

Summary Statement of Faith
Grace and Truth Baptist Church
San Francisco, CA

We believe:

The Bible is God's infallible, inerrant Word, every word of which is given by inspiration of God, and providentially preserved for use by His people.¹

As an unparalleled and accurate translation of the Hebrew and Greek Received Texts of Scripture, the Authorized, King James Version is used exclusively in the public preaching of our church.

The one and only living and Almighty God, Jehovah, is one undivided Being in three eternal Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.² The Bible teaches the doctrine of the Trinity as confessed in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds. The Christian life is one of personal fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.³

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God who united a true, complete, and sinless human nature to His Divine Person when He became Man through His virginal conception in the womb of His human mother Mary.⁴ The Council of Chalcedon confessed the truth of Scripture in its doctrine of the one Person of Christ in two natures.⁵ Christ died and shed His blood to offer a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.⁶ He was buried, rose bodily from the grave the third day, ascended to heaven, and is coming again.⁷

The Holy Spirit is the third eternal Person of the one Triune God.⁸ Christ baptized the church with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost,⁹ and the Spirit indwells all believers in this dispensation.¹⁰ The Spirit's filling and fruit are essential for Biblical holiness.¹¹ The miraculous signs and wonders performed in the first century validated the Apostles and their message,¹² and, with the completion of the canon of Scripture and the passing of the Apostles, have ceased.¹³ The modern charismatic movement is not from God.¹⁴

¹ 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Matthew 5:18-19; 24:35.

² Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 83:18; Matthew 28:19; 1 John 5:7-9.

³ 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 2:18.

⁴ Hebrews 1:1-14; 1 Timothy 3:16; Matthew 1:23; 1 Timothy 2:5.

⁵ Daniel 3:25; 7:13; Matthew 9:6; 14:33; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 2:8.

⁶ Mark 10:45; John 3:16; 1 John 2:2.

⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; John 2:18-22; Ephesians 4:8-10; Acts 1:9-11.

⁸ Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Hebrews 9:14; Hebrews 3:7-12 & Psalm 95:6-11.

⁹ Matthew 3:11; Acts 2.

¹⁰ Romans 8:9; 1 John 4:13.

¹¹ Ephesians 5:18-21; Galatians 5:16-25.

¹² 2 Corinthians 12:12.

¹³ Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 13:8-10.

¹⁴ Matthew 12:39; 24:24.

God created the world out of nothing.¹⁵ Genesis records the literal account of the origin of the world thousands, not millions, of years ago, and records the literal account of the worldwide flood in the days of Noah.¹⁶ God made mankind—male and female—in His image and likeness.¹⁷

As a result of the disobedience of the first man, Adam, sin entered into the world, and death by sin. All the sons of Adam deserve spiritual and physical death because of the immediate imputation of Adam's sin to all mankind, Christ only excepted.¹⁸ People also deserve condemnation because of the totally depraved and corrupt human nature with which they are born,¹⁹ and their countless personal transgressions, both through commission and through omission, of God's holy law, in thought, word, and deed.²⁰

When, enabled and drawn by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through the Word of God,²¹ sinners repent and believe the gospel,²² they are justified or declared righteous, based on the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ,²³ are adopted into the family of God,²⁴ enter into the New Covenant or Testament,²⁵ and are born again.²⁶ Salvation is by God's grace alone, through repentant faith alone,²⁷ based on the death of Christ alone,²⁸ and to the glory of God alone.²⁹ When God gives sinners repentance and faith,³⁰ they turn from their sins to receive Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King,³¹ trusting in and resting upon the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life.³² Everyone who is born again is eternally secure—once saved, each Christian is always saved from the penalty and power of sin, and certain of final and complete deliverance from the presence of sin.³³ Christians can have full assurance³⁴ of their election according to the foreknowledge of God³⁵ and union with Jesus Christ by the Spirit through faith³⁶ because of the sufficiency of Christ's work for them, confirmed by the holy fruits of regeneration in their lives.³⁷ Neither Calvinism nor Arminianism represent the teaching of

¹⁵ Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3.

¹⁶ Genesis 1-2; 6-9.

¹⁷ Genesis 1:26-27.

¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:22; Romans 5:12-19.

¹⁹ Jeremiah 17:9; Psalm 51:5.

²⁰ Romans 3:10-23; Matthew 5:48; 1 John 3:4.

²¹ John 6:44; 12:32; 16:7-13; Romans 10:17.

²² Mark 1:15.

²³ Romans 3:28; 4:1-8.

²⁴ Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5.

²⁵ Hebrews 8:8-13.

²⁶ John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23.

²⁷ Ephesians 2:8-9.

²⁸ Hebrews 10:10, 14.

²⁹ Revelation 5:8-14.

³⁰ 2 Timothy 2:25; Philippians 1:29.

³¹ Ezekiel 33:11; Revelation 2:22; 9:20-21; Acts 3:22; Hebrews 9:11-14; Revelation 19:16.

³² Psalm 2:12; John 3:18; Titus 3:4-8.

³³ John 10:27-30; Romans 8:28-39; John 17:8, 17, 24.

³⁴ 1 John 5:13; 2 Timothy 1:12.

³⁵ 1 Peter 1:2.

³⁶ Ephesians 1:3-14.

³⁷ 1 John 2:29; 3:14; 5:1-2

Scripture on the doctrine of salvation.³⁸ Eternal security is a tremendous encouragement to the Christian's love for Christ and pursuit of holiness.³⁹

Jesus Christ started His church during His ministry upon the earth and has preserved true churches from the first century until today.⁴⁰ In modern times, those true churches—assemblies of visible saints⁴¹—are generally called “Baptist,” having formerly been called “Anabaptist,” as heirs of the first century churches, although doctrine and practice, not the wording of a local congregation's name, are of the essence of a true church. Neither Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, nor Protestant denominations originating in the Reformation period have the doctrine or the historical heritage of Christ's true churches. Christ's church is an assembly of baptized believers, organized to carry out the Lord's work.⁴² The church is neither universal and visible, nor universal and invisible, but is solely local and visible.⁴³ The nation of Israel and the church are distinct entities, and Scriptural teaching on the relation of the church and Israel fits much more closely with dispensationalism than it does with covenant theology.⁴⁴ Jesus Christ is the sole Head of His church.⁴⁵ The human overseers of the church are pastors, also called elders or bishops,⁴⁶ and are men who meet the qualifications in the pastoral epistles.⁴⁷ Deacons are men who have a special role as servants in Christ's church.⁴⁸

Disciples are added to the church by baptism—the immersion of the believer in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a beautiful symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.⁴⁹ In the Lord's Supper, the church commemorates Christ's death until He comes through the elements of unleavened bread and the unfermented fruit of the vine.⁵⁰ Pouring or sprinkling water on infants or adults is not Biblical baptism, nor are transubstantiation or consubstantiation taught in Scripture. Neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper brings about the new birth or justification, as justification is by faith alone, apart from all works and religious rituals.⁵¹ Every believer has direct access to God as a spiritual priest.⁵²

Christ's churches have the serious responsibility to preach the gospel to every creature and make disciples world-wide.⁵³ Christ's churches offer Him reverent and solemn worship⁵⁴ in accordance

³⁸ Acts 7:51; 2 Peter 2:1; John 4:13-14.

³⁹ 2 Peter 1:5-11; 1 John 5:13.

⁴⁰ Matthew 16:18; 18:20; 28:18-20; Ephesians 3:21.

⁴¹ Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1.

⁴² Acts 2:41, 47.

⁴³ Every one of the 115 uses of the word translated “church” in the New Testament refers to something local and visible.

⁴⁴ Romans 11:25-26; 1 Corinthians 10:32; Ephesians 3:1-6.

⁴⁵ Ephesians 1:22.

⁴⁶ Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

⁴⁷ 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9.

⁴⁸ Acts 6:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:8-13

⁴⁹ Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 8:36-38; Romans 6:3-6.

⁵⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:23-27; Mark 14:22-25.

⁵¹ Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 11:6; 2 Timothy 1:9.

⁵² 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6.

⁵³ Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16.

⁵⁴ John 4:24; Hebrews 12:28; Psalm 92:3.

with His explicit commandment,⁵⁵ singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs,⁵⁶ and rejecting all worldly and fleshly false worship, including the vast majority of what is termed “Contemporary Christian Music” today.⁵⁷

Biblical predictions about future events should be interpreted literally.⁵⁸ Literal interpretation requires that Christ’s second coming is premillennial and pretribulational.⁵⁹ Those saved from their sin will live forever in conscious bliss and fellowship with God in the new heaven and new earth. Those who die without having their sins remitted will suffer conscious torment in the lake of fire forever and ever.⁶⁰

Scripture teaches personal and ecclesiastical separation from all unrepentant doctrinal and practical apostasy and spiritual compromise, so that true churches and Christians earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints and out of love for Christ and others mark and avoid both unregenerate false teachers and even true believers who are committed to spiritual compromise, the latter, however, not being counted as enemies, but admonished as brethren.⁶¹

Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed⁶²

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; he was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; from thence he shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. In the holy church; we acknowledge one baptism on account of the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Creed of Chalcedon⁶³

⁵⁵ Leviticus 10:1-2; Matthew 15:9; Colossians 2:23.

⁵⁶ Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16.

⁵⁷ 1 John 2:15-17.

⁵⁸ Micah 5:2 & Matthew 2:5-6; Zechariah 9:9 & John 12:14-15.

⁵⁹ Revelation 1:19 & 4:1; 20:1-6; 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9.

⁶⁰ Matthew 25:34, 41, 46; Revelation 14:9-11; 20:11-22:15.

⁶¹ Romans 16:17; Ephesians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14; Jude 3.

⁶² The creed has received minor modification in the clause about the church and in clarifying that baptism does not remit sin. The procession of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son is also clarified.

⁶³ The creed has received minor modification in its initial phrase. The reference to Mary as *Theotokos* has also been removed, not because it cannot be interpreted in an orthodox sense, but because it has been abused by Roman Catholicism to teach the idolatrous veneration and worship of Mary. The final clause referring to the “holy fathers” has also been removed because, while it is orthodox, it could be misused.

We confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us, yet without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, according to the manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two Persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us.

Athanasian Creed⁶⁴

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Christian faith. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Christian faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity, neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible.

The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet they are not three eternals, but one Eternal.

As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated, but one Uncreated, and one Incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Spirit Almighty. And yet they are not three almighties, but one Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet they are not three gods, but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord. And yet not three lords, but one Lord.

⁶⁴ The creed has received minor modification. The Latin *catholicus* has been translated as “Christian.” The *Filioque* has also been added, and *descendit ad inferos* removed, but its original meaning, “and died,” supplied. The second to last sentence has also been omitted, not because it is unorthodox, but because it can be misunderstood.

For as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge each Person by Himself to be both God and Lord, so we are also forbidden by the Christian religion to say that there are three gods or three lords.

The Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and the Son, neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three fathers; one Son, not three sons; one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits.

And in the Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another, but all three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved must think thus of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man; God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man of the substance of his mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching His manhood; who, although He is God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh but by taking of the manhood into God; one altogether; not by confusion of substance, but by unity of Person. For as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ; who suffered and died for our salvation and rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven, He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence He will come to judge the quick and the dead. At His coming all men will rise again with their bodies and shall give account for their own works.

This is the Christian faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.

Detailed Statement of Faith with Verse References⁶⁵

Chapter 1 *Of the Holy Scriptures*

1. The holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.⁶⁶ Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable, yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and His will, which is necessary unto salvation.⁶⁷ Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to

⁶⁵ This detailed statement of faith is based upon the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689, with a number of adjustments and updates.

⁶⁶ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Isaiah 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Ephesians 2:20.

⁶⁷ Romans 1:19-21ff.; 2:14-15; Psalm 19:1-3.

declare his will to his people;⁶⁸ and afterward for the better preserving, and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of his people against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and of the world, to commit the same wholly to writing;⁶⁹ which makes the holy Scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing His will to his people being now ceased. With the cessation of the sign gifts in conjunction with the completion of the canon of Scripture and the death of the Apostles, nobody living today has miraculous spiritual gifts such as the ability to speak in tongues or to utter infallible prophecy.⁷⁰

2. Under the Name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written; are now contained all the Books of the Old and New Testament, which are these:

Of the Old Testament.

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

Of the New Testament.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, 1 & 2 of Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, Jude & Revelation.

All which are given by the inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.⁷¹

3. The Books commonly called Apocrypha, not being inspired by God, are no part of the canon (or rule) of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority to the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of, then other human writings.⁷²

4. The authority of the holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, depends not upon the testimony of any man, or church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the Author thereof; therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.⁷³

5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church of God, to an high and reverent esteem of the holy Scriptures; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, and the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, and many other incomparable excellencies, and entire perfections thereof, are arguments whereby it does

⁶⁸ Hebrews 1:1-4.

⁶⁹ Proverbs 22:19-21; Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:19, 20.

⁷⁰ 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:20.

⁷¹ 2 Timothy 3:16.

⁷² Luke 24:27, 44; Romans 3:1-2.

⁷³ 2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 John 5:9.

abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God; yet, notwithstanding our full persuasion, and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.⁷⁴

6. The whole council of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the holy Scriptures; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of men.⁷⁵

Nevertheless we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God, to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word,⁷⁶ and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies; which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.⁷⁷

7. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all;⁷⁸ yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them.⁷⁹

8. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old),⁸⁰ and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them.⁸¹ But because these original tongues 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 and search⁸² them, therefore they are to be translated into the common language of every nation unto which they come,⁸³ that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all,⁸⁴ they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.

9. God's promises to infallibly inspire and perfectly preserve His Words among His true churches lead by good and necessary consequence to the canonicity of the traditional Hebrew (and Aramaic) Masoretic text of Scripture and the Greek Received Text of Scripture.⁸⁵ Because Scripture is still God's Word when translated, it possesses Divine authority according to its substance when it accurately renders the original language text (which alone is finally and ultimately authoritative,

⁷⁴ John 16:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; 1 John 2:20, 27.

⁷⁵ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Galatians 1:8-9.

⁷⁶ John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12.

⁷⁷ 1 Corinthians 11:13-14; 14:26, 40.

⁷⁸ 2 Peter 3:16.

⁷⁹ Psalms 19:7; 119:30.

⁸⁰ Romans 3:2.

⁸¹ Isaiah 8:20; Acts 15:15.

⁸² John 5:39.

⁸³ 1 Corinthians 14:6, 9, 11-12, 24, 28.

⁸⁴ Colossians 3:16.

⁸⁵ 2 Timothy 3:16; Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:5-6; Matthew 4:4; 24:35; 28:19-20; Isaiah 59:21; 1 Timothy 3:15.

both according to its words and according to its substance). It is therefore appropriate to recognize that faithful vernacular translations of the Received Hebrew and Greek texts of Scripture, such as the Authorized, King James Version in English, are worthy of reverence as the very Word of God.

10. As an unparalleled and accurate translation of the Hebrew and Greek Received Texts of Scripture, the Authorized, King James Version is used exclusively in the public preaching of our church in the English language. Preaching in other languages takes place exclusively from a Received Text Bible version that practices formal equivalence in its translation philosophy to the extent reasonably possible.

11. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself.⁸⁶ Therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold but one) it must be searched by other places that speak more clearly.

12. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which Scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved.⁸⁷

Chapter 2 *Of God and of the Holy Trinity*

1. The Lord our God is but one only living and true God,⁸⁸ whose subsistence is in and of himself,⁸⁹ infinite in being⁹⁰ and perfection, whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself; a most pure spirit,⁹¹ invisible,⁹² without body, parts, or passions, who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, who is immutable,⁹³ immense,⁹⁴ eternal,⁹⁵ incomprehensible, Almighty,⁹⁶ every way infinite, most holy,⁹⁷ most wise, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the council of his own immutable, and most righteous will,⁹⁸ for his own glory,⁹⁹ most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin,¹⁰⁰ the rewarder of them that diligently seek

⁸⁶ 2 Peter 1:20, 21; Acts 15:15-16.

⁸⁷ Matthew 22:29, 31-32; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 28:23.

⁸⁸ 1 Corinthians 8:4, 6; Deuteronomy 6:4.

⁸⁹ Jeremiah 10:10; Isaiah 48:12.

⁹⁰ Exodus 3:14.

⁹¹ John 4:24.

⁹² 1 Timothy 1:17; Deuteronomy 4:15-16.

⁹³ Malachi 3:6.

⁹⁴ 1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:23.

⁹⁵ Psalm 90:2.

⁹⁶ Genesis 17:1.

⁹⁷ Isaiah 6:3.

⁹⁸ Psalm 16:3; Isaiah 46:10.

⁹⁹ Proverbs 16:4; Romans 11:36.

¹⁰⁰ Exodus 34:6-7.

him,¹⁰¹ and withal most just, and terrible in his judgments,¹⁰² hating all sin and all workers of iniquity,¹⁰³ and who will by no means clear the guilty.¹⁰⁴

2. God having all life,¹⁰⁵ glory,¹⁰⁶ goodness,¹⁰⁷ blessedness, in and of himself: is alone in, and unto himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creature which he has made, nor deriving any glory from them,¹⁰⁸ but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them, he is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things,¹⁰⁹ and he hath most sovereign dominion over all creatures,¹¹⁰ to do by them, for them, and upon them, whatsoever he pleases; in his sight all things are open and manifest,¹¹¹ his knowledge is infinite and infallible, so as nothing is to him uncertain;¹¹² he is most holy in all his councils, in all his works, and in all his commands;¹¹³ to him is due from angels and men,¹¹⁴ whatsoever worship, service, or obedience as creatures they owe unto the Creator, and whatever he is further pleased to require of them.

3. In this divine and infinite Being there are three subsistences, the Father the Word (or Son) and Holy Spirit,¹¹⁵ of one substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole Divine essence,¹¹⁶ yet the essence undivided, the Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding, the Son is eternally begotten of the Father,¹¹⁷ the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son,¹¹⁸ all infinite, without beginning, therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being; but distinguished by several peculiar, relative properties, and personal relations; which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on Him.

Chapter 3 *Of Gods Decree*

1. God has decreed in Himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy council of His own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever comes to pass;¹¹⁹ yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, nor has fellowship with any therein,¹²⁰ nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty, or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather

¹⁰¹ Hebrews 11:6.

¹⁰² Nehemiah 9:32-33.

¹⁰³ Psalm 5:5-6.

¹⁰⁴ Exodus 34:7; Nahum 1:2-3.

¹⁰⁵ John 5:26.

¹⁰⁶ Psalm 148:13.

¹⁰⁷ Psalm 119:68.

¹⁰⁸ Job 22:2-3.

¹⁰⁹ Romans 11:34-36.

¹¹⁰ Daniel 4:25 & 5:24-25.

¹¹¹ Hebrews 4:13.

¹¹² Ezekiel 11:5; Acts 15:18.

¹¹³ Psalm 145:17.

¹¹⁴ Revelation 5:12-14.

¹¹⁵ 1 John 5:7; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14.

¹¹⁶ Exodus 3:14; John 14:11; 1 Corinthians 8:6.

¹¹⁷ John 1:14, 18.

¹¹⁸ John 15:26; Galatians 4:6.

¹¹⁹ Isaiah 46:10; Ephesians 1:11; Hebrews 6:17.

¹²⁰ James 1:15, 17; 1 John 1:5.

established,¹²¹ in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power, and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree.¹²²

2. God knows whatsoever may, or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions.¹²³

3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory some men and angels are predestinated, or foreordained to eternal life, through Jesus Christ,¹²⁴ to the praise of His glorious grace;¹²⁵ others being left to act in their sin to their just condemnation,¹²⁶ to the praise of His glorious justice. However, Scripture without equal ultimacy asserts that God actively and powerfully prepares His kingdom for the elect from the foundation of the world, while asserting only that the lost are fitted on account of their own sin for damnation.¹²⁷

4. These angels and men thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly, and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain, and definite, that it cannot be either increased, or diminished.¹²⁸

5. Those of mankind that are predestinated to life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret council and good pleasure of his will, has chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, and in accordance with His foreknowledge.¹²⁹

6. As God has appointed the elect unto glory, so he has by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto,¹³⁰ wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ,¹³¹ are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified,¹³² and kept by his power through faith unto salvation,¹³³ neither are any other justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved by Christ but the elect only.¹³⁴

7. The Doctrine of this high mystery of predestination, is to be handled with special prudence, and care; that men attending the will of God revealed in his word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election;¹³⁵ so shall

¹²¹ Acts 4:27-28, John 19:11.

¹²² Numbers 23:19; Ephesians 1:3-5.

¹²³ Acts 15:18.

¹²⁴ 1 Timothy 5:21; Matthew 25:41.

¹²⁵ Ephesians 1:5, 6.

¹²⁶ Romans 9:22-23; Jude 4.

¹²⁷ Matthew 25:34, 41; Romans 9:22-23; Jeremiah 18:1-10.

¹²⁸ 2 Timothy 2:19; John 13:18.

¹²⁹ Ephesians 1:4, 9, 11; Romans 8:30; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:9; 1 Peter 1:2.

¹³⁰ 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

¹³¹ 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10.

¹³² Romans 8:30; 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

¹³³ 1 Peter 1:5.

¹³⁴ John 10:26; 17:9; 6:64.

¹³⁵ 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5; 2 Peter 1:10.

this doctrine afford matter of praise,¹³⁶ reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation, to all that sincerely obey the gospel.¹³⁷

8. God is not willing that any person eternally perish, but that all come to repentance.¹³⁸ He sincerely wills the salvation of every individual, and prepared hell for the devil and his angels, they having fallen into sin, not for mankind,¹³⁹ so that those who eternally perish bear themselves all the responsibility for their damnation, as unwilling to receive His freely and sincerely offered grace.¹⁴⁰

Chapter 4

Of Creation of the World, of Man, and concerning the Flood

1. In the beginning it pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,¹⁴¹ for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness,¹⁴² to create or make the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six literal days, and all very good.¹⁴³

2. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female,¹⁴⁴ with reasonable and immortal souls, rendering them fit unto that life to God, for which they were created; being made after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness;¹⁴⁵ having the law of God written in their hearts,¹⁴⁶ and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject to change.¹⁴⁷

3. Besides the Law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil;¹⁴⁸ which whilst they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.¹⁴⁹

4. The account of origins presented in Genesis 1–11 is a simple but factual presentation of actual events, and therefore provides a reliable framework for scientific research into the question of the origin and history of life, mankind, the earth, and the universe.

5. The various original life forms or kinds, including mankind, were made by direct, supernatural, creative acts of God, not by natural, physical processes over millions of years.¹⁵⁰

¹³⁶ Ephesians 1:6; Romans 11:33.

¹³⁷ Romans 11:5-6; Luke 10:20.

¹³⁸ 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4.

¹³⁹ Matthew 25:41, 46.

¹⁴⁰ Titus 2:11; Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34.

¹⁴¹ John 1:2-3; Hebrews 1:2; Job 26:13.

¹⁴² Romans 1:20.

¹⁴³ Colossians 1:16; Genesis 2:1-2.

¹⁴⁴ Genesis 1:27.

¹⁴⁵ Genesis 1:26; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Ephesians 4:24.

¹⁴⁶ Romans 2:14-15.

¹⁴⁷ Genesis 3:6.

¹⁴⁸ Genesis 2:17; 3:11.

¹⁴⁹ Genesis 1:26, 28.

¹⁵⁰ Genesis 1:11-12, 21, 24-25.

6. The living descendants of any of the original kinds (apart from man) may represent more than one species today, reflecting the genetic potential within each original kind. Only limited biological changes (including mutational deterioration) have occurred naturally within each kind since creation; one kind does not change over time into a different kind.¹⁵¹

7. The great flood of Genesis was an actual historic event, worldwide in its extent and catastrophic in its effects. At one stage during the flood, the waters covered the entire surface of the whole globe with no land surface being exposed anywhere; the flood of Noah is not to be understood as any form of local or regional flood. The Noachian flood was a significant geological event, and most fossiliferous sediments were deposited at that time.¹⁵²

8. Scripture teaches that the origin of man and of the whole creation took place thousands, not tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, or millions of years ago.¹⁵³

9. The days in Genesis do not correspond to geologic ages but are six consecutive, 24-hour creative days. The first day began in Genesis 1:1, and the seventh day, which was also a normal 24-hour day, ended in Genesis 2:3.¹⁵⁴

10. The gap theory, progressive creation, day-age, framework hypothesis, theistic evolution or evolutionary creation, functionality–cosmic temple, analogical days, day-gap-day, and all other views that try to fit macroevolution or millions of years into Genesis are incompatible with Scripture.

11. Truth and knowledge may not be divided into a secular and a religious realm, whereby allegedly “religious truth” about creation, or about any other subject, can contradict allegedly “secular truth.”¹⁵⁵

12. No apparent, perceived, or claimed evidence in any field of study, including science, history, and chronology, can be valid if it contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture obtained by literal hermeneutics.¹⁵⁶

13. Mankind, consisting of two genders (male and female), is created in the image of God. Each of these two distinct, complementary genders reflects the image of God.¹⁵⁷

14. The special and unique creation of Adam from dust and Eve from Adam was supernatural and immediate. Adam and Eve did not originate from any other preexisting lifeforms.¹⁵⁸

15. All human life has unique and eternal value and begins at conception, that is, at the moment of fertilization. Each unborn child is a unique, living human being, created in the image of God, and

¹⁵¹ Genesis 1:11–12, 1:21, 1:24–25, 30:37–42; 1 Corinthians 15:39.

¹⁵² Genesis 7:19–20; 2 Peter 3:5–7.

¹⁵³ Genesis 1–2; 5; 10–11; Mark 10:6; Luke 3:23–38.

¹⁵⁴ Genesis 1:1–2:3; Exodus 20:8–11, 31:17; Hebrews 4:3–4.

¹⁵⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17; John 17:17;

¹⁵⁶ Numbers 23:19; 2 Samuel 22:31; Psalm 18:30; Isaiah 46:9–10, 55:9; Romans 3:4; 2 Timothy 3:16.

¹⁵⁷ Genesis 1:26–27, 5:2, 9:6; Matthew 19:4–6; Mark 10:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9–10.

¹⁵⁸ Genesis 2:7, 2:21–23, 3:19; 1 Corinthians 11:8–12, 15:47–49.

must be respected and protected both before and after birth. The abortion of an unborn child or the active, intentional taking of human life through euthanasia or assisted suicide constitutes a violation of the sanctity of human life and is a crime against God and man.¹⁵⁹

16. There is only one race of mankind—the human race or Adam’s race. Adam and Eve were the first two humans. All people alive today are the descendants of Adam and Eve, as well as of Noah.¹⁶⁰

17. Since all humans are made in the image of God, all humans, including the unborn, have equal dignity and value regardless of age, intelligence, gender, physical ability, shade of skin tone, religion, ethnicity, or any other characteristic.¹⁶¹

18. The only legitimate marriage—which is sanctioned by God and validated in the creation account of Genesis 1-2—is the joining of one naturally born man and one naturally born woman in a single, exclusive union as delineated in Scripture. God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other and has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. Any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, prostitution, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, abuse, or any attempt to change one’s gender, or disagreement with one’s biological gender, is sinful and offensive to God.¹⁶²

19. Gender and biological sex are equivalent and cannot be separated. A person’s gender is determined at conception (fertilization), coded in that person’s DNA, and cannot be changed by drugs, hormones, or surgery. Rejection of one’s biological sex (gender) or identifying oneself by the opposite sex is a sinful rejection of the way God made that person.¹⁶³

Chapter 5

Of God’s Creation and Role for Male and Female

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God’s image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood.¹⁶⁴ Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order.¹⁶⁵ Adam’s headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin.¹⁶⁶ The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women.¹⁶⁷ In the home, the husband’s loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife’s intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced

¹⁵⁹ Genesis 9:6; Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17; Psalm 51:5; 1 Corinthians 15:49; James 2:11.

¹⁶⁰ Genesis 1:26–27, 3:20, 10:1, 10:32; 1 Corinthians 15:45–47; Luke 17:27; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5.

¹⁶¹ Genesis 1:26–27, 3:20, 11:9; Acts 17:26–28.

¹⁶² Genesis 1:27–28, 2:24; Leviticus 18:1–30; Matthew 5:27–30, 19:4–5; Mark 10:2–9; Romans 1:18–32; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–7; Hebrews 13:4.

¹⁶³ Genesis 1:26–28, 5:1–2; Psalm 51:5, 139:13–16; Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 1:20–21, 19:4–6; Mark 10:6; Luke 1:31; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11; Galatians 3:28.

¹⁶⁴ Genesis 1:26–27; 2:18.

¹⁶⁵ Genesis 2:18, 21–24; 1 Corinthians 11:7–9; 1 Timothy 2:12–14.

¹⁶⁶ Genesis 2:16–18, 21–24; 3:1–13; 1 Corinthians 11:7–9.

¹⁶⁷ Genesis 3:1–7, 12, 16.

by usurpation or servility. In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.

2. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women.¹⁶⁸ Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family, in the covenant community, and in the state.¹⁶⁹ Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse. In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership.¹⁷⁰ In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, the leadership role of pastor, elder, or bishop and deacon are restricted to men, and women are not to teach adult men.¹⁷¹ In the state, men to lead and, when appropriate, fight in the armed forces, while women are keepers at home.¹⁷² In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission—domestic, religious, or civil—ever involves a mandate to follow a human authority into sin.¹⁷³

3. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries.¹⁷⁴ Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will. No man or woman need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world.¹⁷⁵

4. God-ordained distinctions between men and women extend to their appearance. It is a shame for a man, but a glory to a woman, to have long hair, and a woman must not wear that which pertains to a man, neither must a man put on a woman's garment.¹⁷⁶

Chapter 6 *Of 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,¹⁷⁷ from the greatest even to the least,¹⁷⁸ by His most wise and holy providence, to the end for the which they were created; according unto his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable council of His own will; to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness and mercy.¹⁷⁹

¹⁶⁸ Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18; Galatians 3:28.

¹⁶⁹ Genesis 2:18; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:11-15; Isaiah 3:12

¹⁷⁰ Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

¹⁷¹ Galatians 3:28; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

¹⁷² Isaiah 3:12; Jeremiah 50:37; 51:30; Titus 2:5.

¹⁷³ Daniel 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Peter 3:1-2.

¹⁷⁴ 1 Timothy 2:11-15; 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9.

¹⁷⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:7-21.

¹⁷⁶ 1 Corinthians 11:14-15; Deuteronomy 22:5.

¹⁷⁷ Hebrews 1:3; Job 38:11. Isaiah 46:10-11; Psalm 135:6.

¹⁷⁸ Matthew 10:29-31.

¹⁷⁹ Ephesians 1:11.

2. Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly;¹⁸⁰ so that there is not anything that befalls any apart from his providence;¹⁸¹ yet by the same providence he orders them to fall out, according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.¹⁸²

3. God in His ordinary providence makes use of means;¹⁸³ yet is free to work, without,¹⁸⁴ above,¹⁸⁵ and against them¹⁸⁶ at His pleasure.

4. The Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence, that His determinate council extends itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions, both of angels, and men;¹⁸⁷ which also he most wisely and powerfully bounds, and otherwise orders, and governs,¹⁸⁸ in a manifold dispensation to His most holy ends:¹⁸⁹ yet so, as the sinfulness of their 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.¹⁹⁰

5. The most wise, righteous, and gracious God, does oftentimes, leave for a season his own children to manifold temptations, and the corruptions of their own heart, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption, and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled; and to raise them to a more close, and constant dependence for their support, upon himself; and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for other just and holy ends,¹⁹¹ so that whatsoever befalls any of his elect is by His appointment, for His glory, and their good.¹⁹²

6. As for those wicked and ungodly men, whom God as a righteous judge, for former sin does blind and harden;¹⁹³ from them he not only withholds his grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understanding, and wrought upon in their hearts:¹⁹⁴ but sometimes also withdraws the gifts which they had,¹⁹⁵ and exposes them to such objects as their corruptions makes occasion of sin;¹⁹⁶ and withal gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and

180 Acts 2:23.

181 Proverbs 16:33.

182 Genesis 8:22.

183 Acts 27:31, 44; Isaiah 55:10-11.

184 Hosea 1:7.

185 Romans 4:19-21.

186 Daniel 3:27.

187 Romans 11:32-34; 2 Samuel 24:1; 1 Chronicles 21:1.

188 2 Kings 19:28; Psalm 76:10.

189 Genesis 50:20; Isaiah 10:6-7, 12.

190 Psalm 50:21; 1 John 2:16.

191 2 Chronicles 32:25-26, 31; 2 Samuel 24:1; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9.

192 Psalm 23:6; Romans 8:28.

193 Romans 1:24, 26, 28; 11:7-8.

194 Deuteronomy 29:4.

195 Matthew 13:12.

196 Deuteronomy 2:30; 2 Kings 8:12-13.

the power of Satan,¹⁹⁷ whereby it comes to pass, that they harden themselves, even under those means which God uses for the softening of others.¹⁹⁸

7. As the providence of God does in general reach to all creatures, so after a most special manner it takes care of the holy Scriptures,¹⁹⁹ of His physical people—the nation of Israel,²⁰⁰ of his spiritual people—all who are born again through faith in Jesus Christ,²⁰¹ and of his church,²⁰² and disposes of all things to the good of those he has redeemed.²⁰³

Chapter 7

Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment thereof.

1. Although God created man upright, and perfect, and gave him a righteous law, which had been unto life had he kept it, and threatened death upon the breach thereof;²⁰⁴ yet he did not long abide in this honour; Satan using the subtilty of the serpent to seduce Eve, then by her seducing Adam, who without any compulsion, did willfully transgress the law of their creation, and the command given unto them, in eating the forbidden fruit;²⁰⁵ which God was pleased according to his wise and holy council to permit, to His own glory.

2. Our first parents, by this sin, fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and we fell in them, whereby death came upon all; all becoming dead in sin,²⁰⁶ and wholly defiled, in all the faculties, and parts, of soul, and body.²⁰⁷

3. They being the root, and by Gods appointment, Adam standing in the room, and stead of all mankind; the guilt of this sin was imputed, and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation,²⁰⁸ being now conceived in sin,²⁰⁹ and by nature children of wrath,²¹⁰ the servants of sin, the subjects of death²¹¹ and all other miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal, unless the Lord Jesus set them free.²¹²

4. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil,²¹³ do proceed all actual transgressions.²¹⁴

¹⁹⁷ Psalm 81:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

¹⁹⁸ Exodus 8:15, 32; Isaiah 6:9-10; 1 Peter 2:7-8.

¹⁹⁹ Psalm 119:160; Isaiah 59:21; Matthew 5:18-19; 24:35.

²⁰⁰ Deuteronomy 32:8; Amos 9:8-9; Isaiah 43:3-5; Romans 11:26.

²⁰¹ Psalm 84:11; 121:7; Proverbs 12:21; 2 Corinthians 4:15-17; 1 Timothy 4:10.

²⁰² Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 5:23-32.

²⁰³ Romans 8:28-39.

²⁰⁴ Genesis 2:16-17.

²⁰⁵ Genesis 3:12-13; 2 Corinthians 11:3.

²⁰⁶ Romans 3:23; 5:12-19.

²⁰⁷ Titus 1:15; Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-19.

²⁰⁸ Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45, 49.

²⁰⁹ Psalm 51:5; Job 14:4.

²¹⁰ Ephesians 2:3.

²¹¹ Romans 6:20; 5:12.

²¹² Hebrews 2:14; 1 Thessalonians 1:10.

²¹³ Romans 8:7; Colossians 1:21.

²¹⁴ James 1:14-15; Matthew 15:19.

5. This corruption of nature, during this life, remains in those that are regenerated:²¹⁵ and although it be through Christ pardoned, and mortified, yet both itself, and the first motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.²¹⁶

6. The special creation of Adam (the first man) and Eve (the first woman) and their subsequent fall into sin is the basis for the necessity of salvation for mankind;²¹⁷ since all mankind, having fallen in Adam, can be redeemed by the Christ, the Second Adam.²¹⁸

7. Human death (both physical and spiritual), as well as all animal death, disease, bloodshed, suffering, extinction, thorns and thistles, and all other natural evils, from earthquakes to hurricanes to tsunamis, entered this world subsequent to, and as a direct consequence of, man's sin.²¹⁹

Chapter 8

Of God's Covenants and Dispensations

1. The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have attained the reward of life, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which He has been pleased to express, by way of covenant.²²⁰

2. Moreover man having brought himself under the curse of the law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace²²¹ wherein he freely offers unto sinners, life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved;²²² and promising to give unto all those that believe and are ordained unto eternal life, His Holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to come to Christ.²²³

3. This covenant is revealed in the gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman,²²⁴ and afterwards by farther steps, until the full discovery thereof was completed in the New Testament;²²⁵ and it is founded in that eternal covenant transaction, that was between the Father and the Son, about the redemption of the elect;²²⁶ and it is alone by the grace of this covenant, that all of the posterity of fallen Adam, that ever were saved, did obtain life and a blessed immortality; man being now utterly incapable of acceptance with God upon those terms, on which Adam stood in his state of innocence.²²⁷

²¹⁵ Romans 7:18, 23; Ecclesiastes 7:20; 1 John 1:8.

²¹⁶ Romans 7:23-25; Galatians 5:17.

²¹⁷ Genesis 2:7, 2:17, 2:22-23, 3:6-20; Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:45-49.

²¹⁸ Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45-49.

²¹⁹ Genesis 2:16-17; 3:8, 19; 4:4-8; Romans 5:12, 8:20-22; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22.

²²⁰ Luke 17:10; Job 35:7, 8.

²²¹ Genesis 2:17; Galatians 3:10; Romans 3:20-21.

²²² Romans 8:3; Mark 16:15-16; John 3:16.

²²³ Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 6:44-45.

²²⁴ Genesis 3:15.

²²⁵ Hebrews 1:1-4.

²²⁶ 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2.

²²⁷ Hebrews 11:6, 13; Romans 4:1-8; Act. 4:12; John 8:56.

4. The existence of a covenant among the Persons of the Trinity and a covenant of grace between God and His elect is entirely consistent with the literal fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham and his seed, David and his seed, and the physical nation of Israel in the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New Covenants, as well as all other Biblical covenants.²²⁸ The church and Israel are distinct entities, and the church does not replace Israel in God's covenantal purposes.²²⁹

5. Dispensations are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on the earth through men under varying responsibilities. Changes in the dispensational dealings of God with mankind depend on changed conditions or situations in which they are successively found with relation to God; these changes are the result of human failures and the judgments of God. Different administrative responsibilities of this character are manifest in the Biblical record. They span the entire history of mankind, and each ends in failure after a respective test and in an ensuing judgment from God. Though time is not a primary consideration, each divine administration, or dispensation, relates to a definite period of human history. Following relatively brief descriptions of several dispensations lasting from Adam to through the patriarchal dispensation, extensive Biblical revelation describes the dispensation of Israel under Moses, the present dispensation of grace, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom. These dispensations are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused, as they are chronologically successive.²³⁰

6.) The different dispensations do not constitute different ways of salvation. While believers grew in their understanding as the time of Christ's coming drew near, ever since the fall of Adam, and in every time period until the final consummation in the new heaven and earth, sinners have been justified, not by works, but by grace alone through faith alone, trusting in God and His coming Messiah.²³¹ In the dispensation of grace and in all future ages until the final consummation, no sinners who have passed the age and mental development that brings accountability can be saved apart from faith in the consciously known and trusted Savior, Jesus Christ.²³²

Chapter 9 *Of Christ the Mediator*

1. It pleased God in his eternal purpose, to chose 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;²³³ the Prophet,²³⁴ Priest,²³⁵ and King;²³⁶ Head and Savior of his people²³⁷ and of the church,²³⁸ the heir of all things,²³⁹ and judge of the world:²⁴⁰ unto whom he did from all eternity give a people to

²²⁸ Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5; 2 Samuel 7:8-17; Jeremiah 31:31-34.

²²⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:32.

²³⁰ Genesis 12:1-3; John 1:17; Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 10:32; Galatians 3:19; Ephesians 1:10; Revelation 20:1-7.

²³¹ Genesis 3:15; 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4; Psalm 2:12; Romans 4:1-8; Revelation 14:6.

²³² John 14:6; Acts 4:12.

²³³ Isaiah 42:1; 1 Peter 1:19-20.

²³⁴ Acts 3:22.

²³⁵ Hebrews 5:5-6.

²³⁶ Psalm 2:6; Luke 1:33.

²³⁷ Revelation 15:3; Luke 2:11.

²³⁸ Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23.

²³⁹ Hebrews 1:2.

²⁴⁰ Acts 17:31.

be Christ's spiritual seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.²⁴¹

2. The Son of God, the second Person in the Holy Trinity, being very 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: did when the fullness of time was come take upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties, and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin:²⁴² being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit coming down upon her, and the power of the most High overshadowing her, and so was made of a woman, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham, and David according to the Scriptures:²⁴³ so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, were inseparably joined together in one Person: without conversion, composition, or confusion: which Person is very God, and very Man; yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and Man.²⁴⁴

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, above measure;²⁴⁵ having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;²⁴⁶ in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell:²⁴⁷ to the end that being holy, harmless, undefiled,²⁴⁸ and full of grace and truth,²⁴⁹ he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a Mediator, and surety;²⁵⁰ which office He took not upon Himself, but was thereunto called by his Father;²⁵¹ who also put all power and judgement in His hand, and gave Him a commandment to execute the same.²⁵²

4. This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake,²⁵³ which that he might discharge he was made under the Law,²⁵⁴ and did perfectly fulfill it, and underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have born and suffered,²⁵⁵ being made sin and a curse for us:²⁵⁶ enduring most grievous sorrows in His soul; and most painful sufferings in His body;²⁵⁷ was crucified, and died, and remained in the state of the dead; yet saw no corruption:²⁵⁸ on the third day he arose from the dead,²⁵⁹ with the same body in which He suffered;²⁶⁰ with which He also ascended into heaven:²⁶¹

²⁴¹ Isaiah 53:10; John 17:6; Romans 8:30.

²⁴² John 1:1-18; Galatians 4:4; Romans 8:3; Hebrews 2:14-17; 4:15.

²⁴³ Luke 1:27, 31, 35.

²⁴⁴ Romans 9:5; 1 Timothy 2:5.

²⁴⁵ Psalm 45:7; Acts 10:38; John 3:34.

²⁴⁶ Colossians 2:3.

²⁴⁷ Colossians 1:19.

²⁴⁸ Hebrews 7:26.

²⁴⁹ John 1:14.

²⁵⁰ Hebrews 7:22.

²⁵¹ Hebrews 5:5.

²⁵² John 5:22, 27; Matthew 28:18; Acts 2:36.

²⁵³ Psalm 40:7,-8; Hebrews 10:5-11; John 10:18.

²⁵⁴ Galatians 4:4; Matthew 3:15.

²⁵⁵ Galatians 3:13; Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 3:18.

²⁵⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:21.

²⁵⁷ Matthew 26:37-38; Luke 22:44; Matthew 27:46.

²⁵⁸ Acts 13:37.

²⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

²⁶⁰ John 20:25, 27.

²⁶¹ Mark 16:19; Act. 1:9-11.

and there sits at the right hand of his Father, making intercession;²⁶² and shall return to judge Men and Angels, at the end of the world.²⁶³

5. The Lord Jesus by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the Justice of God,²⁶⁴ procured reconciliation, and purchased an Everlasting inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.²⁶⁵

6. Although the price of Redemption was not actually paid by Christ, till after his incarnation, yet the power, efficacy, and benefit thereof were communicated to the elect in all ages successively, from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein He was revealed, and signified to be the seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head;²⁶⁶ and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world:²⁶⁷ being the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.²⁶⁸

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.²⁶⁹

8. To all those who trust in Christ for eternal redemption, He certainly, and effectually applies, and communicates the same; making intercession for them,²⁷⁰ uniting them to himself by his Spirit, revealing unto them, in and by the Word, the mystery of salvation; persuading them to believe, and obey;²⁷¹ governing their hearts by his Word and Spirit,²⁷² and overcoming all their enemies by his Almighty power, and wisdom;²⁷³ in such manner, and ways as are most consonant to his wonderful, and unsearchable dispensation; and all of free, and absolute grace, without any merit in them to procure it.²⁷⁴

9. This office of Mediator between God and man, is proper only to Christ, who is the Prophet, Priest, and King of people of God; and may not be either in whole, or any part thereof transferred from Him to any other.²⁷⁵

10. This number and order of offices is necessary; for in respect of our ignorance, we stand in need of his prophetic office;²⁷⁶ and in respect of our alienation from God, and imperfection of the best

²⁶² Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24.

²⁶³ Acts 10:42; Romans 14:9-10; Acts 1:11.

²⁶⁴ Hebrews 9:14; 10:14; Romans 3:25-26.

²⁶⁵ John 17:2; Hebrews 9:15.

²⁶⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:4; Hebrews 4:2; 1 Peter 1:10-11

²⁶⁷ Revelation 13:8.

²⁶⁸ Hebrews 13:8.

²⁶⁹ John 3:13; Acts 20:28.

²⁷⁰ John 6:37; 10:15-16; 17:9.

²⁷¹ John 17:6; Ephesians 1:9; 1 John 5:20.

²⁷² Romans 8:9, 14.

²⁷³ Psalm 110:1; 1 Corinthians 15:25-26.

²⁷⁴ John 3:8; Ephesians 1:8.

²⁷⁵ 1 Timothy 2:5.

²⁷⁶ John 1:18.

of our services, we need his priestly office, to reconcile us, and present us acceptable unto God:²⁷⁷ and in respect of our averseness, and utter inability to return to God, and for our rescue, and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need his kingly office,²⁰ to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom, and lead us into his coming earthly kingdom during his future 1,000 year reign.²⁷⁸

11. While Christ's penal, substitutionary, and vicarious death has special reference to every individual believer,²⁷⁹ to the church,²⁸⁰ to Israel,²⁸¹ and to the elect,²⁸² nevertheless His death is of infinite value, the sins of every man being imputed to Him,²⁸³ so that His death is sufficient to remove, not the sins of the elect alone, but also the sins of the whole world,²⁸⁴ enabling the gospel to be sincerely offered to all men by God, by Christ, and by the Lord's people,²⁸⁵ and aggravating the condemnation of those who reject Christ's death for them.²⁸⁶

Chapter 10 *Of Free Will*

1. God has indued the will of Man, with that natural liberty, and power of acting upon choice; that it is neither forced, nor by any necessity of nature determined to do good or evil.²⁸⁷

2. Man in his state of innocence, had freedom, and power, to will, and to do that which was good, and well-pleasing to God;²⁸⁸ but yet was mutable, so that he might fall from it.²⁸⁹

3. Man by his fall into a state of sin hath wholly lost all ability of will, to any spiritual good accompanying salvation;²⁹⁰ so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin,²⁹¹ is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself; or to prepare himself thereunto.²⁹²

4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he frees him from his natural bondage under sin,²⁹³ and by his grace alone, enables him freely to will, and to do that

²⁷⁷ Colossians 1:21; Galatians 5:17.

²⁰ Joh. 16:8; Ps. 110:3; Luk. 1:74, 75.

²⁷⁸ John 16:8; Psalm 110:3; Luke 1:74-75; Revelation 19:11-20:6.

²⁷⁹ Galatians 2:20.

²⁸⁰ Ephesians 5:25.

²⁸¹ Matthew 1:21.

²⁸² Romans 8:33-34; John 10:15.

²⁸³ 2 Corinthians 5:19.

²⁸⁴ 1 John 2:2.

²⁸⁵ Matthew 23:37; 1 Timothy 2:4-6; Revelation 22:17.

²⁸⁶ 2 Peter 2:1.

²⁸⁷ Matthew 17:12; James 1:14; Deuteronomy 30:19.

²⁸⁸ Ecclesiastes 7:29.

²⁸⁹ Genesis 3:6.

²⁹⁰ Romans 5:6; 8:7.

²⁹¹ Ephesians 2:1, 5.

²⁹² Titus 3:3-5; John 6:44.

²⁹³ Colossians 1:13; John 8:36.

which is spiritually good;²⁹⁴ yet so as that by reason of his remaining corruptions he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good; but doth also will that which is evil.²⁹⁵

5. The will of man is made perfectly, and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only.²⁹⁶

Chapter 11 *Of God's Calling*

1. Those whom God has predestinated unto life in accordance with His foreknowledge²⁹⁷ he is pleased, in His appointed, and accepted time, to call²⁹⁸ by his word, and Spirit, out of that state of sin, and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ;²⁹⁹ enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God;³⁰⁰ taking away their⁴ heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh;³⁰¹ renewing their wills, and by his Almighty power determining them to that which is good, and drawing them to Jesus Christ;³⁰² yet so as they come most freely,³⁰³ being made willing by his grace.

2. This call is of God's free grace alone,³⁰⁴ the creature being dead in trespasses and sins, until being enlightened, drawn, and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it;³⁰⁵ and that by no less power, then that which raised up Christ from the dead.³⁰⁶

3. Infants dying in infancy are saved by Christ through the Spirit;³⁰⁷ who works when, and where, and how he pleases.³⁰⁸ so also are all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.

4. Others not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit,³⁰⁹ they neither will nor can truly come to Christ; and therefore cannot be saved:³¹⁰ much less can men that receive not the Christian religion be saved; be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the Law of that religion they do profess.³¹¹

²⁹⁴ Philippians 2:13.

²⁹⁵ Romans 7:15, 18-19, 21, 23.

²⁹⁶ Ephesians 4:13.

²⁹⁷ Romans 8:29; 1 Peter 1:2

²⁹⁸ Romans 8:30; 11:7; Ephesians 1:10-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.

²⁹⁹ Ephesians 2:1-6.

³⁰⁰ Acts 26:18; Ephesians 1:17-18.

⁴ Ezek. 36:26.

³⁰¹ Ezekiel 36:26.

³⁰² Deuteronomy 30:6; Ezekiel 36:27, Ephesians 1:19.

³⁰³ Revelation 22:17.

³⁰⁴ 2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 2:8.

³⁰⁵ 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:5; John 5:25.

³⁰⁶ Ephesians 1:19-20.

³⁰⁷ 2 Samuel 12:3; John 3:3-6.

³⁰⁸ John 3:8.

³⁰⁹ Matthew 22:14; 13:20-21; Hebrews 6:4-5.

³¹⁰ John 6:44-45, 65; 1 John 2:24-25.

³¹¹ Acts 4:12; John 4:22; 17:3.

Chapter 12 *Of Justification*

1. God freely justifies all believers,³¹² not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting, and accepting their persons as righteous;³¹³ not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone,³¹⁴ not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing Christ's active obedience unto the whole law, and obedience in suffering death, for their whole and sole Righteousness,³¹⁵ they receiving, and resting on him, and His righteousness, by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.³¹⁶

2. Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ, and his righteousness, is alone the instrument of justification:³¹⁷ yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but works by love.³¹⁸

3. Christ by his obedience, and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are justified; and did by the sacrifice of Himself, in the blood of his cross, undergoing in their stead, the penalty due unto them: make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in their behalf:³¹⁹ yet inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them, and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for anything in them;³²⁰ their justification is only of free grace, that both the exact justice and rich grace of God, might be glorified in the justification of sinners.³²¹

4. God did from all eternity decree to justify all the elect,³²² and Christ did in the fulness of time die for their sins, and rise again for their justification;³²³ nevertheless they are not justified personally, until the Holy Spirit in due time actually applies Christ unto them.³²⁴

5. God continues to forgive the sins of those that are justified,³²⁵ and although they can never fall from the state of justification;³²⁶ yet they may by their sins fall under God's¹⁷ Fatherly displeasure;³²⁷ and in that condition, they have not usually the light of his countenance restored

³¹² Romans 3:24; 8:30.

³¹³ Romans 4:5-8; Ephesians 1:7.

³¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Romans 5:17-19.

³¹⁵ Philippians 3:8-9; Ephesians 2:8-10.

³¹⁶ John 1:12; Romans 5:17; Philippians 1:29.

³¹⁷ Romans 3:28

³¹⁸ Galatians 5:6; James 2:17, 22, 26.

³¹⁹ Hebrews 10:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Isaiah 53:5-6.

³²⁰ Romans 8:32; 2 Corinthians 5:21.

³²¹ Romans 3:26; Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:7.

³²² Galatians 3:8; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Timothy 2:6.

³²³ Romans 4:25.

³²⁴ Colossians 1:21-22; Titus 3:4-7.

³²⁵ Matthew 6:12; 1 John 1:7, 9.

³²⁶ John 10:28.

¹⁷ Ps. 89:31, 32, 33.

³²⁷ Psalm 89:31-33.

unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith, and repentance.³²⁸

6. The Justification of believers under the Old Testament was in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament.³²⁹

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Chapter 13 *Of Adoption*

All those that are justified, God vouchsafed, in, and for the sake of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption;³³⁰ by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of children of God,³³¹ have His name put upon them,³³² receive the Spirit of adoption,³³³ have access to the throne of grace with boldness,³³⁴ are enabled to cry “Abba, Father,”³³⁵ are pitied,³³⁶ protected,³³⁷ provided for,³³⁸ and chastened by him, as by a Father;³³⁹ yet never cast off;³⁴⁰ but sealed to the day of Redemption,³⁴¹ and inherit the promises, as heirs of everlasting salvation.³⁴²

Chapter 14 *Of Sanctification*

1. They who are united to Christ, effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart, and a new Spirit created in them, through the power of Christ’s death and resurrection; are also farther sanctified, really, and personally,³⁴³ through the same power, by his word and Spirit dwelling in them;³⁴⁴ the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed,³⁴⁵ and the several lusts thereof, are more and more weakened and mortified;³⁴⁶ and they more and more enlivened and strengthened in all saving graces,³⁴⁷ to the practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.³⁴⁸

³²⁸ Psalm 32:5; 51:1-19; Matthew 26:75.
³²⁹ Galatians 3:9; Romans 4:22-24.
³³⁰ Ephesians 1:5; Galatians 4:4-5.
³³¹ John 1:12; Romans 8:17.
³³² 2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 3:12.
³³³ Romans 8:15.
³³⁴ Hebrews 4:16.
³³⁵ Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 2:18.
³³⁶ Psalm 103:13.
³³⁷ Proverbs 14:26.
³³⁸ 1 Peter 5:7.
³³⁹ Hebrews 12:6.
³⁴⁰ Isaiah 54:8-9; Lamentations 3:31; John 10:27-30.
³⁴¹ Ephesians 4:30.
³⁴² Hebrews 1:14; 6:12.
³⁴³ Acts 20:32; Romans 6:5-6.
³⁴⁴ John 17:17; Ephesians 3:16-19; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-23.
³⁴⁵ Romans 6:14; Galatians 5:24.
³⁴⁶ Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5.
³⁴⁷ Colossians 1:11.
³⁴⁸ 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14.

2. This Sanctification is throughout, in the whole man,³⁴⁹ yet imperfect in this life; there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part,³⁵⁰ whence ariseth a continual, and irreconcilable war; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.³⁵¹

3. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail;³⁵² yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part overcomes;³⁵³ and so the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, pressing after an heavenly life, in evangelical obedience to all the commands which Christ as Head and King, in his Word has prescribed to them.³⁵⁴

Chapter 15

Of Repentance unto Life and Salvation

1. When men are converted, having sometimes lived in the state of nature, and therein served divers lusts and pleasures, God in their calling gives them repentance unto life.³⁵⁵

2. Whereas there is none that doeth good, and sinneth not;³⁵⁶ and all men may, through the power, and deceitfulness of their corruption dwelling in them, with the prevalency of temptation, fall into great sins, and provocations; God has mercifully provided that those so sinning, and falling, be renewed through repentance unto salvation.³⁵⁷

3. This saving repentance is an evangelical grace,³⁵⁸ whereby a person, being by the Holy Spirit made sensible of the manifold evils of his sin, doth, by faith in Christ, humble himself for it, with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-abhorrence;³⁵⁹ praying or seeking for pardon, and strength of grace, with a purpose and endeavour by supplies of the Spirit, to walk before God unto all well pleasing in all things.³⁶⁰

4. Unfeigned repentance includes a settled purpose of heart³⁶¹ to leave all our sins, resulting in a careful endeavor to live a more holy and sanctified life,³⁶² according to all God's commands,³⁶³ and a turning, or change of the whole man from sin to God,³⁶⁴ resulting in the endeavour, through his grace, to mortify indwelling lust, or corruptions,³⁶⁵ and obtain a great reformation both in the

³⁴⁹ 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

³⁵⁰ Romans 7:18, 23.

³⁵¹ Galatians 5:17; 1 Peter 2:11.

³⁵² Romans 7:23.

³⁵³ Romans 6:14.

³⁵⁴ Ephesians 4:15-16; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1.

³⁵⁵ Titus 3:2-5.

³⁵⁶ Ecclesiastes 7:20.

³⁵⁷ Luke 22:31-32.

³⁵⁸ Zechariah 12:10; Acts 11:18.

³⁵⁹ Ezekiel 36:31; 2 Corinthians 7:11.

³⁶⁰ Psalm 119:6, 128.

³⁶¹ Luke 15:7ff.

³⁶² Ezekiel 18:30.

³⁶³ Ephesians 2:10.

³⁶⁴ Ezekiel 33:11.

³⁶⁵ Romans 8:13.

outward and inward man, according to the will of God; this repentance unto life is not wrought without faith in the soul.³⁶⁶

5. The lost must repent at the moment of their new birth, while for believers repentance is also to be continued through the whole course of our lives, upon the account of the body of death, and the motions thereof; so it is every man's duty, to repent of his particular known sins, particularly.³⁶⁷

6. Such is the provision which God hath made through Christ in the covenant of grace, for the preservation of believers unto salvation, that although there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation;³⁶⁸ yet there is no sin so great, that it shall bring damnation on them that repent;³⁶⁹ which makes the constant preaching of repentance necessary.

Chapter 16 *Of Saving Faith*

1. The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts;³⁷⁰ and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the² Word;³⁷¹ by which also, and by the administration of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, prayer, and other means appointed of God, it is increased, and strengthened.³⁷²

2. By this faith a Christian believes to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, because of the authority of God Himself;³⁷³ and also apprehends an excellency therein,⁴ above all other writings; and all things in the world:³⁷⁴ as it bears forth the glory of God in his attributes, the excellency of Christ in his natures and offices; and the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit in his workings, and operations; and so is enabled to⁵ cast his soul upon the truth thus believed;³⁷⁵ and also acts differently, upon that which each particular passage thereof contains; yielding obedience to the commands,³⁷⁶ trembling at the threatenings,³⁷⁷ and embracing the promises of God, for this life, and that which is to come:³⁷⁸ 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, in accordance with the covenant of grace.³⁷⁹

³⁶⁶ Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38; 3:19, 26; 11:18.

³⁶⁷ Luke 19:8; 1 Timothy 1:13, 15.

³⁶⁸ Romans 6:23.

³⁶⁹ Isaiah 1:16, 18; 55:7.

³⁷⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:13; Ephesians 2:8.

² Rom. 10:14, 17.

³⁷¹ Romans 10:14, 17.

³⁷² Luke 17:5; 1 Peter 2:2; Acts 20:32.

³⁷³ Acts 24:14.

⁴ Ps. 19:7, 8, 9, 10; Ps. 119:72.

³⁷⁴ Psalm 19:7-10; 119:72.

⁵ 2 Tim. 1:12.

³⁷⁵ 2 Timothy 1:12.

³⁷⁶ John 15:14.

³⁷⁷ Isaiah 66:2.

³⁷⁸ Hebrews 11:13.

³⁷⁹ John 1:12; Acts 16:31; Galatians 2:20; Acts 15:11.

3. This faith although it be different in degrees, and may be weak, or strong;³⁸⁰ yet it is in the least degree of it, different in the kind, or nature of it (as is all other saving grace) from the (so-called) faith, and common grace of temporary believers;³⁸¹ and therefore though it may be many times assailed, and weakened; yet it gets the victory;³⁸² growing up in many, to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ,³⁸³ who is both the Author and Finisher of our faith.³⁸⁴

Chapter 17 *Of Good Works*

1. Good works are only such as God has commanded in His holy Word;³⁸⁵ and not such as without the warrant thereof, are devised by men, out of blind zeal,² or upon any pretense of good intentions.³⁸⁶

2. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits, and evidences³ of a true, and lively faith;³⁸⁷ and by them believers manifest their thankfulness,³⁸⁸ strengthen their assurance,³⁸⁹ edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the gospel,³⁹⁰ stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify⁷ God,³⁹¹ whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto,³⁹² that having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end eternal life.³⁹³

3. Their ability to do good works, is not at all sourced in themselves; but wholly from the Spirit of Christ;³⁹⁴ and that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is necessary an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit, to work in them to will, and to do, of his good pleasure;³⁹⁵ yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty, unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.³⁹⁶

³⁸⁰ Hebrews 5:13-14; Matthew 6:30; Romans 4:19-20.

³⁸¹ 2 Peter 1:1.

³⁸² Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 5:4-5.

³⁸³ Hebrews 6:11-12; Colossians 2:2.

³⁸⁴ Hebrews 12:2.

³⁸⁵ Micah 6:8; Hebrews 13:21.

² Mat. 15:9; Isa. 29:13.

³⁸⁶ Matthew 15:9; Isaiah 29:13.

³ Jam. 2:18, 22.

³⁸⁷ James 2:18, 22.

³⁸⁸ Psalm 116:12, 13.

³⁸⁹ 1 John 2:3, 5; 2 Peter 1:5-11.

³⁹⁰ Matthew 5:16.

⁷ 1 Tim. 6:1; 1 Pet. 2:15; Phil. 1:11.

³⁹¹ 1 Timothy 6:1; 1 Peter 2:15; Philippians 1:11.

³⁹² Ephesians 2:10.

³⁹³ Romans 6:22.

³⁹⁴ John 15:4, 6.

³⁹⁵ 2 Corinthians 3:5; Philippians 2:13.

³⁹⁶ Philippians 2:12; Hebrews 6:11-12; Isaiah 64:7.

4. They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do.³⁹⁷

5. We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom by them we can neither profit, nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins;³⁹⁸ but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants; and because as they are good they proceed from his Spirit,³⁹⁹ and as they are wrought by us they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.⁴⁰⁰

6. Yet notwithstanding the persons of believers being accepted through Christ their good works also are accepted in Him;⁴⁰¹ not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unreprovable in God's sight; but that he looking upon them in His Son is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere although accomplished with many weaknesses and imperfections.⁴⁰²

7. Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use, both to themselves and others;⁴⁰³ yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith,⁴⁰⁴ nor are done in a right manner according to the Word,⁴⁰⁵ nor to a right end, the glory of God;⁴⁰⁶ they are therefore sinful and cannot please God; nor make a man fit to receive grace from God;⁴⁰⁷ and yet their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing to God.⁴⁰⁸

Chapter 18

Of the Preservation and Perseverance of the Saints

1. Those whom God hath accepted in the beloved, called and sanctified by his Spirit, and given the precious faith of his elect unto, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved, seeing the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, (whence he still begets and nourishes in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality) and though many storms and floods arise and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon:⁴⁰⁹ 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

³⁹⁷ Job 9:2-3; Galatians 5:17; Luke 17:10.

³⁹⁸ Romans 3:20; 4:6; Ephesians 2:8-9.

³⁹⁹ Galatians 5:22-23.

⁴⁰⁰ Isaiah 64:6; Psalm 143:2.

⁴⁰¹ Ephesians 1:6; 1 Peter 2:5.

⁴⁰² Matthew 25:21, 23; Hebrews 6:10.

⁴⁰³ 2 Kings 10:30; 1 Kings 21:27, 29.

⁴⁰⁴ Genesis 4:5; Hebrews 11:4, 6.

⁴⁰⁵ 1 Corinthians 13:1.

⁴⁰⁶ Matthew 6:2, 5.

⁴⁰⁷ Amos 5:21-22; Romans 9:16; Titus 3:5.

⁴⁰⁸ Job 21:14-15; Matthew 25:41-43.

⁴⁰⁹ John 10:28-29; Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 2:19; 1 John 2:19.

them,⁴¹⁰ yet He is still the same,⁴¹¹ and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God unto salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraven upon the palms of his hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.

2. This perseverance of the saints depends upon the immutability of the decree of election,⁴¹² flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ and union with him,⁴¹³ the oath of God,⁴¹⁴ the abiding of His Spirit and the seed of God within them,⁴¹⁵ and the nature of the new covenant,⁴¹⁶ from all which arises also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

3. And though they may, through the temptation of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation fall into grievous sins, and for a time continue therein;⁴¹⁷ whereby they incur Gods displeasure, and grieve his Holy Spirit,⁴¹⁸ come to have their graces and comforts impaired,⁴¹⁹ have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded,⁴²⁰ hurt, and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgements upon themselves:⁴²¹ yet they shall renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end.⁴²²

Chapter 19

Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation

1. Although temporary believers, and other unregenerate men, may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions, of being in the favour of God, and in a state of salvation, which hope of theirs shall perish;⁴²³ yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace; and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God,⁴²⁴ which hope shall never make them ashamed.⁴²⁵

2. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon⁴ a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith,⁴²⁶ founded on the blood and righteousness of Christ revealed

⁴¹⁰ Psalm 89:31-32; 1 Corinthians 11:32.

⁴¹¹ Malachi 3:6.

⁴¹² Romans 8:30; 9:11, 16.

⁴¹³ Romans 5:9-10; John 14:19.

⁴¹⁴ Hebrews 6:17-18.

⁴¹⁵ 1 John 3:9.

⁴¹⁶ Jeremiah 32:40.

⁴¹⁷ Matthew 26:70, 72, 74.

⁴¹⁸ Isaiah 64:5, 9; Ephesians 4:30.

⁴¹⁹ Psalm 51:10, 12.

⁴²⁰ Psalm 32:3-4.

⁴²¹ 2 Samuel 12:14.

⁴²² Luke 22:32, 61-62.

⁴²³ Job 8:13-14; Matthew 7:22-23.

⁴²⁴ 1 John 2:3; 3:14, 18-19, 21, 24; 5:13.

⁴²⁵ Romans 5:2, 5.

⁴ Heb. 6:11, 19.

⁴²⁶ Hebrews 6:11, 19.

in the gospel;⁴²⁷ and also upon the inward evidence of those graces of the Spirit unto which promises are made,⁴²⁸ and on the testimony of the Spirit of adoption, witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God;⁴²⁹ and as a fruit thereof keeping the heart both humble and holy.⁴³⁰

3. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer, may wait long and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it;⁴³¹ yet being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may without extraordinary revelation in the right use of means attain thereunto:⁴³² and therefore it is the duty of every one, to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, that thereby 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, the proper¹² fruits of this assurance;⁴³³ so far is it¹³ from inclining men to looseness.⁴³⁴

4. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin, which wounds the conscience, and grieves the Spirit,⁴³⁵ by some sudden or vehement temptation,⁴³⁶ by God's withdrawing the light of his countenance and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light;⁴³⁷ yet are they never destitute of the seed of God,⁴³⁸ and life of faith,⁴³⁹ that love of Christ, and the brethren, that sincerity of heart, and conscience of duty, out of which by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may in due time be revived:⁴⁴⁰ and by the which in the mean time they are preserved from utter despair.⁴⁴¹

Chapter 20 *Of the Law of God*

1. God gave to Adam a law of universal obedience, written in his heart, and a particular precept of not eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil,⁴⁴² by which He bound him, and all his posterity, to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience,⁴⁴³ promised life upon the

⁴²⁷ Hebrews 6:17-18.

⁴²⁸ 2 Peter 1:4-5, 10-11.

⁴²⁹ Romans 8:15-16.

⁴³⁰ 1 John 3:1-3.

⁴³¹ Isaiah 50:10; Psalm 88; 77:1-12.

⁴³² 1 John 4:13; Hebrews 6:11-12.

¹² Rom. 5:1, 2, 5. ch. 14:17; Ps. 119:32.

⁴³³ Romans 5:1-2, 5; 14:17; Psalm 119:32.

¹³ Rom. 6:1, 2. Tit. 2:11, 12, 14.

⁴³⁴ Romans 6:1-2; Titus 2:11-14.

⁴³⁵ Psalm 51:8, 12, 14.

⁴³⁶ Psalm 116:11; 77:7-8; 31:22.

⁴³⁷ Psalm 30:7.

⁴³⁸ 1 John 3:9.

⁴³⁹ Luke 22:32.

⁴⁴⁰ Psalm 42:5, 11.

⁴⁴¹ Lamentations 3:26-31.

⁴⁴² Genesis 2:17; Ecclesiastes 7:29.

⁴⁴³ Romans 10:5.

fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and indued him with power and ability to keep it.⁴⁴⁴

2. The same law that was first written in the heart of man, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall;⁴⁴⁵ and was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, along with the ceremonial Sabbath commandment,⁴⁴⁶ in the Ten Commandments, written in two Tables; the four first containing Israel's duty towards God, and the other six Israel's duty to man.⁴⁴⁷

3. Besides the law commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people Israel ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, His graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits;⁴⁴⁸ and partly holding forth various instructions of moral duties,⁴⁴⁹ all which ceremonial laws being appointed only to the time of reformation, are by Jesus Christ the true Messiah and only lawgiver, who was furnished with power from the Father, for that end, abrogated and taken away.⁴⁵⁰

4. To them also he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obligatory now; their general equity only, being of moral use,⁴⁵¹ as well as their value in pointing to Jesus Christ, who fulfilled them.⁴⁵²

5. The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof,⁴⁵³ and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it:⁴⁵⁴ neither doth Christ in the gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.⁴⁵⁵

6. Although true believers be not under the Law, as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned;⁴⁵⁶ yet it is of great use to them as well as to others: in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God, and their duty, it directs and binds them, to walk accordingly discovering also the sinful pollutions of their natures, hearts and lives; so as examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin;⁴⁵⁷ 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; and the threatenings of it serve to shew what even their sins deserve; and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curse and unallayed rigor thereof. The promises of it likewise shew them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance

⁴⁴⁴ Galatians 3:10, 12.

⁴⁴⁵ Romans 2:14-15.

⁴⁴⁶ Exodus 31:17; Nehemiah 9:14; Colossians 2:

⁴⁴⁷ Deuteronomy 10:4.

⁴⁴⁸ Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:17.

⁴⁴⁹ 1 Corinthians 5:7.

⁴⁵⁰ Colossians 2:14-17; Ephesians 2:14-16.

⁴⁵¹ 1 Corinthians 9:8-10.

⁴⁵² Hebrews 6:18; Numbers 35:9-34.

⁴⁵³ Romans 13:8-10; James 2:8-12.

⁴⁵⁴ James 2:10-11.

⁴⁵⁵ Matthew 5:17-19; Romans 3:31.

⁴⁵⁶ Romans 6:14; Galatians 2:16; Romans 8:1; 10:4.

⁴⁵⁷ Romans 3:20; 7:7ff.

thereof, though not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works; so as man's doing good and refraining from evil, because the law encourages to the one and deters from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law and not under grace.⁴⁵⁸

7. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the gospel; but do sweetly comply with it;⁴⁵⁹ the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man, to do that freely and cheerfully, which the will of God revealed in the law, requires to be done.⁴⁶⁰

Chapter 21

Of the gospel, and of the extent of the grace thereof.

1. The covenant of works being broken by sin, and made unprofitable unto life; God was pleased to give forth the promise of Christ, the Seed of the woman, as the means of calling the elect, and begetting in them repentance and faith;⁴⁶¹ in this promise, the gospel, as to the substance of it, was revealed, and therein effectual, for the conversion and salvation of sinners.⁴⁶²

2. This promise of Christ, and salvation by him, is revealed only by the Word of God;⁴⁶³ neither do the works of creation, or providence, with the light of nature, make discovery of Christ, or of grace by him; so much as in a general, or obscure way;⁴⁶⁴ much less that men destitute of the revelation of him by the promise, or gospel; should be enabled thereby, to attain saving faith, or repentance.⁴⁶⁵

3. The revelation of the gospel to sinners, made in divers times, and by sundry parts; with the addition of promises, and precepts for the obedience required therein, as to the nations, and persons, to whom it is granted, is of the sovereign will and good pleasure of God,⁴⁶⁶ who is not willing that any should perish, but that all men should come to repentance,⁴⁶⁷ and therefore commands his churches to preach the gospel to every person and make disciples among all nations,⁴⁶⁸ Christ having died for the sins of the whole world.⁴⁶⁹

4. Although the gospel be the only outward means, of revealing Christ, and saving grace; and is, as such, abundantly sufficient thereunto; yet that men who are dead in trespasses, may be born again, made alive, or regenerated; there is moreover necessary, an effectual work of the Holy Spirit, upon the whole soul, for the producing in them a new spiritual life;⁴⁷⁰ without which no other means will effect their conversion to God.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁵⁸ Romans 6:12-14; 1 Peter 3:8-13.

⁴⁵⁹ Galatians 3:21.

⁴⁶⁰ Ezekiel 36:27.

⁴⁶¹ Genesis 3:15.

⁴⁶² Revelation 13:8.

⁴⁶³ Romans 1:17.

⁴⁶⁴ Romans 10:14-15, 17.

⁴⁶⁵ Proverbs 29:18; Isaiah 25:7; 60:2-3.

⁴⁶⁶ Psalm 147:20; Acts 16:7

⁴⁶⁷ 2 Peter 3:9.

⁴⁶⁸ Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19.

⁴⁶⁹ John 3:16; 1 John 2:2.

⁴⁷⁰ 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 1:19-20.

⁴⁷¹ John 6:44; 2 Corinthians 4:4, 6.

Chapter 22

Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience

1. The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the gospel, consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the rigor and curse of the law;⁴⁷² and in their being delivered from this present evil world,⁴⁷³ bondage to Satan,⁴⁷⁴ and dominion of sin;⁴⁷⁵ from the evil of afflictions;⁴⁷⁶ the fear, and sting of death, the victory of the grave,⁴⁷⁷ and everlasting damnation;⁴⁷⁸ as also in their free access to God; and their yielding obedience unto him not out of a slavish fear,⁴⁷⁹ but a child-like love, and willing mind.⁴⁸⁰ All which were common also to believers under the law for the substance of them;⁴⁸¹ but under the new testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law, to which Israel was subjected; and in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace; and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God,⁴⁸² then believers under the law did ordinarily partake of, the Spirit not permanently indwelling Old Testament saints as He does permanently dwell in those of this dispensation.⁴⁸³

2. God alone is Lord of the conscience,⁴⁸⁴ and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, or not contained in it.⁴⁸⁵ So that to believe such doctrines, or obey such commands out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience;⁴⁸⁶ and the requiring of an implicit faith, and absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.⁴⁸⁷

3. They who upon pretense of Christian liberty do practice any sin, or cherish any sinful lust; as they do thereby pervert the main design of the grace of the gospel to their own destruction;⁴⁸⁸ so they wholly destroy the end of Christian liberty, which is, that being 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 life.⁴⁸⁹

Chapter 23

⁴⁷² Galatians 3:13.

⁴⁷³ Galatians 1:4.

⁴⁷⁴ Acts 26:18.

⁴⁷⁵ Romans 8:3.

⁴⁷⁶ Romans 8:28.

⁴⁷⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:54-57.

⁴⁷⁸ 2 Thessalonians 1:10.

⁴⁷⁹ Romans 8:15.

⁴⁸⁰ Luke 1:74-75; 1 John 4:18.

⁴⁸¹ Galatians 3:9, 14.

⁴⁸² John 7:38-39; Hebrews 10:19-21.

⁴⁸³ John 14:17.

⁴⁸⁴ James 4:12; Romans 14:4.

⁴⁸⁵ Acts 4:19; 5:29; 1 Corinthians 7:23; Matthew 15:9.

⁴⁸⁶ Colossians 2:20-23.

⁴⁸⁷ 1 Corinthians 3:5; 2 Corinthians 1:24.

⁴⁸⁸ Romans 6:1-2.

⁴⁸⁹ Galatians 5:13; 2 Peter 2:18-21; Luke 1:68-75.

Of Religious Worship and the Lord's Day

1. The light of nature shows that there is a God, who has Lordship, and sovereignty over all; is just, good, and does good unto 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.⁴⁹⁰ But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself;⁴⁹¹ and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations, and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations, or any other way, not prescribed in the holy Scriptures.⁴⁹²

2. Religious worship is to be given to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and to Him alone;⁴⁹³ not to angels, saints, or any other creatures,⁴⁹⁴ and at least since the fall, not without a mediator,⁴⁹⁵ nor in the mediation of any other but Christ alone.⁴⁹⁶

3. Prayer with thanksgiving, being one special part of natural worship, is by God required of all men.⁴⁹⁷ But that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son,⁴⁹⁸ by the help of the Spirit,⁴⁹⁹ according to His will,⁵⁰⁰ with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and in a known tongue.⁵⁰¹

4. Prayer is to be made for things lawful, and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter;⁵⁰² but not for the dead,⁵⁰³ nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death.⁵⁰⁴

5. The reading of the Scriptures,⁵⁰⁵ preaching, and hearing the Word of God,⁵⁰⁶ teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord;⁵⁰⁷ as also the administration of baptism,⁵⁰⁸ and the Lord's Supper,⁵⁰⁹ are all parts of religious worship of God, to be performed in obedience to Him, with understanding, faith,

⁴⁹⁰ Jeremiah 10:7; Mark 12:33.

⁴⁹¹ Deuteronomy 12:32.

⁴⁹² Exodus 20:4-6.

⁴⁹³ Matthew 4:9-10; 28:19.

⁴⁹⁴ Romans 1:25; Colossians 2:18; Revelation 19:10.

⁴⁹⁵ John 14:6.

⁴⁹⁶ 1 Timothy 2:5.

⁴⁹⁷ Psalm 95:1-7; 65:2.

⁴⁹⁸ John 14:13-14.

⁴⁹⁹ Romans 8:26.

⁵⁰⁰ 1 John 5:14.

⁵⁰¹ 1 Corinthians 14:16-17.

⁵⁰² 1 Timothy 2:1-2; 2 Samuel 7:29.

⁵⁰³ 2 Samuel 12:21-23.

⁵⁰⁴ 1 John 5:16.

⁵⁰⁵ 1 Timothy 4:13.

⁵⁰⁶ 2 Timothy 4:2; Luke 8:18.

⁵⁰⁷ Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19.

⁵⁰⁸ Matthew 28:19-20.

⁵⁰⁹ 1 Corinthians 11:26.

reverence, and godly fear; moreover solemn humiliation, with fastings;⁵¹⁰ and thanksgiving upon special occasions, ought to be used in an holy and religious manner.⁵¹¹

6. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now under the gospel tied unto, or made more acceptable by, any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed; but God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit, and in truth;⁵¹² as in private families⁵¹³ daily,⁵¹⁴ and in secret each one by himself,⁵¹⁵ so more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly, nor willfully, to be neglected, or forsaken, when God by his Word and providence calls thereunto.⁵¹⁶

7. As it is of the law of nature, that in general a proportion of time by God's appointment, be set apart for the worship of God; so by his Word, he appointed the Sabbath for Israel's worship,⁵¹⁷ while from the resurrection of Christ, He appointed the first day of the week, which is called the Lord's Day;⁵¹⁸ and is to be continued to the end of this age; the observation of Israel's Sabbath being fulfilled in Christ.⁵¹⁹

8. While the Lord's Day is not the Sabbath, it is appropriate for Christians to consider Sabbath principles on the first day of the week. On the Lord's Day it is fitting that, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs aforehand, they not only observe an holy rest all the day, from their own works, words, and thoughts, about their worldly employment, and recreations,⁵²⁰ but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.⁵²¹

Chapter 24 *Of Lawful Oaths and Vows*

1. A lawful oath is a part of religious worship, wherein the person swearing in truth, righteousness, and judgment, solemnly calls God to witness what he swears;⁵²² and to judge him according to the truth or falseness thereof.⁵²³

2. The name of God only is that by which men ought to swear; and therein it is to be used, with all holy fear and reverence, 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;⁵²⁴ yet as in matter of weight and

⁵¹⁰ Esther 4:16; Joel 2:12.

⁵¹¹ Exodus 15:1-21; Psalm 107.

⁵¹² John 4:21; 1 Timothy 2:8.

⁵¹³ Acts 10:2.

⁵¹⁴ Matthew 6:11; Psalm 55:17.

⁵¹⁵ Matthew 6:6.

⁵¹⁶ Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:42.

⁵¹⁷ Exodus 20:8, 11; 31:1.

⁵¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Revelation 1:10.

⁵¹⁹ Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 4:4-11.

⁵²⁰ Isaiah 58:13; Nehemiah 13:15-23.

⁵²¹ Matthew 12:1-13.

⁵²² Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 10:20; Jeremiah 4:2.

⁵²³ 2 Chronicles 6:22-23.

⁵²⁴ Matthew 5:34, 37; James 5:12.

moment for confirmation of truth, and ending all strife, an oath is warranted by the word of God;⁵²⁵ so a lawful oath being imposed, by lawful authority, in such matters, ought to be taken.⁵²⁶

3. Whosoever takes an oath warranted by the Word of God, ought properly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act; and therein to profess nothing, but what he knows to be the truth; for that by rash, false, and vain oaths the Lord is provoked, and for them the land mourns.⁵²⁷

4. An oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words; without equivocation, or mental reservation.⁵²⁸

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;⁵²⁹ but popish monastical vows of perpetual single life,⁵³⁰ professed poverty,⁵³¹ and regular obedience,⁵³² are so far from being decrees of higher perfection, that they are superstitious and sinful snares, in which no Christian may entangle himself.⁵³³

Chapter 25 *Of the Civil Magistrate and Religious Liberty*

1. God the supreme Lord, and King of all the World, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him, over the people, for his own glory, and the public good; and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword, for defense and encouragement of them that do good, and for the punishment of evil doers.⁵³⁴

2. It is lawful for Christians to accept, and execute the office of a magistrate, when called thereunto; in the management whereof, as they ought especially to maintain justice, and peace,⁵³⁵ according to the wholesome laws of their country: so for that end they may lawfully now under the New Testament wage war upon just and necessary occasions.⁵³⁶

3. Civil magistrates being set up by God, for the ends aforesaid; subjection in all lawful things commanded by them, ought to be yielded by us, in the Lord; not only for wrath but for conscience sake;⁵³⁷ and we ought to make supplications and prayers for kings, and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.⁵³⁸

⁵²⁵ Hebrews 6:16; 2 Corinthians 1:23.

⁵²⁶ Nehemiah 13:25.

⁵²⁷ Leviticus 19:12; Jeremiah 23:10.

⁵²⁸ Psalm 24:4.

⁵²⁹ Psalm 76:11; Genesis 28:20-22.

⁵³⁰ 1 Corinthians 7:2, 9.

⁵³¹ Ephesians 4:28.

⁵³² Matthew 19:11. "Regular obedience" refers to obedience to a monastic rule or *regula*, as well as to unconditional obedience to one's superiors in such a monastic order. Such monastic obedience is not obedience to God, but superstition and a sinful snare.

⁵³³ Matthew 19:11.

⁵³⁴ Romans 13:1-4.

⁵³⁵ 2 Samuel 23:3; Psalm 82:3-4.

⁵³⁶ Luke 3:14.

⁵³⁷ Romans 13:5-7; 1 Peter 2:17.

⁵³⁸ 1 Timothy 2:1-2.

4. The church and the state have separate spheres of authority, and the state has no valid jurisdiction over the ministry of the church.⁵³⁹ Therefore, the state should not favor one ecclesiastical group over another, nor should the state impose taxes for the support of any form of religion, nor impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. Nor should the church resort to the civil power to carry on its work, for the gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, which involves the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Chapter 26 *Of Marriage*

1. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman; neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time.⁵⁴⁰

2. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife,⁵⁴¹ for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue,⁵⁴² and for the preventing of uncleanness.⁵⁴³

3. It is lawful for all sorts of adults⁵⁴⁴ to marry, who are able with judgment to give their consent;⁵⁴⁵ yet it is the duty of Christians to marry in the Lord,⁵⁴⁶ and therefore such as profess the true religion, should not marry with infidels or idolators; neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by marrying with such as are wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresy.⁵⁴⁷

4. Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity, or affinity forbidden in the word;⁵⁴⁸ nor can such incestuous marriage ever be made lawful, by any law of man or consent of parties, so as those persons may live together as man and wife.⁵⁴⁹

5. Homosexuality, transgenderism, bestiality, the molestation of children and teenagers, and all other forms of sexual perversion are abominations to God, and those who practice such sin will not inherit the kingdom of God unless, by God's grace, they repent and are born again; nor does God recognize as marriages any alternatives wickedly proposed by such persons to monogamous and heterosexual marriage.⁵⁵⁰

⁵³⁹ Matthew 22:29.

⁵⁴⁰ Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:15; Matthew 19:5-6.

⁵⁴¹ Genesis 2:18.

⁵⁴² Genesis 1:28.

⁵⁴³ 1 Corinthians 7:2, 9.

⁵⁴⁴ 1 Corinthians 7:36.

⁵⁴⁵ Hebrews 13:4; 1 Timothy 4:3.

⁵⁴⁶ 1 Corinthians 7:39.

⁵⁴⁷ Nehemiah 13:25-27.

⁵⁴⁸ Leviticus 18.

⁵⁴⁹ Matthew 6:18; 1 Corinthians 5:1.

⁵⁵⁰ Leviticus 18:22; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

6. God hates divorce.⁵⁵¹ Furthermore, whoever divorces his lawful husband or wife, and marries another while his former spouse remains alive, commits adultery.⁵⁵² One who divorces and remarries may not then divorce his or her second spouse and go back to the first one, for that is an abomination before the Lord.⁵⁵³ A man who has been divorced, or remarried while his former spouse remained alive, cannot serve in the office of an overseer or pastor, nor of deacon.⁵⁵⁴

Chapter 27 *Of the Family of God and the Church*

1. The family of God, which (with respect to internal work of the Spirit, and truth of grace) may be called invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ.⁵⁵⁵

2. All persons throughout the world, professing the faith of the gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ, according unto it; not destroying their own profession by any errors overthrowing the foundation, or unholiness of conduct, are and may be called visible saints;⁵⁵⁶ and of such ought all particular congregations or churches to be constituted.⁵⁵⁷ Scripture never speaks of a universal visible or a universal and invisible church. On the contrary, in every usage in the New Testament Christ's church is solely local and visible, the congregation of saints, in contrast to His kingdom and His family,⁵⁵⁸ which have universal or catholic aspects. The church, which is distinct from Israel,⁵⁵⁹ is an organized congregation of immersed believers, associated together by a common faith and fellowship in the gospel.⁵⁶⁰

3. The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture, and error;⁵⁶¹ and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan;⁵⁶² nevertheless Christ always has had, and ever shall have true churches in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in him, make profession of his name, are immersed upon profession of their faith, commemorate Christ's death as a memorial in the Lord's Supper, and live as visible saints.⁵⁶³

4. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order, or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner,⁵⁶⁴ neither can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is an Antichrist, a man of sin, a false prophet, and a son of perdition, a representative of the future one-world religious and political leaders, the False Prophet and Antichrist, who exalt themselves

⁵⁵¹ Malachi 2:16.

⁵⁵² Mark 10:11-12; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11.

⁵⁵³ Deuteronomy 24:4.

⁵⁵⁴ Proverbs 6:32-33; 1 Timothy 3:5, 12.

⁵⁵⁵ Hebrews 12:23; Ephesians 1:10.

⁵⁵⁶ 1 Corinthians 1:2; Acts 11:26.

⁵⁵⁷ Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:20-22.

⁵⁵⁸ John 3:3.

⁵⁵⁹ Ephesians 3:3-6.

⁵⁶⁰ Matthew 18:20; Acts 2:41-42.

⁵⁶¹ 1 Corinthians 5; Revelation 2-3.

⁵⁶² Revelation 18:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12.

⁵⁶³ Matthew 16:18; 28:18-20; Ephesians 3:21; Philippians 1:1.

⁵⁶⁴ Colossians 1:18; Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Ephesians 4:11-12.

against Christ, and all that is called God; whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.⁵⁶⁵

5. In the execution of this power wherewith he is so entrusted, the Lord Jesus calls out of the world unto himself, through the ministry of his Word, by his Spirit, those that are given to him by his Father;⁵⁶⁶ that they may walk before him in all the ways of obedience, which he prescribes to them in his Word.⁵⁶⁷ Those thus called he commands to walk together in particular societies, or churches, for their mutual edification; and the due performance of that public worship, which he requires of them in the world.⁵⁶⁸

6. The members of these churches are saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing (in and by their profession and walking) their obedience unto that call of Christ;⁵⁶⁹ and do willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of Christ, giving up themselves, to the Lord and one to another by the will of God, in professed subjection to the ordinances of the gospel.⁵⁷⁰

7. To each of these churches thus gathered, according to his mind, declared in his Word, he has given all that power and authority, which is any way needful, for their carrying on that order in worship, and discipline, which he hath instituted for them to observe; with commands, and rules for the due and right exerting, and executing of that power.⁵⁷¹

8. A particular church gathered, and completely organized, according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers, and members. The officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church (so called and gathered) for the peculiar duties which he entrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are elders or pastors, also called overseers or bishops, and deacons.⁵⁷²

9. The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person, fitted, and gifted by the Holy Spirit, to the office of bishop, elder, or pastor, in a church, is, that he be chosen thereunto by the common suffrage of the church itself;⁵⁷³ and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands of the elders of the church, if there be any before constituted therein;⁵⁷⁴ and of an evangelist or a deacon that he be chosen by the like suffrage, and set apart by prayer, and the like imposition of hands.⁵⁷⁵

10. While the leadership offices of apostle and prophet have ceased with the completion of the New Testament canon and the end of the apostolic age,⁵⁷⁶ the leadership office of evangelist—one

⁵⁶⁵ 2 Thessalonians 2:3-9.

⁵⁶⁶ John 10:16; 12:32.

⁵⁶⁷ Matthew 28:20.

⁵⁶⁸ Matthew 18:15-20.

⁵⁶⁹ Romans 1:9; 1 Corinthians 1:2.

⁵⁷⁰ Acts 2:41-42; 5:13-14; 2 Corinthians 9:13.

⁵⁷¹ Matthew 18:17-18; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, 13.

⁵⁷² Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Philippians 1:1.

⁵⁷³ Acts 14:23. See the original

⁵⁷⁴ 1 Timothy 4:14.

⁵⁷⁵ Ephesians 4:11; Acts 6:3, 5-6.

⁵⁷⁶ Ephesians 2:20.

who preaches the gospel for the purpose of being God’s instrument to see new congregations established—as well as that of elder, bishop, or pastor,⁵⁷⁷ will continue until the end of the church age at the rapture of the saints, as will the serving office of deacon.⁵⁷⁸

11. While men and women are of equal value in Jesus Christ,⁵⁷⁹ the Lord calls only men,⁵⁸⁰ and those with the necessary spiritual, moral, and doctrinal qualifications,⁵⁸¹ to the office of bishop, elder, or pastor, the office of evangelist, and the office of deacon.

12. The work of pastors being constantly to attend the service of Christ, in His churches, in the ministry of the Word, and prayer, with watching for their souls, as they that must give an account to him;⁵⁸² it is incumbent on the churches to whom they minister, not only to give them all due respect, but also to share with them of all their good things according to their ability,⁵⁸³ so as they may have a comfortable supply, without being themselves entangled in secular affairs;⁵⁸⁴ and may also be capable of exercising hospitality towards others;⁵⁸⁵ and this is required by the law of nature, and by the express order of our Lord Jesus, who has ordained that they that preach the gospel, should live of the gospel.⁵⁸⁶

13. Although it be incumbent on the bishops or pastors of the churches to be instant in preaching the Word, by way of office; yet the work of preaching the Word, is not so peculiarly confined to them but that others also gifted, and fitted by the Holy Spirit for it, and approved by the church, may and ought to perform it.⁵⁸⁷

14. As all believers are bound to join themselves to particular churches, when and where they have opportunity so to do; so all that are admitted to the privileges of a church, are also² under the censures and government thereof, according to the rule of Christ.⁵⁸⁸

15. No church members upon any offence taken by them, having performed their duty required of them towards the person they are offended at, ought to disturb any church order, or absent themselves from the assemblies of the church, or administration of any ordinances, upon the account of such offence at any of their fellow-members; but to wait upon Christ, in the further proceeding of the church.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁷⁷ Acts 8:26-40; 21:8; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 2 Timothy 4:5.

⁵⁷⁸ 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

⁵⁷⁹ Galatians 3:28.

⁵⁸⁰ Isaiah 3:12; 1 Corinthians 14:34-37; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 3:2, 4, 11; Titus 1:6.

⁵⁸¹ 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:5-9.

⁵⁸² Acts 6:4; Hebrews 13:17.

⁵⁸³ 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Galatians 6:6-7.

⁵⁸⁴ 2 Timothy 2:4.

⁵⁸⁵ 1 Timothy 3:2.

⁵⁸⁶ 1 Corinthians 9:6-14.

⁵⁸⁷ Acts 11:19-21; 1 Peter 4:10-11.

² 1 Thes. 5:14; 2 Thes. 3:6, 14, 15.

⁵⁸⁸ 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15.

⁵⁸⁹ Matthew 18:15-17; Ephesians 4:2-3.

16. As each church, and all the members of it, are bound to pray continually, for the good and prosperity of all the churches of Christ,⁵⁹⁰ in all places; and upon all occasions to further it (every one within the bounds of their places, and callings, in the exercise of their gifts and graces) so the churches (when planted by the providence of God so as they may enjoy opportunity and advantage for it) ought to hold communion amongst themselves for their peace, increase of love, and mutual edification.⁵⁹¹

17. Each church of Christ is an independent body underneath its sole Head, Jesus Christ.⁵⁹² Scripture contains no record of and provides no warrant for churches delegating their authority to any organized convention or association of churches; rather, each church is autonomous, not subject to the control of any outside persons or organizations, and has the power and right to confess its own faith and conduct its own affairs in accordance with the teachings of the New Testament. On all matters of membership, polity, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of each particular assembly church is final.⁵⁹³ Nor can any para-church organization, meeting, school, mission board, or any other institution possess any church-power properly so called, or possess any jurisdiction over the churches themselves, or have the authority to impose its determination on the churches, or their officers.⁵⁹⁴ Notwithstanding churches of like faith and practice may and ought to hold communion together for their mutual peace, edification, and support, and for their mutual fellowship in the gospel by sending forth evangelists to preach the gospel and baptize disciples unto the ends of the earth.⁵⁹⁵

A local church is autonomous, is not to be subject to the control of any outside persons or organizations, and has the power and right to confess its own faith and conduct its own affairs in accordance with the teachings of the New Testament. On all matters of membership, polity, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is final (7).

18. God's plan for history demands a consistent distinction between national Israel and the church,⁵⁹⁶ and includes an ongoing Divine plan and purpose for national, ethnic Israel that culminates in Christ's literal and earthly millennial kingdom.⁵⁹⁷

19. True churches, believing in the true God⁵⁹⁸ and true gospel,⁵⁹⁹ practicing the immersion of disciples and a memorial view of the Lord's Supper, have existed in an unbroken succession from the time of Christ their founder until today, in accordance with the unbreakable promises of God that the gates of hell would not prevail against them.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁰ Ephesians 6:18.

⁵⁹¹ Romans 16:1-2; 3 John 8-10.

⁵⁹² Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18.

⁵⁹³ Matthew 18:15-18; Acts 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, 13; 1 Timothy 3:15.

⁵⁹⁴ 2 Corinthians 1:24; 1 John 4:1.

⁵⁹⁵ Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Romans 15:25-27; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; Philippians 4:15-19; 3 John 5-7;

⁵⁹⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:32.

⁵⁹⁷ Isaiah 11:1-16; Ezekiel 40-48; Romans 11:25-27; Revelation 20:1-6.

⁵⁹⁸ John 17:3; 1 John 5:7; 1 John 5:20

⁵⁹⁹ Mark 1:15; Romans 3:20-4:8.

⁶⁰⁰ Matthew 16:18; 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Ephesians 3:21.

20. The church's members must highly prioritize preaching the gospel to every person, both in one's local area and as far as the uttermost parts of the earth, and making disciples,⁶⁰¹ as well as edifying believers to themselves continue to do the work of the ministry.⁶⁰² To assist in making disciples in all nations, local churches send out evangelists to preach the gospel, baptize, and assist in the organization of new churches outside of their local area.⁶⁰³

Chapter 28 *On the Communion of Saints*

1. All saints that are united to Jesus Christ their Head, by his Spirit, and faith; although they are not made thereby one person with him, have fellowship in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory;⁶⁰⁴ and being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts, and graces;⁶⁰⁵ and obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, in an orderly way, as do contribute to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.⁶⁰⁶

2. Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services, as tend to their mutual edification;⁶⁰⁷ as also in relieving each other in outward things according to their several abilities, and necessities;⁶⁰⁸ which communion, according to the rule of the gospel, though especially to be exercised by them, in the relations wherein they stand, whether in families,⁶⁰⁹ or churches;⁶¹⁰ yet as God offers opportunity 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; nevertheless their communion one with another as saints, does not take away or infringe the title or propriety, which each man has in his goods and possessions.⁶¹¹

Chapter 29 *Of Personal and Ecclesiastical Separation*

1. Scripture requires both personal and ecclesiastical separation. The doctrine of separation is grounded in the character of God Himself. Holiness carries the basic idea of separation or apartness. God is holy in that He is separate or apart from all that is created and finite⁶¹² and from all that is sinful or morally unclean,⁶¹³ and He demands that His people be holy or separated.⁶¹⁴ God constituted the nation of Israel a holy or separated people who were to be separated from the customs and practices of the surrounding heathen.⁶¹⁵ God commands His people today to be

⁶⁰¹ Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-17; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; 8:4; 9:31; Ephesians 4:12.

⁶⁰² Acts 9:31; Ephesians 2:20-22; 4:12, 16.

⁶⁰³ Acts 8:26-40; 13:1-4; 21:8; Ephesians 4:11.

⁶⁰⁴ 1 John 1:3; John 1:16; Philippians 3:10; Romans 6:5-6.

⁶⁰⁵ Ephesians 4:15-16; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 3:21-23.

⁶⁰⁶ 1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14; Romans 1:12; 1 John 2:17-18; Galatians 6:10.

⁶⁰⁷ Hebrews 10:24-25; 3:12-13.

⁶⁰⁸ Acts 12:19-20.

⁶⁰⁹ Ephesians 6:4.

⁶¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:14-27.

⁶¹¹ Acts 5:4; Ephesians 4:28.

⁶¹² Psalm 99:1-3; Isaiah 57:15.

⁶¹³ Isaiah 6:3, 5; Matthew 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 6:16; 1 Peter 1:15; 1 John 1:5.

⁶¹⁴ Matthew 5:48; Romans 12:1; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 2:1.

⁶¹⁵ Exodus 19:5-6; Leviticus 20:24-26; Deuteronomy 7:1-6; Psalm 135:4.

personally separated from the world,⁶¹⁶ the transient system of evil led by Satan,⁶¹⁷ organized against God and His will,⁶¹⁸ that has its own ungodly philosophies, goals, life styles, amusements, habits, and practices. Ecclesiastical separation is the refusal to collaborate with any church, ecclesiastical organization, or religious leader which unashamedly supports false teaching or disobeys Scripture,⁶¹⁹ as well as separation from even Christian brethren who disobey Scripture's teaching, including its teaching on separation,⁶²⁰ and refuse to repent, while always maintaining a spirit of love and grace towards all.⁶²¹ Churches and individual Christians are not to fellowship with such persons and organizations, but rather are to identify them, rebuke them, and withdraw themselves from any spiritual communion with them;⁶²² separation, as opposed to infiltration or collaboration, is clearly taught. Biblical unity centers in the church, where only Biblical doctrine must be taught and practiced and the saints, while exercising longsuffering and forbearance, recognize that they are to all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among them, but that are to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,⁶²³ so that each may be a pure and holy temple and bride for Jesus Christ.⁶²⁴

Chapter 30 *Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper*

1. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are symbolic and memorial ordinances of positive and sovereign institution; appointed by the Lord Jesus the only Law-giver, to be continued in his church to the end of the world.⁶²⁵
2. These holy appointments are to be administered with the authority of Christ's church alone, according to the commission of Christ.⁶²⁶

Chapter 31 *Of Baptism*

1. Baptism in water is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized, a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death, burial, and resurrection; of his being engrafted into him;⁶²⁷ of remission of sins;⁶²⁸ and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.⁶²⁹

⁶¹⁶ Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:11; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15.

⁶¹⁷ John 12:31; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 2:17; 5:19.

⁶¹⁸ John 7:7; 15:18; Jas 4:4.

⁶¹⁹ Matthew 7:15; Romans 16:17-18; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Galatians 1:18-19; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:16-21; Titus 3:10-11; 2 John 10-11; Revelation 2:14.

⁶²⁰ 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14.

⁶²¹ 1 Corinthians 13.

⁶²² Romans 16:17; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Titus 1:13.

⁶²³ 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Timothy 1:3.

⁶²⁴ 2 Corinthians 11:2-4; Ephesians 2:20-22; 5:23-32;

⁶²⁵ Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:26.

⁶²⁶ Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 4:1.

⁶²⁷ Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; Galatians 3:27.

⁶²⁸ Mark 1:4; Acts 26:16.

⁶²⁹ Romans 6:2, 4.

2. Those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience, to our Lord Jesus, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance.⁶³⁰

3. The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, wherein the party is to be baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.⁶³¹

4. Immersion, or dipping of the person in water once, is necessary to the due administration of this ordinance.⁶³²

5. Through baptism, a disciple is added to the membership of the church that authorizes that ordinance.⁶³³ Christ has given His church alone the authority to baptize disciples until the end of this age; therefore, no individual or religious organization besides Christ's church has authority from Him to baptize.⁶³⁴ Baptism is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and participation in the Lord's Supper.⁶³⁵

6.) Christ baptized the church with the Holy Spirit on the first Day of Pentecost after his resurrection and ascension to heaven, validating the church as His institution for this dispensation.⁶³⁶ Christ having authenticated the church and immersed the church with the Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit has ceased. The Holy Spirit indwells all believers in this age,⁶³⁷ but only baptism in water, not the baptism of the Spirit,⁶³⁸ continues until the second coming of Jesus Christ.⁶³⁹

Chapter 32 *Of the Lord's Supper*

1. The Supper of the Lord Jesus, was instituted by him, the same night wherein he was betrayed, to be observed in his churches unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance, and shewing forth the sacrifice of Himself in his death,⁶⁴⁰ confirmation of the faith of believers in all the benefits thereof, their spiritual nourishment, and growth in him, their further engagement in, and to, all duties which they owe to him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other.⁶⁴¹

2. In this ordinance Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all, for remission of sin of the living or dead; but only a memorial of that³ one offering up of Himself, by

⁶³⁰ Mark 16:16; Acts 8:36-37.

⁶³¹ Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:38.

⁶³² Matthew 3:16; John 3:23.

⁶³³ Acts 2:41, 47; 1 Corinthians 12:13.

⁶³⁴ Matthew 28:18-20.

⁶³⁵ Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 10:16-17.

⁶³⁶ Acts 2, 8, 10, 19; Exodus 40:34; 1 Kings 8:11; Ezekiel 43:3; Ephesians 4:5; Matthew 28:18-20.

⁶³⁷ Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14.

⁶³⁸ Ephesians 4:5.

⁶³⁹ Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16.

⁶⁴⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

⁶⁴¹ 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 21.

³ Heb 9:25, 26, 28.

Himself, upon the cross, once for all;⁶⁴² and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise to God for the same;⁶⁴³ so that the Popish sacrifice of the Mass (as they call it) is most abominable, injurious to Christ's own only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the world.

3. The Lord Jesus has in this ordinance, appointed His ministers to pray, and bless the elements of unleavened bread⁶⁴⁴ and the unfermented fruit of the vine,⁶⁴⁵ and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use, and to take and break the bread; to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants.⁶⁴⁶

4. The denial of the cup to the people, worshiping the elements, the 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 ordinance, and to the institution of Christ.⁶⁴⁷

5. The outward elements in this ordinance, properly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to Him crucified, as that truly, although in terms used figuratively, they may be called by the name of the things they represent, that is, the body and blood of Christ;⁶⁴⁸ albeit in substance, and nature, they still remain truly, and only bread, and the fruit of the vine, as they were before.⁶⁴⁹

6. That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and the fruit of the vine, into the substance of Christ's body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant not to Scripture alone,⁶⁵⁰ but even to common sense and reason; overthrows the nature of the ordinance, and has been and is the cause of manifold superstitions, indeed, of gross idolatries.⁶⁵¹

7. Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this ordinance, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally, and corporally, but spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death: the body and blood of Christ, being then not corporally, or carnally, but spiritually present to the faith of believers, in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.⁶⁵² Believers similarly can and ought to feed on Christ by faith, not during the Supper only, but in the other portions of the holy worship of the gathered church, in their households, and in their own individual lives day by day.

8. All ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with Christ; so are they unworthy of the Lord's Table; and cannot without great sin against him, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereunto:⁶⁵³ yea whosoever shall receive

⁶⁴² Hebrews 9:25-28.

⁶⁴³ 1 Corinthians 11:24; Matthew 26:26-27.

⁶⁴⁴ Exodus 12:15, 19; 13:7; Luke 22:15; 1 Corinthians 5:7.

⁶⁴⁵ Matthew 26:29; Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35.

⁶⁴⁶ 1 Corinthians 11:23-26ff.

⁶⁴⁷ Matthew 26:26-28; 15:9; Exodus 20:4-5.

⁶⁴⁸ 1 Corinthians 11:27; 2 Chronicles 30:18; Matthew 26:17.

⁶⁴⁹ 1 Corinthians 11:26-28; Mark 14:25.

⁶⁵⁰ Acts 3:21; Luke 24:6, 39.

⁶⁵¹ 1 Corinthians 11:24-25.

⁶⁵² 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:23-26.

⁶⁵³ 2 Corinthians 6:14-15.

unworthily are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, eating and drinking judgment to themselves.⁶⁵⁴

9. Christ gave the Supper as an ordinance for each local and particular church.⁶⁵⁵ Scripture provides no warrant for unbaptized persons, or persons not well-known by a church as godly and righteous, partaking with the congregation in its celebration of the Supper.⁶⁵⁶

Chapter 33 *Of Spiritual Gifts*

A spiritual gift is an ability or a capacity to serve the Lord through an aspect of the life of the local assembly. While God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His spiritual gifts,⁶⁵⁷ every believer has one or more functions to serve in the church and has been gifted by God accordingly.⁶⁵⁸ Jesus Christ by His Spirit gives gifts for the common good,⁶⁵⁹ the edification,⁶⁶⁰ and the service, work, or ministry of the church,⁶⁶¹ as well as, in the first century, the attestation or accreditation of God's messengers and their new revelation for the church age.⁶⁶² Certain gifts present in the first-century churches were miraculous in nature, such as speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, and the working of miracles. These gifts were foundational and transitional, having served the church in its infancy and immature stage, and have now ceased, being no longer needed because God has for this age set aside the nation of Israel from the center of His redemptive purpose, the canon of Scripture is complete, the church has been launched and Divinely certified, the transition from the dispensation of law to that of grace has been made, and the apostles have gone to their eternal reward.⁶⁶³

Chapter 34 *Of Godly Song, Music, and the Worship of God*

1. Singing the praises of God is a holy ordinance of Christ that it is brought under Divine institution, it being enjoined on the churches of Christ to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.⁶⁶⁴ The whole church in their public assemblies, as well as private Christians, ought to sing God's praises.⁶⁶⁵ Moreover, singing was practiced in the great representative church, by our Lord Jesus Christ with his disciples, after he had instituted and celebrated the sacred ordinance of his holy Supper, as a commemorative token of redeeming love.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁵⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:29; Matthew 7:6.

⁶⁵⁵ Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17.

⁶⁵⁶ Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:26-33.

⁶⁵⁷ Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:11, 18, 28-31; Ephesians 4:7-8; Hebrews 2:4.

⁶⁵⁸ 1 Corinthians 12:27; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 12:7.

⁶⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:7.

⁶⁶⁰ 1 Corinthians 14:12.

⁶⁶¹ Ephesians 4:11-12.

⁶⁶² 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4.

⁶⁶³ 1 Corinthians 13:8-12; Ephesians 2:20; Hebrews 2:1-4.

⁶⁶⁴ Acts 16:25; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16.

⁶⁶⁵ Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13.

⁶⁶⁶ Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26.

2. Christ's churches are bound by Christ's institution to sing the inspired psalms of David, rather than singing only uninspired hymns. All uninspired hymns sung by God's churches must be doctrinally and practically accurate, reflecting the infallible word of Christ.⁶⁶⁷

3. Music is a gift from God to be used for His glory.⁶⁶⁸ Music influences us in many ways: physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.⁶⁶⁹ As a language for the Christian, music should express that which is pure and wholesome. With over five hundred references to music in Scripture, music is an important aspect of the Christian life about which believers must make wise, discerning choices, avoiding all music that dishonors the name of God or lessens the Christian's influence in the world as salt and light.⁶⁷⁰

4. In music, as in all of life, Christians should strive for excellence.⁶⁷¹ Christians must be different from the world, set apart unto the Lord, and living a Christ-like life, including in the sphere of music, which is not amoral, but expresses morality.⁶⁷² The two accent systems of the Hebrew Old Testament—for the poetic books, including the psalter, and for the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures—provide important principles about the solemn and reverent sound that God requires in His worship.⁶⁷³ Consistent with the pattern provided in the Hebrew accent system, great music through the years has been based upon an appropriate, skillful organization of melody, harmony, and rhythm. This organization is not merely the product of a particular cultural preference but is rooted in the natural order of created things, reflecting the image of God in man.⁶⁷⁴ Good music is based primarily upon a God-honoring melody, is enhanced by harmony, and is supported by appropriate rhythm. While a wide variety of acceptable musical styles are available to the believer in both sacred and secular realms, they should sing and listen to God-honoring music about which there is no question.⁶⁷⁵

5. Special attention must be given in vocal music to ensure that the text is appropriate for a godly testimony, both in its content and its literary and musical style.⁶⁷⁶ Singing styles should reinforce the message of the song and should avoid sensuality or the glorification of the performer.⁶⁷⁷ Because rock, rap, country and western, new age, jazz, and Eastern music designed to worship pagan gods, as well as any "Christian" music that borrows these styles are sensual, worldly, or devilish, Christians should not sing or choose to listen to them.⁶⁷⁸

6. Songs or styles which are strongly identified with unbiblical movements or worldly practices should also be avoided,⁶⁷⁹ as should music which is questionable or which might violate other

⁶⁶⁷ Matthew 26:30; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13.

⁶⁶⁸ Colossians 1:16.

⁶⁶⁹ 1 Samuel 16:23.

⁶⁷⁰ Matthew 5:13-14; 1 Corinthians 10:31.

⁶⁷¹ Philippians 1:9-10.

⁶⁷² Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 2:5; 1 John 2:15-17.

⁶⁷³ Psalm 92:3; Hosea 9:5; Leviticus 23:36; Numbers 10:10; Leviticus 19:30; Psalm 89:7; Hebrews 12:28.

⁶⁷⁴ Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40.

⁶⁷⁵ Romans 14:23; 2 Corinthians 6:3; Philippians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.

⁶⁷⁶ Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 4:29, 5:4.

⁶⁷⁷ 1 Corinthians 10:31.

⁶⁷⁸ Deuteronomy 12:30-32; 1 John 2:15-17.

⁶⁷⁹ Romans 12:1-2.

believers' consciences, as Christians follow after the things which make for peace, and things where with one may edify another.⁶⁸⁰

Chapter 35 *Of the State of Man after Death and the Resurrection of the Dead*

1. The bodies of men after death return to dust, and see corruption;⁶⁸¹ but their souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them;⁶⁸² the souls or spirits of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into paradise where they are with Christ, and behold the face of God, in light and glory; waiting for the full redemption of their bodies;⁶⁸³ and the souls of the wicked, are cast into hell; where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to the judgement of the great day;⁶⁸⁴ besides these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledges none.

2. Both the righteous and the unrighteous will be raised up with the selfsame bodies, and none other;⁶⁸⁵ although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls forever.⁶⁸⁶

3. The bodies of the unjust shall by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonour; the bodies of the just by his Spirit unto honour, and be made conformable to his own glorious body.⁶⁸⁷

4. The souls of the redeemed pass immediately into the presence of Christ,⁶⁸⁸ that there is a separation of soul and body,⁶⁸⁹ and that, for those in Christ, such separation will continue until the rapture,⁶⁹⁰ which initiates the first resurrection⁶⁹¹ when their souls and bodies will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord.⁶⁹² Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with Him in the intermediate heaven.⁶⁹³

5. The souls of the lost at death are kept under punishment in the intermediate hell until the second resurrection,⁶⁹⁴ when the soul and the resurrection body will be united.⁶⁹⁵ They shall then appear at the Great White Throne Judgment⁶⁹⁶ and shall be cast into the lake of fire,⁶⁹⁷ cut off from the life of God and enduring His wrath forever.⁶⁹⁸

⁶⁸⁰ Romans 14:15-19.

⁶⁸¹ Genesis 3:19; Acts 13:36.

⁶⁸² Ecclesiastes 12:7.

⁶⁸³ Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6, 8; Philippians 1:23; Hebrews 12:23.

⁶⁸⁴ Jude 6-7; 1 Peter 3:19; Luke 16:23-24.

⁶⁸⁵ Job 19:26-27.

⁶⁸⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:42-43.s

⁶⁸⁷ Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29; Philippians 3:21.

⁶⁸⁸ Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8.

⁶⁸⁹ Philippians 1:21-24.

⁶⁹⁰ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

⁶⁹¹ Revelation 20:4-6.

⁶⁹² Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54.

⁶⁹³ 2 Corinthians 5:8.

⁶⁹⁴ Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15.

⁶⁹⁵ John 5:28-29.

⁶⁹⁶ Revelation 20:11-15.

⁶⁹⁷ Matthew 25:41-46; Revelation 20:15.

⁶⁹⁸ Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.

Chapter 36 *Of Coming Judgment*

1. God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ;⁶⁹⁹ to whom all power and judgement is given of the Father. The Lord will not only judge the apostate angels,⁷⁰⁰ but also all persons that have lived upon the earth, who shall appear before Christ; to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds, and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.⁷⁰¹

2. God has appointed a future judgment for the manifestation of the glory of his mercy, in the eternal salvation of the elect; and of his justice in the eternal damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient;⁷⁰² for then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, prepared for them from the foundation of the world,⁷⁰³ and receive that fulness of joy, and glory, with everlasting reward, in the presence of the Lord:⁷⁰⁴ but the wicked who know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, prepared for the devil and his fallen angels,⁷⁰⁵ and punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, enduring conscious and eternal suffering in the lake of fire for ever and ever.⁷⁰⁶

3. As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a judgement, both to deter all men from sin,⁷⁰⁷ and for the greater consolation of the godly, in their adversity;⁷⁰⁸ so will He have the day of His coming to inaugurate eschatological judgment unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour, the⁹ Lord will come;⁷⁰⁹ and may ever be prepared to say, “Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.”⁷¹⁰

4. The bodily resurrection of the just constitutes the first resurrection, and that of the unjust the second resurrection.⁷¹¹ The souls of those who trust in Christ go immediately into His presence at death,⁷¹² where they remain in a state of conscious bliss until the resurrection of the just, at which time they will receive their glorified bodies,⁷¹³ and thereafter spend eternity serving the Lord in unending fellowship and love.⁷¹⁴ The souls of unbelievers go immediately into a state of conscious

⁶⁹⁹ Acts 17:31; John 5:22, 27.

⁷⁰⁰ 1 Corinthians 6:3; Jude 6.

⁷⁰¹ 2 Corinthians 5:10; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 12:36; Romans 14:10, 12; Matthew 25:31-46.

⁷⁰² Romans 9:22-23.

⁷⁰³ Matthew 25:34; Ephesians 1:3-14.

⁷⁰⁴ Matthew 25:21, 34; 2 Timothy 4:8.

⁷⁰⁵ Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10, 14-15.

⁷⁰⁶ Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:48; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

⁷⁰⁷ 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.

⁷⁰⁸ 2 Thessalonians 1:5-7.

⁹ Mar. 13:35, 36, 37; Luk. 13:35, 34.

⁷⁰⁹ Mark 13:35-37; Luke 12:35-36.

⁷¹⁰ Revelation 22:20.

⁷¹¹ Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:21-24; Revelation 20:1-15.

⁷¹² Acts 7:59-60; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:21-23.

⁷¹³ Romans 8:11, 23; 1 Corinthians 15:22-24, 35-38; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2.

⁷¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 13:13; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-7, 9-27; 22:1-5, 14.

torment and punishment at death,⁷¹⁵ where they remain until the resurrection of the unjust, when they will be cast into the lake of fire to endure eternal suffering as just retribution for their sin.⁷¹⁶ The resurrection of the just begins at the Rapture of the saints⁷¹⁷ and is completed at the conclusion of the seven-year tribulation period, the 70th week predicted by Daniel the prophet.⁷¹⁸ The resurrection of the unjust takes place after the Millennium.⁷¹⁹

Chapter 37 *Of Eschatological Events*

1. The literal and bodily appearing and return of Jesus Christ will take place in two stages. The first stage is the Rapture, Christ's personal,⁷²⁰ and pretribulation⁷²¹ coming for His saints, including not just some portion, but all of the saints of this dispensation.⁷²² The Rapture is imminent,⁷²³ no man knows the day or hour at which the Lord will come.⁷²⁴ The second stage is the Revelation or the second coming in glory, which is Christ's personal and public coming at the close of the seven-year Tribulation period, the latter half of which is called the Great Tribulation,⁷²⁵ to overthrow the Antichrist and False Prophet, bind Satan and remove him from this world,⁷²⁶ and establish the Messianic, millennial kingdom on the earth,⁷²⁷ during which Israel will be restored to covenant favor with God⁷²⁸ and to her land in faith⁷²⁹ and church-age saints will reign with Christ for a thousand years.⁷³⁰ The millennial kingdom will fulfill God's promise to Israel⁷³¹ to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience.⁷³² The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside⁷³³ but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing.⁷³⁴

2. The earthly, millennial reign of Christ on the throne of David in Jerusalem will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life,⁷³⁵ it will be brought to an end with the

⁷¹⁵ Deuteronomy 32:22; Luke 16:23-25.

⁷¹⁶ Matthew 8:12; 18:8; 25:41, 46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 14:10-11; 20:14-15; 21:8.

⁷¹⁷ John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11.

⁷¹⁸ Daniel 9:24-27; 12:2; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 11:11-12; 20:4-5.

⁷¹⁹ Revelation 20:5, 11-15.

⁷²⁰ 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:1; 1 John 3:2.

⁷²¹ 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9; Revelation 3:10.

⁷²² John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

⁷²³ Romans 13:12; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:6; Titus 2:13; James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:5; 2 Peter 3:12;

Jude 21; Revelation 22:10.

⁷²⁴ Matthew 24:36; Luke 12:40; Acts 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:2.

⁷²⁵ Matthew 24:15-21.

⁷²⁶ Daniel 7:17-27; Revelation 19:11-20:7.

⁷²⁷ Daniel 7:9-14; Zechariah 14:1-4; Malachi 3:1-2; Matthew 24:29-30; Acts 1:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 1:7.

⁷²⁸ Jeremiah 31:31-37; 31:28; Ezekiel 36:11; Joel 3:1; Amos 9:14; Micah 4:7-8; Zechariah 10:6; Romans 11:25-27.

⁷²⁹ Genesis 13:14-17; 15:18; Deuteronomy 30:1-11; Isaiah 11:12; 14:2; Jeremiah 32:37-41; Ezekiel 34:10-16; 37:14; Amos 9:15; Zechariah 10:9-10; Matthew 24:30-31.

⁷³⁰ 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 3:21; 20:1-6.

⁷³¹ Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17.

⁷³² Deuteronomy 28:15-68.

⁷³³ Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26.

⁷³⁴ Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-38; Romans 11:25-29.

⁷³⁵ Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38; Zechariah 8:4.

final release of Satan, who will deceive and gather the nations of the earth against the saints and God's beloved city, Jerusalem. His armies will be devoured by fire from heaven, and Satan will then be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone.⁷³⁶ Christ, the Judge of all men,⁷³⁷ will then raise and judge all unbelievers at the Great White Throne Judgment. This resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical, bodily resurrection⁷³⁸ in which they will be committed to eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire.⁷³⁹

3. After the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of the lost,⁷⁴⁰ the righteous will enter the eternal state of glory with God. The elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up,⁷⁴¹ and God will establish a new heaven and earth wherein only righteousness dwells.⁷⁴² The heavenly city will then come down out of heaven⁷⁴³ and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy fellowship with God and one another forever.⁷⁴⁴ Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive and mediatorial mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, that in all spheres the Triune God may reign forever and ever.⁷⁴⁵ Amen.

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church ([1 Corinthians 12:12–13](#)), the bride of Christ ([2 Corinthians 11:2](#); [Ephesians 5:23–32](#); [Revelation 19:7–8](#)), of which Christ is the Head ([Ephesians 1:22](#); [4:15](#); [Colossians 1:18](#)).

We teach that the formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the Day of Pentecost ([Acts 2:1–21](#), [38–47](#)) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture ([1 Corinthians 15:51–52](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13–18](#)).

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all regenerate persons (i.e., believers) in this present age ([Ephesians 2:11–3:6](#)). The church is distinct from Israel ([1 Corinthians 10:32](#)), a mystery not revealed until this age ([Ephesians 3:1–6](#); [5:32](#)).

We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures ([Acts 14:23](#), [27](#); [20:17](#), [28](#); [Galatians 1:2](#); [Philippians 1:1](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:1](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:1](#)) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies ([1 Corinthians 11:18–20](#); [Hebrews 10:25](#)).

We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ ([1 Corinthians 11:3](#); [Ephesians 1:22](#); [Colossians 1:18](#)) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all

⁷³⁶ Revelation 20:7-10.

⁷³⁷ John 5:22.

⁷³⁸ John 5:28-29.

⁷³⁹ Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15.

⁷⁴⁰ 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15

⁷⁴¹ 2 Peter 3:10.

⁷⁴² Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15; 21-22.

⁷⁴³ Revelation 21:2.

⁷⁴⁴ John 17:3; Revelation 21-22.

⁷⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.

appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called overseers and pastors, [Acts 20:28](#); [Ephesians 4:11](#)) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications ([1 Timothy 3:1–13](#); [Titus 1:5–9](#); [1 Peter 5:1–5](#)).

We teach that the eldership of a local congregation consists of spiritually qualified men who lead or rule as servants of Christ ([1 Timothy 2:11–12](#); [5:17–22](#)) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership ([Hebrews 13:7, 17](#)).

We teach the importance of discipleship ([Matthew 28:19–20](#); [2 Timothy 2:2](#)), the mutual accountability of all believers ([Matthew 18:5–14](#)), as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture ([Matthew 18:15–22](#); [Acts 5:1–11](#); [1 Corinthians 5:1–13](#); [2 Thessalonians 3:6–15](#); [1 Timothy 1:19–20](#); [Titus 1:10–16](#)).

We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations ([Titus 1:5](#)).

We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders should determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government ([Acts 15:19–31](#); [20:28](#); [1 Corinthians 5:4–7, 13](#); [1 Peter 5:1–4](#)).

We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God ([Ephesians 3:21](#)) by building itself up in the faith ([Ephesians 4:13–16](#)), by instruction of the Word ([2 Timothy 2:2, 15](#); [3:16–17](#)), by fellowship ([Acts 2:47](#); [1 John 1:3](#)), by keeping the ordinances ([Luke 22:19](#); [Acts 2:38–42](#)) and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world ([Matthew 28:19](#); [Acts 1:8](#); [2:42](#)).

We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service ([1 Corinthians 15:58](#); [Ephesians 4:12](#); [Revelation 22:12](#)).

We teach the need of the church to fulfill her God-given mission as God accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry ([Ephesians 4:7–12](#)), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ ([Romans 12:5–8](#); [1 Corinthians 12:4–31](#); [1 Peter 4:10–11](#)).

We teach that there were two kinds of gifts given to the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message ([Hebrews 2:3–4](#); [2 Corinthians 12:12](#)); and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message. Thus, confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message ([1 Corinthians 13:8–12](#)). Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers ([1 Corinthians 13:13–14:12](#); [Revelation 13:13–14](#)). The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification ([Romans 12:6–8](#)).

We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted ([Luke 18:1–6](#); [John 5:7–9](#); [2 Corinthians 12:6–10](#); [James 5:13–16](#); [1 John 5:14–15](#)).

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper ([Acts 2:38–42](#)). Christian baptism by immersion ([Acts 8:36–39](#)) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior,

and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life ([Romans 6:1–11](#)). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ ([Acts 2:41–42](#)).

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination ([1 Corinthians 11:28–32](#)).

We also teach that, whereas the elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, participation in the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ, who indwells every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people ([1 Corinthians 10:16](#)).

We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation, which has always been by grace through faith, but are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on earth through humanity under varying responsibilities; that changes in dispensational dealings depend upon changed situations in which humanity is found in relation to God due to human failures and God's judgments; that, though several dispensations cover the entirety of human history, only three of these are the subject of extended revelation in Scripture; that these three (Mosaic Law, Grace, and millennial Kingdom) are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused.

We believe the Church which is Christ's body is composed of all true believers (those who have been born again through a personal acceptance of Christ as Savior) from Pentecost to the rapture; that this Church was brought into being on the day of Pentecost by Spirit baptism, placing into one body all who were believers at that time; that on the day of Pentecost and since that time others have been and are being added to this church; that at the rapture this Church will be complete and will be caught up to be united with Christ as His Bride never to be separated from Him.

We believe that local churches are gatherings of professing believers in given communities, organized for the purposes of united worship, fellowship, administration of the ordinances (baptism and Lord's Supper), edification, discipline, and effective promotion of the work of Christ throughout the world; that such local churches should be limited in membership to those who are born again, desire to follow Christ in obedience and have been immersed; that Christ is the supreme Head and every member has direct access to Him and is responsible to seek His will; that the two New Testament offices recognized in such churches are to be those of pastor (also known as bishop or elder) and deacon, both referencing qualified, godly men; that government is congregational with every member responsible to vote in keeping with his or her understanding of the will of Christ; that each local church is responsible directly to Christ and not to some other local church or organization; that there is value in fellowship and cooperation with other local churches of like convictions.

We believe that the Scriptures foretell certain events among which are the following:

Rapture of the Church

We believe that Jesus Christ will return to the atmosphere of this earth; that the dead in Christ will rise first, then believers who are still living will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air and to ever be with the Lord; that the rapture is the next event on the revealed calendar and that no prophecy need be fulfilled before this occurs.

Tribulation

We believe that the rapture of the Church will be followed on earth by Israel's seventieth week; that, though there will be salvation, this will be a time of great judgments, the latter part being known as the Great Tribulation.

Second Coming

We believe that following the tribulation, Christ will return to the earth with His glorified saints to establish the millennial Kingdom; that during the 1,000 years of peace and prosperity Satan will be bound and Christ will reign with a rod of iron; that at the end of the Millennium Satan will be released for a short time, deceive many and lead them in final rebellion, but be destroyed with his armies.

Eternal State

We believe that the unsaved of all ages will be resurrected and together with the evil angels will be finally judged and condemned to everlasting conscious punishment in hell; that all the saved of all ages in glorified bodies will enjoy everlasting blessing in the presence of God.

Article 12: The Church

We believe that the Church as set forth in the New Testament has both a universal and a local aspect. The church as the Body of Christ, of which Christ is the Head,¹ is an organism composed of genuine believers in Jesus Christ, the total number of Spirit baptized believers of this age regardless of location or circumstances.² We believe that a local church is the visible expression of the body of Christ in a particular time and place,³ being an organized body of immersed believers,⁴ sharing a common faith or body of truth,⁵ observing the ordinances of baptism⁶ and communion,⁷ meeting at regular and stated times⁸ for worship, preaching and teaching, fellowship, and prayer,⁹ carrying out the Great Commission,¹⁰ and whose biblical offices are pastor¹¹ and deacon.¹² We believe that the local church is an autonomous body solely responsible to preserve its internal unity,¹³ maintain pure doctrine and practice,¹⁴ elect its own officers, leaders, and messengers,¹⁵ settle its own internal affairs,¹⁶ and determine the extent of its cooperation with other churches.¹⁷ We believe that the institution of the local church is God's ordained instrument for His work and witness in this age.¹⁸

See ¹ Eph 1:22-23; 5:23; Col 1:18, 24, ² 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 2:11-22, ³ Acts 13:1; Rom 16:1, 5; 1 Cor 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; Phlm 2, ⁴ Matt 28:19; Acts 2:41, 47, ⁵ Acts 2:42; 2 Thess 3:6; Jude 3, ⁶ Matt 28:19; Acts 2:41; 10:47-48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; 1 Cor 1:16, ⁷ Matt 26:26-30; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor 10:16-22; 11:23-32, ⁸ Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2; Heb 10:25, ⁹ Acts 2:42, 47, ¹⁰ Matt 28:19-20; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8, ¹¹ Acts 20:17, 28; Eph 4:11; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5; 1 Pet 5:1, ¹² Acts 6:1-6; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8-13, ¹³ Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 1:10; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:2, ¹⁴ 1 Tim 3:15; Jude 3; Rev 2-3, ¹⁵ Acts 6:1-6; 11:22; 13:2; 15:3, 4, 22; 1 Cor 16:3; 2 Cor 8:19, ¹⁶ Matt 18:15-17; 1 Cor 5:4-5, 12; 6:1-5; 2 Cor 2:6; 2 Thess 3:6, ¹⁷ Acts 15:2-32; 2 Cor 8:19; Col 4:16, ¹⁸ 1 Tim 3:15

Concerning the Lord's Day

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, and is a Christian institution that is to be kept sacred for spiritual purposes insofar as is possible on the part of the individual believer. It commemorates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead (1). It is a time for public worship and for spiritual growth (2).

Some places where taught: (1) [John 20:1, 19](#). (2) [Acts 20:7](#); [I Cor. 16:1-2](#).

Concerning Future Events

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. Those who are righteous will enter into eternal bliss with Christ and those who are wicked will be lost forever (1). We believe that the Scriptures teach that at death the spirit and soul of the believer pass into the presence of Christ and remain in conscious joy until the resurrection of the body when Christ comes for His own (2). The blessed hope of the believer is the imminent, personal, pretribulation, premillennial appearance of Christ to rapture the Church, His bride, prior to the seventieth week of Daniel (3). God's righteous judgments will then be poured out upon an unbelieving world during the seven years of tribulation (4). The climax of this fearful era will be the physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth in great glory to reestablish the Davidic kingdom (5). Israel will be saved and restored as a nation (6). Satan will be bound, and the curse essentially will be lifted from the physical creation (7). Following this thousand-year reign of Christ (the Millennium), the Great White Throne Judgment will occur, at which time the bodies and souls of the wicked shall be reunited and cast into the lake of fire, a divinely appointed place of eternal torment (8). The saved will enter the city which God has prepared for His own and will live with the Lord in resurrected and glorified bodies (9).

Some places where taught: (1) [Mal. 3:18](#); [John 3:16-18](#). (2) [I Cor. 15:51-57](#); [II Cor. 5:8](#). (3) [I Thess. 4:13-18](#); [Titus 2:13](#). (4) [Rev. 6:17](#). (5) [Rev. 19:11-20:6](#). (6) [Rom. 11:26-27](#). (7) [Is. 35:1-7](#). (8) [Rev. 20:7-15](#). (9) [Phil. 3:20-21](#); [Rev. 21:1-3](#).