THE TRINITY CONFESSION OF FAITH AND CATECHISM

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INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2019, a group of elders formally launched Trinity Fellowship Churches. From the beginning it was determined that it would be an intentionally "Confessional" denomination of churches. To them this meant being tied to a written Confession of Faith that would be what the ordained elders in TFC regard as "sound doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:9; 2:1). That is, the Confession of Faith would be a summary of what they believe, teach, and defend.

Since the Reformation there has been an established pattern in churches to start such confessions with an existing one and then modify it only as needed. TFC adopted this same approach and began with the 1689 *London Baptist Confession of Faith*. The 1689 takes the Puritan and Reformed *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1646) with the modifications of the Congregationalist *Savoy Declaration of Faith* (1658) and then adds its own Baptistic nuance in places like the covenants and the sacraments.

Similarly, TFC took the work of the 17th-century Reformed Baptists and then modified it. One change was to modernize the language, which included adjusting the vocabulary and sentence structures to make them more in line with modern conventions. A second change was to add chapters on Man (5), The Empowering Holy Spirit (10), and Mission (33). For Man (5) this was felt to be necessary because many assumptions made about anthropology and gender in the 17th century do not hold throughout the culture today—even in Christendom. The Empowering Holy Spirit (10) was added to capture our Continuationist perspective. Mission (33) was added to make more explicit our commitment to evangelism, discipleship, and church planting in fulfillment of the Great Commission and the *missio dei*. There are also paragraphs added in The Church (28) to reflect our convictions about elder-led churches that are deeply connected together for their mutual benefit, strength, protection, purity, and mission.

Our commitment to our *Confession of Faith* is not in any way meant to replace our commitment to the Scriptures themselves. Our *Confession* is simply a summary of what the TFC elders believe is taught in the Bible. It is the Bible and the Bible alone that is divinely inspired. All of this is saying nothing more than what our Confession itself says in a paragraph only slightly changed from the original *Westminster Confession of Faith*:

> The final judge for the examination and judgment of all religious controversies, decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits can be no other than Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit. Our faith must rest when Scripture speaks.
>
> *Trinity Confession of Faith* 1.10

The Trinity Catechism was produced by the elders of Trinity Fellowship Churches to be used by individuals, families, and churches seeking to grow in Christ. Historically, catechisms are a complement to a confession of faith, combining doctrine and more practical matters of the Christian life.

The Trinity Catechism, like *The Trinity Confession of Faith*, is built on the work of others. Of the 104 questions, about half are taken from other catechisms—the largest portion of these are from the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, but other important sources were Benjamin Keach's 17th-century *Baptist Catechism*, John Piper's *A Baptist Catechism* (1986), and the 1563 *Heidelberg Catechism*.

May the Lord use these means of grace to build up his people for the glory of his name.

The elders of TFC
June 2026

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THE TRINITY CONFESSION OF FAITH

1. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1. Holy Scripture is the only inerrant,[1] sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.[2] The light of nature and the works of creation and providence demonstrate God's goodness, wisdom, and power so clearly that they leave men without excuse. Nevertheless, these are insufficient to give the knowledge of God and his will that is necessary for salvation.[3] Therefore, it pleased the Lord at many times and in many ways to reveal himself and declare his will to his

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[1] "Inerrant" here is understood according to the definition adopted by "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy" (1978). "Inerrancy" there means "free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit," and this is not "limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science" (Article XII).

[2] **2 Timothy 3:15–17** And how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. **Isaiah 8:20** To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn. **Luke 16:29, 31** But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them… He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.' **Ephesians 2:20** Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.

[3] **Romans 1:19–21** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **Romans 2:14–15** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them. **Psalm 19:1–3** The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard.

church.[4] After this, the Lord preserved this revelation in writing to better guard and spread the truth and establish and comfort the church against the corruption of the flesh and the evil intention of Satan and of the world. Therefore, the Holy Scriptures are absolutely necessary as God's former means of revealing his normative will to his people have ceased.[5]

2. Holy Scripture, or the written Word of God, consists of all the books of the Old and New Testaments, which are the following.

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	Song of Solomon	Habakkuk
2 Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
1 Kings	Jeremiah	Haggai
2 Kings	Lamentations	Zechariah
1 Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

[4] **Hebrews 1:1** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

[5] **Proverbs 22:19–21** That your trust may be in the LORD, I have made them known to you today, even to you. Have I not written for you thirty sayings of counsel and knowledge, to make you know what is right and true, that you may give a true answer to those who sent you? **Romans 15:4** For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. **2 Peter 1:19–20** And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

Of the New Testament:

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

All of these are given by the inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life.[6]

3. The books commonly called the Apocrypha are not part of the canon or rule of the Scriptures as they are not divinely inspired and therefore have no authority over the church of God and are not to be viewed or used as anything more than human writings.[7]

4. The authority of Holy Scripture, the very reason that we believe in it, does not depend on the testimony of any man or church but entirely on God, the author, who is truth itself. Scripture is to be received because it is the Word of God.[8]

5. We may be moved and persuaded by the testimony of the

[6] **2 Timothy 3:16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

[7] **Luke 24:27, 44** And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself… Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." **Romans 3:2** The Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.

[8] **2 Peter 1:19–21** And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. **2 Timothy 3:16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in

church of God to a high and reverent esteem of Holy Scripture. Its heavenly content, powerful doctrine, majestic style, the harmony of all its parts, its unified aim to give all glory to God, the full revelation it makes of the only way of salvation, its incomparable excellence, and its unmatched perfection are arguments by which Scripture abundantly evidences itself to be the Word of God. Notwithstanding all this, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and its divine authority is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.[9]

6. The whole counsel of God concerning everything necessary for his glory, man's salvation, faith, and life is either expressly set down in Scripture or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from it. Nothing, neither man's tradition nor personal revelations, is to be added to Scripture.[10] Nevertheless,

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righteousness. **1 Thessalonians 2:13** And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

[9] **John 16:13–14** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. **1 Corinthians 2:10–12** These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. **1 John 2:20, 27** You have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge… But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.

[10] **2 Timothy 3:15–17** And how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every

we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God is necessary for a saving understanding of what is revealed in the Word.[11] Further, there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church, which are common to human actions and administrations, and these are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian wisdom according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.[12]

7. Not all parts of Scripture are equally clear, and not all people have an equal understanding of the Bible.[13] Yet, all things necessary to know, believe, and observe for salvation are clear enough in the Scriptures that both the educated and uneducated may

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good work. **Galatians 1:8–9** Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

[11] **John 6:45** "It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me." **1 Corinthians 2:9–12** But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

[12] **1 Corinthians 11:13–15** Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? **1 Corinthians 14:26, 40** What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up… But all things should be done decently and in order.

[13] **2 Peter 3:15–16** And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

understand them sufficiently by the use of normal methods of interpretation.[14]

8. The original manuscripts, written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, are inspired and authoritative.[15] These are now lost to us; we nonetheless possess a near-perfect duplication of them today in our best original language texts. Therefore, these can be trusted as authentic and the final authority for all religious controversies in the church.[16] Yet, as these original languages are not known to all the people of God, who have a right to and interest in the Scriptures and are commanded in the fear of God to read[17] and search them,[18] they are to be translated into the native language of every people,[19] so, with the Word of God dwelling richly in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner and through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures have hope.[20]

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[14] **Psalm 19:7** The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. **Psalm 119:130** The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.

[15] **Romans 3:1–2** Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. **2 Peter 3:15–16** And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

[16] **Isaiah 8:20** To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.

[17] **Acts 15:15–16a** And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, "After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David."

[18] **John 5:39** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.

[19] **1 Corinthians 14:9–11** So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me.

[20] **Colossians 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching

9. The infallible rule for the interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself; therefore, when there is a question about the true and full intention of any Scripture, it must be clarified by other passages that speak more clearly. [21]

10. The final judge for the examination and judgment of all religious controversies, decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits can be no other than Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit. Our faith must rest when Scripture speaks. [22]

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and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

[21] **2 Peter 1:20–21** We know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. **Acts 15:15–16** And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, "After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it."

[22] **Matthew 22:29, 31–32** But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God… And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." **Ephesians 2:19b–20** You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone. **Acts 28:23** When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.

2. GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY

1. The Lord, our God, is one, the only living and true God.[1] He exists in and of himself;[2] he is infinite in being and perfection; his essence cannot be comprehended by anyone but himself;[3] he is a perfectly pure spirit,[4] invisible, without body, parts, or passions. He alone has immortality, dwelling in the light no one can approach.[5] He is immutable,[6] immense,[7] eter-

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[1] **1 Corinthians 8:4–6** Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "an idol has no real existence," and that "there is no God but one." For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"— yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. **Deuteronomy 6:4** Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

[2] **Jeremiah 10:10** But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation. **Isaiah 48:12** Listen to me, O Jacob, and Israel, whom I called! I am he; I am the first, and I am the last.

[3] **Exodus 3:14** God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

[4] **John 4:24** God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

[5] **1 Timothy 1:17** To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. **Deuteronomy 4:15–16** "Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female." **1 Timothy 6:15–16** He… is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

[6] **Malachi 3:6** For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.

[7] **1 Kings 8:27** "Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!" **Jeremiah 23:23** Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God far away?

nal,[8] incomprehensible, almighty,[9] entirely infinite, completely holy,[10] fully wise, totally free, and absolute. He works all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and perfectly righteous will[11] for his glory.[12] He is most loving, gracious, merciful, and long-suffering. He is abundant in goodness and truth and forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin.[13] He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him[14] and is entirely just

[8] **Psalm 90:2** Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

[9] **Genesis 17:1** When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless."

[10] **Isaiah 6:3** And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

[11] **Psalm 115:3** Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. **Isaiah 46:9–10** I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose."

[12] **Proverbs 16:4** The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble. **Romans 11:36** For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

[13] **Exodus 34:6–7** The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

[14] **Hebrews 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

and to be feared in his judgments.[15] He hates all sin[16] and will by no means clear the guilty.[17]

2. Having all life,[18] glory,[19] goodness,[20] blessedness, in and of himself, God alone is all-sufficient. He does not need any creature that he has made, nor does his glory come from them,[21] but he demonstrates his glory in what he does in them, by them, to them, and for them. He alone is the fountain of all being; all things are of him, through him, and to him.[22] He has absolute

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[15] **Nehemiah 9:32–33** Now, therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love, let not all the hardship seem little to you that has come upon us, upon our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and all your people, since the time of the kings of Assyria until this day. Yet you have been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly.

[16] **Psalm 5:5–6** The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. You destroy those who speak lies; the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

[17] **Exodus 34:6–7** The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation. **Nahum 1:2–3** The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD is avenging and wrathful; the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

[18] **John 5:26** For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.

[19] **Psalm 148:13** Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven.

[20] **Psalm 119:68** You are good and do good; teach me your statutes.

[21] **Job 22:2–3** Can a man be profitable to God? Surely he who is wise is profitable to himself. Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are in the right, or is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?

[22] **Romans 11:34–36** For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To

sovereign dominion over all creatures, to do by them, for them, or to them whatever he pleases.[23] He sees all things so that nothing is hidden from him.[24] His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent of all created things, so that nothing is contingent or uncertain to him.[25] He is absolutely holy in all his counsels, in all his works,[26] and in all his commands. He is due all worship,[27] service, and obedience that creatures owe to their Creator, and whatever else he is pleased to require of them.

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him be glory forever. Amen.

[23] **Daniel 4:24–25** It is a decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king, that you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and you shall be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will. **Daniel 4:34–35** At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?"

[24] **Hebrews 4:13** And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

[25] **Ezekiel 11:5** And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and he said to me, "Say, Thus says the LORD: So you think, O house of Israel. For I know the things that come into your mind." **Acts 15:16–18** "After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old."

[26] **Psalm 145:17** The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.

[27] **Revelation 5:12–14** "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped.

3. In this divine and infinite Being, there are three persons: the Father, the Word or Son, and the Holy Spirit.[28] They are of one substance, power, and eternity. Each has the whole divine essence, yet the essence is not divided.[29] The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding. The Son is eternally begotten of the Father.[30] The Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son.[31] Yet, all three are infinite, without beginning, and are, therefore, one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being but distinguished by several peculiar relative properties and personal relations. This doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God and comfortable dependence on him.

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[28] **Matthew 28:19–20** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. **2 Corinthians 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

[29] **Exodus 3:14** God said to Moses, "I am who I am." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I am has sent me to you.' " **John 14:11** Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. **1 Corinthians 8:5–6** For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"— yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

[30] **John 1:14, 18** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth… No one has ever seen God; God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

[31] **John 15:26** But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. **Galatians 4:6–7** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

3. GOD'S DECREE

1. God has decreed in himself from all eternity all things, whatever comes to pass, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably.[1] Yet he is neither the author of sin nor has fellowship with anyone in sin.[2] In his decree he does not violate the will of the creature or take away the liberty or contingency of second causes. Instead, these are established.[3] In this, his wisdom is displayed in directing all things, as is his power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree.[4]

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[1] **Isaiah 46:9–10** I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose." **Ephesians 1:11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. **Hebrews 6:17** So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath. **Romans 9:15–18** For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

[2] **James 1:13** Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. **1 John 1:5–6** This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

[3] **Acts 4:27–28** For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. **John 19:11** Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.

[4] **Numbers 23:19** God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or

2. Although God knows everything that may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions,[5] his decree is not the result of what he foresaw or that which would come to pass upon such conditions.[6]

3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life,[7] and others

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has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it? **Ephesians 1:3–5** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.

[5] **Acts 15:16–18** "After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old."

[6] **Romans 9:6–18** But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son." And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— she was told, "The older will serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

[7] **Ephesians 1:4–6** In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

foreordained to everlasting death.[8]

4. These angels and men thus predestined and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.[9]

5. Those of mankind who are predestined to 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, has chosen in Christ for everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love,[10] without any other thing in the

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[8] **Romans 9:22–23** What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory? **Jude 4** For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

[9] **2 Timothy 2:19** But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." **John 13:18** I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, "He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me."

[10] **Ephesians 1:3–4** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, [4] even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. **Ephesians 1:7–11** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. **Romans 8:30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. **2 Timothy 1:8–9** Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages

creature as a condition or cause moving him to it.[11]

6. As God has appointed the elect to glory, so he has by the eternal and most free purpose of his will foreordained all the means to it.[12] As a result, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, effectually called to faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith to salvation.[13] Neither are

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began. **1 Thessalonians 5:9** For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[11] **Romans 9:13–16** As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. **Ephesians 2:5** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved. **Ephesians 2:12** Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

[12] **1 Peter 1:1–2** To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood. **2 Thessalonians 2:13** But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

[13] **1 Thessalonians 5:9–10** For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. **Romans 8:30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. **Ephesians 1:5** He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will. **1 Thessalonians 5:23** Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **1 Peter 1:3–5** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power

any others redeemed by Christ or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.[14]

7. The doctrine of the high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care so that men obedient to the will of God as revealed in his Word may, from the certainty of their effectual calling, be assured of their eternal election.[15] So shall this doctrine be a source of praise,[16] reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility,[17] diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.[18]

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are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

[14] **John 10:26** But you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. **John 17:9** I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. **John 6:64** But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.)

[15] **1 Thessalonians 1:4–5** For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. **2 Peter 1:10** Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

[16] **Ephesians 1:4–6** In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. **Romans 11:33** Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

[17] **Romans 11:5–6** So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. **Romans 11:20** That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear.

[18] **Luke 10:20** Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

4. CREATION

1. In the beginning, it pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,[1] for the demonstration of the glory of his eternal power,[2] wisdom, and goodness to create, or make out of nothing, the world and all things in it, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days and all very good.[3]

2. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female.[4] He created them with reasonable and immortal souls,[5] making them fit for that life to God for which they were created. They were made in the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness.[6] The law of God was written

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[1] **John 1:2–3** He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. **Hebrews 1:1–2** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. **Job 26:13** By his wind the heavens were made fair; his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.

[2] **Romans 1:20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

[3] **Colossians 1:16** For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. **Genesis 1:31** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

[4] **Genesis 1:26–27** Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

[5] **Genesis 2:7** Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

[6] **Ecclesiastes 7:29** See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes. **Genesis 1:26** Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have

in their hearts,[7] along with the power to fulfill it. Yet there remained a possibility of transgressing God's law since they had liberty of their own will, which was subject to change.[8]

3. Besides the law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,[9] and while they kept this command they were happy in their communion with God and had dominion over the creatures.[10]

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dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

[7] **Romans 2:14–15** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.

[8] **Genesis 3:6** So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

[9] **Genesis 2:16–17** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

[10] **Genesis 1:26** Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **Genesis 1:28** And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

5. MAN

1. God created man, male and female, by special acts of divine creation. Man alone of all creation is in the image and likeness of God. Man was given dominion over all of creation and commanded to fill the earth.[1] Though the fall distorts the image of

[1] **Genesis 1:26–31** Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. **Genesis 2:5–24** When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded

God in man, it is not eradicated.[2] In Christ, the image is progressively restored and his people shall become more fully conformed to the divine design.[3]

2. Male and female are divinely-ordered sexes, designed and assigned by God for complementary roles. Both men and women are created in the image of God, equal in dignity and worth.[4] Adam was created by God from the dust of the earth. Eve was created by God from Adam's rib, as a helper suitable to Adam.[5]

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the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

[2] **Genesis 9:6** "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image."

[3] **Colossians 3:9–10** Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

[4] **Genesis 1:26–27** Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

[5] **Genesis 2:5–7** When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face

The Sovereign Lord of history creates each person male or female,[6] and inherent in his design are good purposes for each person.[7] A man is divinely created male in his whole person, and his vocation[8] as a man is to work, cultivate, and keep what is entrusted to him. He is spiritually called to be a son, brother, and father; and most will reflect these callings in their natural

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of the ground— then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. **Genesis 2:18–24** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

[6] In saying "each person" is created "male or female" in 5.2, we are not denying that on extremely rare occasions a person will be born with biological and/or genetic sex characteristics that are ambiguous. Such people are a kind of "eunuchs… from birth" (Matt 19:12). Their bodies bear the marks of both God's mysterious design and yet the fall of man—as we all do. There is nonetheless grace for them to glorify God as image-bearers of their Creator and to fulfill their distinct callings.

[7] **Psalm 139:13–15** For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

[8] "Vocation" in TCOF 5.2 (and in the Trinity Catechism Questions 15–16) refers to the fuller and historical sense of the word, which speaks to a divine calling and the responsibilities that go along with it, rather than the narrower modern usage that can mean simply what a person does for income.

relationships as well.[9] A woman is divinely created female in her whole person, and her vocation as a woman is to help, nurture, and bring life to those given to her. She is spiritually called to be a daughter, sister, and mother; and most will reflect these callings in their natural relationships as well.[10]

3. Jesus Christ, as the God-man, united both full humanity and full deity in his person.[11] In him, humanity reached its fullest

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[9] **Genesis 2:7–8** Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. **Genesis 2:15** The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. **Genesis 2:24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **1 Corinthians 16:13** Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. **Ephesians 6:4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. **Philippians 2:22** But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. 1 **Timothy 5:1–2** Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity. **1 Corinthians 11:3** But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. **1 Corinthians 11:8–9** For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

[10] **Genesis 2:18** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **Genesis 2:21** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **Genesis 2:23–24** Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **Genesis 3:20** The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. **Romans 16:13** Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. **1 Timothy 5:1–2** Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.

[11] **Matthew 1:23** "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

expression, and through his Spirit all of his people are empowered to live for his glory.[12] At his resurrection, he received a glorified body, the firstfruits of the resurrection. Upon his return, his people will likewise receive glorified bodies, and they shall enjoy his presence with glorified bodies and souls made perfect forever.[13]

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and they shall call his name Immanuel." **Luke 1:26–35** In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God."

[12] **Romans 8:3–4** For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

[13] **Romans 8:23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. **1 Corinthians 15:20–23** But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. **1 Corinthians 15:50–57** I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable

puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **1 John 3:2** Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. **Revelation 21:1–5** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

6. DIVINE PROVIDENCE

1. God, the good Creator of all things, in his infinite power and wisdom upholds, directs, disposes, and governs all creatures and things[1] from the greatest even to the least[2] by his most wise and holy providence to the end for which they were created according to his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of his own will. This is all to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness, and mercy.[3]

2. In relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly[4] so that there is not anything befalls any by chance or without his providence.[5] Yet, by the same providence he orders them to happen

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[1] **Hebrews 1:3** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. **Job 38:11** And [the LORD] said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed'? **Isaiah 46:9–11** I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it. **Psalm 135:6** Whatever the LORD pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.

[2] **Matthew 10:29–31** Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

[3] **Ephesians 1:11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.

[4] **Acts 2:22–23** Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

[5] **Proverbs 16:33** The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

according to the nature of second causes either necessarily, freely, or contingently.[6]

3. God in his ordinary providence makes use of means,[7] yet he is free to work without,[8] above, and against them[9] at his pleasure.

4. The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far demonstrate themselves in his providence that his sovereign plan extends even to the Fall of Man and all other sinful actions both of angels and men.[10] This is not

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[6] **Genesis 8:22** While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.

[7] **Acts 27:31,44** Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." … And so it was that all were brought safely to land. **Isaiah 55:10–11** For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. **Hosea 1:7** But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and I will save them by the LORD their God. I will not save them by bow or by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen.

[8] **Romans 4:19–21** He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness." But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord.

[9] **Daniel 3:27** And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them.

[10] **Romans 11:32–34** For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" **2 Samuel 24:1** Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go, number Israel and Judah." **1 Chronicles 21:1** Then Satan stood against

by a bare permission. Instead, God most wisely and powerfully limits and otherwise orders and governs[11] even sinful actions in a manifold administration to his most holy ends.[12] The sinfulness of these acts proceeds only from the creatures and not from God who, being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin.[13]

5. The most wise, righteous, and gracious God often leaves his own children for a season to manifold temptations and the corruptions of their own hearts to chastise them for their former sins or to reveal to them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts that they may be humbled, to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support on God, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of

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Israel and incited David to number Israel.

[11] **2 Kings 19:28** Because you have raged against me and your complacency has come into my ears, I will put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth, and I will turn you back on the way by which you came. **Psalm 76:10** Surely the wrath of man shall praise you; the remnant of wrath you will put on like a belt.

[12] **Genesis 50:20** As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. **Isaiah 10:6–7, 12** Against a godless nation I send him, and against the people of my wrath I command him, to take spoil and seize plunder, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. But he does not so intend, and his heart does not so think; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few… When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he will punish the speech of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the boastful look in his eyes.

[13] **1 John 2:16** For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. **James 1:13–14, 17** Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire… Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. **Psalm 50:21** These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you.

sin and for other just and holy ends.[14] Thus, whatever befalls any of his elect is by his appointment, for his glory and their good.[15]

6. At times God, as the righteous judge, blinds and hardens wicked and ungodly men for former sins.[16] From them he withholds his grace, which might have enlightened their understanding and worked upon their hearts.[17] Sometimes he also withdraws

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[14] **2 Chronicles 32:25–26, 31** But Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore wrath came upon him and Judah and Jerusalem. But Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah… And so in the matter of the envoys of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart. **2 Corinthians 12:7–9** So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

[15] **Romans 8:28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

[16] **Romans 1:24–28** Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. **Romans 11:7–8** What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day."

[17] **Deuteronomy 29:4** But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart

the gifts which they had[18] and exposes them to objects which their corruption makes an occasion of sin.[19] In addition, he gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan,[20] by which it comes to pass that they harden themselves under those means which God uses for the softening of others.[21]

7. As the providence of God in general reaches to all creatures, so after a more special manner it takes care of his church and disposes all things for its good.[22]

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to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.

[18] **Matthew 13:12** For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

[19] **Deuteronomy 2:30** But Sihon the king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that he might give him into your hand, as he is this day. **2 Kings 8:12–13** And Hazael said, "Why does my lord weep?" He answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel. You will set on fire their fortresses, and you will kill their young men with the sword and dash in pieces their little ones and rip open their pregnant women." And Hazael said, "What is your servant, who is but a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Elisha answered, "The LORD has shown me that you are to be king over Syria."

[20] **Psalm 81:11–12** But my people did not listen to my voice; Israel would not submit to me. So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels. **2 Thessalonians 2:10–12** And with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

[21] **Exodus 8:15, 32** But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said… But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let the people go. **Isaiah 6:9–10** And he said, "Go, and say to this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'" **1 Peter 2:7–8** So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense."

[22] **1 Timothy 4:10** For to this end we toil and strive, because we have

our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. **Amos 9:8–9** "Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the surface of the ground, except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob," declares the LORD. "For behold, I will command, and shake the house of Israel among all the nations as one shakes with a sieve, but no pebble shall fall to the earth." **Isaiah 43:3–5** For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you. Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life. Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you. **Matthew 16:18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **Romans 8:28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. **Ephesians 3:10–11** Through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7. THE FALL OF MAN, SIN, AND ITS PUNISHMENT

1. God created man upright and perfect and gave him a righteous law, which would have led to life had he kept it and threatened death if he broke it.[1] Yet Adam did not live long in this honor. Satan used the subtlety of the serpent[2] to subdue Eve, and by her, seduced Adam. Adam, without any compulsion, willfully transgressed the law of their creation and the command given to them in eating the forbidden fruit.[3] God was pleased to permit this according to his wise and holy counsel, having purposed to direct it to his own glory.

2. By this sin our first parents fell from their original righteousness and communion with God. We fell in Adam, and by this, death came upon all.[4] All became dead in sin[5] and wholly defiled

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[1] **Genesis 2:16–17** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

[2] **Revelation 12:9** And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

[3] **Genesis 3:12–13** The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." **John 8:44** You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. **2 Corinthians 11:3** But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

[4] **Romans 3:23** For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

[5] **Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.

in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.[6]

3. By God's appointment they were the root of all mankind. Adam stood in the place and stead of all mankind. The guilt of his sin was imputed and their corrupted nature passed on to all future generations descending from them by ordinary reproduc-

[6] **Titus 1:15** To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. **Genesis 6:5** The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. **Jeremiah 17:9** The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? **Romans 3:10–19** As it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." "Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known." "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.

tion.[7] All are now conceived in sin[8] and by nature children of wrath,[9] the servants of sin, the subjects of death,[10] and all other miseries: spiritual, temporal, and eternal, unless the Lord Jesus sets them free.[11]

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[7] **Romans 5:12–19** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. **1 Corinthians 15:21–22, 45, 49** For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive… Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit… Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

[8] **Psalm 51:5** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. **Job 14:4** Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one.

[9] **Ephesians 2:1–3** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

[10] **Romans 6:20** For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. **Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.

[11] **Hebrews 2:14–15** Since therefore the children share in flesh and

4. All actual transgressions proceed from this original corruption[12] by which we are utterly unwilling to do good, disabled from doing good, made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil.[13]

5. The corruption of nature, during this life, remains in those who are regenerated.[14] Although it is pardoned and mortified through Christ, yet both this corrupt nature and all actions arising from it are truly and properly sin.[15]

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blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. **1 Thessalonians 1:10** Wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

[12] **James 1:14–15** But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. **Matthew 15:19** For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.

[13] **Romans 8:7** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. **Colossians 1:21** And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds.

[14] **Romans 7:18, 23** For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out… but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. **Ecclesiastes 7:20** Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins. **1 John 1:8** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

[15] **Romans 7:23–25** But I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. **Galatians 5:17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

8. GOD'S COVENANT OF GRACE

1. The distance between God and the creature is so great that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience to him as their creator, yet they could never have attained the reward of life except by some voluntary condescension on God's part. He has been pleased to express this by way of covenant.[1]

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

3. Moreover, man having brought himself under the curse of the law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace.[3] In this, he freely offers life and salvation to sinners by Jesus Christ. He requires of them faith in him that they may be saved.[4]

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[1] **Luke 17:10** So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty." **Job 35:7–8** If you are righteous, what do you give to him? Or what does he receive from your hand? Your wickedness concerns a man like yourself, and your righteousness a son of man.

[2] **Genesis 2:16–17** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." **Hosea 6:7** But like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me.

[3] **Genesis 2:17** "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." **Genesis 3:15** "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." **Galatians 3:10** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." **Hebrews 7:22** This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

[4] **Romans 8:3** For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh. **Romans 10:9–10** Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. **John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,

He promises to give his Holy Spirit to all those who are ordained to eternal life to make them willing and able to believe.[5]

4. This covenant is revealed in the gospel, first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman[6] and afterward by further steps until the full discovery of it was completed in the New Testament.[7] This salvation is founded in the eternal covenant transaction that was between the Father and the Son about the redemption of the elect.[8] It is by the grace of

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that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

[5] **Ezekiel 36:26–27** And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. **John 6:44–45** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, "And they will all be taught by God." Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. **Psalm 110:4** The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

[6] **Genesis 3:15** "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

[7] **Genesis 17:7** And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. **Jeremiah 31:31–32** "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD." **Luke 22:20** And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." **Galatians 3:8** And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." **Ephesians 2:12** Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

[8] **Psalm 2:7–8** I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

this covenant alone that any descendants of fallen Adam who are saved have obtained life and blessed immortality. For man is now utterly incapable of acceptance with God upon those terms on which Adam stood in his state of innocence.[9]

Isaiah 42:1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. **2 Timothy 1:8–9** Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began. **Titus 1:2** In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began.

[9] **Hebrews 11:6, 13** And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him… These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. **Romans 4:1–8** What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." **Acts 4:12** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. **John 8:56** Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.

9. CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

1. It pleased God in his eternal purpose to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the mediator between God and man.[1] Jesus is ordained as the prophet,[2] priest,[3]

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[1] **John 6:37–40** "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day." **John 17:6–9, 24–25** "I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours… Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me." **Luke 22:29** "I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom." **Hebrews 10:5–10** Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

[2] **Acts 3:22** Moses said, "The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you."

[3] **Hebrews 5:5–6** So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son,

and king.[4] He is the head and Savior of the church,[5] the heir of all things,[6] and judge of the world.[7] From all eternity, God gave a people to be his seed and to be by him, in time, redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.[8]

2. The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, is the true and eternal God, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance and equal with him who made the world, who upholds and governs all things he has made. When the fullness of time had come, he took upon himself man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities of it,[9] yet without sin.[10] He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of

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today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

[4] **Psalm 2:6** As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill. **Luke 1:33** And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

[5] **Ephesians 1:22–23** And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

[6] **Hebrews 1:2** But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

[7] **Acts 17:31** Because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

[8] **Isaiah 53:10** Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. **John 17:6** I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. **Romans 8:30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

[9] **John 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **Galatians 4:4–5** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.

[10] **Romans 8:3** For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and

the virgin Mary when the Holy Spirit came down upon her and the power of the Most High overshadowed her. So he was born of a woman of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham and David according to the Scriptures.[11] Two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. This person is truly God and truly man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.[12]

3. The Lord Jesus in his human nature thus united to the divine, in the person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure.[13] In him are all the treasures

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for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh. **Hebrews 2:14–17** Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **Hebrews 4:15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

[11] **Matthew 1:1, 22–23** The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham… All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel"

[12] **Luke 1:27, 31, 35** To a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary… And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus… And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God." **Romans 9:5** To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen. **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

[13] **Psalm 45:7** You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions. **Acts 10:38** John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about

of wisdom and knowledge,[14] and it pleased the Father that in Christ all the fullness of God should dwell.[15] This was so that being holy, meek, undefiled,[16] and full of grace and truth,[17] he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of mediator and guarantor.[18] He did not grasp this office but was called by his Father to it.[19] His Father also put all power and judgment in his hand and commanded him to execute these.[20]

4. The Lord Jesus took this office most willingly.[21] So that he

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doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. **John 3:34** For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.

[14] **Colossians 2:3** In [Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

[15] **Colossians 1:19** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

[16] **Hebrews 7:26** For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

[17] **John 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

[18] **Hebrews 7:22** This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

[19] **Hebrews 5:5** So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"

[20] **John 5:22, 27** For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son… And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. **Matthew 28:18** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." **Acts 2:36** "Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

[21] **Psalm 40:7–8** Then I said, "Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me: I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." **Hebrews 10:5–10** Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.' " When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your

might discharge it, he was made under the law[22] and perfectly fulfilled it. He underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have endured and suffered,[23] being made sin and a curse for us.[24] He endured very grievous sorrows in his soul and very painful sufferings in his body.[25] He was crucified, died, and remained in the state of the dead, yet saw no corruption.[26] On the third day he rose from the dead[27] with the same body in which

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will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. **John 10:18** No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.

[22] **Galatians 4:4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law. **Matthew 3:15** But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."

[23] **Galatians 3:13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" **Isaiah 53:6** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. **1 Peter 3:18** For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.

[24] **2 Corinthians 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

[25] **Matthew 26:37–38** And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." **Luke 22:44** And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. **Matthew 27:46** And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

[26] **Acts 13:37** But he whom God raised up did not see corruption.

[27] **1 Corinthians 15:3–4** For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

he suffered[28] and with which he also ascended into heaven.[29] He sits there at the right hand of his Father making intercession[30] and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world.[31]

5. By his perfect obedience and sacrifice offered up to God once and for all through the eternal Spirit, the Lord Jesus has fully satisfied the justice of God.[32] And through this, he also pro-

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[28] **John 20:25–27** So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."

[29] **Acts 1:9–11** And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, [11] and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

[30] **Romans 8:34** Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. **Hebrews 9:24** For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

[31] **Acts 1:11** "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." **Acts 10:42** And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. **Romans 14:9–10** For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. **2 Peter 2:4** For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment.

[32] **Hebrews 9:14** How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. **Hebrews 10:14** For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanc-

cured reconciliation and purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father has given to him.[33]

6. The price of redemption was not actually paid by Christ until after His incarnation. Yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefit of it were given to the elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices where he was revealed and signified to be the seed which should bruise the serpent's head[34] and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,[35] being the same yesterday, today, and forever.[36]

7. Christ in the work of mediation acts according to both natures by each nature doing that which is proper to itself. 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.[37]

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tified. **Romans 3:24–26** Christ Jesus… God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

[33] **John 17:2** Since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. **Hebrews 9:15** Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

[34] **1 Corinthians 10:4** And all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. **Hebrews 4:2** For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. **1 Peter 1:10–11** Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

[35] **Revelation 13:8** And all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

[36] **Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

[37] **John 3:13** No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. **Acts 20:28** Pay careful attention to

8. To all those for whom Christ has obtained eternal redemption, he certainly and effectually applies and communicates this redemption and makes intercession for them.[38] He unites them to himself by His Spirit, reveals to them in and by his Word the mystery of salvation, and persuades them to believe and obey.[39] He governs their hearts by his Word and Spirit[40] and overcomes all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom,[41] in such manner and ways as are entirely consistent with his wonderful and unsearchable providence. All this is of free and absolute grace without any condition foreseen in them to procure it.[42]

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yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

[38] **John 6:37** All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. **John 10:15–16** Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. **John 17:9** I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. **Romans 5:10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

[39] **John 17:6** I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. **Ephesians 1:9** Making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ. **1 John 5:20** And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

[40] **Romans 8:9, 14** You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him… For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

[41] **Psalm 110:1** The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." **1 Corinthians 15:25–26** For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

[42] **John 3:8** The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with every-

9. This office of mediator between God and man is exclusively Christ's and is threefold: He is the prophet, priest, and king of the church of God. This may not be either in whole or any part, transferred from him to any other. [43]

10. This number and order of offices are necessary. For with respect to our ignorance, we stand in need of his prophetic office. [44] With respect to our alienation from God and imperfection of the best of our service, we need his priestly office to reconcile us and present us acceptable to God. [45] With respect to our opposition to and utter inability to return to God and for our rescue and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need his kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom. [46]

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one who is born of the Spirit. **Ephesians 1:7–8** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight.

[43] **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

[44] **John 1:18** No one has ever seen God; God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

[45] **Colossians 1:21–22** And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him. **Galatians 5:17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

[46] **John 16:8** And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment. **Psalm 110:4** The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." **Luke 1:68, 69, 72–75** He has… raised up a horn of salvation for us… to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

10. THE EMPOWERING HOLY SPIRIT

1. It pleased God in his eternal purpose to choose and ordain the Holy Spirit to be the life-giver and sustainer of the redeemed.[1] He is the Spirit of regeneration,[2] convicting sinners of their rebellion against God, granting them new life,[3] and baptizing them into the Body of Christ.[4] He is the Spirit of adoption,[5] the guarantor of the promised redemption, and the seal of redemption unto God.[6] He is the comforter,[7] keeping

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[1] **Deuteronomy 10:16** Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn. **Deuteronomy 30:6** And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. **Ezekiel 36:25-27** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

[2] **John 3:5** Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

[3] **Galatians 5:25** If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

[4] **1 Corinthians 12:12–13** For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

[5] **Galatians 4:6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

[6] **2 Corinthians 1:21–22** And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. **2 Corinthians 5:5** He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. **Ephesians 1:13–14** In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, [14] who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. **Ephesians 4:30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

[7] **John 14:16–17** "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another

his people in perfect peace and sanctifying them in all seasons unto the truth. He is the Spirit of love, securing disciples in the love of the Father poured out upon them.[8] He is the Spirit of freedom and fellowship.[9] He is the Spirit of holiness.[10]

2. The Holy Spirit of God, the third person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God,[11] of one substance and co-equal with him who made the world, who upholds and governs all things he has made, did, when the fullness of time was come, conceive the Lord Jesus in the womb of the virgin Mary.[12] He

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Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you." **John 15:26** "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me."

[8] **Romans 5:5** And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. **2 Corinthians 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

[9] **2 Corinthians 3:17** Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom

[10] **Romans 1:4** And was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

[11] **Matthew 28:19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." **Acts 5:3–4** But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."

[12] **Luke 1:31–35** And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

empowered the Son[13] throughout his earthly ministry, working to fulfill all of the purposes of the Godhead in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ.[14]

3. Near the conclusion of his earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit upon his disciples that he might lead them into all truth, empower them for witness, and sanctify them in the truth.[15] He is the Spirit of unity within the church of Christ.[16] He is, indeed, the Spirit of Christ.[17]

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[13] **Acts 1:1–2** In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. **Luke 4:18–19** "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

[14] **Galatians 4:29** But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. **1 Timothy 3:16** Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. **Titus 3:5** He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

[15] **John 14:25–26** These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. **John 15:26–27** But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. **Acts 1:8** "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

[16] **Ephesians 4:1–3** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

[17] **Romans 8:9–11** You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although

4. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in fulfillment of the promises of God under the Old Testament.[18]

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the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

[18] **Joel 2:28–32** "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. "And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls. **Acts 2:1–21** When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine." But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: "'And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

He unites all persons who believe in Christ, from every nation, into the Church.[19] He works still in the world to convict, regenerate, and sanctify sinners, granting them new life and faith so that they might believe in Jesus Christ.[20]

5. He is the Spirit of the New Covenant, enlivening and empowering all the elect to know the Lord,[21] to bear his fruits, and to serve one another in the church for mutual edification.[22] He

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And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

[19] **Galatians 3:14** So that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith. **Ephesians 4:4** There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call.

[20] **Ezekiel 36:25–27** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. **1 John 4:13** By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

[21] **2 Corinthians 3:5–6** Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. **Jeremiah 31:31–34** Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

[22] **Galatians 5:16** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify

blows where he wishes, both enlivening the elect through the proclamation of the gospel and empowering them for service according to the sovereign purposes of the triune God.[23]

6. The gifts of the Spirit are given freely by God for the good of his people.[24] He gives gifts according to his good purposes and calls his disciples to earnestly desire these gifts.[25] Both the

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the desires of the flesh.

[23] **John 3:8** "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." **1 Thessalonians 1:5–6** Because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit. **2 Thessalonians 2:13** But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

[24] **1 Corinthians 12:4–7** Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. **Ephesians 4:7–14** But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

[25] **Romans 12:3–8** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are

fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit are granted to each Christian, testifying to the love, goodness, and almighty power of our God in transforming his people into his likeness.[26] These gifts are to be earnestly desired in order that the church might be edified.[27] They were granted to the church until the Lord shall return.[28]

7. All the gifts of the Spirit listed in the New Testament are available for the church today and should be earnestly desired and exercised for the edification of the church and the advance of the gospel.[29]

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one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. **1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1** But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way… Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

[26] **1 Corinthians 12:8-11** For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. **Galatians 5:22–23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

[27] **1 Corinthians 14:1** Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

[28] **1 Corinthians 1:4–5, 7** I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge… so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. **1 Corinthians 13:8–10** Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

[29] **Acts 2:17–21** "'And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.'" **Ephesians 4:7, 11–13** But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift… And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

11. FREE WILL

1. God has endowed the will of man with a natural liberty and power of acting upon choice so that it is neither forced nor by any necessity of nature determined to do good or evil.[1]

2. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good and well-pleasing to God.[2] But this innocence was unstable so that he might fall from it.[3]

3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, has wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation.[4] Such a natural man is altogether averse to that good and dead in sin.[5] He is not able by his own strength to convert himself or to prepare himself for it.[6]

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[1] **Matthew 17:12** But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands. **James 1:14** But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. **Deuteronomy 30:19** I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live.

[2] **Ecclesiastes 7:29** See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.

[3] **Genesis 3:6** So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

[4] **Romans 5:6** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **Romans 8:7** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

[5] **Genesis 6:5** The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. **1 Corinthians 2:14** The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. **Ephesians 2:1, 5** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins… But God… even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.

[6] **Titus 3:3–5** For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray,

4. When God converts a sinner and transfers him into the state of grace, he frees him from his natural bondage under sin.[7] God's grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good.[8] However, due to his remaining corruptions, he does not perfectly nor exclusively will that which is good, but he also wills that which is evil.[9]

5. Only in the state of glory will the will of man be made perfectly and immutably free to do good alone.[10]

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slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. **John 6:44** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

[7] **Colossians 1:13** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. **John 8:36** So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

[8] **Philippians 2:13** For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

[9] **Romans 7:15–23** For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. **Galatians 5:17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

[10] **Ephesians 4:13** Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

12. EFFECTUAL CALLING

1. Those whom God has predestined to life, he is pleased in his appointed and accepted time effectually to call[1] to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. He effectually calls them by his Word and Spirit out of their natural state of sin and death, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God.[2] He takes away their heart of stone and gives them a

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[1] **Romans 8:30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. **Romans 11:7–8** What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day." **Ephesians 1:11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. **2 Thessalonians 2:13–14** But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[2] **Acts 26:18** Open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me. **Ephesians 1:16–18** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints. **Ephesians 2:1–6** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

heart of flesh.[3] He renews their wills and by his almighty power causes them to do what is good. He effectually draws them to Jesus Christ,[4] yet they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.[5]

2. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man nor from any power or agency in him.[6] Being dead in sins and trespasses, he is wholly passive in this until being born again and renewed by the Holy Spirit.[7] He is thus enabled to answer this call and to embrace the

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[3] **Ezekiel 36:26–27** And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

[4] **Deuteronomy 30:6** And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. **Ezekiel 36:27** And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. **Ephesians 1:16–18** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you.

[5] **John 6:44** "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day." **Philippians 2:12–13** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

[6] **2 Timothy 1:8–9** Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began. **Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.

[7] **1 Corinthians 2:14** The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. **Ephesians 2:5** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with

grace offered and conveyed in it. This is by no less a power than that which raised up Christ from the dead.[8]

3. Elect infants dying in infancy[9] are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit,[10] who works when, where, and how he pleases.[11] All elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word are also regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit.[12]

4. Others who are not elect, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word and may have some common operations of the Spirit,[13] but who are not effectually drawn by the Father,

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Christ—by grace you have been saved. **John 5:25** Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. **John 3:3, 5** Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God… Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **John 10:27** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

[8] **Ephesians 1:19–20** And what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.

[9] **2 Samuel 12:23** But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.

[10] **John 3:3, 5–6** Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." …Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

[11] **John 3:8** The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

[12] **Psalm 22:9–10** Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts. On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God.

[13] **Matthew 22:14** For many are called, but few are chosen. **Matthew 13:20–21** As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. **Hebrews 6:4–5** For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened,

will neither come to Christ nor can come to Christ. Therefore they cannot be saved,[14] much less men who do not receive the Christian religion cannot be saved, though they so diligently frame their lives according to the light of nature and the law of whatever religion they profess.[15]

who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come.

[14] **John 6:44–45, 65** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, "And they will all be taught by God." Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me… And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." **1 John 2:24–25** Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.

[15] **Acts 4:12** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. **John 4:22** You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. **John 17:3** And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

13. JUSTIFICATION

1. Those whom God effectually calls, he also freely justifies,[1] not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins and by accounting and accepting them as righteous.[2] This is not for anything done in them or done by them but for Christ's sake alone.[3] God justifies them not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other gospel obedience to them. God justifies them by imputing Christ's active obedience to the whole law and passive obedience in his death, and he does this through faith.[4]

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[1] **Romans 3:23–24** All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. **Romans 8:30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

[2] **Romans 4:5–8** And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." **Ephesians 1:7** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

[3] **1 Corinthians 1:30–31** And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." **Romans 5:17–19** For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

[4] **Philippians 3:8–9** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

This faith they have is not of themselves. It is the gift of God.[5]

2. Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness is the only instrument of justification.[6] Yet it is not alone in the person justified but is always accompanied with all other saving graces. It is not a dead faith but works by love.[7]

3. Christ by his obedience and death fully paid the debt of all those who are justified. By his sacrifice in the blood of his cross in their place, he underwent the penalty due to them and so made a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice on their behalf.[8] Since His obedience and satisfaction were accepted in their stead, their justification is wholly of free grace, for he was given freely by the Father for them, not for anything in them.[9]

Ephesians 2:8–9 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast .

[5] **Ephesians 2:8–9** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

[6] **Romans 3:28** For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

[7] **Galatians 5:6** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love. **James 2:17** So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. **James 2:22** You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works. **James 2:26** For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

[8] **Hebrews 10:14** For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. **1 Peter 1:18–19** You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. **Isaiah 53:5–6** But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

[9] **Romans 8:32** He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? **2 Corinthians 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so

This was so that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.[10]

4. From all eternity God decreed to justify all the elect,[11] and Christ, in the fullness of time, died for their sins and rose again for their justification.[12] Nevertheless, they are not justified personally until the Holy Spirit actually applies Christ to them in due time.[13]

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that in him we might become the righteousness of God. **Romans 5:8** God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

[10] **Romans 3:26** It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. **Ephesians 1:5–7** He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace. **Ephesians 2:4, 5, 7** God… made us alive together with Christ… so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

[11] **Galatians 3:8** And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." **Ephesians 1:4** He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. **1 Peter 1:1–2** Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. **1 Timothy 2:6** [He] gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

[12] **Romans 4:25** [He] was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

[13] **Colossians 1:21–22** And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him. **Titus 3:4–7** But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

5. God continues to forgive the sins of those who are justified,[14] and although they can never fall from the state of justification,[15] yet they may by their sins fall under God's fatherly displeasure.[16] In that condition, they will not usually have the light of his countenance restored to them until they humble themselves, confess their sins, seek pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.[17]

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

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[14] **Matthew 6:12** Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **1 John 1:7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[15] **John 10:28** I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

[16] **Psalm 89:31–33** If they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments, then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes, but I will not remove from him my steadfast love or be false to my faithfulness.

[17] **Psalm 32:5** I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. **Psalm 51:1–12** Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. **Matthew 26:75** And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

believers in the New Testament.[18]

[18] **Genesis 15:6** And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness. **Galatians 3:9** So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. **Romans 4:22–24** That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness." But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord. **Hebrews 11:7** By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

14. ADOPTION

1. In and for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ, God has graciously granted the gift of adoption to all those who are justified.[1] By this, they are numbered with and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God.[2] They have his name put upon them,[3] receive the Spirit of adoption,[4] and have access to the throne of grace with boldness.[5] They are enabled to cry,

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[1] **Ephesians 1:5** He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will. **Galatians 4:4–5** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

[2] **John 1:12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. **Romans 8:17** If [we are] children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

[3] **2 Corinthians 6:18** "I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty." **Revelation 3:12** The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

[4] **Romans 8:15** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

[5] **Hebrews 4:16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. **Ephesians 2:18** For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

"Abba, Father." [6] They are pitied,[7] protected,[8] provided for,[9] and disciplined[10] by him as by a father. They are never cast off[11] but sealed to the day of redemption[12] and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.[13]

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[6] **Galatians 4:6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

[7] **Psalm 103:13** As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.

[8] **Psalm 23:4** Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. **Proverbs 14:26** In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge. **1 Peter 5:7** Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

[9] **Matthew 7:9–11** "Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!"

[10] **Hebrews 12:6** "For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." **Isaiah 54:8–9** In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you," says the LORD, your Redeemer. "This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you.

[11] **Lamentations 3:31** For the Lord will not cast off forever.

[12] **Ephesians 4:30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

[13] **Hebrews 1:14** Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? **Hebrews 6:11–12** And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

15. SANCTIFICATION

1. Those who are united to Christ, effectually called, and regenerated, have a new heart and a new spirit created in them through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection. They are also further sanctified, really and personally,[1] through the same virtue, by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them.[2] The dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed,[3] and its various lusts are more and more weakened and put to death.[4] Those who are united to Christ are more and more enlivened and strengthened in all saving graces[5] so that they practice true holiness, without

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[1] **Acts 20:32** And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. **Romans 6:5–6** For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

[2] **John 17:17** Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. **Ephesians 3:14, 16–19** I bow my knees before the Father… that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. **Colossians 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. **1 Thessalonians 5:21–23** Test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[3] **Romans 6:14** For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

[4] **Galatians 5:24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

[5] **Colossians 1:9, 11** And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding… being strengthened

which no man shall see the Lord.[6]

2. This sanctification is throughout the whole person,[7] yet imperfect in this life. Some remnants of corruption still abide in every part,[8] from which arises a continual and irreconcilable war—the desires of the flesh against the desires of the Spirit and those of the Spirit against those of the flesh.[9]

3. In this war, the remaining corruption may significantly prevail for a time,[10] yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part will overcome.[11] Thus the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, pressing after a heavenly life, in gospel obedience to all the commands which Christ, as Head and King, has prescribed for them in His Word.[12]

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with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy.

[6] **2 Corinthians 7:1** Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. **Hebrews 12:14** Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

[7] **1 Thessalonians 5:23** Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[8] **Romans 7:18, 23** For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out… I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

[9] **Galatians 5:17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **1 Peter 2:11** Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

[10] **Romans 7:23** I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

[11] **Romans 6:14** For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

[12] **Ephesians 4:15–16** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom

the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. **2 Corinthians 3:18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. **2 Corinthians 7:1** Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. **Colossians 3:1–8** If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

16. SAVING FAITH

1. The grace of faith is a work of the Spirit of Christ in the hearts[1] of the elect, by which they are enabled to believe for the saving of their souls. This grace of faith is ordinarily brought about by the ministry of the Word.[2] It is also increased and strengthened by the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper, prayer, and other means appointed by God.[3]

2. By this faith, a Christian believes to be true whatever is revealed in the Word as the authority of God himself,[4] and he perceives an excellency in it above all other writings and all things in the world,[5] for the Word bears forth the glory of God in his attributes, the excellency of Christ in his nature and offices, and the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit in his workings

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[1] **2 Corinthians 4:13** Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak. **Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.

[2] **Romans 10:14** How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? **Romans 10:17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

[3] **Luke 17:5** The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" **1 Peter 2:2** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation. **Acts 20:32** And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

[4] **Acts 24:14** But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets.

[5] **Psalm 19:7–10** The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. **Psalm 119:72** The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

and operations. By this faith, he also acts differently based on what each particular passage contains: obeying the commands,[6] trembling at the warnings,[7] and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come.[8] But the principal acts of saving faith have immediate relation to Christ—accepting, receiving, and resting upon him alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.[9]

3. This faith varies in degree and may be weak or strong.[10] Yet even in the least degree it is different in kind or nature, as is all other saving grace, from the faith and common grace of hypocrites.[11] Therefore, though it may be many times assailed and

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[6] **John 15:14** You are my friends if you do what I command you.

[7] **Isaiah 66:2** But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

[8] **Hebrews 11:13** These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

[9] **John 1:12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. **Acts 16:31** And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." **Galatians 2:20** I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. **Acts 15:11** "But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will."

[10] **Hebrews 5:13–14** Everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. **Matthew 6:30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? **Romans 4:19–20** He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God.

[11] **2 Peter 1:1** Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

weakened, yet it gets the victory,[12] growing up in many people to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ,[13] who is both the author and finisher of our faith.[14]

[12] **Ephesians 6:16** In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. **1 John 5:4–5** For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

[13] **Hebrews 6:11–12** And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. **Colossians 2:1–2** For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ.

[14] **Hebrews 12:1–2** Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

17. REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE AND SALVATION

1. The faith that leads to salvation is also a faith that leads to true repentance. There is no saving faith that does not lead to true repentance and no true repentance that does not spring from saving faith.[1] In their effectual calling, God gives the elect repentance unto life.[2] This includes even those who have lived some time in the state of nature, and served various lusts and pleasures while in it.[3]

2. There is no one who does good and does not sin.[4] Even the best of men may fall into great sins and provocations, through the power and deceitfulness of their corruption dwelling in them, with the prevalence of temptation. But God has, in the covenant of grace, mercifully provided that believers so sinning and falling are renewed through repentance to salvation.[5]

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[1] **Mark 1:15** "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." **James 2:17** So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. **Ephesians 2:8–10** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

[2] **Acts 11:18** When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

[3] **Titus 3:1–5** We ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

[4] **Ecclesiastes 7:20** Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.

[5] **Luke 22:31–32** "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

3. This saving repentance is an evangelical grace[6] by which a person by the Holy Spirit is made aware of the numerous evils of his sin and, by faith in Christ, humbles himself for his sin with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-abhorrence for it,[7] praying for pardon and strength of grace. By the supply of the Spirit, this person aims and endeavors to walk before God in a well-pleasing way in all things.[8]

4. Repentance is to be continued through the whole course of our lives on the account of the body of death and its sinful desires and actions. So it is every man's duty to repent specifically of his particular known sins.[9]

5. In the covenant of grace, God has made full provision through Christ for the preservation of believers to salvation. Although there is no sin so small that it does not deserve damnation,[10] yet

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[6] **Zechariah 12:10** "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn." **Acts 11:18** When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

[7] **Ezekiel 36:31** Then you will remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominations. **2 Corinthians 7:11** For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.

[8] **Psalm 119:6** Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments. **Psalm 119:128** Therefore I consider all your precepts to be right; I hate every false way.

[9] **Luke 19:8** And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." **1 Timothy 1:13** Formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief. **1 Timothy 1:15** The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

[10] **Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

there is no sin so great that it would bring damnation on those who repent.[11] This makes the constant preaching of repentance necessary.

[11] **Isaiah 1:16–18** Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause. "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. **Isaiah 55:7** Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

18. GOOD WORKS

1. Good works are only those which God has commanded in his Holy Word.[1] Works which are without such warrant are devised by men out of blind zeal or on a pretense of good intentions but are not truly good works.[2]

2. These good works done in obedience to God's commandments are the fruits and evidence of true and lively faith.[3] By them, believers manifest their thankfulness,[4] strengthen their assurance,[5] edify their brothers and sisters, adorn the profession

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[1] **Micah 6:8** He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? **Hebrews 13:20–21** Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

[2] **Matthew 15:9** "In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." **Isaiah 29:13** And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men."

[3] **James 2:18** But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **James 2:22** You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works.

[4] **Psalm 116:12–13** What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.

[5] **1 John 2:3** And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. **1 John 2:5** Whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. **2 Peter 1:5–11** For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the

of the gospel,[6] stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God.[7] They are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, that having the fruit which leads to holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.[8]

3. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves but wholly from the Spirit of Christ.[9] To enable them to do good works, an actual influence of the Spirit in addition to his other graces is necessary for believers to will and to work for God's good pleasure.[10] Yet they are not, as a result, to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty without a special motion of the Spirit**,** but they ought to be diligent in stirring up

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more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[6] **Matthew 5:16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

[7] **1 Timothy 6:1** Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. **1 Peter 2:15** For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. **Philippians 1:9–11** And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

[8] **Romans 6:22** But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

[9] **John 15:4–5** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

[10] **2 Corinthians 3:5** Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God. **Philippians 2:13** For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

the grace of God that is in them.[11]

4. Even they, who in their obedience, attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life are far from being able to pay back beyond what they owe or to do more than God requires. For they fall short of much they are duty-bound to do.[12]

5. By our best works, we cannot merit pardon of sin or eternal life at the hand of God. This is due to the great disproportion between them and the glory to come, and the infinite distance between us and God. By these works, we can neither advantage God nor satisfy the debt of our former sins.[13] But when we have done all we can, we have only done our duty and are unprofitable servants. As these works are good they proceed from his Spirit,[14] but as they are produced by us they are defiled and mixed with

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[11] **Philippians 2:12** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. **Hebrews 6:11–12** And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. **Isaiah 64:7** There is no one who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.

[12] **Job 9:2–3** "Truly I know that it is so: But how can a man be in the right before God? If one wished to contend with him, one could not answer him once in a thousand times." **Galatians 5:17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **Luke 17:10** "So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.' "

[13] **Romans 3:20** For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. **Romans 4:6** David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works. **Ephesians 2:8–9** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

[14] **Galatians 5:22–23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

so much weakness and imperfection that they cannot endure the severity of God's punishment.[15]

6. Nevertheless just as the persons of believers are accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him.[16] Their works are not accepted as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unreprovable in God's sight. But God, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, even though it is accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.[17]

7. Although works done by unregenerate men may be things which God commands and of good use to both themselves and others,[18] yet because they do not proceed from a heart purified by faith,[19] nor are done in a right manner according to the

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[15] **Isaiah 64:6** We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. **Psalm 143:2** Enter not into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you.

[16] **Ephesians 1:5–6** He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. **1 Peter 2:5** You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

[17] **Matthew 25:21** "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'" **Hebrews 6:10** For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.

[18] **2 Kings 10:30** And the LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in carrying out what is right in my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel." **1 Kings 21:27** And when Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his flesh and fasted and lay in sackcloth and went about dejectedly. **1 Kings 21:29** "Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; but in his son's days I will bring the disaster upon his house."

[19] **Genesis 4:5** For Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. **Hebrews 11:4** By faith Abel offered to God a

Word,[20] nor to a right end, to the glory of God,[21] they are therefore sinful and cannot please God. Nor can they make a man ready to receive grace from God,[22] and yet the neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing to God.

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more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. **Hebrews 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

[20] **1 Corinthians 13:1** If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

[21] **Matthew 6:2** "Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward." **Matthew 6:5** "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward."

[22] **Amos 5:21–22** "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them." **Romans 9:16** So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. **Titus 3:5** He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

19. THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

1. Those whom God has accepted in the Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, and given the precious faith of his elect, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace but will certainly persevere to the end. They are eternally saved, for the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable.[1] Consequently, he continues to sustain and nourish their faith, as well as their repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit which incline to immortality.[2] Though many storms and floods arise and beat against them, these shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock on which they are fastened by faith. Notwithstanding, through unbelief and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of the light and love of God may for a time be clouded and obscured from them,[3] yet he is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God for salvation. There they shall enjoy their purchased possession, having been engraved upon the palms of his hands and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.[4]

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[1] **Romans 11:29** For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

[2] **John 10:28–29** I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. **Philippians 1:6** And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. **2 Timothy 2:19** But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." **1 John 2:19** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

[3] **Psalm 89:31–32** If they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments, then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes. **1 Corinthians 11:32** But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

[4] **Malachi 3:6** "For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed."

2. This perseverance of the saints depends not on their own free will but on the immutability of the decree of election,[5] which flows from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father. Their perseverance likewise depends on the oath of God[6] and the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ and union with him,[7] on the abiding of his Spirit, the seed of God within them,[8] and the nature of the covenant of grace.[9] From all of these the certainty and infallibility of this perseverance also arises.

3. Christians may fall into grievous sin and continue for a time in it,[10] through the temptation of Satan and of the world, the

[5] **Romans 8:30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. **Romans 9:11–12** Though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." **Romans 9:16** So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.

[6] **Hebrews 6:17–18** So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

[7] **Romans 5:9–10** Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. **John 14:19** Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

[8] **1 John 3:9** No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.

[9] **Jeremiah 32:40** I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.

[10] **Matthew 26:70** But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you mean." **Matthew 26:72** And again he denied it with an oath: "I do not know the man." **Matthew 26:74** Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the rooster crowed.

prevalence of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation. Through such sin they incur God's displeasure and grieve his Holy Spirit,[11] come to have their graces and comforts impaired,[12] have their hearts hardened and their consciences wounded,[13] hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.[14] Despite all this, they will renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end.[15]

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[11] **Isaiah 64:5** You meet him who joyfully works righteousness, those who remember you in your ways. Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved? **Isaiah 64:9** Be not so terribly angry, O LORD, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all your people. **Ephesians 4:30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

[12] **Psalm 51:10** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. **Psalm 51:12** Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

[13] **Psalm 32:3–4** For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

[14] **2 Samuel 12:14** "Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die."

[15] **Luke 22:32** "I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." **Luke 22:61–62** And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

20. THE ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND SALVATION

1. Although false professors and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and fleshly presumptions of being in the favor of God and state of salvation, their hope will perish.[1] Yet those who 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 the state of grace.[2] They can rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, and this hope will never make them ashamed.[3]

2. This certainty is not mere conjecture or probable persuasion grounded upon a fallible hope, but an infallible assurance of faith[4] founded on the blood and righteousness of Christ revealed

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[1] **Job 8:13–14** Such are the paths of all who forget God; the hope of the godless shall perish. His confidence is severed, and his trust is a spider's web. **Matthew 7:22–23** "On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

[2] **1 John 2:3** And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. **1 John 3:14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. **1 John 3:18–19** Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth. By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him. **1 John 3:21** Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God. **1 John 3:24** Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us. **1 John 5:13** I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

[3] **Romans 5:2** Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **Romans 5:5** Hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

[4] **Hebrews 6:11** And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end. **Hebrews 6:19** We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain.

in the Gospel.[5] It is also based on the inward evidence of those graces of the Spirit to which the promises are made,[6] and on the testimony of the Spirit of adoption, witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God.[7] It is a fruit of the Spirit, keeping the heart both humble and holy.[8]

3. This infallible assurance is not an essential aspect of faith, but a true believer may wait long and battle with many difficulties before he is partaker of it.[9] Yet being enabled by the Spirit to

[5] **Hebrews 6:17–18** So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

[6] **2 Peter 1:4–5** He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge. **2 Peter 1:10–11** Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[7] **Romans 8:15–16** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

[8] **1 John 3:1–3** See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

[9] **Isaiah 50:10** Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of his servant? Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. **Psalm 88:16** Your wrath has swept over me; your dreadful assaults destroy me. **Psalm 77:1–12** I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and he will hear me. In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying; my soul refuses to be comforted. When I remember God, I moan; when I meditate, my spirit faints. *Selah* You hold my eyelids open; I am so

know the things which are freely given to him by God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of means, attain this assurance.[10] Therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure, and as a result, his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, which are the proper fruits of this assurance.[11] So this assurance is far from inclining men to licentiousness.[12]

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troubled that I cannot speak. I consider the days of old, the years long ago. I said, "Let me remember my song in the night; let me meditate in my heart." Then my spirit made a diligent search: "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" *Selah* Then I said, "I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High." I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds.

[10] **1 John 4:13** By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. **Hebrews 6:11–12** And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

[11] **Romans 5:1–2** Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **Romans 5:5** Hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. **Romans 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. **Psalm 119:32** I will run in the way of your commandments when you enlarge my heart!

[12] **Romans 6:1–2** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? **Titus 2:11–14** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

4. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation shaken, diminished, and interrupted in various ways. This can happen by negligence in preserving it,[13] by falling into some special sin which wounds the conscience and grieves the Spirit,[14] by some sudden or vehement temptation,[15] or by God's withdrawing the light of his countenance allowing even those who fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light.[16] Yet they are never destitute of the seed of God[17] and life of faith,[18] or the love of Christ and the brethren, or the sincerity of heart and conscience of their duty. By the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may in due time be revived.[19] In the meantime, by the Spirit, they are

[13] **Revelation 2:4–5** But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

[14] **Psalm 51:8** Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. **Psalm 51:12** Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. **Psalm 51:14** Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

[15] **Psalm 116:11** I said in my alarm, "All mankind are liars." **Psalm 77:7–8** "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? **Psalm 31:22** I had said in my alarm, "I am cut off from your sight." But you heard the voice of my pleas for mercy when I cried to you for help.

[16] **Psalm 30:7** By your favor, O LORD, you made my mountain stand strong; you hid your face; I was dismayed.

[17] **1 John 3:9** No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.

[18] **Luke 22:32** "I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

[19] **Psalm 42:5** Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation. **Psalm 42:11** Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

preserved from utter despair.[20]

[20] **Lamentations 3:26–31** It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone in silence when it is laid on him; let him put his mouth in the dust— there may yet be hope; let him give his cheek to the one who strikes, and let him be filled with insults. For the Lord will not cast off forever.

21. THE LAW OF GOD [1]

1. God gave to Adam a law of universal obedience written in his heart and a particular command not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.[2] By this, God bound him and all his future generations to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience.[3] God promised life upon the fulfilling of it,[4] threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.[5]

2. The same law that was first written in the heart of man continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall,[6] and it was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai in ten commandments and written in two tables. The first four contain our duty toward

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[1] Trinity Fellowship Churches allows elders to take a personal exception on the understanding of the tripartite law, subject to approval by the region.

[2] **Genesis 1:27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. **Ecclesiastes 7:29** See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.

[3] **Romans 10:5** For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

[4] **Genesis 2:9** And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. **Genesis 2:17** "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

[5] **Genesis 2:17** "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." **Galatians 3:10** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." **Galatians 3:12** But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them."

[6] **Romans 2:14–15** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.

God, and the other six contain our duty to man.[7]

3. Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel ceremonial laws. These ceremonial laws contain several typical ordinances, some of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits;[8] and some hold forth various instructions of moral duties.[9] All these ceremonial laws were appointed only until the time of reformation and are now abrogated and taken away by Jesus Christ. He is the true Messiah and only lawgiver and was granted power from the Father for this purpose.[10]

4. To Israel, God also gave various judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, and now do not bind any by virtue of that institution. Yet, the general equity within these

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[7] **Deuteronomy 10:4** And he wrote on the tablets, in the same writing as before, the Ten Commandments that the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. And the LORD gave them to me.

[8] **Hebrews 10:1** For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. **Colossians 2:17** These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

[9] **1 Corinthians 5:7** Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

[10] **Colossians 2:13–17** And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. **Ephesians 2:14–16** For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

laws retains a moral component. [11]

5. The moral law forever binds all to its obedience,[12] including those who are justified as well as others. This obligation is not only in regard to the content of the law but also with respect to the authority of God the Creator, who gave it.[13] Christ in the Gospel does not in any way dissolve but much strengthens this obligation.[14]

6. Although true believers are not under the law as a covenant

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[11] **1 Corinthians 9:8–10** Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not certainly speak for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop.

[12] **Romans 13:8–10** Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. **James 2:8** If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. **James 2:10–12** For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.

[13] **James 2:10–11** For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

[14] **Matthew 5:17–19** "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. **Romans 3:31** Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

of works to be justified or condemned,[15] yet it is of great use to believers as well as to others as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty. It directs and binds them to walk accordingly. Through it, they also discover the sinful pollutions of their natures, hearts, and lives, and so examining themselves as a result, they may come to the further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin.[16] Together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ and the perfection of his obedience, it is likewise of use to the regenerate to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin. The law's threat of punishment serves to show what their sins deserve and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, even though they are freed from the curse and its full severity.[17] The promises of it likewise

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[15] **Romans 6:14** For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. **Galatians 2:16** A person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. **Romans 8:1** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. **Romans 10:4** For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

[16] **Romans 3:20** For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. **Romans 7:7** What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."

[17] **Hebrews 12:5–11** And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

show them God's approval of obedience and what blessings they may expect upon keeping it, though these blessings are not due to them by the law as a covenant of works. Men doing good and refraining from evil, because the law encourages one and deters from the other, is not evidence of them being under the law and not under grace.[18]

7. These uses of the law are not contrary to the grace of the Gospel but sweetly comply with it.[19] The Spirit of Christ subdues and enables the will of man to freely and cheerfully do that which the will of God, revealed in the law, requires to be done.[20]

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[18] **Romans 6:12–14** Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. **1 Peter 3:8–13** Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?

[19] **Galatians 3:21** Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.

[20] **Ezekiel 36:27** And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. **Romans 8:2–5** For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

22. THE GOSPEL AND THE EXTENT OF ITS GRACE

1. The covenant of works was broken by sin and was therefore unable to give life. But God was pleased to give forth the promise of Christ, the seed of the woman, as the means of calling the elect and producing faith and repentance in them.[1] In this promise, the substance of the gospel was revealed and became effectual for the conversion and salvation of sinners.[2]

2. This promise of Christ and salvation by him are revealed only by the Word of God.[3] The works of creation or providence with the light of nature alone do not reveal Christ or his grace, even in a general or obscure way.[4] Even less are men, who are destitute of the revelation of him by the promise or gospel, enabled as a result to attain saving faith or repentance.[5]

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[1] **Genesis 3:15** "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

[2] **Revelation 13:8** All who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

[3] **Romans 1:17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

[4] **Romans 10:14–17** How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

[5] **Proverbs 29:18** Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law. **Isaiah 25:7** And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. **Isaiah 60:2–3** For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

3. The revelation of the gospel to sinners has been made at various times and to varying degrees with the addition of promises and commandments for the obedience required in it. The particulars of this revelation and the nations and persons to whom it is granted are by the sovereign will and good pleasure of God alone.[6] This revelation does not come to a nation because it demonstrates some improvement of men's natural abilities or a common light received without the gospel. None have ever done this nor can do so.[7] Therefore, in every age, the preaching of the

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[6] **Psalm 147:20** He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his rules. Praise the LORD! **Acts 16:7** And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

[7] **Romans 1:18–32** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

gospel has been granted to persons and nations, to a greater or lesser extent, with great variety, according to the counsel of the will of God.

4. The gospel is the only outward means of revealing Christ and saving grace and is, as such, abundantly sufficient for it. However, men who are dead in trespasses may be born again, quickened or regenerated, only if there is an effectual, irresistible work of the Holy Spirit upon the whole soul, producing in them a new spiritual life.[8] Without this, no other means will effect their conversion to God.[9]

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[8] **Psalm 110:3** Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. **1 Corinthians 2:14** The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. **Ephesians 1:16, 18–20** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers… that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.

[9] **John 6:44** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. **2 Corinthians 4:4–6** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

23. CHRISTIAN LIBERTY AND LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE

1. The liberty which Christ has purchased for believers under the gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the rigor and curse of the law,[1] and in their being delivered from this present evil world,[2] bondage to Satan,[3] and dominion of sin,[4] from the evil of afflictions,[5] the fear and sting of death, the victory of the grave,[6] and everlasting damnation.[7] It also consists in their free access to God and

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[1] **Galatians 3:13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree."

[2] **Galatians 1:3–4** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

[3] **Acts 26:16, 18** "I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you… to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

[4] **Romans 8:2–3** For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh. **Romans 6:1–2** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

[5] **Romans 8:28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

[6] **1 Corinthians 15:54–57** When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[7] **2 Thessalonians 1:9–10** They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

their yielding obedience to him, not out of slavish fear,[8] but from a childlike love and a willing mind.[9] The substance of all these liberties was common to believers under the law,[10] but under the New Testament the liberty of Christians is further enlarged in their freedom from the yoke of a ceremonial law to which the Old Testament saints were subjected, in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace, and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God than believers under the law ordinarily partook of.[11]

2. God alone is Lord of the conscience[12] and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in any way contrary to his word or not contained in it.[13] To believe such

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[8] **Romans 8:15** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

[9] **Luke 1:68, 72, 74–75** "He has visited and redeemed his people… to remember his holy covenant… that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days." **1 John 4:18** There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

[10] **Galatians 3:9** So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. **Galatians 3:13, 14** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us… so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

[11] **John 7:38–39** "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' " Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. **Hebrews 10:19–21** Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God.

[12] **James 4:12** There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor? **Romans 14:4** Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

[13] **Acts 4:19** But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge."

doctrines or obey such commands out of conscience is to betray true liberty of conscience.[14] This requiring of an implicit faith, an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason also.[15]

3. However, those who practice any sin or cherish any sinful lust on the pretense of Christian liberty pervert the main design of the grace of the gospel to their own destruction.[16] They wholly destroy the goal of Christian liberty, which is this: having been delivered out of the hands of all our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our lives.[17]

Acts 4:29 "And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness." **1 Corinthians 7:23** You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men. **Matthew 15:9** "In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'"

[14] **Colossians 2:20–23** If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— "Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch" (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

[15] **1 Corinthians 3:5** What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. **2 Corinthians 1:24** Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.

[16] **Romans 6:1–2** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

[17] **Galatians 5:13** For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **2 Peter 2:18, 21** For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error… For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.

24. RELIGIOUS WORSHIP, THE SABBATH, AND THE LORD'S DAY

1. The light of nature shows that there is a God who has lordship and sovereignty over all. It shows that he is just, good, and does good to all and is, therefore, to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart and all the soul and with all the might.[1] But the acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by him alone,[2] and is so limited by his own revealed will that he may not be worshiped according to the imagination and devices of men nor the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.[3]

2. Religious worship is to be given to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to him alone.[4] Worship should not be given to

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[1] **Jeremiah 10:7** Who would not fear you, O King of the nations? For this is your due; for among all the wise ones of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is none like you. **Mark 12:33** And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

[2] **Deuteronomy 12:32** "Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it."

[3] **Exodus 20:4–6** "You shall not make for yourself a carved 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. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

[4] **Matthew 4:9–10** And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" **John 5:22–23** For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. **Matthew 28:19 "**Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

angels, saints, or any other creatures.[5] Since the fall, worship should not be given without a mediator[6] nor in the mediation of any other but Christ alone.[7]

3. Prayer, with thanksgiving, is one part of worship and is required of all men by God.[8] But so it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son,[9] by the help of the Spirit,[10] and according to his will.[11] It is also to be made with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance.[12]

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[5] **Romans 1:25** They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. **Colossians 2:18** Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind. **Revelation 19:10** Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God." For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

[6] **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

[7] **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

[8] **Psalm 95:1–7** Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. **Psalm 65:2** O you who hear prayer, to you shall all flesh come.

[9] **John 14:13–14** Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

[10] **Romans 8:26** Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

[11] **1 John 5:14** And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

[12] **Hebrews 12:28** Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom

4. Prayer is to be made for things lawful and for all sorts of men living or that will live in the future.[13] But prayer should not be made for the dead[14] or for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin that leads to death.[15]

5. The reading of the Scriptures,[16] preaching, and hearing the Word of God,[17] teaching and admonishing one another in

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that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe. **James 1:6–7** But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord. **James 5:16** Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. **Mark 11:24** Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18** Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

[13] **1 Timothy 2:1–2** First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. **2 Samuel 7:29** "Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

[14] **2 Samuel 12:21–23** Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive; but when the child died, you arose and ate food." He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, 'Who knows whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."

[15] **1 John 5:16** If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that.

[16] **1 Timothy 4:13** Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.

[17] **2 Timothy 4:2** preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. **Luke 8:18** "Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has

psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in our hearts to the Lord,[18] as well as the administration of baptism[19] and the Lord's supper,[20] the giving of tithes and offerings,[21] expressions of fellowship and Christian affection,[22] stirring up one another to love and good works,[23] and the exercise of spiritual gifts[24] are all parts of the religious worship of God.

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will be taken away."

[18] **Colossians 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. **Ephesians 5:18–19** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart.

[19] **Matthew 28:19–20** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

[20] **1 Corinthians 11:23–25** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

[21] **1 Corinthians 16:1–2** Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.

[22] **1 Corinthians 16:20** All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

[23] **Hebrews 10:24–25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

[24] **1 Corinthians 14:26–33** What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one

These are to be performed in obedience to him with understanding, faith, reverence, and godly fear. Moreover, solemn humbling with fastings[25] and thanksgivings on special occasions ought to be used in a holy and religious manner.[26]

6. Under the gospel, neither prayer nor any other part of religious worship is now restricted to or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed or towards which it is directed. But God is to be worshiped everywhere in spirit and in truth,[27]

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by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints.

[25] **Esther 4:16** "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish." **Joel 2:12** "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning."

[26] **Exodus 15:1–2** Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying, "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him." **Psalm 107:1–3** Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. **Ephesians 5:18–20** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[27] **John 4:21, 23** Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father… But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him." **Malachi 1:11** For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. **1 Timothy 2:8** I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling.

in private families[28] daily,[29] and in secret, each one by himself,[30] and more so solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly nor willfully to be neglected or forsaken when God by his word or providence calls his people to them.[31]

7. On the seventh day of Creation, our God rested from all his labor[32] and bids us to receive this Sabbath rest as a gift, for the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.[33] The Sabbath law was then commanded in the Decalogue for Israel to work six days and rest on the seventh.[34] The New Testament promises a Sabbath rest that remains for the people of God.[35] We

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[28] **Acts 10:1–2** At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.

[29] **Matthew 6:11** Give us this day our daily bread. **Psalm 55:17** Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he hears my voice.

[30] **Matthew 6:6** But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

[31] **Hebrews 10:24–25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. **Acts 2:42** And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

[32] **Genesis 2:2–3** And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

[33] **Mark 2:27** And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

[34] **Exodus 20:8–11** "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."

[35] **Hebrews 4:9** So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people

should therefore strive to enter that rest by hearing his voice, not hardening our hearts, resting from our labors, and putting our faith and trust in Jesus, our true rest, rather than striving in our flesh.[36]

8. In the New Testament, the church began to gather on the first day of the week (Sunday) for its corporate worship. This is commonly referred to as "the Lord's Day" in honor of the resurrection of our Savior. It is commendable to reserve this day for corporate and private worship.[37]

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of God.

[36] **Hebrews 4:7** Again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." **Hebrews 3:10–11** Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.' As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.'"

[37] **Hebrews 10:24–25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. **Acts 20:7** On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. **Revelation 1:10** I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.

25. OATHS AND VOWS

1. An oath is a part of religious worship,[1] in which a person swearing in truth, righteousness, and judgment, solemnly calls God to witness what he promises[2] and to judge him according to the truth or falseness of it.[3]

2. The name of God is the only name by which men ought to swear. It is to be used with all holy fear and reverence. 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.[4] Yet, in matters of great significance an oath is warranted by the word of God,[5] under the New Testament as well as under the

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[1] **Romans 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

[2] **Exodus 20:7** "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain." **Deuteronomy 10:20** "You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear." **Jeremiah 4:2** "If you swear, 'As the LORD lives,' in truth, in justice, and in righteousness, then nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory."

[3] **2 Chronicles 6:22–23** "If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath and comes and swears his oath before your altar in this house, then hear from heaven and act and judge your servants, repaying the guilty by bringing his conduct on his own head, and vindicating the righteous by rewarding him according to his righteousness."

[4] **Matthew 5:34–37 "**But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil." **James 5:12** But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "yes" be yes and your "no" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

[5] **Hebrews 6:16** For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. **2 Corinthians 1:23** I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth.

Old. So an oath being imposed by lawful authority in such matters ought to be taken.[6]

3. Whoever takes an oath warranted by the Word of God, should duly consider the weightiness of so solemn an act and so affirm nothing but what he knows to be the truth. For by rash, false, and vain oaths, the Lord is profaned, and for them this land mourns.[7]

4. An oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words, without equivocation or mental reservation.[8]

[6] **Nehemiah 13:25** And I confronted them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair. And I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves."

[7] **Leviticus 19:12** "You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD." **Jeremiah 23:10** The land is full of adulterers; because of the curse the land mourns, and the pastures of the wilderness are dried up. Their course is evil, and their might is not right.

[8] **Psalm 24:4** He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

5. A vow, which is not to be made to any creature, but to God alone, is to be made and performed with all religious care and faithfulness.[9] However, Roman Catholic monastic vows of perpetual single life,[10] professed poverty,[11] 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.[12]

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[9] **Psalm 76:11** Make your vows to the LORD your God and perform them; let all around him bring gifts to him who is to be feared. **Genesis 28:20–22** Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you."

[10] **1 Corinthians 7:2** But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. **1 Corinthians 7:9** But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

[11] **Ephesians 4:28** Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

[12] **Matthew 19:11–12** But he said to them, "Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it."

26. CIVIL OFFICERS

1. God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, has ordained civil officers to be under him and over the people for his own glory and the public good. To this end, he has armed them with the power of the sword for defense and encouragement of them that do good and for the punishment of evildoers.[1]

2. It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute civil offices when called to them. In the management of them, they should especially maintain justice and peace[2] according to the wholesome laws of each nation and commonwealth. They may, therefore, lawfully, under the New Testament, wage war on just and necessary occasions.[3]

3. Civil officers are instituted by God for the aforementioned ends. We should therefore be subject to them in all lawful things commanded by them in the Lord, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.[4] We should make supplica-

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[1] **Romans 13:1–4** Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

[2] **2 Samuel 23:3** The God of Israel has spoken; the Rock of Israel has said to me: When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God. **Psalm 82:3–4** "Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

[3] **Luke 3:14** Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages."

[4] **Romans 13:5–7** Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this

tions and prayers for civil leaders and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.[5]

very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. **1 Peter 2:17** Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

[5] **1 Timothy 2:1–2** First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

27. MARRIAGE

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

2. God instituted marriage as a one-flesh union between one man and one woman.[2] All other attempts at sexual unions are illegitimate and contrary to God's good design. Within marriage, husbands are called to exercise loving headship in imitation of Christ and his love for the church, and wives are called to exercise respectful submission in imitation of the church in relation to Christ.[3] Those who are single are called to loving friendships

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[1] **Genesis 2:24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **Malachi 2:15** Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. **Matthew 19:5–6** "'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

[2] **Genesis 2:18–24** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

[3] **Ephesians 5:22–33** Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and

and dedicated service within the body of Christ.[4]

3. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increase of mankind with children, and for the prevention of sexual immorality.[5]

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gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

[4] **1 Corinthians 7:25–35** Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. I think that in view of the present distress it is good for a person to remain as he is. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman marries, she has not sinned. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that. This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away. I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.

[5] **Genesis 2:18** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **Genesis 1:28** And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish

4. It is lawful for both Christians and non-Christians to marry, so long as they are able to enter that union voluntarily in the right state of mind.[6] Yet it is the duty of Christians to marry in the Lord.[7] Therefore, those who profess the true religion should not marry unbelievers or idolaters. Neither should those who are Christian be unequally yoked by marrying false professors who are wicked in their life or maintain damnable heresy.[8]

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of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." **1 Corinthians 7:2** But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. **1 Corinthians 7:9** But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

[6] **Hebrews 13:4** Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. **1 Timothy 4:1–3** Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

[7] **1 Corinthians 7:39** A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

[8] **Nehemiah 13:25–27** And I confronted them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair. And I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. Did not Solomon king of Israel sin on account of such women? Among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless, foreign women made even him to sin. Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil and act treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women?"

5. Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of family relation forbidden in the Word.[9] Nor can such incestuous marriages ever

[9] **Leviticus 18** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the LORD your God. You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the LORD. "None of you shall approach any one of his close relatives to uncover nakedness. I am the LORD. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is your father's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether brought up in the family or in another home. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your son's daughter or of your daughter's daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, brought up in your father's family, since she is your sister. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's relative. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's relative. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife, you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and of her daughter, and you shall not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are relatives; it is depravity. And you shall not take a woman as a rival wife to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive. "You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. And you shall not lie sexually with your neighbor's wife and so make yourself unclean with her. You shall not give any of your children to offer them to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. And you shall not lie with any animal and so make yourself unclean with it, neither shall any woman give herself to an animal to lie with it: it is perversion. "Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, and the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniqui-

be made lawful by any law of man or consent of parties, which would allow those persons to live together as man and wife.[10]

ty, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. But you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you (for the people of the land, who were before you, did all of these abominations, so that the land became unclean), lest the land vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation that was before you. For everyone who does any of these abominations, the persons who do them shall be cut off from among their people. So keep my charge never to practice any of these abominable customs that were practiced before you, and never to make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God."

[10] **Mark 6:18** For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

[1] **Corinthians 5:1** It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife.

28. THE CHURCH

1. The catholic or universal church may be called invisible in terms of the internal work of the Spirit. The universal church consists of the whole number of the elect from the past, present, and future. They will be gathered into one, under Christ, its head. The church is the spouse, the body, and the fullness of him who fills all in all.[1]

2. All persons throughout the world who profess faith in the gospel and practice obedience to God by Christ according to it, who have not destroyed their own profession by any foundational errors or unholiness, are and may be called visible saints.[2] Individual congregations ought to be composed of those who profess such faith.[3]

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[1] **Hebrews 12:22–23** But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect. **Colossians 1:18** He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. **Ephesians 1:9–10** [God is] making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth. **Ephesians 1:22–23** And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. **Ephesians 5:23** For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. **Ephesians 5:27** So that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. **Ephesians 5:32** This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

[2] **1 Corinthians 1:2** To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours. **Acts 11:26** When he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

[3] **Romans 1:7** To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be

3. The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error.[4] Some have so degenerated so as to become no churches of

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saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Ephesians 1:20–22** He raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church.

[4] **1 Corinthians 5** It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you." **Revelation 2:2–6** "'I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.'" **Revelation 2:13–16** "'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where

Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth. **Revelation 2:19–25** "'I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. Only hold fast what you have until I come. **Revelation 3:1–5** "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: 'The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. "'I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.'" **Revelation 3:8–11** "'I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.'" **Revelation 3:15–21** "'I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of

Christ but synagogues of Satan.[5] Nevertheless, Christ has always had and ever will have a kingdom in this world until its end, a kingdom of those who believe in him and profess his name.[6]

4. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. By the Father's appointment, all authority is invested in him in a supreme and sovereign manner for the calling, institution, order, and government of the church.[7]

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my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.'"

[5] **Revelation 2:9** "I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan." **Revelation 3:9** "Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you." **2 Thessalonians 2:11–12** Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

[6] **Revelation 18:2** And he called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast." **Matthew 16:18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **Psalm 72:17** May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in him, all nations call him blessed! **Psalm 102:28** The children of your servants shall dwell secure; their offspring shall be established before you. **Revelation 12:17** Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

[7] **Colossians 1:18** He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be

5. The Lord Jesus, in the execution of this power with which he is so entrusted, calls those who are given to him by his Father[8] out of the world to himself, through the ministry of his word, by his Spirit. He calls them, that they may walk before him in all the ways of obedience, which he prescribes to them in his word.[9] He commands those thus called to walk together in particular communities, or churches, for their mutual edification and the proper execution of public worship, which he requires of them in the world.[10]

6. The members of these churches are saints by calling, visibly demonstrating and evidencing (in and by their profession and

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preeminent. **Matthew 28:18–20** Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **Ephesians 4:11–12** He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

[8] **John 10:16** I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. **John 12:32** "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

[9] **Matthew 28:19–20** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

[10] **Matthew 18:15–20** "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

walking) their obedience to the call of Christ.[11] They willingly consent to walk together, according to the appointment of Christ, giving themselves up to the Lord and one to another by the will of God, in professed subjection to the ordinances of the Gospel.[12]

7. To each of these churches thus gathered, according to the mind of Christ declared in his word, he has given power and authority. This power and authority is necessary to carry out in good order the worship and discipline God has instituted for them to observe. Along with this power and authority, God gave commands and rules for the proper and right exerting and executing of it.[13]

8. A particular church, gathered and completely organized ac-

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[11] **Romans 1:7** To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **1 Corinthians 1:2** To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.

[12] **Acts 2:41–42** Those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. **Acts 5:13–14** None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women. **2 Corinthians 9:13** By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others.

[13] **Matthew 18:17–18** If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. **1 Corinthians 5:4–5** When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. **1 Corinthians 5:13** God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you." **2 Corinthians 2:6–8** For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him.

cording to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members. The officers appointed by Christ are to be chosen and set apart by the church (called and gathered) for the administration of the sacraments and execution of power or duty to which he entrusts or calls them. The two offices of elder (also called overseer and pastor) and deacon continue to the end of the world.[14] For the health of the particular church and from scriptural examples, it is ideal that there is a plurality of qualified overseers or elders.[15] While not every church is able to have a plurality of overseers or elders, each local church should strive toward the ideal.

9. The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person, fitted and gifted by the Holy Spirit, to the office of elder in a church, is that he be affirmed by the church itself.[16] He is to be solemnly set apart by prayer with the laying on of hands by the eldership of the church, if the church already has elders.[17] Deacons should be likewise affirmed by the church and set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands.[18]

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[14] **Acts 20:17** Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. **Acts 20:28** Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. **Philippians 1:1** Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons.

[15] **Acts 6:6** These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. **1 Timothy 4:14** Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.

[16] **Acts 14:23** When they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

[17] **1 Timothy 4:14** Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.

[18] **Acts 6:3–6** "Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a pros-

10. The work of pastors is constantly to attend to the service of Christ in his churches in the ministry of the word and prayer, watching over their souls as those who must give an account to him.[19] Therefore, it is incumbent on the churches to whom they minister, not only to give them all due respect, but also to share with them from all their good things according to their ability.[20] This is so that the pastors may have a comfortable supply without being entangled in secular affairs[21] and may also be capable of exercising hospitality towards others.[22] Such provision is required by the law of nature and by the express order of our

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elyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. **1 Timothy 3:1–8** The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.

[19] **Acts 6:4** "We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." **Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

[20] **1 Timothy 5:17–18** Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages." **Galatians 6:6–7** Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

[21] **2 Timothy 2:4** No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.

[22] **1 Timothy 3:2** Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.

Lord Jesus, who has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should earn their living by the Gospel.[23]

11. It is essential that the pastors of the churches preach the word as a function of their office, but the work of preaching is not limited to pastors only. Other men gifted and fitted by the Holy Spirit and approved and called by the church may and ought to preach.[24]

12. All believers are bound to join themselves to particular churches when and where they have the opportunity, so that all who are admitted to the privileges of a church are also under

[23] **1 Corinthians 9:6–14** Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not certainly speak for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop. If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

[24] **Acts 11:19–21** Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. **1 Peter 4:10–11** As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

its censures and government, according to the rule of Christ.[25]

13. If any offense is taken by church members and they have performed their duty required of them toward the person who offended them, they should not disturb any church order or remove themselves from the assemblies of the church or administration of any sacraments because of the account of such offense at any of their fellow members. Instead, they are to wait upon Christ in the further actions of the church.[26]

14. Each church and all the members of it are bound to pray continually for the good and prosperity of all the churches of Christ[27] in all places and upon all occasions to further it. Everyone within the bounds of their places and callings are to exercise their gifts and graces for the benefit of every church. Churches planted by the providence of God, as they enjoy opportunity and advantage for it, should hold fellowship among themselves, for

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[25] **1 Thessalonians 5:14** We urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. **2 Thessalonians 3:6** Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. **2 Thessalonians 3:14–15** If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

[26] **Matthew 18:15–17** "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." **Ephesians 4:1–3** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

[27] **Ephesians 6:18** [Pray] at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. **Psalm 122:6** Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! "May they be secure who love you!"

their peace, increase of love, and mutual edification.[28]

15. The unity of the Church as a single body with Christ as its head should be manifest in partnership. Therefore, it is appropriate for particular churches to unite with other churches for fellowship, accountability, and cooperation in mission and training.[29]

16. The exemplary council of the early church in Jerusalem commends the regular gathering of the elders of churches in partnership for various purposes.[30]

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[28] **Romans 16:1–2** I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well. **3 John 7–10** For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son.

[29] **Ephesians 1:22–23** He put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. **1 Corinthians 12:20** As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. **1 Timothy 3:15** If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. **Romans 8:29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. **Ephesians 2:22** In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

[30] **Acts 15:2** And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. **Acts 15:4** When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them. **Acts 15:6–7** The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter. And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe." **Acts 15:22–27** Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church,

17. Such partnerships are voluntary and are thus established by the mutual consent of the particular churches. The authority of these assemblies shall be such as is agreed upon by the churches through their ordained elders and shall pertain to such things as ordination, the discipline of elders, appeals for church discipline, and shared participation in mission.

to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers, with the following letter: "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions, it has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth.

29. THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

1. All saints are united to Jesus Christ, their head, by his Spirit and faith. They are not made one person with him but do have fellowship with him in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory.[1] They are united to one another in love. They have communion in each other's gifts and graces[2] and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, in an orderly way, as to bring about to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.[3]

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[1] **1 John 1:3** that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. **John 1:16** For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. **Philippians 3:10** That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death. **Romans 6:5–6** If we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

[2] **Ephesians 4:15–16** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. **1 Corinthians 12:7** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. **1 Corinthians 3:21–23** So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

[3] **1 Thessalonians 5:11** Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. **1 Thessalonians 5:14** And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. **Romans 1:12** That is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. **1 John 3:17–18** If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth. **Galatians 6:10** As we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

2. Saints by profession are bound to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God and in performing such other spiritual services as to care for their mutual edification.[4] They are also to aid each other in outward things according to their various abilities and necessities.[5] This communion, according to the rule of the gospel, is to be extended to all the household of faith, even all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, but especially in the relationships within their families[6] or churches[7] of which they are a part, as

[4] **Hebrews 10:24–25** Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. **Hebrews 3:12–13** Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

[5] **Acts 11:29–30** So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

[6] **Ephesians 6:4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

[7] **1 Corinthians 12:14–27** For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

God offers opportunity. Nevertheless, their communion with others as saints does not take away or infringe the title or propriety which each man has in his goods and possessions. [8]

[8] **Acts 5:4** While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." **Ephesians 4:28** Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

30. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only two sacraments that are sovereign institutions explicitly appointed by the Lord Jesus, the only lawgiver, to be continued in his church until he returns.[1]

2. These holy ordinances are practiced under the oversight of the elders of the church, according to the commission of Christ.[2]

3. As sacraments, the Lord's Supper and baptism are visible signs and seals of an invisible grace that comes from the Lord to the recipient of the sign. Such invisible grace comes through faith by the power of the Holy Spirit.[3]

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[1] **Matthew 28:19–20** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **1 Corinthians 11:26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

[2] **1 Timothy 5:17** Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

[3] **Ephesians 1:13–14** In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. **Romans 4:9–12** Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. **1 Corinthians 11:23–26** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in

4. Due to human frailty these signs will at times be given and received inappropriately, but their meaning remains unchanged. [4]

my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

[4] **1 Corinthians 11:27–30** Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.

31. BAPTISM

1. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament which is ordained by Jesus Christ. To the participant, baptism is a sign of his fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection, being grafted into Christ,[1] remission of sins,[2] and submission to God's lordship to live and walk in newness of life through Jesus Christ.[3]

2. Those who profess repentance towards God, faith in him, and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ are the only proper subjects of this sacrament.[4]

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[1] **Romans 6:3–5** Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. **Colossians 2:12** [You have] been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. **Galatians 3:27** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

[2] **Mark 1:4** John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **Acts 22:16** "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name."

[3] **Romans 6:4** We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

[4] **Matthew 28:19–20** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **Acts 2:41** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. **Acts 8:12** When they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. **Acts 18:8** Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.

3. The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, in which the participant is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.[5]

4. Immersion, or dipping of the person in the water, is normative for the administration of this sacrament.[6]

[5] **Matthew 28:19–20** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **Acts 8:38** And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

[6] **Matthew 3:16** When Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. **John 3:23** John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized.

32. THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. On the same night he was betrayed, the supper of the Lord Jesus was instituted by him to be observed in his churches, to the end of the world, for perpetual remembrance. The Lord's Supper shows the sacrifice of Christ in his death,[1] the sealing of all its benefits to true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, and their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe to him. It is to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him and with each other.[2]

2. In this sacrament, Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor is any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sin of the living or the dead. It is a commemoration of that one offering up of himself by himself on the cross, once for all,[3] and a spiritual sacrifice of all possible praise to God for this.[4]

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[1] **1 Corinthians 11:23–26** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

[2] **1 Corinthians 10:16–17** The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. **1 Corinthians 10:21** You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

[3] **Hebrews 9:25–28** Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

[4] **1 Corinthians 11:24** When he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

3. In this sacrament, the Lord Jesus has appointed his ministers to oversee the bread and the cup and to lead the communicants in the taking of the elements. Though elders as part of their office are to oversee the Lord's Supper, others in the church may administer the elements under their oversight.[5]

4. The denial of the cup to the people, worshiping the elements, lifting them up or carrying them about for adoration, and reserving them for any pretended religious use, are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament and to the institution of Christ.[6]

5. The outward elements in this sacrament, duly set apart to the use ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, so that truly, although in terms used figuratively, they are sometimes called by the names of the things they represent, namely, the body and blood of Christ. Yet, in substance and nature, they

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Matthew 26:26–27 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you"

[5] **1 Corinthians 11:23–26** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. **1 Timothy 5:17** Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

[6] **Matthew 26:26–28** Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. **Matthew 15:9** "In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." **Exodus 20:4–5** "You shall not make for yourself a carved 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. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me."

still remain truly and only bread and wine as they were before.[7]

6. The doctrines which add a physical presence to the bread and wine, whether by saying the substance of Christ's body and blood replaces or joins them, are contrary to Scripture and subvert the nature of the sacrament.[8]

7. Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this sacrament, do then spiritually and inwardly, and thus really and truly, but not bodily or physically, feed upon Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death. The body and blood of Christ are not physically but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that sacrament, just as the physical elements are present to their outward senses.[9]

8. All unrepentant or unbelieving persons are unfit to enjoy communion with Christ and are therefore unworthy of the

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[7] **1 Corinthians 11:26–28** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

[8] **Acts 3:21** [Jesus,] whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. **Luke 24:6** He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee. **Luke 24:39** "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." **1 Corinthians 11:24–25** When he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

[9] **1 Corinthians 10:16** The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? **1 Corinthians 11:23–26** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Lord's table and cannot partake of these holy mysteries without great sin while they remain in their unrepentance or unbelief.[10] Indeed, whoever receives it in an unworthy manner is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord and eats and drinks judgment on himself.[11] Instead, a Christian must receive the Lord's Supper with sincere faith in Christ, true repentance, a discernment of the body of Christ, and unity of spirit with our brothers and sisters in Christ.[12]

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[10] **2 Corinthians 6:14–15** Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?

[11] **1 Corinthians 11:29** For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. **Matthew 7:6** "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you."

[12] **1 Corinthians 11:27–31** Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. **1 Corinthians 5:8** Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. **2 Corinthians 13:5** Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! **Ephesians 4:1, 3** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,… eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

33. MISSION

1. The great aim of the Lord our God is the magnification of his glory for the fame of his holy name.[1] His mission in this fallen world and a primary means of demonstrating his glory is the redemption of sinful persons who are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.[2]

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[1] **Isaiah 48:9–11** "For my name's sake I defer my anger; for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another."

[2] **Revelation 5** Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever

2. These redeemed persons are united not only to Christ but also to one another in local churches.[3] The church is the community of the redeemed, and as such is called to proclaim the glories of our Savior. Both individually and as churches, his people are called to proclaim his glory in word and deed in all of their varied vocations.[4]

3. As those who have been saved and transformed by their Savior, Christians have the privilege of joining God in his mission on the earth.[5] As the Father sent the Son and as the Father and Son sent the Spirit, so also the church has been sent out by the triune God to make disciples of all nations.[6] As ambassadors of

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and ever!" And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped. **Colossians 1:20** Through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. **Luke 19:10** "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

[3] **1 Corinthians 12:12–13** For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

[4] **Colossians 1:28** Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. **Matthew 5:16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. **1 Corinthians 10:31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. **Colossians 3:17** Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. **Colossians 3:23–24** Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

[5] **Matthew 28:18–20** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

[6] **John 15:26** "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me." **John 20:21** Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."

the risen Lord, Christians have been entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation.[7]

4. The New Testament emphasis on mission is centered on local churches. These churches are called, in partnership with one another, to strengthen and plant other local churches.[8] The members of these local churches are called to personal evangelism, vocational fruitfulness, and good works as an expression of their role in God's mission.[9]

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[7] **2 Corinthians 5:18–20** All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **Acts 1:8** You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

[8] **Acts 14:23** When they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. **Acts 15:41** He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. **Acts 13:1–3** Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. **Philippians 4:15–16** And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. **Colossians 1:5–7** Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf.

[9] **Matthew 5:16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. **Ephesians 2:10** We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. **Matthew 16:18** "I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will

build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." **Ephesians 4:11–13** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. **Acts 13:1–2** Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

34. THE STATE OF MAN AFTER DEATH AND OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

1. After death, the bodies of men return to dust and see corruption.[1] Their souls, which have an immortal existence, do not die or sleep but immediately return to God who gave them.[2] The souls of the righteous are then made perfect in holiness and are received into paradise, where they are with Christ and behold the face of God in light and glory. They wait for the full redemption of their bodies.[3] The souls of the wicked are cast into hell where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved for the judgment of the great day.[4] For souls separat-

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[1] **Genesis 3:19** "By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." **Acts 13:36** For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption.

[2] **Ecclesiastes 12:7** The dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

[3] **Luke 23:43** And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." **2 Corinthians 5:1** For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. **2 Corinthians 5:6–8** So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **Philippians 1:23** I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. **Hebrews 12:23** To the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect.

[4] **Jude 6–7** The angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. **1 Peter 3:18–19** For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might

ed from their bodies, Scripture acknowledges none other than these two places.

2. On the last day the saints which are alive will not sleep but will be changed.[5] All the dead will be raised up with physical, human bodies and not another,[6] although with different qualities. These raised bodies will be united again to their souls forever.[7]

3. By the power of Christ, the bodies of the unjust will be raised to dishonor. By his Spirit, the bodies of the just will be raised to honor and be conformed to his own glorious body.[8]

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bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison. **Luke 16:23–24** In Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he called out, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

[5] **1 Corinthians 15:51–52** Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. **1 Thessalonians 4:17** Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

[6] **Job 19:26–27** And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

[7] **1 Corinthians 15:42–43** So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.

[8] **Acts 24:15** [I have] a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust. **John 5:28–29** "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment." **Philippians 3:21** [Christ] will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

35. THE LAST JUDGMENT

1. God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ,[1] who is given all power and judgment by the Father. On that day, not only will the fallen angels be judged,[2] but also all persons who have lived upon the earth will appear before the tribunal of Christ to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds. They will receive judgment according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.[3]

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[1] **Acts 17:31** "He has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." **John 5:22–27** For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

[2] **1 Corinthians 6:3** Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! **Jude 6** And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day

[3] **2 Corinthians 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. **Ecclesiastes 12:14** For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil. **Matthew 12:36** I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak. **Romans 14:10–12** Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. **Matthew 25:32–46** "Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his

2. The purpose of God appointing this day is to demonstrate the glory of his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect and his justice in the eternal damnation of the reprobate who are wicked and disobedient.[4] On that day, the righteous will go into everlasting life and receive the fullness of joy and glory with everlasting rewards in the presence of the Lord. However, the wicked, who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ, will be cast aside into everlasting torments[5] and punished with everlasting destruction away from the presence

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right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' "Then he will say to those on his left, Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

[4] **Romans 9:22–23** What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory?

[5] **Matthew 25:21** His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' **Matthew 25:34** Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. **2 Timothy 4:8** Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

of the Lord and away from the glory of his power.[6]

3. Christ desires us to be certain that there will be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin,[7] and for the greater comfort of the godly in their adversity.[8] He also desires to keep the day unknown to men, so that they may shake off all fleshly security and be always watchful, because they do not know at

[6] **Matthew 25:46** And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." **Mark 9:47–48** And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' For everyone will be salted with fire. **2 Thessalonians 1:6–10** Indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

[7] **2 Corinthians 5:10–11** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.

[8] **2 Thessalonians 1:5–7** This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels

what hour the Lord will come[9] and may ever be prepared to say, "Come Lord Jesus. Come quickly. Amen."[10]

[9] **Mark 13:35–37** Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake." **Luke 12:35–40** "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

[10] **Revelation 22:20** He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

THE TRINITY CATECHISM

INTRODUCTION (Q1–3)

Q1. Who is the first and greatest of all beings?
A. God is the first and greatest of all beings.

Psalm 8:1 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. **Psalm 97:9** For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods. **Isaiah 44:6** Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god."

Q2. What is the chief end of man?
A. Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

1 Corinthians 10:31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. **Romans 11:36** For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. **Psalm 73:25–28** Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.

Q3. What is our only comfort in life and death?

A. Our only comfort is that we, with body and soul, both in life and death, are not our own, but belong to our faithful Saviour Jesus Christ; who, with his precious blood, has fully paid for all our sins, and delivered us from all the power of the devil; and so preserves us that apart from the will of our heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from our heads. Yes, all things must work together for our salvation, and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures us of eternal life and makes us sincerely willing and ready, from now on, to live for him.

Romans 14:7–8 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. **1 Corinthians 6:19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own. **1 Corinthians 3:23** You are Christ's, and Christ is God's. **Titus 2:14** [He] gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. **1 Peter 1:18–19** You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. **1 John 2:2** He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. **Hebrews 2:14** Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil. **John 10:28** I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. **Matthew 10:29–31** Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. **Romans 8:28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. **Romans 8:16** The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

Romans 8:3–4 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

GOD THE CREATOR (Q4–19)

Q4. How do we know there is a God?

A. God reveals himself in creation and all people know there is a God, but a saving knowledge of God comes only through the Word and Spirit of God.

Psalm 19:1–2 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. **Romans 1:18–20** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **2 Timothy 3:15** And how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **1 Corinthians 2:9–14** But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"—these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we

impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

Q5. What is the Word of God?

A. The Word of God is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. They are inspired by God and so without error, sufficient for faith and godly living, and authoritative in all they teach.

2 Peter 1:21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. **Psalm 19:7** The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. **2 Timothy 3:16–17** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Q6. How do we know that the Bible is the Word of God?

A. The Bible evidences itself to be God's Word by the heavenliness of its doctrine, the unity of its parts, and its power to convert sinners and to edify saints. Yet, only the Spirit of God, bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in our hearts, is able to persuade us fully that the Bible is the Word of God.

1 Corinthians 2:6–7 Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. **1 Corinthians 2:13** And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. **Psalm 119:18**

Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. **Psalm 119:129** Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. **Acts 10:43** "To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." **Acts 26:22** "To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass." **Acts 18:28** He powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus. **Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. **Psalm 19:7–9** The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. **Romans 15:4** For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. **John 16:13–14** "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you." **Romans 10:17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. **1 Peter 1:23–25** You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

Q7. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The Scriptures principally teach what we are to believe concerning God and what duty he requires of us.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. **John 20:30–31** Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. **Acts 24:14** But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets. **1 Corinthians 10:11** Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. **Ecclesiastes 12:13** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

Q8. What is God?

A. God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

John 4:24 "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." **Job 11:7–9** "Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty? It is higher than heaven—what can you do? Deeper than Sheol—what can you know? Its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea." **Psalm 90:2** Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. **James 1:17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. **Exodus 3:14** God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."

And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" **Psalm 147:5** Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure. **Revelation 4:8** And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" **Revelation 15:4** "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed." **Exodus 34:6–7** The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

Q9. Are there more gods than one?

A. There is only one living and true God.

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." **Jeremiah 10:10** But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation.

Q10. How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, the same in essence and equal in power and glory.

Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." **John 10:30** "I and the Father are one." **John 14:9** Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" **Acts 5:3–4** But

Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." **1 Corinthians 8:6** There is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. **2 Corinthians 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Q11. What is God's decree?

A. God's decree is his ordaining from eternity whatever comes to pass, all according to his own good pleasure and for his own glory.

Psalm 115:3 Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. **Ephesians 1:4** He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. **Ephesians 1:11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. Romans 9:22–23 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory? **Daniel 4:35** All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?" **Romans 11:36** For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Q12. How does God execute his decree?

A. God executes his decree through his works of creation and providence.

Genesis 1:1–3 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. **Psalm 148:7–8** Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word! **Isaiah 40:26** Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. **Daniel 4:35** All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?" **Matthew 6:26** "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" **Acts 4:24–28** And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed'—for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place." **Revelation 4:11** "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

Q13. What is God's work of creation?

A. God's work of creation is his making all things out of nothing by the word of his power. He did this in six days, and it was all very good.

Genesis 1:1, 31 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth... And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. **Hebrews 11:3** By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

Q14. How did God create us?

A. God created us male and female after his own image in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. He gave us an immortal soul and dominion over the creatures. We are each either a man or a woman according to his good purposes for us.

Genesis 1:26–28 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." **Genesis 2:7–8** Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. **Genesis 2:15–18** The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and

evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **Genesis 2:21–23** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." **Colossians 3:10** [You] have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. **Ephesians 4:24** Put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. **Romans 2:14–15** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them. **Ecclesiastes 7:29** See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes. **Matthew 10:28** "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

Q15. What does it mean to be a man?

A. A man is divinely created male in his whole person, and his vocation as a man is to work, cultivate, and keep what is entrusted to him. He is spiritually called to be a son, brother, and father; and most will reflect these callings in their natural relationships as well.

Genesis 2:7–8 Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. **Genesis 2:15** The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. **Genesis 2:24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold

fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **1 Corinthians 16:13** Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. **Ephesians 6:4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. **Philippians 2:22** But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. **1 Timothy 5:1–2** Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity. **1 Corinthians 11:3** But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. **1 Corinthians 11:8–9** For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

Q16. What does it mean to be a woman?

A. A woman is divinely created female in her whole person, and her vocation as a woman is to help, nurture, and bring life to those given to her. She is spiritually called to be a daughter, sister, and mother; and most will reflect these callings in their natural relationships as well.

Genesis 2:18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." **Genesis 2:21** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **Genesis 2:23–24** Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **Genesis 3:20** The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. **Romans 16:13** Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. **1 Timothy 5:1–2** Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.

Q17. What is distinctive of a man and a woman in marriage?

A. Marriage is between one man and one woman. In marriage a husband is the head of the wife, and he is called to love her as Christ loved the church and also to honor and understand her; and the wife is called to love, respect, and submit to her husband, and she is also to adorn herself with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit.

Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **1 Corinthians 11:3** But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. **Ephesians 5:25–27** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. **1 Peter 3:7** Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. **Ephesians 5:22** Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. **Ephesians 5:33** However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. **Titus 2:4** [Older women] train the young women to love their husbands and children. **1 Peter 3:4** Let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

Q18. What is God's purpose for marriage?

A. God created marriage as a mystery that reflects Christ's relationship with the Church. It is a covenant ordained at creation. It is for the mutual help, joy, and comfort of husband and wife in prosperity and adversity. It is the exclusive relationship for sexual intimacy and union, for the procreation of children who are to be brought up in the Lord, and for protection from sexual temptation.

Ephesians 5:31–32 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. **Genesis 2:24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **Proverbs 31:12** She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. **Song of Songs 1:2** Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine. **Song of Songs 4:10** How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your oils than any spice! **Malachi 2:15** Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. **Ephesians 6:4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. **1 Peter 3:7** Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. **1 Corinthians 7:3–5** The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Q19. What are God's works of providence?

A. God's works of providence are his holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures and all their actions, ordering them and all things for his own glory.

Genesis 8:22 "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." **Psalm 145:17** The LORD is righteous in all his ways and

kind in all his works. **Isaiah 28:29** This also comes from the LORD of hosts; he is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom. **Matthew 10:29–31** "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." **Acts 17:26** "And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place." **Hebrews 1:3** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. **Romans 11:36** For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

SIN AND THE FALL (Q20–24)

Q20. In God's providence, what covenant relationship did he establish with Adam, the first man?

A. God established a covenant of works with Adam and his descendants, which promised life if he obeyed and death if he disobeyed.

Genesis 2:16–17 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." **Hosea 6:7** But like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me. **Galatians 3:12** But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them." **Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.

Q21. Did Adam keep this covenant?

A. Adam did not keep this covenant, but through the devices of Satan he sinned when he freely chose to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 3:1–6 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. **James 1:13–15** Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

Q22. What was the result of eating this fruit?

A. Because Adam sinned, sin and death came to all humanity; our natures became corrupted, which is called original sin, leading inevitably to the whole array of our actual sins; and the creation itself was cursed.

Genesis 2:16–17 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." **Genesis 3:17–19** And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you,

'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." **Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.

Q23. What is sin?

A. Sin is any lack of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God.

1 John 3:4 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. **Romans 2:14–16** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. **Romans 14:23** But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. **Romans 8:7–8** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Q24. What is the penalty for such sin?

A. The just penalty for all sin is God's judgment and eternal wrath and also temporal consequences that God brings.

Ephesians 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. **Galatians 3:10** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who

does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." **Lamentations 3:39** Why should a living man complain, a man, about the punishment of his sins? **Matthew 25:41** "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." **Galatians 6:7** Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

CHRIST THE REDEEMER (Q25–33)

Q25. Do all experience these effects of sin?

A. Though all experience consequences for Adam's sin, God in his mercy chose to establish a covenant of grace to bring salvation to his chosen people through a Redeemer.

Genesis 3:15 "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." **Genesis 15:6** And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness. **Habakkuk 2:4** "Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith." **Isaiah 54:10** "For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you. **Ezekiel 37:26–27** I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **Ephesians 2:4–5** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved. **Galatians 3:24–29** So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer

under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Q26. What is this covenant of grace?

A. The covenant of grace is God's promise to save his elect through the Redeemer given by God to men, the man Christ Jesus. This covenant is first revealed in the Garden and then more fully throughout the Bible until its most complete expression in the new covenant. It is founded in the eternal covenant transaction made between the Father and the Son regarding the redemption of the elect.

Genesis 3:15 "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." **Genesis 15:6** And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness. **Ephesians 1:3–6** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. **Hebrews 11:4–7** By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who

seek him. By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. **Hebrews 8:6–13** But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. For he finds fault with them when he says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. **Psalm 2:7–8** I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession." **Isaiah 42:1** Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

Q27. What is true of this Redeemer?

A. The only Redeemer of God's chosen people is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the eternal Son of God who became man and continues to be both God and man, two distinct natures in one person forever.

1 Timothy 2:5–6 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. **John 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **Galatians 4:4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law. **Romans 9:5** To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen. **Luke 1:35** And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God." **Colossians 2:9** In him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily. **Hebrews 7:24–25** He holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Q28. What offices does Jesus Christ execute as our Redeemer?

A. He executes the offices of prophet, priest, and king, both in his humiliation and his exaltation.

Psalm 2:6 "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill." **Isaiah 9:6–7** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the

LORD of hosts will do this. **Acts 3:22** "Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.'" **Hebrews 12:25** See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. **Hebrews 5:5–7** So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. **Hebrews 7:25** Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. **Hebrews 12:25** See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. **Matthew 21:5** "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

Q29. How does Christ execute the office of prophet?

A. Christ is prophet by being the Word of God and revealing to us by his Word, incarnation, and Spirit what God is like and what is his will for our salvation and obedience.

Matthew 5:21–22 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire." **Matthew 5:27–28** "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." **John 1:18** No one has ever seen God; God the only Son, who is at the Father's side,

he has made him known. **John 14:26** "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you." **John 15:15** "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." **John 20:30–31** Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. **1 Peter 1:10–12** Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

Q30. How does Christ execute the office of priest?

A. Christ is priest by offering himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, by reconciling us to God, and by making continual intercession for us.

Hebrews 2:17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **Hebrews 7:24–25** He holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. **Romans 3:23–26** All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over

former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. **Romans 5:10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Q31. How does Christ execute the office of king?

A. Christ is king by ruling over us and all things, by conquering all his enemies, by defending us, and by causing us to submit joyfully to him.

Matthew 11:27 "All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." **Matthew 28:18** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." **Isaiah 33:22** For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king; he will save us. **Isaiah 32:1–2** Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule in justice. Each will be like a hiding place from the wind, a shelter from the storm, like streams of water in a dry place, like the shade of a great rock in a weary land. **1 Corinthians 15:25** For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. **Revelation 19:16** On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Q32. What was Christ's humiliation?

A. Christ's humiliation was in his being born in a low condition; born under the law; undergoing the miseries of this life; the wrath of God; and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried; and continuing under the power of death for a time.

Luke 2:7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. **Galatians 4:4** But when the

fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law. **Hebrews 12:2–3** Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. **Isaiah 53:2–3** For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. **Luke 22:44** And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. **Matthew 27:46** And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" **Philippians 2:8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **1 Corinthians 15:3–4** For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. **Acts 2:24–27** God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him, "'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. **Acts 2:31** He foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

Q33. What is Christ's exaltation?

A. Christ's exaltation is in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world on the last day.

1 Corinthians 15:4 He was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. **Acts 1:9** And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. **Ephesians 1:20** He raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places. **Acts 1:11** "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." **Acts 17:31** "He has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE ORDER OF SALVATION (Q34–41)

Q34. How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of redemption by the work of the Holy Spirit, who applies Christ's redemption to us.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." **Ezekiel 36:25–27** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. **1 Corinthians 12:3** Therefore

I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

Q35. And who is the Holy Spirit?

A. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead, equal in power, glory, majesty, and deity with the Father and the Son.

Genesis 1:2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. **Psalm 104:30** When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground. **Matthew 28:19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." **Acts 5:3–4** But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."

Q36. How does the Holy Spirit apply Christ's redemption to us?

A. The Spirit applies redemption through his effectual call by giving us a new heart, by working faith in us, and uniting us to Christ. This call is irresistible, removes our opposition to the gospel, and causes us to embrace Christ as our own.

Romans 8:30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. **Ezekiel 36:25–27** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will

remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. **John 1:12–13** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. **John 3:5** Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." **Romans 10:17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. **Colossians 2:11–12** In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. **John 6:44–45** "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me." **2 Thessalonians 2:13–14** But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Q37. What is the gospel?

A. The gospel is the good news of Christ's victory over sin, death, and the devil through his righteous life, atoning death, victorious resurrection, present reign, and imminent return. Through faith in him we are saved from God's wrath, forgiven of our sins, made new creations, adopted as sons and daughters, and kept for eternity.

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." **Colossians 2:15** He disarmed the rul-

ers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. **Mark 1:15** "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." **Romans 1:16–17** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." **Romans 3:23–25** All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. **1 Corinthians 15:1–5** Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Q38. What happens in our heart as a result of this effectual calling?

A. When God calls us in this way, we respond with faith and repentance, and then we experience justification, adoption, progressive sanctification, and all the benefits connected to these.

Romans 8:30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. **Ephesians 1:5** He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will. **1 Corinthians 1:26** For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. **1 Corinthians 1:30** And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who

became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption. **1 Corinthians 6:11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. **Galatians 3:26** In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

Q39. What is justification?

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, which is received by faith alone. In it he pardons all our sins and declares us to be righteous in his sight because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us.

Acts 10:43 "To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." **Romans 3:23–26** All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. **Romans 4:5–8** To the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." **Romans 5:17–19** For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:19 In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. **2 Corinthians 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. **Galatians 2:16** We know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. **Philippians 3:8–9** I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

Q40. What is adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace by which we are made sons of God, fellow heirs with Christ, and we receive the Spirit of adoption to cry out, "Abba! Father!"

John 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. **1 John 3:1** See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. **Romans 8:15–17** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. **Galatians 4:4–6** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive

adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

Q41. What is progressive sanctification?

A. Progressive sanctification is a work of God's free grace by which we are enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness and be renewed after the image of God. Though God is the Author of all spiritual life and change, we must strive to be holy, for he is holy.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. **Romans 6:19** I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. **Romans 6:22** But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. **Ephesians 4:22–24** Put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. **1 Thessalonians 5:23** Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **1 Peter 1:15–16** As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

THE BENEFITS OF OUR SALVATION IN LIFE, DEATH, AND THE RESURRECTION (Q42–47)

Q42. What benefits do we experience in this life as a result of our justification, adoption, and progressive sanctification?

A. These works of the Spirit bring with them communion with God, assurance of his love, peace in our conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, and the grace to persevere to the end.

1 John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. **2 Corinthians 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Galatians 5:22–23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. **Romans 5:5** Hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. **1 Corinthians 12:7** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. **1 Peter 1:5** By God's power [you] are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Q43. What spiritual gifts can we experience in this life?

A. Since all the gifts of the Spirit found in the New Testament continue in this present age, God in his kindness might give any of these to us according to his boundless grace and the need of the moment. We are to desire them earnestly and never to despise them.

Luke 11:13 "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good

gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" **Ephesians 4:7–14** Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. **1 Corinthians 12:4–7** Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. **1 Corinthians 14:1** Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. **1 Corinthians 14:39** So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. **1 Thessalonians 5:19–21** Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good.

Q44. What benefits do we receive from Christ at death?

A. At death our souls are made perfect in holiness and immediately go to the very presence of God. Our bodies rest in their graves until the resurrection.

Luke 23:43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." **Philippians 1:23** I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. **2 Corinthians 5:8** Yes, we are of good courage,

and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **1 Thessalonians 4:14** For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. **Job 19:26** And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God.

Q45. What benefits do we receive from Christ at the resurrection?

A. At the resurrection we are raised up bodily in glory, acquitted on the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God for all eternity.

1 Corinthians 15:43 It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. **Matthew 25:23** "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'" **Matthew 10:32** "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven." **1 John 3:2** Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. **1 Corinthians 13:12** For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. **1 Thessalonians 4:17–18** Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Q46. What happens to the wicked at death?

A. At death the souls of the wicked are cast into the torments of hell, and their bodies lie in their graves until the resurrection and the day of judgment.

Luke 16:22–24 "The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, and

in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'" **John 5:28** "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice."

Q47. What will happen to the wicked at the resurrection and the day of judgment?

A. At the resurrection the wicked dead are raised, their souls uniting with their bodies. Then, on the day of judgment, all the wicked shall be sentenced to unspeakable torments with the devil and his angels forever.

Daniel 12:2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. **John 5:28–29** "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment." **2 Thessalonians 1:9** They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might. **Matthew 25:41** "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

OUR DUTY TOWARD GOD (Q48–75)

Q48. What duty does God require of us?

A. Our duty is to obey God's revealed will.

Micah 6:8 He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? **Ecclesiastes 12:13** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his com-

mandments, for this is the whole duty of man. **Psalm 119:4** You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently. **Romans 2:14–15** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them. **John 14:15** "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

Q49. How does Jesus summarize this duty toward God?

A. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 22:37–40 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

Q50. How do we fulfill the first commandment to love God?

A. God calls us to love him by delighting in him, obeying him, and worshiping him with all our thoughts, words, and deeds.

Psalm 37:4 Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. **John 14:15** "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." **Romans 12:1–2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Q51. How do we fulfill the second greatest commandment to love our neighbors?

A. God calls us to love our neighbors by doing good works, showing compassion, evangelizing, and doing no wrong to them, all for the glory of God.

Luke 10:29–37 But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise." **Romans 13:10** Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. **1 Corinthians 10:31–33** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

Q52. What other commandments help us to know how to love God and our neighbors?

A. The Ten Commandments teach us how to love God and our neighbors.

Exodus 20:1–17 And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt,

out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before me. "You shall not make for yourself a carved 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. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. "You shall not murder. "You shall not commit adultery. "You shall not steal. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

Q53. Which of these commandments are specifically about loving God and which are about loving our neighbors?

A. The first four teach us about loving God, and the last six teach us about loving our neighbors.

Romans 13:8–10 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love

your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Q54. What is the preface to the Ten Commandments?

A. "And God spoke all these words, saying, 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.'"

Exodus 20:1–2 And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Q55. What does the preface teach us?

A. It teaches us that God is God over all; he is our God by his covenant mercies; and he is our Redeemer. Therefore, we are bound to keep his commandments.

Exodus 3:14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" **Deuteronomy 11:1** "You shall therefore love the LORD your God and keep his charge, his statutes, his rules, and his commandments always." **1 Peter 1:15–19** As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Q56. What is the first commandment?

A. "You shall have no other gods before me."

Exodus 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before me."

Q57. What does the first commandment require?

A. It requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God, and to worship and glorify him accordingly. Nothing and no one else is to be the object of the worship that he alone deserves.

1 Chronicles 28:9 "And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever." **Deuteronomy 26:17** You have declared today that the LORD is your God, and that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will obey his voice. **Matthew 4:10** Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" **Psalm 29:2** Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness. **Romans 1:21–25** For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Q58. What is the second commandment?

A. You shall not make for yourself a carved 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. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Exodus 20:4–6 "You shall not make for yourself a carved 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. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

Q59. What does the second commandment require?

A. It requires the worship of God in all the ways prescribed in his Word, and it forbids the worship of God by images or in any other way not prescribed in his Word.

Deuteronomy 4:23–24 Take care, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make a carved image, the form of anything that the LORD your God has forbidden you. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. **Deuteronomy 12:32** "Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it." **Matthew 28:20** "[Teach] them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **Leviticus 10:1–2** Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had

not commanded them. And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.

Q60. What is the third commandment?

A. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain."

Exodus 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain."

Q61. What does the third commandment require?

A. It requires revering and forbids profaning or misusing God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works in our thoughts and words, whether alone or with others.

Psalm 148:13 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven. **Leviticus 19:12** You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. **Psalm 29:2** Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness. **Isaiah 52:5** Now therefore what have I here," declares the LORD, "seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Their rulers wail," declares the LORD, "and continually all the day my name is despised." **Matthew 6:9** "Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.'" **Malachi 1:6–7** A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, 'How have we despised your name?' By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, 'How have we polluted you?' By saying that the LORD's table may be despised.

Q62. What is the fourth commandment?

A. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God."

Exodus 20:8–11 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."

Q63. What does the fourth commandment require?

A. It requires that we regularly gather with God's people to worship him in ways pleasing to him, live in the good of Christ's Sabbath rest now as we await our glorious rest to come, and that our days of labor would be performed with diligence in the fear of God.

Hebrews 10:24–25 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. **Acts 20:7** On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. **Hebrews 4:1–11** Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, "As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest,'" although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has somewhere spoken of the

seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." And again in this passage he said, "They shall not enter my rest." Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. **Colossians 3:23** Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.

Q64. What is the fifth commandment?

A. "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you."

Exodus 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you."

Q65. What does the fifth commandment require?

A. It requires that we honor our father and mother as is appropriate to their position and authority, and this is blessed by God. Further, we are to honor all those in authority over us.

Colossians 3:20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. **1 Peter 2:17** Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. **Titus 3:1** Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work. **Ephesians 5:22–6:9** Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is

the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him. **Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Q66. What is the sixth commandment?
A. "You shall not murder."

Exodus 20:13 "You shall not murder."

Q67. What does the sixth commandment require?
A. It forbids any unlawful taking of a life, our own or any other. Neither are we to be sinfully angry, which is murder in the heart. Instead, we are to protect the life of our neighbor when it is in our power to do so and avoid anything that leads to his harm.

Matthew 5:21–26 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny. **Deuteronomy 24:19** "When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. **Luke 10:33–34** But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. **Romans 13:9–10** For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in

this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Q68. What is the seventh commandment?
A. "You shall not commit adultery."

Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery."

Q69. What does the seventh commandment require?
A. It requires that we be sexually pure in thought, word, and deed; and that we highly honor the institution of marriage. We are also to protect the sexual purity of others when it is in our power to do so.

Matthew 5:27–30 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell." **Hebrews 13:4** Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. **1 Timothy 2:9–10** Women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works.

Q70. What is the eighth commandment?
A. "You shall not steal."

Exodus 20:15 "You shall not steal."

Q71. What does the eighth commandment require?

A. It requires that we not steal the property of another directly or through deception. Instead, we are to live lives of productive labor and be generous toward those in need.

Proverbs 11:1 A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is his delight. **Ephesians 4:28** Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

Q72. What is the ninth commandment?

A. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Exodus 20:16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Q73. What does the ninth commandment require?

A. It forbids speaking lies about others or slandering a person's good name. Instead, we are to speak truth in love whenever we speak.

Deuteronomy 19:16–21 If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of wrongdoing, then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. And the rest shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you. Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. **Ephesians 4:15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ. **Ephesians 4:25** Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Proverbs 14:5 A faithful witness does not lie, but a false witness breathes out lies. **Proverbs 14:25** A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful. **Proverbs 22:1** A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.

Q74. What is the tenth commandment?
A. You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.

Exodus 20:17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

Q75. What does the tenth commandment require?
A. It forbids any lust, envy, greed, or jealousy and requires that we be content with what the Lord has provided to our neighbors and to us.

Colossians 3:5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. **Hebrews 13:5** Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." **Matthew 6:25–33** "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little

faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." **Romans 12:15** Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. **1 Corinthians 13:4–5** Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful.

CONVERSION AND BAPTISM (Q76–83)

Q76. Is anyone able to keep God's commandments perfectly?

A. Since the fall, no mere person keeps the commandments of God perfectly. The unregenerate person lacks all ability, and the regenerate person will still sin until he is glorified.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins. **Genesis 6:5** The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. **Genesis 8:21** And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done." **James 3:2, 8** For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body....No human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. **Romans 3:23** All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. **Galatians 5:17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **1 John 1:8–10** If we say we have no sin, we deceive

ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Q77. What then is the purpose of the law since the fall?

A. The law reveals the righteousness of God. For God's people it also reveals his will, and for the ungodly it convicts of sin so they might be restrained in their sins and even brought to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law. **Romans 3:19–20** Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. **Romans 7:7** What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." **1 Timothy 1:8–9a** Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners. **Galatians 3:24** So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

Q78. What is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Christ is a saving grace by which we believe what God has revealed in his word and then receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel.

Genesis 15:6 And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness. **Ephesians 2:8–10** For by grace you have

been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. **John 1:12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Q79. Are we saved by faith alone?

A. We are saved by faith alone, but true faith always leads to repentance and a life of good works.

Ephesians 2:8–10 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. **James 2:14–17** What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Q80. What is repentance?

A. Repentance is a saving grace by which we understand our sin and the mercy of God and turn from our sin to God to live fully pleasing to him.

Acts 2:37–38 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." **Joel 2:13** "Rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. **2**

Corinthians 7:10–11 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter. **Romans 6:17–18** But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. **Colossians 1:9–10** And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Q81. What act of obedience is to follow faith and repentance?

A. Baptism by immersion in water is to follow faith and repentance.

Acts 2:41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Q82. What is baptism?

A. Baptism is immersion in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and signifies our being grafted into Christ, receiving the benefits of the covenant of grace, and walking in newness of life.

Matthew 3:16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. **Matthew 28:19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." **Romans 6:3–4** Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus

were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. **1 Peter 3:21** Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Q83. Who should be baptized?

A. Baptism should be administered to all those who sincerely profess faith in and submission to our Lord Jesus Christ and repentance towards God. No others should be baptized.

1 Peter 3:21 Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. **Acts 8:12** But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. **Acts 10:47–48** "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

THE CHURCH (Q84–91)

Q84. What act of obedience should follow baptism?

A. Those who are rightly baptized should join a visible and orderly church of Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:41–42 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Q85. What is the visible church?

A. The visible church is the organized community of professing believers in any time and place, which is marked by the preaching of the Word, administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and exercising church discipline.

1 Timothy 3:14–15 I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. **Acts 14:23** And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. **1 Corinthians 1:2** To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours. **Acts 2:42** And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. **Ephesians 4:11–12** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. **2 Timothy 4:1–2** I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. **Matthew 16:19** "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." **Matthew 28:19–20** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Q86. Whom does God set apart to lead a visible church?

A. To lead a local church, God sets apart gifted and qualified men to serve as elders, who are also called pastors or overseers.

Acts 20:28 "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood." **1 Timothy 3:1–7** The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. **Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. **1 Peter 5:1–4** So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Q87. What is the invisible church?

A. The invisible church is the whole number of the elect who have been, are, or shall be gathered into one body under Christ the head.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours. **Ephesians 1:22–23** And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. **John 10:16** And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. **John 11:51–52** He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

Q88. What has God commanded the church to do when it gathers for worship?

A. A church when it gathers for worship is to read and preach the Word; partake of the sacraments; sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; pray; fellowship; practice the whole array of spiritual gifts; and be equipped for mission.

Acts 2:42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. **Acts 20:7** On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. **2 Timothy 4:1–2** I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. **Ephesians 5:18–19** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart. **1 Timothy 2:1–2** First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we

may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. **1 Peter 5:14** Greet one another with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ. **1 Peter 4:10–11** As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. **1 Corinthians 12:7** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. **1 Corinthians 14:26** What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. **Matthew 28:19–20** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Q89. What is a sacrament, and what are the sacraments of the church?

A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, which is a visible sign of an invisible grace and a seal of the covenant of grace. The two sacraments are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Romans 4:11 He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well. **Matthew 28:19–20** "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **1 Corinthians 11:17–26** But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that

there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Q90. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ himself as a means to remember, participate in, and proclaim his death until he comes again. Through the simple act of eating the bread and drinking the cup in faith, the church feasts on Christ and affirms its union with him and each other.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. **1 Corinthians 10:16** The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

Q91. What is required for us to receive the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner?

A. We must receive the Lord's Supper with sincere faith in Christ, true repentance, a discernment of the body of Christ, and unity of spirit with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:27–31 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. **1 Corinthians 5:8** Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. **2 Corinthians 13:5** Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! **1 Corinthians 11:17–22** But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Q92–100)

Q92. What is prayer?

A. Prayer is an offering of our hearts to God to lay before him our desires, needs, sins, thanksgivings, and adoration, all in the name of Christ and according to his will.

1 John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **Philippians 4:6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **Psalm 10:17** O LORD, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear. **Psalm 145:19** He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them. **John 14:13–14** "Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it."

Q93. What prayer has been given to us to help us pray according to the Father's will?

A. The Lord's Prayer, which says, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Matthew 6:9–13 Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Q94. What does calling God, "our Father in heaven," teach us?
A. It teaches us to draw near to God with all holy fear and confidence, as children to a father who is able and ready to help us.

Matthew 6:9 Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." **Psalm 103:13** As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. **Romans 8:15** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" **Luke 11:13** "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" **Hebrews 4:16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Q95. What do we pray for in the first petition, "Hallowed by your name"?
A. In this we pray that we and all people would recognize God's name as holy and live lives that glorify his name.

Matthew 6:9 Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." **Psalm 115:1** Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness! **Romans 11:36** For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. **1 Corinthians 10:31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. **1 Peter 1:15–16** As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Q96. What do we pray for in the second petition, "Your kingdom come"?

A. In this we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of God may advance in our lives and in the world around us until it is fully manifested in the new heaven and new earth.

Matthew 6:10 "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." **Psalm 68:1** God shall arise, his enemies shall be scattered; and those who hate him shall flee before him! **Psalm 68:18** You ascended on high, leading a host of captives in your train and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there. **Matthew 6:33** "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." **Matthew 13:31–32** He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." **Revelation 12:10–11** And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." **Revelation 22:1–5** Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Q97. What do we pray for in the third petition, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"?

A. In this we pray that God by his grace would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

Matthew 6:10 "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." **Psalm 103:20–21** Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will! **Psalm 119:36** Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain! **Matthew 26:39** And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." **1 Corinthians 10:31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. **Hebrews 13:20–21** Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Q98. What do we pray for in the fourth petition, "Give us this day our daily bread"?

A. In this we pray that our daily needs would be met by God's almighty hand and according to his perfect love and will.

Matthew 6:11 "Give us this day our daily bread." **Proverbs 30:8–9** Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the LORD?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God. **1 Timothy 6:6–8** But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. **Matthew 6:25–33** "Therefore I tell you, do

not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." **Matthew 4:4** But he answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Q99. What do we pray for in the fifth petition, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"?

A. In this we pray that God would freely pardon all our sins because of Christ's sacrifice, and that this forgiveness would lead us to extend to others the mercy we ourselves have received.

Matthew 6:12 "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." **Psalm 51:1–2** Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! **Psalm 51:7** Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. **Psalm 51:9** Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. **Matthew 18:33–35** "'And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And

in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart." **Luke 11:4** "Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation." **Ephesians 4:32** Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Q100. What do we pray for in the sixth petition, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"?

A. In this we pray that God would strengthen us to battle the temptations that come to us from the world, the flesh, and the devil, and that we would increasingly put sin to death.

Matthew 6:13 "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." **Matthew 26:41** "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." **Romans 8:3–4** For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. **1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. **Galatians 5:17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

OUR MISSION AND OUR GREAT LONGING (Q101–104)

Q101. What is our mission as the Church until the return of Christ?

A. Our mission is to glorify God by making disciples of all nations through obedience to his Word, evangelism, good works, vocational fruitfulness, and establishing churches.

Matthew 28:18–20 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **Matthew 5:16** "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." **Colossians 3:23** Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men. **1 Corinthians 10:31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Q102. How do we glorify God with our vocational fruitfulness?

A. We are to glorify God above all things and obey his commands in our families, churches, workplaces, and societies.

Romans 12:1–2 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. **Ephesians 4:7–16** But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He

ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. **Ephesians 5:22–6:9** Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him. **Colossians 3:12–4:1** Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

Q103. How do individual churches partner with the whole Church in fulfilling the Great Commission?

A. Individual churches pray and share their resources and people in cooperation with the whole Church to make disciples and plant churches among all the peoples of the earth.

Matthew 28:18–20 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **Acts 1:8** "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." **Acts 13:1–3** Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. **Romans 15:18–21** For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand." **Ephesians 6:19** [Pray] also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel. **Philippians 1:3–7** I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the

day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. **Revelation 5:9–14** And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped. **Psalm 67** May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations. Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. Selah Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear him!

Q104. What is our great longing as the Church?

A. Our great longing is for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ who will usher in a new heaven and a new earth where God will dwell with us forever, all sadness and sin will be banished, and worship will endure forever. Come, Lord Jesus!

1 Corinthians 16:22b Our Lord, come! **Revelation 21:1–4** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the

first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." **Revelation 22:3c** His servants will worship him. **Revelation 22:20** He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!