4:6-8; 5:17-19 5. Acts 10:43; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9

Q71: How is justification an act of God's free grace?

A71: Although Christ, by his obedience and death, did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in the behalf of them that are justified;[1] yet inasmuch as God accepteth the satisfaction from a surety, which he might have demanded of them, and did provide this surety, his own only Son,[2] imputing his righteousness to them,[3] and requiring nothing of them for their justification but faith,[4] which also is his gift,[5] their justification is to them of free grace.[6]

1. Rom. 5:8-10, 19 2. II Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 7:22; 10:10; Matt. 20:28; Dan. 9:24, 26; Isa. 53:4-6, 10-12; Rom. 8:32; I Peter 1:18-19 3. II Cor. 5:21 4. Rom. 3:24-25 5. Eph. 2:8 6. Eph. 1:7

Q72: What is justifying faith?

A72: Justifying faith is a saving grace,[1] wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit [2] and word of God,[3] whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition,[4] not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the gospel,[5] but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and his righteousness, therein held

forth, for pardon of sin,[6] and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.[7]

1. Heb. 10:39 2. II Cor. 4:13; Eph. 1:17-19 3. Rom. 10:14, 17 4. Acts 2:37; 4:12; 16:30; John 16:8-9; Rom. 5:6; Eph. 2:1 5. Eph. 1:13 6. John 1:12; Acts 10:43; 16:31 7. Phil. 3:9; Acts 15:11

Q73: How doth faith justify a sinner in the sight of God?

A73: Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not because of those other graces which do always accompany it, or of good works that are the fruits of it,[3] nor as if the grace of faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to him for his justification,[2] but only as it is an instrument by which he receiveth and applies Christ and his righteousness.[3]

1. Gal. 3:11; Rom. 3:28 2. Rom. 4:5; 10:10 3. John 1:12; Phil. 3:9; Gal. 2:16

Q74: What is adoption?

A74: Adoption is an act of the free grace of God,[1] in and for his only Son Jesus Christ,[2] whereby all those that are justified are received into the number of his children,[3] have his name put upon them,[4] the Spirit of his Son given to them,[5] are under his fatherly care and dispensations,[6] admitted to all the liberties and privileges of the sons of God, made heirs of all the promises, and fellow heirs with Christ in glory.[7]

1. I John 3:1 2. Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:4-5 3. John 1:12 4. II Cor. 4:18; Rev. 3:12 5. Gal. 4:6 6. Psal. 103:13; Prov. 14:26; Matt. 6:32 7. Heb. 6:12; Rom. 8:17

Q75: What is sanctification?

A75: Sanctification is a work of God's grace, whereby they whom God hath, before the foundation of the world, chosen to be holy, are in time, through the powerful operation of his Spirit [1] applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them,[2] renewed in their whole man after the image of God,[3] having the seeds of repentance unto life, and all other saving graces, put into their hearts,[4] and those graces so stirred up, increased, and strengthened,[5] as that they more and more die unto sin, and rise unto newness of life.[6]

1. Eph. 1:4; I Cor. 6:11; II Thess. 2:13 2. Rom. 6:4-6 3. Eph. 4:23-24 4. Acts 11:18; I John 3:9 5. Jude 1:20; Heb. 6:11-12; Eph. 3:16-19; Col. 1:10-11 6. Rom. 6:4; 6:14; Gal. 5:24

Q76: What is repentance unto life?

A76: Repentance unto life is a saving grace,[1] wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit [2] and word of God,[3] whereby, out of the sight and sense, not only of the danger,[4] but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins,[5] and upon the apprehension of God's mercy in Christ to such as are penitent,[6] he so grieves for [7] and hates his sins,[8] as that he turns from them all to God,[9] purposing and endeavoring constantly to walk with him in all the ways of new obedience.[10]

1. II Tim. 2:25 2. Zech. 12:10 3. Acts 11:18, 20-21 4. Ezek. 18:28, 30, 32; Luke 15:17-18; Hosea 2:6-7 5. Ezek. 36:31; Isa. 30:22 6. Joel 2:12-13 7. Jer. 31:18-19 8. II Cor. 7:11 9. Acts 26:18; Ezek. 14:6; I Kings 8:47-48 10. Psal. 119:6, 59, 128; Luke 1:6; II Kings 23:25

Q77: Wherein do justification and sanctification differ?

A77: Although sanctification be inseparably joined with justification,[1] yet they differ, in that God in justification imputeth the righteousness of Christ,[2] in sanctification his Spirit infuseth grace, and

enableth to the exercise thereof;[3] in the former, sin is pardoned;[4] in the other, it is subdued:[5] the one doth equally free all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that perfectly in this life, that they never fall into condemnation;[6] the other is neither equal in all,[7] nor in this life perfect in any,[8] but growing up to perfection.[9]

1. I Cor. 1:30; 6:11 2. Rom. 4:6, 8 3. Ezek. 36:27 4. Rom. 3:24-25 5. Rom. 6:6, 14 6. Rom. 8:33-34
7. I John 2:12-14; Heb. 5:12-14 8. I John 1:8, 10 9. II Cor. 7:1; Phil 3:12-14

Q78: Whence ariseth the imperfection of sanctification in believers?

A78: The imperfection of sanctification in believers ariseth from the remnants of sin abiding in every part of them, and the perpetual lustings of the flesh against the spirit; whereby they are often foiled with temptations, and fall into many sins,[1] are hindered in all their spiritual services,[2] and their best works are imperfect and defiled in the sight of God.[3]

1. Rom. 7:18, 23; Mark 14:66-72 ; Gal. 2:11-12 2. Heb. 12:1 3. Isa. 64:6; Exod. 28:88

Q79: May not true believers, by reason of their imperfections, and the many temptations and sins they are overtaken with, fall away from the state of grace ?

A79: True believers, by reason of the unchangeable love of God,[1] and his decree and covenant to give them perseverance,[2] their inseparable union with Christ,[3] his continual intercession for them,[4] and the Spirit and seed of God abiding in them,[5] can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace,[6] but are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.[7]

1. Jer. 31:3 2. II Tim. 2:19-21; II Sam. 23:5 3. I Cor. 1:8-9 4. Heb. 7:25; Luke 22:32 5. I John 2:27; 3:9
6. Jer. 32:40; John 10:28 7. I Peter 1:5

Q80: Can true believers be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and that they shall persevere therein unto salvation?

A80: Such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavor to walk in all good conscience before him,[1] may, without extraordinary revelation, by faith grounded upon the truth of God's promises, and by the Spirit enabling them to discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made,[2] and bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God,[3] be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and shall persevere therein unto salvation.[4]

1. Jn 2:3 2. I Cor. 2:12; I Jn 3:14, 18-19, 21, 24; 4:13, 16; Heb. 6:11-12 3. Rom. 8:16 4. I Jn 5:13

Q81: Are all true believers at all times assured of their present being in the estate of grace, and that they shall be saved?

A81: Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith,[1] true believers may wait long before they obtain it;[2] and, after the enjoyment thereof, may have it weakened and intermitted, through manifold distempers, sins, temptations, and desertions;[3] yet are they never left without such a presence and support of the Spirit of God as keeps them from sinking into utter despair.[4]

1. Eph. 1:13 2. Isa. 1:10; Psa. ch. 88 3. Psa. 22:1; 31:22; 51:8, 12; 87:1-12; Song of Sol. 5:2-3, 6 4. I John 3:9; Job 13:15; Psa. 73:15, 23; Isa. 54:7-10

Q82: What is the communion in glory which the members of the invisible church have with Christ?

A82: The communion in glory which the members of the invisible church have with Christ, is in this life,[1] immediately after death,[2] and at last perfected at the resurrection and day of judgment.[3]

1. II Cor. 3:18 2. Luke 23:43 3. I Thess. 4:17

Q83: What is the communion in glory with Christ which the members of the invisible church enjoy in this life?

A83: The members of the invisible church have communicated to them in this life the firstfruits of glory with Christ, as they are members of him their head, and so in him are interested in that glory which he is fully possessed of;[1] and, as an earnest thereof, enjoy the sense of God's love,[2] peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and hope of glory;[3] as, on the contrary, sense of God's revenging wrath, horror of conscience, and a fearful expectation of judgment, are to the wicked the beginning of their torments which they shall endure after death.[4]

1. Eph. 2:5 2. Rom. 5:5; II Cor. 1:22 3. Rom. 5:1-2; 14:17 4. Gen. 4:13; Matt. 27:4; Heb. 10:27; Rom. 2:9; Mark 9:44

Q84: Shall all men die?

A84: Death being threatened as the wages of sin,[1] it is appointed unto all men once to die;[2] for that all have sinned.[3]

1. Rom. 6:23 2. Heb. 9:27 3. Rom. 5:12

Q85: Death, being the wages of sin, why are not the righteous delivered from death, seeing all their sins are forgiven in Christ?

A85: The righteous shall be delivered from death itself at the last day, and even in death are delivered from the sting and curse of it;[1] so that, although they die, yet it is out of God's love,[2] to free them perfectly from sin and misery,[3] and to make them capable of further communion with Christ in glory, which they then enter upon.[4]

1. I Cor. 15:26, 55-57; Heb. 2:15 2. Isa. 57:1-2; II Kings 22:20 3. Rev. 14:13; Eph. 5:27 4. Luke 23:43; Phil 1:23

Q86: What is the communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible church enjoy immediately after death ?

A86: The communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible church enjoy immediately after death, is, in that their souls are then made perfect in holiness,[1] and received into the highest heavens,[2] where they behold the face of God in light and glory,[3] waiting for the full redemption of their bodies,[4] which even in death continue united to Christ,[5] and rest in their graves as in their beds,[6] till at the last day they be again united to their souls.[7] Whereas the souls of the wicked are at their death cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, and their bodies kept in their graves, as in their prisons, till the resurrection and judgment of the great day.[8]

1. Heb. 12:23 2. II Cor. 5:1, 6, 8; Phil 1:23; Acts 3:21; Eph. 4:10 3. I John 3:2; I Cor. 13:12 4. Rom. 8:23; Psal. 16:9 5. I Thess. 4:14 6. Isa. 57:2 7. Job 19:26-27 8. Luke 16:23-24; Acts 1:25; Jude 1:6-7

Q87: What are we to believe concerning the resurrection?

A87: We are to believe, that at the last day there shall be a general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust:[1] when they that are then found alive shall in a moment be changed; and the selfsame bodies of the dead which were laid in the grave, being then again united to their souls forever, shall be raised up by the power of Christ.[2] The bodies of the just, by the Spirit of Christ, and by virtue of his resurrection as their head, shall be raised in power, spiritual, incorruptible, and made like to his

glorious body;[3] and the bodies of the wicked shall be raised up in dishonor by him, as an offended judge.[4]

1. Acts 24:15 2. I Cor. 15:51-53; I Thess. 4:15-17; John 5:28-29 3. I Cor. 15:21-23, 42-44; Phil. 3:21 4. John 5:27-29; Matt. 25:33

Q88: What shall immediately follow after the resurrection?

A88: Immediately after the resurrection shall follow the general and final judgment of angels and men;[1] the day and hour whereof no man knows, that all may watch and pray, and be ever ready for the coming of the Lord.[2]

1. II Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6-7, 14-15; Matt. 25:46 2. Matt. 24:36, 42, 44; Luke 21:35-36

Q89: What shall be done to the wicked at the day of judgment?

A89: At the day of judgment, the wicked shall be set on Christ's left hand,[1] and, upon clear evidence, and full conviction of their own consciences,[2] shall have the fearful but just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them;[3] and thereupon shall be cast out from the favorable presence of God, and the glorious fellowship with Christ, his saints, and all his holy angels, into hell, to be punished with unspeakable torments, both of body and soul, with the devil and his angels forever.[4]

1. Matt. 25:33 2. Rom. 2:15-16 3. Matt. 25:41-43 4. Luke 16:26; II Thess. 1:8-9

Q90: What shall be done to the righteous at the day of judgment?

A90: At the day of judgment, the righteous, being caught up to Christ in the clouds,[1] shall be set on his right hand, and there openly acknowledged and acquitted,[2] shall join with him in the judging of reprobate angels and men,[3] and shall be received into heaven,[4] where they shall be fully and forever freed from all sin and misery;[5] filled with inconceivable joys,[6] made perfectly holy and happy both in body and soul, in the company of innumerable saints and holy angels,[7] but especially in the immediate vision and fruition of God the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, to all eternity.[8] And this is the perfect and full communion, which the members of the invisible church shall enjoy with Christ in glory, at the resurrection and day of judgment.

1. I Thess. 4:17 2. Matt. 10:32, 25:33 3. I Cor. 6:2-3 4. Matt. 25:34, 46 5. Eph. 5:27; Rev. 14:13 6. Psal. 16:11 7. Heb. 12:22-23 8. I John 3:2; I Cor. 13:12; I Thess. 4:17-18

Q91: What is the duty which God requireth of man?

A91: The duty which God requireth of man, is obedience to his revealed will.[1]

1. Rom. 12:1-2; Micah 6:8; I Sam. 15:22

Q92: What did God at first reveal unto man as the rule of his obedience?

A92: The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him, besides a special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the moral law.[1]

1. Gen. 1:26-27; 2:17; Rom. 2:14-15; 10:5

Q93: What is the moral law?

A93: The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding everyone to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body,[1] and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he oweth to God and man:[2] promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it.[3]

1. Deut. 5:1-3, 31, 33; Luke 10:26-27; Gal. 3:10; I Thess. 5:23 2. Luke 1:75; Acts 14:16 3. Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:10, 12

Q94: Is there any use of the moral law to man since the fall?

A94: Although no man, since the fall, can attain to righteousness and life by the moral law:[1] yet there is great use thereof, as well common to all men, as peculiar either to the unregenerate, or the regenerate.[2]

1. Rom. 8:3; Gal. 2:16 2. I Tim. 1:8

Q95: Of what use is the moral law to all men?

A95: The moral law is of use to all men, to inform them of the holy nature and will of God,[1] and of their duty, binding them to walk accordingly:[2] to convince them of their disability to keep it, and of the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives:[3] to humble them in the sense of their sin and misery,[4] and thereby help them to a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ,[5] and of the perfection of his obedience.[6]

1. Lev. 11:44-45; 20:7-8; Rom. 7:12 2. Micah 6:8; James 2:10-11 3. Psa. 19:11-12; Rom. 3:20; 7:7 4. Rom. 3:9, 23 5. Gal. 3:21-22 6. Rom. 10:4

Q96: What particular use is there of the moral law to unregenerate men?

A96: The moral law is of use to unregenerate men, to awaken their consciences to flee from wrath to come,[1] and to drive them to Christ:[2] or, upon their continuance in the estate and way of sin, to leave them inexcusable,[3] and under the curse thereof.[4]

1. I Tim. 1:9-10 2. Gal. 3:24 3. Rom. 1:20; 2:15 4. Gal. 3:10

Q97: What special use is there of the moral law to the regenerate?

A97: Although they that are regenerate, and believe in Christ, be delivered from the moral law as a covenant of works,[1] so as thereby they are neither justified [2] nor condemned:[3] yet, besides the general uses thereof common to them with all men, it is of special use, to show them how much they are bound to Christ for his fulfilling it, and enduring the curse thereof in their stead, and for their good:[4] and thereby to provoke them to more thankfulness,[5] and to express the same in their greater care to conform themselves thereunto as the rule of their obedience.[6]

1. Rom. 6:14; 7:4, 6; Gal. 4:4-5 2. Rom. 3:20 3. Gal. 5:23; Rom. 8:1 4. Rom. 7:24-25; 8:3-4; Gal. 3:13-14 5. Luke 1:68-69, 74-75; Col. 1:12-14 6. Rom. 7:22; 12:2; Titus 2:11-14

Q98: Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?

A98: The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments, which were delivered by the voice of God upon mount Sinai, and written by him in two tables of stone:[1] and are recorded in the

twentieth chapter of Exodus. The four first commandments containing our duty to God, and the other six our duty to man.[2]

1. Deut. 10:4; Exod. 34:1-4 2. Matt. 22:37-38, 40

Q99: What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?

A99: For the right understanding of the ten commandments, these rules are to be observed: 1. That the law is perfect, and bindeth everyone to full conformity in the whole man unto the righteousness thereof, and unto entire obedience forever; so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin.[1] 2. That it is spiritual, and so reaches the understanding, will, affections, and all other powers of the soul; as well as words, works, and gestures.[2] 3. That one and the same thing, in divers respects, is required or forbidden in several commandments.[3] 4. That as, where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden;[4] and, where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded;[5] so, where a promise is annexed, the contrary threatening is included;[6] and, where a threatening is annexed, the contrary promise is included.[7] 5. That what God forbids, is at no time to be done;[8] What he commands, is always our duty;[9] and yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times.[10] 6. That under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded; together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto.[11] 7. That what is forbidden or commanded to ourselves, we are bound, according to our places, to endeavor that it may be avoided or performed by others, according to the duty of their places.[12] 8. That in what is commanded to others, we are bound, according to our places and callings, to be helpful to them;[13] and to take heed of partaking with others in: What is forbidden them.[14]

1. Psa. 19:7; James 2:10; Matt. 5:21-22 2. Rom. 7:14; Deut. 6:5; Matt. 5:21-22, 27-28, 33-34, 37-39, 43-44; 22:37-39 3. Col. 3:5; Amos 8:5; Prov. 1:19; I Tim. 6:10 4. Isa. 58:13; Deut. 6:13; Matt. 4:9-10; 15:4-6 5. Matt. 5:21-25; Eph. 4:28 6. Exod. 20:12; Prov. 30:17 7. Jer. 18:7-8; Exod. 20:7; Psa. 15:1, 4-5; 24:4-5 8. Job. 13:7; 36:21; Rom. 3:8; Heb. 11:25 9. Deut. 4:8-9 10. Matt. 12:7 11. Matt. 5:21-22, 27-28; 15:4-6; Heb. 10:24-25; I Thess. 5:22-23; Gal. 5:26; Col. 3:21 12. Exod. 20:10; Lev. 19:17; Gen. 18:19; Josh. 24:15; Deut. 6:6-7 13. II Cor. 1:24 14. I Tim. 5:22

Q100: What special things are we to consider in the ten commandments?

A100: We are to consider, in the ten commandments, the preface, the substance of the commandments themselves, and several reasons annexed to some of them, the more to enforce them.

Q101: What is the preface to the ten commandments?

A101: The preface to the ten commandments is contained in these words, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.[1] Wherein God manifesteth his sovereignty, as being JEHOVAH, the eternal, immutable, and almighty God;[2] having his being in and of himself;[3] and giving being to all his words [4] and works:[5] and that he is a God in covenant, as with Israel of old, so with all his people;[6] who, as he brought them out of their bondage in Egypt, so he delivers us from our spiritual thralldom;[7] and that therefore we are bound to take him for our God alone, and to keep all his commandments.[8]

1. Exod. 20:2 2. Isa. 44:6 3. Exod. 3:14 4. Exod. 6:3 5. Acts 17:24, 28 6. Gen. 17:7; Rom. 3:29 7. Luke 1:74-75 8. I Peter 1:15-18; Lev. 18:30, 19:37

Q102: What is the sum of the four commandments which contain our duty to God?

A102: The sum of the four commandments containing our duty to God is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind.[1]

1. Luke 10:27

Q103: Which is the first commandment?

A103: The first commandment is, Thou shall have no other gods before me.[1]

1. Exod. 20:3

Q104: What are the duties required in the first commandment?

A104: The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God;[1] and to worship and glorify him accordingly,[2] by thinking,[3] meditating,[4] remembering,[5] highly esteeming, [6] honoring,[7] adoring,[8] choosing,[9] loving,[10] desiring,[11] fearing of him;[12] believing him;[13] trusting,[14] hoping,[15] delighting,[16] rejoicing in him;[17] being zealous for him;[18] calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks,[19] and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man;[20] being careful in all things to please him,[21] and sorrowful when in anything he is offended;[22] and walking humbly with him.[23]

1. I Chr. 28:9; Deut 26:17; Isa. 43:10; Jer. 14:22 2. Psal. 29:2; 95:6-7; Matt. 4:10 3. Mal. 3:16 4. Psal. 63:6 5. Eccl. 12:1 6. Psal. 71:19 7. Mal. 1:6 8. Isa. 45:28 9. Josh. 24:15, 22 10. Deut. 6:5 11. Psal. 73:25 12. Isa. 8:13 13. Exod. 14:31 14. Isa. 26:4 15. Psal. 130:7 16. Psal. 37:4 17. Psal. 32:11 18. Rom. 12:11; Num. 25:11 19. Phil. 4:6 20. Jer. 7:28; James 4:7 21. I John 3:22 22. Jer. 31:18; Psal. 119:136 23. Micah 6:8

Q105: What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

A105: The sins forbidden in the first commandment are, atheism, in denying or not having a God;[1] Idolatry, in having or worshiping more gods than one, or any with or instead of the true God;[2] the not having and avouching him for God, and our God;[3] the omission or neglect of anything due to him, required in this commandment;[4] ignorance,[5] forgetfulness,[6] misapprehensions,[7] false opinions,[8] unworthy and wicked thoughts of him;[9] bold and curious searching into his secrets;[10] all profaneness,[11] hatred of God;[12] self-love,[13] self-seeking,[14] and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things, and taking them off from him in whole or in part;[15] vain credulity,[16] unbelief,[17] heresy,[18] misbelief,[19] distrust,[20] despair,[21] incorrigibility,[22] and insensibility under judgments,[23] hardness of heart,[24] pride,[25] presumption,[26] carnal security,[27] tempting of God;[28] using unlawful means,[29] and trusting in lawful means;[30] carnal delights and joys;[31] corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal;[32] lukewarmness,[33] and deadness in the things of God;[34] estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God;[35] praying, or giving any religious worship, to saints, angels, or any other creatures;[36] all compacts and consulting with the devil,[37] and hearkening to his suggestions;[38] making men the lords of our faith and conscience;[39] slighting and despising God and his commands;[40] resisting and grieving of his Spirit,[41] discontent and impatience at his dispensations, charging him foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us;[42] and ascribing the praise of any good we either are, have, or can do, to fortune,[43] idols,[44] ourselves,[45] or any other creature.[46]

1. Psal. 14:1; Eph. 2:12 2. Jer. 2:27-28; I Thess. 1:9 3. Psal. 81:11 4. Isa. 43:22-24 5. Jer. 4:22; Hosea 4:1, 6 6. Jer. 2:32 7. Acts 17:23, 29 8. Isa. 40:18 9. Psal. 1:21 10. Deut. 29:29 11. Titus 1:16; Heb. 12:16 12. Rom. 1:30 13. II Tim. 3:2 14. Phil. 2:21 15. I John 2:15-16; I Sam. 2:29; Col. 3:2, 5 16. I John 4:1 17. Heb. 3:12 18. Gal. 5:20; Titus 3:10 19. Acts 26:9 20. Psal. 78:22 21. Gen. 4:13 22. Jer. 5:3 23. Isa. 42:25 24. Rom. 2:5 25. Jer. 13:15 26. Psal. 19:13 27. Zeph. 1:12 28. Matt. 4:7 29. Rom. 3:8 30. Jer. 17:5 31. II Tim. 3:4 32. Gal. 4:17; John 16:2; Rom. 10:2; Luke 9:54-55 33. Rev. 3:16 34. Rev. 3:1 35. Ezek. 14:5; Isa. 1:4-5 36. Rom. 1:25, 10:13-14; Hosea 4:12; Acts 10:25-26; Rev. 19:10; Matt. 4:10; Col. 2:18 37. Lev. 20:6; I Sam. 28:7, 11; I Chr. 10:13-14 38. Acts 5:3 39. II Cor. 1:24; Matt. 23:9 40. Deut.

32:15; II Sam. 12:9; Prov. 13:13 41. Acts 7:51; Eph. 4:30 42. Psalms. 73:2-3, 13-15, 22; Job 1:22 43. I Sam. 6:7-9 44. Dan. 5:23 45. Deut. 8:17; Dan. 4:30 46. Hab. 1:16

Q106: What are we specially taught by these words before me in the first commandment?

A106: These words before me, or before my face, in the first commandment, teach us, that God, who seeth all things, taketh special notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God: that so it may be an argument to dissuade from it, and to aggravate it as a most impudent provocation:[1] as also to persuade us to do as in his sight, Whatever we do in his service.[2]

1. Ezek. 8:5-18; Psalms. 44:20-21 2. I Chr. 28:9

Q107: Which is the second commandment?

A107: The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.[1]

1. Exod. 20:4-6

Q108: What are the duties required in the second commandment?

A108: The duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath instituted in his word:[1] particularly prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ:[2] the reading, preaching, and hearing of the word:[3] the administration and receiving of the sacraments:[4] church government and discipline:[5] the ministry and maintenance thereof:[6] religious fasting:[7] swearing by the name of God,[8] and vowing unto him:[9] as also the disapproving, detesting, opposing, all false worship:[10] and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry.[11]

1. Deut. 32:46-47; Matt. 28:30; Acts 2:42; I Tim. 6:13-14 2. Phil. 4:6; Eph. 5:20 3. Deut. 17:18-19; Acts 10:88; 15:21; II Tim. 4:2; James 1:21-22 4. Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 11:23-30 5. Matt. 16:19; 18:15-17; I Cor. ch. 5; 12:28 6. Eph. 4:11-12; I Tim. 5:17-18; I Cor. 9:1-15 7. Joel 2:12-13; I Cor. 7:5 8. Deut. 6:13 9. Isa. 19:21; Psalms. 76:11 10. Acts 17:16-17; Psalms. 16:4 11. Deut. 7:5; Isa. 30:22

Q109: What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?

A109: The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising,[1] counseling,[2] commanding,[3] using,[4] and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself:[5] tolerating a false religion:[6] the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever:[7] all worshiping of it,[8] or God in it or by it:[9] the making of any representation of feigned deities,[10] and all worship of them, or service belonging to them:[11] all superstitious devices,[12] corrupting the worship of God,[13] adding to it, or taking from it,[14] whether invented and taken up of ourselves,[15] or received by tradition from others,[16] though under the title of antiquity,[17] custom,[18] devotion,[19] good intent, or any other pretense whatsoever:[20] simony:[21] sacrilege:[22] all neglect,[23] contempt,[24] hindering,[25] and opposing the worship and ordinances which God hath appointed.[26]

1. Num. 15:39 2. Deut. 13:6-8 3. Hosea 5:11; Micah 6:16 4. I Kings 11:33; 12:33 5. Deut. 12:30-32 6. Deut. 13:6-12; Zech. 13:2-3; Rev. 2:2, 14-15, 20, Rev. 17:12, 16-17 7. Deut. 4:15-19; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:21-23, 25 8. Dan. 3:18; Gal. 4:8 9. Exod. 32:5 10. Exod. 32:8 11. I Kings 18:26, 28; Isa. 65:11

12. Acts 17:22; Col. 2:21-23 13. Mal. 1:7-8, 14 14. Deut. 4:2 15. Psa. 106:39 16. Matt. 15:9 17. I Peter 1:18 18. Jer. 44:17 19. Isa. 65:3-5; Gal. 1:13-14 20. I Sam. 13:11-12; 15:21 21. Acts 8:18 22. Rom. 2:22; Mal. 3:8 23. Exod. 4:24-26 24. Matt. 22:5; Mal. 1:7, 13 25. Matt. 23:13 26. Acts 13:44-45; I Thess. 2:15-16

Q110: What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it?

A110: The reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it, contained in these words, For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments;[1] are, besides God's sovereignty over us, and propriety in us,[2] his fervent zeal for his own worship,[3] and his revengeful indignation against all false worship, as being a spiritual whoredom;[4] accounting the breakers of this commandment such as hate him, and threatening to punish them unto divers generations;[5] and esteeming the observers of it such as love him and keep his commandments, and promising mercy to them unto many generations.[6]

1. Exod. 20:5-6 2. Psa. 45:11; Rev. 20:3-4 3. Exod. 34:13-14 4. I Cor. 10:20-22; Jer. 7:18-20; Ezek. 16:26-27; Deut. 32:16-20 5. Hosea 2:2-4 6. Deut. 5:29

Q111: Which is the third commandment?

A111: The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.[1]

1. Exod. 20:7

Q112: What is required in the third commandment?

A112: The third commandment requires, That the name of God, his titles, attributes,[1] ordinances,[2] the word,[3] sacraments,[4] prayer,[5] oaths,[6] vows,[7] lots,[8] his works,[9] and whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, be holily and reverently used in thought,[10] meditation,[11] word,[12] and writing;[13] by an holy profession,[14] and Answerable conversation,[15] to the glory of God,[16] and the good of ourselves,[17] and others.[18]

1. Matt. 6:9; Deut. 28:58; Psa. 29:2; 68:4; Rev. 15:3-4 2. Mal. 1:14; Eccl. 5:1 3. Psa. 138:2 4. I Cor. 11:24-25, 28-29 5. I Tim. 2:8 6. Jer. 4:2 7. Eccl. 5:2, 4-6 8. Acts 1:24, 26 9. Job 36:24 10. Mal. 3:16 11. Psa. 8:1, 3-4, 9 12. Col. 3:17; Psa. 105:2, 5 13. Psa. 102:18 14. I Peter 3:15; Micah 4:5 15. Phil. 1:27 16. I Cor. 10:31 17. Jer. 32:39 18. I Peter 2:12

Q113: What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment?

A113: The sins forbidden in the third commandment are, the not using of God's name as is required;[1] and the abuse of it in an ignorant,[2] vain,[3] irreverent, profane,[4] superstitious,[5] or wicked mentioning, or otherwise using his titles, attributes,[6] ordinances,[7] or works,[8] by blasphemy,[9] perjury;[10] all sinful cursings,[11] oaths,[12] vows,[13] and lots;[14] violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful;[15] and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful;[16] murmuring and quarreling at,[17] curious prying into,[18] and misapplying of God's decrees [19] and providences;[20] misinterpreting,[21] misapplying,[22] or any way perverting the word, or any part of it,[23] to profane jests,[24] curious or unprofitable Questions,[25] vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines;[26] abusing it, the creatures, or anything contained under the name of God, to charms,[27] or sinful lusts and practices;[28] the maligning,[29] scorning,[30] reviling,[31] or any wise opposing of God's truth, grace, and ways;[32] making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends;[33] being ashamed of it,[34] or a shame to it, by unconformable,[35] unwise,[36] unfruitful,[37] and offensive walking,[38] or backsliding from it.[39]

1. Mal. 2:2 2. Acts 17:23 3. Prov. 30:9 4. Mal. 1:6-7, 12; 3:14 5. I Sam. 4:3-5; Jer. 7:4, 9-10, 14, 31; Col. 2:20-22 6. II Kings 18:30, 35; Exod. 5:2; Psalms 139:20 7. Psalms 50:16-17 8. Psalms 1:16-17 9. Isa. 5:12 10. II Kings 19:22; Lev. 24:11 11. Zech. 5:4; 8:17 12. I Sam. 17:43; II Sam. 16:5 13. Jer. 5:7; 23:10 14. Deut. 23:18; Acts 23:12, 14 15. Esth. 3:7; 9:24; Psalms 22:18 16. Psalms 24:4, Ezek. 17:16, 18-19 17. Mark 6:26; I Sam. 25:22, 32-34 18. Rom. 9:14, 19-20 19. Deut. 29:29 20. Rom. 3:5, 7; 6:1-2 21. Eccl. 8:11; 9:3; Psalms 39 22. Matt. 5:21-48 23. Ezek. 13:22 24. II Peter 3:16; Matt. 22:24-31 25. Isa. 22:18; Jer. 23:34, 36, 38 26. I Tim. 1:4, 6-7; 6:4-5, 20; II Tim. 2:14; Titus. 3:9 27. Deut. 18:10-14; Acts 19:13 28. II Tim. 4:3-4; Rom. 13:13-14; I Kings 21:9-10; Jude 1:4 29. Acts 13:45; I John 3:12 30. Psalms 1:1; II Peter 3:3 31. I Peter 4:4 32. Acts 4:18; 13:45-46, 50; 19:9; I Thess 2:16; Heb. 10:29 33. II Tim. 3:5; Matt. 6:1-2, 5, 16; 23:14 34. Mark 8:38 35. Psalms 73:14-15 36. I Cor. 6:5-6; Eph. 5:15-17 37. Isa. 5:4; II Peter 1:8-9 38. Rom. 2:23-24 39. Gal. 3:1, 3; Heb. 6:6

Q114: What reasons are annexed to the third commandment?

A114: The reasons annexed to the third commandment, in these words, The Lord thy God, and, For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain,[1] are, because he is the Lord and our God, therefore his name is not to be profaned, or any way abused by us;[2] especially because he will be so far from acquitting and sparing the transgressors of this commandment, as that he will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment,[3] albeit many such escape the censures and punishments of men.[4]

1. Exod. 20:7 2. Lev. 19:12 3. Ezek. 36:21-23; Deut. 28:58-59; Zech. 5:2-4 4. I Sam. 2:12, 17, 22, 24; 3:18

Q115: Which is the fourth commandment?

A115: The fourth commandment is, Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. [1]

1. Exod. 20:8-11

Q116: What is required in the fourth commandment?

A116: The fourth commandment requires of all men the sanctifying or keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word, expressly one whole day in seven; which was the seventh from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week ever since, and so to continue to the end of the world; which is the Christian sabbath,[1] and in the New Testament called The Lord's day.[2]

1. Deut. 5:12, 14, 18; Gen. 2:2-3; I Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Matt. 5:17-18; Isa. 56:2, 4, 6-7 2. Rev. 1:10

Q117: How is the sabbath or the Lord's day to be sanctified?

A117: The sabbath or Lord's day is to be sanctified by an holy resting all the day,[1] not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful;[2] and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy)[3] in the public and private exercises of God's worship:[4] and, to that end, we are to prepare our hearts, and with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose and seasonably dispatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day.[5]

1. Exod. 20:8, 10 2. Exod. 16:25-28; Neh. 13:15-22; Jer. 17:21-22 3. Matt. 12:1-13 4. Isa. 58:18; 66:23; Luke 4:16; Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Psa. ch. 92; Lev. 23:3 5. Exod. 16:22, 25-26, 29; 20:8; Luke 23:54, 56; Neh. 13:19

Q118: Why is the charge of keeping the sabbath more specially directed to governors of families, and other superiors?

A118: The charge of keeping the sabbath is more specially directed to governors of families, and other superiors, because they are bound not only to keep it themselves, but to see that it be observed by all those that are under their charge; and because they are prone oftentimes to hinder them by employments of their own.[1]

1. Exod. 20:10; 23:12; Josh. 24:15; Neh. 13:15, 17; Jer. 17:20-22

Q119: What are the sins forbidden in the fourth commandment?

A119: The sins forbidden in the fourth commandment are, all omissions of the duties required,[1] all careless, negligent, and unprofitable performing of them, and being weary of them;[2] all profaning the day by idleness, and doing that which is in itself sinful;[3] and by all needless works, words, and thoughts, about our worldly employments and recreations.[4]

1. Ezek. 22:26 2. Acts 15:7, 9; Ezek. 33:30-32; Amos 8:5; Mal. 1:13 3. Ezek. 23:38 4. Jer. 17:24, 27; Isa. 58:13

Q120: What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, the more to enforce it?

A120: The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, the more to enforce it, are taken from the equity of it, God allowing us six days of seven for our own affairs, and reserving but one for himself, in these words, Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:[1] from God's challenging a special propriety in that day, The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God:[2] from the example of God, who in six days made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: and from that blessing which God put upon that day, not only in sanctifying it to be a day for his service, but in ordaining it to be a means of blessing to us in our sanctifying it; Wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.[3]

1. Exod. 20:9 2. Exod. 20:10 3. Exod. 20:11

Q121: Why is the word Remember set in the beginning of the fourth commandment?

A121: The word Remember is set in the beginning of the fourth commandment,[1] partly, because of the great benefit of remembering it, we being thereby helped in our preparation to keep it,[2] and, in keeping it, better to keep all the rest of the commandments,[3] and to continue a thankful remembrance of the two great benefits of creation and redemption, which contain a short abridgment of religion;[4] and partly, because we are very ready to forget it,[5] for that there is less light of nature for it,[6] and yet it restraineth our natural liberty in things at other times lawful;[7] that it cometh but once in seven days, and many worldly businesses come between, and too often take off our minds from thinking of it, either to prepare for it, or to sanctify it;[8] and that Satan with his instruments much labor to blot out the glory, and even the memory of it, to bring in all irreligion and impiety.[9]

1. Exod. 20:8 2. Exod. 16:23; Luke 23:54, 56; Mark 15:42; Neh. 13:19 3. Psa. 92:13-14; Ezek. 20:12, 19-20 4. Gen. 2:2-3; Psa. 118:22, 24; Acts 4:10, 11; Rev. 1:10 5. Ezek. 22:26 6. Neh. 9:14 7. Exod. 34:21 8. Deut. 5:14-15; Amos 8:5 9. Lam. 1:7; Jer. 17:21-23; Neh. 13:15-23

Q122: What is the sum of the six commandments which contain our duty to man?

A122: The sum of the six commandments which contain our duty to man is, to love our neighbor as ourselves,[1] and to do to others what we would have them to do to us.[2]

1. Matt. 22:39 2. Matt. 7:12

Q123: Which is the fifth commandment?

A123: The fifth commandment is, Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.[1]

1. Exod. 20:12

Q124: Who are meant by father and mother in the fifth commandment?

A124: By father and mother, in the fifth commandment, are meant, not only natural parents,[1] but all superiors in age [2] and gifts;[3] and especially such as, by God's ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family,[4] church,[5] or commonwealth.[6]

1. Prov. 23:22-25; Eph. 6:1-2 2. I Tim. 5:1-2 3. Gen. 4:20-22; 45:8 4. II Kings 5:13 5. II Kings 2:12; 13:14; Gal. 4:19 6. Isa. 49:23

Q125: Why are superiors styled Father and Mother?

A125: Superiors are styled Father and Mother, both to teach them in all duties toward their inferiors, like natural parents, to express love and tenderness to them, according to their several relations;[1] and to work inferiors to a greater willingness and cheerfulness in performing their duties to their superiors, as to their parents.[2]

1. Eph. 6:4; II Cor. 12:14; I Thess. 2:7-8, 11; Num. 11:11-12 2. I Cor. 4:14-16; II Kings 5:13

Q126: What is the general scope of the fifth commandment?

A126: The general scope of the fifth commandment is, the performance of those duties which we mutually owe in our several relations, as inferiors, superiors, or equals.[1]

1. Eph. 5:21; I Peter 2:17; Rom. 12:10

Q127: What is the honor that inferiors owe to their superiors?

A127: The honor which inferiors owe to their superiors is, all due reverence in heart,[1] word,[2] and behavior;[3] prayer and thanksgiving for them;[4] imitation of their virtues and graces;[5] willing obedience to their lawful commands and counsels;[6] due submission to their corrections;[7] fidelity to,[8] defense [9] and maintenance of their persons and authority, according to their several ranks, and the nature of their places;[10] bearing with their infirmities, and covering them in love, that so they may be an honor to them and to their government.[11]

1. Mal. 1:6; Lev. 19:3 2. Prov. 31:28; I Peter 3:6 3. Lev. 19:32; I Kings 2:19 4. I Tim. 2:1-2 5. Heb. 13:7; Phil. 3:17 6. Eph. 6:1-2, 5-7; I Peter 2:13-14; Rom. 13:1-5; Heb. 13:17; Prov. 4:3-4; 23:22; Exod. 18:19, 24 7. Heb. 12:9; I Peter 2:18-20 8. Titus 2:9-10 9. I Sam. 26:15-16; II Sam. 18:3; Esth. 6:2 10. Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:6-7; I Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6; Gen. 45:11; 47:12 11. Psal. 127:3-5; Prov. 31:23

Q128: What are the sins of inferiors against their superiors?

A128: The sins of inferiors against their superiors are, all neglect of the duties required toward them;[1] envying at,[2] contempt of,[3] and rebellion [4] against, their persons [5] and places,[6] in their lawful counsels,[7] commands, and corrections;[8] cursing, mocking,[9] and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.[10]

1. Matt. 15:4-6 2. Num. 11:28-29 3. I Sam. 8:7; Isa. 3:5 4. II Sam. 15:1-12 5. Exod. 21:15 6. I Sam. 10:27 7. I Sam. 2:25 8. Deut. 21:18-21 9. Prov. 30:11, 17 10. Prov. 19:26

Q129: What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?

A129: It is required of superiors, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand, to love,[1] pray for,[2] and bless their inferiors;[3] to instruct,[4] counsel, and admonish them;[5] countenancing,[6] commending,[7] and rewarding such as do well;[8] and discountenancing,[9] reproof, and chastising such as do ill;[10] protecting,[11] and providing for them all things necessary for soul [12] and body:[13] and by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God,[14] honor to themselves,[15] and so to preserve that authority which God hath put upon them.[16]

1. Col. 3:19; Titus 2:4 2. I Sam. 12:28; Job 1:5 3. I Kings 8:55-56; Heb. 7:7; Gen. 49:28 4. Deut. 6:6-7 5. Eph. 6:4 6. I Peter 3:7 7. I Peter 2:14; Rom. 13:3 8. Esth. 6:3 9. Rom. 13:3-4 10. Prov. 29:15; I Peter 2:14 11. Job 29:12-17; Isa. 1:10, 17 12. Eph. 6:4 13. I Tim. 5:8 14. I Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:3-5 15. I Kings 3:28 16. Titus 2:15

Q130: What are the sins of superiors?

A130: The sins of superiors are, besides the neglect of the duties required of them,[1] an inordinate seeking of themselves,[2] their own glory,[3] ease, profit, or pleasure;[4] commanding things unlawful,[5] or not in the power of inferiors to perform;[6] counseling,[7] encouraging,[8] or favoring them in that which is evil;[9] dissuading, discouraging, or discountenancing them in that which is good;[10] correcting them unduly;[11] careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger;[12] provoking them to wrath;[13] or any way dishonoring themselves, or lessening their authority, by an unjust, indiscreet, rigorous, or remiss behavior.[14]

1. Ezek. 34:2-4 2. Phil. 2:21 3. John 5:44; 7:18 4. Isa. 56:10-1; Deut. 17:17 5. Dan. 3:4-6; Acts 4:17-18 6. Exod. 5:10-18; Matt. 23:2, 4 7. Matt. 14:8; Mark 6:24 8. II Sam. 13:28 9. I Sam. 3:13 10. John 7:46-49; Col. 3:21; Exod. 5:17 11. I Peter 2:18-20; Heb. 12:10; Deut. 25:3 12. Gen. 38:11, 26; Acts 18:17 13. Eph. 6:4 14. Gen. 9:21; I Kings 1:6; 12:13-16; I Sam. 2:29-31

Q131: What are the duties of equals?

A131: The duties of equals are, to regard the dignity and worth of each other,[1] in giving honor to go one before another;[2] and to rejoice in each other's gifts and advancement, as their own.[3]

1. I Peter 2:17 2. Rom. 12:10 3. Rom. 12:15-16; Phil. 2:3-4

Q132: What are the sins of equals?

A132: The sins of equals are, besides the neglect of the duties required,[1] the undervaluing of the worth,[2] envying the gifts,[3] grieving at the advancement of prosperity one of another;[4] and usurping preeminence one over another.[5]

1. Rom. 13:8 2. II Tim. 3:3 3. Acts 7:9; Gal. 5:26 4. Num. 12:2; Est. 6:12-13 5. III John 1:9; Luke 22:24

Q133: What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment, the more to enforce it?

A133: The reason annexed to the fifth commandment, in these words, That thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,[1] is an express promise of long life and prosperity, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good, to all such as keep this commandment.[2]

1. Exod. 20:12 2. Deut. 5:16; I Kings 8:25; Eph. 6:2-3

Q134: Which is the sixth commandment?

A134: The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.[1]

1. Exod. 20:13

Q135: What are the duties required in the sixth commandment?

A135: The duties required in the sixth commandment are, all careful studies, and lawful endeavors, to preserve the life of ourselves [1] and others [2] by resisting all thoughts and purposes,[3] subduing all passions,[4] and avoiding all occasions,[5] temptations,[6] and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any;[7] by just defense thereof against violence,[8] patient bearing of the hand of God,[9] quietness of mind,[10] cheerfulness of spirit;[11] a sober use of meat,[12] drink,[13] physic,[14] sleep,[15] labor,[16] and recreations;[17] by charitable thoughts,[18] love,[19] compassion,[20] meekness, gentleness, kindness;[21] peaceable,[22] mild and courteous speeches and behavior;[23] forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient bearing and forgiving of injuries, and requiting good for evil;[24] comforting and succoring the distressed, and protecting and defending the innocent.[25]

1. Eph. 5:28-29 2. I Kings 18:4 3. Jer. 26:15-16; Acts 23:12, 16-17, 21, 27 4. Eph. 4:26-27 5. II Sam. 2:22; Deut. 22:8 6. Matt. 4:6-7; Prov. 1:10-11, 15-16 7. I Sam. 24:2; 26:9-11; Gen. 37:21-22 8. Psal. 82:4; Prov. 24:11-12; I Sam. 14:45 9. James 5:7-11; Heb. 12:9 10. I Thess. 4:11; I Peter 3:3-4; Psal. 37:8-11 11. Prov. 17:22 12. Prov. 25:16, 27 13. I Tim. 5:23 14. Isa. 38:21 15. Psal. 127:2 16. Eccl. 5:12; II Thess. 3:10, 12; Prov. 16:26 17. Eccl. 3:4, 11 18. I Sam. 19:4-5; 22:13-14 19. Rom. 13:10 20. Luke 10:33-34 21. Col. 3:12-13 22. James 3:17 23. I Peter 3:8-11; Prov. 15:1; Judg. 8:1-3 24. Matt. 5:24; Eph. 4:2, 32; Rom. 12:17, 20-21 25. I Thess. 5:14; Job 31:19-20; Matt. 25:35-36; Prov. 31:8-9

Q136: What are the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A136: The sins forbidden in the sixth commandment are, all taking away the life of ourselves,[1] or of others,[2] except in case of public justice,[3] lawful war,[4] or necessary defense;[5] the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life;[6] sinful anger,[7] hatred,[8] envy,[9] desire of revenge;[10] all excessive passions,[11] distracting cares;[12] immoderate use of meat, drink,[13] labor,[14] and recreations;[15] provoking words,[16] oppression,[17] quarreling,[18] striking, wounding,[19] and: Whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.[20]

1. Acts 16:28 2. Gen. 9:6 3. Num. 35:31, 33 4. Jer. 48:10; Deut. ch. 20 5. Exod. 22:2-3 6. Matt. 25:42-43; James 2:15-16; Eccl. 6:1-2 7. Matt. 5:22 8. I John 3:15; Lev. 19:17 9. Prov. 14:30 10. Rom. 12:19 11. Eph. 4:31 12. Matt. 6:31, 34 13. Luke 21:34; Rom. 13:13 14. Eccl. 2:22-23; 12:12 15. Isa. 5:12 16. Prov. 12:18; 15:1 17. Ezek. 18:18; Exod. 1:14 18. Gal. 5:15; Prov. 23:29 19. Num. 35:16-18, 21 20. Exod. 21:18-36

Q137: Which is the seventh commandment?

A137: The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery.[1]

1. Exod. 20:14

Q138: What are the duties required in the seventh commandment?

A138: The duties required in the seventh commandment are, chastity in body, mind, affections,[1] words,[2] and behavior;[3] and the preservation of it in ourselves and others;[4] watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses;[5] temperance,[6] keeping of chaste company,[7] modesty in apparel;[8] marriage by those that have not the gift of continency,[9] conjugal love,[10] and cohabitation;[11] diligent labor in our callings;[12] shunning all occasions of uncleanness, and resisting temptations thereunto.[13]

1. I Thess. 4:4; Job 31:1; I Cor. 7:34 2. Col. 4:6 3. I Peter 2:3 4. I Cor. 7:2, 35-36 5. Job 31:1 6. Acts 24:24 7. Prov. 2:16-20 8. I Tim. 2:9 9. I Cor. 7:2, 9 10. Prov. 5:19-20 11. I Peter 3:7 12. Prov. 31:11, 27-28 13. Prov. 5:8; Gen. 39:8-10

Q139: What are the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A139: The sins forbidden in the seventh commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required,[1] are, adultery, fornication,[2] rape, incest,[3] sodomy, and all unnatural lusts;[4] all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections;[5] all corrupt or filthy communications, or listening thereunto;[6] wanton looks,[7] impudent or light behavior, immodest apparel;[8] prohibiting of lawful,[9] and dispensing with unlawful marriages;[10] allowing, tolerating, keeping of stews, and resorting to them;[11] entangling vows of single life,[12] undue delay of marriage;[13] having more wives or husbands than one at the same time;[14] unjust divorce,[15] or desertion;[16] idleness, gluttony, drunkenness,[17] unchaste company;[18] lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays;[19] and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others.[20]

1. Prov. 5:7 2. Heb. 13:4; Gal. 5:19 3. II Sam. 13:14; I Cor. 5:1 4. Rom. 1:24, 26-27; Lev. 20:15-16 5. Matt. 5:28; 15:19; Col. 3:5 6. Eph. 5:3-4; Prov. 7:5, 21-22 7. Isa. 3:16; II Peter 2:14 8. Prov. 7:10, 13 9. I Tim. 4:3 10. Lev. 18:1-21; Mark 6:18; Mal. 2:11-12 11. I Kings 15:12; II Kings 23:7; Deut. 23:17-18; Lev. 19:29; Jer. 5:7; Prov. 7:24-27 12. Matt. 19:10-11 13. I Cor. 7:7-9; Gen. 38:26 14. Mal. 2:14-15; Matt. 19:5 15. Mal. 2:16; Matt. 5:32 16. I Cor. 7:12-13 17. Ezek. 16:49; Prov. 23:30-33 18. Gen. 39:10; Prov. 5:8 19. Eph. 5:4; Ezek. 23:14-16; Isa. 3:16; 23:15-17; Mark 6:22; Rom. 13:13; I Peter 4:3 20. II Kings 9:30; Jer. 4:30; Ezek. 23:40

Q140: Which is the eighth commandment?

A140: The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.[1]

1. Exod. 20:15

Q141: What are the duties required in the eighth commandment?

A141: The duties required in the eighth commandment are, truth, faithfulness, and justice in contracts and commerce between man and man;[1] rendering to everyone his due;[2] restitution of goods unlawfully detained from the right owners thereof;[3] giving and lending freely, according to our abilities, and the necessities of others;[4] moderation of our judgments, wills, and affections concerning worldly goods;[5] a provident care and study to get;[6] keep, use, and dispose these things which are necessary and convenient for the sustentation of our nature, and suitable to our condition;[7] a lawful calling,[8] and diligence in it;[9] frugality;[10] avoiding unnecessary lawsuits [11] and suretyship, or other like engagements;[12] and an endeavor, by all just and lawful means, to procure, preserve, and further the wealth and outward estate of others, as well as our own.[13]

1. Psa. 15:2, 4; Zech. 7:4, 10; 8:16-17 2. Rom. 13:7 3. Lev. 6:2-5; Luke 19:8 4. Luke 6:30, 38; I John 3:17; Eph. 4:28; Gal. 6:10 5. I Tim. 6:6-9; Gal. 6:14 6. I Tim. 5:8 7. Prov. 27:23-27; Eccl. 2:24; 3:12-

13; I Tim. 6:17-18; Isa. 38:1; Matt. 11:8 8. I Cor. 7:20; Gen. 2:15, 3:19 9. Eph. 4:28; Prov. 10:4 10. John 6:12; Prov. 21:20 11. I Cor. 6:1-9 12. Prov. 6:1-6; 11:15 13. Lev. 25:35; Deut. 22:1-4; Exod. 23:4-5; Gen. 47:14, 20; Phil. 2:4, Matt. 22:39

Q142: What are the sins forbidden in the eighth commandment?

A142: The sins forbidden in the eighth commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required,[1] are, theft,[2] robbery,[3] man-stealing,[4] and receiving anything that is stolen;[5] fraudulent dealing,[6] false weights and measures,[7] removing land marks,[8] injustice and unfaithfulness in contracts between man and man,[9] or in matters of trust;[10] oppression,[11] extortion,[12] usury,[13] bribery,[14] vexatious lawsuits,[15] unjust enclosures and depopulations;[16] engrossing commodities to enhance the price;[17] unlawful callings,[18] and all other unjust or sinful ways of taking or withholding from our neighbor what belongs to him, or of enriching ourselves;[19] covetousness;[20] inordinate prizing and affecting worldly goods;[21] distrustful and distracting cares and studies in getting, keeping, and using them;[22] envying at the prosperity of others;[23] as likewise idleness,[24] prodigality, wasteful gaming; and all other ways whereby we do unduly prejudice our own outward estate,[25] and defrauding ourselves of the due use and comfort of that estate which God hath given us.[26]

1. James 2:15-16; I John 3:17 2. Eph. 4:28; Psa. 42:10 3. Psa. 62:10 4. I Tim. 1:10 5. Prov. 29:24; Psa. 1:18 6. I Thess. 4:6 7. Prov. 11:1; 20:10 8. Deut. 19:14; Prov. 23:10 9. Amos 8:5; Psa. 37:21 10. Luke 16:10-12 11. Ezek. 22:29; Lev. 25:17 12. Matt. 23:25; Ezek. 22:12 13. Psa. 15:5 14. Job 15:34 15. I Cor. 6:6-8; Prov. 3:29-30 16. Isa. 5:8; Micah 2:2 17. Prov. 11:26 18. Acts 19:19, 24-25 19. Job. 20:19; James 5:4; Prov. 21:6 20. Luke 12:15 21. I Tim. 6:5; Col. 3:2; Prov. 23:5; Psa. 42:10 22. Matt. 6:25, 31, 34, Eccl. 5:12 23. Psa. 37:1, 7; 73:3 24. II Thess. 3:11; Prov. 18:9 25. Prov. 21:17; 23:20-21; 28:19 26. Eccl. 4:8; 6:2; I Tim. 5:8

Q143: Which is the ninth commandment?

A143: The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.[1]

1. Exod. 20:16

Q144: What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?

A144: The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting of truth between man and man,[1] and the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own;[2] appearing and standing for the truth;[3] and from the heart,[4] sincerely,[5] freely,[6] clearly,[7] and fully,[8] speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice,[9] and in all other things whatsoever;[10] a charitable esteem of our neighbors;[11] loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name;[12] sorrowing for,[13] and covering of their infirmities;[14] freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces,[15] defending their innocence;[16] a ready receiving of a good report,[17] and unwillingness to admit of an evil report,[18] concerning them; discouraging talebearers,[19] flatterers,[20] and slanderers;[21] love and care of our own good name, and defending it when need requireth;[22] keeping of lawful promises;[23] studying and practicing of whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.[24]

1. Zech. 8:16 2. III John 1:12 3. Prov. 31:8-9 4. Psa. 15:2 5. II Chr. 19:9 6. I Sam. 19:4-5 7. Josh. 7:19 8. II Sam. 14:18-20 9. Lev. 19:15; Prov. 14:5, 25 10. II Cor. 1:17-18; Eph. 4:25 11. Heb. 6:9; I Cor. 13:7 12. Rom. 1:8; II John 1:4; III John 1:3-4 13. II Cor. 2:4; 12:21 14. Prov. 17:9; I Peter 4:8 15. I Cor. 1:4-5, 7; II Tim. 1:4-5 16. I Sam. 22:14 17. I Cor. 13:6-7 18. Psa. 15:3 19. Prov. 25:23 20. Prov. 26:24-25 21. Psa. 101:5 22. Prov. 22:1; John 8:49 23. Psa. 15:4 24. Phil. 4:8

Q145: What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A145: The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbors, as well as our own,[1] especially in public judicature;[2] giving false evidence,[3] suborning false witnesses,[4] wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, outfacing and overbearing the truth;[5] passing unjust sentence,[6] calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked;[7] forgery,[8] concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause,[9] and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for either a reproof from ourselves,[10] or complaint to others;[11] speaking the truth unseasonably,[12] or maliciously to a wrong end,[13] or perverting it to a wrong meaning,[14] or in doubtful and equivocal expressions, to the prejudice of truth or justice;[15] speaking untruth,[16] lying,[17] slandering,[18] backbiting,[19] detracting,[20] tale bearing,[21] whispering,[22] scoffing,[23] reviling,[24] rash,[25] harsh,[26] and partial censuring;[27] misconstruing intentions, words, and actions;[28] flattering,[29] vainglorious boasting,[30] thinking or speaking too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others;[31] denying the gifts and graces of God;[32] aggravating smaller faults;[33] hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins, when called to a free confession;[34] unnecessary discovering of infirmities;[35] raising false rumors,[36] receiving and countenancing evil reports,[37] and stopping our ears against just defense;[38] evil suspicion;[39] envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any,[40] endeavoring or desiring to impair it,[41] rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy;[42] scornful contempt,[43] fond admiration;[44] breach of lawful promises;[45] neglecting such things as are of good report,[46] and practicing, or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering: What we can in others, such things as procure an ill name.[47]

1. I Sam. 17:28; II Sam. 1:9-10, 15-16; 16:3 2. Lev. 19:15; Hab. 1:4 3. Prov. 6:16, 19; 19:5 4. Acts 6:13 5. Jer. 9:3, 5; Acts 24:2, 5; Psalms 3:1-4; 12:3-4 6. Prov. 17:15; I Kings 21:9-14 7. Isa. 5:23 8. Psalms 119:69; Luke 16:5-7; 19:8 9. Lev. 5:1; Acts 5:3, 8-9; II Tim. 4:6 10. I Kings 1:6; Lev. 19:17 11. Isa. 59:4 12. Prov. 29:11 13. I Sam. 22:9-10; Psalms 52:1 14. Psalms 56:5; John 2:19; Matt. 26:60-61 15. Gen. 3:5, 26:7, 9 16. Isa. 59:13 17. Lev. 19:11; Col. 3:9 18. Psalms 1:20 19. Psalms 15:3 20. James 4:11; Jer. 38:4 21. Lev. 19:16 22. Rom. 1:29-30 23. Gen. 21:9; Gal. 4:29 24. I Cor. 6:10 25. Matt. 7:1 26. Acts 28:4 27. Gen. 38:24; Rom. 2:1 28. Neh. 6:6-8; Rom. 3:8; Psalms 69:10; I Sam. 1:13-15; II Sam. 10:3 29. Psalms 12:2-3 30. II Tim. 3: 31. Luke 18:9, 11; Rom. 12:16; I Cor. 4:6; Acts 12:22; Exod. 4:10-14 32. Job 4:6, 27:5-6 33. Matt. 7:3-5 34. Prov. 28:13; 30:20; Gen. 3:12-13; 4:9; Jer. 2:35; II Kings 5:25 35. Gen. 9:22; Prov. 25:9-10 36. Exod. 23:1 37. Prov. 29:12 38. Acts 7:56-57; Job 31:13-14 39. I Cor. 13:5; I Tim. 6:4 40. Num. 11:29; Matt. 21:15 41. Ezra 4:12-13 42. Jer. 48:27 43. Psalms 35:15-16, 21; Matt. 27:28-29 44. Jude 1:16; Acts 12:22 45. Rom. 1:31; II Tim. 3:3 46. I Sam. 2:24 47. II Sam. 13:12-13; Prov. 5:8-9; 6:33

Q146: Which is the tenth commandment?

A146: The tenth commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.[1]

1. Exod. 20:17

Q147: What are the duties required in the tenth commandment?

A147: The duties required in the tenth commandment are, such a full contentment with our own condition,[1] and such a charitable frame of the whole soul toward our neighbor, as that all our inward motions and affections touching him, tend unto, and further all that good which is his.[2]

1. Heb. 13:5; I Tim. 6:6 2. Job 31:29; Psalms 122:79; I Tim. 1:5; Est. 10:3; I Cor. 13:4-7

Q148: What are the sins forbidden in the tenth commandment?

A148: The sins forbidden in the tenth commandment are, discontentment with our own estate;[1] envying [2] and grieving at the good of our neighbor,[3] together with all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his.[4]

1. I Kings 21:4; Est. 5:13; I Cor. 10:10 2. Gal. 5:26; James 3:14, 16 3. Psalms 122:9-10; Neh. 2:10 4. Rom. 7:7-8; Rom. 13:9; Col. 3:5; Deut. 5:21

Q149: Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A149: No man is able, either of himself,[1] or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God;[2] but doth daily break them in thought,[3] word, and deed.[4]

1. James 3:2; John 15:5; Rom. 8:3 2. Eccl. 7:20; I John 1:8, 10; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:18-19 3. Gen. 6:5, 8:21 4. Rom. 3:9-19; James 3:2-13

Q150: Are all transgressions of the law of God equally heinous in themselves, and in the sight of God?

A150: All transgressions of the law of God are not equally heinous; but some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.[1]

1. John 19:11; Ezek. 8:6, 13, 15; I John 5:16; Psalms 78:17, 32, 56

Q151: What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?

A151: Sins receive their aggravations, 1. From the persons offending:[1] if they be of riper age,[2] greater experience or grace,[3] eminent for profession,[4] gifts,[5] place,[6] office,[7] guides to others,[8] and whose example is likely to be followed by others.[9] 2. From the parties offended:[10] if immediately against God,[11] his attributes,[12] and worship;[13] against Christ, and his grace;[14] the Holy Spirit,[15] his witness,[16] and workings;[17] against superiors, men of eminency,[18] and such as we stand especially related and engaged unto;[19] against any of the saints,[20] particularly weak brethren,[21] the souls of them, or any other,[22] and the common good of all or many.[23] 3. From the nature and quality of the offense:[24] if it be against the express letter of the law,[25] break many commandments, contain in it many sins:[26] if not only conceived in the heart, but breaks forth in words and actions,[27] scandalize others,[28] and admit of no reparation:[29] if against means,[30] mercies,[31] judgments,[32] light of nature,[33] conviction of conscience,[34] public or private admonition,[35] censures of the church,[36] civil punishments;[37] and our prayers, purposes, promises,[38] vows,[39] covenants,[40] and engagements to God or men:[41] if done deliberately,[42] wilfully,[43] presumptuously,[44] impudently,[45] boastingly,[46] maliciously,[47] frequently,[48] obstinately,[49] with delight,[50] continuance,[51] or relapsing after repentance.[52] 4. From circumstances of time [53] and place:[54] if on the Lord's day,[55] or other times of divine worship;[56] or immediately before [57] or after these,[58] or other helps to prevent or remedy such miscarriages:[59] if in public, or in the presence of others, who are thereby likely to be provoked or defiled.[60]

1. Jer. 2:8 2. Job 32:7, 9; Eccl. 4:13 3. I Kings 11:4, 9 4. II Sam. 12:14; I Cor. 5:1 5. James 4:17; Luke 12:47-48 6. Jer. 5:4-5 7. II Sam. 12:7-9; Ezek. 8:11-12 8. Rom. 2:17-24 9. Gal. 2:11-14 10. Matt. 21:38-39 11. I Sam. 2:25; Acts 5:4; Psalms 51:4 12. Rom. 2:4 13. Mal. 1:8, 14 14. Heb. 2:2-3; 12:25 15. Heb. 10:29; Matt. 12:31-32 16. Eph. 4:30 17. Heb. 6:4-6 18. Jude 1:8; Num. 12:8-9; Isa. 3:5 19. Prov. 30:17; II Cor. 12:15; Psalms 55:12-15 20. Zeph. 2:8, 10-11; Matt. 18:6; I Cor. 6:8; Rev. 17:6 21. I Cor. 8:11-12; Rom. 14:13, 15, 21 22. Ezek. 13:19; I Cor. 8:12; Rev. 18:12-13; Matt. 23:15 23. I Thess. 2:15-16; Josh. 22:20 24. Prov. 6:30-35 25. Ezra 9:10-12; I Kings 11:9-10 26. Col. 3:5; I Tim. 6:10; Prov. 5:8-12; 6:32-33; Josh. 7:21 27. James 1:14-15; Matt. 5:22; Micah 2:1 28. Matt. 18:7; Rom. 2:23-24 29. Deut. 22:22, 28-29; Prov. 6:32-25 30. Matt. 11:21-24; John 15:22 31. Isa. 1:3; Deut. 32:6 32. Amos 4:8-11; Jer. 5:8 33. Rom. 1:26-27 34. Rom. 1:32; Dan. 5:22; Titus 3:10-11 35. Prov. 29:1 36. Titus

3:10; Matt. 18:17-37. Prov. 23:35, 27:22-38. Psalms 78:34-37; Jer. 2:20, 13:5-6, 20-21-39. Eccl. 5:4-6; Prov. 20:25-40. Lev. 26:25-41. Prov. 2:17; Ezek. 17:18-19-42. Psalms 36:4-43. Jer. 6:16-44. Num. 15:30; Exod. 21:14-45. Jer. 3:3; Prov. 7:13-46. Psalms 52:1-47. III John 1:10-48. Num. 14:22-49. Zech. 7:11-12-50. Prov. 2:14-51. Isa. 57:17-52. Jer. 34:8-11; II Peter 2:20-22-53. II Kings 5:26-54. Jer. 7:10; Isa. 26:10-55. Ezek. 23:37-39-56. Isa. 58:3-5; Num. 25:6-7-57. I Cor. 11:20-21-58. Jer. 7:8-10, 14-15; John 13:27, 30-59. Ezra 9:13-14-60. II Sam. 16:22; I Sam. 2:22-24

Q152: What doth every sin deserve at the hands of God?

A152: Every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty,[1] goodness,[2] and holiness of God,[3] and against his righteous law,[4] deserveth his wrath and curse,[5] both in this life,[6] and that which is to come,[7] and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ.[8]

1. James 2:10-11 2. Exod. 20:1-2 3. Hab. 1:13; Lev. 10:3; 11:44-45 4. I John 3:4; Rom. 7:12 5. Eph. 5:6; Gal. 3:10 6. Lam. 3:39; Deut. 28:15-68 7. Matt. 25:41 8. Heb. 9:22; I Peter 1:18-19

Q153: What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us by reason of the transgression of the law?

A153: That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us by reason of the transgression of the law, he requireth of us repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,[1] and the diligent use of the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation.[2]

1. Acts 16:30-31; 20:21; Matt. 3:7-8; Luke 13:3, 5; John 3:16, 18 2. Prov. 2:1-5; 8:33-36

Q154: What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation?

A154: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to his church the benefits of his mediation, are all his ordinances; especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation.[1]

1. Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:42, 46-47

Q155: How is the word made effectual to salvation?

A155: The Spirit of God makes the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of enlightening,[1] convincing, and humbling sinners;[2] of driving them out of themselves, and drawing them unto Christ;[3] of conforming them to his image,[4] and subduing them to his will;[5] of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions;[6] of building them up in grace,[7] and establishing their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.[8]

1. Neh. 8:8; Acts 26:18; Psalms 19:8 2. I Cor. 14:24-25; II Cor. 3:18-19, 26-28 3. Acts 2:37, 41; 8:27-39 4. II Cor. 3:18 5. II Cor. 10:4-6; Rom. 6:17 6. Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; Eph. 6:16-17; Psalms 19:11; I Cor. 10:11 7. Acts 20:32; II Tim. 3:15-17 8. Rom. 1:16; 10:13-17; 15:4; 16:25; I Thess. 3:2, 10-11, 13

Q156: Is the word of God to be read by all?

A156: Although all are not to be permitted to read the word publicly to the congregation,[1] yet all sorts of people are bound to read it apart by themselves,[2] and with their families:[3] to which end, the holy scriptures are to be translated out of the original into vulgar languages.[4]

1. Deut. 31:9, 11-13; Neh. 8:2-3; 9:3-5 2. Deut. 17:19; Rev. 1:3; John 5:39; Isa. 34:16 3. Deut. 6:6-9; Gen. 18:17, 19; Psalms 78:5-7 4. I Cor. 14:6, 9, 11-12, 15-16, 24, 27-28

Q157: How is the word of God to be read?

A157: The holy scriptures are to be read with an high and reverent esteem of them;[1] with a firm persuasion that they are the very word of God;[2] and that he only can enable us to understand them;[3] with desire to know, believe, and obey the will of God revealed in them;[4] with diligence,[5] and attention to the matter and scope of them;[6] with meditation,[7] application,[8] self-denial,[9] and prayer.[10]

1. Psa. 19:10; Neh. 8:3-10; Exod. 24:7; II Chr. 34:27; Isa. 66:2 2. II Peter 1:19-21 3. Luke 24:45; II Cor. 3:13-16 4. Deut. 17:10, 20 5. Acts 17:11 6. Acts 8:30, 34; Luke 10:26-28 7. Psa. 1:2, 119:97 8. II Chr. 24:21 9. Prov. 3:5; Deut 33:3 10. Prov. 2:1-6; Psa. 119:18; Neh. 7:6, 8

Q158: By whom is the word of God to be preached?

A158: The word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted,[1] and also duly approved and called to that office.[2]

1. I Tim. 3:2, 6; Eph. 4:8-11; Hosea 4:6; Mal. 2:7; II Cor. 3:6 2. Jer. 14:15; Rom. 10:15; Heb. 5:4; I Cor. 12:28-29; I Tim. 3:10; 4:14; 5:22

Q159: How is the word of God to be preached by those that are called thereunto?

A159: They that are called to labor in the ministry of the word, are to preach sound doctrine,[1] diligently,[2] in season and out of season;[3] plainly,[4] not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power;[5] faithfully,[6] making known the whole counsel of God;[7] wisely,[8] applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers;[9] zealously,[10] with fervent love to God [11] and the souls of his people;[12] sincerely,[13] aiming at his glory,[14] and their conversion,[15] edification,[16] and salvation.[17]

1. Titus 2:1, 8 2. Acts 18:25 3. II Tim. 4:2 4. I Cor. 14:19 5. I Cor. 2:4 6. Jer. 23:28; I Cor. 4:1-2 7. Acts 20:27 8. Col. 1:28; II Tim. 2:15 9. I Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12-14; Luke 12:42 10. Acts 18:25 11. II Cor. 5:13-14; Phil. 1:15-17 12. Col. 4:12; II Cor. 12:15 13. II Cor. 2:17; 4:2 14. I Thess. 2:4-6; John 7:18 15. I Cor. 9:19-22 16. II Cor. 12:19; Eph. 4:12 17. I Tim. 4:16; Acts 26:16-18

Q160: What is required of those that hear the word preached?

A160: It is required of those that hear the word preached, that they attend upon it with diligence,[1] preparation,[2] and prayer;[3] examine: What they hear by the scriptures;[4] receive the truth with faith,[5] love,[6] meekness,[7] and readiness of mind,[8] as the word of God;[9] meditate,[10] and confer of it;[11] hide it in their hearts,[12] and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives.[13]

1. Prov. 8:34 2. I Peter 2:1-2; Luke 8:18 3. Psa. 119:18; Eph. 6:18-19 4. Acts 17:11 5. Heb. 4:2 6. II Thess 2:10 7. James 1:21 8. Acts 17:11 9. I Thess 2:13 10. Luke 9:44; Heb. 2:1 11. Luke 24:14; Deut 6:6-7 12. Prov. 2:1; Psa. 119:11 13. Luke 8:15; James 1:25

Q161: How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

A161: The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not by any power in themselves, or any virtue derived from the piety or intention of him by whom they are administered, but only by the working of the Holy Ghost, and the blessing of Christ, by whom they are instituted.[1]

1. I Peter 3:21; Acts 8:13, 23; I Cor. 3:6-7; 12:13

Q162: What is a sacrament?

A162: A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ in his church,[1] to signify, seal, and exhibit [2] unto those that are within the covenant of grace,[3] the benefits of his mediation;[4] to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces;[5] to oblige them to obedience;[6] to testify and cherish their love and communion one with another;[7] and to distinguish them from those that are without.[8]

1. Gen. 17:7, 10; Exod. ch. 12; Matt. 26:26-28; 28:19 2. Rom. 4:11; I Cor. 11:24-25 3. Rom. 15:8; Exod. 12:48 4. Acts 2:38; I Cor. 10:16 5. Rom. 4:11; Gal. 3:27 6. Rom. 6:3-4; I Cor. 10:21 7. Eph. 4:2-5; I Cor. 12:13 8. Eph. 2:11-12; Gen. 34:14

Q163: What are the parts of a sacrament?

A163: The parts of a sacrament are two; the one an outward and sensible sign, used according to Christ's own appointment; the other an inward and spiritual grace thereby signified.[1]

1. Matt. 3:11; I Peter 3:27; Rom. 2:28-29

Q164: How many sacraments hath Christ instituted in his church under the New Testament?

A164: Under the New Testament Christ hath instituted in his church only two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's supper.[1]

1. Matt. 26:26-28; 28:19; I Cor. 11:20, 23

Q165: What is Baptism?

A165: Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,[1] to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself,[2] of remission of sins by his blood,[3] and regeneration by his Spirit;[4] of adoption,[5] and resurrection unto everlasting life;[6] and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church,[7] and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's.[8]

1. Matt. 28:19 2. Gal. 3:27 3. Mark 1:4; Rev. 1:5 4. Titus 3:5; Eph. 5:26 5. Gal. 3:26-27 6. I Cor. 15:29; Rom. 6:5 7. I Cor. 12:13 8. Rom. 6:4 \

Q166: Unto whom is Baptism to be administered?

A166: Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, and so strangers from the covenant of promise, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him,[1] but infants descending from parents, either both, or but one of them, professing faith in Christ, and obedience to him, are in that respect within the covenant, and to be baptized.[2]

1. Acts 2:38; 8:36-37 2. Gen. 17:7, 9; Gal. 3:9, 14; Col. 2:11-12; Acts 2:38-39; Rom. 4:11-12; 11:16; I Cor. 7:14; Matt 28:19; Luke 18:15-16 Q167: How is our Baptism to be improved by us?

A167: The needful but much neglected duty of improving our Baptism, is to be performed by us all our life long, especially in the time of temptation, and when we are present at the administration of it to others;[1] by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it, and of the ends for which Christ instituted it, the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby, and our solemn vow made therein;[2] by being humbled for our sinful defilement, our falling short of, and walking contrary to, the grace of baptism, and our engagements;[3] by growing up to assurance of pardon of sin, and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament;[4] by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ, into whom we are baptized, for the mortifying of sin, and quickening of grace;[5] and by

endeavoring to live by faith,[6] to have our conversation in holiness and righteousness,[7] as those that have therein given up their names to Christ;[8] and to walk in brotherly love, as being baptized by the same Spirit into one body.[9]

1. Col. 2:11-12; Rom. 6:4, 6, 11 2. Rom. 6:3-5 3. I Cor. 1:11-13; Rom. 6:2-3 4. Rom. 4:11-12; I Peter 3:21 5. Rom. 6:3-5 6. Gal. 3:26-27 7. Rom. 6:22 8. Acts 2:38 9. I Cor. 12:13, 25-27

Q168: What is the Lord's supper?

A168: The Lord's supper is a sacrament of the New Testament,[1] wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, his death is showed forth; and they that worthily communicate feed upon his body and blood, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace;[2] have their union and communion with him confirmed;[3] testify and renew their thankfulness,[4] and engagement to God,[5] and their mutual love and fellowship each with other, as members of the same mystical body.[6]

1. Luke 22:20 2. Matt. 26:26-28; I Cor. 11:13-26 3. I Cor. 10:16 4. I Cor. 11:24 5. I Cor. 10:14-16, 21 6. I Cor. 10:17

Q169: How hath Christ appointed bread and wine to be given and received in the sacrament of the Lord's supper?

A169: Christ hath appointed the ministers of his word, in the administration of this sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to set apart the bread and wine from common use, by the word of institution, thanksgiving, and prayer; to take and break the bread, and to give both the bread and the wine to the communicants: who are, by the same appointment, to take and eat the bread, and to drink the wine, in thankful remembrance that the body of Christ was broken and given, and his blood shed, for them.[1]

1. I Cor. 11:23-24; Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20

Q170: How do they that worthily communicate in the Lord's supper feed upon the body and blood of Christ therein?

A170: As the body and blood of Christ are not corporally or carnally present in, with, or under the bread and wine in the Lord's supper,[1] and yet are spiritually present to the faith of the receiver, no less truly and really than the elements themselves are to their outward senses;[2] so they that worthily communicate in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, do therein feed upon the body and blood of Christ, not after a corporal and carnal, but in a spiritual manner; yet truly and really,[3] while by faith they receive and apply unto themselves Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death.[4]

1. Acts 3:21 2. Matt. 26:26, 28 3. I Cor. 11:24-29 4. I Cor. 10:16

Q171: How are they that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper to prepare themselves before they come unto it?

A171: They that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper are, before they come, to prepare themselves thereunto, by examining themselves [1] of their being in Christ,[2] of their sins and wants;[3] of the truth and measure of their knowledge,[4] faith,[5] repentance;[6] love to God and the brethren,[7] charity to all men,[8] forgiving those that have done them wrong;[9] of their desires after Christ,[10] and of their new obedience;[11] and by renewing the exercise of these graces,[12] by serious meditation,[13] and fervent prayer.[14]

1. I Cor. 11:28 2. II Cor. 13:5 3. I Cor. 5:7; Exod. 12:15 4. I Cor. 11:29 5. I Cor. 13:5; Matt. 26:28 6. Zech. 12:10; I Cor. 11:31 7. I Cor. 10:16-17; Acts 2:46-47 8. I Cor. 5:8; 11:18, 20 9. Matt. 5:23-24 10.

Isa. 55:1; John 7:37 11. I Cor. 5:7-8 12. I Cor. 11:25-26, 28; Heb. 10:21-22, 24; Psalms. 26:6 13. I Cor. 11:24-25 14. II Cor. 30:18-19; Matt. 26:26

Q172: May one who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation, come to the Lord's supper?

A172: One who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof;[1] and in God's account hath it, if he be duly affected with the apprehension of the want of it,[2] and unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ,[3] and to depart from iniquity:[4] in which case (because promises are made, and this sacrament is appointed, for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians)[5] he is to bewail his unbelief,[6] and labor to have his doubts resolved:[7] and, so doing, he may and ought to come to the Lord's supper, that he may be further strengthened.[8]

1. Isa. 1:10; I John 5:13; Psalms. 77:1-12; ch 88; Jonah 2:4, 7 2. Isa. 54:7-10; Matt. 5:3-4; Psalms. 31:22; 73:13, 22-23 3. Phil 3:8-9; Psalms. 10:17; 42:1-2, 5, 11 4. II Tim. 2:19; Isa. 1:10; Psalms. 66:18-20 5. Isa. 4:11, 29, 31; Matt. 11:28; 12:20; 26:28 6. Mark 9:24 7. Acts 2:37, 16:30 8. Rom. 4:11; I Cor. 11:28

Q173: May any who profess the faith, and desire to come to the Lord's supper, be kept from it?

A173: Such as are found to be ignorant or scandalous, notwithstanding their profession of the faith, and desire to come to the Lord's supper, may and ought to be kept from that sacrament, by the power which Christ hath left in his church,[1] until they receive instruction, and manifest their reformation.[2]

1. I Cor. ch. 5; 11:27-31; Matt. 7:6; Jude 1:23; I Tim. 5:22 2. II Cor. 2:7

Q174: What is required of them that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper in the time of the administration of it?

A174: It is required of them that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper, that, during the time of the administration of it, with all holy reverence and attention they wait upon God in that ordinance,[1] diligently observe the sacramental elements and actions,[2] heedfully discern the Lord's body,[3] and affectionately meditate on his death and sufferings,[4] and thereby stir up themselves to a vigorous exercise of their graces:[5] in judging themselves,[6] and sorrowing for sin:[7] in earnest hungering and thirsting after Christ,[8] feeding on him by faith,[9] receiving of his fulness,[10] trusting in his merits,[11] rejoicing in his love,[12] giving thanks for his grace:[13] in renewing of their covenant with God, and love to all the saints.[14]

1. Lev. 10:3; Heb. 12:18; Psalms. 5:7; I Cor. 11:17, 26-27 2. Exod. 24:8; Matt. 26:28 3. I Cor. 11:29 4. Luke 22:19 5. I Cor. 10:3-5, 11, 14; 11:26 6. I Cor. 11:31 7. Zech. 12:10 8. Rev. 22:17 9. John 6:35 10. John 1:16 11. Phil. 1:16 12. Psalms. 63:4-5; II Cor. 30:21 13. Psalms. 22:26 14. Jer. 1:5; Psalms. 1:5 15. Acts 2:42

Q175: What is the duty of Christians, after they have received the sacrament of the Lord's supper?

A175: The duty of Christians, after they have received the sacrament of the Lord's supper, is seriously to consider how they have behaved themselves therein, and with what success:[1] if they find quickening and comfort, to bless God for it,[2] beg the continuance of it,[3] watch against relapses,[4] fulfil their vows,[5] and encourage themselves to a frequent attendance on that ordinance:[6] but if they find no present benefit, more exactly to review their preparation to, and carriage at, the sacrament:[7] in both which, if they can approve themselves to God and their own consciences, they are to wait for the fruit of it in due time:[8] but, if they see they have failed in either, they are to be humbled,[9] and to attend upon it afterwards with more care and diligence.[10]

1. Psa. 28:7, 85:8; I Cor. 11:17, 30-31 2. II Chr. 30:21-16; Acts 2:42, 46 3. Psa. 36:10; Song of Sol. 3:4; I Chr. 29:18 4. I Cor. 10:3-5, 12 5. Psa. 1:14 6. I Cor. 11:25-26; Acts 2:42, 46 7. Song of Sol. 5:1-6; Eccl. 5:1-6 8. Psa. 42:5, 8; 43:3-5; 123:1-2 9. II Chr. 30:18-19; Isa. 1:16, 18 10. II Cor. 7:11; I Chr. 15:12-14

Q176: Wherein do the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper agree?

A176: The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper agree, in that the author of both is God;[1] the spiritual part of both is Christ and his benefits;[2] both are seals of the same covenant;[3] are to be dispensed by ministers of the gospel, and by none other;[4] and to be continued in the church of Christ until his second coming.[5]

1. Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 11:23 2. Rom. 6:3-4; I Cor. 10:16 3. Rom. 4:11; Col. 2:12; Matt. 26:27-28 4. John 1:33; Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 4:1; 11:23; Heb. 5:4 5. Matt. 28:19-20; I Cor. 11:26

Q177: Wherein do the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper differ?

A177: The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper differ, in that baptism is to be administered but once, with water, to be a sign and seal of our regeneration and ingrafting into Christ,[1] and that even to infants;[2] whereas the Lord's supper is to be administered often, in the elements of bread and wine, to represent and exhibit Christ as spiritual nourishment to the soul,[3] and to confirm our continuance and growth in him,[4] and that only to such as are of years and ability to examine themselves.[5]

1. Matt. 3:11; Titus 3:5; Gal. 3:27 2. Gen. 17:7, 9; Acts 2:38-39; I Cor. 7:14 3. I Cor. 11:23-26 4. I Cor. 10:16 5. I Cor. 11:28-29

Q178: What is prayer?

A178: Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God,[1] in the name of Christ,[2] by the help of his Spirit;[3] with confession of our sins,[4] and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.[5]

1. Psa. 62:8 2. John 16:23 3. Rom. 8:26 4. Psa. 32:5-6; Dan. 9:4 5. Phil. 4:6

Q179: Are we to pray unto God only?

A179: God only being able to search the hearts,[1] hear the requests,[2] pardon the sins,[3] and fulfil the desires of all;[4] and only to be believed in,[5] and worshiped with religious worship;[6] prayer, which is a special part thereof,[7] is to be made by all to him alone,[8] and to none other.[9]

1. I Kings 8:39; Acts 1:24; Rom. 8:27 2. Psa. 65:2 3. Micah 7:18 4. Psa. 145:18-19 5. Rom. 10:14 6. Matt. 4:10 7. I Cor. 1:2 8. Psa. 1:15 9. Rom. 10:14

Q180: What is it to pray in the name of Christ?

A180: To pray in the name of Christ is, in obedience to his command, and in confidence on his promises, to ask mercy for his sake;[1] not by bare mentioning of his name,[2] but by drawing our encouragement to pray, and our boldness, strength, and hope of acceptance in prayer, from Christ and his mediation.[3]

1. John 14:13-14, 16:24; Dan. 9:17 2. Matt. 7:21 3. Heb. 4:14-16; I John 5:13-15

Q181: Why are we to pray in the name of Christ?

A181: The sinfulness of man, and his distance from God by reason thereof, being so great, as that we can have no access into his presence without a mediator;[1] and there being none in heaven or earth appointed to, or fit for, that glorious work but Christ alone,[2] we are to pray in no other name but his only.[3]

1. John 14:6; Isa. 59:2; Eph. 3:12 2. John 6:27; Heb.7:25-27; I Tim. 2:5 3. Col. 3:17; Heb. 13:15

Q182: How doth the Spirit help us to pray?

A182: We not knowing: What to pray for as we ought, the Spirit helps our infirmities, by enabling us to understand both for whom, and: What, and: How prayer is to be made; and by working and quickening in our hearts (although not in all persons, nor at all times, in the same measure) those apprehensions, affections, and graces which are requisite for the right performance of that duty.[1]

1. Rom. 8:26-27; Psa. 10:17; Zech. 12:10

Q183: For whom are we to pray?

A183: We are to pray for the whole church of Christ upon earth;[1] for magistrates,[2] and ministers;[3] for ourselves,[4] our brethren,[5] yea, our enemies;[6] and for all sorts of men living,[7] or that shall live hereafter;[8] but not for the dead,[9] nor for those that are known to have sinned the sin unto death.[10]

1. Eph. 6:18; Psa. 28:9 2. I Tim. 2:1-2 3. Col. 4:3 4. Gen. 32:11 5. James 5:16 6. Matt. 5:44 7. I Tim. 2:1-2 8. John 17:20; II Sam. 7:29 9. II Sam. 12:21-23 10. I John 5:16

Q184: For what things are we to pray?

A184: We are to pray for all things tending to the glory of God,[1] the welfare of the church,[2] our own [3] or others good;[4] but not for anything that is unlawful.[5]

1. Matt. 6:9 2. Psa. 51:18, 122:6 3. Matt. 7:11 4. Psa. 125:4 5. I John 5:14

Q185: How are we to pray?

A185: We are to pray with an awful apprehension of the majesty of God,[1] and deep sense of our own unworthiness,[2] necessities,[3] and sins;[4] with penitent,[5] thankful,[6] and enlarged hearts;[7] with understanding,[8] faith,[9] sincerity,[10] fervency,[11] love,[12] and perseverance,[13] waiting upon him,[14] with humble submission to his will.[15]

1. Eccl. 5:1 2. Gen. 18:27; 32:10 3. Luke 15:17-19 4. Luke 18:13-14 5. Psa. 51:17 6. Phil. 4:6 7. I Sam. 1:15, 2:1 8. I Cor. 14:15 9. Mark 11:24; James 1:6 10. Psa. 17:1; 145:18 11. James 5:16 12. I Tim. 2:8 13. Eph. 6:18 14. Micah 7:7 15. Matt. 26:39

Q186: What rule hath God given for our direction in the duty of prayer?

A186: The whole word of God is of use to direct us in the duty of prayer;[1] but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which our Savior Christ taught his disciples, commonly called The Lord's prayer.[2]

1. I John 5:14 2. Matt. 6:2-13; Luke 11:2-4

Q187: How is the Lord's prayer to be used?

A187: The Lord's prayer is not only for direction, as a pattern, according to which we are to make other prayers; but may also be used as a prayer, so that it be done with understanding, faith, reverence, and other graces necessary to the right performance of the duty of prayer.[1]

1. Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2

Q188: Of how many parts doth the Lord's prayer consist?

A188: The Lord's prayer consists of three parts; a preface, petitions, and a conclusion.

Q189: What doth the preface of the Lord's prayer teach us?

A189: The preface of the Lord's prayer (contained in these words, Our Father which art in heaven,)[1] teacheth us, when we pray, to draw near to God with confidence of his fatherly goodness, and our interest therein;[2] with reverence, and all other childlike dispositions,[3] heavenly affections,[4] and due apprehensions of his sovereign power, majesty, and gracious condescension:[5] as also, to pray with and for others.[6]

1. Matt. 6:9 2. Luke 11:13; Rom. 8:15 3. Isa. 64:9 4. Psal. 123:1; Lam. 3:41 5. Isa. 63:15-16; Neh. 1:4-6 6. Acts 12:5

Q190: What do we pray for in the first petition?

A190: In the first petition (which is, Hallowed be thy name,)[1] acknowledging the utter inability and indisposition that is in ourselves and all men to honor God aright,[2] pray, that God would by his grace enable and incline us and others to know, to acknowledge, and highly to esteem him,[3] his titles,[4] attributes,[5] ordinances, word,[6] works, and whatsoever he is pleased to make himself known by;[7] and to glorify him in thought, word,[8] and deed:[9] that he would prevent and remove atheism,[10] ignorance,[11] idolatry,[12] profaneness,[13] and: whatsoever is dishonorable to him;[14] and, by his overruling providence, direct and dispose of all things to his own glory.[15]

1. Matt. 6:9 2. II Cor. 3:5; Psal. 51:15 3. Psal. 67:2-3 4. Psal. 83:18 5. Psal. 86:10-13, 15 6. II Thess. 3:1; Psal. 138:1-3; 147:19-20; II Cor. 2:14-15 7. Psal. ch. 8; ch. 145 8. Psal. 19:14; 103:1 9. Phil. 1:9, 11 10. Psal. 67:1-4 11. Eph. 1:17-18 12. Psal. 97:7 13. Psal. 74:18, 22-23 14. II Kings 19:15-16 15. II Chr. 20:6, 10-12; Psal. ch. 83; 140:4, 8

Q191: What do we pray for in the second petition?

A191: In the second petition (which is, Thy kingdom come,)[1] acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan,[2] we pray, that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed,[3] the gospel propagated throughout the world,[4] the Jews called,[5] the fullness of the Gentiles brought in;[6] the church furnished with all gospel officers and ordinances,[7] purged from corruption,[8] countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate:[9] that the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed, and made effectual to the converting of those that are yet in their sins, and the confirming, comforting, and building up of those that are already converted:[10] that Christ would rule in our hearts here,[11] and hasten the time of his second coming, and our reigning with him forever:[12] and that he would be pleased so to exercise the kingdom of his power in all the world, as may best conduce to these ends.[13]

1. Matt. 6:10 2. Eph. 2:2-3 3. Psal. 67:1, 18; Rev. 12:10-11 4. II Thess. 3:1 5. Rom. 10:1 6. John 17:9, 20; Rom. 11:25-26; Psal. ch. 67 7. Matt. 9:38; II Thess. 3:1 8. Mal. 1:11; Zeph. 3:9 9. I Tim. 2:1-2 10. Acts 4:29-30; Eph. 6:18-20; Rom. 15:29-30, 32; II Thess. 1:11; 2:16-17 11. Eph. 3:14-20 12. Rev. 22:20 13. Isa. 64:1-2; Rev. 4:8-11

Q192: What do we pray for in the third petition?

A192: In the third petition (which is, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,)[1] acknowledging, that by nature we and all men are not only utterly unable and unwilling to know and do the will of God,[2] but prone to rebel against his word,[3] to repine and murmur against his providence,[4] and wholly inclined to do the will of the flesh, and of the devil:[5] we pray, that God would by his Spirit take away from ourselves and others all blindness,[6] weakness,[7] indisposedness,[8] and perverseness of heart,[9] and by his grace make us able and willing to know, do, and submit to his will in all things,[10] with the like humility,[11] cheerfulness,[12] faithfulness,[13] diligence,[14] zeal,[15] sincerity,[16] and constancy,[17] as the angels do in heaven.[18]

1. Matt. 6:10 2. Rom. 7:18; Job 21:14; I Cor. 2:14 3. Rom. 8:7 4. Exod. 17:7; Num. 14:2 5. Eph. 2:2 6. Eph. 1:17-18 7. Eph. 3:16 8. Matt. 26:40-41 9. Jer. 31:18-19 10. Psalms 119:1, 8, 35-36; Acts 21:14 11. Micah 6:8 12. Psalms 100:2; Job 1:21; II Sam. 15:25-26 13. Isa. 38:3 14. Psalms 119:4-5 15. Rom. 12:11 16. Psalms 119:80 17. Psalms 119:112 18. Isa. 6:2-3; Psalms 103:20-21; Matt. 18:10

Q193: What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

A193: In the fourth petition (which is, Give us this day our daily bread,)[1] acknowledging, that in Adam, and by our own sin, we have forfeited our right to all the outward blessings of this life, and deserve to be wholly deprived of them by God, and to have them cursed to us in the use of them:[2] and that neither they of themselves are able to sustain us,[3] nor we to merit,[4] or by our own industry to procure them:[5] but prone to desire,[6] get,[7] and use them unlawfully:[8] we pray for ourselves and others, that both they and we, waiting upon the providence of God from day to day in the use of lawful means, may, of his free gift, and as to his fatherly wisdom shall seem best, enjoy a competent portion of them:[9] and have the same continued and blessed unto us in our holy and comfortable use of them,[10] and contentment in them:[11] and be kept from all things that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort.[12]

1. Matt. 6:11 2. Gen. 2:17, 3:17; Rom. 8:20-22; Jer. 5:25; Deut. 28:15-68 3. Deut. 8:3 4. Gen. 32:10 5. Deut. 8:17-18 6. Jer. 6:13; Mark 7:21-22 7. Hosea 12:7 8. James 4:3 9. Gen. 28:20; 43:12-14; Eph. 4:28; II Thess. 3:11-12; Phil. 4:6 10. I Tim. 4:3-5 11. Tim. 6:6-8 12. Prov. 30:8-9

Q194: What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

A194: In the fifth petition (which is, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,)[1] acknowledging, that we and all others are guilty both of original and actual sin, and thereby become debtors to the justice of God; and that neither we, nor any other creature, can make the least satisfaction for that debt:[2] we pray for ourselves and others, that God of his free grace would, through the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, apprehended and applied by faith, acquit us both from the guilt and punishment of sin,[3] accept us in his Beloved:[4] continue his favor and grace to us,[5] pardon our daily failings,[6] and fill us with peace and joy, in giving us daily more and more assurance of forgiveness:[7] which we are the rather emboldened to ask, and encouraged to expect, when we have this testimony in ourselves, that we from the heart forgive others their offenses.[8]

1. Matt. 6:12 2. Rom. 3:9-22; Matt. 18:24-25; Psalms 130:3-4 3. Rom. 3:24-26; Heb. 9:22 4. Eph. 1:6-7 5. II Peter 1:2 6. Hosea 14:2; Jer. 14:7 7. Rom. 15:13; Psalms 51:7-10, 12 8. Luke 11:4; Matt. 6:14-15; 18:35

Q195: What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

A195: In the sixth petition (which is, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,)[1] acknowledging, that the most wise, righteous, and gracious God, for divers holy and just ends, may so order things, that we may be assaulted, foiled, and for a time led captive by temptations:[2] that Satan,[3] the world,[4] and the flesh, are ready powerfully to draw us aside, and ensnare us:[5] and that we, even after the pardon of our sins, by reason of our corruption,[6] weakness, and want of

watchfulness,[7] are not only subject to be tempted, and forward to expose ourselves unto temptations,[8] but also of ourselves unable and unwilling to resist them, to recover out of them, and to improve them;[9] and worthy to be left under the power of them:[10] we pray, that God would so overrule the world and all in it,[11] subdue the flesh,[12] and restrain Satan,[13] order all things,[14] bestow and bless all means of grace,[15] and quicken us to watchfulness in the use of them, that we and all his people may by his providence be kept from being tempted to sin;[16] or, if tempted, that by his Spirit we may be powerfully supported and enabled to stand in the hour of temptation;[17] or when fallen, raised again and recovered out of it,[18] and have a sanctified use and improvement thereof:[19] that our sanctification and salvation may be perfected,[20] Satan trodden under our feet,[21] and we fully freed from sin, temptation, and all evil, forever.[22]

1. Matt. 6:13; II Chr. 32:31 2. I Chr. 32:31 3. I Chr. 21:1 4. Luke 21:34; Mark 4:19 5. James 1:14 6. Gal. 5:17 7. Matt. 26:41 8. Matt. 26:69-72; Gal. 2:11-14; II Chr. 18:3; 19:2 9. Rom. 7:23-24; I Chr. 21:1-4; II Chr. 16:7-10 10. Psa. 81:11-12 11. John 17:15 12. Psa. 51:10; 119:133 13. II Cor. 12:7-8 14. I Cor. 10:12-13 15. Heb. 13:20-21 16. Matt. 26:41; Psa. 19:13 17. Eph. 3:14-17; I Thess. 3:13; Jude 1:24 18. Psa. 51:12 19. I Peter 5:8-10 20. II Cor. 13:7, 9 21. Rom. 16:20; Zech. 3:2; Luke 22:31-32 22. John 17:15; I Thess. 5:23

Q196: What doth the conclusion of the Lord's prayer teach us?

A196: The conclusion of the Lord's prayer (which is, For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.),[1] teaches us to enforce our petitions with arguments,[2] which are to be taken, not from any worthiness in ourselves, or in any other creature, but from God;[3] and with our prayers to join praises,[4] ascribing to God alone eternal sovereignty, omnipotency, and glorious excellency;[5] in regard whereof, as he is able and willing to help us,[6] so we by faith are emboldened to plead with him that he would,[7] and quietly to rely upon him, that he will fulfil our requests.[8] And, to testify this our desire and assurance, we say, Amen.[9]

1. Matt. 6:13 2. Rom. 15:30 3. Dan. 9:4, 7-9, 16-19 4. Phil. 4:6 5. I Chr. 29:10-13 6. Eph. 3:20-21; Luke 11:13 7. II Chr. 20:6, 11 8. II Chr. 14:11 9. I Cor. 14:16; Rev. 22:20-21

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DIRECTORY OF THE SHORTER CATECHISM

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

K. Directory of the Shorter Catechism

THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

Q1: What is the chief end of man?

A1: Man's chief end is to glorify God,[1] and to enjoy Him for ever.[2]

1. I Cor. 10:31 2. Psa. 73:25-26

Q2: What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him.

A2: The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments,[1] is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him.[2]

1. Eph. 2:20; II Tim. 3:16 2. I John 1:3

Q3: What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A3: The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.[1]

1. II Tim. 1:13

Q4: What is God?

A4: God is a Spirit,[1] infinite,[2] eternal,[3] and unchangeable,[4] in his being,[5] wisdom,[6] power,[7] holiness,[8] justice, goodness, and truth.[9]

1. John 4:24 2. Job 11:7 3. Psa. 90:2 4. James 1:17 5. Exod. 3:14 6. Psa. 147:5 7. Rev. 4:8 8. Rev. 15:4 9. Exod. 34:6

Q5: Are there more Gods than one?

A5: There is but one only,[1] the living and true God.[2]

1. Deut. 6:4 2. Jer. 10:10

Q6: How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A6: There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;[1] and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.[2]

1. Matt. 28:19 2. I John 5:7

Q7: What are the decrees of God?

A7: The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass.[1]

1. Eph. 1:11-12

Q8: How doth God execute his decrees?

- A8: God executeth his decrees in the works of creation [1] and providence.[2]
1. Rev. 4:11 2. Dan. 4:35
- Q9: What is the work of creation?
- A9: The work of creation is, God's making all things of nothing,[1] by the word of his power,[2] in the space of six days, and all very good.[3]
1. Gen. 1:1 2. Heb. 11:3 3. Gen. 1:31
- Q10: How did God create man?
- A10: God created man male and female, after his own image,[1] in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness,[2] with dominion over the creatures.[3]
1. Gen. 1:27 2. Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24 3. Gen. 1:28
- Q11: What are God's works of providence?
- A11: God's works of providence are, his most holy,[1] wise,[2] and powerful preserving [3] and governing all his creatures, and all their actions.[4]
1. Psa. 145:17 2. Isa. 28:29 3. Heb. 1:3 4. Psa. 103:19; Matt. 10:29
- Q12: What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the estate wherein he was created?
- A12: When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience;[1] forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.[2]
1. Gal. 3:12 2. Gen. 2:17
- Q13: Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?
- A13: Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.[1]
1. Eccl. 7:29
- Q14: What is sin?
- A14: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.[1]
1. I John 3:4
- Q15: What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?
- A15: The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.[1]
1. Gen. 3:6-8
- Q16: Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

A16: The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity;[1] all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.[2]

1. Gen. 1:28; 2:16-17 2. Rom. 5:18

Q17: Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A17: The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.[1]

1. Rom. 5:12

Q18: Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A18: The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin,[1] the want of original righteousness,[2] and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin;[3] together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.[4]

1. Rom. 5:19 2. Rom. 3:10 3. Eph. 2:1; Psa. 51:5 4. Matt. 15:19-2

Q19: What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A19: All mankind by their fall lost communion with God,[1] are under his wrath and curse,[2] and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.[3]

1. Gen. 3:8, 24 2. Eph. 2:3; Gal. 3:10 3. Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41

Q20: Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

A20: God having, out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life,[1] did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.[2]

1. Eph. 1:4 2. Rom. 3:21-22

Q21: Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

A21: The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ,[1] who, being the eternal Son of God, became man,[2] and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person,[3] for ever.[4]

1. I Tim. 2:5 2. John 1:14 3. Rom. 9:5 4. Heb. 7:24

Q22: How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

A22: Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body,[1] and a reasonable soul,[2] being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her,[3] yet without sin.[4]

1. Heb. 2:14 2. Matt. 26:38 3. Luke 1:31, 35 4. Heb. 7:26

Q23: What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?

A23: Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the offices of a prophet,[1] of a priest,[2] and of a king,[3] both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.

1. Acts 3:22 2. Heb. 5:6 3. Psalms 2:6

Q24: How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A24: Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us,[1] by his word [2] and Spirit,[3] the will of God for our salvation.

1. John 1:18 2. John 20:31 3. John 14:26

Q25: How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?

A25: Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice,[1] and reconcile us to God;[2] and in making continual intercession for us.[3]

1. Heb. 9:28 2. Heb. 2:17 3. Heb. 7:25

Q26: How doth Christ execute the office of a king?

A26: Christ executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to himself,[1] in ruling and defending us,[2] and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.[3]

1. Psalms 110:3 2. Isaiah 33:22 3. I Cor. 15:25

Q27: Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A27: Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition,[1] made under the law,[2] undergoing the miseries of this life,[3] the wrath of God,[4] and the cursed death of the cross;[5] in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.[6]

1. Luke 2:7 2. Gal. 4:4 3. Isaiah 53:3 4. Matt. 27:46 5. Phil. 2:8 6. Matt. 12:40

Q28: Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?

A28: Christ's exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day,[1] in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father,[2] and in coming to judge the world at the last day.[3]

1. I Cor. 15:4 2. Mark 16:19 3. Acts 17:31

Q29: How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A29: We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us [1] by his Holy Spirit.[2]

1. John 1:12 2. Titus 3:5-6

Q30: How doth the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

A30: The Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us,[1] and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.[2]

1. Eph. 2:8 2. Eph. 3:17 3. I Cor. 1:9

Q31: What is effectual calling?

A31: Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit,[1] whereby convincing us of our sin and misery,[2] enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ,[3] and renewing our wills,[4] he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.[5]

1. II Tim. 1:9 2. Acts 2:37 3. Acts 26:18 4. Ezek. 36:26 5. John 6:44

Q32: What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?

A32: They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification,[1] adoption,[2] and sanctification, and the several benefits which, in this life, do either accompany or flow from them.[3]

1. Rom. 8:30 2. Eph. 1:5 3. I Cor. 1:30

Q33: What is justification?

A33: Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins,[1] and accepteth us as righteous in His sight,[2] only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us,[3] and received by faith alone.[4]

1. Eph. 1:7 2. II Cor. 5:21 3. Rom. 5:19 4. Gal. 2:16

Q34: What is adoption?

A34: Adoption is an act of God's free grace,[1] whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the Sons of God.[2]

1. I John 3:1 2. John 1:12

Q35: What is sanctification?

A35: Sanctification is the work of God's free grace,[1] whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God,[2] and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.[3]

1. II Thess. 2:13 2. Eph. 4:24 3. Rom. 8:1

Q36: What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A36: The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost,[1] increase of grace,[2] and perseverance therein to the end.[3]

1. Rom. 5:1-2, 5 2. Prov. 4:18 3. I John 5:13

Q37: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

A37: The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness,[1] and do immediately pass into glory;[2] and their bodies, being still united to Christ,[3] do rest in their graves[4] till the resurrection.[5]

1. Heb. 12:23 2. Phil. 1:23 3. I Thess. 4:14 4. Isa. 57:2 5. Job 19:26

Q38: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?

A38: At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory,[1] shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgement,[2] and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God [3] to all eternity.[4]

1. I Cor. 15:43 2. Matt. 10:32 3. I John 3:2 4. I Thess. 4:17

Q39: What is the duty which God requireth of man?

A39: The duty which God requireth of man is obedience to His revealed will.[1]

1. Micah 6:8

Q40: What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

A40: The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the Moral Law.[1]

1. Rom. 2:14-15

Q41: Where is the Moral Law summarily comprehended?

A41: The Moral Law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments.[1]

1. Deut. 10:4; Matt. 19:17

Q42: What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?

A42: The sum of the Ten Commandments is, To love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.[1]

1. Matt. 22:37-40

Q43: What is the preface to the Ten Commandments?

A43: The preface to the Ten Commandments is in these words, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.[1]

1. Exod. 20:2

Q44: What doth the preface to the Ten Commandments teach us?

A44: The preface to the Ten Commandments teacheth us, That because God is The Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all His commandments.[1]

1. Deut. 11:1; Luke 1:74-75

Q45: Which is the First Commandment?

A45: The First Commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.[1]

1. Exod. 20:3

Q46: What is required in the First Commandment?

A46: The First Commandment requireth us to know [1] and acknowledge God to be only true God, and our God;[2] and to worship and glorify Him accordingly.[3]

1. I Chr. 28:9 2. Deut. 26:17 3. Matt. 4:10

Q47: What is forbidden in the First Commandment?

A47: The First Commandment forbiddeth the denying,[1] or not worshipping and glorifying the true God,[2] as God,[3] and the giving of that worship and glory to any other which is due to Him alone.[4]

1. Psal. 14:1 2. Rom. 1:20-21 3. Psal. 81:11 4. Rom. 1:25

Q48: What are we specially taught by these words, before me in the First Commandment?

A48: These words before me in the First Commandment, teach us, That God who seeth all things, taketh notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God.[1]

1. Psal. 44:20-21

Q49: Which is the Second Commandment?

A49: The Second Commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth, thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep my commandments.[1]

1. Exod. 20:3-6

Q50: What is required in the Second Commandment?

A50: The Second Commandment requireth the receiving, observing,[1] and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in His Word.[2]

1. Deut. 32:46; Matt. 28:20 2. Deut. 12:32

Q51: What is forbidden in the Second Commandment?

A51: The Second Commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images,[1] or any other way not appointed in His Word.[2]

1. Deut. 4:15-16 2. Col. 2:18

Q52: What are the reasons annexed to the Second Commandment?

A52: The reasons annexed to the Second Commandment are, God's sovereignty over us,[2] his propriety in us,[2] and the zeal He hath to His own worship.[3]

1. Psal. 95:2-3 2. Psal. 45:11 3. Exod. 34:14

Q53: Which is the Third Commandment?

A53: The Third Commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.[1]

1. Exod. 20:7

Q54: What is required in the Third Commandment?

A54: The Third Commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names,[1] titles, attributes,[2] ordinances,[3] Word,[4] and works.[5]

1. Psa. 29:2 2. Rev. 15:3-4 3. Eccl. 5:1 4. Psa. 138:2 5. Job 36:24

Q55: What is forbidden in the Third Commandment?

A55: The Third Commandment forbiddeth all profaning or abusing anything whereby God maketh Himself known.[1]

1. Mal. 2:2

Q56: What is the reason annexed to the Third Commandment?

A56: The reason annexed to the Third Commandment is, That however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape His righteous judgment.[1]

1. Deut. 28:58-59

Q57: Which is the Fourth Commandment?

A57: The Fourth Commandment is, Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.[1]

1. Exod. 20:8-11

Q58: What is required in the Fourth Commandment?

A58: The Fourth Commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as He appointed in His Word; expressly one whole day in seven to be a holy Sabbath to Himself.[1]

1. Lev. 19:30; Deut. 5:12

Q59: Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?

A59: From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath;[1] and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.[2]

1. Gen. 2:3 2. Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10

Q60: How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A60: The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days;[1] and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship,[2] except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.[3]

1. Lev. 23:3 2. Psa. 92:1-2 3. Matt. 12:11-12

Q61: What is forbidden in the Fourth Commandment?

A61: The Fourth Commandment forbiddeth the omission or careless performance of the duties required,[1] and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful,[2] or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about our worldly employments or recreations.[3]

1. Mal. 1:13 2. Ezek. 23:38 3. Isa. 58:13

Q62: What are the reasons annexed to the Fourth Commandment?

A62: The reasons annexed to the Fourth Commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments,[1] His challenging a special propriety in the seventh,[2] His own example,[3] and His blessing the Sabbath-day.[4]

1. Exod. 31:15-16 2. Lev. 23:3 3. Exod. 31:17 4. Gen. 2:3

Q63: Which is the Fifth Commandment?

A63: The Fifth Commandment is, Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.[1]

1. Exod. 20:12

Q64: What is required in the Fifth Commandment?

A64: The Fifth Commandment requireth the preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors,[1] inferiors,[2] or equals.[3]

1. Eph. 5:21-22; 6:1, 5; Rom. 13:1 2. Eph. 6:9 3. Rom. 12:10

Q65: What is the forbidden in the Fifth Commandment?

A65: The Fifth Commandment forbiddeth the neglecting of, or doing anything against, the honour and duty which belongeth to every one in their several places and relations.[1]

1. Rom. 13:7-8

Q66: What is the reason annexed to the Fifth Commandment?

A66: The reason annexed to the Fifth Commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.[1]

1. Eph. 6:2-3

Q67: Which is the Sixth Commandment?

A67: The Sixth Commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.[1]

1. Exod. 20:13

Q68: What is required in the Sixth Commandment?

A68: The Sixth Commandment requireth all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life,[1] and the life of others.[2]

1. Eph. 5:28-29 2. Psa. 82:3-4; Job 29:13

Q69: What is forbidden in the Sixth Commandment?

A69: The Sixth Commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own life,[1] or the life of our neighbour unjustly,[2] or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.[3]

1. Acts 16:28 2. Gen. 9:6 3. Prov. 24:11-12

Q70: Which is the Seventh Commandment?

A70: The Seventh Commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery.[1]

1. Exod. 20:14

Q71: What is required in the Seventh Commandment?

A71: The Seventh Commandment requireth the preservation of our own[1] and our neighbor's chasity,[2] in heart,[3] speech,[4] and behaviour.[5]

1. Thess. 4:4 2. Eph. 5:11-12 3. II Tim. 2:22 4. Col. 4:6 5. I Peter 3:2

Q72: What is forbidden in the Seventh Commandment?

A72: The Seventh Commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts,[1] words,[2] and actions.[3]

1. Matt. 5:28 2. Eph. 5:4 3. Eph. 5:3

Q73: Which is the Eighth Commandment?

A73: The Eighth Commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.[1]

1. Exod. 20:15

Q74: What is required in the Eighth Commandment?

A74: The Eighth Commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves [1] and others.[2]

1. Rom. 12:17; Prov. 27:23 2. Lev. 25:35; Phil. 2:4

Q75: What is forbidden in the Eighth Commandment?

A75: The Eighth Commandment forbiddeth whatsoever doth or may unjustly hinder our own [1] or our neighbour's wealth or outward estate.[2]

1. I Tim. 5:8 2. Prov. 28:19; 21:6; Job 20:19-20

Q76: What is the Ninth Commandment?

A76: The Ninth Commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.[1]

1. Exod. 20:16

Q77: What is required in the Ninth Commandment?

A77: The Ninth Commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man,[1] and of our own [2] and our neighbour's good name,[3] especially in witness-bearing.[4]

1. Zech. 8:16 2. I Peter 3:16; Acts 25:10 3. III John 1:12 4. Prov. 14:5, 25

Q78: What is forbidden in the Ninth Commandment?

A78: The Ninth Commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth,[1] or injurious to our own [2] or our neighbour's good name.[3]

1. Rom. 3:13 2. Job 27:5 3. Psa. 15:3

Q79: Which is the Tenth Commandment?

A79: The Tenth Commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.[1]

1. Exod. 20:17

Q80: What is required in the Tenth Commandment?

A80: The Tenth Commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition,[1] with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbour, and all this is his.[2]

1. Heb. 13:5 2. Rom. 12:15; I Cor. 13:4-6

Q81: What is forbidden in the Tenth Commandment?

A81: The Tenth Commandment forbiddeth all discontentment with our own estate,[1] envying or grieving at the good of our neighbour,[2] and all inordinate motions and affections to any thing that is his.[3]

1. I Cor. 10:10 2. Gal. 5:26 3. Col. 3:5

Q82: Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A82: No mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God,[1] but doth daily break them in thought,[2] word,[3] and deed.[4]

1. Eccl. 7:20 2. Gen. 8:21 3. James 3:8 4. James 3:2

Q83: Are all transgression of the law equally heinous?

A83: Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.[1]

1. John 19:11

Q84: What doth every sin deserve?

A84: Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.[1]

1. Gal. 3:10; Matt. 25:41

Q85: What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for sin?

A85: To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life,[1] with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption.[2]

1. Acts 20:21 2. Prov. 2:1-5

Q86: What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A86: Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace,[1] whereby we receive [2] and rest upon him alone for salvation,[3] as he is offered to us in the gospel.[4]

1. Heb. 10:39 2. John 1:12 3. Phil. 3:9 4. Isa. 33:22

Q87: What is repentance unto life?

A87: Repentance unto life is a saving grace,[1] whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin,[2] and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ,[3] doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God,[4] with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.[5]

1. Acts 11:18 2. Acts 2:37 3. Joel 2:13 4. Jer. 31:18-19 5. Psalms 119:59

Q88: What are the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?

A88: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption, are his ordinances, especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer;[1] all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

1. Acts 2:41-42

Q89: How is the Word made effectual to salvation?

A89: The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the Word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners,[1] and of building them up in holiness and comfort,[2] through faith, unto salvation.[3]

1. Psalms 19:7 2. I Thess. 1:6 3. Rom. 1:16

Q90: How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?

A90: The the Word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence,[1] preparation,[2] and prayer;[3] receive it with faith [4] and love,[5] lay it up in our hearts,[6] and practise it in our lives.[7]

1. Prov. 8:34 2. I Peter 2:1-2 3. Psalms 119:18 4. Heb. 4:2 5. II Thess. 2:10 6. Psalms 119:11 7. James 1:25

Q91: How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

A91: The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them;[1] but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.[2]

1. I Cor. 3:7 2. I Peter 3:21

Q92: What is a sacrament?

A92: A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented,[1] sealed, and applied to believers.[2]

1. Gen. 17:10 2. Rom. 4:11

Q93: Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?

A93: The sacraments of the New Testament are, Baptism,[3] and the Lord's supper.[2]

1. Mark 16:16 2. I Cor. 11:23

Q94: What is baptism?

A94: Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,[1] doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace,[2] and our engagement to be the Lord's.[3]

1. Matt. 28:19 2. Rom. 6:3 3. Rom. 6:4

Q95: To whom is baptism to be administered?

A95: Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him:[1] but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.[2]

1. Acts 2:41 2. Gen. 17:7, 10; Acts 2:38-39

Q96: What is the Lord's supper?

A96: The Lord's supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth:[1] and the worth receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.[2]

1. Luke 22:19-20 2. I Cor. 10:16

Q97: What is required to be the worthy receiving of the Lord's supper?

A97: It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body,[1] of their faith to feed upon him,[2] of their repentance,[3] love,[4] and new obedience:[5] lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgement to themselves.[6]

1. I Cor. 11:28-29 2. II Cor. 13:5 3. I Cor. 11:31 4. I Cor. 11:18, 20 5. I Cor. 5:8 6. I Cor. 11:27

Q98: What is prayer?

A98: Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God [1] for things agreeable to his will,[2] in the name of Christ,[3] with confession of our sins,[4] and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.[5]

1. Psalms. 62:8 2. Rom. 8:27 3. John 16:23 4. Dan. 9:4 5. Phil. 4:6

Q99: What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer?

A99: The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in prayer;[1] but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called The Lord's Prayer.[2]

1. I John 5:14 2. Matt. 6:9

Q100: What doth the preface of the Lord's prayer teach us?

A100: The preface of the Lord's prayer, which is, Our Father which art in heaven,[1] teacheth us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence,[2] as children to a father,[3] able and ready to help us;[4] and that we should pray with and for others.[5]

1. Matt. 6:9 2. Isa. 64:9 3. Luke 11:13 4. Rom. 8:15 5. Eph. 6:18

Q101: What do we pray for in the first petition?

A101: In the first petition, which is, Hallowed be thy name,[1] we pray, That God would enable us and others to glorify him in all that whereby he maketh himself known;[2] and that he would dispose all things to his own glory.[3]

1. Matt. 6:9 2. Psalms 67:1-3 3. Rom. 11:36

Q102: What do we pray for in the second petition?

A102: In the second petition, which is, Thy kingdom come,[1] we pray, That Satan's kingdom may be destroyed;[2] and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced,[3] ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it;[4] and the kingdom of glory may be hastened.[5]

1. Matt. 6:10 2. Psalms 68:1 3. Psalms 51:18 4. II Thess. 3:1 5. Rev. 22:20

Q103: What do we pray for in the third petition?

A103: In the third petition, which is, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,[1] we pray, That God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey,[2] and submit to his will in all things,[3] as the angels do in heaven.[4]

1. Matt. 6:10 2. Psalms 119:34-36 3. Acts 21:14 4. Psalms 103:20, 22

Q104: What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

A104: In the fourth petition, which is, Give us this day our daily bread,[1] we pray, That of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life,[2] and enjoy his blessing with them.[3]

1. Matt. 6:11 2. Prov. 30:8 3. Psalms 90:17

Q105: What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

A105: In the fifth petition, which is, And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,[1] we pray, That God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins;[2] which we are able to be rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.[3]

1. Matt. 6:12 2. Psalms 51:1 3. Matt. 6:14

Q106: What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

A106: In the sixth petition, which is, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,[1] we pray, That God would either keep us from being tempted to sin,[2] or support and deliver us when we are tempted.[3]

1. Matt. 6:13 2. Matt. 26:41; Psa. 19:13 3. Psa. 51:10, 12

Q107: What doth the conclusion the Lord's prayer teach us?

A107: The conclusion of the Lord's prayer, which is, For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen.[1] teacheth us, to take our encouragement in prayer from God only,[2] and in our prayers to praise him,[3] ascribing kingdom, power and glory to him. And, in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, Amen.[4]

1. Matt. 6:13 2. Dan. 9:18-19 3. I Chr. 29:11, 13 4. Rev. 22:20

DIRECTORY FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

L. Directory For Family Worship

THE DIRECTORY FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

BESIDES the public worship in congregations, mercifully established in this land in great purity, it is expedient and necessary that secret worship of each person alone, and private worship of families, be pressed and set up; that, with national reformation, the profession and power of godliness, both personal and domestic, be advanced.

- I. And first, for secret worship, it is most necessary, that every one apart, and by themselves, be given to prayer and meditation, the unspeakable benefit whereof is best known to them who are most exercised therein; this being the mean whereby, in a special way, communion with God is entertained, and right preparation for all other duties obtained: and therefore it becomes not only pastors, within their several charges, to press persons of all sorts to perform this duty morning and evening, and at other occasions; but also it is incumbent to the head of every family to have a care, that both themselves, and all within their charge, be daily diligent herein.
- II. The ordinary duties comprehended under the exercise of piety which should be in families, when they are convened to that effect, are these: First, Prayer and praises performed with a special reference, as well to the public condition of the church of God and this kingdom, as to the present case of the family, and every member thereof. Next, Reading of the scriptures, with catechizing in a plain way, that the understandings of the simpler may be the better enabled to profit under the public ordinances, and they made more capable to understand the scriptures when they are read; together with godly conferences tending to the edification of all the members in the most holy faith: as also, admonition and rebuke, upon just reasons, from those who have authority in the family.
- III. As the charge and office of interpreting the holy scriptures is a part of the ministerial calling, which none (however otherwise qualified) should take upon him in any place, but he that is duly called thereunto by God and his church; so in every family where there is any that can read, the holy scriptures should be read ordinarily to the family; and it is commendable, that thereafter they confer, and by way of conference make some good use of what hath been read and heard. As, for example, if any sin be reproved in the word read, use may be made thereof to make all the family circumspect and watchful against the same; or if any judgment be threatened, or mentioned to have been inflicted, in that portion of scripture which is read, use may be made to make all the family fear lest the same or a worse judgment befall them, unless they beware of the sin that procured it: and, finally, if any duty be required, or comfort held forth in a promise, use may be made to stir up themselves to employ Christ for strength to enable them for doing the commanded duty, and to apply the offered comfort. In all which the master of the family is to have the chief hand; and any member of the family may propone a question or doubt for resolution.
- IV. The head of the family is to take care that none of the family withdraw himself from any part of family-worship: and, seeing the ordinary performance of all the parts of family-worship belongs properly to the head of the family, the minister is to stir up such as are lazy, and train up such as are weak, to a fitness to these exercises; it being always free to persons of quality to entertain one approved by the presbytery for performing family-exercise. And in other families, where the head of the family is unfit, that another, constantly residing in the family, approved by the minister and session, may be employed in that service, wherein the minister and session are to be countable to the presbytery. And if a minister, by divine Providence, be brought to any family, it is requisite that at no time he convene a part of the family for worship, secluding the rest, except in singular cases especially concerning these parties, which (in Christian prudence) need not, or ought not, to be imparted to others.

- V. Let no idler, who hath no particular calling, or vagrant person under pretence of a calling, be suffered to perform worship in families, to or for the same; seeing persons tainted with errors, or aiming at division, may be ready (after that manner) to creep into houses, and lead captive silly and unstable souls.
- VI. At family-worship, a special care is to be had that each family keep by themselves; neither requiring, inviting, nor admitting persons from divers families, unless it be those who are lodged with them, or at meals, or otherwise with them upon some lawful occasion.
- VII. Whatsoever have been the effects and fruits of meetings of persons of divers families in the times of corruption or trouble, (in which cases many things are commendable, which otherwise are not tolerable,) yet, when God hath blessed us with peace and purity of the gospel, such meetings of persons of divers families (except in cases mentioned in these Directions) are to be disapproved, as tending to the hinderance of the religious exercise of each family by itself, to the prejudice of the public ministry, to the rending of the families of particular congregations, and (in progress of time) of the whole Church. Besides many offences which may come thereby, to the hardening of the hearts of carnal men, and grief of the godly.
- VIII. On the Lord's day, after every one of the family apart, and the whole family together, have sought the Lord (in whose hands the preparation of men's hearts are) to fit them for the public worship, and to bless to them the public ordinances, the master of the family ought to take care that all within his charge repair to the public worship, that he and they may join with the rest of the congregation: and the public worship being finished, after prayer, he should take an account what they have heard; and thereafter, to spend the rest of the time which they may spare in catechizing, and in spiritual conferences upon the word of God: or else (going apart) they ought to apply themselves to reading, meditation, and secret prayer, that they may confirm and increase their communion with God: that so the profit which they found in the public ordinances may be cherished and promoted, and they more edified unto eternal life.
- IX. So many as can conceive prayer, ought to make use of that gift of God; albeit those who are rude and weaker may begin at a set form of prayer, but so as they be not sluggish in stirring up in themselves (according to their daily necessities) the spirit of prayer, which is given to all the children of God in some measure: to which effect, they ought to be more fervent and frequent in secret prayer to God, for enabling of their hearts to conceive, and their tongues to express, convenient desires to God for their family. And, in the meantime, for their greater encouragement, let these materials of prayer be meditated upon, and made use of, as follows.
1. Let them confess to God how unworthy they are to come in his presence, and how unfit to worship his Majesty; and therefore earnestly ask of God the spirit of prayer.
 2. They are to confess their sins, and the sins of the family; accusing, judging, and condemning themselves for them, till they bring their souls to some measure of true humiliation.
 3. They are to pour out their souls to God, in the name of Christ, by the Spirit, for forgiveness of sins; for grace to repent, to believe, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and that they may serve God with joy and delight, walking before him.
 4. They are to give thanks to God for his many mercies to his people, and to themselves, and especially for his love in Christ, and for the light of the gospel.
 5. They are to pray for such particular benefits, spiritual and temporal, as they stand in need of for the time, (whether it be morning or evening,) as anent health or sickness, prosperity or adversity.

6. They ought to pray for the Church of Christ in general, for all the reformed kirks, and for this Church in particular, and for all that suffer for the name of Christ; for all our superiors, the king's majesty, the queen, and their children; for the magistrates, ministers, and whole body of the congregation whereof they are members, as well for their neighbors absent in their lawful affairs, as for those that are at home.
 7. The prayer may be closed with an earnest desire that God may be glorified in the coming of the kingdom of his Son, and in doing of his will, and with assurance that themselves are accepted, and what they have asked according to his will shall be done."
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- X. These exercises ought to be performed in great sincerity, without delay, laying aside all exercises of worldly business or hinderances, notwithstanding the mockings of atheists and profane men; in respect of the great mercies of God to this land, and of his severe corrections wherewith lately he hath exercised us. And, to this effect, persons of eminency (and all elders of the church) not only ought to stir up themselves and families to diligence herein, but also to concur effectually, that in all other families, where they have power and charge, the said exercises be conscionably performed.
 - XI. Besides the ordinary duties in families, which are above mentioned, extraordinary duties, both of humiliation and thanksgiving, are to be carefully performed in families, when the Lord, by extraordinary occasions, (private or public,) calls for them.
 - XII. Seeing the word of God requires that we should consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works; therefore, at all times, and specially in this time, wherein profanity abounds, and mockers, walking after their own lusts, think it strange that others run not with them to the same excess of riot; every member of this church ought to stir up themselves, and one another, to the duties of mutual edification, by instruction, admonition, rebuke; exhorting one another to manifest the grace of God in denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and in living godly, soberly and righteously in this present world; by comforting the feeble-minded, and praying with or for one another. Which duties respectively are to be performed upon special occasions offered by Divine Providence; as, namely, when under any calamity, cross, or great difficulty, counsel or comfort is sought; or when an offender is to be reclaimed by private admonition, and if that be not effectual, by joining one or two more in the admonition, according to the rule of Christ, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.
 - XIII. And, because it is not given to every one to speak a word in season to a wearied or distressed conscience, it is expedient, that a person (in that case,) finding no ease, after the use of all ordinary means, private and public, have their address to their own pastor, or some experienced Christian: but if the person troubled in conscience be of that condition, or of that sex, that discretion, modesty, or fear of scandal, requires a godly, grave, and secret friend to be present with them in their said address, it is expedient that such a friend be present.
 - XIV. When persons of divers families are brought together by Divine Providence, being abroad upon their particular vocations, or any necessary occasions; as they would have the Lord their God with them whithersoever they go, they ought to walk with God, and not neglect the duties of prayer and thanksgiving, but take care that the same be performed by such as the company shall judge fittest. And that they likewise take heed that no corrupt communication proceed out of their mouths, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.

The drift and scope of all these Directions is no other, but that, upon the one part, the power and practice of godliness, amongst all the ministers and members of this church, according to their several places and vocations, may be cherished and advanced, and all impiety and mocking of religious exercises suppressed: and, upon the other part, that, under the name and pretext of religious exercises, no such meetings or

practices be allowed, as are apt to breed error, scandal, schism, contempt, or disregard of the public ordinances and ministers, or neglect of the duties of particular callings, or such other evils as are the works, not of the Spirit, but of the flesh, and are contrary to truth and peace.

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DIRECTORY OF
THE SUM OF SAVING
KNOWLEDGE AND THE
PRACTICAL USE OF
SAVING KNOWLEDGE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

M. Directory of The Sum of Saving Knowledge and The Practical Use of Saving Knowledge

THE SUM OF SAVING KNOWLEDGE

HEAD I.

Our woeful condition by nature, through breaking the covenant of works. Hos. 13:9. O
Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.

- I. THE almighty and eternal God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three distinct persons in the one and the same undivided Godhead, equally infinite in all perfections, did, before time, most wisely decree, for his own glory, whatsoever cometh to pass in time: and doth most holily and infallibly execute all his decrees, without being partaker of the sin of any creature.
- II. This God, in six days, made all things of nothing, very good in their own kind: in special, he made all the angels holy; and he made our first parents, Adam and Eve, the root of mankind, both upright and able to keep the law written in their heart. Which law they were naturally bound to obey under pain of death; but God was not bound to reward their service, till he entered into a covenant or contract with them, and their posterity in them, to give them eternal life, upon condition of perfect personal obedience; withal threatening death in case they should fail. This is the covenant of works.
- III. Both angels and men were subject to the change of their own free will, as experience proved, (God having reserved to himself the incommunicable property of being naturally unchangeable:) for many angels of their own accord fell by sin from their first estate, and became devils. Our first parents, being enticed by Satan, one of these devils speaking in a serpent, did break the covenant of works, in eating the forbidden fruit; whereby they, and their posterity, being in their loins, as branches in the root, and comprehended in the same covenant with them, became not only liable to eternal death, but also lost all ability to please God; yea, did become by nature enemies to God, and to all spiritual good, and inclined only to evil continually. This is our original sin, the bitter root of all our actual transgressions, in thought, word, and deed.

HEAD II.

The remedy provided in Jesus Christ for the elect by the covenant of grace. Hos. 13:9. O

Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.

- I. ALBEIT man, having brought himself into this woeful condition, be neither able to help himself, nor willing to be helped by God out of it, but rather inclined to lie still, insensible of it, till he perish; yet God, for the glory of his rich grace, hath revealed in his word a way to save sinners, viz. by faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, by virtue of, and according to the tenor of the covenant of redemption, made and agreed upon between God the Father and God the Son, in the council of the Trinity, before the world began.
- II. The sum of the covenant of redemption is this: God having freely chosen unto life a certain number of lost mankind, for the glory of his rich grace, did give them, before the world began, unto God the Son, appointed Redeemer, that, upon condition he would humble himself so far as to assume the human nature, of a soul and a body, unto personal union with his divine nature, and submit himself to the law, as surety for them, and satisfy justice for them, by giving obedience in their name, even unto the suffering of the cursed death of the cross, he should ransom and redeem them all from sin and death, and purchase unto them righteousness and eternal life, with all saving graces leading thereunto, to be effectually, by means of his own appointment, applied in due time to every one of them. This condition the Son of God (who is Jesus Christ our Lord) did accept before the world began, and in the fulness of time came into the world, was born of the Virgin Mary, subjected himself to the law, and completely paid the ransom on the cross: But by virtue of the foresaid bargain, made before the world began, he is in all ages, since the fall of Adam, still upon the work of applying actually the purchased benefits unto the elect; and that he doth by way of entertaining a covenant of free grace and reconciliation with them, through faith in himself; by which covenant, he makes over to every believer a right and interest to himself, and to all his blessings.
- III. For the accomplishment of this covenant of redemption, and making the elect partakers of the benefits thereof in the covenant of grace, Christ Jesus was clad with the threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King: made a Prophet, to reveal all saving knowledge to his people, and to persuade them to believe and obey the same; made a Priest, to offer up himself a sacrifice once for them all, and to intercede continually with the Father, for making their persons and services acceptable to him; and made a King, to subdue them to himself, to feed and rule them by his own appointed ordinances, and to defend them from their enemies.

HEAD III.

The outward means appointed to make the elect partakers of this covenant, and all the rest that are called, to be inexcusable. Matt. 22:14. Many are called.

- I. THE outward means and ordinances, for making men partakers of the covenant of grace, are so wisely dispensed, as that the elect shall be infallibly converted and saved by them; and the reprobate, among whom they are, not to be justly stumbled: The means are especially these four. 1. The word of God. 2. The sacraments. 3. Kirk-government. 4. Prayer. In the word of God preached by sent messengers, the Lord makes offer of grace to all sinners, upon condition of faith in Jesus Christ; and whosoever do confess their sin, accept of Christ offered, and submit themselves to his ordinances, he will have both them and their children received into the honor and privileges of the covenant of grace. By the sacraments, God will have the covenant sealed for confirming the bargain on the foresaid condition. By church-government, he will have them hedged in, and helped forward unto the keeping of the covenant. And by prayer, he will have his own glorious grace, promised in the covenant, to be daily drawn forth, acknowledged, and employed. All which means are followed either really, or in profession only, according to the quality of the covenanters, as they are true or counterfeit believers.
- II. The covenant of grace, set down in the Old Testament before Christ came, and in the New since he came, is one and the same in substance, albeit different in outward administration: For the covenant in the Old Testament, being sealed with the sacraments of circumcision and the paschal lamb, did set forth Christ's death to come, and the benefits purchased thereby, under the shadow of bloody sacrifices, and sundry ceremonies: but since Christ came, the covenant being sealed by the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, doth clearly hold forth Christ already crucified before our eyes, victorious over death and the grave, and gloriously ruling heaven and earth, for the good of his own people.

HEAD IV.

The blessings which are effectually conveyed by these means to the Lord's elect, or chosen ones. Matt. 22:14. Many are called, but few are chosen.

- I. BY these outward ordinances, as our Lord makes the reprobate inexcusable, so, by the power of his Spirit, he applies unto the elect, effectually, all saving graces purchased to them in the covenant of redemption, and makes a change in their persons. In particular, 1. He doth convert or regenerate them, by giving spiritual life to them, in opening their understandings, renewing their wills, affections, and faculties, for giving spiritual obedience to his commands. 2. He gives them saving faith, by making them, in the sense of deserved condemnation, to give their consent

heartily to the covenant of grace, and to embrace Jesus Christ unfeignedly. 3. He gives them repentance, by making them, with godly sorrow, in the hatred of sin, and love of righteousness, turn from all iniquity to the service of God. And, 4. He sanctifies them, by making them go on and persevere in faith and spiritual obedience to the law of God, manifested by fruitfulness in all duties, and doing good works, as God offers occasion.

- II. Together with this inward change of their persons, God changes also their state: for, so soon as they are brought by faith into the covenant of grace, 1. He justifies them, by imputing unto them that perfect obedience which Christ gave to the law, and the satisfaction also which upon the cross Christ gave unto justice in their name. 2. He reconciles them, and makes them friends to God, who were before enemies to God. 3. He adopts them, that they shall be no more children of Satan, but children of God, enriched with all spiritual privileges of his sons. And, last of all, after their warfare in this life is ended, he perfects the holiness and blessedness, first of their souls at their death, and then both of their souls and their bodies, being joyfully joined together again in the resurrection, at the day of his glorious coming to judgment, when all the wicked shall be sent away to hell, with Satan; whom they have served: but Christ's own chosen and redeemed ones, true believers, students of holiness, shall remain with himself for ever, in the state of glorification.

THE PRACTICAL USE OF SAVING KNOWLEDGE,

Contained in SCRIPTURE, and holden forth briefly in the foresaid CONFESSION OF FAITH and CATECHISMS.

THE chief general use of Christian doctrine is, to convince a man of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, John 16:8. partly by the law or covenant of works, that he may be humbled and become penitent; and partly by the gospel or covenant of grace, that he may become an unfeigned believer in Jesus Christ, and be strengthened in his faith upon solid grounds and warrants, and give evidence of the truth of his faith by good fruits, and so be saved.

The sum of the covenant of works, or of the law, is this: “ If thou do all that is commanded, and not fail in any point, thou shalt be saved: but if thou fail, thou shalt die.” Rom. 10:5. Gal. 3:10,12.

The sum of the gospel, or covenant of grace and reconciliation, is this: “ If thou flee from deserved wrath to the true Redeemer Jesus Christ, “ (who is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God through him,) thou shalt not perish, but have eternal life.” Rom. 10:8,9,11.

For convincing a man of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment by the law, or covenant of works, let these scriptures, among many more, be made use of.

I. For convincing a man of sin by the law, consider *Jer. 17:9,10*.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it ? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Here the Lord teaches these two things:

1. That the fountain of all our miscarriage, and actual sinning against God, is in the heart, which comprehends the mind, will, affections, and all the powers of the soul, as they are corrupted and defiled with original sin; the mind being not only ignorant and incapable of saving truth, but also full of error and enmity against God; and the will and affections being obstinately disobedient unto all God's directions, and bent toward that only which is evil: "The heart (said he) is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; yea, and unsearchably wicked, so that no man can know it; and Gen. 6:5. "Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually," said the Lord, whose testimony we must trust in this and all other matters; and experience also may teach us, that, till God make us deny ourselves, we never look to God in anything, but fleshly self-interest alone doth rule us, and move all the wheels of our actions.
2. That the Lord brings our original sin, or wicked inclination, with all the actual fruits thereof, unto reckoning before his judgment-seat; "For he searches the heart, and tries the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."

Hence let every man reason thus:

"What God and my guilty conscience beareth witness of, I am convinced that it is true: But God and my guilty conscience beareth witness, that my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; and that all the imaginations of my heart, by nature, are only evil continually: Therefore I am convinced that this is true."

Thus a man may be convinced of sin by the law.

II. For convincing a man of righteousness by the law, consider *Gal. 3:10*.

As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Here the apostle teaches us three things:

1. That, by reason of our natural sinfulness, the impossibility of any man's being justified by the works of the law is so certain, that whosoever do seek justification by the works of the law, are liable to the curse of God for breaking of the law; "*For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse,*" said he.
2. That, unto the perfect fulfilling of the law, the keeping of one or two of the precepts, or doing of some, or of all duties (if it were possible) for a time, is not sufficient; for the law requires, that "*a man continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*"
3. That, because no man can come up to this perfection, every man by nature is under the curse; for the law said, "*Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*"

Now, to be under the curse, comprehends all the displeasure of God, with the danger of the breaking forth more and more of his wrath upon soul and body, both in this life, and after death perpetually, if grace do not prevent the full execution thereof.

Hence let every man reason thus: "*Whosoever, according to the covenant of works, is liable to the curse of God for breaking the law, times and ways out of number, cannot be justified, or find righteousness by the works of the law: But I, (may every man say,) according to the covenant of works, am liable to the curse of God, for breaking the law times and ways without number: Therefore I cannot be justified, or have righteousness by the works of the law.*"

Thus may a man be convinced of righteousness, that it is not to be had by his own works, or by the law.

III. For convincing a man of judgment by the law, consider 2 Thess. 1:7.

The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, Ver. 8. In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Ver. 9. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; Ver. 10. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.

Wherein we are taught, that our Lord Jesus, who now offers to be Mediator for them who believe in him, shall, at the last day, come armed with flaming fire, to judge, condemn, and destroy all them who have not believed God, have not received the offer of grace made in the gospel, nor obeyed the doctrine thereof; but remain in their natural state, under the law or covenant of works.

Hence let every man reason thus: "*What the righteous Judge hath forewarned me shall be done at the last day, I am sure is just judgment: But the righteous Judge hath forewarned me, that if I do not believe God in time, and obey not the doctrine of the gospel, I shall be secluded from his presence and his glory at the last day, and be*

tormented in soul and body for ever: Therefore I am convinced that this is a just judgment: And I have reason to thank God heartily, who hath forewarned me to flee from the wrath which is to come."

Thus every man may be, by the law or covenant of works, convinced of judgment, if he shall continue under the covenant of works, or shall not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

IV. For convincing a man of sin, righteousness, and judgment, by the gospel.

As for convincing a man of sin, and righteousness, and judgment, by the gospel, or covenant of grace, he must understand three things:

1. That not believing in Jesus Christ, or refusing of the covenant of grace offered in him, is a greater and more dangerous sin than all other sins against the law; because the hearers of the gospel, not believing in Christ, do reject God's mercy in Christ, the only way of freedom from sin and wrath, and will not yield to be reconciled to God. 2. Next, he must understand, that perfect remission of sin, and true righteousness, is to be had only by faith in Jesus; because God requires no other conditions but faith; and testifies from heaven, that he is well pleased to justify sinners upon this condition. 3. He must understand, that upon righteousness received by faith, judgment shall follow, on the one hand, to the destroying of the works of the devil in the believer, and to the perfecting of the work of sanctification in him, with power: and that, upon refusing to take righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ, judgment shall follow, on the other hand, to the condemnation of the misbeliever, and destroying of him with Satan and his servants for ever.

For this end, let these passages of scripture, among many others, serve to make the greatness of the sin of not believing in Christ appear; or, to make the greatness of the sin of refusing of the covenant of grace offered to us, in the offering of Christ unto us appear, let the fair offer of grace be looked upon as it is made, Isa. 55:3. *Incline your ear, and come unto me, (said the Lord:) hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.* That is, If ye will believe me, and be reconciled to me, I will, by covenant, give unto you Christ, and all saving graces in him: repeated Acts 13:34.

Again, consider that this general offer in substance is equivalent to a special offer made to every one in particular; as appears by the apostle's making use of it, Acts 16:31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* The reason of which offer is given, John 3:16. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Seeing then this great salvation is offered in the Lord Jesus, whosoever believeth not in him, but looks for happiness some other way, what doth he else but *observe lying vanities, and forsake his own mercy*, which he might have had in Christ? Jonah 2:8,9. What doth he else but blaspheme God in his heart as it is said, 1 John 5:10,11. *He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God*

gave of his Son. And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. And that no sin against the law is like unto this sin, Christ testifies, John 15:22. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. This may convince a man of the greatness of this sin of not believing in Christ.

V. For convincing a man of righteousness to be had only by faith in Jesus Christ, consider how, *Rom. 10:3,4.*

It is said, that the Jews, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God, (and so they perished.) For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. And Acts 13:39. By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. And 1 John 1:7. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.

For convincing a man of judgment, if a man embrace this righteousness, consider 1 John 3:8. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. And Heb. 9:14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?

But if a man embrace not this righteousness, his doom is pronounced, John 3:18,19. He that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.

Hence let the penitent, desiring to believe, reason thus: "What doth suffice to convince all the elect in the world of the greatness of the sin of not believing in Christ, or refusing to flee to him for relief from sins done against the law, and from wrath due thereto; and what suffices to convince them that righteousness and eternal life is to be had by faith in Jesus Christ, or by consenting to the covenant of grace in him; and what suffices to convince them of judgment to be exercised by Christ, for destroying the works of the devil in a man, and sanctifying and saving all that believe in him, may suffice to convince me also: But what the Spirit hath said, in these or other like scriptures, suffices to convince the elect world of the foresaid sin, and righteousness, and judgment: Therefore what the Spirit hath said, in these and other like scriptures, serves to convince me thereof also."

*Whereupon let the penitent desiring to believe take with him words, and say heartily to the Lord, Seeing thou hast said, *Seek ye my face*; my soul answered unto thee, *Thy face, Lord, will I seek*. I have hearkened unto the offer of an everlasting covenant of all saving mercies to be had in Christ, and I do heartily embrace thy offer. Lord, let it be a bargain; *Lord, I believe; help my unbelief*: Behold, I give myself to thee, to serve thee in all things for ever; and I hope *thy right hand shall save me*: the Lord will perfect that which concerns me: thy mercy, O Lord, endures for ever; forsake not the *works of thine own hands*.*

Thus may a man be made an unfeigned believer in Christ.

VI. For strengthening the man's faith who hath agreed unto the covenant of grace.

BECAUSE many true believers are weak, and do much doubt if ever they shall be sure of the soundness of their own faith and effectual calling, or made certain of their justification and salvation, when they see that many, who profess faith, are found to deceive themselves; let us see how every believer may be made strong in the faith, and sure of his own election and salvation upon solid grounds, by sure warrants, and true evidences of faith. To this end, among many other scriptures, take these following.

A. For laying solid grounds of Faith, consider 2 Peter 1:10. *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall.*

In which words, the apostle teaches us these four things, for help and direction how to be made strong in the faith.

1. That such as believe in Christ Jesus, and are fled to him for relief from sin and wrath, albeit they be weak in the faith, yet they are indeed children of the same Father with the apostles; for so he accounts of them, while he called them *brethren*.
 2. That albeit we be not sure, for the time, of our effectual calling and election, yet we may be made sure of both, if we use diligence; for this he presupposes, saying, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."
 3. That we must not be discouraged, when we see many seeming believers prove rotten branches, and make defection; but we must the rather take the better heed to ourselves: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, (said he,) give all diligence."
 4. That the way to be sure both of our effectual calling and election, is to make sure work of our faith, by laying the grounds of it solidly, and bringing forth the fruits of our faith in new obedience constantly: "For if ye do *these things*, (said he,) ye shall never fall;" understanding by these things, what he had said of sound faith, Ver. 1,2,3,4, and what he had said of the bringing out of the fruits of faith, Ver. 5,6,7,8,9.
- B. To this same purpose, consider Rom. 8:1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* Ver. 2. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* Ver. 3. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;* Ver. 4. *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Wherein the apostle teaches us these four things, for laying of the ground of faith solidly:

1. That every one is a true believer, who, in the sense of his sin, and fear of God's wrath, doth flee for full relief from both unto Jesus Christ alone, as the only Mediator and all-sufficient Redeemer of men; and, being fled to Christ, doth strive against his own flesh, or corrupt inclination of nature, and studied to follow the rule of God's Spirit, set down in his word: for the man, whom the apostle doth here bless as a true believer, is a man in Christ Jesus, "who doth not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit."
2. That all such persons as are fled to Christ, and do strive against sin, howsoever they may be possibly exercised under the sense of wrath, and fear of condemnation, yet they are in no danger; for "there is no condemnation (said he) to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."
3. That albeit the apostle himself, (brought in here for example's cause,) and all other true believers in Christ, be by nature under the law of sin and death, or under the covenant of works, (called the law of sin and death, because it binds sin and death upon us, till Christ set us free;) yet the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, or the covenant of grace, (so called, because it doth enable and quicken a man to a spiritual life through Christ,) doth set the apostle, and all true believers, free from the covenant of works, or the law of sin and death: so that every man may say with him, "The law of the Spirit of life," or the covenant of grace, hath made me free from the law of sin and death," or covenant of works.
4. That the fountain and first ground, from whence our freedom from the curse of the law doth flow, is the covenant of redemption, passed betwixt God and God the Son as incarnate, wherein Christ takes the curse of the law upon him for sin, that the believer, who could not otherwise be delivered from the covenant of works, may be delivered from it. And this doctrine the apostle holds forth in these four branches: (1.) That it was utterly impossible for the law, or the covenant of works, to bring righteousness and life to a sinner, because it was weak. (2.) That this weakness and inability of the law, or covenant of works, is not the fault of the law, but the fault of sinful flesh, which is neither able to pay the penalty of sin, nor to give perfect obedience to the law, (presuppose bygone sins were forgiven:) "*The law was weak (saith he) through the flesh.*" (3.) That the righteousness and salvation of sinners, which was impossible to be brought about by the law, is brought to pass by sending God's own Son, Jesus Christ, in the flesh, in whose flesh sin is condemned and punished, for making satisfaction in the behalf of the elect, that they might be set free. (4.) That by his means the law loses nothing, because the righteousness of the law is best fulfilled this way; first, by Christ's giving perfect active obedience in our name unto it in all things; next, by his paying in our name the penalty due to our sins in his death: and, lastly, by his working of sanctification in us, who are true believers, who strive to give new obedience unto the law, and "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

WARRANTS TO BELIEVE

FOR building our confidence upon this solid ground, these four Warrants and special Motives to believe in Christ may serve.

The first whereof is *God's hearty invitation*, holds forth, Isa. 55:1,2,3,4,5.

Ho, every one that thirsts, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Ver. 2. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread ? and your labor for that which satisfies not ? Harken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Ver. 3. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Ver. 4. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people, etc.

Here (after setting down the precious ransom of our redemption by the sufferings of Christ, and the rich blessings purchased to us thereby, in the two former chapters) the Lord, in this chapter,

1. Makes open offer of Christ and his grace, by proclamation of a free and gracious market of righteousness and salvation, to be had through Christ to every soul, without exception, that truly desires to be saved from sin and wrath: *"Ho, every one that thirsts,"* said he.
2. He invites all sinners, that for any reason stand at a distance from God, to come and take from him riches of grace, running in Christ as a river, to wash away sin, and to stoken wrath: *"Come ye to the waters,"* said he.
3. Lest any should stand aback in the sense of his own sinfulness or unworthiness, and inability to do any good, the Lord calls upon such persons in special, saying, *"He that hath no money, come."*
4. He craves no more of his merchant, but that he be pleased with the wares offered, which are grace, and more grace; and that he heartily consent unto, and embrace this offer of grace, that so he may close a bargain, and a formal covenant with God; *"Come, buy without money, (said he,) come, eat: that is, consent to have, and take unto you all saving graces; make the wares your own, possess them, and make use of all blessings in Christ; whatsoever makes for your spiritual life and comfort, use and enjoy it freely, without paying any thing for it: "Come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price,"* said he.
5. Because the Lord knows how much we are inclined to seek righteousness and life by our own performances and satisfaction, to have righteousness and life as it were by

the way of works, and how loath we are to embrace Christ Jesus, and to take life by way of free grace through Jesus Christ, upon the terms whereupon it is offered to us; therefore the Lord lovingly calls us off this our crooked and unhappy way with a gentle and timely admonition, giving us to understand, that we shall but lose our labor in this our way: “Wherefore do ye spend your money (said he) for that which is not bread ? and your labor for that which satisfies not ?”

6. The Lord promises to us solid satisfaction in the way of betaking ourselves unto the grace of Christ, even true contentment, and fullness of spiritual pleasure, saying, “Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.”
7. Because faith comes by hearing, he calls for audience unto the explication of the offer, and calls for believing of, and hastening unto the truth , which is able to beget the application of saving faith, and to draw the soul to trust in God: “Incline your ear, and come unto me,” said he. To which end, the Lord promises, that this offer being received, shall quicken the dead sinner; and that, upon the welcoming of this offer, he will close the covenant of grace with the man that shall consent unto it, even an indissoluble covenant of perpetual reconciliation and peace: “Hearken, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you.” Which covenant, he declares, shall be in substance the assignation, and the making over, of all the saving graces which David (who is Jesus Christ, Acts 13:34.) hath bought for us in the covenant of redemption: “I will make a covenant with you, (said he,) even the “sure mercies of David.” By *sure mercies*, he means saving graces, such as are righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, adoption, sanctification, and glorification, and whatsoever belongs to godliness and life eternal.
8. To confirm and assure us of the real grant of these saving mercies, and to persuade us of the reality of the covenant betwixt God and the believer of this word, the Father hath made a fourfold gift of his eternal and only begotten Son:

First, To be incarnate and born for our sake, of the seed of David his type; for which cause he is called here, and Acts 13:34. DAVID, the true and everlasting King of Israel. This is the great gift of God to man, John 4:10. And here, *I have given him to be David*, or born of David, *to the people*.

Secondly, He hath made a gift of Christ to be a witness to the people, both of the sure and saving mercies granted to the redeemed in the covenant of redemption; and also of the Father’s willingness and purpose to apply them, and to make them fast in the covenant of reconciliation made with such as embrace the offer: “*I have given him* (said the Lord here) *to be a witness to the people.*” And truly he is a sufficient witness in this matter in many respects: *1st*, Because he is one of the blessed Trinity, and party-contractor for us, in the covenant of redemption, before the world was. *2dly*, He is by office, as Mediator, the Messenger of the covenant, and hath gotten commission to reveal it. *3dly*, He began actually to reveal it in paradise, where he promised, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. *4thly*, He set forth his own death and sufferings, and the

great benefits that should come thereby to us, in the types and figures of sacrifices and ceremonies before his coming. *5thly*, He gave more and more light about this covenant, speaking by his Spirit, from age to age, in the holy prophets. *6thly*, He came himself, in the fullness of time, and did bear witness of all things belonging to this covenant, and of God's willing mind to take believers into it; partly, by uniting our nature in one person with the divine nature; partly, by preaching the good tidings of the covenant with his own mouth; partly, by paying the price of redemption on the cross; and partly, by dealing still with the people, from the beginning to this day, to draw in, and to hold in the redeemed in this covenant.

Thirdly, God hath made a gift of Christ, as a leader to the people, to bring us through all difficulties, all afflictions and temptations, unto life, by this covenant: and he it is, and no other, who doth indeed lead his own unto the covenant; and, in the covenant, all the way on unto salvation: 1. By the direction of his word and Spirit. 2. By the example of his own life, in faith and obedience, even to the death of the cross. 3. By his powerful working, bearing his redeemed ones in his arms, and causing them to lean on him, while they go up through the wilderness.

Fourthly, God hath made a gift of Christ unto his people, as a commander: which office he faithfully exercises, by giving to his church and people laws and ordinances, pastors and governors, and all necessary officers; by keeping courts and assemblies among them, to see that his laws be obeyed; subduing, by his word, Spirit, and discipline, his people's corruptions; and; by his wisdom and power, guarding them against all their enemies whatsoever.

Hence he who hath closed bargain with God may strengthen his faith, by reasoning after this manner:

"Whosoever doth heartily receive the offer of free grace, made here to sinners, thirsting for righteousness and salvation: unto him, by an everlasting covenant, belongs Christ, the true David, with all his sure and saving mercies: But I (may the weak believer say) do heartily receive the offer of free grace made here to sinners, thirsting for righteousness and salvation: Therefore unto me, by an everlasting covenant, belongs Christ Jesus, with all his sure and saving mercies."

The second Warrant and special Motive to embrace Christ, and believe in him, is the *earnest request* that God makes to us to be reconciled to him in Christ; holds forth, 2 Cor. 5:19,20,21.

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Ver. 20. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Ver. 21. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Wherein the apostle teaches us these nine doctrines:

1. That the elect world, or world of redeemed souls, are by nature in the estate of enmity against God: this is presupposed in the word *reconciliation*; for reconciliation, or renewing of friendship, cannot be, except betwixt those that have been at enmity.
2. That in all the time by-past, since the fall of Adam, Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God, as Mediator, and the Father in him, hath been about the making friendship (by his word and Spirit) betwixt himself and the elect world: "*God (said he) was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.*"
3. That the way of reconciliation was in all ages one and the same in substance, viz. by forgiving the sins of them who do acknowledge their sins and their enmity against God, and do seek reconciliation and remission of sins in Christ: "*For God (said he) was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself,*" by way of "*not imputing their trespasses unto them.*"
4. That the end and scope of the gospel, and whole word of God, is threefold: (1.) It serves to make people sensible of their sins, and of their enmity against God, and of their danger, if they should stand out, and not fear God's displeasure. (2.) The word of God serves to make men acquainted with the course which God hath prepared for making friendship with them through Christ, viz. That if men shall acknowledge the enmity, and shall be content to enter into a covenant of friendship with God through Christ, then God will be content to be reconciled with them freely. (3.) The word of God serves to teach men how to carry themselves towards God, as friends, after they are reconciled to him, viz. to be loath to sin against him, and to strive heartily to obey his commandments: and therefore the word of God here is called *the word of reconciliation*, because it teaches us what need we have of reconciliation, and how to make it, and how to keep the reconciliation of friendship, being made with God through Christ.
5. That albeit the hearing, believing, and obeying of this word, doth belong to all those to whom this gospel doth come; yet the office of preaching of it with authority belongs to none, but to such only as God doth call to his ministry, and sends out with commission for this work. This the apostle holds forth, Ver. 19. in these words, "He hath committed to us the word of reconciliation."
6. That the ministers of the gospel should behave themselves as Christ's messengers, and should closely follow their commission set down in the word, Matt. 28:19, 20; and when they do so, they should be received by the people as ambassadors from God; for here the apostle, in all their names, said, "*We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us.*"
7. That ministers, in all earnestness of affections, should deal with people to acknowledge their sins, and their natural enmity against God, more and more seriously; and to consent to the covenant of grace and embassy of Christ more and more heartily; and to evidence more and more clearly their reconciliation, by a holy

carriage before God. This he holds forth, when he said, “We pray you, be ye reconciled to God.”

8. That in the ministers’ affectionate dealing with the people, the people should consider that they have to do with God and Christ, requesting them, by the ministers, to be reconciled. Now, there cannot be a greater inducement to break a sinner’s hard heart, than God’s making a request to him for friendship; for when it became us, who have done so many wrongs to God, to seek friendship of God, he prevents us: and (O wonder of wonders !) he requests us to be content to be reconciled to him; and therefore most fearful wrath must abide them who do set light by this request, and do not yield when they hear ministers with commission, saying, “We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did “beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”
9. To make it appear how it cometh to pass that the covenant of reconciliation should be so easily made up betwixt God and a humble sinner fleeing to Christ, the apostle leads us unto the cause of it, holds forth in the covenant of redemption, the sum whereof is this: “ *It is agreed betwixt God and the Mediator Jesus Christ the Son of God, surety for the redeemed, as parties contractors, that the sins of the redeemed should be imputed to innocent Christ, and he both condemned and put to death for them, upon this very condition, that whosoever heartily consents unto the covenant of reconciliation offered through Christ, shall, by the imputation of his obedience unto them, be justified and holds righteous before God; for God hath made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, said the apostle, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*” Hence may a weak believer strengthen his faith, by reasoning from this ground after this manner:

“He that, upon the loving request of God and Christ, made to him by the mouth of ministers, (having commission to that effect,) hath embraced the offer of perpetual reconciliation through Christ, and doth purpose, by God’s grace, as a reconciled person, to strive against sin, and to serve God to his power constantly, may be as sure to have righteousness and eternal life given to him, for the obedience of Christ imputed to him, as it is sure that Christ was condemned and put to death for the sins of the redeemed imputed to him: But I (may the weak believer say) upon the loving request of God and Christ, made to me by the mouth of his ministers, have embraced the offer of perpetual reconciliation through Christ, and do purpose, by God’s grace, as a reconciled person, to strive against sin, and to serve God to my power constantly: Therefore I may be as sure to have righteousness and eternal life given to me, for the obedience of Christ imputed to me, as it is sure that Christ was condemned and put to death for the sins of the redeemed imputed to him.”

The third Warrant and special Motive to believe in Christ, is the strait and awful command of God, charging all the hearers of the gospel to approach to Christ in the order set down by him, and to believe in him; holds forth, 1 John 3:23. *This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.*

Wherein the apostle gives us to understand these five doctrines:

1. That if any man shall not be taken with the sweet invitation of God, nor with the humble and loving request of God, made to him to be reconciled, he shall find he hath to do with the sovereign authority of the highest Majesty; for “this is his commandment, that we believe in him,” said he.
2. That if any man look upon this commandment as he hath looked heretofore upon the neglected commandments of the law, he must consider that this is a command of the gospel, posterior to the law, given for making use of the remedy of all sins; which, if it be disobeyed, there is no other command to follow but this, “Go, ye cursed, into the everlasting fire of hell;” for “this is his commandment;” the obedience of which is most pleasant in his sight, Ver. 22. and without which it is impossible to please him, Heb. 11:6.
3. That every one who hears the gospel, must make conscience of the duty of lively faith in Christ; the weak believer must not think it presumption to do what is commanded; the person inclined to desperation must take up himself, and think upon obedience unto this sweet and saving command; the strong believer must dip yet more in the sense of his need he hath of Jesus Christ, and more and more grow in the obedience of this command; yea, the most impenitent, profane, and wicked person must not thrust out himself, or be thrust out by others, from orderly aiming at this duty, how desperate so ever his condition seems to be; for he that commands all men to believe in Christ, doth thereby command all men to believe that they are damned and lost without Christ: he thereby commands all men to acknowledge their sins, and their need of Christ, and in effect commands all men to repent, that they may believe in him. And whosoever do refuse to repent of their bygone sins, are guilty of disobedience to this command given to all hearers, but especially to those that are within the visible church: for “this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ,” said he.
4. That he who obeys this commandment hath built his salvation on a solid ground: for, *1st*, He hath found the promised Messiah, completely furnished with all perfections unto the perfect execution of the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; for he is that Christ in whom the man doth believe. *2d*, He hath embraced a Savior, who is able to save to the uttermost, yea, and who doth effectually save every one that cometh to God through him; for he is Jesus, the true Savior of his people from their sins. *3d*, He that obeys this command hath built his salvation on the Rock, that is, on the Son of God, to whom it is no robbery to be called equal to the Father, and who is worthy to be the object of saving faith, and of spiritual worship: for “this is his command, (saith he) that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ.”
5. That he who hath believed on Jesus Christ, though he be freed from the curse of the law, is not freed from the command and obedience of the law, but tied thereunto by a new obligation, and a new command from Christ; which new command from Christ imports help to obey the command: unto which command from Christ, the Father

adds his authority and command also; for “this is his commandment, (said John,) “that we believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he hath commanded us.” The first part of which command, enjoining belief in him, necessarily implies love to God, and so obedience to the first table; for believing in God, and loving God, are inseparable; and the second part of the command enjoins love to our neighbor, (especially to the household of faith,) and so obedience to the second table of the law.

Hence may a weak believer strengthen himself, by reasoning from this ground after this manner:

“Whosoever, in the sense of his own sinfulness, and fear of God’s wrath, at the command of God, is fled to Jesus Christ, the only remedy of sin and misery, and hath engaged his heart to the obedience of the law of love, his faith is not presumptuous or dead, but true and saving faith: But I, (may the weak believer say) in the sense of my own sinfulness, and fear of God’s wrath, am fled to Jesus Christ, the only remedy of sin and misery, and have engaged my heart to the obedience of the law of love: Therefore my faith is not a presumptuous and dead faith, but true and saving faith.”

The fourth Warrant and special Motive to believe in Christ, is *much assurance of life* given, in case men shall obey the command of believing; and a *fearful certification* of destruction, in case they obey not; holden forth, *John 3:35*.

The Father loves the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. Ver. 36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him.

Wherein are holds forth to us these five following doctrines:

1. That the Father is well satisfied with the undertakings of the Son, entered Redeemer and Surety, to pay the ransom of believers and to perfect them in holiness and salvation: “*The Father loves the Son,*” said he; viz. as he stands Mediator in our name, undertaking to perfect our redemption in all points: The Father loves him, that is, doth heartily accept his offer to do the work, and is well pleased with him: his soul delights in him, and rests upon him, and makes him, in this his office, the “*receptacle of love, and grace, and good will,*” to be conveyed by him to believers in him.
2. That, for fulfilling of the covenant of redemption, the Father hath given to the Son (as he stands in the capacity of the Mediator, or as he is God incarnate, the Word made flesh) all authority in heaven and earth, all furniture of the riches of grace, and of spirit and life, with all power and ability, which the union of the divine nature with the human, or which the fullness of the Godhead dwelling substantially in his human nature, or which the indivisible all-sufficiency and omnipotency of the inseparable, every where present Trinity doth import, or the work of redemption can require: “The

Father (said he) hath given all things into the Son's hand," to wit, for accomplishing his work.

3. Great assurance of life is holds forth to all who shall heartily receive Christ, and the offer of the covenant of grace and reconciliation through him: "He that believeth on the Son (said he) hath everlasting life;" for it is made fast unto him, *1st*, In God's purpose and irrevocable decree, as the believer is a man elected to life. *2d*, By effectual calling of him unto life by God, who, as he is faithful, so will he do it. *3d*, By promise and everlasting covenant, sworn by God, to give the believer strong consolation in life and death, upon immutable grounds. *4th*, By a pawn and investment under the great seal of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, so oft as the believer shall come to receive the symbols and pledges of life. *5th*, In Christ the fountain and head of life, who is entered in possession, as attorney for believers; in whom our life is so laid up, that it cannot be taken away. *6th*, By begun possession of spiritual life and regeneration, and a kingdom consisting in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, erected within the believer, as earnest of the full possession of everlasting life.
4. A fearful certification is given, if a man received not the doctrine concerning righteousness and eternal life to be had by Jesus Christ: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life," that is, not so much as understand what it means.
5. He further certifies, that if a man receive not the doctrine of the Son of God, he shall be burdened twice with the wrath of God; once, as a born rebel by nature, he shall bear the curse of the law, or the covenant of works; and next, he shall endure a greater condemnation, in respect that light being come into the world, and offered to him, he hath rejected it, and loves darkness rather than light: and this double wrath shall be fastened and fixed immovably upon him, so long as he remains in the condition of misbelief: "The wrath of God abides on him," said he.

Hence may the weak believer strengthen his faith, by reasoning from this ground after this manner:

"Whosoever believeth the doctrine delivered by the Son of God, and finds himself partly drawn powerfully to believe in him, by the sight of life in him, and partly driven, by the fear of God's wrath, to adhere unto him, may be sure of right and interest to life eternal through him: But sinful and unworthy I (may the weak believer say) do believe the doctrine delivered by the Son of God, and do feel myself partly drawn powerfully to believe in him, by the sight of life in him, and partly driven, by the fear of God's wrath, to adhere unto him: Therefore I may be sure of my right and interest unto eternal life through him."

THE EVIDENCES OF TRUE FAITH.

SO much for the laying the grounds of faith, and warrants to believe. Now, for evidencing of true faith by fruits, these four things are requisite: 1. That the believer be soundly convinced, in his judgment, of his obligation to keep the whole moral law, all the days of his life; and that not the less, but so much the more, as he is delivered by Christ from the covenant of works, and curse of the law. 2. That he endeavour to grow in the exercise and daily practice of godliness and righteousness. 3. That the course of his new obedience run in the right channel, that is through faith in Christ, and through a good conscience, to all the duties of love towards God and man. 4. That he keep strait communion with the fountain Christ Jesus, from whom grace must run along, for furnishing of good fruits.

For the first, *viz.* To convince the believer, in his judgment, of his obligation to keep the moral law, among many passages, take *Matt. 5:16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Ver. 17. *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* Ver. 18. *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* Ver. 19. *Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* Ver. 20. *For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Wherein our Lord,

1. Gives commandment to believers, justified by faith, to give evidence of the grace of God in them before men, by doing good works: “Let your light so shine before men, (saith he,) that they may see your good works.”
2. He induces them so to do, by showing, that albeit they be not justified by works, yet spectators of their good works may be converted or edified; and so glory may redound to God by their good works, when the witnesses thereof “shall glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
3. He gives them no other rule for their new obedience than the moral law, set down and explicated by Moses and the prophets: “Think not” (said he) that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets.”
4. He gives them to understand, that the doctrine of grace, and freedom from the curse of the law by faith in him, is readily mistaken by men’s corrupt judgments, as if it did loose or slacken the obligation of believers to obey the commands, and to be subject to the authority of the law; and that this error is indeed a destroying of the law and of

the prophets, which he will in no case ever endure in any of his disciples, it is so contrary to the end of his coming, which is first to sanctify, and then to save believers: "Think not (said he) that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets."

5. He teaches, that the end of the gospel and covenant of grace is to procure men's obedience unto the moral law: "I am come (said he) to fulfill the law and the prophets."
6. That the obligation of the moral law, in all points, unto all holy duties, is perpetual, and shall stand to the world's end, that is, "till heaven and earth pass away."
7. That as God hath had a care of the Scriptures from the beginning, so shall he have a care of them still to the world's end, that there shall not one jot or one tittle of the substance thereof be taken away; so said the text, Ver. 18.
8. That as the breaking of the moral law, and defending the transgressions thereof to be no sin, doth exclude men both from heaven, and justly also from the fellowship of the true church; so the obedience of the law, and teaching others to do the same, by example, counsel, and doctrine, according to every man's calling, proves a man to be a true believer, and in great estimation with God, and worthy to be much esteemed of by the true church, Ver. 19.
9. That the righteousness of every true Christian must be more than the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees; for the scribes and Pharisees, albeit they took great pains to discharge sundry duties of the law, yet they cut short the exposition thereof, that it might the less condemn their practice; they studied the outward part of the duty, but neglected the inward and spiritual part; they discharged some meaner duties carefully, but neglected judgment, mercy, and the love of God: in a word, they went about to establish their own righteousness, and rejected the righteousness of God by faith in Jesus. But a true Christian must have more than all this; he must acknowledge the full extent of the spiritual meaning of the law, and have a respect to all the commandments, and labor to cleanse himself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and "not lay weight upon what service he hath done, or shall do," but clothe himself with the imputed righteousness of Christ, which only can hide his nakedness, or else he cannot be saved; so said the text, "Except your righteousness," *etc.*

The second thing requisite to evidence true faith is, that the believer endeavor to put the rules of godliness and righteousness in practice, and to grow in the daily exercise thereof; holds forth, 2 Pet. 1:5. *And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; Ver. 6. And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; Ver. 7. And to godliness, brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, charity. Ver. 8. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Wherein,

1. The apostle teaches believers, for evidencing of precious faith in themselves, to endeavor to add to their faith seven other sister graces. The first is Virtue, or the active exercise and practice of all moral duties, that so faith may not be idle, but put forth itself in work. The second is Knowledge, which serves to furnish faith with information of the truth to be believed, and to furnish virtue with direction what duties are to be done, and how to go about them prudently. The third is Temperance, which serves to moderate the use of all pleasant things, that a man be not clogged therewith, nor made unfit for any duty whereto he is called. The fourth is Patience, which serves to moderate a man's affections, when he meets with any difficulty or unpleasant thing; that he neither weary for pains required in well-doing, nor faint when the Lord chastises him, nor murmur when he crosses him. The fifth is Godliness, which may keep him up in all the exercises of religion, inward and outward; whereby he may be furnished from God for all other duties which he hath to do. The sixth is Brotherly-kindness, which keeps estimation of, and affection to, all the household of faith, and to the image of God in every one where so ever it is seen. The seventh is Love, which keeps the heart in readiness to do good to all men, whatsoever they be, upon all occasions which God shall offer.
2. Albeit it be true, that there is much corruption and infirmity in the godly; yet the apostle will have men uprightly endeavoring, and doing their best, as they are able, to join all these graces one to another, and to grow in the measure of exercising them: *"Giving all diligence, (said he,) "add to your faith," etc.*
3. He assures all professed believers, that as they shall profit in the obedience of this direction, so they shall profitably prove the soundness of their own faith; and, if they want these graces, that they shall be found blind deceivers of themselves, Ver. 9.

The third thing requisite to evidence true faith is, that obedience to the law run in the right channel, that is, through faith in Christ, etc. holds forth, 1 *Tim.* 1:5. *Now, the end of the commandment is love, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.*

Wherein the apostle teaches these seven doctrines:

1. That the obedience of the law must flow from love, and love from a pure heart, and a pure heart from a good conscience, and a good conscience from faith unfeigned: this he makes the only right channel of good works: *"The end of the law is love," etc.*
2. That the end of the law is not, that men may be justified by their obedience of it, as the Jewish doctors did falsely teach; for it is impossible that sinners can be justified by the law, who, for every transgression, are condemned by the law: *"For the end of the law is (not such as the Jewish doctors taught, but) love, out of a pure heart," etc.*
3. That the true end of the law, preached unto the people, is, that they, by the law, being made to see their deserved condemnation, should flee to Christ unfeignedly, to be

justified by faith in him; so said the text, while it makes love to flow through faith in Christ.

4. That no man can set himself in love to obey the law, excepting as far as his conscience is quieted by faith, or is seeking to be quieted in Christ; for “the end of the law is love, out of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.”
5. That feigned faith goes to Christ without reckoning with the law, and so wants an errand; but unfeigned faith reckons with the law, and is forced to flee for refuge unto Christ, as the end of the law for righteousness, so often as it finds itself guilty for breaking of the law: “For the end of the law is faith unfeigned.”
6. That the fruits of love may come forth in act particularly, it is necessary that the heart be brought to the hatred of all sin and uncleanness, and to a steadfast purpose to follow all holiness universally: “For the end of the law is love, out of a pure heart.”
7. That unfeigned faith is able to make the conscience good, and the heart pure, and the man lovingly obedient to the law; for when Christ’s blood is seen by faith to quiet justice, then the conscience becomes quiet also, and will not suffer the heart to entertain the love of sin, but sets the man on work to fear God for his mercy, and to obey all his commandments, out of love to God, for his free gift of justification, by grace bestowed on him: “*For this is the end of the law indeed,*” whereby it obtaineth of a man more obedience than any other way.

The fourth thing requisite to evidence true faith is, the *keeping strait communion with Christ*, the fountain of all graces, and of all good works; holds forth, John 15:5. *I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.*

Wherein Christ, in a similitude from a vine-tree, teaches us,

1. That by nature we are wild barren briers, till we be changed by coming unto Christ; and that Christ is that noble vine-tree, having all life and sap of grace in himself, and able to change the nature of every one that cometh to him, and to communicate spirit and life to as many as shall believe in him: “I am the vine, (said he,) and ye are the branches.”
2. That Christ loves to have believers so united unto him, as that they be not separated at any time by unbelief: and that there may be a mutual inhabitation of them in him, by faith and love and of him in them, by his word and Spirit; for he joins these together, “If ye abide in me, and I in you,” as things inseparable.
3. That except a man be ingrafted into Christ, and united to him by faith, he cannot do any the least good works of his own strength; yea, except in as far as a man doth draw spirit and life from Christ by faith, the work which he doth is naughty and null in point of goodness in God’s estimation: “For without me (said he) ye can do nothing.”

4. That this mutual inhabitation is the fountain and infallible cause of constant continuing and abounding in well-doing: For “he that abides in me, and I in him, (said he,) the same bears much fruit.” Now, as our abiding in Christ presupposes three things; *1st*, That we have heard the joyful sound of the gospel, making offer of Christ to us, who are lost sinners by the law; *2d*, That we have heartily embraced the gracious offer of Christ; *3d*, That by receiving of him we are become the sons of God, *John* 1:12. and are incorporated into his mystical body, that he may dwell in us, as his temple, and we dwell in him, as in the residence of righteousness and life: so our abiding in Christ imports other three things, (1.) An employing of Christ in all our addresses to God, and in all our undertakings of whatsoever piece of service to him. (2.) A contentedness with his sufficiency, without going out from him to seek righteousness, or life, or furniture in any case, in our own or any of the creature’s worthiness. (3.) A fixedness in our believing in him, a fixedness in our employing and making use of him, and a fixedness in our contentment in him, and adhering to him, so that no allurements, no temptation of Satan or the world, no terror nor trouble, may be able to drive our spirits from firm adherence to him, or from the constant avowing of his truth, and obeying his commands, who hath loved us, and given himself for us; and in whom not only our life is laid up, but also the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily, by reason of the substantial and personal union of the divine and human nature in him.

Hence let every watchful believer, for strengthening himself in faith and obedience, reason after this manner: *“Whosoever doth daily employ Christ Jesus for cleansing his conscience and affections from the guiltiness and filthiness of sins against the law, and for enabling him to give obedience to the law in love, he hath the evidence of true faith in himself: But I (may every watchful believer say) do daily employ Jesus Christ for cleansing my conscience and affections from the guiltiness and filthiness of sins against the law, and for enabling of me to give obedience to the law in love: Therefore I have the evidence of true faith in myself.”*

And hence also let the sleepy and sluggish believer reason, for his own up-stirring, thus:

“Whatsoever is necessary for giving evidence of true faith, I study to do it, except I would deceive myself and perish: But to employ Christ Jesus daily for cleansing of my conscience and affections from the guiltiness and filthiness of sins against the law, and for enabling me to give obedience to the law in love, is necessary for evidencing of true faith in me: Therefore this I must study to do, except I would deceive myself and perish.”

And, *lastly*, Seeing Christ himself hath pointed this forth, as an undoubted evidence of a man elected of God unto life, and given to Jesus Christ to be redeemed, *“if he come unto him,”* that is, close covenant, and keep communion with him, as he teaches us, *John* 6:37. saying, *“All that the Father hath given me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;”* let every person, who doth not in earnest make use of Christ for remission of sin, and amendment of life, reason hence, and from the whole premises, after this manner, that his conscience may be awakened:

“Whosoever is neither by the law, nor by the gospel, so convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgment, as to make him come to Christ, and employ him daily for remission of sin, and amendment of life; he wants not only all evidence of saving faith, but also all appearance of his election, so long as he remains in this condition: But I (may every impenitent person say) am neither by the law nor gospel so convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgment, as to make me come to Christ, and employ him daily for remission of sin, and amendment of life: Therefore I want not only all evidence of saving faith, but also all appearance of my election, so long as I remain in this condition.”

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ADDENDUM

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Book of Official Position Papers

The *Book of Official Position Papers* of the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly is the official record of the expressed opinions of the church concerning the topical subject of each position paper. The purpose is to point out areas where we recognize the need to bring the light of Scripture to issues facing the Body of Christ in this world. Position papers should seek to bring forth the most basic principles upon which there is substantial agreement, while avoiding the details over which disagreement may exist among brothers. While not specifically part of the *Book of Church Order*, this book will be kept by the denomination, so as to clarify its interpretation of the Bible and the *Westminster Standards* on these topics. It is not the intention of these position papers to be directly binding upon the congregations, presbyteries or general assembly, therefore nothing in them may be used as binding.

A. Introduction of a Position Paper Topic or Change in a Position Paper

The topic of a position paper must be approved by the general assembly by majority vote and may be introduced by any member of the general assembly during the time for new business. No position paper topics can be approved which are (or include any comments on items) specifically listed in the *Covenant and Constitution (A5, Ecclesiastical Liberty)* without two-thirds consent of the seated general assembly.

B. Appointment of a Committee to Draft a Position Paper

Upon approval of the topic, a committee shall be appointed to write an initial draft. This draft shall be circulated to each presbytery, and by them, to each congregation, with at least three months for the congregations to study it, and respond by whatever deadline the committee chooses to set. The committee must then circulate its proposed draft no less than three months prior to the general assembly at which approval shall be sought.

C. Approval of the Position Paper

A position paper, properly circulated, may be presented for approval at the next regularly called general assembly. Two-thirds approval of the general assembly is needed for the position paper to be placed in the *Book of Official Position Papers*.