

**CENTERPOINT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**FALL 2016**

**The Westminster Confession of Faith**

**(1) CONFESSIONS**

1. “No Creed but the Bible!” – some contemporary problems that make the very idea of a Confession or Creed unnecessary at best and deeply suspicious at worst.
  - a. History is bunk
  - b. Language is slippery (“a word means what I say it means”)
  - c. No other “church” can tell us what to believe. *We* are the church – period!
  - d. Misgivings about theology – especially Systematic (formulaic) theology
    - i. Inductive v. deductive Bible Study (top-down/Bottom-up)
    - ii. Unity of truth – WHOLE Bible. Big picture v. little picture
    - iii. Imposition of “foreign” grids (e.g. Aristotelian philosophy)
  - e. “Doctrine” [*noun*: a belief or set of beliefs held and taught by a church, political party, or other group]; “Dogma” [*noun*: a principle or set of principles laid down by an authority as incontrovertibly true].
    - i. “Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 1:13). Pattern = ὑποτύπωσις. KJV “the form of sound words.” Every discipline has its own set of specialist words. Paul does not simply say, “memorize the Old Testament.”
    - ii. Phil 2:5-11 as a summary of basic Christology;
    - iii. 1 Tim 3:16 “Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:
 

He was manifested in the flesh,  
vindicated by the Spirit,  
seen by angels,  
proclaimed among the nations,  
believed on in the world,  
taken up in glory.”
    - iv. 2 Thess. 2:15 “So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions [παράδοσις] that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.”
    - v. 1 Cor. 11:2 “Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions [παράδοσις] even as I delivered them to you.”
    - vi. 2 Thess 3:6 “Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition [παράδοσις] that you received

from us.”

- vii. 1 Cor. 15:1-4 “Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, <sup>2</sup> and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.”
- viii. 1 Cor. 11:23-26 “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” <sup>25</sup> In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

## 2. The Early Church

- a. *Didache*
- b. *The Rule of Faith*
- c. The Apostolic Fathers
- d. Marcion, Doctetism
- e. The Apostles’ Creed
- f. The Seven Ecumenical Councils
  - i. Nicea 325
  - ii. Constantinople 385
  - iii. Chalcedon 451

## 3. The Classical Confessions

### **Continental Reformed**

- Zwingli’s Sixty-Seven Articles (1523)
- Ten Theses of Berne (1528)
- East Friesland Confession
- Tetrapolitan Confession (1530)
- Synodical Declaration of Bern (1532)
- First Confession of Basel (1534)
- First Helvetic Confession (Second Confession of Basel, 1536)

- Lausanne Articles (1536)
- Geneva Confession (1536)
- Zurich Consensus (1549)
- Emden Catechism (1554)
- Confession of the English Congregation at Geneva (1556)
- French Confession of Faith (1559)
- Confession of the Christian Faith (1559)
- Second Helvetic Confession (1562)
- Erlauthal Confession (1562)
- Hungarian Confession (1562)
- Heidelberg Catechism (1563)
- Belgic Confession (1566)
- Sendomir Consensus (1570)
- Wittenberg Catechism (1571)
- Confession of Nassau (1578)
- Bremen Consensus (1595)
- Sigismund Confession (1614)
- Canons of Dordt (1619), known collectively with the Heidelberg Catechism and Belgic Confession as the Three Forms of Unity
- Harmony of the Confessions of Faith (1581), a response to the Lutheran Formula of Concord.
- Helvetic Consensus (1675)
- Conclusions of Utrecht (1905)
- Theological Declaration of Barmen (1934)
- Belhar Confession (1986), first adopted in South Africa and since adopted by many Reformed churches

### **Presbyterian**

- Scots Confession (1560)
- The Westminster Standards are common among the Presbyterian churches:
  - Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)
  - Westminster Shorter Catechism (1649)
  - Westminster Larger Catechism (1649)
- Confession of 1967
- The Book of Confessions (1983) contains the confessional standards of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and incorporates versions of both Continental and Presbyterian Reformed confessions of faith, including the 1991 *Brief Statement of Faith*.

### **Congregationalist**

The Independents declined from Reformed theology on issues of the role of the magistrate, and the powers of higher church courts, but retained the Calvinist system touching many other issues.

- Cambridge Platform (1648), Massachusetts Bay Colony, New England

- Savoy Declaration (1658), London
- Saybrook Platform (1708), Connecticut Colony, New England

## **Baptist**

Some of the Baptist churches came alongside the Puritan movement in England, and in doing so sought to agree as far as conscience allowed, in the Calvinistic form of doctrine which prevailed among the Presbyterians and many Congregationalists. Except for their few exceptions concerning congregational church governance and adult baptism, these “Particular” Baptists adopted the Reformed faith.

- 1644 Baptist Confession of Faith
- Keach’s Catechism (1677)
- 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith
- New Hampshire Confession of Faith
- Baptist Affirmation of Faith 1966

## **Anglican**

The Anglican church is not a confessional church in the same way that the Lutheran Church is. Anglican doctrine is most defined by *Lex grandi, lex credendi* (“the law of praying [is] the law of believing”). The Thirty-Nine Articles are in the Book of Common Prayer but are not part of Anglican canon law. The Thirty-Nine Articles are, however, important in defining how the Anglican church related and relates to the reformed churches on the one hand and the Roman Catholic Church on the other.

- Thirty-Nine Articles
- Lambeth Articles
- Irish Articles 1615

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**(2) THE CALLING OF THE ASSEMBLY**



*Assertion of Liberty of Conscience by the Independents of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*  
John Rogers Herbert (1847)

1. The Westminster Confession is a 17<sup>th</sup> Century document – all around there is the smell of gunfire! But the Assembly itself, and certainly its documents, show no sign of it. The seventeenth century of the beginning of the modern era, but again, the assembly is unmoved by these forces, except to refute them. Their interests were metaphysical and theological. *Shorter Catechism* speaks of “superiors and inferiors” without blinking an eye.
  - a. Philosophically:
    - i. The Cambridge Platonists not represented at WA, but there is a sense in which conception or idea rather than the visual dominates. The abstract can claim to be real.
    - ii. Bacon (1561-1626) and the role of experiment and observation in knowledge/epistemology.
    - iii. Ramus (1515-1572). Died at St. Bartholomew massacre. Sought to recover order, precision, the return to Aristotle. He influenced Bacon, Milton and encouraged the emerging scientific spirit.

- iv. (Continent): Descartes. Controversy with Voetius broke in 1649. His Discourse on method was published in 1637. The way to truth is through doubt. Are we dreaming? Or is this real.
- v. Sociologically: Protestant v Roman Catholic. The WA opened the door to denominations (though they would be surprised by that). The Renaissance and its impact upon society (culture).
- vi. Modern Science: Newtown (b. 1642), Galileo (d. 1642). In England: Harvey (Physiology), Boyle (Chemistry), Ray (Botany). The “war” between science and religion had not yet begun.

b. Theologically:

- i. Protestant Reformation was 125 years old.
  - 1. Joannes Wollebius (1586-1629), Compendium of Christian Theology published in 1626. Not translated into English until 1650, but it showed how theology could be “popularized.”
  - 2. 1619: Synod of Dordt. Calvinism and the Five Points.
  - 3. England: puritans were preachers and writers. Movement of education and spiritual renewal. SC was a response for simpler catechisms for the masses.
  - 4. Intense theological debates: limited atonement, active and passive obedience of Christ, the role of law and grace, ordo salutis, imputed righteousness, Justification, baptism, infra- and supra-lapsarianism, church government, eschatology.
  - 5. Absolute commitment to the historic Creeds, Nicea (325), Constantinople (385) and Chalcedon (451). Apostles’ Creed.
  - 6. Generic Calvinism: the 39 Articles. The Irish Articles (Ussher). Edward Reynolds (1599-1676, Bishop of Norwich after Restoration). He was Vice-Chancellor of Oxford before John Owen and the era of Cromwell. “Let us not put in disputes and scholastical things into a Confession of Faith.”
- ii. Specific Influences:
  - 1. British:
    - a. Augustinian theology through the grid of Anselm and Bradwardine (briefly Archbishop of Canterbury) and Wycliffe.

Bradwardine's works were edited by William Twisse (Prolocutor of the Assembly).

## 2. Continental:

- a. Bullinger (The Decades) required reading for UK clergy in early sixteenth century. Calvin. In the century up to assembly, 96 editions of Calvin's works published (in English), 50 of Beza, 30 of Luther and Bullinger. Archbishop Parker had more books published than any other Anglican during this time – 10! Between 1548-1634 there was at least one book of Calvin's published every year in English. In 1578-81 there 8 per year. Then in 17<sup>th</sup> century he was surpassed by William Perkins. Institutes required reading at Oxford and Cambridge.
- b. Covenant Theology: Calvin – Beza -- William Ames – Polanus – Wallebius – Robert Rollock. The “pactum salutis”
- c. Deep concern over Roman Catholicism on the Continent (cf. Communism in 1950s, Islam today).

## 3. Antinomianism

- a. Very much on the radar. Free grace, “easy believe-ism,” lack of “discipline”, role of third use of the law.
- b. George Gillespie responded to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland: “The Confession of Faith is framed, so as it is of great use against the floods of heresies and errors that overflow that land; nay their intention of framing it was to meet with all the considerable Errors of the present tyme [i.e., time], the Socinian, Arminian, Popish, Antinomian, Anabaptistian [i.e., Anabaptist], Independent errors, etc. The Confession of Faith sets them out, and refutes them, so far as belongs to a Confession.” (Baillie, Vol. 3, Appendix 451).

## 2. Consensus Document:

- a. Discussion, negotiation, dispute, deliberate wording occasionally to compromise. Important principle that a doctrine consistent with the Confession may not be only doctrine that is consistent with it! Some boundaries are deliberately left ambiguous on issues of high Calvinism.

## 3. Historical Background to the Calling of the Assembly

- a. 1649 King Charles 1 was beheaded at the Banqueting House in London



- b. Reformation in Scotland and England evolved in different ways: Scotland a grassroots movement; England – the adulterous shenanigans of Henry 8<sup>th</sup>.
- c. C of E and the 39 articles: Knox referred to the “unreformed face” of English Reformation. The hope when Edward 6<sup>th</sup> became King but he died shortly afterwards in 1553. 1553-1558 – Mary Reformation set back years. Execution of Nicholas Ridley, Hugh Latimer and Thomas Cranmer. Mary Queens of Scots was beheaded by her cousin Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup>.
- i. 1549 (Edward 6<sup>th</sup>): Establishment of the Book of Common Prayer as the only legal form of worship
  - ii. 1552 (Edward 6<sup>th</sup>). Requirement of the 1552 Book of Common Prayer.
  - iii. 1559 (Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup>). everyone had to go to church each week or be fined 1 shilling.
  - iv. 1563 the 39 Articles adopted. Article 20 “The church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies and authority on controversies of faith” (Regulative principle issues).
  - v. Elizabeth 1: Church moved away from radical reformation. Rise of Puritanism, an attempt to purify the local church at a grassroots level but in contradistinction from the Monarchy.
  - vi. 1603. Elizabeth dies (unmarried and childless). Union with Scotland (though not Parliament until 1707). James 6<sup>th</sup> – James 1st of England. A Presbyterian! Tutored by finest Continental minds. Fluent in French, Greek and Latin. Wrote a book against tobacco. BUT: Hampton Court (1604): No bishop, no King. Andrew Melville had given a robust defense of *jus divinum*. 1611 KJV.

Anti-puritan (anti Geneva Bible). Puritans refused to use it. James was shrewd. He understood Presbyterians. Knew how far you could push them. 1618 tried to impose FIVE ARTICLES OF PERTH (church calendar, private baptisms, kneeling at communion, confirmation by bishops).

vii. Charles 1 1625. He flaunted the the things his father believed but had kept in proportion. Promoted Anglo-Catholicism. First monarch since the reformation to receive a papal emissary. Foreign policy a disaster and expensive. Need to raise taxes. Many puritans became part of the *nouveau riche* and enter parliament. By 1630 the king and Parliament are in direct conflict.

1. 1629 Dissolution of Parliament
2. 1633 Book of Sports revised. Archbishop Laud. Attempt to force prelacy on Scotland.
3. 1640 April: Short Parliament
4. 1640 Long Parliament. Laud and Earl of Strafford impeached and executed. King leaves London.
5. 1642. Royal standard raised in Nottingham. Smectymnuus Divines: Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcommen, William Spartsow.

viii. 1637: Jenny Geddes: St Giles Edinburgh. Riot after Laud and Charles 1<sup>st</sup> tried to force changes on church of Scotland.



- ix. 1638 National Covenant
- x. June 12 1643 Parliament passed ordinance to call an assembly of divines

4. Goals of the Assembly:

- a. Reform liturgy
- b. Reform Discipline in C of E
- c. Reform government of the Church
- d. (It would produce WCF and Catechisms; Form of Church Government and Directory for the Public Worship of God).

5. Who were they?

**Members of the clergy (England and Wales)**

John Arrowsmith (1602-1659); Norfolk  
 Simeon Ashe (d. 1662); Cardigan, Wales  
 Theodore Bathurst (c.1587-1652); Huntingdonshire  
 Thomas Baylie (1581/2-1663); Wiltshire  
 John Bond (1612-1676); Oxford University  
 Samuel Bolton (1605/6-1654); Middlesex  
 Oliver Bowles (c. 1577-1644); Bedfordshire  
 William Bridge (1600/01-1671); Cumberland  
 Anthony Burgess (d. 1664); Warwickshire  
 Cornelius Burges (d. 1665); Hertfordshire  
 Jeremiah Burroughs (bap. 1601?, d. 1646); Middlesex  
 Adoniram Byfield (d. 1660); Non-voting scribe  
 Richard Byfield (bap. 1598, d. 1664); Surrey  
 Edmund Calamy (1600-1666); London  
 John Carter (d. 1645/6); Yorkshire  
 Thomas Carter (b. c. 1585); unspecified  
 William Carter (1605-1658); Northumberland  
 Joseph Caryl (1602-1673); London  
 Thomas Case (bap. 1598- d. 1682); Cheshire  
 Daniel Cawdrey (1587/8-1664); Monmouthshire  
 Humphrey Chambers (bap. 1599?, d. 1662); Somerset  
 Francis Cheynell (bap. 1608, d. 1665); Pembroke, Wales  
 Peter Clark (b. c. 1606); Yorkshire  
 Richard Clayton (1597-1671); Leicestershire  
 Thomas Coleman (1597/8-1646); Lincolnshire  
 John Conant (1608-1694); Somerset  
 Edward Corbet (b. 1590/1); Westmoreland  
 Edward Corbet (1601×3-1658); Shropshire  
 Robert Crosse (1604/5-1683); Oxfordshire  
 Jean de la Marche (1585-1651); Is. of Guernsey  
 Samuel de la Place (1576/7-1658); Is. of Jersey  
 Philippé Delmé (d. 1653); unspecified  
 John Dury (1596-1680); Middlesex  
 Daniel Featley (1582-1645); Surrey  
 Thomas Ford (1598-1674); Bedfordshire  
 John Foxcraft (1595-1662); Nottinghamshire  
 Hannibal Gammon (bap. 1582, d. 1650/51); Cornwall  
 Thomas Gataker (1574-1654); Carnarven, Wales

John Gibbon (b. c. 1587); unspecified  
George Gibbs (c. 1590-1654); Leicestershire  
Samuel Gibson (b. c. 1580); Rutland  
William Good (b. 1600); unspecified  
Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680); Cambridgeshire  
William Gouge (1575-1653); Derbyshire  
Stanley Gower (bap. 1600?, d. 1660); Herefordshire  
John Greene (fl. 1641-1647); Herefordshire  
William Greenhill (1597/8-1671); Durham  
Henry Hall (c. 1604-1644); Westmoreland  
Humphrey Hardwick (b. 1602); unspecified  
Robert Harris (1580/1-1658); Oxfordshire  
Charles Herle (1598-1659); Lancashire  
Richard Herrick (1600-1667); Lancashire  
Gasper Hickee (1605-1677); Cornwall  
Thomas Hill (d. 1653); Northamptonshire  
Thomas Hodges (c. 1600-1672); unspecified  
Joshua Hoyle (bap. 1588, d. 1654); Cumberland  
John Jackson (1600-1648); Northumberland  
Robert Johnston (d. 1670); Yorkshire  
John Langley (d. 1657); Hampshire  
John Ley (1584-1662); Cheshire  
John Lightfoot (1602-1675); Staffordshire  
Stephen Marshall (1594/5-1655); Essex  
John Maynard (1600-1665); Sussex  
William Mew (1602-1659); Gloucestershire  
Thomas Micklethwaite; unspecified  
Matthew Newcomen (d. 1669); unspecified  
Philip Nye (bap. 1595, d. 1672); Huntingdonshire  
Henry Painter (c. 1583-1644); unspecified  
Herbert Palmer (1601-1647); Bedfordshire  
Edward Peale (1583-1645); Dorsetshire  
Andrew Perne (c. 1595-1654); unspecified  
John Philips (c. 1585-1663); Suffolk  
Benjamin Pickering (fl. 1620-1649); Sussex  
William Price (d. 1666); unspecified  
Nicholas Proffet (c. 1599-1669); unspecified  
William Rathbone (d. 1644); Monmouthshire  
William Rayner (c. 1595-1666); Berkshire  
Edward Reynolds (1599-1676); Northamptonshire  
Henry Roborough (d. 1649); Non-voting scribe  
Arthur Sallaway (b. 1606); Worcestershire  
Henry Scudder (d. 1652); Wiltshire  
Lazarus Seaman (d. 1675); London  
Obadiah Sedgwick (1599/1600-1658); Essex  
Sidrach Simpson (c. 1600-1655); Worcestershire  
Peter Smith (1586-1653); Hertfordshire  
William Spurstowe (d. 1666); Merioneth, Wales  
Edmund Staunton (1600-1671); Surrey  
Peter Sterry (1613-1672); unspecified  
John Strickland (bap. 1601?, d. 1670); Cambridge University  
William Strong (d. 1654); Dorsetshire  
Matthias Stiles (1591-1652); Oxford University  
Francis Taylor (1589-1656); Kent  
Thomas Temple (c. 1601-1661); Brednock, Wales  
Christopher Tisdale (1592-1655); Hampshire

Thomas Thorowgood (c. 1595-1669); Norfolk  
Henry Tozer (c. 1601-1650); Glamorgan, Wales  
Anthony Tuckney (1599-1670); Lincolnshire  
William Twisse (1577/8-1646); Berkshire  
Thomas Valentine (1586-1665); Buckinghamshire  
Richard Vines (1599/1600-1656); Warwickshire  
George Walker (bap. 1582?, d. 1651); London  
John Wallis (1616-1703); Non-voting scribe  
John Ward (d. 1665); unspecified  
James Welby (fl. 1643-1649); Denbyshire, Wales  
Thomas Westfield (1573-1644); unspecified  
Jeremiah Whitaker (1599-1654); Rutland  
John White (1575-1648); Dorsetshire  
Henry Wilkinson Jr (1610-1675); unspecified  
Henry Wilkinson Sr (1566-1647); Buckinghamshire  
Thomas Wilson (c. 1601-1653); Kent  
John Wincop (c. 1602-1647); unspecified  
Francis Woodcock (1614-1649×51); Durham  
Thomas Young (c. 1587-1655); Suffolk

## **Members of the House of Lords**

Howard Edward, first Baron Howard of Escrick (d. 1675)  
Robert Deveroux, third earl of Essex (1591-1646)  
Edward Montagu, second earl of Manchester (1602-1671)  
Philip Herbert, first earl of Montgomery and fourth earl of Pembroke (1584-1650)  
Algeron Percy, tenth earl of Northumberland (1602-1668)  
William Cecil, second earl of Salisbury (1591-1668)  
William Fiennes, first Viscount Saye and Sele (1582-1662)  
Robert Rich, second earl of Warwick (1587-1658)  
Philip Wharton, fourth Baron Wharton (1613-1696)

## **Members of the House of Commons**

Sir Thomas Barrington, second baronet (c.1585-1644)  
John Clotworthy, first Viscount Massereene (d. 1665)  
John Cook (bap. 1608, d. 1660)  
Sir John Evelyn (1601-1685)  
Nathaniel Fiennes (1607/8-1669)  
Sir Gilbert Gerard (1587-1670)  
Sir John Glynne (1603-1666)  
Sir Robert Harley (bap. 1579, d. 1656)  
Sir Arthur Hesilrige, second baronet (1601-1661)  
William Masham (1615/16-1654/5)  
Sir John Maynard (1604-1690)  
William Pierrepont (1607/8-1678)  
Edmund Prideaux (1601-1659)  
Sir Robert Pye (bap. 1585, d. 1662)  
John Pym (1584-1643)  
Sir Robert Reynolds (1600/01-1678)  
Francis Rous (1580/81-1659)  
Sir Benjamin Rudyerd (1572-1658)  
Oliver St John (c.1598-1673)  
Humphrey Salwey (c.1575-1652)  
John Selden (1584-1654)  
William Strode (bap. 1594, d. 1645)

Sir Henry Vane, Jr. (1613-1662)  
Sir Henry Vane, Sr. (1589-1655)  
William Wheeler (c. 1601 – 1666)  
John White (1590-1645)  
Bulstrode Whitelocke (1605-1675)  
Zouch Tate (1606-1650)

## **Church of Scotland ministers**

Robert Baillie (1602-1662); Scottish Commissioner  
George Gillespie (1613-1648); Scottish Commissioner  
Alexander Henderson (c.1583-1646); Scottish Commissioner  
Samuel Rutherford (c. 1600-1661); Scottish Commissioner

## **Scottish elders**

Archibald Campbell, marquess of Argyll (1605×7-1661)  
John Elphinstone, second Lord Balmerino (d. 1649)  
Sir Charles Erskine of Alva (d. 1663)  
John Maitland, duke of Lauderdale (1616-1682)  
Sir Archibald Johnston, Lord Wariston (bap. 1611, d. 1663)  
John Campbell, first earl of Loudoun (1598-1662)  
George Winram, of Liberton, Lord Liberton (d. 1650)

6. What did they do?
  - a. 1643... about 100 were present.
  - b. Mostly Calvinistic. “High” Calvinists (Twisse); also Amyraldians; majority were Presbyterians (some mildly so), Congregationalists and independents (wanting an overthrow of national church). Erastians (discipline in the hands of the state).
  - c. Initial commission to revise Irish Articles and 39 articles.
  - d. Every member assigned to a committee (though free to attend any)
  - e. Plenary session in am and smoke-filled rooms to hammer out wording in pm.
  - f. Brought to the floor, discussed and debated and thrown back to committees.
  - g. Paid 4 shillings a day (1 pound sterling a week). Many spent weeks and even months away from their churches. They would not have had any sense that what they were doing was for South Carolina in 21<sup>st</sup> century. In less than ten years the entire thing was dead as far as England was concerned.
  - h. High points:
    - i. Jan 4 1645: Directory for Public Worship
    - ii. Dec 1646: WCF presented to Parliament
    - iii. April 1647: Proof texts
    - iv. Aug 27 1647: LC
    - v. April 1648: SC and LC in final form
    - vi. 1649 Charles 1 beheaded 3 weeks before Assembly suspended (though it kept meeting unofficially until March 1652).
  - i. Rules for debate:
    - i. 2 assessors to fill the place when a moderator absent
    - ii. scribes to take minutes (not members)

- iii. all took a vow to maintain nothing in doctrine but that which agrees with Scripture and promotes the peace of the church
- iv. No resolution of a question on the day it was proposed
- v. Whatever was necessary had to be demonstrated from Scripture
- vi. Participants subject to Prolocutor to cease speaking when ordered by majority of Assembly
- vii. Minority dissent permitted (especially on church government)
- viii. Everything had to be agreed and read over and sent to Parliament. If there was dissent and annexed, the assembly could annex the annex.

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**The Westminster Confession of Faith**

**(3) SCRIPTURE**

## Of the Holy Scripture

### Chapter I.

#### Of the Holy Scripture.

Which chapter should come first: God or Scripture? Principium theologicae (God) or Principium Cognoscendi (how we are to know God... Scripture)

GOD:	Gallic (1559). John Calvin, Synod of Paris and adopted by Synod of La Rochelle in 1571 Belgic Confession 1561 (Flanders, Netherlands). Revision of Gallic Confession. 39 Articles (1. Trinity, 2. Christ, 3. Spirit... 6. Scripture)
SCRIPTURE	1 <sup>st</sup> Helvetic (1536: Bullinger (based on Oecolompadius); 2 <sup>nd</sup> Helvetic (1566); Formula of Concord (1576); Irish Articles (1615)

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

(a) Rom. 2:14, 15; Rom. 1:19, 20; Ps. 19:1, 2, 3; Rom. 1:32, with chap. 2:1.

(b) I Cor. 1:21; I Cor. 2:13, 14.

(c) Heb. 1:1.

(d) Prov. 22:19, 20, 21; Luke 1:3, 4; Rom. 15:4; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; Isa. 8:19, 20.

(e) II Tim. 3:15; II Pet. 1:19.

(f) Heb. 1:1, 2.

- General Revelation: Creation and Providence
- “light of nature” (1:6, 10:4, 20:4, 21:1, LC 2, 51) “the capacity to perceive spiritual realities without the aid of revelation” (OED). *This is not correct.* “without special revelation”
- Special revelation does not necessitate a written Bible
- Last clause of section 1 taken up in section 6. “New revelations of the Spirit” (Quakers and the “inner light”); “traditions of men” (RC).
- Another danger: locking up the Holy Spirit. George Gillespie. Miracles.

II. Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these:

Of the Old Testament:

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

Of the New Testament:

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

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

(g) Luke 16:29, 31; Eph. 2:20; Rev. 22:18, 19; II Tim. 3:16.

- Definition of Scripture extensively, intensively, exclusively. Trent within living memory.

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

(h) Luke 24:27, 44; Rom. 3:2; II Pet. 1:21.

- 1611 (Authorized Version. 1<sup>st</sup> edition had additions to Daniel, Judith, Esdras, additions to Esther, Susanna, 2 Macabees, 4 Ezra, Prayer of Manasseh, Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch, 1 Maccabees, Tobit, Bel. No interest in defining canon apart from inspiration.

IV. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or Church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God.(i)

(i) II Pet. 1:19, 21; II Tim. 3:16; I John 5:9; I Thess. 2:13.

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

(k) I Tim. 3:15.

(l) I John 2:20, 27; John 16:13, 14; I Cor. 2:10, 11, 12; Isa. 59:21.

- How do I get convinced of the canon? Testimony of the Holy Spirit (Calvin)
- Holy Spirit does not witness apart from Scripture

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

(m) II Tim. 3:15, 16, 17; Gal. 1:8, 9; II Thess. 2:2.

(n) John 6:45, I Cor. 2:9 to 12.

(o) I Cor. 11:13, 14; I Cor. 14:26, 40.

- Perfection of Scripture

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

(p) II Pet. 3:16.

(q) Psalm 119:105, 130.

- Perspicuity of Scripture

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

(r) Matt. 5:18.

(s) Isa. 8:20; Acts 15:15; John 5:39, 46.

(t) John 5:39.

(u) I Cor. 14:6, 9, 11, 12, 24, 27, 28.

(w) Col. 3:16.

(x) Rom. 15:4.

- Transmission and Preservation of Scripture

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

(y) II Pet. 1:20, 21; Acts 15:15, 16.

- Principles of Interpretation

X. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined; and in whose sentence we are to rest; can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.(z)

(z) Matt. 22:29, 31; Eph. 2:20 with Acts 28:25.

- Final Authority in all matters of faith and practice is Scripture (rightly interpreted and understood).

**CENTERPOINT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**FALL 2016**

**The Westminster Confession of Faith**

**(4) DOCTRINE OF GOD (TRINITY)**

## Of God and of the Holy Trinity

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

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

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

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

III. In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.[o] The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father: [p] the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. [q]

- (o) I John 5:7; Matt. 3:16, 17; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14.
- (p) John 1:14, 18.
- (q) John 15:26; Gal. 4:6.

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**CHAPTER 4: OF GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE**

## Chapter 4: Of God's Eternal Decree

1. God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass;[\[1\]](#) yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin,[\[2\]](#) nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.[\[3\]](#)

Notes:

2. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions;[\[4\]](#) yet has He not decreed anything because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.[\[5\]](#)

Notes:

3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels[\[6\]](#) are predestinated unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death.[\[7\]](#)

Notes:

4. These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.[\[8\]](#)

Notes:

5. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, has chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory,[\[9\]](#) out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto;[\[10\]](#) and all to the praise of His glorious grace.[\[11\]](#)

Notes:

6. As God has appointed the elect unto glory, so has He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto.[\[12\]](#) Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ,[\[13\]](#) are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified,[\[14\]](#) and kept by His power, through faith, unto salvation.[\[15\]](#) Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.[\[16\]](#)

Notes:

7. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extends or withholds mercy, as He pleases, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.[\[17\]](#)

Notes:

8. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care,[\[18\]](#) that men, attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election.[\[19\]](#) So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God;[\[20\]](#) and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.[\[21\]](#)

Notes:

[1] EPH 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. ROM 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! HEB 6:17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. ROM 9:15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

[2] JAM 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. 1JO 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

[3] ACT 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. MAT 17:12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. ACT 4:27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. JOH 19:11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. PRO 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.

[4] ACT 15:18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 1SA 23:11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. 12 Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up. MAT 11:21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

[5] ROM 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

[6] 1TI 5:21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. MAT 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

[7] ROM 9:22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. EPH 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. PRO 16:4 The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

[8] 2TI 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. JOH 13:18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

[9] EPH 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. ROM 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 2TI 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 1TH 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

[10] ROM 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. EPH 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.

[11]EPH. 1:6,12.

[12] IPE 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. EPH 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. 2TH 2:13 But we are

bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

[13] 1TH 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. TIT 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

[14] ROM 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. EPH 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. 2TH 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

[15] 1PE 1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

[16] JOH 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. ROM 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. JOH 6:64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 8:47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. 1JO 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

[17] MAT 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. 26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. ROM 9:17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. 2TI 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. 20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. JUD 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. 1PE 2:8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

[18] ROM 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! DEU 29:29 The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

[19] 2PE 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

[20] EPH 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. ROM 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

[21] ROM 11:5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 2PE 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. ROM 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. LUK 10:20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

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**CHAPTER 5:**

**CREATION**

I. It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. [1] for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness. [2] in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days; and all very good. [3]

II. After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, [4] with reasonable and immortal souls,[5] endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after His own image; [6] having the law of God written in their hearts, [7] and power to fulfil it; [8] and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. [9] Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command, not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; [10] which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures. [11]

<sup>1</sup> HEB 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. JOH 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. GEN 1:2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. JOB 26:13 By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. 33:4 The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

<sup>2</sup> ROM 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. JER 10:12 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. PSA 104:24 O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. 33:5 He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. 6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

<sup>3</sup> All of Genesis 1; HEB 11:3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. COL 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. ACT 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.

<sup>4</sup> GEN 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

<sup>5</sup> GEN 2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. ECC 12:7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. LUK 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. MAT 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

<sup>6</sup> GEN 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. COL 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. EPH 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

<sup>7</sup> ROM 2:14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.

<sup>8</sup> ECC 7:29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

<sup>9</sup> GEN 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. ECC 7:29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

<sup>10</sup> GEN 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. 3:8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

<sup>11</sup> GEN 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

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**The Westminster Confession of Faith**

**PROVIDENCE**

## PROVIDENCE

Classic statement of “no-risk” view of providence – Westminster Confession, Chapter 5:

1. God the great Creator of all things does uphold direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by His most wise and holy providence, according to His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will, to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.

*Note: NATURE of providence: divine preservation, direction and government. SCOPE of providence: No dualism: God alone is in charge of providence. GOAL of providence: glory of God.*

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

*Note: God acts as “first cause” or “second cause”: necessarily when the effect is necessary to laws of nature, or freely – not by any compulsion, or contingently – when the effect is dependent on the second cause in a manner that is unpredictable.*

3. God, in His ordinary providence, makes use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at His pleasure.

*God is not a prisoner of how he ordinarily works.*

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

*Note: bare permission would imply passivity of God’s part (perhaps even an indifference as to outcome). Note how “permission” is different from “allows”. This would imply a providence without direction, governing or disposing.*

*Providence and sin/evil (see later notes)*

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

*Pastoral implications: bad things happen for a variety of reasons – punishment for past sin, illumination of hidden sin, humility, deeper dependence in faith and trust, to encourage watchfulness.*

6. As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as a righteous Judge, for former sins, does blind and harden, from them He not only withholds His grace whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings, and wrought upon in their hearts; but sometimes also withdraws the gifts which they had, and exposes them to such objects as their corruption makes occasion of sin; and, withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan, whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, even under those means which God uses for the softening of others.

*Providence in the ungodly*

7. As the providence of God does, in general, reach to all creatures; so, after a most special manner, it takes care of His Church, and disposes all things to the good thereof.

*Providence of God is ultimately for the good of the church as God's central purpose in history.*

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**The Westminster Confession of Faith  
Chapter 6**

**THE FALL**

## Westminster Confession Chapter 6 (Sections 1-3)

### Of the Fall of Man

I. Our first parents, being seduced by the subtilty and temptations of Satan, sinned, in eating the forbidden fruit.[\[1\]](#) This their sin, God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory.[\[2\]](#)

II. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion, with God,[\[3\]](#) and so became dead in sin,[\[4\]](#) and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body.[\[5\]](#)

III. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed;[\[6\]](#) and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.[\[7\]](#)

[1] GEN 3:13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. 2CO 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

[2] ROM 11:32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

[3] GEN 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. ECC 7:29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions. ROM 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

[4] GEN 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. EPH 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.

[5] TIT 1:15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. GEN 6:5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. JER 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? ROM 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

[6] GEN 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 2:16 AND THE LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. ACT 17:26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. ROM 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. 1CO 15:21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

[7] PSA 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. GEN 5:3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth. JOB 14:4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. 15:14 What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

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**SIN**

IV. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good,[8] and wholly inclined to all evil,[9] do proceed all actual transgressions.[10]

V. This corruption of nature, during this life, does remain in those that are regenerated;[11] and although it be, through Christ, pardoned, and mortified; yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.[12]

VI. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto,[13] does in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner,[14] whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God,[15] and curse of the law,[16] and so made subject to death,[17] with all miseries spiritual,[18] temporal,[19] and eternal.[20]

[10] JAM 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. EPH 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. MAT 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

[11] 1JO 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. ROM 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me(that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. JAM 3:2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. PRO 20:9 Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin? ECC 7:20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

[12]ROM 7:5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. GAL 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

[13] 1JO 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

[14] ROM 2:15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another. ROM 3:9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

[15] EPH 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

[16] GAL 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

[17] ROM 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[18] EPH 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

[19] ROM 8:20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. LAM 3:39 Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?

[20] MAT 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. 2TH 1:9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

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Chapter 7**

**COVENANT 1 & 2**

# GOD'S COVENANT WITH MAN

- I. The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.<sup>i</sup>
  
- II. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works,<sup>ii</sup> wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity,<sup>iii</sup> upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.  
<sup>iv</sup>
  
- III. Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second,<sup>v</sup> commonly called the Covenant of Grace; whereby he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him, that they may be saved;<sup>vi</sup> and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.<sup>vii</sup>

- IV. This covenant of grace is frequently set forth in the Scripture by the name of a Testament, in reference to the death of Jesus Christ, the testator, and to the everlasting inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed.<sup>viii</sup>
- V. This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel,<sup>ix</sup> under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all foreshadowing Christ to come,<sup>x</sup> which were for that time sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah,<sup>xi</sup> by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called the Old Testament.<sup>xii</sup>
- VI. Under the gospel, when Christ the substance,<sup>xiii</sup> was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the word, and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper;<sup>xiv</sup> which though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity and less outward glory, yet in them it is held forth in more fulness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy,<sup>xv</sup> to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles,<sup>xvi</sup> and is called the New Testament.<sup>xvii</sup> There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations.<sup>xviii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Isa. 40:13-17; Job 9:32-33; I Sam. 2:25; Ps. 113:5-6; Ps. 100:2-3; Job 22:2-3; Job 35:7-8; Luke 17:10; Acts 17:24-25.

<sup>ii</sup> Gal. 3:12.

<sup>iii</sup> Rom. 10:5; Rom. 5:12-19.

<sup>iv</sup> Gen. 2:17; Gal. 3:10.

<sup>v</sup> Gal. 3:21; Rom. 8:3; Rom. 3:20-21; Gen. 3:15; Isa. 42:6.

<sup>vi</sup> Mark 16:15-16; John 3:16; Rom. 10:6, 9; Gal. 3:11.

<sup>vii</sup> Ezek. 36:26-27; John 6:44-45.

<sup>viii</sup> Heb. 9:15-17; Heb. 7:22; Luke 22:20; I Cor. 11:25.

<sup>ix</sup> II Cor. 3:6-9.

<sup>x</sup> Heb. 8; Heb. 9; Heb. 10; Rom. 4:11; Col. 2:11-12; I Cor. 5:7.

<sup>xi</sup> I Cor. 10:1-4; Heb. 11:13; John 8:56.

<sup>xii</sup> Gal. 3:7-9, 14.

<sup>xiii</sup> Col. 2:17.

<sup>xiv</sup> Matt. 28:19-20; I Cor. 11:23-25.

<sup>xv</sup> Heb. 12:22-27; Jer. 31:33-34.

<sup>xvi</sup> Matt. 28:19; Eph. 2:15-19.

<sup>xvii</sup> Luke 22:20.

<sup>xviii</sup> Gal. 3:14, 16; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:21-23, 30; Ps. 32:1; with Rom. 4:3, 6, 16-17, 23-24; Heb. 13:8.

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Chapter 8**

**CHRIST THE MEDIATOR 1 & 2**

# CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

- I. It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and Man,<sup>i</sup> the Prophet,<sup>ii</sup> Priest,<sup>iii</sup> and King;<sup>iv</sup> the head and Saviour of his church;<sup>v</sup> the Heir of all things;<sup>vi</sup> and Judge of the world;<sup>vii</sup> unto whom he did from all eternity give a people to be his seed,<sup>viii</sup> and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.<sup>ix</sup>
  
- II. The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him man's nature,<sup>x</sup> with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin;<sup>xi</sup> being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance.<sup>xii</sup> So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion.<sup>xiii</sup> Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.<sup>xiv</sup>
  
- III. The Lord Jesus, in his human nature thus united to the divine, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure;<sup>xv</sup> having in him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge:<sup>xvi</sup> in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell:<sup>xvii</sup> to the end that, being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth,<sup>xviii</sup> he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a Mediator and Surety.<sup>xix</sup> Which office he took not unto himself, but was thereunto called by his Father;<sup>xx</sup> who put all power and judgment into his hand, and gave him commandment to execute the same.<sup>xxi</sup>

- IV. This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake;<sup>xxii</sup> which that he may discharge, he was made under the law,<sup>xxiii</sup> and did perfectly fulfil it;<sup>xxiv</sup> endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul,<sup>xxv</sup> and most painful sufferings in his body;<sup>xxvi</sup> was crucified, and died;<sup>xxvii</sup> was buried, and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption.<sup>xxviii</sup> On the third day he arose from the dead,<sup>xxix</sup> with the same body in which he suffered;<sup>xxx</sup> with which also he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father,<sup>xxxi</sup> making intercession,<sup>xxxii</sup> and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world.<sup>xxxiii</sup>
- V. The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father<sup>xxxiv</sup> and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.<sup>xxxv</sup>
- VI. Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ, till after his incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefits thereof, were communicated unto the elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein he was revealed and signified to be the Seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head, and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, being yesterday and today the same and forever.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

VII. Christ, in the work of mediation, acteth according to both natures; by each nature doing that which is proper to itself;<sup>xxxvii</sup> yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

VIII. To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same;<sup>xxxix</sup> making intercession for them,<sup>xl</sup> and revealing unto them, in and by the word, the mysteries of salvation;<sup>xli</sup> effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts, by his word and spirit;<sup>xlii</sup> overcoming all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom, in such manner and ways as are most consonant to his wonderful and unsearchable dispensation.<sup>xliii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Isa. 42:1; I Pet. 1:19-20; John 3:16; I Tim 2:5.

<sup>ii</sup> Acts 3:22.

<sup>iii</sup> Heb. 5:5-6.

<sup>iv</sup> Ps. 2:6; Luke 1:33.

<sup>v</sup> Eph. 5:23.

<sup>vi</sup> Heb. 1:2.

<sup>vii</sup> Acts 17:31.

<sup>viii</sup> John 17:6; Ps. 22:30; Isa. 53:10.

<sup>ix</sup> I Tim. 2:6; Isa. 55:4-5; I Cor. 1:30.

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<sup>x</sup> John 1:1, 14; I John 5:20; Phil. 2:6; Gal. 4:4.

<sup>xi</sup> Heb. 2:14, 16-17; Heb. 4:15.

<sup>xii</sup> Luke 1:27, 31, 35; Gal. 4:4.

<sup>xiii</sup> Luke 1:35; Col. 2:9; Rom. 9:5; I Pet. 3:18; I Tim. 3:16.

<sup>xiv</sup> Rom. 1:3-4; I Tim. 2:5.

<sup>xv</sup> Ps. 45:7; John 3:34.

<sup>xvi</sup> Col. 2:3.

<sup>xvii</sup> Col. 1:19.

<sup>xviii</sup> Heb. 7:26; John 1:14.

<sup>xix</sup> Acts 10:38; Heb. 12:24; Heb. 7:22.

<sup>xx</sup> Heb. 5:4-5.

<sup>xxi</sup> John 5:22, 27; Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:36.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ps. 40:7-8; with Heb. 10:5-10; John 10:18; Phil. 2:8.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Gal. 4:4.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Matt. 3:15; Matt. 5:17.

<sup>xxv</sup> Matt. 26:37-38; Luke 22:44; Matt. 27:46.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Matt. 26; Matt. 27.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Phil. 2:8.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Acts 2:23-24, 27; Acts 13:37; Rom. 6:9.

<sup>xxix</sup> I Cor. 15:3-5.

<sup>xxx</sup> John 20:25, 27.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Mark 16:19.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; Heb. 7:25.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Rom. 14:9-10; Acts 1:11; Acts 10:42; Matt. 13:40-42. Jude 6; II Pet. 2:4.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Rom. 5:19; Heb. 9:14, 16; Heb. 10:14; Eph. 5:2; Rom 3:25-26.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Dan. 9:24, 26; Col. 1:19-20; Eph. 1:11,14; John 17:2; Heb. 9:12, 15.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Gal. 4:4-5; Gen. 3:15; Rev. 13:8; Heb. 13:8.

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xxxvii Heb. 9:14; I Pet. 3:18.

xxxviii Acts 20:28; John 3:13; I John 3:16.

xxxix John 6:37, 39; John 10:15-16.

xl I John 2:1-2; Rom. 8:34.

xli John 15:13, 15; Eph. 1:7-9; John 17:6

xlii John 14:16; Heb. 12:2; II Cor. 4:13; Rom. 8:9, 14; Rom. 15:18-19; John 17:17.

xliii Ps. 110:1; I Cor. 15:25-26; Mal. 4:2-3; Col. 2:15.

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**The Westminster Confession of Faith  
Chapter 9**

**FREE WILL**

# FREE WILL

I. God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined, to good or evil.<sup>i</sup>

II. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well pleasing to God:<sup>ii</sup> but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it.<sup>iii</sup>

III. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation;<sup>iv</sup> so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good,<sup>v</sup> and dead in sin,<sup>vi</sup> is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.<sup>vii</sup>

IV. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin,<sup>viii</sup> and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good:<sup>ix</sup> yet so as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.<sup>x</sup>

V. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to do good alone in the state of glory only.<sup>xi</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Matt. 17:12; James 1:14; Deut 30:19.

<sup>ii</sup> Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 1:26.

<sup>iii</sup> Gen. 2:16-17; Gen. 3:6.

<sup>iv</sup> Rom. 5:6; Rom. 8:7; John 15:5.

<sup>v</sup> Rom. 3:10, 12.

<sup>vi</sup> Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13.

<sup>vii</sup> John 6:44, 65; Eph. 2:2-5; I Cor. 2:14; Tit. 3:3-5.

<sup>viii</sup> Col. 1:13; John 8:34, 36.

<sup>ix</sup> Phil. 2:13; Rom. 6:18, 22.

<sup>x</sup> Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:15, 18-19, 21, 23.

<sup>xi</sup> Eph. 4:13; Heb. 12:23; I John 3:2; Jude 24.

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Chapter 10**

**EFFECTUAL CALLING**



III. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit,<sup>xii</sup> who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth.<sup>xiii</sup> So also are all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word.<sup>xiv</sup>

IV. Others not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the word,<sup>xv</sup> and may have some common operations of the Spirit,<sup>xvi</sup> yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved:<sup>xvii</sup> much less can men not professing the Christian religion be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they ever so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess;<sup>xviii</sup> and to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested.<sup>xix</sup>

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- <sup>i</sup> Rom. 8:30; Rom. 11:7; Eph. 1:10-11.
- <sup>ii</sup> II Thess. 2:13-14; II Cor. 3:3, 6.
- <sup>iii</sup> Rom. 8:2; Eph. 2:1-5; II Tim. 1:9-10.
- <sup>iv</sup> Acts 26:18; I Cor. 2:10, 12; Eph. 1:17-18.
- <sup>v</sup> Ezek. 36:25.
- <sup>vi</sup> Ezek. 11:19; Phil. 2:13; Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 36:27.
- <sup>vii</sup> Eph. 1:19; John 6:44-45.
- <sup>viii</sup> S. of Sol. 1:4; Ps. 110:3; John 6:37; Rom. 6:16-18.
- <sup>ix</sup> II Tim. 1:9; Tit. 3:4-5; Eph. 2:4-5, 8-9; Rom. 9:11.
- <sup>x</sup> I Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7; Eph. 2:5.
- <sup>xi</sup> John 6:37; Ezek 36:27; John 5:25.
- <sup>xii</sup> Luke 18:15-16; and Acts 2:38-39; and John 3:3, 5; and I John 5:12; with Rom. 8:9; (compared together)
- <sup>xiii</sup> John 3:8
- <sup>xiv</sup> I John 5:12; Acts 4:12.
- <sup>xv</sup> Matt. 22:14.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Matt. 7:22; Matt. 13:20-21; Heb. 6:4-5.
- <sup>xvii</sup> John 6:64-66; John 8:24.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Eph. 2:12; John 4:22; John 17:3.
- <sup>xix</sup> II John 9-11; I Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:6-8.

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Chapter 11**

**JUSTIFICATION**



- III. Christ, but his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf.<sup>vi</sup> Yet, inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them,<sup>vii</sup> and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead,<sup>viii</sup> and both freely, not for anything in them, their justification is only of free grace;<sup>ix</sup> that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.<sup>x</sup>
- IV. God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect;<sup>xi</sup> and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification;<sup>xii</sup> Nevertheless they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them.<sup>xiii</sup>
- V. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified;<sup>xiv</sup> and although they can never fall from the state of justification,<sup>xv</sup> yet they may by their sins fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.<sup>xvi</sup>

VI. The justification of believers under the Old Testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament.<sup>xvii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Rom. 8:30; Rom. 3:24.

<sup>ii</sup> Rom. 4:5-8; II Cor. 5:19, 21; Rom. 3:22, 24-25, 27-28; Tit. 3:5, 7; Eph. 1:7; Jer. 23:6; I Cor. 1:30-31; Rom. 5:17-19.

<sup>iii</sup> Acts 10:44; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9; Acts 13:38-39; Eph. 2:7-8.

<sup>iv</sup> John 1:12; Rom. 3:28; Rom. 5:1.

<sup>v</sup> James 2:17, 22, 26; Gal. 5:6.

<sup>vi</sup> Rom. 5:8-10, 19; I Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 10:10, 14; Dan. 9:24, 26; Isa. 53:4-6, 10-12.

<sup>vii</sup> Rom. 8:32.

<sup>viii</sup> II Cor. 5:21; Matt. 3:17; Eph. 5:2.

<sup>ix</sup> Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7.

<sup>x</sup> Rom. 3:26; Eph. 2:7.

<sup>xi</sup> Gal. 3:8; I Pet. 1:2, 19-20; Rom. 8:30.

<sup>xii</sup> Gal. 4:4; I Tim. 2:6; Rom. 4:25.

<sup>xiii</sup> Col. 1:21-22; Gal. 2:16; Tit. 3:4-7.

<sup>xiv</sup> Matt. 6:12; I John 1:7, 9; I John 2:1-2.

<sup>xv</sup> Luke 22:32; John 10:28; Heb. 10:14

<sup>xvi</sup> Ps. 89:31-33; Ps. 51:7-12; Ps. 32:5; Matt. 26:75; I Cor. 11:30, 32; Luke 1:20.

<sup>xvii</sup> Gal. 3:9, 13-14; Rom. 4:22-24; Heb. 13:8.

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Chapter 12**

**ADOPTION**

# ADOPTION

- I. All those that are justified, God vouchsafeth, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption;<sup>i</sup> by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God;<sup>ii</sup> have his name put upon them,<sup>iii</sup> receive the Spirit of adoption;<sup>iv</sup> have access to the throne of grace with boldness;<sup>v</sup> are enabled to cry, Abba, Father;<sup>vi</sup> are pitied,<sup>vii</sup> protected,<sup>viii</sup> provided for,<sup>ix</sup> and chastened by him as by a father;<sup>x</sup> yet never cast off,<sup>xi</sup> but sealed to the day of redemption,<sup>xii</sup> and inherit the promises,<sup>xiii</sup> as heirs of everlasting salvation.<sup>xiv</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:4-5.

<sup>ii</sup> Rom. 8:17; John 1:12.

<sup>iii</sup> Jer. 14:9; II Cor. 6:18; Rev. 3:12.

<sup>iv</sup> Rom. 8:15.

<sup>v</sup> Eph. 3:12; Rom. 5:2.

<sup>vi</sup> Gal. 4:6.

<sup>vii</sup> Ps. 103:13.

<sup>viii</sup> Prov. 14:26.

<sup>ix</sup> Matt. 6:30, 32; I Pet. 5:7.

<sup>x</sup> Heb. 12:6.

<sup>xi</sup> Lam. 3:31.

<sup>xii</sup> Eph. 4:30.

<sup>xiii</sup> Heb. 6:12.

<sup>xiv</sup> I Pet. 1:3-4; Heb. 1:14.

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Chapter 13**

**SANCTIFICATION**



III. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail,<sup>x</sup> yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome;<sup>xi</sup> and so the saints grow in grace,<sup>xii</sup> perfecting holiness in the fear of God.<sup>xiii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> I Cor. 6:11; Acts. 20:32; Phil. 3:10; Rom. 6:5-6.

<sup>ii</sup> John 17:17; Eph. 5:26; II Thess. 2:13.

<sup>iii</sup> Rom. 6:6, 14.

<sup>iv</sup> Gal. 5:24; Rom. 8:13.

<sup>v</sup> Col. 1:11; Eph. 3:16-19.

<sup>vi</sup> II Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14.

<sup>vii</sup> I Thess. 5:23.

<sup>viii</sup> I John 1:10; Rom. 7:18, 23; Phil. 3:12.

<sup>ix</sup> Gal. 5:17; I Pet. 2:11.

<sup>x</sup> Rom. 7:23.

<sup>xi</sup> Rom. 6:14; I John 5:4; Eph. 4:15-16.

<sup>xii</sup> II Pet. 3:18; II Cor. 3:18.

<sup>xiii</sup> II Cor. 7:1.

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Chapter 14**

**SAVING FAITH**



III. This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong;<sup>x</sup> may be often and many ways assailed and weakened, but get the victory;<sup>xi</sup> growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ,<sup>xii</sup> who is both the author and finisher of our faith.<sup>xiii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Heb. 10:39.

<sup>ii</sup> II Cor. 4:13; Eph. 1:17-19; Eph. 2:8.

<sup>iii</sup> Rom. 10:14, 17.

<sup>iv</sup> I Pet. 2:2; Acts 20:32; Rom. 4:11; Luke 17:5; Rom. 1:16-17.

<sup>v</sup> John 4:42; I Thess. 2:13; I John 5:10; Acts 24:14.

<sup>vi</sup> Rom. 16:26.

<sup>vii</sup> Isa. 66:2.

<sup>viii</sup> Heb. 11:13; I Tim. 4:8.

<sup>ix</sup> John 1:12; Acts 16:31; Gal. 2:20; Acts 15:11.

<sup>x</sup> Heb. 5:13-14; Rom. 4:19-20; Matt. 6:30; Matt. 8:10.

<sup>xi</sup> Luke 22:31-32; Eph. 6:16; I John 5:4-5.

<sup>xii</sup> Heb. 6:11-12; Heb. 10:22; Col. 2:2.

<sup>xiii</sup> Heb. 12:2.

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Chapter 15**

**REPENTANCE**



III. Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof,<sup>5</sup> which is the act of God's free grace in Christ;<sup>6</sup> yet is it of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.<sup>7</sup>

IV. As there is no sin so small but it deserves damnation;<sup>8</sup> so there is no sin so great, that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ezek. 36:31-32; Ezek. 16:61-63.

<sup>6</sup> Hos. 14:2, 4; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 6:23; Rom. 5:12; Matt. 12:36.

<sup>9</sup> Isa. 55:7; Rom. 8:1; Isa. 1:16, 18

V. Men ought not to content themselves with a general repentance, but it is every man's duty to endeavor to repent of his particular sins particularly.<sup>10</sup>

VI. As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof;<sup>11</sup> upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy;<sup>12</sup> so he that scandalizeth his brother, or the church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended;<sup>13</sup> who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ps. 19:13; Luke 19:8; I Tim. 1:13, 15.

<sup>11</sup> Ps. 51:4-5, 7, 9, 14; Ps. 32:5-6.

<sup>12</sup> Prov. 28:13; I John 1:9.

<sup>13</sup> James 5:16; Luke 17:3-4; Josh. 7:19; Ps. 51.

<sup>14</sup> II Cor. 2:8.

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Chapter 16**

**GOOD WORKS**

# OF GOOD WORKS

- I. Good works are only such as God hath commanded in his holy word,<sup>1</sup> and not such as, without the warrant thereof, are devised by men out of blind zeal, or upon any pretence of good intention.<sup>2</sup>
  
- II. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith;<sup>3</sup> and by them believers manifest their thankfulness,<sup>4</sup> strengthen their assurance,<sup>5</sup> edify their brethren,<sup>6</sup> adorn the profession of the gospel,<sup>7</sup> stop the mouths of the adversaries,<sup>8</sup> and glorify God,<sup>9</sup> whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto;<sup>10</sup> that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end eternal life.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Micah 6:8; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 13:21.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 15:9; Isa. 29:13; I Pet. 1:18; Rom. 10:2; John 16:2; I Sam. 15:21-23.

<sup>3</sup> James 2:18, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 116:12-13; I Pet. 2:9.

<sup>5</sup> I John 2:3, 5; II Pet. 1:5-10.

<sup>6</sup> II Cor. 9:2; Matt. 5:16.

<sup>7</sup> Tit. 2:5, 9-12; I Tim. 6:1.

<sup>8</sup> I Pet. 2:15.

<sup>9</sup> I Pet. 2:12; Phil. 1:11; John 15:8.

<sup>10</sup> Eph. 2:10.

<sup>11</sup> Rom. 6:22.

III. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ.<sup>12</sup> And that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure;<sup>13</sup> yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.<sup>14</sup>

IV. They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> John 15:4-6; Ezek. 36:26-27.

<sup>13</sup> Phil. 2:13; Phil. 4:13; II Cor. 3:5.

<sup>14</sup> Phil. 2:12; Heb 6:11-12; II Pet. 1:3, 5, 10-11; Isa. 64:7; II Tim. 1:6; Acts 26:6-7; Jude 20-21.

<sup>15</sup> Luke 17:10; Neh. 13:22; Job 9:2-3; Gal. 5:17.

V. We cannot, by our best works, merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come, and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom by them we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins;<sup>16</sup> but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants;<sup>17</sup> and because, as they are good, they proceed from his Spirit;<sup>18</sup> and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.<sup>19</sup>

VI. Yet, notwithstanding, the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him;<sup>20</sup> not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unprovable in God's sight;<sup>21</sup> but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Rom. 3:20; Rom. 4:2, 4, 6; Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5-7; Rom. 8:18; Ps. 16:2; Job 22:2-3; Job 35: 7-8.

<sup>17</sup> Luke 17:10.

<sup>18</sup> Gal. 5:22-23.

<sup>19</sup> Isa. 64:6; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:15, 18; Ps. 143:2; Ps. 130:3.

<sup>20</sup> Eph. 1:6; I Pet. 2:5; Exod. 28:38; Gen. 4:4; with Heb. 11:4.

<sup>21</sup> Job 9:20; Ps. 143:2.

<sup>22</sup> Heb. 13:20-21; II Cor. 8:12; Heb. 6:10; Matt. 25:21, 23.

VII. Works done by unregenerate men, although, for the matter of them, they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others;<sup>23</sup> yet, because they proceed not from an heart purified by faith;<sup>24</sup> nor are done in a right manner, according to the word;<sup>25</sup> nor to a right end, the glory of God;<sup>26</sup> they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God.<sup>27</sup> And yet their neglect of them is more sinful, and displeasing unto God.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> II Kings 10:30-31; I Kings 21:27, 29; Phil. 1:15-16, 18.

<sup>24</sup> Gen. 4:5; with Heb. 11:4, 6.

<sup>25</sup> I Cor. 13:3; Isa. 1:12.

<sup>26</sup> Matt. 6:2, 5, 16.

<sup>27</sup> Hag. 2:14; Tit. 1:15; Amos 5:21-22; Hosea 1:4; Rom. 9:16; Tit. 3:5.

<sup>28</sup> Ps. 14:4; Ps. 36:3; Job 21:14-15; Matt. 25:41-43, 45; Matt. 23:23.

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Chapter 17**

**PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS**

# OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

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

II. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father;<sup>2</sup> upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ;<sup>3</sup> the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them;<sup>4</sup> and the nature of the covenant of grace,<sup>5</sup> from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Phil. 1:6; II Pet. 1:10; John 10:28-29; I John 3:9; I Pet. 1:5, 9.

<sup>2</sup> II Tim. 2:18-19; Jer. 31:3.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. 10:10, 14; Heb. 13:20-21; Heb. 9:12-15; Rom. 8:33-39; John 17:11, 24; Luke 22:32; Heb. 7:25.

<sup>4</sup> John 14:16-17; I John 2:27; I John 3:9.

<sup>5</sup> Jer. 32:40.

<sup>6</sup> John 10:28; II Thess. 3:3; I John 2:19.

III. Nevertheless they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins;<sup>7</sup> and for a time continue therein;<sup>8</sup> whereby they incur God's displeasure,<sup>9</sup> and grieve his Holy Spirit;<sup>10</sup> come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts;<sup>11</sup> have their hearts hardened,<sup>12</sup> and their consciences wounded;<sup>13</sup> hurt and scandalize others,<sup>14</sup> and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Matt. 26:70, 72, 74.

<sup>8</sup> Ps. 51[The Title]; Ps. 51:14.

<sup>9</sup> Isa. 64:5, 7, 9; II Sam. 11:27.

<sup>10</sup> Eph. 4:30.

<sup>11</sup> Ps. 51:8, 10, 12; Rev. 2:4; S. of Sol. 5:2-4, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Isa. 63:17; Mark 6:52; Mark 16:14.

<sup>13</sup> Ps. 32:3-4; Ps. 51:8.

<sup>14</sup> II Sam. 12:14.

<sup>15</sup> Ps. 89: 31-32; I Cor. 11:32.

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Chapter 18**

**ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND SALVATION**

# OF GRACE AND SALVATION

I. ALTHOUGH hypocrites, and other unregenerate men, may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and carnal presumptions of being in the favor of God and estate of salvation;<sup>1</sup> which hope of theirs shall perish:<sup>2</sup> yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace,<sup>3</sup> and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God; which hope shall never make them ashamed.<sup>4</sup>

II. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope;<sup>5</sup> but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation,<sup>6</sup> the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made,<sup>7</sup> the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God;<sup>8</sup> which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Job 8:13-14; Micah 3:11; Deut. 29:19; John 8:41.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 7:22-23.

<sup>3</sup> I John 2:3; I John 3:14, 18-19, 21,24; I John 5:13.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 5:2, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. 6:11, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. 6:17-18.

<sup>7</sup> II Pet. 1:4-5, 10-11; I John 2:3; I John 3:14; II Cor. 1:12.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 8:15-16.

<sup>9</sup> Eph. 1:13-14, Eph. 4:30; II Cor. 1:21-22.

III. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it;<sup>10</sup> yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto.<sup>11</sup> And therefore it is the duty of every one to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure;<sup>12</sup> that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience,<sup>13</sup> the proper fruits of this assurance: so far is it from inclining men to looseness.<sup>14</sup>

IV. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving of it; by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience, and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation; by God's withdrawing the light of his countenance, and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness, and to have no light;<sup>15</sup> yet are they never utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may in due time be revived,<sup>16</sup> and by the which, in the meantime, they are supported from utter despair.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> I John 5:13; Isa. 50:10; Mark 9:24; Ps. 88; Ps. 77:1-11.

<sup>11</sup> I Cor. 2:12; I John 4:13; Heb. 6:11-12; Eph. 3:17-19.

<sup>12</sup> II Pet. 1:10.

<sup>13</sup> Rom. 5:1-2, 5; Rom 14:17; Rom. 15:13; Eph. 1:3-4; Ps. 4:6-7; Ps. 119:32.

<sup>14</sup> I John 2:1-2; Rom. 6:1-2; Tit. 2:11-12, 14; I Cor. 7:1; Rom. 8:1, 12; I John 3:2-3; Ps. 130:4; I John 1:6-7.

<sup>15</sup> S. of Sol. 5:2-3, 6; Ps. 51:8, 12, 14; Eph. 4:30-31; Ps. 77:1-10; Matt. 26:69-72; Ps. 31:22; Ps. 88; Isa. 50:10.

<sup>16</sup> I John 3:9; Luke 22:32; Job 13:15; Ps. 73:15; Ps. 51:8, 12; Isa. 50:10.

<sup>17</sup> Micah 7:7-9; Jer. 32:40; Isa. 54:7-10; Ps 22:1; Ps. 88.

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Chapter 19**

**THE LAW OF GOD**



- III. Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances; partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits;<sup>4</sup> and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties.<sup>5</sup> All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament.<sup>6</sup>
- IV. To them also, as a body politic, he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require.<sup>7</sup>
- V. The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof;<sup>8</sup> and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God, the Creator who gave it.<sup>9</sup> Neither doth Christ in the gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Heb. 9; Heb. 10:1; Gal. 4:1-3; Col. 2:17.

<sup>5</sup> I Cor. 5:7; II Cor. 6:17; Jude 23.

<sup>6</sup> Col. 2:14, 16-17; Dan. 9:27; Eph. 2:15-16.

<sup>7</sup> Exod. 21; Exod. 22:1-28; Gen 49:10; with I Pet. 2:13-14; Matt. 5:17; with Matt. 5:38-39; I Cor. 9:8-10.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 13:8-10; Eph. 6:2; I John 2:3-4, 7-8.

<sup>9</sup> James 2:10-11.

<sup>10</sup> Matt. 5:17-19; James 2:8; Rom. 3:31.

VI. Although true believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned;<sup>11</sup> yet is it of great use to them, as well as to others; in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly;<sup>12</sup> discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts and lives;<sup>13</sup> so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin;<sup>14</sup> together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience.<sup>15</sup> It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin;<sup>16</sup> and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatened in the law.<sup>17</sup> The promises of it, in like manner, shew them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof,<sup>18</sup> although not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works:<sup>19</sup> so as a man's doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law, and not under grace.<sup>20</sup>

VII. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the gospel, but do sweetly comply with it;<sup>21</sup> the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the law requireth to be done.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Rom. 6:14; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:13; Gal. 4:4-5; Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1.

<sup>12</sup> Rom. 7:12, 22, 25; Ps. 119:4-6; I Cor. 7:19; Gal. 5:14, 16, 18-23.

<sup>13</sup> Rom. 7:7; Rom. 3:20.

<sup>14</sup> James 1:23-25; Rom. 7:9, 14, 24.

<sup>15</sup> Gal. 3:24; Rom. 7:24-25; Rom. 8:3-4.

<sup>16</sup> James 2:11; Ps. 119:101, 104, 128.

<sup>17</sup> Ezra 9:13-14; Ps. 89:30-34.

<sup>18</sup> Lev. 26:1-13; with II Cor. 6:16; Eph. 6:2-3; Ps. 37:11; with Matt. 5:5; Ps. 19:11.

<sup>19</sup> Gal. 2:16; Luke 17:10.

<sup>20</sup> Rom. 6:12, 14; I Pet. 3:8-12; with Ps. 34:12-16; Heb. 12:28-29.

<sup>21</sup> Gal. 3:21.

<sup>22</sup> Ezek. 36:27; Heb. 8:10; with Jer. 31:33.

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**(20) CHRISTIAN LIBERTY**

## Chapter 20: Christian Liberty

1. The liberty which Christ has purchased for believers under the Gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, and condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law;[1] and, in their being delivered from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, and dominion of sin;[2] from the evil of afflictions, the sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation;[3] as also, in their free access to God,[4] and their yielding obedience unto Him, not out of slavish fear, but a child-like love and willing mind.[5] All which were common also to believers under the law.[6] But, under the New Testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged, in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law, to which the Jewish Church was subjected;[7] and in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace,[8] and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than believers under the law did ordinarily partake of.[9]
  
2. God alone is Lord of the conscience,[10] and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are, in any thing, contrary to His Word; or beside it, if matters of faith, or worship.[11] So that, to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands, out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience:[12] and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.[13]

3. They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, do practice any sin, or cherish any lust, do thereby destroy the end of Christian liberty, which is, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.[14]

4. And because the powers which God has ordained, and the liberty which Christ has purchased are not intended by God to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another, they who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power, or the lawful exercise of it, whether it be civil or ecclesiastical, resist the ordinance of God.[15] And, for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices, as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity (whether concerning faith, worship, or conversation), or to the power of godliness; or, such erroneous opinions or practices, as either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ has established in the Church, they may lawfully be called to account,[16] and proceeded against, by the censures of the Church. and by the power of the civil magistrate.[17]

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Chapter 21**

**WORSHIP**

- I. The light of nature shows that there is a God, who has lordship and sovereignty over all, is good, and does good unto all, and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served, with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might.[1] But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture.[2]
  
- II. Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to Him alone;[3] not to angels, saints, or any other creature:[4] and, since the fall, not without a Mediator; nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.[5]
  
- III. Prayer, with thanksgiving, being one special part of religious worship,[6] is by God required of all men:[7] and, that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son,[8] by the help of His Spirit,[9] according to His will,[10] with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love and perseverance;[11] and, if vocal, in a known tongue.[12]

IV. Prayer is to be made for things lawful;[13] and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter:[14] but not for the dead,[15] nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death.[16]

V. The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear,[17] the sound preaching[18] and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith and reverence,[19] singing of psalms with grace in the heart;[20] as also, the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ, are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God:[21] beside religious oaths,[22] vows,[23] solemn fastings,[24] and thanksgivings upon special occasions,[25] which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in an holy and religious manner.[26]

VI. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the Gospel, either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed:[27] but God is to be worshipped everywhere,[28] in spirit and truth;[29] as, in private families[30] daily,[31] and in secret, each one by himself;[32] so, more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly or wilfully to be neglected, or forsaken, when God, by His Word or providence, calls thereunto.[33]

VII. As it is the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in His Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment binding all men in all ages, He has particularly appointed one day in seven, for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him:[34] which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week: and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week,[35] which, in Scripture, is called the Lord's Day,[36] and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian Sabbath.[37]

VIII. This Sabbath is to be kept holy unto the Lord when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations,[38] but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.[39]

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Chapter 22**

**LAWFUL OATHS AND VOWS**

- I. A lawful oath is part of religious worship, [1] wherein, upon just occasion, the person swearing solemnly calls God to witness what he asserts, or promises, and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he swears. [2]
  
- II. The name of God only is that by which men ought to swear, and therein it is to be used with all holy fear and reverence.[3] Therefore, to swear vainly, or rashly, by that glorious and dreadful Name; or, to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful, and to be abhorred.[4] Yet, as in matters of weight and moment, an oath is warranted by the Word of God, under the New Testament as well as under the old:[5] so a lawful oath, being imposed by lawful authority, in such matters, ought to be taken.[6]
  
- III. Whosoever takes an oath ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act, and therein to avouch nothing but what he is fully persuaded is the truth:[7] neither may any man bind himself by oath to anything but what is good and just, and what he believes so to be, and what he is able and resolved to perform.[8] Yet it is a sin to refuse an oath touching anything that is good and just, being imposed by lawful authority.[9]

- IV. An oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words, without equivocation, or mental reservation. [10] It cannot oblige to sin; but in anything not sinful, being taken, it binds to performance, although to a man's own hurt. [11] Not is it to be violated, although made to heretics, or infidels. [12]
- V. A vow is of the like nature with a promissory oath, and ought to be made with the like religious care, and to be performed with the like faithfulness. [13]
- VI. It is not to be made to any creature, but to God alone:[14] and that it may be accepted, it is to be made voluntarily, out of faith, and conscience of duty, in way of thankfulness for mercy received, or for the obtaining of what we want, whereby we more strictly bind ourselves to necessary duties: or, to other things, so far and so long as they may fitly conduce thereunto.[15]
- VII. No man may vow to do anything forbidden in the Word of God, or what would hinder any duty therein commanded, or which is not in his own power, and for the performance whereof he has no promise of ability from God.[16] In which respects, popish monastical vows of perpetual single life, professed poverty, and regular obedience, are so far from being degrees of higher perfection, that they are superstitious and sinful snares, in which no Christian may entangle himself.[17]

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Chapter 23**

**CIVIL MAGISTRATE**



III. Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the Word and sacraments; or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven;[5] yet he has authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administrated, and observed.[6] For the better effecting whereof, he has power to call synods, to be present at them and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God.[7]

IV. It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates,[8] to honor their persons,[9] to pay them tribute or other dues,[10] to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake.[11] Infidelity, or difference in religion, does not make void the magistrates' just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to them:[12] from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted,[13] much less has the Pope any power and jurisdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people; and, least of all, to deprive them of their dominions, or lives, if he shall judge them to be heretics, or upon any other pretence whatsoever.[14]

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Chapter 24**

**MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE**



- IV. Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden by the Word.[8] Nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any law of man or consent of parties, so as those persons may live together as man and wife.[9] The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred, nearer in blood than he may of his own: nor the woman of her husband's kindred, nearer in blood than of her own.[10]
- V. Adultery or fornication committed after a contract, being detected before marriage, gives just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract.[11] In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce and, after the divorce,[12] to marry another, as if the offending party were dead.[13]
- VI. Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God has joined together in marriage: yet, nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church, or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage:[14] wherein, a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed; and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills, and discretion, in their own case.[15]

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Chapter 25**

**THE CHURCH**

- I. The catholic or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that fills all in all.[1]
  
- II. The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation, as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion;[2] and of their children:[3] and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ,[4] the house and family of God,[5] out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.[6]
  
- III. Unto this catholic visible Church Christ has given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and does, by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto.[7]

- IV. This catholic Church has been sometimes more, sometimes less visible.[8] And particular Churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.[9]
- V. The purest Churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error;[10] and some have so degenerated, as to become no Churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan.[11] Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth to worship God according to his will.[12]
- VI. There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ.[13] Nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself, in the Church, against Christ and all that is called God.[14]