

BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH (1689)

REWRITTEN IN MODERN ENGLISH BY ANDREW KERKHAM

1ST ED. 1999, REVISED ED. 2001

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

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

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

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

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CHAPTER 1 - THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1. The Holy Scriptures are the only sufficient, certain and infallible rule¹ for saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.² Although the light of nature and the works of creation and providence give such clear testimony to the goodness, wisdom and power of God that they leave people without excuse,³ yet they are not sufficient to give the knowledge of God and his will that is necessary for salvation.⁴ Therefore it pleased the Lord to reveal himself at various times and in different ways, and to declare his will to his church.⁵ To ensure the preservation and propagation of the truth, and to establish and support the church against human corruption, the malice of Satan, and the world, he committed his complete revelation to writing. The Holy Scriptures are therefore absolutely indispensable,⁶ for God's former ways of revealing his will to his people have now ceased.⁷
2. The Holy Scriptures, or the Word of God written, consist of all the books of the Old and New Testament. These are:
 - 2.1. The Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
 - 2.2. The New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation

All of these are given by the inspiration of God to be the rule¹ of faith and life.⁸

3. The books commonly called the Apocrypha were not given by divine inspiration, and are not part of the canon or rule of Scripture. Therefore they have no authority in the church of God, nor are they to be accepted or made use of in any way different from other human writings.⁹
4. Holy Scripture demands belief, yet its authority does not depend on the testimony of any person or church,¹⁰ but entirely on God its author, who is truth itself. Therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God.¹¹
5. We may be influenced and persuaded by the testimony of the church of God to hold a high and reverent regard for the Holy Scriptures.¹² Moreover the glory of its contents, the efficacy of its doctrine, the majesty of its style, the agreement among all its parts, the expanse of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full revelation it gives of the only way for human salvation, together with many other incomparable characteristics and its complete perfection—all these arguments provide abundant

¹ Or, *standard*

² Isaiah 8:20; Luke 16:29; Ephesians 2:20; 2 Timothy 3:15-17

³ Psalm 19:1-3; Romans 1:19-21,32; 2:12a,14-15

⁴ Psalm 19:1-3 with 7-11; Romans 1:19-21; 2:12a,14-15 with 1:16-17 and 3:21

⁵ Hebrews 1:1-2a

⁶ Proverbs 22:19-21; Luke 1:1-4; 2 Peter 1:12-15; 3:1; Deuteronomy 17:18ff; 31:9ff,19ff; 1 Corinthians 15:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2,15; 3:17; Romans 1:8-15; Galatians 4:20; 6:11; 1 Timothy 3:14ff; Revelation 1:9,19; 2:1, etc.; Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:19-21

⁷ Hebrews 1:1-2a; Acts 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:7-8; Ephesians 2:20

⁸ 2 Timothy 3:16 with 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 2 Peter 3:16

⁹ Luke 24:27,44; Romans 3:2

¹⁰ Luke 16:27-31; Galatians 1:8-9; Ephesians 2:20

¹¹ 2 Timothy 3:15; Romans 1:2; 3:2; Acts 2:16; 4:25; Matthew 13:35; Romans 9:17; Galatians 3:8; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Matthew 22:32; Luke 16:17; Matthew 22:41ff; John 10:35; Galatians 3:16; Acts 1:16; 2:24ff; 13:34-35; John 19:34-36; 19:24; Luke 22:37; Matthew 26:54; John 13:18; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Matthew 5:17-18; 4:1-11

¹² 2 Timothy 3:14-15

evidence that it is indeed the Word of God.¹³ Yet, notwithstanding this, our full persuasion and assurance of its infallible truth and divine authority comes from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.¹⁴

6. The whole revelation of God concerning all things essential for his own glory, human salvation, faith and life, is either explicitly set down or implicitly contained in the Holy Scriptures. Nothing is ever to be added, whether by a new revelation of the Spirit, or by human traditions.¹⁵ Nevertheless, we acknowledge that the inward enlightenment of the Spirit of God is necessary for the saving understanding of the things revealed in the Word.¹⁶ There are also some aspects of the worship of God and of church government common to human activities and organizations which may be determined by the light of nature and Christian common-sense, but in accordance with the general rules of the Word which must always be observed.¹⁷
7. Not all things in Scripture are equally plain in themselves,¹⁸ nor equally clear to everyone.¹⁹ Yet those things that are essential to be known, believed and obeyed for salvation are so clearly set forth and explained in one place of Scripture or another, that not only the educated but also the uneducated may attain a satisfactory understanding of them by using ordinary means.²⁰
8. The Old Testament in Hebrew (the national language of the people of God of ancient Israel)²¹ and the New Testament in Greek (the common language of that time) were inspired directly by God, and were kept pure throughout the ages by his particular care and providence. They are therefore authentic,²² so that in all religious controversies the church must appeal to them as final.²³ But these original languages are not known to all the people of God, who have a right to and an interest in the Scriptures, and who are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them.²⁴ They are therefore to be translated into the common language of every nation to which they come,²⁵ so that (with the Word of God living richly in all) people may worship God in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.²⁶
9. The infallible rule for the interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself. Therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any [part of] Scripture (which is not a miscellany, but a unity) it must be understood in the light of other passages that speak more clearly.²⁷
10. The supreme judge by which all religious controversies are to be settled, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, human doctrines and individual thinkers are to be examined, can be none other than the Holy Scriptures delivered by the Spirit. In the verdict of Scripture our faith is finally determined.²⁸

¹³ Jeremiah 23:28-29; Luke 16:27-31; John 6:63; 1 Peter 1:23-25; Hebrews 4:12-13; Deuteronomy 31:11-13; John 20:31; Galatians 1:8-9; Mark 16:15-16

¹⁴ Matthew 16:17; 1 Corinthians 2:14ff; John 3:3; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6; 1 John 2:20-21 with 27

¹⁵ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Deuteronomy 4:2; Acts 20:20,27; Psalm 19:7; 119:6,9,104,128

¹⁶ John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14

¹⁷ 1 Corinthians 14:26,40

¹⁸ 2 Peter 3:16

¹⁹ 2 Timothy 3:15-17

²⁰ 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Psalm 19:7-8; 119:105; 2 Peter 1:19; Proverbs 6:22-23; Deuteronomy 30:11-14

²¹ Romans 3:2

²² Matthew 5:18

²³ Isaiah 8:20; Acts 15:15; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 10:34-36

²⁴ Deuteronomy 17:18-20; Proverbs 2:1-5; 8:34; John 5:39,46

²⁵ 1 Corinthians 14:6,9,11,12,24,28

²⁶ Romans 15:4; Colossians 3:16

²⁷ Isaiah 8:20; John 10:34-36; Acts 15:15-16

²⁸ Matthew 22:29,31-32; Acts 28:23-25; Ephesians 2:20

CHAPTER 2 - GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY

1. The Lord our God is the one and only living and true God.²⁹

His substance is in and of himself, he is infinite in being and perfection.³⁰ His essence cannot be understood by any but himself.³¹ He is an absolutely pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions. He alone has immortality, living in light which no one can approach.³² He is immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, in every way infinite, perfectly holy, perfectly wise, absolutely free, completely absolute.³³ He works all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and entirely righteous will for his own glory.³⁴ He is perfectly loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth; he forgives iniquity, transgression and sin.³⁵ He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him, yet at the same time he is entirely just and terrible in his judgments, hating all sin, and he will by no means clear the guilty.³⁶

2. God has all life, glory, goodness, blessedness in and of himself; he is unique in being, all-sufficient in and to himself, not standing in need of any creature which he has made, nor deriving any glory from them, but rather demonstrating his own glory in them, through them, to them, and upon them.³⁷

He alone is the source of all being, from whom, through whom, and to whom are all things; He has absolute sovereign dominion over all creatures, to do through them, for them, or to them whatever he pleases.³⁸ In his sight all things are open and plain, his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent of created beings, so for him nothing is contingent or uncertain.³⁹ He is perfectly holy in all his plans, in all his works, and in all his commands.⁴⁰

Angels and human beings owe him, as creatures to the Creator, worship, service, and obedience, and whatever else he is pleased to require of them.⁴¹

3. 2.3 In this divine and infinite Being there are three persons, the Father, the Son (or the Word) and the Holy Spirit.⁴² They are one in substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, yet this essence is undivided.⁴³

The Father is not derived from anyone, he is neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.⁴⁴ All three are infinite, without beginning, and therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being. Yet they are distinguished by several distinctive characteristics and personal relations.

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

²⁹ Deuteronomy 6:4; Jeremiah 10:10; 1 Corinthians 8:4,6; 1 Thessalonians 1:9

³⁰ Isaiah 48:12

³¹ Exodus 3:14; Job 11:7-8; 26:14; Psalm 145:3; Romans 11:33-34

³² John 4:24; 1 Timothy 1:17; Deuteronomy 4:15-16; Luke 24:39; Acts 14:11,15; James 5:17

³³ Mal 3:6; James 1:17; 1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:23-24; Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17; Genesis 17:1; Revelation 4:8; Isaiah 6:3; Romans 16:27; Psalm 115:3; Ex 3:14

³⁴ Ephesians 1:11; Isaiah 46:10; Proverbs 16:4; Romans 11:36

³⁵ Exodus 34:6-7; 1 John 4:8

³⁶ Hebrews 11:6; Nehemiah 9:32-33; Psalm 5:4-6; Nah 1:2-3; Exodus 34:7

³⁷ John 5:26; Acts 7:2; Psalm 148:13; 119:68; 1 Timothy 6:15; Job 22:2-3; Acts 17:24-25

³⁸ Revelation 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:15; Romans 11:34-36; Daniel 4:25,34-35

³⁹ Hebrews 4:13; Romans 11:33-34; Psalm 147:5; Acts 15:18; Ezekiel 11:5

⁴⁰ Psalm 145:17; Romans 7:12

⁴¹ Revelation 5:12-14

⁴² Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

⁴³ Exodus 3:14; John 14:11; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6

⁴⁴ Proverbs 8:22-31; John 1:1-3,14,18; 3:16; 10:36; 15:26; 16:28; Hebrews 1:2; 1 John 4:14; Galatians 4:4-6

CHAPTER 3 - GOD'S DECREE

1. God has decreed all things that occur,⁴⁵ and this he has done in himself, from all eternity, by the perfectly wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably.⁴⁶ Yet he has done this in such a way that God is neither the author of sin, nor does he share with anyone in sinning,⁴⁷ nor does this violate the will of the creature, nor is the free working or contingency of second causes taken away but rather established.⁴⁸ In all this, God's wisdom is displayed in directing all things, as is his power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree.⁴⁹
2. Although God knows everything which may or can come to pass under all imaginable conditions,⁵⁰ yet he has not decreed anything because he foresaw it in the future, or because it would come to pass [anyway] under certain conditions.⁵¹
3. By God's decree, and for the demonstration of his glory, certain human beings and angels are predestined (or foreordained) to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glorious grace.⁵² Others are left to continue in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice.⁵³
4. Those angels and human beings who are predestined and foreordained to eternal life, are specifically and irreversibly designated, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.⁵⁴
5. God chose those human beings who are predestined to life before the foundation of the world, in accordance with his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will. God chose them in Christ for eternal glory, solely out of his free grace and love,⁵⁵ without anything in the creature as a condition or cause moving him to choose them.⁵⁶
6. As God has appointed the elect to glory, so he has by the eternal and completely free purpose of his will foreordained all the means.⁵⁷ Therefore those who are elected (being fallen in Adam) are redeemed by Christ,⁵⁸ effectually called to faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, justified, adopted, sanctified,⁵⁹ and kept by his power through faith to salvation.⁶⁰ None but the elect are redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved.⁶¹
7. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care,⁶² so that those who are heeding the will of God revealed in his Word, and who are obeying it, may be assured of their eternal election from the certainty of their effectual calling.⁶³ So shall this doctrine promote the

⁴⁵ Daniel 4:34-35; Romans 8:28; 11:36; Ephesians 1:11

⁴⁶ Proverbs 19:21; Isaiah 14:24-27; 46:10-11; Psalm 115:3; 135:6; Romans 9:19

⁴⁷ Genesis 18:25; James 1:13; 1 John 1:5

⁴⁸ Genesis 50:20; 2 Samuel 24:1; Isaiah 10:5-7; Matthew 17:12; John 19:11; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28

⁴⁹ Numbers 23:19; Ephesians 1:3-5

⁵⁰ 1 Samuel 23:11-12; Matthew 11:21,23; Acts 15:18

⁵¹ Isaiah 40:13-14; Romans 9:11-18; 11:34; 1 Corinthians 2:16

⁵² Matthew 25:34; 1 Timothy 5:21

⁵³ John 12:37-40; Romans 9:6-24; 1 Peter 2:8-10; Jude 1:4

⁵⁴ Matthew 22:1-14; John 13:18; Romans 11:5-6; 1 Corinthians 7:20-22; 2 Timothy 2:19

⁵⁵ Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:4-6,9; 2 Timothy 1:9

⁵⁶ Romans 9:11-16; 11:5-6

⁵⁷ Ephesians 1:4; 2:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2

⁵⁸ 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10; Titus 2:14

⁵⁹ Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13

⁶⁰ 1 Peter 1:5

⁶¹ John 6:64-65; 8:47; 10:26; 17:9; Romans 8:28; 1 John 2:19

⁶² Deuteronomy 29:29; Romans 9:20; 11:33

⁶³ 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5; 2 Peter 1:10

praise, reverence, and admiration of God,⁶⁴ and encourage humility⁶⁵ and diligence,⁶⁶ and bring much comfort⁶⁷ to all who sincerely obey the Gospel.

CHAPTER 4 - CREATION

1. In the beginning it pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,⁶⁸ to create the world and all things in it, both visible and invisible,⁶⁹ in six days,⁷⁰ and all very good.⁷¹ This was a demonstration of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness.⁷²
2. After God had made all other creatures, he created human beings, male and female, with reasoning and immortal souls, making them fitted for that life for God for which they were created.⁷³ They were made in the image of God, with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness.⁷⁴ They had the law of God written in their hearts, and the power to fulfil it; yet they also had the possibility of transgressing, and were left to the liberty of their own changeable wills.⁷⁵
3. Apart from the law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. While they kept this commandment they were happy in their fellowship with God, and had dominion over all other creatures.⁷⁶

CHAPTER 5 - PROVIDENCE

1. God, the good Creator of all things,⁷⁷ in his infinite power and wisdom,⁷⁸ upholds, directs, organizes and governs⁷⁹ all creatures and things, from the greatest to the least,⁸⁰ by his perfectly wise and holy providence,⁸¹ to the end for which they were created.⁸² He governs in accordance with his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of his own will,⁸³ to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness and mercy.⁸⁴
2. Although, in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God who is the first cause, all things occur immutably and infallibly, so that nothing happens to anyone by chance, or outside his providence.⁸⁵ Yet

⁶⁴ Ephesians 1:6; Romans 11:33

⁶⁵ Romans 11:5,6,20; Colossians 3:12

⁶⁶ 2 Peter 1:10

⁶⁷ Luke 10:20

⁶⁸ Hebrews 1:2; John 1:2-3; Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4

⁶⁹ Genesis 1:1; John 1:2; Colossians 1:16

⁷⁰ Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11

⁷¹ Genesis 1:31; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 5:12

⁷² Romans 1:20; Jeremiah 10:12; Psalm 104:24; 33:5-6; Proverbs 3:19; Acts 14:15-16

⁷³ Genesis 1:27; 2:7; James 2:26; Matthew 10:28; Ecclesiastes 12:7

⁷⁴ Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-3; 9:6; Ecclesiastes 7:29; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9; Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24

⁷⁵ Romans 1:32; 2:12a,14-15; Genesis 3:6; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 5:12

⁷⁶ Genesis 1:26,28; 2:17

⁷⁷ Genesis 1:31; 2:18; Psalm 119:68

⁷⁸ Psalm 145:11; Proverbs 3:19; Psalm 66:7

⁷⁹ Hebrews 1:3; Isaiah 46:10-11; Daniel 4:34-35; Psalm 135:6; Acts 17:25-28; Job 38-41

⁸⁰ Matthew 10:29-31

⁸¹ Proverbs 15:3; Psalm 104:24; 145:17

⁸² Colossians 1:16-17; Acts 17:24-28

⁸³ Psalm 33:8-11; Ephesians 1:11

⁸⁴ Isaiah 63:14; Ephesians 3:10; Romans 9:17; Genesis 45:7; Psalm 145:7

⁸⁵ Acts 2:23; Proverbs 16:33

by his providence he arranges them to occur according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.⁸⁶

3. God in his ordinary providence makes use of means,⁸⁷ yet is free to work outside,⁸⁸ above⁸⁹ and against⁹⁰ them at his pleasure.
4. The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, are so far expressed in his providence that his sovereign purposes extend even to the first fall and all other sinful actions of angels and human beings.⁹¹ This is not merely by a bare permission, for he most wisely and powerfully limits and by other means arranges and governs sinful actions, so that they bring about his own holy purposes.⁹² Yet [in all this] the sinfulness of these actions comes entirely from the creature, and not from God, who is altogether holy and righteous neither is he nor can he be the author or approver of sin.⁹³
5. The perfectly wise, righteous, and gracious God often leaves for a time [even] his own children to various temptations, and to the corruption of their own hearts. He does this to chastise them for their former sins, or to show them the hidden strength of the corruption and deceitfulness still in their hearts so that they may be humbled, and to bring them to a closer and more constant dependence on him for their support, and to make them more watchful against future occasions of sin, and for various other just and holy ends.⁹⁴ So whatever happens to any of his elect it is by his appointment, for his glory and for their good.⁹⁵
6. As for those evil and ungodly people whom God as a righteous judge blinds and hardens⁹⁶ because of their sins, he not only withholds his grace from them by which they might have been enlightened in their understanding and affected in their hearts,⁹⁷ but sometimes he also withdraws the gifts which they had,⁹⁸ and exposes them to situations which their corruption makes an occasion for sin.⁹⁹ Moreover, God gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan,¹⁰⁰ so that eventually they harden themselves by the very means which God uses for the softening of others.¹⁰¹
7. As the providence of God reaches out in a general way to all creatures, so, in a very special way, it takes care of his church and controls all things for the good of his church.¹⁰²

CHAPTER 6 - THE FALL, SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT

1. God created Adam upright and perfect, and gave him a righteous law which secured life for him while he kept it, but threatened death if he broke it. Yet Adam did not live long in this position of honour.¹⁰³ Satan

⁸⁶ Genesis 8:22; Jeremiah 31:35; Exodus 21:13; Deuteronomy 19:5; Isaiah 10:6-7; Luke 13:3,5; Acts 27:31; Matthew 5:20-21; Philippians 1:19; Proverbs 20:18; Luke 14:25ff; Proverbs 21:31; 1 Kings 22:28,34; Ruth 2:3

⁸⁷ Acts 27:22,31,44; Isaiah 55:10-11; Hosea 2:21-22

⁸⁸ Hosea 1:7; Luke 1:34-35

⁸⁹ Romans 4:19-21

⁹⁰ Exodus 3:2-3; 2 Kings 6:6; Daniel 3:27

⁹¹ Romans 11:32-34; 2 Samuel 24:1; 1 Chronicles 21:1; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Samuel 16:10; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28

⁹² Acts 14:16; 2 Kings 19:28; Genesis 50:20; Isaiah 10:6,7,12

⁹³ James 1:13,14,17; 1 John 2:16; Psalm 50:21

⁹⁴ 2 Chronicles 32:25,26,31; 2 Samuel 24:1; Luke 22:34-35; Mark 14:66f; John 21:15-17

⁹⁵ Romans 8:28

⁹⁶ Romans 1:24-26,28; 11:7-8

⁹⁷ Deuteronomy 29:4

⁹⁸ Matthew 13:12; 25:19

⁹⁹ Deuteronomy 2:30; 2 Kings 8:12-13

¹⁰⁰ Psalm 81:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

¹⁰¹ Exodus 7:3; 8:15,32; 2 Corinthians 2:15-16; Isaiah 6:9-10; 8:14; 1 Peter 2:7; Acts 28:26-27; John 12:39-40

¹⁰² Proverbs 2:7-8; Isaiah 43:3-5,14; Amos 9:8-9; Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11,22; 3:10-11,21; 1 Timothy 4:10

¹⁰³ Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 5:12a,14-15; Genesis 2:17; 4:25-5:3

used the subtlety of the serpent to subdue Eve, she seduced Adam, and Adam (without any compulsion) wilfully transgressed the law of their creation and the command given to them by eating the forbidden fruit.¹⁰⁴ God was pleased to permit this act, according to his wise and holy counsel, as it was his purpose to direct it toward his own glory.¹⁰⁵

2. By this sin our first parents fell from their original righteousness and communion with God. We fell in them, for by it death came upon all;¹⁰⁶ all became dead in sin and totally defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.¹⁰⁷
3. By God's appointment, they were the root, standing in the place of the whole human race. The guilt of this sin was imputed to, and their corrupted nature passed on to all their posterity by ordinary birth. Their descendants are therefore conceived in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, the servants of sin, the subjects of death and all other miseries—spiritual, temporal, and eternal—unless the Lord Jesus sets them free.¹⁰⁸
4. All actual transgressions proceed from this original corruption.¹⁰⁹ By it we are completely incapacitated and disabled, antagonistic to all good and entirely biased towards evil.¹¹⁰
5. During this life, this corruption of nature remains in those who are regenerated.¹¹¹ Although it is pardoned and put to death through Christ, yet both this corrupt nature and all its actions are truly and actually sin.¹¹²

CHAPTER 7 - GOD'S COVENANT WITH THE HUMAN RACE

1. The distance between God and the creature is so great, that (although reasonable creatures owe obedience to him as their Creator) they could never have attained the reward of life except by an Acts of voluntary condescension on God's part. This he has been pleased to express by way of a covenant.¹¹³
2. Moreover, as Adam had brought himself and his posterity under the curse of the law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace.¹¹⁴ In this covenant he freely offers to sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring from them faith in him that they may be saved,¹¹⁵ and promising to give his Holy Spirit to all who are elected to eternal life, to make them willing and able to believe.¹¹⁶
3. This covenant is revealed through the Gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman, and afterwards step by step until the full revelation of it was completed in the New Testament.¹¹⁷ This salvation rests on that eternal covenant transaction between the Father and the Son

¹⁰⁴ Genesis 3:1-7; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:14

¹⁰⁵ Romans 11:32-34; 2 Samuel 24:1; 1 Chronicles 21:1; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Samuel 16:10; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28

¹⁰⁶ Genesis 3:22-24; Romans 5:12ff; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Psalm 51:4-5; 58:3; Ephesians 2:1-3; Genesis 8:21; Proverbs

¹⁰⁷ Genesis 2:17; Ephesians 2:1; Titus 1:15; Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-18; 1:21; Ephesians 4:17-19; John 5:40; Romans 8:7

¹⁰⁸ Genesis 5:12ff, 1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Psalm 51:4-5; 58:3; Ephesians 2:1-3; Genesis 8:21; Proverbs 22:15; Job 14:4; 15:14

¹⁰⁹ Matthew 7:17-20; 12:33-35; 15:18-20

¹¹⁰ Matthew 7:17-18; 12:33-35; Luke 6:43-45; John 3:3,5; 6:37,39,40,44,45,65; Romans 3:10-12; 5:6; 7:18; 8:7-8; 1 Corinthians 2:14

¹¹¹ 1 John 1:8-10; 1 Kings 8:46; Psalm 130:3; 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 7:14-25; James 3:2

¹¹² Psalm 51:4-5; Proverbs 22:15; Ephesians 2:3; Romans 7:5,7-8,17-18,25; 8:3-13; Galatians 5:17-24; Genesis 8:21; Proverbs 15:26; 21:4; Genesis 8:21; Matthew 5:27-28

¹¹³ Job 35:7-8; Psalm 113:5-6; Isaiah 40:13-16; Luke 17:5-10; Acts 17:24-25

¹¹⁴ Genesis 3:15; Psalm 110:4 with Hebrews 7:18-22 and 10:12-18; Ephesians 2:12 with Romans 4:13-17 and Galatians 3:18-22; Hebrews 9:15

¹¹⁵ John 3:16; Romans 10:6,9; Galatians 3:11

¹¹⁶ Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 6:44-45

¹¹⁷ Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:25-27; Ephesians 3:5; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 1:1-2

which concerns the redemption of the elect.¹¹⁸ It is by the grace of this covenant alone that all the descendants of fallen Adam who have ever been saved have obtained life and blessed immortality. Human beings are now utterly incapable of gaining acceptance with God on those terms by which Adam stood in his state of innocence.¹¹⁹

CHAPTER 8 - CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

1. It pleased God,¹²⁰ in his eternal purpose,¹²¹ to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only Son, in accordance with the covenant made between them both,¹²² to be the Mediator between God and the human race; to be prophet, priest, and king; to be the head and saviour of his church, the heir of all things, and judge of the world.¹²³ From all eternity he gave to him a people to be his progeny. In time these would be redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified by him.¹²⁴
2. The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, is truly and eternally God. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, of the same substance¹²⁵ and equal with him who made the world, who upholds and governs all things he has made.¹²⁶

When the fullness of time was come,¹²⁷ he took upon himself human nature, with all its essential properties¹²⁸ and common infirmities,¹²⁹ yet without sin.¹³⁰ He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary. The Holy Spirit came down upon her and the power of the Most High overshadowed her, so that he was born to a woman from the tribe of Judah, a descendant of Abraham and David, in accordance with the Scriptures.¹³¹

So two whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, mixing, or confusion. This person is therefore truly God¹³² and truly human,¹³³ yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and the human race.¹³⁴

3. The Lord Jesus, his human nature thus united to the divine in the person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit without limit, so in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in him, so that being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full

¹¹⁸ Psalm 110:4; Ephesians 1:3-11; 2 Timothy 1:9

¹¹⁹ John 8:56; Romans 4:1-25; Galatians 3:18-22; Hebrews 11:6,13,39-40

¹²⁰ Isaiah 42:1; John 3:16

¹²¹ 1 Peter 1:19

¹²² Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:21-22

¹²³ 1 Timothy 2:5; Acts 3:22; Hebrews 5:5-6; Psalm 2:6; Luke 1:33; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23; Hebrews 1:2; Acts 17:31

¹²⁴ Romans 8:30; John 17:6; Isaiah 53:10; Psalm 22:30; 1 Timothy 2:6; Isaiah 55:4-5; 1 Corinthians 1:30

¹²⁵ Or, *essence*

¹²⁶ John 8:58; John 2:32 with Romans 10:13; Psalm 102:25 with Hebrews 1:10; 1 Peter 2:3 with Psalm 34:8; Isaiah 8:12-13 with 3:15; John 1:1; 5:18; 20:28; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8-9; Philippians 2:5-6; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20

¹²⁷ Galatians 4:4

¹²⁸ Hebrews 10:5; Mark 14:8; Matthew 26:12,26; Luke 7:44-46; John 13:23; Matthew 9:10-13; 11:19; Luke 22:44; Hebrews 2:10; 5:8; 1 Peter 3:18; 4:1; John 19:32-35; Matthew 26:36-44; James 2:26; John 19:30; Luke 23:46; Matthew 26:39; 9:36; Mark 3:5; 10:14; John 11:35; Luke 19:41-44; 10:21; Matthew 4:1-11; Hebrews 4:15 with James 1:13; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:18,28; 2:40,52; Hebrews 5:8-9

¹²⁹ Matthew 4:2; Mark 11:12; Matthew 21:18; John 4:7; 19:28; John 4:6; Matthew 8:24; Romans 8:3; Hebrews 5:8; 2:10,18; Galatians 4:4

¹³⁰ Isaiah 53:9; Luke 1:35; John 8:46; 14:30; Romans 8:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26; 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22; 1 John 3:5

¹³¹ Romans 1:3-4; 9:5

¹³² See ref.1 above

¹³³ Acts 2:22; 13:38; 17:31; 1 Corinthians 15:21; 1 Timothy 2:5

¹³⁴ Romans 1:3-4; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11

of grace and truth, he might be perfectly qualified to execute the office of a mediator and surety.¹³⁵ He did not take this office upon himself, but was called to it by his Father, who also put all power and judgment in his hands, and commanded him to execute these.¹³⁶

4. The Lord Jesus undertook this office entirely willingly.¹³⁷ To discharge it he was subject to the law¹³⁸ and perfectly fulfilled it. He also underwent the punishment due to us which we should have borne and suffered.¹³⁹ He was made sin and was accursed for us;¹⁴⁰ he endured the extremities of agonizing distress in his soul and painful suffering in his body.¹⁴¹ He was crucified, and died,¹⁴² and remained in the state of the dead, yet his body did not decay.¹⁴³ On the third day he rose from the dead with the same body in which he had suffered,¹⁴⁴ with which he also ascended into heaven,¹⁴⁵ where he sits at the right hand of his Father making intercession [for his people].¹⁴⁶ At the end of the world he will return to judge human beings and angels.¹⁴⁷
5. The Lord Jesus has fully satisfied the justice of God¹⁴⁸ by his perfect obedience and his once-for-all sacrifice¹⁴⁹ which he offered up to God through the eternal Spirit.¹⁵⁰ He has procured reconciliation,¹⁵¹ and has purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven¹⁵² for all those whom the Father has given to him.¹⁵³
6. Although the price¹⁵⁴ of redemption was not actually paid¹⁵⁵ by Christ till after his incarnation, yet its value, efficacy, and benefits were communicated to the elect in all ages from the beginning of the world.¹⁵⁶ This was accomplished through those promises, types, and sacrifices in which he was revealed and represented as the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head,¹⁵⁷ and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world,¹⁵⁸ for he is the same, yesterday and today and forever.¹⁵⁹
7. In his work of mediation, Christ acts according to both natures, in each nature doing that which is appropriate to itself. Yet, because of the unity of his person, that which is appropriate to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person indicated by the other nature.¹⁶⁰

¹³⁵ Psalm 45:7; Colossians 1:19; 2:3; Hebrews 7:26; John 1:14; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 7:22

¹³⁶ Hebrews 5:5; John 5:22,27; Matthew 28:18; Acts 2:36

¹³⁷ Psalm 40:7-8 with Hebrews 10:5-10; John 10:18; Philippians 2:8

¹³⁸ Galatians 4:4

¹³⁹ Matthew 3:15; 5:17

¹⁴⁰ Matthew 26:37-38; Luke 22:44; Matthew 27:46

¹⁴¹ Matthew 26-27

¹⁴² Westminster Confession of Faith adds: *was buried*

¹⁴³ Philippians 2:8; Acts 13:37

¹⁴⁴ John 20:25,27

¹⁴⁵ Acts 1:9-11

¹⁴⁶ Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24

¹⁴⁷ Acts 10:42; Romans 14:9-10; Acts 1:11; Matthew 13:40-42; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6

¹⁴⁸ Romans 3:25-26; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10

¹⁴⁹ Romans 5:19 Ephesians 5:2

¹⁵⁰ Hebrews 9:14,16; 10:10,14

¹⁵¹ 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Colossians 1:20-23

¹⁵² Hebrews 9:15; Revelation 5:9-10

¹⁵³ John 17:2

¹⁵⁴ WCF: *work*

¹⁵⁵ WCF: *wrought*

¹⁵⁶ Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 4:1-9

¹⁵⁷ Genesis 3:15; 1 Peter 1:10-11

¹⁵⁸ Revelation 13:8

¹⁵⁹ Hebrews 13:8

¹⁶⁰ Acts 20:28; John 3:13

8. To all those for whom Christ has obtained¹⁶¹ eternal redemption, he certainly and effectually applies and communicates this redemption,¹⁶² making intercession for them.¹⁶³ He unites them to himself by his Spirit,¹⁶⁴ he reveals to them the mystery of salvation in and by the Word,¹⁶⁵ he persuades them to believe and obey¹⁶⁶ controlling their hearts by his Word and Spirit,¹⁶⁷ and he overcomes all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom¹⁶⁸ using methods and ways which are perfectly consistent with his wonderful and unsearchable providence.¹⁶⁹ All this is by free and absolute grace, without any foreseen condition in them to obtain it.¹⁷⁰
9. This office of Mediator between God and the human race belongs exclusively to Christ, who is the Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church of God. This office may not be transferred from him to any other, either in whole or in part.¹⁷¹
10. The number and order of offices is essential. Because of our ignorance we need his prophetic office.¹⁷² Because of our alienation from God and the imperfection of the best of our service we need his priestly office to reconcile us and present us to God as acceptable.¹⁷³ Because of our antagonism and our utter inability to return to God, and because we need to be rescued and kept from spiritual enemies, we need his kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, sustain, deliver, and preserve us for his heavenly kingdom.¹⁷⁴

CHAPTER 9 - FREE WILL

1. God has provided the human will by nature with liberty and power to Acts upon choice; it is neither forced, nor determined by any intrinsic necessity to do good or evil.¹⁷⁵
2. In his state of innocence, Adam had freedom and power to will and to do what was good and well-pleasing to God;¹⁷⁶ but he was unstable so that he might fall from this condition.¹⁷⁷
3. The human race through the fall into a state of sin, has completely lost all ability of will to perform any spiritual good accompanying salvation. In our natural state we are altogether opposed to spiritual good and dead in sin; we are not able, by our own strength, to convert ourselves, or even to prepare ourselves for conversion.¹⁷⁸
4. 9.4 When God converts sinners and transfers them into the state of grace, he frees them from their natural bondage to sin, and by his grace alone he enables them freely to will and to do what is spiritually

¹⁶¹ WCF: *purchased*

¹⁶² John 6:37,39; 10:15-16; 17:9

¹⁶³ 1 John 2:1-2; Romans 8:34

¹⁶⁴ Romans 8:1-2

¹⁶⁵ John 15:13,15; 17:6; Ephesians 1:7-9

¹⁶⁶ 1 John 5:20

¹⁶⁷ John 14:6; Hebrews 12:2; Romans 8:9,14; 2 Corinthians 4:13; Romans 15:18-19; John 17:17

¹⁶⁸ Psalm 110:1; 1 Corinthians 15:25-26; Colossians 2:15

¹⁶⁹ Ephesians 1:9-11

¹⁷⁰ 1 John 3:8; Ephesians 1:8

¹⁷¹ 1 Timothy 2:5

¹⁷² John 1:18

¹⁷³ Colossians 1:21; Galatians 5:17; Hebrews 10:19-21

¹⁷⁴ John 16:8; Psalm 110:3; Luke 1:74-75

¹⁷⁵ Matthew 17:12; James 1:14; Deuteronomy 30:19

¹⁷⁶ Ecclesiastes 7:29

¹⁷⁷ Genesis 3:6

¹⁷⁸ Romans 6:16,20; John 8:31-34; Ephesians 2:1; 2 Corinthians 3:14; 4:3-4; John 3:3; Romans 7:18; 8:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Matthew 7:17-18; 12:33-37; Luke 6:43-45; John 6:44; Jeremiah 13:23; John 3:3,5; 5:40, 6:37,39,40,44,45,65; Acts 7:51; Romans 3:10-12; James 1:18; Romans 9:16-18; John 1:12-13; Acts 11:18; Philippians 1:29; Ephesians 2:8-9

good.¹⁷⁹ Nevertheless, because of their remaining corruption, they do not perfectly nor exclusively will what is good, but also will what is evil.¹⁸⁰

9.5 Only in the state of glory will our wills be made perfectly and permanently free to do good alone.¹⁸¹

CHAPTER 10 - EFFECTUAL CALLING

1. Those whom God¹⁸² has predestined to life,¹⁸³ he is pleased (in his appointed and accepted time)¹⁸⁴ to effectually call¹⁸⁵ by his Word¹⁸⁶ and Spirit.¹⁸⁷ He calls them out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ.⁷¹⁸⁸ He enlightens their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God.¹⁸⁹ He takes away their heart of stone, and gives to them a heart of flesh.¹⁹⁰ He renews their wills, and by his almighty power causes them to do what is good.¹⁹¹ He effectually draws them to Jesus Christ,¹⁹² yet in such a way that they come completely freely, for they are made willing by his grace.¹⁹³
2. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not on account of anything at all foreseen in us. It is not made because of any power or action in us,¹⁹⁴ for we are altogether passive in it, we are dead in sins and trespasses until we are made alive and renewed by the Holy Spirit.¹⁹⁵ By this [regeneration] we are enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it, this power being none other than that which raised up Christ from the dead.¹⁹⁶
3. Infants¹⁹⁷ dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who works when and where and how he pleases.¹⁹⁸ So also are all elect persons regenerated who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word.
4. Those who are not elected, even though they may be called by the ministry of the Word and may experience some common operations of the Spirit,¹⁹⁹ cannot be saved because they are not effectually drawn by the Father, therefore they will not and cannot truly come to Christ. Much less can those who do not profess the Christian religion be saved,²⁰⁰ no matter how diligently they order their lives according to the light of nature and the teachings of the religion they profess.²⁰¹

¹⁷⁹ Colossians 1:13; John 8:36; Philippians 2:13

¹⁸⁰ Romans 7:14-25; Galatians 5:17

¹⁸¹ Ephesians 4:13; Hebrews 12:23

¹⁸² Romans 8:28-29

¹⁸³ Romans 8:29-30; 9:22-24; 1 Corinthians 1:26-28; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:9

¹⁸⁴ John 3:8; Ephesians 1:11

¹⁸⁵ Matthew 22:14; 1Cor 1:23-24; Romans 1:6; 8:28; Jude 1:1; Psalm 29; John 5:25; Romans 4:17

¹⁸⁶ 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 Peter 1:23-25; James 1:17-25; 1 John 5:1-5; Romans 1:16-17; 10:14; Hebrews 4:12

¹⁸⁷ John 3:3,5-6,8; 2 Corinthians 3:3,6

¹⁸⁸ Romans 8:2; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Ephesians 2:1-6; 2 Timothy 1:9-10

¹⁸⁹ Acts 26:18; 1 Corinthians 2:10,12; Ephesians 1:17-18

¹⁹⁰ Ezekiel 36:26

¹⁹¹ Deuteronomy 30:6; Ezekiel 36:27;

¹⁹² John 6:44-45; Ephesians 1:19; Philippians 2:13

¹⁹³ Psalm 110:3; John 6:37; Romans 6:16-18

¹⁹⁴ 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:4-5; Ephesians 2:4-5,8-9; Romans 9:11

¹⁹⁵ 1 Corinthians 2:14; Romans 8:7; Ephesians 2:5

¹⁹⁶ John 6:37; Ezekiel 36:27; John 5:25; Ephesians 1:19-20

¹⁹⁷ WCF: *Elect infants*

¹⁹⁸ John 3:8

¹⁹⁹ Matthew 13:20-21; 22:14; Hebrews 6:4-5; Matthew 7:22

²⁰⁰ John 6:44-45,64-66; 8:24

²⁰¹ Acts 4:12; John 4:22; 17:3

CHAPTER 11 - JUSTIFICATION

1. Those whom God effectually calls he also freely justifies.²⁰² He does this, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting them as righteous,²⁰³ not for anything done in them or by them, but for Christ's sake alone.²⁰⁴ They are not justified because God imputes²⁰⁵ as their righteousness either their faith itself, or the Acts of believing, or any other Acts of obedience to the gospel. They are justified by God imputing Christ's active obedience to the whole law and his passive obedience in death. By faith they receive and rest on his righteousness, and this faith they do not have of themselves for it is the gift of God.²⁰⁶
2. Faith which receives and rests on Christ and his righteousness is the sole instrument of justification.²⁰⁷ Yet it is never alone in the person justified, but is always accompanied by all the other saving graces; it is not a dead faith, for it functions by love.²⁰⁸
3. By his obedience and death, Christ fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified. By his sacrifice in the blood of his cross, he underwent in their place the penalty due to them, so making an appropriate, real, and full satisfaction of God's justice on their behalf.²⁰⁹ Yet their justification is entirely of free grace, because he was given by the Father for them,²¹⁰ and his obedience and satisfaction was accepted in their place,²¹¹ both actions being done freely, and not because of anything in them.²¹² So both the exact justice and the rich grace of God are glorified in the justification of sinners.²¹³
4. From all eternity God decreed to justify all the elect,²¹⁴ and Christ in the fullness of time died for their sins, and rose again for their justification.²¹⁵ Nevertheless they are not justified personally until the Holy Spirit in due time actually applies Christ to them.²¹⁶
5. God continues to forgive the sins of those who are justified;²¹⁷ and although they can never fall from the state of justification,²¹⁸ yet they may fall under God's fatherly displeasure because of their sins. In that condition they will not usually have fellowship with God²¹⁹ restored to them until they humble themselves, confess their sins, ask for pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.²²⁰
6. The justification of believers under the Old Testament was in all these respects exactly the same as the justification of believers under the New Testament.²²¹

²⁰² Romans 8:30; 3:24

²⁰³ Romans 4:5-8; Ephesians 1:7

²⁰⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Romans 5:17-19

²⁰⁵ i.e. *accounts* or *reckons*

²⁰⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Titus 3:5,7; Romans 3:22-28; Jeremiah 23:6; Philippians 3:9; Acts 13:38-39; Ephesians 2:7-8

²⁰⁷ Romans 1:17; 3:27-31; Philippians 3:9; Galatians 3:5

²⁰⁸ Galatians 5:6; James 2:17,22,26

²⁰⁹ Romans 5:8-10,19; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 10:10,14; Isaiah 53:4-6,10-12

²¹⁰ Romans 8:32

²¹¹ 2 Corinthians 5:21; Matthew 3:17; Ephesians 5:2

²¹² Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7

²¹³ Romans 3:26; Ephesians 2:7

²¹⁴ Galatians 3:8; 1 Peter 1:2,19-20; Romans 8:30

²¹⁵ Galatians 4:4; 1 Timothy 2:6; Romans 4:25

²¹⁶ Colossians 1:21-22; Galatians 2:16; Titus 3:4-7; Ephesians 2:1-3

²¹⁷ Matthew 6:12; 1 John 1:7-2:2; John 13:3-11

²¹⁸ Luke 22:32; John 10:28; Hebrews 10:14

²¹⁹ Literally, *the light of his countenance*

²²⁰ Psalm 32:5; 51:7-12; Matthew 26:75; Luke 1:20

²²¹ Galatians 3:9; Romans 4:22-24

CHAPTER 12 - ADOPTION

God has granted²²² that, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ,²²³ all those who are justified²²⁴ share in the grace of adoption. By this they are numbered with and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God. They have his name put upon them,²²⁵ and receive the Spirit of adoption. They have access to the throne of grace with boldness, and are able to cry, 'Abba, Father!'²²⁶ They are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by him as by a father, yet they are never cast off, but are sealed to the day of redemption,²²⁷ and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.²²⁸

CHAPTER 13 - SANCTIFICATION

1. Those who are united to Christ, effectually called and regenerated, have a new heart and a new spirit created in them through the efficacy of Christ's death and resurrection.²²⁹ Furthermore, they are also really and personally sanctified²³⁰ through the same means,²³¹ by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them.²³² The power of every part of the body of sin is destroyed, and its various lusts are increasingly weakened and put to death, and saving graces are increasingly brought to life and strengthened in them so that they practice true holiness²³³ without which no one shall see the Lord.²³⁴
2. This sanctification extends throughout the whole person, yet it remains incomplete in this life. Some remnants of corruption still remain in every part,²³⁵ from which arise a continual and irreconcilable war,²³⁶ the flesh desiring what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh.²³⁷
3. In this war, the remaining corruption may often predominate for a time,²³⁸ yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part gains the victory.²³⁹ So believers grow in grace, moving towards mature holiness in the fear of God, pressing on towards the heavenly life in gospel obedience to all the commands which Christ as Head and King has prescribed for them in his Word.²⁴⁰

²²² 1 John 3:1-3

²²³ Ephesians 1:5; Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 8:17,29

²²⁴ Galatians 3:24-26

²²⁵ Romans 8:17; John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 3:12

²²⁶ Romans 8:15; Ephesians 3:12; Romans 5:2; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 2:18

²²⁷ Psalm 103:13; Proverbs 14:26; Matthew 6:30,32; 1 Peter 5:7; Hebrews 12:6; Isaiah 54:8-9; Lam 3:31; Ephesians 4:30

²²⁸ Romans 8:17; Hebrews 1:14; 9:15

²²⁹ John 3:3-8; 1 John 2:29; 3:9-10; Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 3:12; Acts 20:32; 26:18; Romans 15:16; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; Romans 6:1-11

²³⁰ 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Romans 6:19,22

²³¹ 1 Corinthians 6:11; Acts 20:32; Philippians 3:10; Romans 6:5-6

²³² John 17:17; Ephesians 5:26; 3:16-19; Romans 8:13

²³³ Romans 6:14; Galatians 5:24; Romans 8:13; Colossians 1:11; Ephesians 3:16-19; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Romans 6:13; Ephesians 4:22-25; Galatians 5:17

²³⁴ Hebrews 12:14

²³⁵ 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 John 1:8,10; Romans 7:18,23; Philippians 3:12

²³⁶ 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 1 Timothy 1:18; 6:12; 2 Timothy 4:7

²³⁷ Galatians 5:17; 1 Peter 2:11

²³⁸ Romans 7:23

²³⁹ Romans 6:14; 1 John 5:4; Ephesians 4:15-16

²⁴⁰ 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 3:18; Matthew 28:20

CHAPTER 14 - SAVING FAITH

1. The grace of faith (by which the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls) is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts. It is normally brought into being by the ministry of the Word.²⁴¹ It is increased and strengthened by the ministry of the Word, and by the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper, prayer, and other means appointed by God.²⁴²
2. By this faith, a Christian believes to be true whatever is revealed in the Word for it is the authority of God himself. We also perceive an excellency in the Word above all other writings and everything else in the world, because it shows forth the glory of God and his attributes, the excellency of Christ and his nature and offices, and the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit in his works and operations.

So believers are enabled to trust implicitly the truth they have believed,²⁴³ and to respond appropriately to each particular passage in Scripture, yielding obedience to the commands,²⁴⁴ trembling at the threatenings,²⁴⁵ and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come.²⁴⁶

But the principal acts of saving faith are those directly to do with Christ—accepting, receiving, and resting on him alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.²⁴⁷

3. This faith may differ in degree, and may be weak or strong,²⁴⁸ yet even at its weakest it is different in kind and nature (as is all saving grace) from the faith and common grace of temporary believers.²⁴⁹ Therefore, though it may be frequently attacked and weakened, it gains the victory,²⁵⁰ and develops in many until they attain full assurance²⁵¹ through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith.²⁵²

CHAPTER 15 - REPENTANCE TO LIFE AND SALVATION

1. Some of the elect are converted in later years, having lived for some time in their natural state²⁵³ in which they have served various lusts and pleasures. Then God gives them repentance to life by effectually calling them.²⁵⁴
2. There is no one who does good and does not sin,²⁵⁵ and the best of people may fall into great sins and provocations [against God] through the power and deceitfulness of their indwelling corruption and the strength of temptation.²⁵⁶ Therefore God has mercifully provided in the covenant of grace that when believers sin and fall they shall be restored to salvation through repentance.²⁵⁷

²⁴¹ John 6:37,44; Acts 11:21,24; 13:48; 14:27; 15:9; 2 Corinthians 4:13; Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2

²⁴² Romans 10:14,17; Luke 17:5; Acts 20:32; Romans 4:11; 1 Peter 2:2

²⁴³ Acts 24:14; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Psalm 19:7-10; 119:72

²⁴⁴ John 15:14; Romans 16:26

²⁴⁵ Isaiah 66:2

²⁴⁶ 1 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 11:13

²⁴⁷ John 1:12; Acts 15:11; 16:31; Galatians 2:20

²⁴⁸ Matthew 6:30; 8:10,26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20; Hebrews 5:13-14; Romans 4:19-20

²⁴⁹ James 2:14; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:4

²⁵⁰ Luke 22:31-32; Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 5:4-5

²⁵¹ Psalm 119:114; Hebrews 6:11-12; 10:22-23

²⁵² Hebrews 12:2

²⁵³ Titus 3:2-5

²⁵⁴ 2 Chronicles 33:10-20; Acts 9:1-19; 16:29-30

²⁵⁵ Psalm 130:3; 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20

²⁵⁶ 2 Samuel 11:1-27; Luke 22:54-62

²⁵⁷ Jeremiah 32:40; Luke 22:31-32; 1 John 1:9

3. Saving repentance is a gospel grace²⁵⁸ by which we are made aware of the many evils of our sin by the Holy Spirit.²⁵⁹ By faith in Christ²⁶⁰ we humble ourselves over our sin with godly sorrow, hatred of it, and self-loathing. We pray for pardon and strength of grace,²⁶¹ and determine and endeavour, by [the power] supplied by the Spirit, to walk before God and to please him in all things.²⁶²
4. Repentance is to continue through the whole course of our lives because of our 'body of death' and its activities.²⁶³ So it is everyone's duty to repent of particular known sins with particular care.²⁶⁴
5. In the covenant of grace God has made full provision through Christ for the preservation of believers in their salvation, so, although even the smallest sin deserves damnation,²⁶⁵ yet there is no sin great enough to bring damnation on those who repent. This makes the constant preaching of repentance essential.²⁶⁶

CHAPTER 16 - GOOD WORKS

1. Good works are only those which God has commanded in his holy Word.²⁶⁷ Works which do not have such warrant, and are invented by people out of blind zeal or on pretence of good intentions, are not good works.²⁶⁸
2. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidence of a true and living faith.²⁶⁹ By them believers express their thankfulness,²⁷⁰ strengthen their assurance,²⁷¹ edify their brethren,²⁷² enhance their profession of the Gospel,²⁷³ and silence the opponents [of the Gospel].²⁷⁴ So they glorify God whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus to do good works²⁷⁵ and to produce the fruits of holiness which lead to eternal life.²⁷⁶
3. Their ability to do these good works does not in any way come from themselves, but entirely from the Spirit of Christ. To enable them to do good works (besides the graces they have already received) they require the actual influence of the Holy Spirit to cause them to will and to do his good pleasure.²⁷⁷ Yet are they not on this account to become negligent, nor to think that they are not required to perform a duty

²⁵⁸ Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2 Timothy 2:25

²⁵⁹ Psalm 51:1-6; 130:1-3; Luke 15:17-20; Acts 2:37-38

²⁶⁰ Psalm 130:4; Matthew 27:3-5; Mark 1:15

²⁶¹ Ezekiel 16:60-63; 36:31-32; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 21:29; Acts 15:19; 20:21; 26:20; 2 Corinthians 7:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9

²⁶² Proverbs 28:13; Ezekiel 36:25; 18:30-31; Psalm 119:59,104,128; Matthew 3:8; Luke 3:8; Acts 26:20; 1 Thessalonians 1:9

²⁶³ Ezekiel 16:60; Matthew 5:4; 1 John 1:9

²⁶⁴ Luke 19:8; 1 Timothy 1:13,15

²⁶⁵ Psalm 130:3; 143:2; Romans 6:23

²⁶⁶ Isaiah 1:16-18; 55:7; Acts 2:36-38

²⁶⁷ Micah 6:8; Romans 12:2; Hebrews 13:21; Colossians 2:3; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

²⁶⁸ Matthew 15:9 with Isaiah 29:13; 1 Peter 1:18; Romans 10:2; John 16:2; 1 Samuel 15:21-23; 1 Corinthians 7:23; Galatians 5:1; Colossians 2:8,16-23

²⁶⁹ James 2:18,22; Galatians 5:6; 1 Timothy 1:5

²⁷⁰ Psalm 116:12-14; 1 Peter 2:9,12; Luke 7:36-50 with Matthew 26:1-11

²⁷¹ 1 John 2:3,5; 3:18-19; 2 Peter 1:5-11

²⁷² 2 Corinthians 9:2; Matthew 5:16

²⁷³ Matthew 5:16; Titus 2:5,9-12; 1 Timothy 6:1; 1 Peter 2:12

²⁷⁴ 1 Peter 2:12,15; Titus 2:5; 1 Timothy 6:1

²⁷⁵ Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 1:11; 1 Timothy 6:1; 1 Peter 2:12; Matthew 5:16

²⁷⁶ Romans 6:22; Matthew 7:13-14,21-23

²⁷⁷ Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 15:4-6; 2 Corinthians 3:5; Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 2:10

unless given a special impulse of the Spirit; rather, they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.²⁷⁸

4. Those who in their obedience [to God] attain the greatest height possible in this life, are still far from being able to perform works of supererogation (that is, to do more than God requires) since they fall short of much which, as their duty, they are required to do.²⁷⁹
5. We cannot, even by our best works, merit pardon of sin or eternal life from the hand of God, for those works are out of all proportion to the glory to come.²⁸⁰ Moreover, because of the infinite distance that is between us and God, our works can neither benefit God nor satisfy the debt of our former sins. When we have done all we can, we have only done our duty, and are still unprofitable servants.²⁸¹ Besides, if our works are good they originate from the Spirit,²⁸² and whatever we do is defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection that it cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.²⁸³
6. Yet, although believers are accepted as individual people through Christ, their good works also are accepted in Christ.²⁸⁴ It is not as though in this life they were entirely blameless and beyond censure in God's sight,²⁸⁵ but that he looks upon them in his Son, and is pleased to accept and reward what is sincere, even though it is accompanied by many weaknesses and imperfections.²⁸⁶
7. As for works done by the unregenerate, even though in essence they may be things which God commands, and may be beneficial both to themselves and others,²⁸⁷ yet they remain sinful works because they do not proceed from a heart purified by faith,²⁸⁸ nor are they done in a right manner according to the Word,²⁸⁹ nor is their purpose the glory of God.²⁹⁰ Therefore such works cannot please God nor make a person acceptable to receive grace from God.²⁹¹ Yet the neglect of such works is even more sinful and displeasing to God.²⁹²

CHAPTER 17 - THE PERSEVERANCE OF BELIEVERS

1. The elect are those whom God has accepted in [Christ] the Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, and given the precious faith of his elect. These can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but they shall certainly persevere in grace to the end and be eternally saved. For God will not repent of²⁹³ his gifts and calling, therefore he continues to bring about and nourish in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit that lead to immortality.²⁹⁴

²⁷⁸ Romans 8:14; John 3:8; Philippians 2:12-13; 2 Peter 1:10; Hebrews 6:12; 2 Timothy 1:6; Jude 1:20-21

²⁷⁹ 1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chronicles 6:36; Psalm 130:3; 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:9,23; 7:14-15; Galatians 5:17; 1 John 1:6-10; Luke 17:10

²⁸⁰ Romans 8:18

²⁸¹ Job 22:3; 35:7; Luke 17:10; Romans 4:3; 11:3

²⁸² Galatians 5:22-23

²⁸³ 1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chronicles 6:36; Psalm 130:3; 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:9,23; 7:14-15; Galatians 5:17; 1 John 1:6-10

²⁸⁴ Exodus 28:38; Ephesians 1:6-7; 1 Peter 2:5

²⁸⁵ 1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chronicles 6:36; Psalm 130:3; 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:9,23; 7:14-15; Galatians 5:17; 1 John 1:6-10

²⁸⁶ Hebrews 6:10; Matthew 25:21,23

²⁸⁷ 1 Kings 21:27-29; 2 Kings 10:30-31; Romans 2:14; Philippians 1:15-18

²⁸⁸ Genesis 4:5 with Hebrews 11:4-6; 1 Timothy 1:5; Romans 14:23; Galatians 5:6

²⁸⁹ 1 Corinthians 13:3; Isaiah 1:12

²⁹⁰ Matthew 6:2,5-6; 1 Corinthians 10:31

²⁹¹ Romans 9:16; Titus 1:15; 3:5

²⁹² 1 Kings 21:27-29; 2 Kings 10:30-31; Psalm 14:4; 36:3

²⁹³ Or, *change his mind about*

²⁹⁴ John 10:28-29; Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 2:19; 2 Peter 1:5-10; 1 John 2:19

Many storms and floods may arise and beat against them, yet these things will never be able to sweep them off the foundation and rock upon which they are fastened by faith. Even though unbelief and the temptations of Satan cause the sight and feeling of the light and love of God to be clouded and obscured from them for a time,²⁹⁵ yet God is still the same and they are sure to be kept by his power until their salvation is complete. Then they will enjoy the purchased possession which is theirs, for they are engraved on the palms of his hands, and their names have been written in the book of life from all eternity.²⁹⁶

2. This perseverance of believers does not depend on their own free will,²⁹⁷ but on the immutability of the decree of election,²⁹⁸ which flows from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father. It also rests on the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ and their union with him,²⁹⁹ the oath of God,³⁰⁰ the abiding of his Spirit, the seed of God³⁰¹ within them,³⁰² and the nature of the covenant of grace,³⁰³ from all of which arises also its certainty and infallibility.
3. They may fall into serious sins through the temptations of Satan and the world, the power of the corruption remaining in them, and neglect of the means for their preservation, and may even continue in them for a time.³⁰⁴ In this they incur God's displeasure, grieve his Holy Spirit,³⁰⁵ have their graces and comforts impaired,³⁰⁶ have their hearts hardened and their consciences wounded,³⁰⁷ and hurt and offend others,³⁰⁸ and bring present chastisement upon themselves.³⁰⁹ Yet they will [in time] renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end.³¹⁰

CHAPTER 18 - ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND SALVATION

1. Temporary believers and other unregenerate people may deceive themselves with futile and false hopes and unspiritual presumptions that they are in favour with God and in a state of salvation, but their hope will perish.³¹¹ Yet those who truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before him, may be certainly assured in this life that they are in the state of grace; they may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, knowing that such hope will never make them ashamed.³¹²
2. This certainty is not mere conjecture or probability based on a fallible hope. Rather it is an infallible assurance of faith³¹³ based on the blood and righteousness of Christ revealed in the Gospel,³¹⁴ on the

²⁹⁵ Psalm 89:31-32; 1 Corinthians 11:32; 2 Timothy 4:7

²⁹⁶ Psalm 102:27; Mal 3:6; Ephesians 1:14; 1 Peter 1:5; Revelation 13:8

²⁹⁷ Philippians 2:12-13; Romans 9:16; John 6:37,44

²⁹⁸ Matthew 24:22,24,31; Romans 8:30; 9:11,16; 11:2,29; Ephesians 1:5-11

²⁹⁹ Ephesians 1:4; Romans 5:9-10; 8:31-34; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Romans 8:35-38; 1 Corinthians 1:8-9; John 14:19; 10:28-29

³⁰⁰ Hebrews 6:16-20

³⁰¹ or, *the divine nature*

³⁰² 1 John 2:19-20,27; 3:9; 5:4,18; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:14

³⁰³ Jeremiah 31:33-34; 32:40; Hebrews 10:11-18; 13:20-21

³⁰⁴ Matthew 26:70,72,74

³⁰⁵ Psalm 38:1-8; Isaiah 54:5-9; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:14

³⁰⁶ Psalm 51:10-12

³⁰⁷ Psalm 32:3-4; 73:21-22

³⁰⁸ 2 Samuel 12:14; 1 Corinthians 8:9-13; Romans 14:13-18; 1 Timothy 6:1-2; Titus 2:5

³⁰⁹ 2 Samuel 12:14-15; Genesis 19:30-38; 1 Corinthians 11:27-32

³¹⁰ Luke 22:32,61-62; 1 Corinthians 11:32; 1 John 3:9; 5:18

³¹¹ Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 18:10-14; John 8:41; Ephesians 5:6-7; Galatians 6:3,7-9

³¹² Romans 5:2,5; 8:16; 1 John 2:3; 3:14,18-19,24; 5:13; 2 Peter 1:10

³¹³ Romans 5:2,5; Hebrews 6:11,19-20; 1 John 3:2,14; 4:16; 5:13,19-20

³¹⁴ Hebrews 6:17-18; 7:22; 10:14,19

inward evidence of those graces of the Spirit (about which promises have been made),³¹⁵ and on the testimony of the Spirit of adoption who witnesses with our spirits that we are the children of God.³¹⁶ As the fruit of this assurance, the Spirit keeps our hearts both humble and holy.³¹⁷

3. This infallible assurance is not an essential part of faith, for a true believer may wait a long time, and struggle with many difficulties before obtaining it.³¹⁸ Yet we may obtain it without extraordinary revelation and by the right use of ordinary means, for we are enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given to us by God.³¹⁹ Therefore it is the duty of everyone to be as diligent as possible to make their calling and election sure, so that their hearts may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in carrying out the duties of obedience. These duties are the natural fruits of this assurance, for it is far from inclining people to lose living.³²⁰
4. In various ways true believers may have their assurance of salvation shaken, diminished, or interrupted. This may be because of their negligence in preserving it,³²¹ or by falling into some particular sin which wounds the conscience and grieves the Spirit,³²² or by some sudden or forceful temptation,³²³ or by God withdrawing the light of his countenance and causing even those who fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light.³²⁴ Yet believers are never destitute of the seed of God³²⁵ and the life of faith, the love of Christ and the brethren, sincerity of heart and conscience of duty. Out of these things, this assurance may in due time be revived by the operation of the Spirit, and in the mean time they are preserved from utter despair.³²⁶

CHAPTER 19 - THE LAW OF GOD

1. God gave to Adam a law of universal obedience written in his heart,³²⁷ and a specific precept not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.³²⁸ By this he bound him and all his descendants to personal, total, exact, and perpetual obedience. God promised life on fulfilling it, and threatened death on breaching it, and he endued him with power and ability to keep it.³²⁹
2. The same law that was first written in the human heart continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall.³³⁰ It was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai³³¹ in Ten Commandments (written in two tables) the first four containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to our fellow beings.³³²

³¹⁵ Matthew 3:7-10; Mark 1:15; 2 Peter 1:4-11; 1 John 2:3; 3:14,18-19,24; 5:13

³¹⁶ Romans 8:15-16; 1 Corinthians 2:12; Galatians 4:6-7

³¹⁷ 1 John 3:1-3

³¹⁸ Acts 16:30-34; 1 John 5:13

³¹⁹ Romans 8:15-16; 1 Corinthians 2:12; Galatians 4:4-6 with 3:2; 1 John 4:13; Ephesians 3:17-19; Hebrews 6:11-12; 2 Peter 1:5-11

³²⁰ 2 Peter 1:10; Psalm 119:32; Romans 15:13; Nehemiah 8:10; 1 John 4:19,16; Romans 6:1-2,11-13; 14:17; Titus 2:11-14

³²¹ Hebrews 6:11-12; 2 Peter 1:5-11

³²² Psalm 51:8,12,14; Ephesians 4:30

³²³ Psalm 30:7; 31:22; 77:7-8; 116:11

³²⁴ Isaiah 50:10

³²⁵ or, *the divine nature*

³²⁶ 1 John 3:9; Luke 22:32; Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:5; Psalm 42:5,11

³²⁷ Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 2:12a,14-15

³²⁸ Genesis 2:16-17

³²⁹ Genesis 2:16-17; Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:10,12

³³⁰ For the Fourth Commandment: Genesis 2:3; Exodus 16; Genesis 7:4; 8:10,12. For the Fifth Commandment: Genesis 37:10. For the Sixth Commandment: Genesis 4:3-15. For the Seventh Commandment: Genesis 12:17. For the Eighth Commandment: Genesis 31:30; 44:8. For the Ninth Commandment: Genesis 27:12. For the Tenth Commandment: Genesis 6:2; 13:10-11

³³¹ Romans 2:12a,14-15

3. Besides this law, commonly called the moral law, God was pleased to give the people of Israel ceremonial laws containing several typical ordinances. These were partly concerning worship, and in them Christ was prefigured—his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits.³³³ They also gave instructions about various moral duties.³³⁴ All of these ceremonial laws were appointed only until the time of the New Testament, when Jesus Christ abrogated them and took them away, for he was the true Messiah and only law-giver, and was empowered to do this by the Father.³³⁵
4. To the people of Israel he also gave various judicial laws which lapsed when they ceased as a nation. These are not binding on anyone now by virtue of their being part of the laws of that nation,³³⁶ but their principles of equity continue to be applicable in modern times.³³⁷
5. Obedience to the moral law remains forever binding on all, both justified persons and others,³³⁸ both in regard to the content of the law, and also to the authority of God the Creator who gave the law.³³⁹ Nor does Christ in any way dissolve this law in the Gospel, on the contrary, he strengthens our obligation [to obey the moral law].³⁴⁰
6. Although true believers are not under the law as a covenant of works to be justified or condemned by it,³⁴¹ yet it is of great use to them as well as to others, because as a rule of life it informs them of the will of God and their duty, and directs and binds them to walk accordingly.³⁴²

It also exposes the sinful defilement of their natures, hearts and lives, and as they use it to examine themselves, they come to greater conviction of sin, humiliation for sin, and hatred against sin. They also gain a clearer sight of their need of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience [to the law].³⁴³

Similarly, it is of use to the regenerate to restrain their corruption in that it forbids sin. The threatening of the law serve to show what even their sins deserve, and what troubles they may expect in this life because of their sins, even though they are freed from the curse and undiminished rigors of the law.³⁴⁴

The promises of the law also show believers God's approval of obedience, and what blessings they may expect when the law is kept,³⁴⁵ although these blessings are not due to them through the law as a covenant of works.³⁴⁶ If someone does good and refrains from evil simply because the law encourages the former and deters from the latter that is not evidence of one's being under the law and not under grace.³⁴⁷
7. These uses of the law are not contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but are entirely in line with it, for the Spirit of Christ subdues and enables the human will to do freely and cheerfully what the will of God revealed in the law requires to be done.³⁴⁸

³³² Exodus 32:15-16; 34:4,28; Deuteronomy 10:4

³³³ Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:16-17

³³⁴ 1 Corinthians 5:7; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Jude 1:23

³³⁵ Colossians 2:14,16-17; Ephesians 2:14-16

³³⁶ Luke 21:20-24; Acts 6:13-14; Hebrews 9:18-19 with 8:7,13; 9:10; 10:1

³³⁷ 1 Corinthians 5:1; 9:8-10

³³⁸ Matthew 19:16-22; Romans 2:14-15; 3:19-20; 6:14; 7:6; 8:3; 1 Timothy 1:8-11; Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 7:19 with Galatians 5:6; 6:15; Ephesians 4:25-6:4; James 2:11-12

³³⁹ James 2:10-11

³⁴⁰ Matthew 5:17-19; Romans 3:31; 1 Corinthians 9:21; James 2:8

³⁴¹ Acts 13:39; Romans 6:14; 8:1; 10:4; Galatians 2:16; 4:4-5

³⁴² Romans 7:12,22,25; Psalm 119:4-6; 1 Corinthians 7:19

³⁴³ Romans 3:20; 7:7,9,14,24; 8:3; James 1:23-25

³⁴⁴ James 2:11; Psalm 119:101,104,128

³⁴⁵ Ephesians 6:2-3; Psalm 37:11; Matthew 5:6; Psalm 19:11

³⁴⁶ Luke 17:10

³⁴⁷ See the book of Proverbs; Matthew 3:7; Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:40; Hebrews 11:26; 1 Peter 3:8-13

³⁴⁸ Galatians 3:21; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:27; Romans 8:4; Titus 2:14

CHAPTER 20 - THE GOSPEL AND ITS GRACIOUS EXTENT

1. As the covenant of works was broken by sin and was unable to confer life, God was pleased to promise Christ, the seed of the woman, as the means of calling the elect and bringing to life within them faith and repentance. In this promise the substance of the Gospel was revealed as the effectual means for the conversion and salvation of sinners.³⁴⁹
2. This promise of Christ and of salvation by him, is revealed in the Word of God alone.³⁵⁰ Neither the works of creation and providence, nor the light of nature, reveal Christ or grace through him, not even in a general or obscure way.³⁵¹ How much less, therefore, can people who are devoid of the revelation of Christ by the promise or the Gospel, be enabled [by the light of nature] to attain to saving faith or repentance.³⁵²
3. The revelation of the Gospel to sinners has been given at various times and in a variety of places, together with the promises and precepts concerning the obedience required by it. As to the nations and persons to whom it is granted, this is solely according to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God.³⁵³ It has never been granted to them by virtue of their promising to improve their natural abilities on the grounds of common light received without the Gospel—no one has ever made such a promise, nor can anyone do so. Therefore, in all ages, the preaching of the Gospel has been granted to persons and nations, whether to a great extent or limited extent, in greatly varying measures, according to the counsel of the will of God.
4. The Gospel is the only external means of revealing Christ and saving grace, and as such is totally sufficient for this purpose.³⁵⁴ Yet if people who are dead in trespasses are to be born again, brought to life or regenerated, an effectual, irresistible work of the Holy Spirit upon every part of the soul is necessary to produce in them a new spiritual life. Without this no other means will bring about their conversion to God.³⁵⁵

CHAPTER 21 - CHRISTIAN LIBERTY AND LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE

1. The liberty which Christ has purchased for believers under the Gospel consists of their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, and the severity and curse of the [moral] law.³⁵⁶ It also includes their deliverance from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, the dominion of sin,³⁵⁷ the distress of afflictions, the fear and sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation.³⁵⁸ Furthermore, it includes their free access to God, and their ability to yield obedience to him, not out of slavish fear, but with childlike love, and willing minds.³⁵⁹

All these blessings were also shared in essence by believers under the [Old Testament] law;³⁶⁰ but, under the New Testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law to which the Jews were subjected. We also have greater boldness of access to the

³⁴⁹ Genesis 3:15 with Ephesians 2:12; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 11:13; Luke 2:25,38; 23:51; Romans 4:13-16; Galatians 3:15-22

³⁵⁰ Acts 4:12; Romans 10:13-15

³⁵¹ Psalm 19; Romans 1:18-23

³⁵² Romans 2:12a; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-47 with Acts 17:29-30; Romans 3:9-20

³⁵³ Matthew 11:20

³⁵⁴ Romans 1:16-17

³⁵⁵ John 6:44; 1 Corinthians 1:22-24; 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:4,6

³⁵⁶ John 3:36; Romans 8:33; Galatians 3:13

³⁵⁷ Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 1:13; Acts 26:18; Romans 6:14-18; 8:3

³⁵⁸ Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 15:54-57; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; Hebrews 2:14-15

³⁵⁹ Ephesians 2:18; 3:12; Romans 8:15; 1 John 4:18

³⁶⁰ John 8:32; Psalm 19:7-9; 119:14,24,45,47,48,72,97; Romans 4:5-11; Galatians 3:9; Hebrews 11:27,33-34

throne of grace, and fuller provision of the free Spirit of God than believers under the law normally experienced.³⁶¹

2. God alone is Lord of the conscience,³⁶² and he has left it free from [obligations to] human doctrines and commandments which are in any way contrary to his Word or not contained in it.³⁶³ So to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commandments out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience.³⁶⁴ To require an implicit faith, or absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason.³⁶⁵
3. Those who practice any sin or harbour any sinful desires on pretence of Christian liberty, pervert the main purpose of the grace of the Gospel to their own destruction.³⁶⁶ They completely destroy the purpose of Christian liberty, which is that we (having been delivered from all our [spiritual] enemies) might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives.³⁶⁷

CHAPTER 22 - WORSHIP AND THE LORD'S DAY

1. The light of nature shows that there is a God who has lordship and sovereignty over all. He is just and good and does good to all. Therefore he is to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart and soul and strength.³⁶⁸

But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God has been instituted by himself and delimited by his own revealed will. He may not be worshipped according to human imagination or methods, nor according to the suggestions of Satan, nor by way of any visible representation, nor by any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.³⁶⁹

2. Worship is to be given to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to him alone,³⁷⁰ not to angels, saints, or any other creatures.³⁷¹ Since the fall worship is not to be given without a mediator, nor by any mediation other than that of Christ alone.³⁷²
3. Prayer with thanksgiving, being one part of natural worship, is required by God of all people.³⁷³ But to be acceptable, it must be made in the name of the Son,³⁷⁴ by the help of his Spirit,³⁷⁵ and according to his will.³⁷⁶ It must also be made with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance,³⁷⁷ and when with others in a known language.³⁷⁸

³⁶¹ John 1:17; Hebrews 1:1-2a; 7:19,22; 8:6; 9:23; 11:40; Galatians 2:11-12; 4:1-3; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 10:19-21; John 7:38-39

³⁶² James 4:12; Romans 14:4; Galatians 5:1

³⁶³ Acts 4:19; 5:29; 1 Corinthians 7:23; Matthew 15:9

³⁶⁴ Colossians 2:20,22-23; Galatians 1:10; 2:3-5; 5:1

³⁶⁵ Romans 10:17; 14:23; Acts 17:11; John 4:22; 1 Corinthians 3:5; 2 Corinthians 1:24

³⁶⁶ Romans 6:1-2

³⁶⁷ Luke 1:74-75; Romans 14:9; Galatians 5:13; 2 Peter 2:18,21

³⁶⁸ Jeremiah 10:7; Mark 12:33

³⁶⁹ Genesis 4:1-5; Exodus 20:4-6; Matthew 15:3,8-9; 2 Kings 16:10-18; Lev 10:1-3; Deuteronomy 17:3; 4:2; 12:29-32; Joshua 1:7; 23:6-8; Matthew 15:13; Colossians 2:20-23; 2 Timothy 3:15-17

³⁷⁰ Matthew 4:9-10; John 5:23; 2 Corinthians 13:14

³⁷¹ Romans 1:25; Colossians 2:10; Revelation 19:10

³⁷² John 14:6; Ephesians 2:18; Colossians 3:17; 1 Timothy 2:5

³⁷³ Psalm 95:1-7; 100:1-5

³⁷⁴ John 14:13-14

³⁷⁵ Romans 8:26

³⁷⁶ 1 John 5:14

³⁷⁷ Psalm 47:7; Ecclesiastes 5:1-2; Hebrews 12:28; Genesis 18:27; James 5:16; 1:6-7; Mark 11:24; Matthew 6:12,14-15; Colossians 4:2; Ephesians 6:18

³⁷⁸ 1 Corinthians 14:13-19,27-28

4. Prayer is to be made for lawful things, and for all kinds of people who are alive now or shall live in the future.³⁷⁹ Prayer is not to be made for the dead, nor for those who are known to have sinned the sin leading to death.³⁸⁰
5. The reading of the Scriptures,³⁸¹ the preaching and hearing of the Word of God,³⁸² the teaching and admonishing of one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with gratitude in our hearts to the Lord,³⁸³ as well as the administration of baptism³⁸⁴ and the Lord's Supper³⁸⁵, are all parts of the worship of God. These are to be performed in obedience to him, with understanding, faith, reverence and godly fear. Also to be used on special occasions in a holy and reverent manner,³⁸⁶ are times of solemn humiliation, with fasting and thanksgiving.³⁸⁷
6. Under the Gospel, neither prayer nor any other aspect of religious worship is tied to, or made more acceptable by, any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed.³⁸⁸ God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and in truth,³⁸⁹ whether daily³⁹⁰ in private families,³⁹¹ or individually in secret,³⁹² or solemnly in public assemblies.³⁹³ The latter are not to be carelessly neglected nor wilfully forsaken, because God calls us to them by his Word and providence.³⁹⁴
7. As it is the law of nature that a portion of time by God's appointment should be set apart for the worship of God, so in his Word he has given a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all people in all ages. In particular he has appointed one day in seven as a Sabbath to be kept holy to him.³⁹⁵ From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ this was the last day of the week, but from the resurrection of Christ it was changed to the first day of the week which is called the Lord's Day. This is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath, the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.³⁹⁶
8. People keep the Sabbath holy to the Lord when (after appropriate preparation of their hearts and prior arrangement of their everyday affairs) they observe all day a holy rest from their own works, words, and thoughts³⁹⁷ about their secular employment and recreations, but also devote the whole time to public and private acts of worship, and to carrying out duties of necessity and mercy.³⁹⁸

³⁷⁹ 1 John 5:14; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; John 17:20

³⁸⁰ 2 Samuel 12:21-23; Luke 16:25-26; Revelation 14:13; 1 John 5:16

³⁸¹ Acts 15:21; 1 Timothy 4:13; Revelation 1:3

³⁸² 2 Timothy 4:2; Luke 8:18

³⁸³ Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16

³⁸⁴ Matthew 28:19-20

³⁸⁵ 1 Corinthians 11:26

³⁸⁶ Exodus 15:1-19; Psalm 107

³⁸⁷ Esther 4:16; Joe 2:12; Matthew 9:15; Acts 13:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:5

³⁸⁸ John 4:21

³⁸⁹ Malachi 1:11; 1 Timothy 2:8; John 4:23-24

³⁹⁰ Matthew 6:11

³⁹¹ Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Job 1:5; 1 Peter 3:7

³⁹² Matthew 6:6

³⁹³ Psalm 84:1-2,10; Matthew 18:20; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 14:25; Ephesians 2:21-22

³⁹⁴ Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25

³⁹⁵ Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 2:27-28; Revelation 1:10

³⁹⁶ John 20:1; Acts 2:1; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1; Revelation 1:10; Colossians 2:16-17

³⁹⁷ Exodus 20:8-11; Nehemiah 13:15-22; Isaiah 58:13-14; Revelation 1:10

³⁹⁸ Matthew 12:1-13; Mark 2:27-28

CHAPTER 23 - LAWFUL OATHS AND VOWS

1. A lawful oath is an Acts of worship in which the person swearing in [the light of God's] truth, righteousness and judgement, solemnly calls God to witness what he swears, and to judge him according to the truth or falsity of it.³⁹⁹
2. People should swear by the name of God alone, and his name is to be used with the utmost holy fear and reverence. To swear vainly or rashly by that glorious and awesome name, or to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful and to be abhorred.⁴⁰⁰ An oath is sanctioned by the Word of God in weighty and momentous matters to confirm truth and end strife, so a lawful oath imposed by lawful authority ought in such circumstances to be taken.⁴⁰¹
3. Whoever takes an oath sanctioned by the Word of God ought to consider the seriousness of so solemn an act, and to affirm nothing but what one knows to be the truth. For by rash, false and empty oaths the Lord is provoked and because of them a nation is brought to misery.⁴⁰²
4. An oath is to be taken in the plain and ordinary sense of the words, without ambiguity or mental reservation.⁴⁰³
5. A vow is not to be made to any creature, but to God alone,⁴⁰⁴ and it is to be performed with the utmost care and faithfulness.⁴⁰⁵ But monastic vows of a perpetual single life, professed poverty, and regular obedience, are far from representing degrees of higher perfection, rather, they are superstitious and sinful snares in which no Christian ought to entangle himself.⁴⁰⁶

CHAPTER 24 - CIVIL GOVERNMENT

1. God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, has ordained civil authorities⁴⁰⁷ to be under him and over the people,⁴⁰⁸ for his own glory and the public good.⁴⁰⁹ For this purpose he has armed them with the authority to use force,⁴¹⁰ to defend and encourage those who do good, and to punish evil doers.⁴¹¹
2. It is lawful for Christians to accept and carry out the duties of public office⁴¹² when called upon to so.⁴¹³ In the performance of such office they are particularly responsible for maintaining justice and peace in accordance with the wholesome laws of the nation. For that purpose they may (in terms of the New Testament) lawfully engage in war if it is just and necessary.⁴¹⁴

³⁹⁹ Deuteronomy 10:20; Exodus 20:7; Lev 19:12; 2 Chronicles 6:22-23; 2 Corinthians 1:23

⁴⁰⁰ Deuteronomy 6:13; Exodus 20:7; Jeremiah 5:7

⁴⁰¹ Hebrews 6:13-16; Genesis 24:3; 47:30-31; 50:25; 1 Kings 17:1; Nehemiah 13:25; 5:12; Ezra 10:5; Numbers 5:19,21; 1 Kings 8:31; Exodus 22:11; Isaiah 45:23; 65:16; Matthew 26:62-64; Romans 1:9; 2 Corinthians 1:23; Acts 18:18

⁴⁰² Exodus 20:7; Lev 19:12; Numbers 30:2; Jeremiah 4:2

⁴⁰³ Psalm 24:4; Jeremiah 4:2

⁴⁰⁴ Numbers 30:2-3; Psalm 76:11; Jeremiah 44:25-26

⁴⁰⁵ Numbers 30:2; Psalm 61:8; 66:13-14; Ecclesiastes 5:4-6; Isaiah 19:21

⁴⁰⁶ 1 Corinthians 6:18 with 7:2,9; 1 Timothy 4:3; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Corinthians 7:23; Matthew 19:11-12

⁴⁰⁷ Original, *magistrates*

⁴⁰⁸ Psalm 82:1; Luke 12:48; Romans 13:1-6; 1 Peter 2:13-14

⁴⁰⁹ Genesis 6:11-13 with 9:5-6; Psalm 58:1-2; 72:14; 82:1-4; Proverbs 21:15; 24:11-12; 29:14,26; 31:5; Ezekiel 7:23; 45:9; Daniel 4:27; Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:3-4; 1 Timothy 2:2; 1 Peter 2:14

⁴¹⁰ Original, *the power of the sword*

⁴¹¹ Genesis 9:6; Proverbs 16:14; 19:12; 20:2; 21:15; 28:17; Acts 25:1; Romans 13:4; 1 Peter 2:13-14

⁴¹² Original, *of a magistrate*

⁴¹³ Exodus 22:8-9,28-29; Daniel; Nehemiah; Proverbs 14:35; 16:10,12; 20:26,28; 25:2; 28:15-16; 29:4,14; 31:4-5; Romans 13:2,4,6

⁴¹⁴ Luke 3:14; Romans 13:4

3. As civil authorities⁴¹⁵ are established by God for the purposes given, we ought to be subject to⁴¹⁶ all their lawful commands⁴¹⁷ for the Lord's sake, not merely to avoid punishment, but for conscience' sake. We ought also to make supplications and prayers for rulers and all who are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty.⁴¹⁸

CHAPTER 25 - MARRIAGE

1. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman. It is not lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time.⁴¹⁹
2. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife,⁴²⁰ for the increase of the human race with legitimate children,⁴²¹ and for preventing immorality.⁴²²
3. It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry who are able to give their rational consent,⁴²³ yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord. Therefore those who profess the true faith should not marry unbelievers or idolaters. Nor should the godly be unequally yoked by marrying those who lead evil lives, or who maintain heresy.⁴²⁴
4. Marriage must not to be contracted within the degrees of blood relationship or kinship forbidden in the Word, nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any human law or consent of parties so that such people may live together as man and wife.⁴²⁵

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

5. When adultery or fornication committed after an engagement contract is detected before marriage, there are just grounds for the innocent party to dissolve the contract.⁴²⁶ In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue for a divorce,⁴²⁷ and after the divorce to marry another—it is as if the offending party were dead.⁴²⁸
6. Human corruption is such that clever arguments will be brought to separate those whom God has joined together in marriage. Yet nothing but adultery, or wilful desertion that cannot be healed by the church or civil authority, is sufficient cause for dissolving the bond of marriage.⁴²⁹ Such dissolution is to be conducted in public and an orderly course of proceedings is to be observed; the persons concerned in it should not be left to their own wills and discretion.⁴³⁰

⁴¹⁵ Original, *magistrates*

⁴¹⁶ Proverbs 16:14-15; 19:12; 20:2; 24:21-22; 25:15; 28:2; Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14

⁴¹⁷ Daniel 1:8; 3:4-6,16-18; 6:5-10,22; Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; 5:29

⁴¹⁸ Jeremiah 29:7; 1 Timothy 2:1-4

⁴¹⁹ Genesis 2:24 with Matthew 19:5-6; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6

⁴²⁰ Genesis 2:18; Proverbs 2:17; Mal 2:14

⁴²¹ Genesis 1:28; Psalm 127:3-5; 128:3-4

⁴²² 1 Corinthians 7:2,9

⁴²³ 1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Timothy 4:3; Hebrews 13:4

⁴²⁴ 1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14

⁴²⁵ Lev 18:6-18; Amos 2:7; Mark 6:18; 1 Corinthians 5:1

⁴²⁶ Matthew 1:18-20

⁴²⁷ Matthew 5:31-32

⁴²⁸ Matthew 19:9; Romans 7:2-3

⁴²⁹ Matthew 19:8-9; Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:15; Matthew 19:6

⁴³⁰ Deuteronomy 24:1-4

CHAPTER 26 - THE CHURCH

1. The universal church⁴³¹ (brought into being by the internal work of the Spirit and truth of grace) may be called the invisible church. It consists of the complete number of the elect who have been, who are, or who shall be gathered into one under Christ its Head. The church is the bride, the body, the fullness of Christ who fills all in all.⁴³²
2. All people throughout the world who profess the faith of the Gospel and render obedience to God by Christ according to the Gospel, and who do not destroy their own profession by any fundamental errors, or by unholy behaviour, are and may be called visible saints.⁴³³ All local⁴³⁴ congregations ought to be constituted of such people.⁴³⁵
3. The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error,⁴³⁶ and some have degenerated so much that they have ceased to be churches of Christ and have become 'synagogues of Satan'.⁴³⁷ Nevertheless, Christ has always had, and always will have to the end of time a kingdom in this world, made up of those who believe in him and profess his name.⁴³⁸
4. The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church. In him is vested, by the appointment of the Father in a supreme and sovereign manner, all authority for the calling, institution, order and government of the church.⁴³⁹ The Pope of Rome cannot in any sense be the head of the church, but he is the antichrist, that 'man of lawlessness', and 'son of destruction', who exalts himself in the church against Christ and all that is called God, whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.⁴⁴⁰
5. In executing the authority entrusted to him, the Lord Jesus, through the ministry of his Word and by his Spirit, calls to himself out of the world those who are given to him by the Father.⁴⁴¹ They are called to walk before him in the ways of obedience which he prescribes for them in his Word.⁴⁴² He commands those who are so called to form local⁴⁴³ societies or churches for their mutual edification and to engage in the public worship which he requires of them while in the world.⁴⁴⁴
6. The members of these churches are 'saints'⁴⁴⁵ by calling and they visibly demonstrate and give evidence of their obedience to the call of Christ by their profession and walk.⁴⁴⁶ They willingly consent to walk together according to Christ's instructions, giving themselves to the Lord and to one another by the will of God, affirming their subjection to the directives of the Gospel.⁴⁴⁷
7. To each church so gathered according to the mind [of Christ] as declared in his Word, the Lord has given all the power and authority required to conduct the form of worship and discipline which he has

⁴³¹ Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 1:22; 4:11-15; 5:23-25,27,29,32; Colossians 1:18,24; Hebrews 12:23

⁴³² Ephesians 1:22; 4:11-15; 5:23-25,27,29,32; Colossians 1:18,24; Revelation 21:9-14

⁴³³ 1 Corinthians 1:2; Romans 1:7-8; Acts 11:26; Matthew 16:18; 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-9

⁴³⁴ Original, *particular*

⁴³⁵ Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 2:37-42; 4:4; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 5:1-9

⁴³⁶ 1 Corinthians 1:11; 5:1; 6:6; 11:17-19; 3 John 1:9-10; Revelation 2:1-3:22

⁴³⁷ Revelation 2:5 with 1:20; 1 Timothy 3:14-15; Revelation 18:2

⁴³⁸ Matthew 16:18; 24:14; 28:20; Mark 4:30-32; Psalm 72:16-18; 102:28; Isaiah 9:6-7; Revelation 12:17; 20:7-9

⁴³⁹ Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1:20-23; 5:23-32; 1 Corinthians 12:27-28; John 17:1-3; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 5:31; John 10:14-16

⁴⁴⁰ 2 Thessalonians 2:2-9

⁴⁴¹ John 10:16,23; 12:32; 17:2; Acts 5:31-32

⁴⁴² Matthew 28:20

⁴⁴³ Original, *particular*

⁴⁴⁴ Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 1:3; 3:14-16; 5:17-22

⁴⁴⁵ i.e. holy ones

⁴⁴⁶ Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 14:22-23; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2 with 1:13-17; 1 Thessalonians 1:1 with 1:2-10; Acts 2:37-42; 4:4; 5:13-14

⁴⁴⁷ Acts 2:41-42; 5:13-14; 2 Corinthians 9:13

appointed for them to observe. He has also given commands and rules for the right and proper use of that power.⁴⁴⁸

8. A local⁴⁴⁹ Church, gathered and 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 are bishops or elders, and deacons. They are appointed particularly to oversee what the Lord has ordained, and to execute the powers and duties which the Lord has entrusted to them or to which he calls them. This pattern is to be continued to the end of the world.⁴⁵⁰
9. The way appointed by Christ for calling any person qualified and gifted by the Holy Spirit⁴⁵¹ for the office of bishop or elder, is that he is to be chosen by the communal vote of the church itself.⁴⁵² He shall be solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with the laying on of hands by the elders of the church (if there are any previously appointed bishops or elders).⁴⁵³ Similarly, a deacon is also to be chosen by vote of the church and set apart by prayer, with the laying on of hands.⁴⁵⁴
10. The work of pastors is to give constant attention to the service of Christ in his churches, in the ministry of the Word and prayer, and by watching over their [members'] souls as they must give an account to Christ.⁴⁵⁵ Therefore the churches to which they minister have an obligation to give them all due respect, and also to provide 'all good things' according to their ability,⁴⁵⁶ so that they may have a comfortable income without being entangled in secular affairs,⁴⁵⁷ and may also be able to exercise hospitality towards others.⁴⁵⁸ This is required by the law of nature and by the specific command of our Lord Jesus who has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.⁴⁵⁹
11. Although the bishops or pastors of the churches are obliged to regularly preach the Word as part of their office, yet the work of preaching the Word is not exclusively confined to them. Others who are also gifted and qualified by the Holy Spirit for the task, and who are approved and called by the church, may and ought to perform it.⁴⁶⁰
12. All believers are obliged to join themselves to local⁴⁶¹ churches when and where they have opportunity to do so, so that all who are admitted to the privileges of the church, are also subject to the correction and government of the church in accordance with the rule of Christ.⁴⁶²
13. No church members who have been offended by a fellow member, and who have followed their prescribed duty towards the person they are offended at, may disturb church order in any way. Nor should they absent themselves from the meetings of the church or the administration of the ordinances because of the offence, rather, they should wait upon Christ and the further actions of the church.⁴⁶³
14. Each church and all its members are obliged to pray continually for the good and prosperity of all Christ's churches everywhere. At all times churches should assist all believers within the limits of their area and

⁴⁴⁸ Matthew 18:17-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5,13; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8

⁴⁴⁹ Original, *particular*

⁴⁵⁰ Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Acts 20:17,28; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:2

⁴⁵¹ Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-13

⁴⁵² Acts 6:1-7; 14:23 with Matthew 18:17-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

⁴⁵³ 1 Timothy 4:14; 5:22

⁴⁵⁴ Acts 6:1-7

⁴⁵⁵ Acts 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:17; Hebrews 13:17

⁴⁵⁶ 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Corinthians 9:14; Galatians 6:6-7

⁴⁵⁷ 2 Timothy 2:4

⁴⁵⁸ 1 Timothy 3:2

⁴⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 9:6-14; 1 Timothy 5:18

⁴⁶⁰ Acts 8:5 11:19-21; 1 Peter 4:10-11

⁴⁶¹ Original, *particular*

⁴⁶² 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14-15; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; Hebrews 13:17

⁴⁶³ Matthew 18:15-17; Ephesians 4:2-3; Colossians 3:12-15; 1 John 2:7-11,18-19; Matthew 28:15-17; Ephesians 4:2-3; Matthew 28:20

calling in exercising their gifts and graces.⁴⁶⁴ Therefore, when churches have been planted by the providence of God so that they may enjoy the opportunity and advantage [of fellowship],⁴⁶⁵ they should seek fellowship amongst themselves to promote peace, increase love, and mutual edification.⁴⁶⁶

15. When difficulties or differences arise in points of doctrine or [church] administration which concern the peace unity and edification of churches in general or any single church, or when a member or members of a church are injured by disciplinary proceedings not consistent with truth [in the Word] and [church] order, it is according to the mind of Christ that a number of churches in fellowship together, through their representatives,⁴⁶⁷ should meet to consider the matter in dispute, give their advice about it and report to all the churches concerned.⁴⁶⁸ However, when these representatives⁴⁶⁷ are assembled, they are not entrusted with any real church power nor with any jurisdiction over the churches themselves; they cannot exercise discipline over any churches or persons, nor impose their conclusions on the churches or officers.⁴⁶⁹

CHAPTER 27 - THE FELLOWSHIP OF BELIEVERS

1. All believers are united to Jesus Christ⁴⁷⁰ their Head by his Spirit and by faith,⁴⁷¹ although this does not make them one person with him.⁴⁷² Therefore they have fellowship in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory.⁴⁷³ Being united to one another in love, they have fellowship in each other's gifts and graces,⁴⁷⁴ and are obliged to discharge their duties, both public and private, in an orderly way so as to ensure their mutual good in both spiritual and temporal matters.⁴⁷⁵
2. By their profession, believers are obliged to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God and in performing whatever spiritual services may promote their mutual edification.⁴⁷⁶ They should also relieve one another in temporal things according to their various abilities and needs.⁴⁷⁷ According to the rule of the Gospel, this fellowship applies particularly to family and church relationships,⁴⁷⁸ but as God offers opportunity, this fellowship is to be extended to all the 'household of faith', that is, all those in every place who call on the name of the Lord Jesus.⁴⁷⁹ Nevertheless, this fellowship with one another as believers does not take away or infringe on the personal ownership that each one has of his goods and possessions.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁶⁴ John 13:34-35; 17:11,21-23; Ephesians 4:11-16; 6:18; Psalm 122:6; Romans 16:1-3; 3 John 1:8-10 with 2 John 1:5-11; Romans 15:26; 2 Corinthians 8:1-4,16-24; 9:12-15; Colossians 2:1 with 1:3,4,7 and 4:7,12

⁴⁶⁵ Galatians 1:2,22; Colossians 4:16; Revelation 1:4; Romans 16:1-2; 3 John 1:8-10

⁴⁶⁶ 1 John 4:1-3 with 2 John and 3 John; Romans 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 9:12-15; Joshua 22

⁴⁶⁷ Original, *messengers*

⁴⁶⁸ Galatians 2:2; Proverbs 3:5-7; 12:15; 13:10

⁴⁶⁹ 1 Corinthians 7:25,36,40; 2 Corinthians 1:24; 1 John 4:1

⁴⁷⁰ Ephesians 1:4; John 17:2,6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 6:8; 8:17; 8:2; 1 Corinthians 6:17; 2 Peter 1:4

⁴⁷¹ Ephesians 3:16-17; Galatians 2:20; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18

⁴⁷² 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:18-19; 1 Timothy 6:15-16; Isaiah 42:8; Psalm 45:7; Hebrews 1:8-9

⁴⁷³ 1 John 1:3; John 1:16; 15:1-6; Ephesians 2:4-6; Romans 4:25; 6:1-6; Philippians 3:10; Colossians 3:3-4

⁴⁷⁴ John 13:34-35; 14:15; Ephesians 4:15; 1 Peter 4:10; Romans 14:7-8; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; 12:7,25-27

⁴⁷⁵ Romans 1:12; 12:10-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:11,14; 1 Peter 3:8; 1 John 3:17-18; Galatians 6:10

⁴⁷⁶ Hebrews 3:12-13; 10:24-25

⁴⁷⁷ Acts 11:29-30; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 2; Romans 15

⁴⁷⁸ 1 Timothy 5:8,16; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Corinthians 12:27

⁴⁷⁹ Acts 11:29-30; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 2; 6:10; Romans 15

⁴⁸⁰ Acts 5:4; Ephesians 4:28; Exodus 20:15

CHAPTER 28 - THE ORDINANCES

1. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances explicitly and sovereignly appointed by the Lord Jesus, the only lawgiver,⁴⁸¹ to be continued in his church to the end of the world. Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 1:13-17; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Luke 22:14-20
2. These holy appointments are to be administered by those who are qualified and called to do so, according to the commission of Christ.⁴⁸²

CHAPTER 29 - BAPTISM

1. Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be to the person baptized a sign of fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection, of being grafted into him,⁴⁸³ of remission of sins,⁴⁸⁴ and of giving up oneself to God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.⁴⁸⁵
2. Those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects for this ordinance.⁴⁸⁶
3. The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, in which the person is to be baptised⁴⁸⁷ in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸⁸
4. Immersion, or dipping the person in water, is essential for the proper administration of this ordinance.⁴⁸⁹

CHAPTER 30 - THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. The supper of our Lord Jesus was instituted by him the same night he was betrayed,⁴⁹⁰ to be observed in his churches⁴⁹¹ until the end of the world⁴⁹² as a perpetual remembrance [of him] and to show forth the sacrifice of himself in his death.⁴⁹³ It was also instituted to confirm the faith of believers in all the benefits in Christ's death,⁴⁹⁴ for their spiritual nourishment and growth in him,⁴⁹⁵ for their further engagement in and commitment to all the duties they owe him,⁴⁹⁶ and to be a bond and pledge of their fellowship with him and with one another.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁸¹ Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25

⁴⁸² Matthew 24:45-51; Luke 12:41-44; 1 Corinthians 4:1; Titus 1:5-7

⁴⁸³ Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; Galatians 3:27

⁴⁸⁴ Mark 1:4; Acts 22:16

⁴⁸⁵ Romans 6:4

⁴⁸⁶ Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:4-6; Luke 3:3-6; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; John 4:1-2; 1 Corinthians 1:13-17; Acts 2:37-41; 8:12-13,36-38; 9:18; 10:47-48; 11:16; 15:9; 16:14-15,31-34; 18:8; 19:3-5; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Philippians 3:3; John 1:12-13; Matthew 21:43

⁴⁸⁷ Matthew 3:11; Acts 8:36,38; 22:16

⁴⁸⁸ Matthew 28:18-20

⁴⁸⁹ 2 Kings 5:14; Psalm 69:2; Isaiah 21:4; Mark 1:5,8-9; John 3:23; Acts 8:38; Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12; Mark 7:3-4; 10:38-39; Luke 12:50; 1 Corinthians 10:1-2; Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5,8; 2:1-4,17

⁴⁹⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:23; Matthew 26:20-26; Mark 14:17-22; Luke 22:19-23

⁴⁹¹ Acts 2:41-42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:17-22,33-34

⁴⁹² Mark 14:24-25; Luke 22:17-22; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26

⁴⁹³ 1 Corinthians 11:24-26; Matthew 26:27-28; Luke 22:19-20

⁴⁹⁴ Romans 4:11

⁴⁹⁵ John 6:29,35,47-58

⁴⁹⁶ 1 Corinthians 11:25

⁴⁹⁷ 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

2. In this ordinance Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor is any real sacrifice made for remission of sin of the living or the dead. It is only a memorial of that one offering up of Christ by himself upon the cross once for all.⁴⁹⁸ It is also a spiritual offering of all possible praise to God for [Christ's work].⁴⁹⁹ So the Roman Catholic sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is utterly abominable and defamatory of Christ's own sacrifice which is the only propitiation for all the sins of the elect.
3. In this ordinance the Lord Jesus has appointed his ministers to pray and to bless the elements of bread and wine (so setting them apart from a common to a holy use), and to take and break the bread, then to take the cup, and to give both to the communicants, participating also themselves.⁵⁰⁰
4. The denial of the cup to the people,⁵⁰¹ worshipping the elements, lifting them up or carrying them about for adoration, and reserving them for any pretended religious use,⁵⁰² are all contrary to the nature of this ordinance and to the institution of Christ.⁵⁰³
5. The outward elements in this ordinance, when correctly set apart for the use ordained by Christ, bear such a strong relation to the Lord crucified, that they are sometimes truly, but figuratively, called by the name of the things they represent, namely, the body and blood of Christ.⁵⁰⁴ However, in substance and nature, they still remain truly and only bread and wine as they were before.⁵⁰⁵
6. The doctrine commonly called transubstantiation, which maintains that the substance of bread and wine is changed into the substance of Christ's body and blood when consecrated by a priest or by some other way, is repugnant not only to Scripture,⁵⁰⁶ but even to common sense and reason. It overthrows the nature of the ordinance, and has been and is the cause of numerous superstitions and gross idolatries.
7. Worthy recipients, when outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this ordinance,⁵⁰⁷ also receive them inwardly by faith, truly and in fact, not as flesh and body but spiritually. In so doing they feed upon Christ crucified, and receive all the benefits of his death.⁵⁰⁸ The body and blood of Christ are not present physically, but spiritually by the faith of believers in the ordinance, just as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.⁵⁰⁹
8. All ignorant and ungodly people who are unfit to enjoy fellowship with Christ, are equally unworthy of the Lord's table, and cannot, without great sin against him, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted to them while they remain as they are.⁵¹⁰ Indeed, whoever participates unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, eating and drinking judgment on themselves.⁵¹¹

⁴⁹⁸ John 19:30; Hebrews 9:25-28; 10:10-14; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25

⁴⁹⁹ Matthew 26:26-27,30 with Hebrews 13:10-16

⁵⁰⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-22

⁵⁰¹ Matthew 26:27; Mark 14:23; 1 Corinthians 11:25-28

⁵⁰² Exodus 20:4-5

⁵⁰³ Matthew 15:9

⁵⁰⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:27; Matthew 26:26-28

⁵⁰⁵ 1 Corinthians 11:26-28; Matthew 26:29

⁵⁰⁶ Matthew 26:26-29; Luke 24:36-43,50-51; John 1:14; 20:26-29; Acts 1:9-11; 3:21; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26; Luke 12:1; Revelation 1:20; Genesis 17:10-11; Ezekiel 37:11; Genesis 41:26-27

⁵⁰⁷ 1 Corinthians 11:28

⁵⁰⁸ John 6:29,35,47-58

⁵⁰⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:16

⁵¹⁰ Matthew 7:6; Ephesians 4:17-24; 5:3-9; Exodus 20:7,16; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 John 1:10; Acts 2:41-42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:17-22,33-34

⁵¹¹ 1 Corinthians 11:20-22, 27-34

CHAPTER 31 - THE STATE OF PEOPLE AFTER DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

1. After death the bodies of people return to dust and undergo decomposition,⁵¹² but their souls (which neither die nor sleep for they are immortal in essence) immediately return to God who gave them.⁵¹³ The souls of the righteous are then made perfect in holiness, they are received into paradise where they are with Christ and look on the face of God in light and glory, and wait for the full redemption of their bodies.⁵¹⁴ The souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved for judgment on the great day [of judgment].⁵¹⁵ For souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledges no other place than these two.
2. On the last day, those believers who are still alive will not die, but will be changed.⁵¹⁶ All the dead will be raised up⁵¹⁷ with their own bodies⁵¹⁸ (although these will have different qualities)⁵¹⁹ that will be united again to their souls forever.⁵²⁰
3. By the power of Christ the bodies of the unrighteous will be raised to dishonour.⁵²¹ By his Spirit⁵²² the bodies of the righteous will be raised to honour,⁵²³ for they will be transformed to be like his own glorious body.⁵²⁴

CHAPTER 32 - THE LAST JUDGMENT

1. God has appointed a day when he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom the Father has given all power and judgment.⁵²⁵ On that day, not only the apostate angels will be judged,⁵²⁶ but also all people who have lived on the earth. They will appear before Christ's judgment throne⁵²⁷ to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds, and to receive [judgment] according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.⁵²⁸
2. God's purpose in appointing this day is to show forth the glory of his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect, and his justice in the eternal damnation of the reprobate who are wicked and disobedient.⁵²⁹ Then the righteous will inherit eternal life and receive fullness of joy and glory with eternal reward in the presence of the Lord. But the wicked, who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ,

⁵¹² Genesis 2:17; 3:19; Acts 13:36; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:22

⁵¹³ Genesis 2:7; James 2:26; Matthew 10:28; Ecclesiastes 12:7

⁵¹⁴ Psalm 23:6; 1 Kings 8:27-49; Isaiah 63:15; 66:1; Luke 23:43; Acts 1:9-11; 3:21; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8; 12:2-4; Ephesians 4:10; Philippians 1:21-23; Hebrews 1:3; 4:14-15; 6:20; 8:1; 9:24; 12:23; Revelation 6:9-11; 14:13; 20:4-6

⁵¹⁵ Luke 16:22-26; Acts 1:25; 1 Peter 3:19; 2 Peter 2:9

⁵¹⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 4:17

⁵¹⁷ Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15

⁵¹⁸ Job 19:26-27; John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15:35-38,42-44

⁵¹⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:42-44,52-54

⁵²⁰ Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:46

⁵²¹ Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29

⁵²² Romans 8:1,11; 1 Corinthians 15:45; Galatians 6:8

⁵²³ 1 Corinthians 15:42-49

⁵²⁴ Romans 8:17,29-30; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23,48-49; Philippians 3:21; Colossians 1:18; 3:4; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:5

⁵²⁵ John 5:22,27; Acts 17:31

⁵²⁶ 1 Corinthians 6:3; Jude 1:6

⁵²⁷ Matthew 16:27; 25:31-46; Acts 17:30-31; Romans 2:6-16; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; 2 Peter 3:1-13; Revelation 20:11-15

⁵²⁸ 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Matthew 12:36

⁵²⁹ Romans 9:22-23

will be banished to eternal torment, and be punished with eternal destruction, shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.⁵³⁰

3. Christ wants us to be firmly persuaded that there will be a day of judgment, both to deter everyone from sin,⁵³¹ and to give greater comfort to the godly in their adversity.⁵³² But he has kept the date a secret, so that people may shake off all self-confidence and always be watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come.⁵³³ So they should always be prepared to say, 'Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!⁵³⁴ Amen.

⁵³⁰ Matthew 18:8; 25:41,46; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Hebrews 6:2; Jude 1:6; Revelation 14:10-11; Luke 3:17; Mark 9:43,48; Matthew 3:12; 5:26; 13:41-42; 24:51; 25:30

⁵³¹ 2 Corinthians 5:10-11

⁵³² 2 Thessalonians 1:5-7

⁵³³ Mark 13:35-37; Luke 12:35-40

⁵³⁴ Revelation 22:20