The

CONSTITUTION

of the

Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

The

CONSTITUTION

of the
Reformed Presbyterian Church
of North America

Being

Its Standards Subordinate to the Word of God

The Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms,
the Testimony, the Directory for Church Government,
the Book of Discipline, and the Directory
of Public Worship.

Together with
Official Vows
and Forms

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The Westminster Confession of Faith
(Adopted 1648)

and

The Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America
(Adopted August 1980)

In Parallel Columns

CONFESSION

TESTIMONY

Introduction

1. God's covenants are His gracious instruments for the accomplishment of His purpose that the creation should serve Him. The covenant character of revelation appears in all the Scripture and binds the sixty-six books together in one unified Word of God. It gives the two divisions of the Bible their names, the Old Testament and the New Testament, or Covenant (Jer. 31:31-33; Heb. 8:13). The covenant concept lies at the heart of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America*.

2. Covenant revelation began with God's first conversation with man. God made him ruler over all things, His servant and colaborer in achieving His purpose for the creation (Gen. 2:15). This covenant directed man's activity and promised him life through obedience to God's Word. Thus it was a "Covenant of Life" (*Shorter Catechism* 12), confirmed by the curse of death for disobedience. By work and rest,

after the pattern of his Creator, man was to demonstrate his dependence on God and his hope of final consummation of God's purpose. This covenant required man to respond to God to the full capacity of his being as the image of God.

3. When Adam broke the covenant by disobedience death came upon him and all mankind since they were included in the covenant. But God delayed the final sentence of death, and promised victory over Satan through the seed of the woman. Man's mandate to subdue the earth continued, but he must toil in grief under the curse that God placed upon the whole creation. God's purpose for creation would be accomplished through the Covenant of Grace.

4. The remainder of Scripture is the gradual unfolding of the Covenant of Grace through a series of covenants, each developing a particular element of the one preceding it and preparing for a more complete accomplishment. The call of the elect people, ultimately to include all nations, to live by faith in obedience was set forth in successive covenants made with Abraham, the nation of Israel, and David.

5. In the fulness of time God brought forth His Son, born of a virgin, of the seed of David. He obeyed the Covenant of Life on behalf of His people and offered Himself as a sacrifice to die, once for all, in their place and to appear for them on the throne of God in heaven. Thus Jesus obeyed as man, died for man and sat down in heaven

to rule over all things and bring His covenant people to share His throne and glory (Luke 22:30).

6. In the Covenant of Grace all men are called to repentance and obedience. By the grace of God through the merit of Christ and the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, God's people are saved, sanctified (Lev. 22:32; Heb. 2:11), and given one mind and heart to serve Him. Thus God is always reaching out to men. The covenant people are bound to one another in their Head, Jesus Christ. They are children of the covenant bearing witness corporately to His lordship over every sphere of their life. There is nothing outside of His dominion.

7. Israel frequently responded to God by covenanting with Him to live in faithfulness to the covenant given through Moses (Josh. 24), or to bring about reform after apostasy (2 Chron. 15:12; 29:10; 34:29-32; Neh. 9: 38). These were solemn agreements between the people and God that they would observe His revealed law in particular circumstances in their day (Neh. 9:38; 10:29). Though these are covenants, they are to be distinguished from the covenants given by God to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Israel, David and from the new covenant.

8. The whole creation is under God's covenant to accomplish His will through Christ, the Mediator, by the Holy Spirit (Gen. 9:9-16; Ps. 114; Jer. 33:20-21; Rom. 8:20-22).

Explanation

9. *The Westminster Confession of Faith* is one of the historic creeds of the Presbyterian and Reformed churches. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America believes that this *Confession* is based on, and subordinate to, Scripture. The truth it presents is of inestimable value for contemporary society.

10. However, changes in the application of truth are needed because of changing situations in each generation. Some current topics of vital importance for the Christian Church were unknown in the 17th century. Therefore, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America presents its *Testimony* applying Scripture truth to the contemporary situation. This *Testimony* is placed in a column parallel to that which contains the *Confession*.

11. Wherever applicable, to aid in the usefulness of these documents, notations are made at the heading of each chapter to the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms.* As a general rule, proof texts are provided for the positive statements, but not for the rejections.

12. All of these documents, the *Westminster Confession of Faith,* the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church,* and the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms,* are of equal authority in the church; except that where noted, earlier documents are to be interpreted by the later ones.

Chapter 1: Of the Holy Scripture

(Larger Catechism: 2-5; Shorter Catechism: 2-3)

1. Although the light of nature and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men unexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of His will, which is necessary unto salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal Himself, and to declare that His will unto His Church; and afterwards, for the better preserving and

1. God has revealed Himself in His works, called natural or general revelation, and His Word, called special revelation. This self-revelation contains all that man needs to know about God. The revelation of God in His works is clear, but it does not make known the covenant purposes of God. Hence, God began, from the creation of man, to make known the covenant relationship He had established between Himself and man. These matters could not have become known to man except by special (verbal) revelation.
1 Cor. 2:9; Gen. 1:28; Gen. 2:16-17; Rom. 1:19-20.

2. These two forms of revelation, His works and His Word, are complementary. Any apparent obscurity of either of them, or alleged confusion or contradiction between them, arises from the natural limitations of man, and especially from his sinful state of rebellion against God, and the resultant curse of God upon him and the whole creation. The Scripture reveals that both the works of God and the written Word of God have been spoken into being by the Son, the living Word of God, the Creator, who also, as the incarnate Mediator and risen Savior continues to uphold the universe by His powerful Word.
Ps. 19; Job 38-41; Ps. 139:6; Rom. 1: 19-32; John 1:1-3; Heb. 1:1-3.

3. The revelation of God's works can

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: which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people being now ceased.
Rom. 2:14-15; Rom. 1:19-20; Ps. 19: 1-3; Rom. 1:32 with 2:1; 1 Cor. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:13-14; Heb. 1:1; Prov. 22:19-21; Luke 1:3-4; Rom. 15:4; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; Isa. 8:19-20; 2 Tim. 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:19; Heb. 1:1-2.

be rightly understood only in the light of the written Word.
1 Cor. 1:21.

4. The living Word became man, Jesus Christ. In His life, death and resurrection He fulfilled the covenant broken by man's disobedience and did most completely reveal God and His purpose for man. The Son makes the Father known to man; yet the Son is not known by man except by the Spirit through the Scripture. Hence, the Scripture is the final word of God to man for faith and life.
Matt. 11:27; John 1:18; John 14:24-26; 1 Cor. 2:10-13.

5. God gave His written revelation progressively by holy men whom He chose, and inspired and infallibly guided to write inerrantly and completely the revelation of His will. No further such revelation is to be received. The human authors with differing skills expressed themselves in the peculiar idioms and a variety of literary forms common to their times. They used human sources of historical information and they recorded interpretations of those events and prophecies concerning the future that God revealed to them. In all they wrote, however, they were guided by the Holy Spirit as to matter and manner so that their writings are indeed the Word of God.
Gen. 2:4; Gen. 5:1; Gen. 6:9; 1 Kings 11:41; 1 Kings 14:29; 2 Sam. 23:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21; Jer. 36:32.

6. *We reject* any view of Scripture that denies the objective truth of the Bible

by making the authority of its message dependent on the circumstances or the subjective experience of the reader.

7. *We reject* the notion that the process of revelation was a mechanical one in which the writers were reduced to mere stenographers.

8. *We also reject* all theories of composition that make the writers mere editors or collectors of human tradition and liturgy, so that their writings are but human accounts or interpretations of religious development under God.

9. *We reject* the teaching that prophecy is history written after the event.

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

Of the Old Testament:

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

Of the New Testament:

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

All which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.
Luke 16:29, 31; Eph. 2:20; Rev. 22: 18-19; 2 Tim. 3:16.

3. The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings.
Luke 24:27, 44; Rom. 3:2; 2 Pet. 1:21.

4. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God.
2 Pet. 1:19, 21; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 John 5: 9; 1 Thess. 2:13.

5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to a

10. The Old Testament is the word of Christ and is of equal authority with the New Testament. Nor are the earthly words of Christ quoted in the Scriptures in any way of greater authority or of greater significance to the Church than the rest of God's Word. It is the triune God who speaks with equal and absolute authority in and through every part of Scripture.

11. The truthfulness of God, and not the reasonableness of any doctrine, is

high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. 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.
1 Tim. 3:15; 1 John 2:20, 27; John 16: 13-14; 1 Cor. 2:10-12; Isa. 59:21.

the ground of our faith. It is the work of the Gospel to cast down reasonings against the knowledge of God, and to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.
1 Cor. 2:15; 2 Cor. 10:5.

12. *We reject* the view that the Bible sets forth truth in the form of myth.

6. The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. 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: 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.

13. *We reject* the view that the Bible is only partially inspired, that inspiration pertains only to "revelational" matters, or "saving" truth, or that the Bible as originally given contains any inaccuracy in fact or history.

14. *We reject* the view that the Holy Spirit gives personal revelations or that He leads men apart from the general principles of the Word or contrary to its teachings.

15. *We reject* the concept that there is continuing revelation of God in the actions, decisions or decrees of the Church.

2 Tim. 3:15-17; Gal. 1:8-9; 2 Thess. 2: 2; John 6:45; 1 Cor. 2:9-12; 1 Cor. 11: 13-14; 1 Cor. 14:26, 40.

7. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all: 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.
2 Pet. 3:16; Ps. 119:105, 130.

16. There are in the Scripture doctrines which unassisted reason could never have discovered; and yet, when revealed, are perfectly intelligible by the human mind. Other doctrines are taught in Scripture which human reason cannot fully comprehend and which must be received on the authority of God.
Isa. 40:13; 1 Cor. 1:20; Ps. 119:130; 1 Cor. 2:6-16.

17. *We reject* any suggestion that God uses human reason on a level with Scripture to reveal His truth.

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

18. Bible translations must combine faithfulness to the original text with the idiom of the native language, and thus will always be imperfect. The Church is responsible to examine the documents available to determine as far as possible what was originally written, and to study the translations as to their accuracy in conveying the meaning of the original, and to advise the public concerning them. Paraphrases, which interpret rather than translate, must be used with great caution.

Scriptures, may have hope.
Matt. 5:18; Isa. 8:20; Acts 15:15; John 5:39, 46; 1 Cor. 14:6, 9, 11-12, 24, 27-28; Col. 3:16; Rom. 15:4.

9. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one) it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.
2 Pet. 1:20-21; Acts 15:15-16.

10. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined; and in whose sentence we are to rest; can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.
Matt. 22:29, 31; Eph. 2:20 with Acts 28:25.

19. All men have the right to read the Bible, to inquire into its meaning, and to adopt the doctrines it teaches. In studying the Bible men must depend upon the illumination of the Holy Spirit. They must use God-given human faculties and search in earnest for the truth, in submission to the authority of Scripture. In interpreting the Bible consideration must be given to the historical situation in which the passage was written, to the grammatical structure, and to the literary form. The instruction and counsel of fellow believers, of teachers of the Word, and creeds and confessions of the Church should be given due consideration. When men understand the message of the Bible, they must earnestly seek to obey that message in all that they think and do.
Acts 2:42; John 5:39; 2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11.

Chapter 2: Of God, and of the Holy Trinity

(Larger Catechism: 7-11; Shorter Catechism: 4-6)

1. There is but one only, living, and true God: who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according

1. The true God is revealed in Scripture. Any concept of God, however sincerely held, that is contrary to Scripture is false, and in the end idolatrous. A knowledge of the true God is essential to saving faith.
Rom. 10:14-17; Isa. 44:6, 10-17; Acts 17:22-29.

to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; and withal, most just and terrible in His judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.
Deut. 6:4, 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; 1 Thess. 1:9; Jer. 10:10; Job 11:7-9; Job 26:14; John 4:24; 1 Tim. 1:17; Deut. 4:15-16; John 4:24 with Luke 24:39; Acts 14:11, 15; Jas. 1:17; Mal. 3:6; 1 Kings 8:27; Jer. 23:23-24; Ps. 90:2; 1 Tim. 1:17; Ps. 145:3; Gen. 17:1; Rev. 4:8; Rom. 16:27; Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8; Ps. 115:3; Ex. 3:14; Eph. 1:11; Prov. 16:4; Rom. 11:36; 1 John 4:8, 16; Ex. 34:6-7; Heb. 11:6; Neh. 9:32-33; Ps. 5:5-6; Nah. 1:2-3; Ex. 34:7.

2. God hath all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, 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; and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatsoever Himself pleaseth. In His sight all things are open and manifest; His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to Him contingent, or uncertain. He is most holy in all His counsels, in all His works, and in all His commands. To Him is due from angels and men, and every other

2. *We reject* any teaching which denies or obscures the difference between God the Creator and man the creature or the rest of creation.
Rom. 1:23-25; Acts 5:3-4.

creature, whatsoever worship, service or obedience He is pleased to require of them.
John 5:26; Acts 7:2; Ps. 119:68; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rom. 9:5; Acts 17:24-25; Job 22: 2-3; Rom. 11:36; Rev. 4:11; 1 Tim. 6: 15; Dan. 4:25, 35; Heb. 4:13; Rom. 11: 33-34; Ps. 147:5; Acts 15:18; Ezek. 11:5; Ps. 145:17; Rom. 7:12; Rev. 5:12-14.

3. In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding: the Son is eternally begotten of the Father: the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.
1 John 5:7; Matt. 3:16-17; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 1:14, 18; John 15: 26; Gal. 4:6.

3. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are equally to be worshipped by angels and men.
Phil. 2:9-10; Heb. 1:2-3, 6, 8; 2 Cor. 13:14.

4. The doctrine of the Trinity is knowable only by special revelation. It is not possible for an explanation or comparison from any other source to serve as a true representation of this doctrine.
Isa. 40:18; Isa. 46:5; 1 Cor. 2:10-13; John 1:18.

5. *We reject* any teaching which subordinates any person of the Godhead as to substance, power or glory.
John 1:1-2; Acts 5:3-4.

6. The Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is truly God, of the same substance, equal in power and glory with the Father and the Son. He is to be believed in, loved, obeyed and worshipped by men in all ages.
2 Cor. 13:14; John 14:26; Matt. 28:19; Luke 1:35; Heb. 10:29; Rev. 22:17; Eph. 2:18-22; John 16:7; Gal. 4:6; Acts 5:3-4; Acts 16:6-7; Mark 3:29; Rom. 8:26-27; 1 John 2:20-27.

7. The Holy Spirit, as the giver of life, is everywhere present and makes manifest the grace of God toward all His creatures. He supplies man's powers of reason and conscience, restrains his disposition toward evil, and preserves a degree of justice and morality in society. His common work for all mankind does not regenerate but leaves those who reject God without excuse.
Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30; Job 34:14-15; Gen. 6:3; Isa. 32:15-17; Rom. 1:20.

8. The special work of the Holy Spirit is to apply to the elect the redeeming benefits of Christ's atonement. The outward and ordinary means through which He communicates the knowledge of redemption is the written Word, in which is infallibly recorded the will of God for man's salvation. He prepares for the reception of the Word and accompanies it with His persuasive power. He regenerates the elect by His grace, convicts them of sin, moves them to repentance and persuades and enables them to embrace Christ through faith. In regeneration He works secretly, supernaturally and effectually. This work is in itself so distinct and necessary, that without it, no evidence of the truth of the Gospel, no power of argument, no persuasion of love or of terror, no human eloquence, no combination of the most favorable circumstances, can be effectual in producing salvation.
John 3:1-8; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Sam. 23:2; John 7:39; John 16:13; Titus 3:5; Ezek. 36:27; 1 John 4:2; Gal. 4:6; 2 Thess. 2:13.

9. The Holy Spirit in uniting all believers to Christ, dwells in them as

their Comforter, guiding, teaching and performing in them all those gracious activities by which they are sanctified and sealed unto the day of redemption. His guidance and teaching cannot contradict anything written in God's Word, but makes known the will of God to His people through prayer and submission to the Word.
Rom. 8:14, 26-27; 1 Cor. 2:12-16; Eph. 4:30; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rom. 15:4; John 16:5-11.

10. *We reject* the teaching that inner light, dreams, visions or charismatic gifts provide a new, more advanced or infallible revelation of God.

11. The sin against the Holy Spirit which will not be forgiven, commonly called the unpardonable sin, is the final—secret or open—rejection of His testimony concerning Jesus Christ. It is a sin unto death, because it is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and because, by its very nature, it is the willful and persistent rejection of the only hope of forgiveness through the Savior. On the other hand, the fear of having committed this sin, together with an earnest desire for fellowship with God in Christ, give evidence that this sin has not been committed.
1 Thess. 5:19; Acts 7:51; Heb. 10:26-29; Matt. 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12: 8-10; 1 Cor. 12:3; 1 John 5:16; Heb. 6: 4-6; 1 John 2:22; 1 John 4:3; Isa. 50: 10; 1 John 1:7; Heb. 6:9-11.

12. The Holy Spirit, abiding in believers, unites them to Christ the Head, and to one another in the Church which is His body. He imparts various gifts and graces to all her members that

they may serve Christ. He calls and fits His servants for their work, and qualifies all officers of the Church for their particular tasks. He makes effective the Word and the ordinances of the Gospel. By Christ working through His Spirit, the Church will be preserved, increased, purified, and, at last, made perfectly holy in the presence of God to all eternity.
Eph. 2:14-18; Eph. 4:1-5; Acts 2:4; 1 Cor. 12; Acts 13:2; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; 1 Thess. 1:5-6; John 20:22-23; Matt. 16: 18; Matt. 28:19-20.

13. *We reject* the view that the work of the Holy Spirit is limited to individuals.
Rev. 2:11.

14. *We reject* the teaching that some true believers have not received the Holy Spirit.

15. *We reject* the teaching that particular charismatic gifts such as those of tongues and of healing are normal or necessary signs of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 3: Of God's Eternal Decree

(Larger Catechism: 12-14; Shorter Catechism: 7-8)

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: yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of

1. *We reject* any teaching which asserts that God has not planned all that comes to pass.

sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.
Eph. 1:11; Rom. 11:33; Heb. 6:17; Rom. 9:15, 18; Jas. 1:13, 17; 1 John 1:5; Acts 2:23; Matt. 17:12; Acts 4:27-28; John 19:11; Prov. 16:33.

2. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions, yet hath He not decreed anything because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.
Acts 15:18; 1 Sam. 23:11-12; Matt. 11: 21, 23; Rom. 9:11, 13, 16, 18.

2. It is God's decree which by itself completely determines the course of history; it is never the course of history which in any way determines or modifies God's decree.

3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.
1 Tim. 5:21; Matt. 25:41; Rom. 9:22-23; Eph. 1:5-6; Prov. 16:4.

4. These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.
2 Tim. 2:19; John 13:18.

5. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory, 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: and all to the praise of His glorious grace.
Eph. 1:4, 9, 11; Rom. 8:30; 2 Tim. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:9; Rom. 9:11, 13, 16; Eph. 1:4, 9; Eph. 1:6, 12.

6. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.
1 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 1:4-5; Eph. 2:10; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Thess. 5:9-10; Titus 2:14; Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:5; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:5; John 17:9; Rom. 8:28-39; John 6:64-65; John 10:26; John 8:47; 1 John 2:19.

7. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath, for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.
Matt. 11:25-26; Rom. 9:17-18, 21-22; 2 Tim. 2:19-20; Jude 1:4; 1 Pet. 2:8.

8. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with

3. *We reject* the teaching that God is unjust in choosing some sinners to salvation and leaving others to suffer merited condemnation.

special prudence and care, that men attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God, and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.
Rom. 9:20; Rom. 11:33; Deut. 29:29; 2 Pet. 1:10; Eph. 1:6; Rom. 11:33; Rom. 11:5-6, 20; 2 Pet. 1:10; Rom. 8:33; Luke 10:20.

Chapter 4: Of Creation

(Larger Catechism: 1, 15-17; Shorter Catechism: 1, 9-10)

1. It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, 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.
Heb. 1:2; John 1:2-3; Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; Job 33:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer. 10:12; Ps. 104:24; Ps. 33:5-6; Gen. 1; Heb. 11:3; Col. 1:16; Acts 17:24.

1. The account of creation in Genesis 1 and 2 is history, not mythology.
Heb. 11:3.

2. Since all things were created and exist according to the will of God they are controlled in purpose and duration by the same will.
Rev. 4:11; 2 Pet. 3:3-13.

2. After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after His own image; having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to

3. The theory of evolution which assumes that chance happenings are an explanation of the origin and development of matter and living things is unscriptural. God created various kinds of living forms with tremendous potential for variation. The increase of varieties

fulfil it: and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.
Gen. 1:27; Gen. 2:7 with Eccl. 12:7, and Luke 23:43, and Matt. 10:28; Gen. 1: 26; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Rom. 2:14-15; Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 3:6; Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 2: 17; Gen. 3:8-11, 23; Gen. 1:26, 28.

which has occurred is within genetic limitations provided at creation.
Gen. 1:11, 20, 27; Gen. 2:2.

4. *We deny* that man evolved from any lower form of life.
Gen. 2:7, 21-22.

5. *We reject* all theories of continuing creation.
Gen. 2:2.

6. God created man and woman as His image bearers to complement one another. Scripture describes the responsibilities of each and their proper relationship to one another. Distinctions between the sexes do not imply superiority or inferiority of persons. Family life and social order become disrupted when these distinctions are confused or ignored.
Gen. 2:20-24; Eph. 5:21-33; Rom. 1: 26-27.

7. God made man ruler over His creation in a covenant relationship with Himself in order to glorify His name. As ruler, man was not created to be his own law-maker, but is subject to the covenant. Since the fall man continues to fulfill the creation mandate. Through Christ's redemptive reign over all things the gracious purposes of God for the whole creation are being accomplished through men, sinful though they are.
Gen. 1:26-2:5; Gen. 3:17-19; Heb. 2: 5-9; Eph. 1:20-23.

8. Man is steward of the creation and should treat his resources of material wealth, environment, health, energy

and talents as gifts of God, for which he must give account.
Gen. 1:26; Ps. 8:6; Gen. 2:15-17; Heb. 2:5-9; 1 Cor. 4:2; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11; 1 Pet. 4:10-11.

9. *We reject* any view of man's relationship to his environment which either leads to his irresponsible exploitation of, or denies his proper dominion over, the earth.

10. The whole creation now groans because of man's sin. It, along with man, will be delivered from corruption at the consummation of all things.
Rom. 8:21-22.

Economics

11. The Scriptures teach that everything belongs to God; that the authority and power to obtain and use goods are given by God; and that men are to seek God's glory in the use of their goods. The Scriptures direct how goods are to be obtained and used. No existing economic system incorporates all these teachings.
1 Cor. 10:26; Deut. 8:18; 2 Chron. 1: 12; Luke 12:13-21; Ps. 112; Acts 5:4; 1 Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19; Jas. 4:13.

12. *We reject* Marxist communism because of its doctrines of atheism, necessary class struggle, economic determinism, dialectical materialism, and the inherent illegitimacy of private property.

13. *We reject* that form of capitalism which holds that men possess absolute property rights and that the state

has no right to protect the weak and restrain evil in economic affairs.

14. *We reject* that form of socialism which denies the right to own property. We warn against the concentration of economic power in the hands of the state, as it tends to deprive men of the due reward of their labor.
Deut. 17:14-20; 1 Sam. 8:10-18.

15. The Scriptures require the Christian to exercise stewardship over his possessions. In view of that requirement, he should contribute gladly to the Lord's work and give generously to the poor and needy. Under the old covenant the Lord required the practice of tithing. Recognizing the greater blessings under the new covenant and the fact that Christ endorsed tithing, the Christian should respond out of love by giving at least as great a proportion of his income to the Lord's work through the Church.
Deut. 26:12-15; Mal. 3:10; Matt. 23:23.

16. The Church, regardless of the economic system under which it exists, has the duty to speak against social evils such as oppression of the poor. The Church must never become the instrument of any powerful exploiting class.
Amos 8:4-7; Isa. 5:8; Gal. 2:10; Prov. 14:21, 31; 1 John 3:17; Luke 18:22; Ps. 35:10; Ps. 41:1; Ps. 82:4.

17. To possess wealth is not in itself sinful, but men should resist the temptation to accumulate wealth by exploiting others or for sinful purposes.
Mic. 2:2; 1 Cor. 10:24; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19.

Chapter 5: Of Providence

(Larger Catechism: 18-20, 141-142; Shorter Catechism: 11-12)

1. God the great Creator of all things doth 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 fore-knowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will, to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, goodness and mercy.
Heb. 1:3; Dan. 4:34-35; Ps. 135:6; Acts 17:25-26, 28; Job 38—41; Matt. 10:29-31; Prov. 15:3; Ps. 104:24; Ps. 145:17; Acts 15:18; Ps. 94:8-11; Eph. 1:11; Ps. 33:10-11; Isa. 63:14; Eph. 3:10; Rom. 9:17; Gen. 45:7; Ps. 145:7.

1. *We reject* all theories of the continuation or dissolution of the universe due to any other cause than the will of the Creator.

2. God's providence should lead the believer to be patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity, resting confidently in his Lord. He is to seek to understand the meaning and purpose of God's dealings with him in the light of the Word of God.
Deut. 29:29; 1 Thess. 5:18; 2 Cor. 1: 3-5; Amos 4:6-12.

2. Although, in relation to the fore-knowledge and decree of God, the first Cause, all things come to pass immutably, and infallibly: yet, by the same providence, He ordereth them to fall out, according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.
Acts 2:23; Gen. 8:22; Jer. 31:35; Ex. 21:13 with Deut. 19:5; 1 Kings 22:28, 34; Isa. 10:6-7.

3. *We reject* the belief that God does not exercise His providence in all parts of His creation, and in all actions of His creatures; or that some areas of life are controlled by so-called luck or chance.
Amos 3:6.

3. God in His ordinary providence maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them at His pleasure.
Acts 27:31, 44; Isa. 55:10-11; Hos. 2:21-22; Hos. 1:7; Matt. 4:4; Job 34:20; Rom. 4:19-21; 2 Kings 6:6; Dan. 3:27.

4. Gambling is a sin against God because it denies His providential care and increases dependence on the erroneous notion of luck or chance. It involves and encourages greed and the desire to get something for nothing at the expense of others. Its satanic character is demonstrated in the way it obsesses individuals. Some

examples of unwarranted gambling the Christian should avoid are lotteries, bingo for gain, wagerings, raffles and bets. Many of the same objections may be brought against sweepstakes, door prizes, drawings and other similar practices. The Church should testify against the dependence of public agencies on revenues derived from gambling sources.
2 Thess. 3:9-10; Prov. 15:27; Prov. 16: 33; Ex. 20:15, 17; 1 Tim. 6:9-11.

4. The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in His providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men; and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath 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 proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God, who, being most holy and righteous, neither is, nor can be, the author or approver of sin.
Rom. 11:32-34; 2 Sam. 24:1 with 1 Chron. 21:1; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 1 Chron. 10:4, 13-14; 2 Sam. 16:10; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28; Acts 14:16; Ps. 76:10; 2 Kings 19:28; Gen. 50:20; Isa. 10:6-7, 12; Jas. 1:13-14, 17; 1 John 2:16; Ps. 50:21.

5. The most wise, righteous, and gracious God doth oftentimes leave for a season His own children to manifold temptations, and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption, and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they

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 ends.
2 Chron. 32:25-26, 31; 2 Sam. 24:1; 2 Cor. 12:7-9; Ps. 73; Ps. 77:1-12; Mark 14:66-72 with John 21:15-17.

6. As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as a righteous Judge, for former sins doth blind and harden, from them He not only withholdeth His grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings, and wrought upon in their hearts; but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasions 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 useth for the softening of others.
Rom. 1:24, 26, 28; Rom. 11:7-8; Deut. 29:4; Matt. 13:12; Matt. 25:29; Deut. 2:30; 2 Kings 8:12-13; Ps. 81:11-12; 2 Thess. 2:10-12; Ex. 7:3 with Ex. 8:15, 32; 2 Cor. 2:15-16; Isa. 8:14; 1 Pet. 2: 7-8; Isa. 6:9-10 with Acts 28:26-27.

7. As the providence of God doth in general reach to all creatures, so after a most special manner it taketh care of His Church, and disposeth all things to the good thereof.
1 Tim. 4:10; Amos 9:8-9; Rom. 8:28; Isa. 43:3-5, 14.

5. Satan has power in the world which includes predictions of the future, signs and wonders that deceive, and possession of persons. Satan often duplicates that which belongs to God even to the establishment of churches that serve him. Therefore Christians are to flee the working of Satan in such things as fortune telling, horoscopes, astrology, palmistry, witchcraft, conjurings, seances, drug experiences and Satan worship.
2 Kings 23:24; Acts 16:16; Eph. 6:12; Lev. 20:27; 1 Pet. 5:8-9; Dan. 4:7; Isa. 47:12-15; Deut. 18:10-14; 2 Thess. 2: 8-10; Rev. 2:11.

Chapter 6
Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment Thereof

(Larger Catechism: 21-29; 149-152; Shorter Catechism: 13-19; 82-84)

1. Our first parents, being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory.
Gen. 3:13; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rom. 11:32.

2. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.
Gen. 3:6-8; Eccl. 7:29; Rom. 3:23; Gen. 2:17; Eph. 2:1; Titus 1:15; Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-19.

3. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.
Gen. 1:27-28, and Gen. 2:16-17, and Acts 17:26 with Rom. 5:12, 15-19, and 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 49; Ps. 51:5; Gen. 5:3; Job 14:4; Job 15:14.

4. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.
Rom. 5:6; Rom. 8:7; Rom. 7:18; Col. 1: 21; Gen. 6:5; Gen. 8:21; Rom. 3:10-12; Jas. 1:14-15; Eph. 2:2-3; Matt. 15:19.

1. This corruption of man's nature is commonly called total depravity. Two examples in the Scripture demonstrate that being human is not equivalent to being sinful—that of Adam before the fall and of Christ in His human nature. Since the fall every part of man's nature is affected by sin. His understanding is darkened; he is motivated by wrong

principles, is rebellious and wholly unable of his own will to love God or to obtain salvation. Natural men are not equally evil, nor as evil as they might be. They may conform to some human standards of goodness.
Heb. 4:15; Gen. 6:5; Rom. 5:12-17; Rom. 8:7; Rom. 3:23; Rom. 7:18; Eph. 4:18; Gen. 3:22; Mark 10:20.

5. This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be, through Christ, pardoned and mortified, yet both itself and all the motions thereof are truly and properly sin.
1 John 1:8, 10; Rom. 7:14, 17-18, 23; Jas. 3:2; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 7:5, 7-8, 25; Gal. 5:17.

6. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner; whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.
1 John 3:4; Rom. 2:15; Rom. 3:9, 19; Eph. 2:3; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 4:18; Rom. 8:20; Lam. 3:39; Matt. 25: 41; 2 Thess. 1:9.

2. Every man was created in the image of God. His life, therefore, whether he is regenerate or unregenerate, should be recognized as having value to himself, to society, and to God.
Prov. 16:4; Gen. 9:5-6; Matt. 10:29-31; Gen. 1:27; Rom. 5:7-8; Acts 17:24-29; Rom. 9:20-24.

Chapter 7: Of God's Covenant with Man

(Larger Catechism: 30-36; Shorter Catechism: 16-20)

1. The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto Him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of Him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which He hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.
Isa. 40:13-17; Job 9:32-33; 1 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.

2. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.
Gal. 3:12; Rom. 10:5; Rom. 5:12-20; Gen. 2:17; Gal. 3:10.

3. Man by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace; wherein He freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him that they may be saved, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.
Gal. 3:21; Rom. 8:3; Rom. 3:20-21; Gen. 3:15; Isa. 42:6; Mark 16:15-16; John 3: 16; Rom. 10:6, 9; Gal. 3:11; Ezek. 36: 26-27; John 6:44-45.

1. *We reject* the teaching that Adam was not a covenant head and representative of all his descendants. *We reject* the view that Adam's headship involves any injustice.

2. By this principle of covenant headship the guilt and penalty of sin come upon all men by Adam's one sin; and by the obedience of Christ, the second covenant head, righteousness and life come upon all men who believe.
Rom. 5:12-21.

3. The Covenant of Works has not been revoked. All men remain under its requirement of perfect obedience and will have to give account according to it at the last judgment. In the Covenant of Grace Jesus Christ has fulfilled the requirements of the Covenant of Works for His people. By His death Christ secured the delay of the full penalty of death for sin (the

second death, Rev. 20:14-15) for all men. They therefore may enjoy the creation and have some fruitful toil in it for God's glory, even though they be rebellious against Him. This is usually called common grace.
Heb. 12:14; 2 Cor. 5:10, 21; Col. 1:16-20; 1 Cor. 8:6; Gen. 4:20-24; Ps. 76:10.

4. This covenant of grace is frequently set forth in 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.
Heb. 9:15-17; Heb. 7:22; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25.

5. This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel: under the law, it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all fore-signifying Christ to come: 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, by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called, the Old Testament.
2 Cor. 3:6-9; Heb. 8—10; Rom. 4:11; Col. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Cor. 10:1-4; Heb. 11:13; John 8:56; Gal. 3:7-9, 14.

6. Under the gospel, when Christ, the substance, 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

4. *We reject* the concept that God extends grace to any man apart from the atoning work of Christ.
Isa. 45:1-4 with Rom. 3:21-26; Acts 17:30-31.

5. By the Covenant of Grace, God brings the elect into fellowship with Himself. This fellowship begins in this life when man repents and believes in Jesus Christ; it is a fuller fellowship when at death men depart to be with Christ; and it will be made perfect when believers shall be raised up in glory.
1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:52.

Lord's Supper: 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, to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles; and is called the New Testament. There are not therefore two covenants of grace, differing in substance, but one and the same, under various dispensations.
Col. 2:17; Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25; Heb. 12:22-28; Jer. 31:33-34; Matt. 28:19; Eph. 2:15-19; Luke 22:20; Gal. 3:14, 16; Rom. 3:21-23, 30; Ps. 32:1 with Rom. 4:3, 6, 16-17, 23-24; Heb. 13:8; Acts 15:11.

6. *We reject* the teaching that God will reinstate the temple and its rites and ceremonies.
Heb. 9:1-10, 28.

7. *We reject* the teaching that salvation is or has been available in any way other than by the grace offered and confirmed in Christ.
Rom. 3:20-26; Acts 4:12.

Chapter 8: Of Christ the Mediator

(Larger Catechism: 32-55, 57; Shorter Catechism: 21-28)

1. It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man; the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Saviour of His Church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world: unto whom He did from all eternity give a people, to be His seed, and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.
Isa. 42:1; 1 Pet. 1:19-20; John 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:5; Acts 3:22; Heb. 5:5-6; Ps. 2:6; Luke 1:33; Eph. 5:23; Heb. 1:2; Acts 17:31; John 17:6; Ps. 22:30; Isa. 53:10; 1 Tim. 2:6; Isa. 55:4-5; 1 Cor. 1:30.

1. Jesus Christ, as Mediator, governs all creatures and all their actions for His own glory. Submission is due to Him from all men and angels. All men, in every possible relation and condition, are under obligation to promote His gracious purposes according to His law. The holy angels minister, under His direction, to the heirs of salvation.
Eph. 1:20-22; Heb. 2:8; Phil. 2:9-11; Ps. 2; Heb. 1:4.

2. The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of

2. Jesus Christ, as Head over all things for the sake of the Church, rules in perfect wisdom and justice over all parts of His creation including wicked

time was come, take upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance. 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. Which person is very God, and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.
John 1:1, 14; 1 John 5:20; Phil. 2:6; Gal. 4:4; Heb 2:14, 16-17; Heb. 4:15; Luke 1:27, 31, 35; Gal 4:4; Luke 1:35; Col. 2:9; Rom. 9:5; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 1:3-4; 1 Tim. 2:5.

men and devils. He makes them, and all their counsels and efforts, serve God's glory in the plan of redemption. Rom. 8:28; Eph. 1:22-23; John 17:1-5; Luke 9:26.

3. *We reject* any teaching that denies or obscures the truth that Jesus is both God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever.

3. The Lord Jesus, in His human nature thus united to the divine, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit, above measure, having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell; to the end that, being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth, He might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a Mediator and Surety. Which office He took not unto Himself, but was thereunto called by His Father, who put all power and judgment into His hand, and gave Him commandment to execute the same.
Ps. 45:7; John 3:34; Col. 2:3; Col. 1:19; Heb. 7:26; John 1:14; Acts 10:38; Heb. 12:24; Heb. 7:22; Heb. 5:4-5; John 5: 22, 27; Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:36.

4. *We reject* any teaching that would place any mediator between Christ and man.

4. This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake; which that He

5. It is in the office of Mediator that Christ fulfills and applies the Covenant

might discharge, He was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfil it, endured most grievous torments immediately in His soul, and most painful sufferings in His body; was crucified, and died; was buried, and remained under the power of death; yet saw no corruption. On the third day He arose from the dead, with the same body in which He suffered, with which also He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of His Father, making intercession, and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world.
Ps. 40:7-8 with Heb. 10:5-10; John 10: 18; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 4:4; Matt. 3:15; Matt. 5:17; Matt. 26:37-38; Luke 22:44; Matt. 27:46; Matt. 26—27; Phil. 2:8; Acts 2:23-24, 27; Acts 13:37; Rom. 6:9; 1 Cor. 15: 3-4; John 20:25, 27; Mark 16:19; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; Heb. 7:25; Rom. 14: 9-10; Acts 1:11; Acts 10:42; Matt. 13: 40-42; Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4.

5. The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience, and sacrifice of Himself, which He, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of His Father; and purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him.
Rom. 5:19; Heb. 9:14, 16; Heb 10:14; Eph. 5:2; Rom. 3:25-26; Dan. 9:24, 26; Col. 1:19-20; Eph. 1:11, 14; John 17:2; Heb. 9:12, 15.

of Grace, and in doing so, accomplishes the Covenant of Works.
Heb. 1:3; Heb. 2:5-9; Col. 1:16-20; Rev. 21:24-27.

6. *We reject* the teaching that all men already are in Christ and have been redeemed by Him, whether they realize it or not.

7. Christ did not lay down His life to atone for the sins of all mankind, nor for an indefinite number of sinners. His sacrifice was indeed sufficient to save the whole world, had it been designed to do so; but in the purpose of God and in the undertaking of Christ, it was determined that He should make atonement for those who were elected in Him to everlasting life; these only He represented, and these only shall be saved through His redemption. This truth is commonly called limited

atonement or particular redemption.
John 10:14-15, 25-30; John 3:16; Acts 20:28; Rev. 5:9; John 17:9-10.

6. Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after His incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefits thereof were communicated unto the elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein He was revealed, and signified to be the seed of the woman which should bruise the serpent's head; and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world: being yesterday and today the same, and for ever.
Gal. 4:4-5; Gen. 3:15; Rev. 13:8; Heb. 13:8.

7. Christ, in the work of mediation, acteth according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself: yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature, is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.
Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 3:18; Acts 20:28; John 3:13; 1 John 3:16.

8. To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, He doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them, and revealing unto them, in and by the Word, the mysteries of salvation, effectually persuading them by His Spirit to believe and obey, and governing their hearts by His Word and Spirit, overcoming all their enemies by His almighty power and wisdom, in

8. The reprobate, because of their connection with God's elect who live among them, are partakers of some benefits which flow from Christ's death; divine judgments are sometimes averted for the sake of the saints; the peace and prosperity of nations are furthered by the providence of God over His people; benevolence and temperance are promoted by the Church's teaching and influence; and

such manner, and ways, as are most consonant to His wonderful and unsearchable dispensation.
John 6:37, 39; John 10:15-16; 1 John 2:1-2; Rom. 8:34; John 15:13, 15; Eph. 1:7-9; John 17:6; John 14:26; Heb. 12:2; 2 Cor. 4:13; Rom. 8:9, 14; Rom. 15:18-19; John 17:17; Ps. 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:25-26; Mal. 4:2-3; Col. 2:15.

the world is continued under its present administration until all the elect are brought to salvation.
Isa. 45:1-4; Matt. 5:13-14; Matt. 13:29; Isa. 65:8; Matt. 24:22; Jer. 29:7; Gen. 39:5; Gal. 6:10; Gen. 18:26; Ps. 75:3; Gen. 9:11.

Chapter 9: Of Free Will

1. 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.
Matt. 17:12; Jas. 1:14; Deut. 30:19.

2. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good, and well pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it. Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 1:26; Gen. 2:16-17; Gen. 3:6.

3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.
Rom. 5:6; Rom. 8:7; John 15:5; Rom. 3:10, 12; Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13; John 6:44, 65; Eph. 2:2-5; 1 Cor. 2:14; Titus 3:3-5.

4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, He freeth him from his natural bond-

age under sin; and, by His grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; 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.
Col. 1:13; John 8:34, 36; Phil. 2:13; Rom. 6:18, 22; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:15, 18-19, 21, 23.

1. *We reject* the teaching that the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration is dependent upon the exercise of man's free will.

5. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only.
Eph. 4:13; Heb. 12:23; 1 John 3:2; Jude 24.

Chapter 10: Of Effectual Calling

(Larger Catechism: 66-68; Shorter Catechism: 31-32)

1. Preaching the Gospel consists in the offer of salvation through Christ to sinners, accompanied with such an explanation of the various parts of God's Word as may help to persuade men to receive Christ as Savior, and to live and walk in Him.
2 Cor. 5:20; Matt. 28:20; Isa. 55:1-3.

1. All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased in His appointed and accepted time effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart

2. The elect are effectually called by means of the Gospel offer. This offer is not a declaration to any sinner that his name is in the Book of Life. It is founded upon God's command to offer Christ and all His benefits to sinners. There is no inconsistency between the biblical doctrine of particular redemption and the command to offer the Gospel to all men.

of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by His almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.
Rom. 8:30; Rom. 11:7; Eph. 1:10-11; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6; Rom. 8:2; Eph. 2:1-5; 2 Tim. 1:9-10; Acts 26:18; 1 Cor. 2:10, 12; Eph. 1:17-18; Ezek. 36: 26; Ezek. 11:19; Phil. 2:13; Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 36:27; Eph. 1:19; John 6:44-45; Song of Sol. 1:4; Ps. 110:3; John 6:37; Rom. 6:16-18.

2. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.
2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:4-5; Eph. 2:4-5, 8-9; Rom. 9:11; 1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7; Eph. 2: 5; John 6:37; Ezek. 36:27; John 5:25.

3. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how He pleaseth: so also, are all other elect persons who are uncapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.
Luke 18:15-16, and Acts 2:38-39, and John 3:3, 5, and 1 John 5:12, and Rom. 8:9 compared; John 3:8; 1 John 5:12; Acts 4:12.

4. Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common Deut. 29:29; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-47; 2 Tim. 2:19.

3. *We reject* the teaching that the Gospel offer of salvation is freely and truly offered only to the elect. *We reject* the teaching that particular redemption is to be so understood and presented that Christ as ransom and propitiation is not preached or offered to all men indiscriminately.

operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved: much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess. And, to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested.
Matt. 22:14; Matt. 7:22; Matt. 13:20-21; Heb. 6:4-5; John 6:64-66; John 8:24; Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Eph. 2:12; John 4:22; John 17:3; 2 John 9-11; 1 Cor. 16: 22; Gal. 1:6-8.

4. *We reject* the teaching that all will be effectually called and ultimately saved.

5. *We reject* the view that those who are diligent and sincere in a false religion have eternal life.

6. Evangelism is the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord as He is offered in the Gospel. Christ laid the responsibility upon the whole Church to make this proclamation. The task is not restricted to ordained officers. Each member is to take his share of the responsibility according to the gifts God has given him.
Acts 2:36; Matt. 28:18-20; John 20:21; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:7-16.

7. Those evangelizing should use all available means consistent with the Bible so that every person may be given the opportunity to hear, understand and receive the Gospel. While guarding against undue pressure, we must urge men to be reconciled to God.
1 Cor. 9:20-22; 1 Cor. 2:2-5; 2 Cor. 5: 20.

8. Evangelism is not only to seek the conversion of sinners but also to build them up to become effective in the Church's continuing task.
Col. 1:27-28; Eph. 4:12-15.

9. The Great Commission requires the Church to take the whole Gospel to the whole world. The Bible recognizes the legitimacy of diverse cultures. Every culture is to be transformed and made subject to Christ through redeemed men, all for the glory of God.
Matt. 28:18-20; 1 Cor. 9:19-23; 1 Cor. 10: 32-33; Rev. 21:24, 26; Ps. 72:10-11.

10. Wherever consistent with faithfulness to God's truth, different branches of the visible church should cooperate in evangelism to strengthen their witness by demonstrating their unity in Christ.
John 17:20-21.

Chapter 11: Of Justification

(Larger Catechism: 70-73, 77; Shorter Catechism: 32-33, 36)

1. Those whom God effectually calleth, He also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous, not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness, but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.
Rom. 8:30; Rom. 3:24; Rom. 4:5-8; 2 Cor. 5:19, 21; Rom. 3:22, 24-25, 27-28; Titus 3:5, 7; Eph. 1:7; Jer. 23:6; 1 Cor. 1:30-31;

1. Justification is a legal declaration that the sinner is acquitted from the guilt of sin, and is considered righteous before God. Although he is still an unworthy sinner, yet because he is united to Christ, he has Christ's perfect righteousness imputed to him.

Rom. 5:17-19; Acts 10:43; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9; Acts 13:38-39; Eph. 2:7-8.

2. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ, and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.
John 1:12; Rom. 3:28; Rom. 5:1; Jas. 2:17, 22, 26; Gal. 5:6.

2. Faith in Christ is the only means of justification. The imputed righteousness of Christ is the only basis for justification.

3. *We reject* the teaching that man's works have a part in his justification.

3. Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as He was given by the Father for them; and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead; and both freely, not for anything in them; their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice, and rich grace of God, might be glorified in the justification of sinners.
Rom. 5:8-10, 19; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 10:10, 14; Dan. 9:24, 26; Isa. 53:4-6, 10-12; Rom. 8:32; 2 Cor. 5:21; Matt. 3:17; Eph. 5:2; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; Rom. 3:26; Eph. 2:7.

4. The justification of the believer does not diminish his obligation to obey divine law.
Eccl. 12:13; 1 Cor. 9:21; Rom. 6:1, 12-23; Rom. 3:21.

4. God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification: nevertheless, they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.
Gal. 3:8; 1 Pet. 1:2, 19-20; Rom. 8:30; Gal. 4:4; 1 Tim. 2:6; Rom. 4:25; Col. 1:21-22; Gal 2:16; Titus 3:3-7.

5. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and, although they can never fall from the state of justification; 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.
Matt. 6:12; 1 John 1:7, 9; 1 John 2:1-2; Luke 22:32; John 10:28; Heb. 10:14; Ps. 89:31-33; Ps. 51:7-12; Ps. 32:5; Matt. 26: 75; 1 Cor. 11:30, 32; Luke 1:20.

6. The justification of believers under the old testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the new testament.
Gal. 3:9, 13-14; Rom. 4:22-24; Heb. 13:8.

Chapter 12: Of Adoption

(Larger Catechism: 74; Shorter Catechism: 32, 34, 36)

1. All those that are justified, God vouchsafeth, in and for His only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption: by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God, have His name put upon them, receive the spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to cry, Abba, Father, are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by Him as by a father; yet never cast off, but sealed

1. All the elect, and only they, are adopted into the family of God. The adoption of saints under the Old Testament dispensation was as real as that under the New Testament, although they were regarded as children under age. Under the New Testament God bestows His Spirit more abundantly. He gives more knowledge of, and intimacy with, Himself. He receives on equal grounds those from every part of the world. He allows greater boldness in approaching Him.

to the day of redemption, and inherit the promises, as heirs of everlasting salvation.
Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 8:17; John 1:12; Jer. 14:9; 2 Cor. 6:18; Rev. 3:12; Rom. 8:15; Eph. 3:12; Rom. 5:2; Gal. 4:6; Ps. 103:13; Prov. 14:26; Matt. 6: 30, 32; 1 Pet. 5:7; Heb. 12:6; Lam. 3: 31; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 6:12; 1 Pet. 1:3-4; Heb. 1:14.

Eph. 1:5; Gal. 3:9; Heb. 13:9-10; Rom. 9:4; Jer. 3:4; Gal. 4:1-5; Matt. 11:11; 2 Cor. 3:10-18; Rom. 9:26; Ps. 72:17.

2. Justification and adoption, although inseparably connected, are nevertheless distinct from one another. They are both acts of God's free grace. They are both performed once, and not repeated. They both spring from the grace of God; both give a right to all the privileges of the sons of God; and both are received through faith alone.
John 1:12; Titus 3:7; 1 John 3:1; Jer. 3: 19; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:15-17.

3. Justification applies to believers as those who were guilty, and in a state of condemnation, but whose sins are now pardoned, and they are accounted righteous. Adoption applies to believers as those who were aliens and strangers to God. They were children of wrath, but by this gracious act are brought near unto God and made the children of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.
Eph. 2:2-3; 2 Cor. 6:17-18; 1 Pet. 5:7; Heb. 12:28; Rom. 8:17; Ps. 16:5; Eph. 1:7; Gal. 4:7.

4. There is a sense in which God is the Father of all men, because He created them. They are therefore obligated to love and seek the welfare of one another; yet to the redeemed alone belongs the right to be called the sons of God.
Acts 17:29; Matt. 5:44-45; John 1:12; 1 John 3:1; Rom. 8:14.

5. *We reject* the common conception of the universal fatherhood of God

and the universal brotherhood of men, which denies the distinction between the saved and the unsaved.
1 John 2:23; John 8:44.

6. *We reject* the teaching that sonship, conferred in adoption, will ever be annulled by God.

Chapter 13: Of Sanctification

(Larger Catechism: 75-78; Shorter Catechism: 32, 35-36)

1. God's work of sanctification is designed to restore the whole person after the image of God. The moral law of God, perfectly fulfilled in the life of Christ, reveals God's holiness and declares His will to man, and is therefore the standard for sanctification.
Rom. 8:29; 1 Thess. 5:23-24.

1. They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them: the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified; and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.
1 Cor. 6:11; Acts 20:32; Phil. 3:10; Rom. 6:5-6; John 17:17; Eph. 5:26; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 6:6, 14; Gal. 5:24; Rom. 8: 13; Col. 1:11; Eph. 3:16-19; 2 Cor. 7: 1; Heb. 12:14.

2. This sanctification is throughout, in the whole man; yet imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part: whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war; the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.
1 Thess. 5:23; 1 John 1:10; Rom. 7:18, 23; Phil. 3:12; Gal. 5:17; 1 Pet. 2:11.

2. *We reject* the view that in this life some Christians do not sin.
1 John 1:9; 1 Tim. 1:15.

3. Proper proclamation of the doctrine of sanctification must call believers to struggle diligently against sin.
Phil. 2:12-13; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 6:10-18; Heb. 12:4.

3. In which war, although the remaining corruption, for a time, may much prevail; yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome; and so, the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
Rom. 7:23; Rom. 6:14; 1 John 5:4; Eph. 4:15-16; 2 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Cor. 7:1.

4. Sanctification is inseparably connected with justification, but is distinct from it. By justification the sinner is acquitted from condemnation; by sanctification he is made holy, and prepared for the happiness of heaven. Justification is complete at once, and equal in all believers; sanctification is neither equal in all, nor perfect in any, while in this life. Nevertheless, all who are justified shall be completely sanctified.
2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 8:1-2; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom 7:19, 21; Phil. 1:6; Heb. 12:23; Eph. 5:27; 1 Thess. 5:23-24.

Chapter 14: Of Saving Faith

(Larger Catechism: 60, 72-73; Shorter Catechism: 29-30)

1. Saving faith is the gift of the triune God. It is the Father's will that the elect should be united to Christ by faith. The Son, by His death, provided that saving faith should be freely granted to them. The Holy Spirit, therefore, regenerates each one of them, enabling them to receive Jesus Christ by faith as their Lord and Savior.
Rom. 3:25-26; Rom. 1:16-17; Col. 2:12;

Phil. 1:29; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:3; Eph. 1:3-14; Rom. 8:28-29.

2. *We reject* the teaching that regeneration is the result of saving faith.

1. The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts; and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word: by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.
Heb. 10:39; 2 Cor. 4:13; Eph. 1:17-19; Eph. 2:8; Rom. 10:14, 17; 1 Pet. 2:2; Acts 20:32; Rom. 4:11; Luke 17:5; Rom. 1:16-17.

2. By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein; and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.
John 4:42; 1 Thess. 2:13; 1 John 5:10; Acts 24:14; Rom. 16:26; Isa. 66:2; Heb. 11:13; 1 Tim. 4:8; John 1:12; Acts 16:31; Gal. 2:20; Acts 15:11.

3. Saving faith will normally come to expression in a public confession of Christ within the visible church.
Rom. 10:9.

4. *We reject* the doctrine of universal salvation.
Matt. 25:46; John 5:28-29; Rom. 2:6-13.

5. *We reject* the idea that a man can be saved by any means other than faith in Jesus Christ.
1 Tim. 2:5; Rom. 3:28; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Heb. 11:24-26.

6. *We reject* the idea that unregenerate people can be persuaded to believe

without the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
Rom. 9:16; Titus 3:5.

7. *We reject* the concept that saving faith is merely agreeing that the Bible is historically accurate, and that the doctrines of the Bible are true.
Jas. 2:19.

8. The proper basis for believing is the infinite sufficiency of Christ to save, the unrestricted free invitation to come to Him for salvation, God's command to all to repent and believe, and the promise of salvation to those who believe and obey the Gospel.
Heb. 7:25; Isa. 55:1, 5, 7; Rev. 22:17; 1 John 3:23; Acts 16:31; Heb. 5:9.

3. This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong; may be often and many ways assailed, and weakened, but gets the victory; growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith.
Heb. 5:13-14; Rom. 4:19-20; Matt. 6:30; Matt. 8:10; Luke 22:31-32; Eph. 6:16; 1 John 5:4-5; Heb. 6:11-12; Heb. 10:22; Col. 2:2; Heb. 12:2.

9. God's offer of salvation is genuine, regardless of man's response.
John 6:35-37; Matt. 11:28-30; John 7:37; Rom. 3:4.

10. *We reject* the idea that saving faith is a man's persuading himself that he is elect, and that he has already been saved.
Prov. 14:12; 1 John 1:6-7; 1 John 2:4-5.

Chapter 15: Of Repentance Unto Life

(Larger Catechism: 76, 153, 194; Shorter Catechism: 85, 87)

1. Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the Gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ.
Zech. 12:10; Acts 11:18; Luke 24:47; Mark 1:5; Acts 20:21.

1. Repentance leads to eternal life only when it is accompanied by faith in Christ.
Acts 20:21; Mark 1:15.

2. By it, a sinner, out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature and righteous law of God; and upon the apprehension of His mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for, and hates his sins, as to turn from them all unto God, purposing and endeavoring to walk with Him in all the ways of His commandments.
Ezek. 18:30-31; Ezek. 36:31; Isa. 30:22; Ps. 51:4; Jer. 31:18-19; Joel 2:12-13; Amos 5:15; Ps. 119:128; 2 Cor. 7:11; Ps. 119:6, 59, 106; Luke 1:6; 2 Kings 23:25.

3. Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in Christ; yet is it of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.
Ezek. 36:31-32; Ezek. 16:61-63; Hos. 14:2, 4; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31.

2. Although a believer is freed from the penalty of sin by justification, he is still bound to give perfect obedience to God's law. Because of incomplete sanctification he is unable to do this, but daily breaks the commands of God in thought, word and deed. Therefore, all men are in continual need of repentance.
1 John 1:8-10; Rom. 7:14-25; 1 Tim. 1:15; Lev. 19:2; Eccl. 7:20; Gen. 8:21; John 13:10.

3. *We reject* the doctrine that Christians can in this life attain a condition in

which they no longer have need of repentance.
1 Tim. 1:15.

4. Unregenerate men may, and often do, feel regret or remorse, realizing that sin brings shame and misery and is an obstacle to the happiness they seek; but they may not see sin as an offense against the holy God. Since they do not turn to God, they do not exercise true repentance.
2 Cor. 7:10; Heb. 12:16-17; Rom. 1:32.

4. As there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation, so there is no sin so great, that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.
Rom. 6:23; Rom. 5:12; Matt. 12:36; Isa. 55:7; Rom. 8:1; Isa. 1:16, 18.

5. The unpardonable sin is the rejection of the testimony of the Holy Spirit concerning Jesus Christ. It is the willful and persistent rejection of the only hope of forgiveness through the Savior.
Matt. 10:33; 2 Tim. 2:12.

5. Men ought not to content themselves with a general repentance, but it is every man's duty to endeavour to repent of his particular sins, particularly.
Ps. 19:13; Luke 19:8; 1 Tim. 1:13, 15.

6. Self-examination is essential to true repentance. A person must examine his life to detect specific sins, and repent of them.
Ps. 26; Ps. 139; Ps. 32:5-6; 1 John 1:9; Ps. 119:59; 2 Cor. 13:5.

6. As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof; upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy; 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, who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.
Ps. 51:4-5, 7, 9, 14; Ps. 32:5-6; Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9; Jas. 5:16; Luke 17:3-4; Josh. 7:19; Ps. 51; 2 Cor. 2:8.

7. Since sin is primarily an offense against God, confession to other men cannot take the place of repentance toward God. Since each one is to confess his sins to God, the source of forgiveness, he has no need of priest or other intermediary except Jesus Christ. He should also confess to men against whom he has sinned, and submit to all lawful penalties.
Ps. 32:5; Ps. 51:4; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Jas. 5:16.

8. Every man bears a degree of responsibility for the sins of groups in which he participates. When sins are corporate, repentance and confession should be corporate as well as individual.
Josh. 7:11; Dan. 9:3-20; 2 Chron. 15: 8-15; Neh. 9; Rev. 2:5, 16; Matt. 6:12.

9. Godly repentance implies true faith and union with Christ, but is not the ground of pardon. It precedes the joy which flows from the assurance of pardon.
Zech. 12:10; Eph. 1:7; Rom. 3:28; Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; Ps. 51:1, 8, 12; 2 Cor. 7:10.

Chapter 16: Of Good Works

(Larger Catechism: 60, 73, 78; Shorter Catechism: 35)

1. Good works are only such as God hath commanded in His holy Word, and not such as, without the warrant thereof, are devised by men, out of blind zeal, or upon any pretence of good intention.
Mic. 6:8; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 13:21; Matt. 15:9; Isa. 29:13; 1 Pet. 1:18; Rom. 10: 2; John 16:2; 1 Sam. 15:21-23.

2. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith: and by them believers manifest their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the Gospel, stop the

1. Good works, while not a means of salvation, are required of believers as a testimony to God's grace, as evidence of regeneration and as a blessing to mankind.
Matt. 5:16; Eph. 2:10; Titus 3:8-14.

2. *We reject* the notion that sincerity of performance, or the declaration of a church, can make any act a "good work."
Rom. 10:2; Matt. 15:9.

mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto; that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.
Jas. 2:18, 22; Ps. 116:12-13; 1 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 2:3, 5; 2 Pet. 1:5-10; 2 Cor. 9:2; Matt. 5:16; Titus 2:5, 9-12; 1 Tim. 6:1; 1 Pet. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:12; Phil. 1:11; John 15:8; Eph. 2:10; Rom. 6:22.

3. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. 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: 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.
John 15:4-5; Ezek. 36:26-27; Phil. 2:13; Phil. 4:13; 2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 2:12; Heb. 6:11-12; 2 Pet. 1:3, 5, 10-11; Isa. 64:7; 2 Tim. 1:6; Acts 26:6-7; Jude 1:20-21.

4. They, who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do.
Luke 17:10; Neh. 13:22; Job 9:2-3; Gal. 5:17.

5. We cannot, by our best works, merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great

3. *We reject* the idea that we, by good works, can win favor with God, either for ourselves or for others.
Rom. 3:20; Isa. 64:6.

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, but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants; and because, as they are good, they proceed from His Spirit; 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.
Rom. 3:20; Rom. 4:2, 4, 6; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 8:18; Ps. 16:2; Job 22:2-3; Job 35:7-8; Luke 17:10; Gal. 5: 22-23; Isa. 64:6; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:15, 18; Ps. 143:2; Ps. 130:3.

6. Yet notwithstanding, the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in Him, not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unreprovable in God's sight; but that He, looking upon them in His Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.
Eph. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5; Ex. 28:38; Gen. 4: 4 with Heb. 11:4; Job 9:20; Ps. 143:2; Heb. 13:20-21; 2 Cor. 8:12; Heb. 6:10; Matt. 25:21, 23.

7. Works done by unregenerate men, although, for the matter of them, they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others: yet, because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner according

4. By God's grace, many unregenerate men have generous impulses and may lead outwardly moral lives. Yet good works are only those things done in obedience to His revealed will, out of sincere love for Him and desire to serve Him. The Christian may work

to the Word; nor to a right end, the glory of God; they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God. And yet, their neglect of them is more sinful, and displeasing unto God.
2 Kings 10:30-31; 1 Kings 21:27, 29; Phil. 1:15-16, 18; Gen. 4:5 with Heb. 11:4, 6; 1 Cor. 13:3; Isa. 1:12; Matt. 6: 2, 5, 16; Hag. 2:14; Titus 1:15; Amos 5:21-22; Hos. 1:4; Rom. 9:16; Titus 3:5; Ps. 14:4; Ps. 36:3; Job 21:14-15; Matt. 25:41-43, 45; Matt. 23:23.

with unbelievers in seeking the good of society, but his chief motive should be the glory of God. Christians should avoid any voluntary association in which they cannot maintain a consistent testimony for Christ.
Rom. 14:23; Eph. 2:10; John 15:5; Rom. 12:1-2.

Chapter 17: Of the Perseverance of the Saints

(Larger Catechism: 79-81; Shorter Catechism: 35-36)

1. They, whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally, nor finally, fall away from the state of grace: but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.
Phil. 1:6; 2 Pet. 1:10; John 10:28-29; 1 John 3:9; 1 Pet. 1:5, 9.

1. Men may profess faith in Jesus Christ and have the outward appearance of being regenerate, for a time, and yet finally fall away from this profession.
Heb. 6:4-8; 2 Pet. 2:20-22.

2. *We reject* the view that, because it appears to happen in human observation, true believers can fall away and be eternally lost.
1 John 2:19.

3. The Church cannot discern hypocrites so long as they continue to profess the true religion, and appear obedient to the law of God.
1 Sam. 16:7.

4. *We reject* the view that the Church is able to judge the hearts of men.
Ps. 7:9; Ps. 75:7; Jer. 17:9-10.

2. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ; the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them; and the nature of the covenant of grace; from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.
2 Tim. 2:18-19; Jer. 31:3; 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; John 14:16-17; 1 John 2: 27; 1 John 3:9; Jer. 32:40; John 10:28; 2 Thess. 3:3; 1 John 2:19.

3. Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins; and, for a time, continue therein: whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve His Holy Spirit, come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded, hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.
Matt. 26:70, 72, 74; Ps. 51:title and vs. 14; Isa. 64:5, 7, 9; 2 Sam. 11:27; Eph. 4:30; Ps. 51:8, 10, 12; Rev. 2:4; Song of Sol. 5:2-4, 6; Isa. 63:17; Mark 6:52; Mark 16:14; Ps. 32:3-4; Ps. 51:8; 2 Sam. 12:14; Ps. 89:31-32; 1 Cor. 11:32.

5. *We reject* the accusation that the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is opposed to the believers' responsibility to pursue their own growth in holiness.

Chapter 18: Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation

(Larger Catechism: 80-81; Shorter Catechism: 36)

1. Although hypocrites and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions of being in the favour of God, and estate of salvation; which hope of theirs shall perish: yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love Him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before Him, may, in this life, be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed.
Job 8:13-14; Mic. 3:11; Deut. 29:19; John 8:41; Matt. 7:22-23; 1 John 2:3; 1 John 3:14, 18-19, 21, 24; 1 John 5:13; Rom. 5:2, 5.

1. A man may believe himself to be saved when he is not. A man can also fear that he is not saved, when in actual fact he is.
Isa. 50:10; Luke 18:11-14.

2. The Holy Spirit gives assurance of salvation by leading believers to rest confidently on God's promises, producing in their lives the love for Christ and others which is the fruit of the new birth and enabling them to call upon God as their loving Father in heaven.
2 Tim. 1:12; John 14:21; 1 John 3:14; Rom. 8:14-16; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 5:13; John 10:27-28.

2. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God: which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.
Heb. 6:11, 19; Heb. 6:17-18; 2 Pet. 1:4-5, 10-11; 1 John 2:3; 1 John 3:14; 2 Cor. 1:12; Rom. 8:15-16; Eph. 1:13-14; Eph. 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:21-22.

3. Spiritual experiences or circumstances, however worthy, such as birth of Christian parents, church membership, participation in the sacraments, the hearing of the Word, good works, response to an altar call, speaking in tongues, and other real or imagined evidences of grace, do not of themselves constitute a basis for assurance of salvation.
Rom. 9:7; Rom. 2:28-29; 1 Cor. 10:1-12; Heb. 4:2; Acts 8:9-24; 1 Cor. 11:27-29; Heb. 10:38-39; Titus 3:5.

4. *We reject* the view that, without saving faith, participation in the sacra-

3. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it: 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. And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure; 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, the proper fruits of this assurance; so far is it from inclining men to looseness.
1 John 5:13; Isa. 50:10; Mark 9:24; Ps. 88; Ps. 77:1-12; 1 Cor. 2:12; 1 John 4: 13; Heb. 6:11-12; Eph. 3:17-19; 2 Pet. 1:10; Rom. 5:1-2, 5; Rom. 14:17; Rom. 15:13; Eph. 1:3-4; Ps. 4:6-7; Ps. 119:32; 1 John 2:1-2; Rom. 6:1-2; Titus 2:11-12, 14; 2 Cor. 7:1; Rom. 8:1, 12; 1 John 3: 2-3; Ps. 130:4; 1 John 1:6-7.

4. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement ments or the use of any other means of grace is a proper basis of assurance.

5. *We reject* the teaching that assurance must be chiefly based upon one's memory of a particular conversion experience.

6. It is the task of the Church to declare the Word of God so that the believer, being enabled by the Holy Spirit, can discern his own true inward condition, and thus know that he is saved; but it is not the proper function of the minister or any other person to tell people whether they are saved.
Rom. 8:16.

7. *We reject* the view that preaching the Gospel consists merely in urging people to assent to its truth.

8. While the Scriptures require self-examination, a believer must remember that his heart can be deceived, and that he is always subject to the temptation to trust in works rather than in Christ. A person should not lightly assume he is saved.
1 Cor. 11:28, 32; Prov. 28:26; 1 John 3:19-24; Gal. 6:3; Rev. 3:17-18.

9. A believer's lack of assurance may evidence sinful neglect. Fear respecting the state of a man's own heart is not necessarily the sin of unbelief, for unbelief consists in rejecting the Gospel, not in questioning the presence of grace in the heart.
2 Cor. 13:5.

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: 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; and by the which, in the mean time, they are supported from utter despair.
Song 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; 1 John 3:9; Luke 22:32; Job 13:15; Ps. 73:15; Ps. 51:8, 12; Isa. 50:10; Mic. 7:7-9; Jer. 32:40; Isa. 54:7-10; Ps. 22:1; Ps. 88.

10. *We reject* the teaching that a full assurance of salvation is so inseparably connected with saving faith that a believer cannot be saved without it.

11. *We reject* the teaching that assurance of salvation leads to complacency, or is unimportant to the life and walk of faith, to prayer, and to good works.

Chapter 19: Of the Law of God

(Larger Catechism: 91-148; Shorter Catechism: 40-81)

1. God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which He bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it: and endued him with power and ability to keep it.
Gen. 1:26-27 with Gen. 2:17; Rom. 2: 14-15; Rom. 10:5; Rom. 5:12, 19; Gal. 3:10, 12; Eccl. 7:29; Job 28:28.

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

1. This law is still the rule of God's judgment of men. Christ has fulfilled the requirements of the law for His people by His perfect obedience and His propitiation for their sins.
Gal. 3:10-14; Matt. 5:17-18.

six our duty to man.
Jas. 1:25; Jas. 2:8, 10-12; Rom. 13:8-9; Deut. 5:32; Deut. 10:4; Ex. 34:1; Matt. 22:37-40.

3. Beside this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, His graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated, under the New Testament.
Heb. 9; Heb. 10:1; Gal. 4:1-3; Col. 2:17; 1 Cor. 5:7; 2 Cor. 6:17; Jude 1:23; Col. 2:14, 16-17; Dan. 9:27; Eph. 2:15-16.

2. The ceremonial laws were fulfilled by Christ as our high priest and are no longer binding.
Heb. 10:1-22.

4. To them also, as a body politic, He gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the State of that people; not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require.
Ex. 21; Ex. 22:1-29; Gen. 49:10 with 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Matt. 5:17, 38-39; 1 Cor. 9:8-10.

5. The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; 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: neither doth Christ, in the Gospel, any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.
Rom. 13:8-10; Eph. 6:2; 1 John 2:3-4, 7-8; Jas. 2:10-11; Matt. 5:17-19; Jas. 2:8; Rom. 3:31.

3. *We reject* the teaching that believers are not required to keep all of the Ten Commandments under the New Testament.
Matt. 5:19-20.

6. Although true believers be not under the law, as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned; 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; discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts, and lives; so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin; together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of His obedience. It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin; and the threatenings of it serve to 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. The promises of it, in like manner, show them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof; although not as due to them by the law, as a covenant of works. 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.
Rom. 6:14; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:13; Gal. 4:4-5; Acts 13:39; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 7:12, 22, 25; Ps. 119:4-6; 1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 5:14, 16, 18-23; Rom. 7:7; Rom. 3:20; Jas. 1:23-25; Rom. 7:9, 14, 24; Gal. 3:24; Rom. 7:24-25; Rom. 8:3-4; Jas. 2:11; Ps. 119:101, 104, 128; Ezra 9:13-14; Ps. 89:30-34; Lev. 26:1-14 with 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 6:2-3; Ps. 37:11 with

4. A believer's obedience to the law of God is a proper expression of his thankfulness for the love which he has experienced in the Savior.
John 14:15.

5. *We reject* the view that obedience to God's law is sinful legalism.

6. Sinful legalism consists of mere outward conformity to the law in the absence of love to the Lawgiver. It often involves the effort to gain salvation or reward through such obedience, and the tendency to require of others a similar pattern of conduct. It may also involve adding human requirements that evade God's law.
Matt. 23:13-31; Mark 7:1-23.

Matt. 5:5; Ps. 19:11; Gal. 2:16; Luke 17:10; Rom. 6:12, 14; 1 Pet. 3:8-12 with Ps. 34:12-16; Heb. 12:28-29.

7. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it; 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.
Gal. 3:21; Ezek. 36:27; Heb. 8:10 with Jer. 31:33.

Chapter 20: Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience

(Larger Catechism: 28, 45, 83; Shorter Catechism: 2, 26)

1. The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the Gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law; and, in their being delivered from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, and dominion of sin; from the evil of afflictions, the sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation; as also, in their free access to God, and their yielding obedience unto Him, not out of slavish fear, but a child-like love and willing mind. All which were common also to believers under the law. 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; and in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace, and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than believers under the

1. Christian liberty consists primarily in the believer's freedom from the guilt and power of sin, in freedom from the ceremonial law and in freedom of access to God through Christ.
Titus 2:14; Rom. 6:17-19, 22; Gal. 5:1; Acts 15:10-11; Heb. 10:19-22.

2. Christ sets believers free not only from a feeling of guilt, but from actual guilt.

3. *We reject* the teaching that believers under the Old Testament had no such liberty as belongs to believers under the New Testament. The difference between the liberty enjoyed under the Old and New Testaments is one of degree rather than kind.
Ps. 32:1-5; Ps. 130:7-8.

law did ordinarily partake of.
Titus 2:14; 1 Thess. 1:10; Gal. 3:13; Gal. 1:4; Col. 1:13; Acts 26:18; Rom. 6:14; Rom. 8:28; Ps. 119:71; 1 Cor. 15: 54-57; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 5:1-2; Rom. 8: 14-15; 1 John 4:18; Gal. 3:9, 14; Gal. 4: 1-3, 6-7; Gal. 5:1; Acts 15:10-11; Heb. 4:14, 16; Heb. 10:19-22; John 7:38-39; 2 Cor. 3:13, 17-18.

2. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to His Word; or beside it, in matters of faith or worship. So that, to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands, out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience: and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.
Jas. 4:12; Rom. 14:4; Acts 4:19; Acts 5: 29; 1 Cor. 7:23; Matt. 23:8-10; 2 Cor. 1:24; Matt. 15:9; Col. 2:20, 22-23; Gal. 1:10; Gal. 2:4-5; Gal. 5:1; Rom. 10: 17; Rom. 14:23; Isa. 8:20; Acts 17:11; John 4:22; Hos. 5:11; Rev. 13:12, 16-17; Jer. 8:9.

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

4. Conscience is a sense of right and wrong by which one evaluates his own thoughts and behavior. When one follows his conscience, he feels a measure of contentment; when he violates his conscience, he feels distress. Conscience is natural to man, and implies his accountability to God, but it is not the rule of faith and practice. Conscience shows the work of the law written on the heart, but is distorted by the work of Satan, by man's sinful nature, and by the ungodly standards of the world. The Christian's conscience is to be directed by God's revealed law, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, with due attention to the teaching and admonition of the brethren. Although conscience is not infallible, a person should not do what he believes to be wrong.
Rom. 2:14-15; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Tim. 4: 2-3; Rom. 12:1-2; Matt. 15:9; 2 Tim. 3: 16-17; Ps. 143:10; Rom. 8:5-9; Col. 3: 16; Rom. 14:14, 23.

righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.
Gal. 5:13; 1 Pet. 2:16; 2 Pet. 2:19; John 8:34; Luke 1:74-75.

4. And because the powers which God hath ordained, and the liberty which Christ hath purchased, are not intended by God to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another; they who, upon 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. And, for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices, as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship or conversation; or, to the power of godliness; or, such erroneous opinions or practices, as either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in the Church, they may lawfully be called to account, and proceeded against by the censures of the Church, and by the power of the civil magistrate.
Matt. 12:25; 1 Pet. 2:13-14, 16; Rom. 13:1-8; Heb. 13:17; Rom. 1:32 with 1 Cor. 5:1, 5, 11, 13; 2 John 10-11, and 2 Thess. 3:14, and 1 Tim. 6:3-5, and Titus 1:10-11, 13, and Titus 3:10 with Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; Rev. 2: 2, 14-15, 20; Rev. 3:9; Deut. 13:6-12; Rom. 13:3-4 with 2 John 10-11; Ezra 7: 23, 25-28; Rev. 17:12, 16-17; Neh. 13: 15, 17, 21-22, 25, 30; 2 Kings 23:5-6, 9, 20-21; 2 Chron. 34:33; 2 Chron. 15: 12-13, 16; Dan. 3:29; 1 Tim. 2:2; Isa. 49:23; Zech. 13:2-3.

5. Liberty of conscience differs from Christian liberty. Liberty of conscience is the freedom to interpret and apply God's Word to one's own life. The Christian is to render due submission in the Lord to any lawful authority, but he has the right to disagree with any improper use of human authority. If that authority requires him to sin, he must obey God rather than man. Individual liberty is regulated by the principles found in Scripture and is limited by the mutual duties believers owe to one another, and by concern for the welfare of all men.
Rom. 13:1-7; Acts 5:29; 1 Pet. 2:13-16; 1 Cor. 10:27-29; Rom. 14:10-15; 1 Cor. 8:9-15; Titus 3:1; Gal. 5:13-18.

6. The civil magistrate has no authority to pronounce ecclesiastical censures.

Chapter 21: Of Religious Worship, and the Sabbath Day

(Larger Catechism: 103-121, 178-196; Shorter Catechism: 45-62, 88-90, 98-107)

1. The light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all, is good, and doth 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. 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.
Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:24; Ps. 119:68; Jer. 10:7; Ps. 31:23; Ps. 18:3; Rom. 10:12; Ps. 62:8; Josh. 24:14; Mark 12:33; Deut. 12:32; Matt. 15:9; Acts 17:25; Matt. 4:9-10; Deut. 4:15-20; Ex. 20:4-6; Col. 2:23.

1. All people are required to worship the true God, in a scriptural manner, with sincerity of heart. Sincerity cannot make unscriptural worship acceptable to God. Proper worship is to be conducted in an orderly manner. The tendency to emphasize ritual, liturgy and ceremony is contrary to the Scriptures.
Acts 24:16; John 16:2; Isa. 1:11-15; John 4:24; Heb. 10:19-22.

2. Worship is to be offered only in accordance with God's appointment, and in harmony with the scriptural principle that whatever is not commanded in the worship of God, by precept or example, is forbidden.
Lev. 10:1-3; 2 Sam. 6:1-11; Matt. 15:8-9.

3. The use of pictures or images of Jesus in worship, or as aids to devotion, is unscriptural. The Scriptures do not provide a sufficient description of His physical appearance to picture Him. The work of artists should not be received as accurate representations of His Person.
Ex. 20:4-5.

2. Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to Him alone; not to angels, saints, or any other creature: and since the fall, not without a Mediator; nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.
Matt. 4:10 with John 5:23 and 2 Cor. 13:14; Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10; Rom. 1: 25; John 14:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Eph. 2:18; Col. 3:17.

3. Prayer, with thanksgiving, being one special part of religious worship, is by God required of all men: and that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son, by the help of His Spirit, according to His will, with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and, if vocal, in a known tongue.
Phil. 4:6; Ps. 65:2; John 14:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:5; Rom. 8:26; 1 John 5:14; Ps. 47:7; Eccl. 5:1-2; Heb. 12:28; Gen. 18: 27; Jas. 5:16; Jas. 1:6-7; Mark 11:24; Matt. 6:12, 14-15; Col. 4:2; Eph. 6:18; 1 Cor. 14:14.

4. Prayer is to be made for things lawful, and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter: but not for the dead, nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death.
1 John 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; John 17: 20; 2 Sam. 7:29; Ruth 4:12; 2 Sam. 12: 21-23 with Luke 16:25-26; Rev. 14:13; 1 John 5:16.

5. The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear; the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, reverence; singing of psalms with grace in the heart; as also,

4. Public prayer is to accompany the reading and preaching of the Word.
Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 14:13-19.

the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ; are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God: beside religious oaths, vows, solemn fastings, and thanksgivings, upon special occasions, which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in a holy and religious manner.
Acts 15:21; Rev. 1:3; 2 Tim. 4:2; Jas. 1: 22; Acts 10:33; Matt. 13:19; Heb. 4:2; Isa. 66:2; Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19; Jas. 5: 13; Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; Acts 2:42; Deut. 6:13 with Neh. 10:29; Isa. 19:21 with Eccl. 5:4-5; Joel 2:12; Esther 4:16; Matt. 9:15; 1 Cor. 7:5; Ps. 107; Esther 9:22; Heb. 12:28.

5. Singing God's praise is part of public worship in which the whole congregation should join. The Book of Psalms, consisting of inspired psalms, hymns and songs, is the divinely authorized manual of praise. The use of other songs in worship is not authorized in the Scriptures. The Greek words in the New Testament which are translated "psalm," "hymn" and "song" all appear in the Septuagint (Greek) version of the Book of Psalms.
Ps. 95:2; Ps. 40:3, (4); Ps. 96:1; Col. 3: 16; Eph. 5:19; Mark 14:26; 1 Cor 14: 26; Jas. 5:13.

6. The Psalms are to be sung without the accompaniment of instruments, which are not part of the New Testament pattern of worship. Musical instruments were commanded for use with the offering of sacrifices in the Old Testament temple worship. The death of Christ being the perfect and final sacrifice brought an end to this way of worship. There is neither command for nor example of the use of musical instruments in the words or practice of Christ and the apostles. The command of the New Testament is to offer the sacrifice of praise—the fruit of our lips.
Num. 10:10; 2 Chron. 29:25-30; Heb. 9:12; Heb. 13:15.

7. Religious fasting is an ordinance of God in which the believer voluntarily abstains from food for a season for the purpose of seeking the will of God, strength for service or deeper spirituality. It should be accompanied by meditation, self-examination, humiliation before God, confession of sin,

repentance and renewed dedication to a life of obedience.
Ex. 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8; Dan. 10:2-3; Joel 1:14; Joel 2:12-13, 15; Matt. 4:2; Matt. 6:16-18; Mark 9:29; Acts 13:2-3.

8. The presentation of tithes and offerings is warranted as part of worship.
1 Cor. 16:1-2; Mal. 3:10; 1 Chron. 29: 6-13; Ex. 23:15.

6. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now under the Gospel either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed: but God is to be worshipped everywhere, in spirit and truth; as in private families daily, and in secret each one by himself; 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, calleth thereunto.
John 4:21; Mal. 1:11; 1 Tim. 2:8; John 4:23-24; Jer. 10:25; Deut. 6:6-7; Job 1: 5; 2 Sam. 6:18, 20; 1 Pet. 3:7; Acts 10:2; Matt. 6:11; Matt. 6:6; Eph. 6:18; Isa. 56:6-7; Heb. 10:25; Prov. 1:20-21, 24; Prov. 8:34; Acts 13:42; Luke 4:16; Acts 2:42.

9. Heads of families are responsible for leadership in family worship.
Gen. 18:19; Eph. 6:4.

10. Worship in small groups is also encouraged by the Scripture.
Acts 5:42; Acts 12:12.

7. 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 hath particularly appointed one day in seven, for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto Him: which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day

11. *We reject* the teaching that the Fourth Commandment is no longer binding under the New Testament.

of the week; and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which, in Scripture, is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian Sabbath.
Ex. 20:8, 10-11; Isa. 56:2, 4, 6-7; Gen. 2:2-3; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Rev. 1: 10; Ex. 20:8, 10 with Matt. 5:17-18.

8. This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest, all the day, from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments, and recreations, 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.
Ex. 20:8; Ex. 16:23, 25-26, 29-30; Ex. 31:15-17; Isa. 58:13; Neh. 13:15-19, 21-22; Isa. 58:13; Matt. 12:1-13.

12. God promises rich blessings for keeping the Lord's Day holy.
Isa. 56:2-7; Isa. 58:13-14; Mark 2:27.

Chapter 22: Of Lawful Oaths and Vows

(Larger Catechism: 108, 113; Shorter Catechism: 50, 55)

1. A lawful oath is a part of religious worship, wherein, upon just occasion, the person swearing solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth, or promiseth; and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he sweareth.
Deut. 10:20; Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; 2 Cor. 1:23; 2 Chron. 6:22-23.

1. There is scriptural warrant for swearing with the hand uplifted. Christians should avoid all superstitious or pagan customs in taking an oath.
Heb. 6:16-18; Gen. 14:22; Deut. 10:20; Ex. 6:8; Rev. 10:5-6.

2. The name of God only is that by which men ought to swear; and therein it is to be used with all holy fear and reverence. Therefore, to swear vainly or rashly, by that glorious and dreadful Name; or, to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful, and to be abhorred. 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; so a lawful oath, being imposed by lawful authority, in such matters ought to be taken.
Deut. 6:13; Ex. 20:7; Jer. 5:7; Matt. 5: 34, 37; Jas. 5:12; Heb. 6:16; 2 Cor. 1: 23; Isa. 65:16; 1 Kings 8:31; Neh. 13: 25; Ezra 10:5.

2. Those Scripture passages warning against taking oaths are to be understood as forbidding profane swearing, or the use of an oath to deceive or to escape one's duty.
Matt. 5:33-37; Jas. 5:12; cf. Mark 7:6-13.

3. Whosoever taketh an oath ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act; and therein to avouch nothing, but what he is fully persuaded is the truth. Neither may any man bind himself by oath to anything but what is good and just, and what he believeth so to be, and what he is able and resolved to perform. Yet it is a sin to refuse an oath touching anything that is good and just, being imposed by lawful authority.
Ex. 20:7; Jer. 4:2; Gen. 24:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Num. 5:19, 21; Neh. 5:12; Ex. 22: 7-11.

3. The administrator of an oath, whether civil or ecclesiastical, ought to explain the meaning of the oath, and administer it with suitable solemnity. The well-being of individuals and of society requires that the administrator of an oath know and fear God and understand its nature. Oaths should be administered only to those who understand their meaning.
Eccl. 9:2; Deut. 6:13; Josh. 9:15, 19; cf. 2 Sam. 21:1-14.

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

4. An oath is a confirmatory act calling God to witness the performance of a promise. An oath may confirm a vow or a covenant.
Num. 30:1-4; Ps. 132:2-5; Josh. 9:16-27; 2 Chron. 15:12-15.

Jer. 4:2; Ps. 24:4; 1 Sam. 25:22, 32-34; Ps. 15:4; Ezek. 17:16, 18-19; Josh. 9: 18-19 with 2 Sam. 21:1.

5. A vow is of the like nature with a promissory oath, and ought to be made with the like religious care, and to be performed with the like faithfulness.
Isa. 19:21; Eccl. 5:4-6; Ps. 61:8; Ps. 66:13-14.

5. A vow in Scripture is an act of voluntary dedication to God of one's person, goods or service. A vow is usually made by an individual.
Lev. 27; Num. 6; Deut. 23:21-23; cf. Num. 21:2; Nah. 1:15.

6. It is not to be made to any creature, but to God alone: 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.
Ps. 76:11; Jer. 44:25-26; Deut. 23:21-23; Ps. 50:14; Gen. 28:20-22; 1 Sam. 1:11; Ps. 66:13-14; Ps. 132:2-5.

7. No man may vow to do anything forbidden in the Word of God, or what would hinder any duty therein commanded, or which is not in his own power, and for the performance whereof he hath no promise of ability from God. 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.
Acts 23:12, 14; Mark 6:26; Num. 30:5, 8, 12-13; Matt. 19:11-12; 1 Cor. 7:2, 9; Eph. 4:28; 1 Pet. 4:2; 1 Cor. 7:23.

6. While it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the uses in Scripture of the words "vow" and "covenant," a covenant that men make with God differs from a vow in that it is a corporate

act of pledging obedience to what God has commanded in His covenant.
Gen. 28:20-22; Num. 21:2; Deut. 23: 21-23; Josh. 24:24-25; 2 Chron. 34: 29-32.

7. God has established two covenants with men: the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace (see chap. 7). In accomplishing the Covenant of Grace God made covenants with Noah, Abraham, Israel at Sinai (renewed in the plain of Moab), and with David; these were fulfilled in the new covenant by Jesus Christ.
Gen. 2:17; Gen. 9:1-17; Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 24:3-11; Deut. 29—30; 2 Sam. 7: 5-16; Jer. 31:31-34.

8. God's covenants require obedience of all men whether they acknowledge their obligation or not. God's people, individually and corporately, respond to His covenants by solemnly promising to be the Lord's and to keep His commandments. The Old Testament sacraments, such as circumcision, passover and the feast of tabernacles, were means of entering into and periodically renewing Israel's covenant. Likewise, the sacraments of the New Testament are ordinances for entrance into and renewal of covenant union with God. In addition to these prescribed times of covenant celebration, God's people under the old covenant engaged in corporate acts of repentance and renewal in relation to the transgression of specific commandments or to general apostasy from God. Scripture calls such acts "covenants."
Gen. 17:10; Lev. 23:3-10 with John 19:36 and 1 Cor. 5:7-8; Matt. 26:26-29;

1 Cor. 11:23-26; Josh. 24:24-25; 2 Chron. 15:2, 8-15; 2 Chron. 23:16; 2 Chron. 34:29-32; Neh. 9-10.

9. Covenanting in the New Testament takes the form of confessing Christ and His Lordship. In view of the continued emphasis of the covenantal relationship of God to men in the New Testament, it is appropriate for churches and nations to covenant to be the Lord's and to serve Him. The statements or documents produced in these acts of covenant response are dependent upon the Covenant of Grace. They are statements of responsibility arising from the application of the Word of God to the times in which they are made. Such covenants have continuing validity in so far as they give true expression to the Word of God for the times and situations in which believers live.
Isa. 45:23 with Rom. 14:11 and Phil. 2:11; Jer. 31:31 with Heb. 8:6-13; Ex. 19:5-6 with 1 Pet. 2:9-10.

Chapter 23: Of the Civil Magistrate

(Larger Catechism: 135, 136)

1. God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates, to be, under Him, over the people, for His own glory, and the public good; and, to this end, hath armed them with the power of the sword, for the defence and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punishment of evildoers.
Rom. 13:1-4; 1 Pet. 2:13-14.

1. *We reject* the belief that civil government is unnecessary or essentially evil.

2. God has given the exercise of all authority to the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the Divine Lawgiver, Governor and Judge. His will concerning the purpose of civil government and the principles regarding its functions and operation are revealed in the written Word of God. The Holy Spirit enables even unregenerate rulers to fulfill their proper functions. A true recognition of the authority and law of Christ in national life can only be the fruit of the Spirit's regenerating power in the lives of individuals.
Deut. 4:39; Dan. 4:25, 32, 35; Matt. 28:18; Phil. 2:10; Eph. 1:22; Isa. 33: 22; Deut. 17:18-19; Isa. 45:1-7; Ezek. 36:27.

3. God has assigned to people, both individually and collectively, the responsibility for establishing and maintaining civil government, and the people are accountable to Jesus Christ for the proper exercise of this responsibility.
Deut. 1:13-14; Deut. 17:15; 1 Sam. 8: 22; 2 Sam. 5:3; Hos. 8:1, 4; Eccl. 10: 16-17.

4. Every nation ought to recognize the Divine institution of civil government, the sovereignty of God exercised by Jesus Christ, and its duty to rule the civil affairs of men in accordance with the will of God. It should enter into covenant with Christ and serve to advance His Kingdom on earth. The negligence of civil government in any of these particulars is sinful, makes the nation liable to the wrath of God, and threatens the continued existence of the government and nation.

Phil. 2:10; Rom. 13:4; Ps. 132:12; Ps. 103:17-19; Ps. 2:10-12.

5. *We reject* the view that nations have no corporate responsibility for acknowledging and obeying Christ.

6. It is the duty of every Christian citizen to labor and pray for his nation's official and explicit recognition of the authority and law of Jesus Christ, Preserver and Ruler of nations, and for the conduct of all governmental affairs in harmony with the written Word of God.
1 Tim. 2:1-2; Phil. 2:9-10; Acts 2:1-39; Ps. 2:8-12; Esther 4:14.

7. *We deny* that constitutional recognition of Jesus Christ means union of church and state.

8. *We reject* the teaching that Christians should not seek the establishment of Christian civil government.

9. No particular form of civil government is commanded in the Scriptures. Any form of civil government which observes the duties and limitations set upon it by God in His revealed Word is acceptable to God.
Ex. 18:21-24; Prov. 29:14; Deut. 1: 16-17.

10. *We deny* that simply having a democratic or republican form of government insures God's approval and blessing.

11. All officers and employees of a civil government are to be servants of God for good. They are responsible to

God for the discharge of lawful duties rightfully assigned to them by human authority. Neither their official position, however, nor the orders of their superiors, nor the will of the people, exonerates them from blame for any unscriptural action or inaction.
Rom. 13:3-4; 2 Chron. 19:6-7; Prov. 29:26.

2. It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the office of a magistrate, when called thereunto; in the managing whereof, as they ought especially to maintain piety, justice, and peace, according to the wholesome laws of each commonwealth; so for that end, they may lawfully now, under the New Testament, wage war, upon just and necessary occasion.
Prov. 8:15-16; Rom. 13:1-2, 4; Ps. 2: 10-12; 1 Tim. 2:2; Ps. 82:3-4; 2 Sam. 23:3; 1 Pet. 2:13; Luke 3:14; Rom. 13: 4; Matt. 8:9-10; Acts 10:1-2; Rev. 17: 14, 16.

12. *We reject* the view that it is wrong to wage war in defense of life, liberty or religion.

13. Citizens cannot abdicate their responsibility to determine the moral legitimacy of a particular war and to govern their participation accordingly. Such decisions should be made prayerfully in the light of Scripture and with the counsel of the church.
Acts 5:29; 1 Sam. 14:44-45.

14. When justly administered, capital punishment is a scriptural application of civil authority.
Rom. 13:4; Gen. 9:6; Acts 25:11; Num. 35:29-34.

15. The Christian, when such action involves no disloyalty to Christ, ought to be involved in the selection of and to vote for civil rulers who fear God, love truth and justice, hate evil, and are publicly committed to scriptural principles of civil government.
Ex. 18:21; Deut. 16:18; 2 Sam. 23:3; Rom. 13:3.

16. It is sinful for a Christian to take an oath which compromises his supreme allegiance to Jesus Christ. It is also sinful to vote for officials who are required to take an oath which a Christian himself could not take in good conscience. Voting involves the voter in responsibility for any act required of the official as a condition of holding his office.
Deut. 10:20; Isa. 45:22-23; 2 John 1: 11; 1 Tim. 5:22.

17. The Christian must profess publicly and the Church must witness, that Christ is the Ruler of every nation. Whatever the official action of the civil government of a nation may be, the Christian in his civil actions must always exhibit his loyalty to Christ. The Christian must relinquish every right or privilege of citizenship which involves him in silence about, or denial of the supreme authority of Jesus Christ.
Matt. 5:13-14; Prov. 3:5-6; Ps. 37:7; Matt. 22:21; John 17:14-15; Mark 13:9.

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

18. *We reject* the portion of paragraph 3 after the colon.

19. Both the government of the nation and the government of the visible church are established by God. Though distinct and independent of each other,

be according to the mind of God.
2 Chron. 26:18 with Matt. 18:17 and Matt. 16:19; 1 Cor. 12:28-29; Eph. 4: 11-12; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; Rom. 10:15; Heb. 5:4; Isa. 49:23; Ps. 122:9; Ezra 7:23, 25-28; Lev. 24:16; Deut. 13:5-6, 12; 1 Kings 18:4; 1 Chron. 13:1-9; 2 Kings 23:1-26; 2 Chron. 34:33; 2 Chron. 15: 12-13; 2 Chron. 19:8-11; 2 Chron. 29—30; Matt. 2:4-5.

they both owe supreme allegiance to Jesus Christ. The governments of church and state differ in sphere of authority in that due submission to the government of the visible church is the obligation of members thereof, while due submission to civil government is the obligation of all men. The governments of church and state also have different functions and prerogatives in the advancement of the Kingdom of God. The means of enforcement of the civil government are physical, while those of church government are not. Neither government has the right to invade or assume the authority of the other. They should cooperate to the honor and glory of God, while maintaining their separate jurisdictions.
Rom. 13:1; Matt. 22:21; Col. 1:18; Acts 15:10; Ezra 7:10, 25-26; 2 Chron. 26: 18-19; Matt. 5:25; 1 Cor. 5:12-13.

20. Though responsible for maintaining conditions favorable to the spread of the Gospel, civil government should never attempt to convert men to Christ by the use of force or by persecution. It should guarantee to all its subjects every human right given by God to men. It should, however, restrain and punish its subjects for those sinful actions which fall under its jurisdiction.
1 Tim. 2:1-4; 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Rom. 13: 4; Ezra 7:26; Neh. 13:17-21.

4. It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates, to honour their persons, to pay them tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake. Infidelity, or difference

21. No civil government which deprives men of civil or religious liberty, fails to protect human life, or proposes to force men to do violence to the spirit and precepts of the Christian religion or

in religion, doth not make void the magistrates' just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to them: from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted; much less hath 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.
1 Tim. 2:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:17; Rom. 13:6-7; Rom. 13:5; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-14, 16; Rom. 13:1; 1 Kings 2:35; Acts 25: 9-11; 2 Pet. 2:1, 10-11; Jude 1:8-11; 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:15-17.

interferes unjustly with private ownership of property, can in such matters rightfully expect the submission of its citizens or the blessings of God promised for obedience to Him.
Acts 4:17, 19, 33; Deut. 27:19; Isa. 10: 1-2; Ex. 20:15; Isa. 1:23-26; Dan. 6:13; Heb. 11:23.

22. Both the Christian and the Church have a responsibility for witnessing against national sins and for promoting justice.
Amos 2:6-8; Amos 5:14-15.

23. The failure of a civil government, through negligence, ignorance, or rebellion, to recognize the authority of Jesus Christ does not cancel its just authority. A civil government, though guilty of many sins, still has authority in so far as it furthers some of the scriptural ends of civil government.
Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1; Rom. 2:14; Acts 23:5; Ex. 22:28.

24. Due submission of all persons, cheerfully rendered, to civil officers and to civil government in general, is pleasing to God. No person, however, is required by God to obey civil authority when such authority demands that the citizen or subject do that which is clearly contrary to the law of God as revealed in the Scriptures. In such cases the duty of the Christian is to obey God rather than men. The Christian has a special obligation to render due submission to civil authority in order to express his loyalty to Jesus Christ, to prove his concern for the welfare

of all men, and to bring honor to the name of Christ.
1 Pet. 2:13-14; Rom. 13:5; Acts 5:29; Titus 3:1.

25. The only submission which a Christian may promise to any civil government is due submission in the Lord. Any promise of submission or oath of allegiance beyond this is sinful. If and when the civil government of a nation requires, as a condition of civil service or of holding office, an oath which implies that civil allegiance transcends the swearer's convictions of conscience and obedience to God, it is the Christian's duty to refuse such an oath. It is within the corporate power of the Church, acting through its courts, to declare that facts or circumstances which may exist in a specific situation render the taking of a civil oath sinful.
Gen. 25:33; Matt. 22:21; Eph. 6:12; Matt. 4:10; Deut. 10:20.

26. It is the duty of the Christian to ascertain whether any prescribed oath of allegiance to the civil authority involves acceptance of unchristian principles stated or implied in its constitution of government. If the oath of allegiance to civil authority explicitly or by clear implication requires support of anti-Christian, atheistic, or secular principles, then the Christian must refuse on these grounds to take the oath of allegiance.
Acts 5:29; Acts 4:18-20.

27. In the matter of taking oaths required by civil authority, the Christian should seek the guidance and support of the Church.

28. It is the duty of the Christian Church to testify to the authority of Christ over the nations, against all anti-Christian, atheistic, and secular principles of civil government, and against all sinful oaths of allegiance to civil governments. When the Church by orderly processes in her own courts determines that the oath of allegiance to a civil government compromises the Christian's loyalty to Christ or involves the Christian in the support of sinful principles of civil government, the Church must require her members to refuse such sinful oaths.
Acts 4:24-29; Eph. 5:11; Rev. 3:15-16; Acts 15:28-29; Rev. 2:13-14.

29. When participating in political elections, the Christian should support and vote only for such men as are publicly committed to scriptural principles of civil government. Should the Christian seek civil office by political election, he must openly inform those whose support he seeks of his adherence to Christian principles of civil government.
1 Chron. 16:31; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Chron. 19:6-7; Dan. 2:48; Eph. 4:25.

30. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and the decisions of civil courts cannot determine for the Christian what is morally right and what is sinful. However, since civil government is an institution of God, it is within the legitimate province of the civil courts of a nation to determine what the nation's laws and required oaths of allegiance mean or do not mean. A decision of a civil court cannot legitimize sinful conduct, but it can place

before a Christian a factual situation upon which a moral judgment can be made. It cannot be proper for the Christian to assume that an oath of allegiance implies sinful requirements, when the civil courts have explicitly contradicted such implication. Every oath must be understood in the sense intended by the authority requiring the oath. It is for the Christian and the Church to decide whether this sense involves sinful requirements.
Matt. 22:21b; Rom. 13:5; Eccl. 8:4; 1 Thess. 5:21.

31. *We reject* any inference that civil government has jurisdiction over conscience.

Chapter 24: Of Marriage and Divorce

(Larger Catechism: 137-139; Shorter Catechism: 63-66, 70-72)
(The *Testimony* also treats "Education of Children" in this chapter.)

1. Marriage is an ordinance of God; however, to be unmarried is also an equally honorable state, and it may be the will of God for a person to remain single. Every effort should be made to submit to the direction of God in this matter, and to maintain a chaste and obedient life style.
1 Cor. 7:7-8.

2. Premarital sex relations or promiscuous sex practices as well as homosexuality and other perversions of the natural order are violations of God's law and purpose. All should strive to

discipline their sexual desires, maintain purity of thought and practice, and avoid situations which lead to sexual temptation.
1 Cor. 6:9, 15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-5, 9-11; 1 Cor. 7:8-9; Rom. 1:26-28; Phil. 4:8; Prov. 5.

1. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman: neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband; at the same time.
Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5-6; Prov. 2:17.

3. By God's appointment the marriage relationship is to continue as long as both parties are living. Marriage may not be contracted for any other period. After the death of one party the other party may lawfully marry another.
Matt. 19:4-6; Rom. 7:2-3; Gen. 2:24-25; 1 Cor. 7:39.

4. Marriage is a covenant relationship made before God between a man and a woman.
Prov. 2:17; Mal. 2:14; cf. Hos. 2:16-23.

5. The validity of marriage depends on the mutual agreement of the parties, rather than upon official administration; yet for the glory of God and the protection of the parties, and so that the greatness of the privilege and the seriousness of the responsibility of the marriage may be properly impressed on the parties, marriage should be contracted in the presence of a qualified officer and competent witnesses.
Matt. 19:6; 1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Pet. 2:13.

6. The marriage of Christians should ordinarily be solemnized by an ordained minister of the Gospel.
1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

7. Parties to marriage should comply with the civil laws regarding marriage as long as these laws are not contrary to Scripture.
1 Pet. 2:13.

2. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed; and for preventing of uncleanness.
Gen. 2:18; Mal. 2:15; 1 Cor. 7:2, 9.

8. God created man, male and female, with specific responsibilities to each other.
Gen. 2:18-25.

9. As sexual beings, men and women are, in ordinary circumstances, to marry for the expression of love, the satisfaction of their needs, and the mutual enjoyment of each other, as well as the continuation of the race.
1 Cor. 7:3-5.

10. God has ordained a natural order within the family: the husband is the head of the family, having a relationship to his wife like that of Christ to the Church. He is ordinarily the provider for his family. He is to love his wife as Christ loves His Church and as his own body. He is to love, discipline and instruct his children, and to lead his family in worship.
1 Tim. 5:8; Eph. 5:25-28; 1 Pet. 3:7; Prov. 19:18; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:4-9.

11. The wife is to be a helper to her husband. The Scripture commands submission to her husband in the Lord. She is to join her husband in the wise use of family resources, the care and instruction of children and the maintenance of the home as a place of love, cheerfulness and hospitality.
Gen. 2:18; Eph. 5:22-24; Prov. 31:10-31; 1 Pet. 3:1, 6.

12. Children are commanded to obey and honor their parents in the Lord.
Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; Eph. 6:1-3.

13. Family administration involves mutual responsibility. The exchange or confusion of roles in the family in ordinary circumstances results in God's displeasure and in consequent unhappiness.
Eph. 5:22; Eph. 6:4; Ps. 128; Col. 3: 18-21.

14. *We deny* that the submission in the Lord of a wife to her husband contradicts the equality, in value and dignity, of her person to his.
Gen. 1:27; Gal. 3:28.

15. While we abhor the sinful abuses of a husband's authority and the abdication of his responsibilities within marriage, common since the Fall, *we deny* that his headship is, in and of itself, a result of sin.
Gen. 2:18; 1 Cor. 11:3-10; Eph. 5:23; 1 Tim. 2:11-13.

16. Although in certain circumstances in the service of God it may be unwise for a person to marry, we deny that Scripture forbids officers of the Church to marry.
1 Cor. 9:5; 1 Tim. 4:3.

17. *We deny* that marriage is a more spiritual state than the single life, or that it is necessary for eternal salvation.
1 Cor. 7:7-8.

18. *We deny* that marriage is necessary for officers in the Church.
1 Cor. 7:7.

19. Unborn children are living creatures in the image of God. From the moment

of conception to birth they are objects of God's providence as they are being prepared by Him for the responsibilities and privileges of postnatal life. Unborn children are to be treated as human persons in all decisions and actions involving them. Deliberately induced abortion, except possibly to save the mother's life, is murder.
Ex. 20:13; Ex. 21:22-23; Ps. 139:13-16.

3. It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry, who are able with judgment to give their consent. Yet is it the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord: and therefore such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with infidels, papists, or other idolaters: neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by marrying with such as are notoriously wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresies.
Heb. 13:4; 1 Tim. 4:3; 1 Cor. 7:36-38; Gen. 24:57-58; 1 Cor. 7:39; Gen. 34:14; Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3-4; 1 Kings 11:4; Neh. 13:25-27; Mal. 2:11-12; 2 Cor. 6:14.

20. Christians should not marry those who give only nominal adherence to the Christian faith.
1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14.

4. Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden in the Word; 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. 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.
Lev. 18; 1 Cor. 5:1; Amos 2:7; Mark 6:18; Lev. 18:24-28; Lev. 20:19-21.

21. *We reject* the last sentence in paragraph 4 of the *Confession of Faith*.

22. The prohibition of marriage with a deceased wife's sister or a deceased husband's brother is not warranted by Scripture.
Lev. 18:18; Deut. 25:5-10.

5. Adultery or fornication committed after a contract, being detected before marriage, giveth just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract. In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce; and, after the divorce, to marry another, as if the offending party were dead.
Matt. 1:18-20; Matt. 5:31-32; Matt. 19: 9; Rom. 7:2-3.

6. Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage; yet nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage; 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.
Matt. 19:8-9; 1 Cor. 7:15; Matt. 19:6; Deut. 24:1-4.

23. Before seeking divorce, it is the responsibility of the innocent party to attempt reconciliation with the guilty party in the same manner as in any case of sin, first by his or her own appeal, and then, if need be, by calling on the elders of the church.
Matt. 18:15-17.

24. In any marriage threatened with dissolution, or even if divorce has occurred, both parties ought to strive for reconciliation on the basis of repentance for sin and willingness to forgive.
Eph. 5:25-33; Eph. 4:31-32; 1 Cor. 7:10-14.

25. Members of the household of faith should beware of seeking marriage counsel from unbelievers or from those who have failed to integrate their faith with their professional work.
Matt. 18:15-17; 2 Cor. 6:14-17.

26. Desertion can be a ground of divorce only when the departing person is an unbeliever.
1 Cor. 7:15; Matt. 18:17.

27. If the unrepentant guilty party in a divorce marries another, he commits adultery.
Matt. 19:9.

28. Where the guilty party shows evidence of repentance for the sin of breaking a marriage, the Church may receive or restore him or her to membership.
Gal. 6:1.

Education of Children

29. God is the source of all truth. The knowledge which man can attain merely reflects part of God's creation, and cannot properly be understood apart from God. Therefore there can be no true education without a knowledge of God and His dealings with man, as revealed in the Scriptures. He enlightens man's mind in the understanding of the physical and cultural world. Christians are to ask the aid of the Holy Spirit in the educational task.
Ps. 24:1; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 2:6; Prov. 9:10; Ex. 31:3-6.

30. Education of children is primarily the responsibility of parents, though they may delegate part of this responsibility to the church or other agencies. The earliest and most important educational institution is the home, where children are taught, by precept and example, basic principles of godly living. Parents should educate each child to the extent of their resources and the child's ability, seeking to develop his God-given talents that he may serve God most fully and effectively. In order to promote the general welfare, the state may prescribe educational standards and should provide educational opportunities, both in harmony with God's law.
Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 34:11; Ps. 78:2-7; Prov. 22:6.

31. In the providence of God public schools have provided great social benefits. Yet in serving a highly pluralistic society they have attempted to be religiously and morally "neutral," which

is sinful. To a large extent instruction is based on a secular, humanistic philosophy which ignores God and sees man's welfare as the highest good. Local schools vary widely, however, according to the standards of the community and the quality of the teachers. All Christians, especially those who are teachers, school administrators or board members, should bear witness to the whole truth of God as it relates to education.
Matt. 12:30; 2 Sam. 23:3-4.

32. Where necessary and possible, Christian parents should cooperate in supporting or establishing schools whose curriculum presents a biblical world and life view, and place their children in them. This requires maintenance of the highest academic quality along with Christian orientation in every subject and activity.

33. *We reject* any attempt by the state to force a secular, humanistic philosophy on Christian schools.

34. Parents should take care to counteract any unbiblical teaching given to their children, whether in public or Christian schools. As youth increase in their knowledge and discernment, the home and the Church should help them to examine what is presented in school, to distinguish between God-given truths and human theories, and to integrate the facts learned with a Christian view of man and the universe.
Isa. 8:20.

Chapter 25: Of the Church

(Larger Catechism: 60-65)

1. The catholic or universal Church which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.
Eph. 1:10, 22-23; Eph. 5:23, 27, 32; Col. 1:18.

1. The Church is the body of Christ, which He has redeemed with His own blood, to be a chosen people unto Himself.

2. It is the mission of the Church to preserve, maintain and proclaim to the whole world the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the whole counsel of God; to gather into her fellowship those of every race and people who accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and promise obedience to Him; to build them up in their most holy faith, and train them to be faithful witnesses for Christ in all his offices; to maintain the ordinances of divine worship in their purity; witness against all evil; and in every way to seek the advancement of the Kingdom of God on earth.

2. The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.
1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Ps. 2:8; Rev. 7:9; Rom. 15:9-12; 1 Cor. 7:14; Acts 2: 39; Ezek. 16:20-21; Rom. 11:16; Gen. 3:15; Gen. 17:7; Matt. 13:47; Isa. 9:7; Eph. 2:19; Eph. 3:15; Acts 2:47.

3. The Church is one among all nations, yet for the purpose of corporate worship and orderly procedures, distinct congregations and judicatories are warranted.
Acts 15:22; Acts 16:4-5; 1 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; Col. 4:15-16.

4. There is a visible and an invisible aspect of the Church, but these are not two churches.
Heb. 12:23; Rev. 3:1, 5.

5. *We reject* the teaching that the Church originated in the New Testament and is an interruption of God's plan for the Kingdom.
Rom. 11:17-24; Heb. 9:13-10:18.

3. Unto this catholic visible Church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto.
1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11-13; Matt. 28: 19-20; Isa. 59:21.

6. The Lord Jesus Christ has clothed His Church with power and authority. This authority is vested in the whole membership of the Church, which has the right to choose its officers from among those of its own members who possess the scriptural qualifications.

7. Christ has appointed in His Word a particular form of government for the visible church. It is government by elders (Greek: presbyters) and is therefore called presbyterian. Each congregation should be ruled by a session of ordained elders, elected by the membership of the congregation.
Acts 15:22; Acts 14:23; Acts 13:1-4; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2 Cor. 8:19; 1 Tim. 3:1-7. (See *Testimony*, chap. 31, par. 3; and *Directory for Church Government,* chap. 3, sect. I and II, and chap. 4.)

8. The permanent officers to be set apart by ordination are elders and deacons. The office of elder is restricted in Scripture to men. Women as well as men may hold the office of deacon. Ordination is a solemn setting apart to a specific office by the laying on of the hands of a court of the Church and is not to be repeated. Installation is the official constitution of a relationship between one who is ordained and the congregation.
1 Tim. 2:12; 3:2; Titus 1:6.

9. The responsibility of the elders is in teaching and ruling. Although all elders are to be able to teach, the Scripture recognizes a distinction in these functions. All elders are equal in the government of the Church. This office is referred to in Scripture by two

terms used synonymously: elder, and bishop or overseer.
1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9; 1 Tim. 5:17; Acts 20:28; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:28; Titus 1:7.

10. The elders are organized in courts (the session, the presbytery and the Synod) to which is committed the power of governing the church and of ordaining officers. This power is moral and spiritual, and subject to the law of God.
Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9; 1 Tim. 5:17; Acts 20:28; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:28; Titus 1:7.

11. The diaconate is a spiritual office subordinate to the session and is not a teaching or ruling office. The deacons have responsibility for the ministry of mercy, the finances and property of the congregation, and such other tasks as are assigned to them by the session. Other officers mentioned in the New Testament were commissioned uniquely during the apostolic age for the establishment of the Church.
Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim. 3:8-13.

12. While the New Testament does not state plainly the authority or qualifications for a continuing office of Evangelist, it does clearly set forth the ministry of evangelism in calling all men everywhere to repent and believe the Gospel. Persons displaying the gift of evangelism should minister under the oversight of the Church in given situations.

13. *We deny* that the exclusion of women from the office of elder can

4. This catholic Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. 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.
Rom. 11:3-4; Rev. 12:6, 14; Rev. 2–3; 1 Cor. 5:6-7.

5. The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth, to worship God according to His will.
1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 2–3; Matt. 13:24-30, 47; Rev. 18:2; Rom. 11:18-22; Matt. 16:18; Ps. 72:17; Ps. 102:28; Matt. 28:19-20.

be said to result in the frustration of one's divine vocation or the neglect of one's spiritual gifts for ministry.
1 Cor. 12:14-26.

14. Divisions that separate believers into denominations mar the unity of the Church and are due to error and sin. It is the duty of all denominations which are true churches of Christ to seek reconciliation and union. Such organizational unity, however, should be sought only on the basis of truth and of scriptural order. It is the duty of every believer to unite with the branch of the visible church which adheres most closely to the Scriptures.
Acts 15:22-29; 1 Cor. 10:17; Eph. 4:4-6; Acts 17:11-12.

15. The Church must have membership requirements based on Scripture, to which every member gives his assent. Those who give such assent and their children are church members.
Acts 2:39; 1 Cor. 7:14; Rev. 2–3. (See *Directory for Church Government,* chap. 1, sect. I.)

16. It is the duty of Christians to pray for and seek after the purity and unity of the Church.
Ps. 122:6-9; John 17:11, 21; Eph. 4:13.

17. When any church imposes sinful requirements for membership; when its constitution or creedal statements are fundamentally unscriptural; when its administration is corrupt; or when sound preaching and proper discipline are neglected, it is the duty of Christians to attempt its reformation. Then if such efforts prove ineffectual, it is

6. There is no other head of the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself, in the Church, against Christ and all that is called God.
Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22; Matt. 23:8-10; 2 Thess. 2:3-4, 8-9; Rev. 13:6.

their duty to separate from it, and to unite with a sound church.
Rev. 2:20-23; Acts 19:8-9; 2 Cor. 6:16-17.

18. Many antichrists will be present in the world throughout history. Prior to Christ's coming the final "man of lawlessness" will be revealed. He will be destroyed by Christ.
1 John 2:18; 1 John 4:3; 2 Thess. 2:8.

19. Christians should walk in the light. Their beliefs, purposes, manner of life, and their rules of action and conduct should be based on the Word of God and should not be concealed. Oathbound societies usually involve an improper requirement of secrecy, aims which are immoral, intimate fellowship with unbelievers or participation in unbiblical worship. Membership in such organizations is inconsistent with a Christian profession, however good their announced purposes may be.
1 John 1:7; 1 Thess. 5:5; Matt. 5:14; 2 John 1:7-11; John 3:20-21; Eph. 5:8-14; Matt. 15:9.

Chapter 26: Of the Communion of Saints

(Larger Catechism: 135-136, 141-142; Shorter Catechism: 68-69, 74-81)

1. All saints, that are united to Jesus Christ their Head by His Spirit and by faith, have fellowship with Him in His graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory: and, being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and

1. Concern for fellow believers should be a restraint to evil, especially to unkind speech and action against one another.
1 Cor. 13; Eph. 4:31-32; Rom. 14:19; Jas. 3:16-18; Gal. 5:15; 1 Cor. 12.

are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.
1 John 1:3; Eph. 3:16-19; John 1:16; Eph. 2:5-6; Phil. 3:10; Rom. 6:5-6; 2 Tim. 2:12; Eph. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 12:7; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; Col. 2:19; 1 Thess. 5:11, 14; Rom. 1:11-12, 14; 1 John 3:16-18; Gal. 6:10.

2. Saints by profession are bound to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God; and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities, and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.
Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 2:42, 46; Isa. 2:3; 1 Cor. 11:20; Acts 2:44-45; 1 John 3: 17; 2 Cor. 8—9; Acts 11:29-30.

2. The congregation is the primary organic unit in the presbyterian system of church government. It is commonly composed of Christians residing in the same community who meet together for the worship of God.

3. In addition to their obligation to assemble for worship, believers should assemble for social purposes as another means of support and growth. In response to Christ's love for them, believers are to express their love to one another by using their diverse gifts and talents to help their brethren; by giving and receiving counsel, support, hospitality and comfort; by spending time with one another and sharing joys and sorrows. This is especially necessary when, in the providence of God, brethren need material support and moral and spiritual encouragement.
Heb. 10:24-25; Heb. 13:2; Gal. 6:2; Rom. 12:10, 13, 15; Eph. 4:28; Phil. 4: 10-14; 1 Cor. 16:1-2.

4. All people, regardless of their mental or physical condition, are made in the image of God. Each person's life is a gift from God. We are not to evaluate individuals in terms of their mental and physical ability or appearance. The church should be careful to accept and cherish its handicapped, incorporating them into the life of the church. In evangelistic outreach the church should not overlook handicapped persons but seek them out, minister to them and pray for their conversion.

5. For preservation of life and because of respect for our bodies as God's creation, we are to be careful in the

3. This communion, which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them, in any wise, partakers of the substance of His Godhead; or to be equal with Christ, in any respect: either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous. Nor doth their communion one with another, as saints, take away, or infringe the title or property which each man hath in his goods and possessions.
Col. 1:18-19; 1 Cor. 8:6; Isa. 42:8; 1 Tim. 6:15-16; Ps. 45:7 with Heb. 1:8-9; Ex. 20:15; Eph. 4:28; Acts 5:4.

use of drugs. Christians should avoid enslavement to alcohol, tobacco or any habit-forming drug. The Scripture strongly condemns drunkenness as a sin.
Gen. 1:27 with 9:6; 1 Cor. 6:9-10.

6. Because drunkenness is so common, and because the intemperate use of alcohol is constantly being promoted by advertising, business practices, and social pressure, Christians must be careful not to conform to the attitudes and the practices of the world with regard to alcoholic beverages. To prevent damage to our neighbor, to provide mutual help in godly living, and to strengthen each other in living a disciplined life it is altogether wise and proper that Christians refrain from the use, sale and manufacture of alcoholic beverages.
Prov. 20:1; Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Cor. 8:13.

7. The use of tobacco is detrimental to health and is to be avoided because of the responsibility to preserve the body which is a temple of God.
1 Cor. 6:19; 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

8. The use of drugs for pleasure or escape from moral responsibility should be avoided; one should strive for victory over physical and emotional weakness through the strength of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, and make wise use of proper medical care.
Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:10-14.

Chapter 27: Of the Sacraments

(Larger Catechism: 161-177; Shorter Catechism: 91-97)

1. Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and His benefits; and to confirm our interest in Him; as also, to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church, and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to His Word.
Rom. 4:11; Gen. 17:7, 10; Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23; 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Cor. 11:25-26; Gal. 3:17; Rom. 15:8; Ex. 12:48; Gen. 34: 14; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 10:16, 21.

2. There is in every sacrament a spiritual relation, or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified; whence it comes to pass, that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.
Gen. 17:10; Matt. 26:27-28; Titus 3:5.

3. The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them: neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it: but upon the work of the Spirit, and the word of institution, which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers.
Rom. 2:28-29; 1 Pet. 3:21; Matt. 3: 11; 1 Cor. 12:13; Matt. 26:27-28; Matt. 28:19-20.

1. The sacraments are signs of our covenant union with Christ and His Church, and our common profession that we are owned by Him. They are to be observed under the direction of the elders in a service of worship in which members of the congregation are present.
1 Cor. 11:23-24; 1 Cor. 10:21; Acts 2: 42; Num. 9:14.

2. The administration of the sacraments is to be accompanied by the reading and preaching of the Word.
Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7.

4. There be only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord: neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the Word lawfully ordained.
Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:20, 23; 1 Cor. 4: 1; Heb. 5:4.

3. *We reject* the view that sacraments are mere symbols and not means of grace.

4. *We reject* the view that the sacraments are not necessary in the Church.

5. The sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the New.
1 Cor. 10:1-4.

Chapter 28: Of Baptism

(Larger Catechism: 161-177; Shorter Catechism: 92-95)

1. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church; but also, to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life. Which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in His Church until the end of the world.
Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 4:11 with Col. 2:11-12; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:5; Titus 3:5; Mark 1:4; Rom. 6:3-4; Matt. 28:19-20.

1. All those who have received baptism are to be considered part of the covenant people of God.
Gen. 17:12-14; Col. 2:11-12; Acts 16: 31-34.

2. The church accepts as valid the baptism which has been administered in any true branch of the visible church.

2. The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized, in the name

of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the Gospel, lawfully called thereunto.
Matt. 3:11; John 1:33; Matt. 28:19-20.

3. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but Baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.
Heb. 9:10, 19-22; Acts 2:41; Acts 16: 33; Mark 7:4.

3. *We reject* the teaching that an essential feature of baptism is immersion.
1 Cor. 10:2; Heb. 6:2; Heb. 9:10; Luke 11:38.

4. Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents, are to be baptized.
Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:37-38; Gen. 17: 7, 9-10 with Gal. 3:9, 14, and Col. 2: 11-12, and Acts 2:38-39, and Rom. 4: 11-12; 1 Cor. 7:14; Matt. 28:19; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15.

4. The children of believing parents are to receive baptism because of their covenantal relationship.
Acts 2:38-39; Gen. 17:7; Acts 16:31; Col. 2:11-12.

5. In administering baptism to her children the church recognizes their rightful place within the covenant, and her obligation to give them pastoral care and oversight, and to assist the parents in carrying out their covenanted responsibilities. In presenting them for baptism, parents not only claim for their children the nurture and benefits of the Church, but dedicate them to God in the service of Christ.

6. The baptism of infants sets before parents the obligation to do all in their power to lead their children to a personal faith in Jesus Christ.
Gen. 18:19; Matt. 28:19-20; Prov. 22:6.

7. Baptism is not to be administered to the infants of persons who, though members of the church, have so neglected the means of grace as to cast doubt on their profession, or their intention to fulfill the baptismal vows.
Ps. 76:11.

5. Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it; or, that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.
Luke 7:30 with Ex. 4:24-26; Rom. 4: 11; Acts 10:2, 4, 22, 31, 45, 47; Acts 8:13, 23.

6. The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will in His appointed time.
John 3:5, 8; Gal. 3:27; Titus 3:5; Eph. 5:25-26; Acts 2:38, 41.

7. The sacrament of Baptism is but once to be administered unto any person.
Titus 3:5.

8. *We reject* the teaching that a person cannot be saved without baptism; or that persons are regenerated by baptism.
Luke 23:39-43; Acts 8:13, 18-23; Acts 10:47.

Chapter 29: Of the Lord's Supper

(Larger Catechism: 168-177; Shorter Catechism: 92-93, 96-97)

1. Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein He was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of His body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in His Church, unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death; the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment

and growth in Him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto Him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Him, and with each other, as members of His mystical body.
1 Cor. 11:23-26; 1 Cor. 10:16-17, 21; 1 Cor. 12:13.

2. In this sacrament, Christ is not offered up to His Father; nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sins of the quick or dead; but only a commemoration of that one offering up of Himself, by Himself, upon the cross, once for all: and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same: so that the Popish sacrifice of the mass (as they call it) is most abominably injurious to Christ's one, only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of His elect.
Heb. 9:22, 25-26, 28; 1 Cor. 11:24-26; Matt. 26:26-27; Heb. 7:23-24, 27; Heb. 10:11-12, 14, 18.

3. The Lord Jesus, hath, in this ordinance, appointed His ministers to declare His word of institution to the people; to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to a holy use; and to take and break the bread, to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants; but to none who are not then present in the congregation.
Matt. 26:26-28, and Mark 14:22-24, and Luke 22:19-20 with 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20.

1. The Lord's Supper is to be repeatedly administered to a Christian congregation, at such times as the session deems advisable, according to the needs of the congregation. Observance of this sacrament is a corporate and personal profession of continued adherence to the covenant bond entered into at baptism.
1 Cor. 11:23-26.

4. Private masses, or receiving this sacrament by a priest or any other alone; as likewise, the denial of the cup to the people, worshipping the elements, the lifting them up or carrying them about for adoration, and the reserving them for any pretended religious use; are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament, and to the institution of Christ.
1 Cor. 10:16; Mark 14:23; 1 Cor. 11: 25-29; Matt. 15:9.

5. The outward elements in this sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to Him crucified, as that, truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ; albeit in substance and nature they still remain truly and only bread and wine, as they were before.
Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:26-28; Matt. 26:29.

6. That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of Christ's body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant, not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense and reason; overthroweth the nature of the sacrament, and hath been, and is the cause of manifold superstitions; yea, of gross idolatries.
Acts 3:21 with 1 Cor. 11:24-26; Luke 24:6, 39.

7. Worthy receivers outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this

2. When a congregation is observing the Lord's Supper, worship services in which this sacrament is observed may be held for the sick and invalid who are of sound mind in the presence of members of the session and congregation. There is no instance in Scripture of private communion.
1 Cor. 11:33; Acts 20:7.

3. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not to be exalted above the regular preaching of the Word.

sacrament, do then also, inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all benefits of His death: the body and blood of Christ being then, not corporally or carnally, in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet, as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.
1 Cor. 11:28; 1 Cor. 10:16.

4. Previous preparation, by self-examination, repentance of sin, meditation upon God's grace, and resolution of new obedience is required of those who make this profession of their union with Christ and love to Him.
1 Cor. 11:27-32; 1 Cor. 10:21-22.

8. Although ignorant and wicked men receive the outward elements in this sacrament: yet they receive not the thing signified thereby, but by their unworthy coming thereunto are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord to their own damnation. Wherefore, all ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with Him, so are they unworthy of the Lord's table; and cannot, without great sin against Christ while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereunto.
1 Cor. 11:27-29; 2 Cor. 6:14-16; 1 Cor. 5:6-7, 13; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; Matt. 7:6.

5. The Lord's Supper is to be administered only to those who are accepted by the session dispensing the sacrament.

6. *We deny* that the individual is sole judge of his fitness to partake of the sacrament.
1 Cor. 5:1-13.

7. *We reject* the practice of offering the sacrament of Communion to any one who is not a member of the visible church.

Chapter 30: Of Church Censures

1. The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government, in the hand of Church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate.
Isa. 9:6-7; 1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12; Acts 20:17, 28; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; 1 Cor. 12:28; Matt. 28:18-20.

2. To these officers, the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed: by virtue whereof, they have power respectively to retain, and remit sins; to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the Word and censures; and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the Gospel, and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require.
Matt. 16:19; Matt. 18:17-18; John 20: 21-23; 2 Cor. 2:6-8.

3. Church censures are necessary, for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren, for deterring of others from the like offences, for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump, for vindicating the honour of Christ, and the holy profession of the Gospel, and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the Church, if they should suffer His covenant and the seals thereof to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders.
1 Cor. 5; 1 Tim. 5:20; Matt. 7:6; 1 Tim. 1:20; 1 Cor. 11:27-34 with Jude 1:23.

4. For the better attaining of these ends, the officers of the Church are to proceed by admonition; suspension from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season; and by excommunication from the Church; according to the nature of

1. Our Lord commanded church discipline, so no church which fails to exercise it where needed can hope for His blessing.
Matt. 18:18; Matt. 16:19; Rev. 2:2, 20.

2. Discipline is required by the organic nature of the Church.
1 Cor. 12:13, 25-26; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Rev. 2:2.

3. There are many ways provided by the Lord to deal with offenses in the Church. Christians have a responsibility to admonish one another in the Lord. Some offenses may be resolved by informal counsel by one or more elders. Official discipline is to be administered by the courts of the Church, not by elders individually. Such counsel and discipline should be received in a spirit of Christian submission.
Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1; Col. 3:16; Col. 1:28.

4. The authority and discipline of the Church extends to all members, irrespective of rank or station in life.

the crime, and demerit of the person. 1 Thess. 5:12; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; 1 Cor. 5:4-5, 13; Matt. 18:17; Titus 3:10.

Children who are baptized members are subject to that discipline.

5. Discipline should be exercised with prudence and discretion, in dependence upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, with love both for the Lawgiver and lawbreaker.

6. *We reject* the view that a church member should be disciplined for everything at which another may be justly displeased.

(For specific details of discipline, see *Book of Discipline.*)

Chapter 31: Of Synods and Councils

(Larger Catechism: 123-133; Shorter Catechism: 63-66)

1. Christ is the only Head and Lawgiver of the Church. He gave the apostles authority to establish the permanent form of church government, which is set forth in the New Testament.
Eph. 1:22; Matt. 18:18; 1 Cor. 14:37; Eph. 4:11-12; 2 Cor. 13:10; Acts 14:23; Acts 20:17, 28; Heb. 13:17.

1. For the better government, and further edification of the Church, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called synods or councils.
Acts 15:2, 4, 6.

2. As magistrates may lawfully call a synod of ministers, and other fit persons, to consult and advise with, about matters of religion; so, if magistrates be open enemies to the Church, the ministers of Christ of themselves, by

2. *We reject* paragraph 2 of the *Confession of Faith*.

virtue of their office, or they, with other fit persons, upon delegation from their Churches, may meet together in such assemblies.
Isa. 49:23; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; 2 Chron. 19:8-11; 2 Chron. 29—30; Matt. 2:4-5; Prov. 11:14; Acts 15:2, 4, 22-23, 25.

3. It belongeth to synods and councils, ministerially to determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience, to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and government of His Church; to receive complaints in cases of maladministration, and authoritatively to determine the same: which decrees and determinations, if consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission; not only for their agreement with the Word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God appointed thereunto in His Word.
Acts 15:15, 19, 24, 27-31; Acts 16:4; Matt. 18:17-20.

4. All synods or councils, since the Apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err; and many have erred. Therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice; but to be used as a help in both.
Eph. 2:20; Acts 17:11; 1 Cor. 2:5; 2 Cor. 1:24.

5. Synods and councils are to handle, or conclude, nothing, but that which is ecclesiastical: and are not to in-

3. No ecclesiastical authority is placed in the hands of private Christians or civil rulers; church judicatories are subordinate only to Christ Jesus. They appoint, by an exclusive right, their own times and places of meeting and adjournment.
Matt. 22:21. (For details, see *Directory for Church Government,* chaps. 6-7.)

4. *We reject* the systems of church government which center authority in one individual or in a hierarchy of bishops. *We further reject* the independent congregational system with authority vested in autonomous congregations.

5. Subordinate standards, such as the *Confession of Faith, Catechisms* and the *Testimony,* serve a necessary and useful purpose as a summary of biblical teaching, a basis for fellowship and common service, and as a testimony to the world of the church's belief and practice. They are never to be taken as a substitute for God's Word or as a complete or final exposition of it.
Rom. 15:5-6; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Heb. 4:12; Mark 7:6-13.

6. It is the responsibility of the Church to declare God's Word to civil author-

termeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth; unless by way of humble petition, in cases extraordinary; or by way of advice, for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate.
Luke 12:13-14; John 18:36.

ities as it applies to their use of the power that has been given them.
Acts 9:15; Ps. 119:46; Matt. 10:17-18; Luke 3:12-14. (Compare also the *Testimony,* chap. 23.)

Chapter 32
Of the State of Men After Death, And the Resurrection of the Dead

(Larger Catechism: 84-87; Shorter Catechism: 37-38)

1. The bodies of men, after death, return to dust and see corruption; but their souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them: the souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God, in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. And the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Beside these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.
Gen. 3:19; Acts 13:36; Luke 23:43; Eccl. 12:7; Heb. 12:23; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6, 8; Phil. 1:23 with Acts 3:21 and Eph. 4:10; Luke 16:23-24; Acts 1:25; Jude 1:6-7; 1 Pet. 3:19.

1. God has appointed to every man the time when he shall leave this world.
Ps. 39:4-5; Eccl. 3:2; Ps. 139:16.

2. *We reject* the idea of inactivity of the soul between death and resurrection called "soul sleep."
Eccl. 12:7; 2 Cor. 5:1-9.

3. *We reject* the teaching that there is a "second chance" of salvation after death.
Luke 16:22-26; Heb. 9:27; 2 Cor. 6:2; John 5:28-29; 2 Pet. 2:9.

4. *We reject* the teaching that there is a purgatory, where souls must be purified before entering heaven.
Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:6, 8; Phil. 1:23.

2. At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed: and all the dead shall be raised up, with the selfsame bodies and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls for ever.
1 Thess. 4:17; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Job 19: 26-27; 1 Cor. 15:42-44.

3. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonour; the bodies of the just, by His Spirit, unto honour; and be made conformable to His own glorious body.
Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:43; Phil. 3:21.

5. *We reject* the idea that the soul at death is, or can be, reincarnated in another human or animal form.
Eccl. 12:7; Heb. 9:27.

Chapter 33: Of the Last Judgment

(Larger Catechism: 56, 87-90; Shorter Catechism: 37-38)

1. The return of our Lord to earth is clearly taught in Scripture. He made many promises to return. His coming will be personal and visible. He will come in glory at a time unknown to man.
Rev. 22:7, 12, 20; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; 1 Thess. 4:16; Matt. 16:27; Col. 3:4; Luke 12:40; Rev. 16:15; Mark 13:32-35; 1 Thess. 5:2.

2. At the time of Christ's second coming all the dead will be raised and the world will be judged.
John 5:28-29; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Ps. 96:13; Ps. 98:9.

3. *We reject* the teaching that the Kingdom of God can only be brought in

by Christ's return or that Christ is not now reigning as King over all things.
Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 1:18.

1. God hath appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father. In which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons that have lived upon earth shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.
Acts 17:31; John 5:22, 27; 1 Cor. 6:3; Jude 1:6; 2 Pet. 2:4; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eccl. 12:14; Rom. 2:16; Rom. 14:10, 12; Matt. 12:36-37.

4. The final judgment for the Christian will be an assessment of his obedience to God and of his stewardship of the gifts and talents God has committed to his care. Whatever is imperfect will be burned away, and his faithfulness will be rewarded.
2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:9-15; 1 Cor. 4:5; Matt. 25:14-40.

2. The end of God's appointing this day is for the manifestation of the glory of His mercy, in the eternal salvation of the elect; and of His justice, in the damnation of the reprobate who are wicked and disobedient. For then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fulness of joy and refreshing, which shall come from the

presence of the Lord: but the wicked, who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.
Matt. 25:31-46; Rom. 2:5-6; Rom. 9: 22-23; Matt. 25:21; Acts 3:19; 2 Thess. 1:7-10.

3. As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity; so will He have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, Amen.
2 Pet. 3:11, 14; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; 2 Thess. 1: 5-7; Luke 21:27-28; Rom. 8:23-25; Matt. 24:36, 42-44; Mark 13:35-37; Luke 12: 35-36; Rev. 22:20.

5. Believers are to look forward eagerly to the last great day, in which they will share in Christ's final victory over evil and experience the fulness of joy which is found in the presence of God, forever.
2 Pet. 3:11-13; Ps. 16:11.

The Westminster Larger Catechism

QUESTION 1. *What is the chief and highest end of man?*

ANSWER. Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him for ever.

Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 10:31; Ps. 73:24-28; John 17:21-23.

Q. 2. *How doth it appear that there is a God?*

A. The very light of nature in man, and the works of God, declare plainly that there is a God; but his Word and Spirit only, do sufficiently and effectually reveal him unto men for their salvation.

Rom. 1:19-20; Ps. 19:1-3; Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Isa. 59:21.

Q. 3. *What is the Word of God?*

A. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience.

2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; Eph. 2:20; Rev. 22:18-19; Isa. 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Gal. 1:8-9; 2 Tim. 3:15-16.

Q. 4. *How doth it appear that the Scriptures are the Word of God?*

A. The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the Word of God, by their majesty and purity; by the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God; by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation: but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very Word of God.

Hos. 8:12; 1 Cor. 2:6-7, 13; Ps. 119:18, 129; Ps. 12:6; Ps. 119:140; Acts 10:43; Acts 26:22; Rom. 3:19, 27; Acts 18:28; Heb. 4:12; Jas. 1:18; Ps. 19:7-9; Rom. 15: 4; Acts 20:32; John 16:13-14; 1 John 2:20, 27; John 20:31.

Q. 5. *What do the Scriptures principally teach?*

A. The Scriptures principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

2 Tim. 1:13.

What Man Ought to Believe Concerning God

Q. 6. *What do the Scriptures make known of God?*

A. The Scriptures make known what God is, the persons in the Godhead, his decrees, and the execution of his decrees.

Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:7; Acts 15:14-15, 18; Acts 4:27-28.

Q. 7. *What is God?*

A. God is a Spirit, in and of himself infinite in being, glory, blessedness, and perfection; all-sufficient, eternal, unchangeable, incomprehensible, everywhere present, almighty, knowing all things, most wise, most holy, most just, most merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.

John 4:24; Ex. 3:14; Job 11:7-9; Acts 7:2; 1 Tim. 6:15; Matt. 5:48; Gen. 17:1; Ps. 90:2; Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17; 1 Kings 8:27; Ps. 139:1-13; Rev. 4:8; Heb. 4:13; Ps. 147:5; Rom. 16:27; Isa. 6:3; Rev. 15:4; Deut. 32:4; Ex. 34:6.

Q. 8. *Are there more Gods than one?*

A. There is but one only, the living and true God.

Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; Jer. 10:10.

Q. 9. *How many persons are there in the Godhead?*

A. There be three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one true, eternal God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; although distinguished by their personal properties.

1 John 5:7; Matt. 3:16-17; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 10:30.

Q. 10. *What are the personal properties of the three persons in the Godhead?*

A. It is proper to the Father to beget the Son, and to the Son to be begotten of the Father, and to the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and the Son from all eternity.

Heb. 1:5-6, 8; John 1:14, 18; John 15:26; Gal. 4:6.

Q. 11. *How doth it appear that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father?*

A. The Scriptures manifest that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father, ascribing unto them such names, attributes, works, and worship, as are proper to God only.

Isa. 6:3, 5, 8; John 12:41; Acts 28:25; 1 John 5:20; Acts 5:3-4; John 1:1; Isa. 9:6; John 2:24-25; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Col. 1:16; Gen. 1:2; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14.

Q. 12. *What are the decrees of God?*

A. God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will, whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men.

Eph. 1:11; Rom. 11:33; Rom. 9:14-15, 18; Eph. 1:4, 11; Rom. 9:22-23; Ps. 33:11.

Q. 13. *What hath God especially decreed concerning angels and men?*

A. God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, hath elected some angels to glory; and in Christ hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof: and also according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will, (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favor as he pleaseth), hath passed by, and fore-ordained the rest to dishonor and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice.

1 Tim. 5:21; Eph. 1:4-6; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Rom. 9:17-18, 21-22; Matt. 11:25-26; 2 Tim. 2:20; Jude 1:4; 1 Pet. 2:8.

Q. 14. *How doth God execute his decrees?*

A. God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence, according to his infallible fore-knowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will.

Eph. 1:11.

Q. 15. *What is the work of creation?*

A. The work of creation is that wherein God did in the beginning, by the word of his power, make of nothing the world, and all things therein, for himself, within the space of six days, and all very good.

Gen. 1; Heb. 11:3; Prov. 16:4.

Q. 16. *How did God create angels?*

A. God created all the angels spirits, immortal, holy, excelling in knowledge, mighty in power, to execute his commandments, and to praise his name, yet subject to change.

Col. 1:16; Ps. 104:4; Matt. 22:30; Matt. 25:31; 2 Sam. 14:17; Matt. 24:36; 2 Thess. 1:7; Ps. 103:20-21; 2 Pet. 2:4.

Q. 17. *How did God create man?*

A. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female; formed the body of the man of the dust of the ground, and the woman of the rib of the man; endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls; made them after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, having the law of God written in their hearts and power to fulfill it, with dominion over the creatures; yet subject to fall.

Gen. 1:27; Gen. 2:7; Gen. 2:22; Gen. 2:7; Job 35:11; Eccl. 12:7; Matt. 10:28; Luke 23:43; Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Rom. 2:14-15; Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 1: 28; Gen. 3:6; Eccl. 7:29.

Q. 18. *What are God's works of providence?*

A. God's works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving, and governing all his creatures; ordering them, and all their actions, to his own glory.

Ps. 145:17; Ps. 104:24; Isa. 28:29; Heb. 1:3; Ps. 103:19; Matt. 10:29-31; Gen. 45:7; Rom. 11:36; Isa. 63:14.

Q. 19. *What is God's providence toward the angels?*

A. God by his providence permitted some of the angels, willfully and irrecoverably, to fall into sin and damnation, limiting and ordering that, and all their sins, to his own glory; and established the rest in holiness and happiness; employing them all, at his pleasure, in the administrations of his power, mercy, and justice.

Jude 1:6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Heb. 2:16; John 8:44; Job 1:12; Matt. 8:31; 1 Tim. 5:21; Mark 8:38; Heb. 12:22; Ps. 104:4; 2 Kings 19:35; Heb. 1:14.

Q. 20. *What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?*

A. The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth; putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with Himself; instituting the Sabbath; entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

Gen. 2:8, 15-16; Gen. 1:28; Gen. 2:18; Gen. 1:26-29; Gen. 3:8; Gen. 2:3; Gal. 3:12; Rom. 10:5; Gen. 2:9, 17.

Q. 21. *Did man continue in that estate wherein God at first created him?*

A. Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own will, through the temptation of Satan, transgressed the commandment of God, in eating the forbidden fruit, and thereby fell from the estate of innocency wherein they were created.

Gen. 3:6-8, 13; Eccl. 7:29; 2 Cor. 11:3.

Q. 22. *Did all mankind fall in that first transgression?*

A. The covenant being made with Adam, as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity; all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.

Acts 17:26; Gen. 2:16-17; Rom. 5:12-20; 1 Cor. 15:21-22.

Q. 23. *Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?*

A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Rom. 5:12; Rom. 3:23.

Q. 24. *What is sin?*

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature.

1 John 3:4; Gal. 3:10, 12.

Q. 25. *Wherein consisteth the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?*

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and

the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called Original Sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.

Rom. 5:12, 19; Rom. 3:10-19; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 5:6; Rom. 8:7-8; Gen. 6:5; Jas. 1:14-15; Matt. 15:19.

Q. 26. *How is original sin conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity?*

A. Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.

Ps. 51:5; Job 14:4; Job 15:14; John 3:6.

Q. 27. *What misery did the fall bring upon mankind?*

A. The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world and that which is to come.

Gen. 3:8, 10, 24; Eph. 2:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:26; Gen. 2:17; Lam. 3:39; Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41, 46; Jude 1:7.

Q. 28. *What are the punishments of sin in this world?*

A. The punishments of sin in this world, are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections: or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sakes; and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments; together with death itself.

Eph. 4:18; Rom. 1:28; 2 Thess. 2:11; Rom. 2:5; Isa. 33:14; Gen. 4:13; Matt. 27:4; Rom. 1:26; Gen. 3:17; Deut. 28:15-68; Rom. 6:21, 23.

Q. 29. *What are the punishments of sin in the world to come?*

A. The punishments of sin in the world to come, are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell-fire for ever.

2 Thess. 1:9; Mark 9:43-44, 46, 48; Luke 16:24.

Q. 30. *Doth God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?*

A. God doth not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Works; but of his mere love and mercy delivereth his elect out of it, and bringeth them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Grace.

1 Thess. 5:9; Gal. 3:10, 12; Titus 3:4-7; Gal. 3:21; Rom. 3:20-22.

Q. 31. *With whom was the covenant of grace made?*

A. The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.

Gal. 3:16; Rom. 5:15-21; Isa. 53:10-11.

Q. 32. *How is the grace of God manifested in the second covenant?*

A. The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and, requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation.

Gen. 3:15; Isa. 42:6; John 6:27; 1 John 5:11-12; John 3:16; John 1:12; Prov. 1:23; 2 Cor. 4:13; Gal. 5:22-23; Ezek. 36:27; Jas. 2:18, 22; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Eph. 2:10.

Q. 33. *Was the covenant of grace always administered after one and the same manner?*

A. The covenant of grace was not always administered after the same manner, but the administrations of it under the Old Testament were different from those under the New.

2 Cor. 3:6-9.

Q. 34. *How was the covenant of grace administered under the Old Testament?*

A. The covenant of grace was administered under the Old Testament, by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the passover, and other types and ordinances, which did all fore-signify Christ then to come, and were for that time sufficient to build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they then had full remission of sin, and eternal salvation.

Rom. 15:8; Acts 3:20, 24; Heb. 10:1; Rom. 4:11; 1 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 8-10, 11:13; Gal. 3:7-9, 14.

Q. 35. *How is the covenant of grace administered under the New Testament?*

A. Under the New Testament, when Christ the substance was exhibited, the same covenant of grace was and still is to be administered in the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper; in which grace and salvation are held forth in more fullness, evidence, and efficacy, to all nations.

Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25; 2 Cor. 3:6-18; Heb. 8:6, 10, 11; Matt. 28:19.

Q. 36. *Who is the Mediator of the covenant of grace?*

A. The only Mediator of the covenant of grace is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father, in the fullness of time became man, and so was and continues to be God and man, in two entire distinct natures, and one person, forever.

1 Tim. 2:5; John 1:1, 14; John 10:30; Phil. 2:6; Gal. 4:4; Luke 1:35; Rom. 9:5; Col. 2:9; Heb. 7:24-25.

Q. 37. *How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?*

A. Christ the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of

the Virgin Mary, of her substance, and born of her, yet without sin.

John 1:14; Matt. 26:38; Luke 1:27, 31, 35, 42; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 4:15; Heb. 7:26.

Q. 38. *Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God?*

A. It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death; give worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience and intercession; and to satisfy God's justice, procure his favor, purchase a peculiar people, give his Spirit to them, conquer all their enemies, and bring them to everlasting salvation.

Acts 2:24-25; Rom. 1:4; Rom. 4:25; Heb. 9:14; Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:14; Heb. 7: 25-28; Rom. 3:24-26; Eph. 1:6; Matt. 3:17; Titus 2:13-14; Gal. 4:6; Luke 1:68-69, 71, 74; Heb. 5:8-9; Heb. 9:11-15.

Q. 39. *Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be man?*

A. It was requisite that the Mediator should be man, that he might advance our nature, perform obedience to the law, suffer and make intercession for us in our nature, have a fellow-feeling of our infirmities; that we might receive the adoption of sons, and have comfort and access with boldness unto the throne of grace.

Heb. 2:16; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:14; Heb. 7:24-25; Heb. 4:15; Gal. 4:5; Heb. 4:16.

Q. 40. *Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be God and man in one person?*

A. It was requisite that the Mediator, who was to reconcile God and man, should himself be both God and man, and this in one person, that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of God for us, and relied on by us, as the works of the whole person.

Matt. 1:21, 23; Matt. 3:17; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 2:6.

Q. 41. *Why was our Mediator called Jesus?*

A. Our Mediator was called Jesus, because he saveth his people from their sins.

Matt. 1:21.

Q. 42. *Why was our Mediator called Christ?*

A. Our Mediator was called Christ, because he was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure; and so set apart, and fully furnished with all authority and ability, to execute the offices of prophet, priest, and king of his Church, in the estate both of his humiliation and exaltation.

John 3:34; Ps. 45:7; John 6:27; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 3:21-22; Luke 4:18, 21; Heb. 5:5-7; Heb. 4:14-15; Ps. 2:6; Matt. 21:5; Isa. 9:6-7; Phil. 2:8-11.

Q. 43. *How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?*

A. Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in his revealing to the Church in all ages, by his Spirit and Word, in divers ways of administration, the whole will of God, in all things concerning their edification and salvation.

John 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Heb. 1:1-2; John 15:15; Acts 20:32; Eph. 4:11-13; John 20:31.

Q. 44. *How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?*

A. Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering himself a sacrifice without spot to God, to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people; and in making continual intercession for them.

Heb. 9:14, 28; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 7:25.

Q. 45. *How doth Christ execute the office of a king?*

A. Christ executeth the office of a king, in calling out of the world a people to himself, and giving them officers, laws, and censures, by which he visibly governs them; in bestowing saving grace upon his elect, rewarding their obedience, and correcting them for their sins, preserving and supporting them under all their temptations and sufferings, restraining and overcoming all their enemies, and powerfully ordering all things for his own glory and their good: and also in taking vengeance on the rest, who know not God, and obey not the gospel.

Acts 15:14-16; Isa. 55:4-5; Gen 49:10; Ps. 110:3; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 12:28; Isa. 33:22; Matt. 18:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:4-5; Acts 5:31; Rev. 22:12; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 3: 19; Isa. 63:9; 1 Cor. 15:25; Ps. 110:1-7; Rom. 14:10-11; Rom. 8:28; 2 Thess. 1: 8-9; Ps. 2:8-9.

Q. 46. *What was the estate of Christ's humiliation?*

A. The estate of Christ's humiliation was that low condition, wherein he, for our sakes, emptying himself of his glory, took upon him the form of a servant, in his conception and birth, life, death, and after his death, until his resurrection.

Phil. 2:6-8; Luke 1:31; 2 Cor. 8:9; Acts 2:24.

Q. 47. *How did Christ humble himself in his conception and birth?*

A. Christ humbled himself in his conception and birth, in that, being from all eternity the Son of God, in the bosom of the Father, he was pleased in the fullness of time to become the son of man, made of a woman of low estate, and to be born of her; with divers circumstances of more than ordinary abasement.

John 1:14, 18; Gal. 4:4; Luke 2:7.

Q. 48. *How did Christ humble himself in his life?*

A. Christ humbled himself in his life, by subjecting himself to the law, which he perfectly fulfilled; and by conflicting with the indignities of the world, temptations of Satan, and infirmities in his flesh, whether common to the nature of man, or particularly accompanying that his low condition.

Gal. 4:4; Matt. 5:17; Rom. 5:19; Ps. 22:6; Heb. 12:2-3; Matt. 4:1-12; Luke 4:13; Heb. 2:17-18; Heb. 4:15; Isa. 52:13-14.

Q. 49. *How did Christ humble himself in his death?*

A. Christ humbled himself in his death, in that having been betrayed by Judas, forsaken by his disciples, scorned and rejected by the world, condemned by

Pilate, and tormented by his persecutors; having also conflicted with the terrors of death, and the powers of darkness, felt and borne the weight of God's wrath, he laid down his life an offering for sin, enduring the painful, shameful, and cursed death of the cross.

Matt. 27:4; Matt. 26:56; Isa. 53:2-3; Matt. 27:26-50; John 19:34; Luke 22:44; Matt. 27:46; Isa. 53:10; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 12:2; Gal. 3:13.

Q. 50. *Wherein consisted Christ's humiliation after his death?*

A. Christ's humiliation after his death consisted in his being buried; and continuing in the state of the dead and under the power of death till the third day, which hath been otherwise expressed in these words, *He descended into hell.*

1 Cor. 15:3-4; Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:24-27, 31; Rom. 6:9; Matt. 12:40.

Q. 51. *What was the estate of Christ's exaltation?*

A. The estate of Christ's exaltation comprehendeth his resurrection, ascension, sitting at the right hand of the Father, and his coming again to judge the world.

1 Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:19; Eph. 1:20; Acts 1:11; Acts 17:31.

Q. 52. *How was Christ exalted in his resurrection?*

A. Christ was exalted in his resurrection, in that, not having seen corruption in death (of which it was not possible for him to be held) and having the very same body in which he suffered, with the essential properties thereof (but without mortality and other common infirmities belonging to this life) really united to his soul, he rose again from the dead the third day by his own power; whereby he declared himself to be the Son of God, to have satisfied divine justice, to have vanquished death, and him that had the power of it, and to be Lord of quick and dead: all which he did as a public person, the head of his church, for their justification, quickening in grace, support against enemies, and to assure them of their resurrection from the dead at the last day.

Acts 2:24, 27; Luke 24:39; Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:18; John 10:18; Rom. 1:4; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 2:14; Rom. 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:21-22; Eph. 1:20, 22-23; Col. 1:18; Rom. 4:25; Eph. 2:1, 5-6; Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 15:25-27; 1 Cor. 15:20.

Q. 53. *How was Christ exalted in his ascension?*

A. Christ was exalted in his ascension, in that having after his resurrection often appeared unto and conversed with his apostles, speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and giving them commission to preach the gospel to all nations, forty days after his resurrection, he, in our nature and as our head, triumphing over enemies, visibly went up into the highest heavens, there to receive gifts for men, to raise up our affections thither, and to prepare a place for us, where himself is and shall continue till his second coming at the end of the world.

Acts 1:2-3; Matt. 28:19-20; Heb. 6:20; Eph. 4:8; Acts 1:9-11; Eph. 4:10; Ps. 68:18; Col. 3:1-2; John 14:3; Acts 3:21.

Q. 54. *How is Christ exalted in his sitting at the right hand of God?*

A. Christ is exalted in his sitting at the right hand of God, in that as God-

man he is advanced to the highest favor with God the Father, with all fullness of joy, glory, and power over all things in heaven and earth; and doth gather and defend his Church, and subdue their enemies; furnisheth his ministers and people with gifts and graces, and maketh intercession for them.

Phil. 2:9; Acts 2:28; Ps. 16:11; John 17:5; Eph. 1:22; 1 Pet. 3:22; Eph. 4:10-12; Ps. 110:1; Rom. 8:34.

Q. 55. *How doth Christ make intercession?*

A. Christ maketh intercession, by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven, in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth, declaring his will to have it applied to all believers; answering all accusations against them, and procuring for them quiet of conscience, notwithstanding daily failings, access with boldness to the throne of grace, and acceptance of their persons and services.

Heb. 9:12, 24; Heb. 1:3; John 3:16; John 17:9, 20, 24; Rom. 8:33-34; Rom. 5: 1-2; 1 John 2:1-2; Heb. 4:16; Eph. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5.

Q. 56. *How is Christ to be exalted in his coming again to judge the world?*

A. Christ is to be exalted in his coming again to judge the world, in that he, who was unjustly judged and condemned by wicked men, shall come again at the last day in great power, and in the full manifestation of his own glory and of his Father's, with all his holy angels, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, to judge the world in righteousness.

Acts 3:14-15; Matt. 24:30; Luke 9:26; Matt. 25:31; 1 Thess. 4:16; Acts 17:31.

Q. 57. *What benefits hath Christ procured by his mediation?*

A. Christ by his mediation hath procured redemption, with all other benefits of the covenant of grace.

Heb. 9:12; 2 Cor. 1:20.

Q. 58 *How do we come to be made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured?*

A. We are made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured by the application of them unto us, which is the work especially of God the Holy Ghost.

John 1:11-12; Titus 3:5-6.

Q. 59. *Who are made partakers of redemption through Christ?*

A. Redemption is certainly applied, and effectually communicated, to all those for whom Christ hath purchased it; who are in time by the Holy Ghost enabled to believe in Christ according to the gospel.

Eph. 1:13-14; John 6:37, 39; John 10:15-16; Eph. 2:8; 2 Cor. 4:13.

Q. 60. *Can they who have never heard of the gospel, and so know not Jesus Christ, nor believe in him, be saved by their living according to the light of nature?*

A. They who, having never heard the gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, or the laws of that religion which they

profess; neither is there salvation in any other, but in Christ alone, who is the Saviour only of his body the Church.

Rom. 10:14; 2 Thess. 1:8-9; Eph. 2:12; John 1:10-12; John 8:24; Mark 16: 16; 1 Cor. 1:20-24; John 4:22; Rom. 9:31-32; Phil. 3:4-9; Acts 4:12; Eph. 5:23.

Q. 61. *Are all they saved who hear the gospel, and live in the Church?*

A. All that hear the gospel, and live in the visible Church, are not saved; but only they who are true members of the Church invisible.

John 12:38-40; Rom. 9:6; Matt. 22:14; Matt. 7:21; Rom. 11:7.

Q. 62. *What is the visible Church?*

A. The visible Church is a society made up of all such as in all ages and places of the world do profess the true religion, and of their children.

1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 15:9-12; Rev. 7:9; Ps. 2:8; Ps. 22:27-31; Ps. 45: 17; Matt. 28:19-20; Isa. 59:21; 1 Cor. 7:14; Acts 2:39; Rom. 11:16; Gen. 17:7.

Q. 63. *What are the special privileges of the visible Church?*

A. The visible Church hath the privilege of being under God's special care and government; of being protected and preserved in all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies; and of enjoying the communion of saints, the ordinary means of salvation, and offers of grace by Christ to all the members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying, that whosoever believes in him shall be saved, and excluding none that will come unto him.

Isa. 4:5-6; 1 Tim. 4:10; Ps. 115:1-18; Isa. 31:4-5; Zech. 12:2-4,8-9; Acts 2:39, 42; Ps. 147:19-20; Rom. 9:4; Eph. 4:11-12; Mark 16:15-16; John 6:37.

Q. 64. *What is the invisible Church?*

A. The invisible Church is the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head.

Eph. 1:10, 22-23; John 10:16; John 11:52.

Q. 65. *What special benefits do the members of the invisible Church enjoy by Christ?*

A. The members of the invisible Church, by Christ, enjoy union and communion with him in grace and glory.

John 17:21; Eph. 2:5-6; John 17:24.

Q. 66. *What is that union which the elect have with Christ?*

A. The union which the elect have with Christ is the work of God's grace, whereby they are spiritually and mystically, yet really and inseparably, joined to Christ as their head and husband; which is done in their effectual calling.

Eph. 1:22; Eph. 2:6-8; 1 Cor. 6:17; John 10:28; Eph. 5:23, 30; 1 Pet. 5:10; 1 Cor. 1:9.

Q. 67. *What is effectual calling?*

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace, whereby (out of his free and special love to his elect, and from nothing in them moving

him thereunto) he doth, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his Word and Spirit; savingly enlightening their minds, renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein.

John 5:25; Eph. 1:18-20; 2 Tim. 1:8-9; Titus 3:4-5; Eph. 2:4-5, 7-9; Rom. 9:11; 2 Cor. 5:20, 2 Cor. 6:1-2; John 6:44; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 26:18; 1 Cor. 2:10, 12; Ezek. 11:19; Ezek. 36:26-27; John 6:45; Eph. 2:5; Phil. 2:13; Deut. 30:6.

Q. 68. *Are the elect only effectually called?*

A. All the elect, and they only, are effectually called; although others may be, and often are, outwardly called by the ministry of the Word, and have some common operations of the Spirit; who, for their willful neglect and contempt of the grace offered to them, being justly left in their unbelief, do never truly come to Jesus Christ.

Acts 13:48; Matt. 22:14; Matt. 7:22; Matt. 13:20-21; Heb. 6:4-6; John 12:38-40; Acts 28:25-27; John 6:64-65; Ps. 81:11-12.

Q. 69. *What is the communion in grace, which the members of the invisible Church have with Christ?*

A. The communion in grace, which the members of the invisible Church have with Christ, is their partaking of the virtue of his mediation, in their justification, adoption, sanctification, and whatever else in this life manifests their union with him.

Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:30.

Q. 70. *What is justification?*

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners, in which he pardoneth all their sins, accepteth and accounteth their persons righteous in his sight; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone.

Rom. 3:22, 24-25; Rom. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:19, 21; Rom. 3:22, 24-25, 27-28; Titus 3:5, 7; Eph. 1:7; Rom. 5:17-19; Rom. 4:6-8; Acts 10:43; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9.

Q. 71. *How is justification an act of God's free grace?*

A. Although Christ, by his obedience and death, did make a proper, real and full satisfaction to God's justice in the behalf of them that are justified; yet in as much as God accepteth the satisfaction from a surety, which he might have demanded of them, and did provide this surety, his own only Son, imputing his righteousness to them, and requiring nothing of them for their justification but faith, which also is his gift, their justification is to them of free grace.

Rom. 5:8-10, 19; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 10:10; Matt. 20:28; Dan. 9:24, 26; Isa. 53:4-6; Isa. 53:10-12; Heb. 7:22; Rom. 8:32; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 2:8; Eph. 1:7.

Q. 72. *What is justifying faith?*

A. Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner, by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and his righteousness therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.

Heb. 10:39; 2 Cor. 4:13; Eph. 1:17-19; Rom. 10:14, 17; Acts 2:37; Acts 16:30; John 16:8-9; Rom. 5:6; Eph. 2:1; Acts 4:12; Eph. 1:13; John 1:12; Acts 16:31; Acts 10:43; Phil. 3:9; Acts 15:11.

Q. 73. *How doth faith justify a sinner in the sight of God?*

A. Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not because of those other graces which do always accompany it, or of good works that are the fruits of it, nor as if the grace of faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to him for his justification; but only as it is an instrument by which he receiveth and applieth Christ and his righteousness.

Gal. 3:11; Rom. 3:28; Rom. 4:5; Rom. 10:10; John 1:12; Phil. 3:9; Gal. 2:16.

Q. 74. *What is adoption?*

A. Adoption is an act of the free grace of God, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ, whereby all those that are justified are received into the number of his children, have his name put upon them, the Spirit of his Son given to them, are under his fatherly care and dispensations, admitted to all the liberties and privileges of the sons of God, made heirs of all the promises, and fellow-heirs with Christ in glory.

1 John 3:1; Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:4-5; John 1:12; 2 Cor. 6:18; Rev. 3:12; Gal. 4:6; Ps. 103:13; Prov. 14:26; Matt. 6:32; Heb. 6:12; Rom. 8:17.

Q. 75. *What is sanctification?*

A. Sanctification is a work of God's grace, whereby they whom God hath before the foundation of the world chosen to be holy, are in time through the powerful operation of his Spirit, applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them, renewed in their whole man after the image of God; having the seeds of repentance unto life, and all other saving graces, put into their hearts, and those graces so stirred up, increased, and strengthened, as that they more and more die unto sin and rise unto newness of life.

Eph. 1:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 6:4-6; Eph. 4:23-24; Acts 11:18; 1 John 3:9; Jude 1:20; Heb. 6:11-12; Eph. 3:16-19; Col. 1:10-11; Rom. 6:4, 6, 14; Gal. 5:24.

Q. 76. *What is repentance unto life?*

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and word of God, whereby, out of the sight and sense, not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, and upon the apprehension of God's mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, he so grieves for and hates his sins, as that he turns from them all to God, purposing and

endeavouring constantly to walk with him in all the ways of new obedience.

2 Tim. 2:25; Zech. 12:10; Acts 11:18, 20-21; Ezek. 18:28, 30, 32; Luke 15:17-18; Hos. 2:6-7; Ezek. 36:31; Isa. 30:22; Joel 2:12-13; Jer. 31:18-19; 2 Cor. 7:11; Acts 26: 18; Ezek. 14:6; 1 Kings 8:47-48; Ps. 119:6, 59, 128; Luke 1:6; 2 Kings 23:25.

Q. 77. *Wherein do justification and sanctification differ?*

A. Although sanctification be inseparably joined with justification, yet they differ, in that God in justification imputeth the righteousness of Christ; in sanctification his Spirit infuseth grace, and enableth to the exercise thereof; in the former, sin is pardoned; in the other, it is subdued; the one doth equally free all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that perfectly in this life, that they never fall into condemnation; the other is neither equal in all, nor in this life perfect in any, but growing up to perfection.

1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 4:6, 8; Ezek. 36:27; Rom. 3:24-25; Rom. 6:6, 14; Rom. 8:33-34; 1 John 2:12-14; Heb. 5:12-14; 1 John 1:8, 10; 2 Cor. 7:1; Phil. 3:12-14.

Q. 78. *Whence ariseth the imperfection of sanctification in believers?*

A. The imperfection of sanctification in believers ariseth from the remnants of sin abiding in every part of them, and the perpetual lustings of the flesh against the spirit; whereby they are often foiled with temptations, and fall into many sins, are hindered in all their spiritual services, and their best works are imperfect and defiled in the sight of God.

Rom. 7:18, 23; Mark 14:66-72; Gal. 2:11-12; Heb. 12:1; Isa. 64:6; Ex. 28:38.

Q. 79. *May not true believers, by reason of their imperfections, and the many temptations and sins they are overtaken with, fall away from the state of grace?*

A. True believers, by reason of the unchangeable love of God, and his decree and covenant to give them perseverance, their inseparable union with Christ, his continual intercession for them, and the Spirit and seed of God abiding in them, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Jer. 31:3; 2 Tim. 2:19; Heb. 13:20-21; 2 Sam. 23:5; 1 Cor. 1:8-9; Heb. 7:25; Luke 22:32; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 2:27; Jer. 32:40; John 10:28; 1 Peter 1:5.

Q. 80. *Can true believers be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and that they shall persevere therein unto salvation?*

A. Such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavor to walk in all good conscience before him, may, without extraordinary revelation, by faith grounded upon the truth of God's promises, and by the Spirit enabling them to discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made, and bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace and shall persevere therein unto salvation.

1 John 2:3; 1 Cor. 2:12; 1 John 3:14, 18-19, 21, 24; 1 John 4:13, 16; Heb. 6: 11- 12; Rom. 8:16; 1 John 5:13.

Q. 81. *Are all true believers at all times assured of their present being in the estate of grace, and that they shall be saved?*

A. Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it; and, after the enjoyment thereof, may have it weakened and intermitted, through manifold distempers, sins, temptations, and desertions; yet are they never left without such a presence and support of the Spirit of God, as keeps them from sinking into utter despair.

Eph. 1:13; Isa. 1:10; Ps. 88:1-18; Ps. 77:1-12; Song of Sol. 5:2-3, 6; Ps. 51:8, 12; Ps. 31:22; Ps. 22:1; 1 John 3:9; Job 13:15; Ps. 73:15, 23; Isa. 54:7-10.

Q. 82. *What is the communion in glory which the members of the invisible Church have with Christ?*

A. The communion in glory which the members of the invisible Church have with Christ, is in this life, immediately after death, and at last perfected at the resurrection and day of judgment.

2 Cor. 3:18; Luke 23:43; 1 Thess. 4:17.

Q. 83. *What is the communion in glory with Christ which the members of the invisible Church enjoy in this life?*

A. The members of the invisible Church have communicated to them in this life the first-fruits of glory with Christ, as they are members of him their head, and so in him are interested in that glory which he is fully possessed of; and, as an earnest thereof, enjoy the sense of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and hope of glory; as, on the contrary, sense of God's revenging wrath, horror of conscience, and a fearful expectation of judgment, are to the wicked the beginning of their torments which they shall endure after death.

Eph.2:6; Rom. 5:5 with 2 Cor. 1:22; Rom. 5:1-2; Rom. 14:17; Gen. 4:13; Matt. 27:4; Heb. 10:27; Rom. 2:9; Mark 9:44.

Q. 84. *Shall all men die?*

A. Death being threatened as the wages of sin, it is appointed unto all men once to die; for that all have sinned.

Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:27; Rom. 5:12.

Q. 85. *Death, being the wages of sin, why are not the righteous delivered from death, seeing all their sins are forgiven in Christ?*

A. The righteous shall be delivered from death itself at the last day, and even in death are delivered from the sting and curse of it; so that, although they die, yet it is out of God's love, to free them perfectly from sin and misery, and to make them capable of further communion with Christ in glory, which they then enter upon.

1 Cor. 15:26, 55-57; Heb. 2:15; Isa. 57:1-2; 2 Kings 22:20; Rev. 14:13; Eph. 5: 27; Luke 23:43; Phil. 1:23.

Q. 86. *What is the communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible Church enjoy immediately after death?*

A. The communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible Church enjoy immediately after death, is, in that their souls are then made

perfect in holiness, and received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory; waiting for the full redemption of their bodies, which even in death continue united to Christ, and rest in their graves, as in their beds, till at the last day they be again united with their souls. Whereas the souls of the wicked are at their death cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness; and their bodies kept in their graves, as in their prisons, until the resurrection and judgment of the great day.

Heb. 12:23; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6, 8; Phil. 1:23; Acts 3:21; Eph. 4:10; 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 13:12; Rom. 8:23; Ps. 16:9; 1 Thess. 4:14; Isa. 57:2; Job 19:26-27; Luke 16: 23-24; Acts 1:25; Jude 1:6-7.

Q. 87. *What are we to believe concerning the resurrection?*

A. We are to believe, that, at the last day, there shall be a general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust: when they that are then found alive shall in a moment be changed; and the selfsame bodies of the dead which are laid in the grave, being then again united to their souls for ever, shall be raised up by the power of Christ. The bodies of the just, by the Spirit of Christ, and by virtue of his resurrection as their head, shall be raised in power, spiritual, incorruptible, and made like to his glorious body; and the bodies of the wicked shall be raised up in dishonor by him, as an offended judge.

Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:21-23, 42-44; Phil. 3:21; John 5:27-29; Matt. 25:33.

Q. 88. *What shall immediately follow after the resurrection?*

A. Immediately after the resurrection shall follow the general and final judgment of angels and men; the day and hour whereof no man knoweth, that all may watch and pray, and be ever ready for the coming of the Lord.

2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6-7, 14-15; Matt. 25:46; Matt. 24:36, 42, 44; Luke 21:35-36.

Q. 89. *What shall be done to the wicked at the day of judgment?*

A. At the day of judgment, the wicked shall be set on Christ's left hand, and, upon clear evidence and full conviction of their own consciences, shall have the fearful but just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them; and thereupon shall be cast out from the favorable presence of God, and the glorious fellowship with Christ, his saints, and all his holy angels, into hell, to be punished with unspeakable torments both of body and soul, with the devil and his angels for ever.

Matt. 25:33; Rom. 2:15-16; Matt. 25:41-43; Luke 16:26; 2 Thess. 1:8-9.

Q. 90. *What shall be done to the righteous at the day of judgment?*

A. At the day of judgment, the righteous, being caught up to Christ in the clouds, shall be set on his right hand, and there openly acknowledged and acquitted, shall join with him in the judging of reprobate angels and men, and shall be received into heaven, where they shall be fully and for ever freed from all sin and misery; filled with inconceivable joys, made perfectly holy and happy both in body and soul, in the company of innumerable saints and holy angels, but especially in the immediate vision and fruition of God the Father,

of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, to all eternity. And this is the perfect and full communion, which the members of the invisible Church shall enjoy with Christ in glory, at the resurrection and day of judgment.

1 Thess. 4:17; Matt. 25:33; Matt. 10:32; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; Matt. 25:34, 46; Eph. 5: 27; Rev. 14:13; Ps. 16:11; Heb. 12:22-23; 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 4: 17-18.

Having Seen What the Scriptures Principally Teach Us To Believe Concerning God, It Follows To Consider What They Require As the Duty of Man

Q. 91. *What is the duty which God requireth of man?*

A. The duty which God requireth of man is obedience to his revealed will.

Rom. 12:1-2; Mic. 6:8; 1 Sam. 15:22.

Q. 92. *What did God at first reveal unto man as the rule of his obedience?*

A. The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him, beside a special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the moral law.

Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 2:14-15; Rom. 10:5; Gen. 2:17.

Q. 93. *What is the moral law?*

A. The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and bonding every one to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he oweth to God and man: promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it.

Deut. 5:1-3, 31, 33; Luke 10:26-27; Gal. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:23; Luke 1:75; Acts 24:16; Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:10, 12.

Q. 94. *Is there any use of the moral law to man since the fall?*

A. Although no man, since the fall, can attain to righteousness and life by the moral law; yet there is great use thereof, as well common to all men, as peculiar either to the unregenerate, or the regenerate.

Rom. 8:3; Gal. 2:16; 1 Tim. 1:8.

Q. 95. *Of what use is the moral law to all men?*

A. The moral law is of use to all men, to inform them of the holy nature and will of God, and of their duty, binding them to walk accordingly; to convince them of their disability to keep it, and of the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives; to humble them in the sense of their sin and misery, and thereby help them to a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and of the perfection of his obedience.

Lev. 11:44-45; Lev. 20:7-8; Rom. 7:12; Mic. 6:8; Jas. 2:10-11; Ps. 19:11-12; Rom. 3:20; Rom. 7:7; Rom. 3:9, 23; Gal. 3:21-22; Rom. 10:4.

Q. 96. *What particular use is there of the moral law to unregenerate men?*

A. The moral law is of use to unregenerate men, to awaken their consciences to flee from wrath to come, and to drive them to Christ; or, upon their continuance in the estate and way of sin, to leave them inexcusable, and under the curse thereof.

1 Tim. 1:9-10; Gal. 3:24; Rom. 1:20; Rom. 2:15; Gal. 3:10.

Q. 97. *What special use is there of the moral law to the regenerate?*

A. Although they that are regenerate, and believe in Christ, be delivered from the moral law as a covenant of works, so as thereby they are neither justified nor condemned: yet, beside the general uses thereof common to them with all men, it is of special use to show them how much they are bound to Christ for his fulfilling it, and enduring the curse thereof in their stead and for their good; and thereby to provoke them to more thankfulness, and to express the same in their greater care to conform themselves thereunto as the rule of their obedience.

Rom. 6:14; Rom. 7:4, 6; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 3:20; Gal. 5:23; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 7: 24-25; Gal. 3:13-14; Rom. 8:3-4; Luke 1:68-69, 74-75; Col. 1:12-14; Rom. 7:22; Rom. 12:2; Titus 2:11-14.

Q. 98. *Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?*

A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments, which were delivered by the voice of God upon mount Sinai, and written by him in two tables of stone; and are recorded in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. The four first commandments containing our duty to God, and the other six our duty to man.

Deut. 10:4; Ex. 34:1-4; Matt. 22:37-40.

Q. 99. *What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the ten commandments?*

A. For the right understanding of the ten commandments, these rules are to be observed:

1. That the law is perfect, and bindeth every one to full conformity in the whole man unto the righteousness thereof, and unto entire obedience for ever; so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin.

2. That it is spiritual, and so reacheth the understanding, will, affections, and all other powers of the soul; as well as words, works, and gestures.

3. That one and the same thing, in divers respects, is required or forbidden in several commandments.

4. That as, where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden; and, where a sin is forbidden the contrary duty is commanded: so, where a promise is annexed, the contrary threatening is included; and, where a threatening is annexed, the contrary promise is included.

5. That what God forbids, is at no time to be done; what he commands, is always our duty; and yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times.

6. That under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded; together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto.

7. That what is forbidden or commanded to ourselves, we are bound, according to our places, to endeavor that it may be avoided or performed by others, according to the duty of their places.

8. That in what is commanded to others, we are bound, according to our places and callings, to be helpful to them; and to take heed of partaking with others in what is forbidden them.

Ps. 19:7; Jas. 2:10; Matt. 5:21-22; Rom. 7:14; Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-39; Matt. 5: 27-28, 33-34, 37-39, 43-44; Col. 3:5; Amos 8:5; Prov. 1:19; 1 Tim. 6:10; Isa. 58:13; Deut. 6:13; Matt. 4:9-10; Matt. 15:4-6; Matt. 5:21-24; Eph. 4:28; Ex. 20:12; Prov. 30:17; Jer. 18:7-8; Ex. 20:7; Ps. 15:1, 4-5; Ps. 24:4-5; Job 13:7-8; Rom. 3:8; Job 36:21; Heb. 11:25; Deut. 4:8-9; Matt. 12:7, Matt. 5:21-22, 27-28; Matt. 15:4-6; Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Thess. 5:22; Jude 1:23; Gal. 5:26; Col. 3:21; Ex. 20:10; Lev. 19:17; Gen. 18:19; Josh. 24:15: Deut. 6:6-7; 2 Cor. 1:24; 1 Tim. 5:22; Eph. 5:11.

Q. 100. *What special things are we to consider in the ten commandments?*

A. We are to consider in the ten commandments, the preface, the substance of the commandments themselves, and the several reasons annexed to some of them the more to enforce them.

No references.

Q. 101. *What is the preface to the ten commandments?*

A. The preface to the ten commandments is contained in these words, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* Wherein God manifesteth his sovereignty, as being Jehovah, the eternal, immutable, and almighty God; having his being in and of himself, and giving being to all his words and works: and that he is a God in covenant, as with Israel of old, so with all his people; who, as he brought them out of their bondage in Egypt, so he delivereth us from our spiritual thraldom: and that therefore we are bound to take him for our God alone, and to keep all his commandments.

Ex. 20:2; Isa. 44:6; Ex. 3:14; Ex. 6:3; Acts 17:24, 28; Gen. 17:7; Rom. 3:29; Luke 1:74-75; 1 Pet. 1:15-18; Lev. 18:30; Lev. 19:37.

Q. 102. *What is the sum of the four commandments which contain our duty to God?*

A. The sum of the four commandments containing our duty to God, is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind.

Luke 10:27.

Q. 103. *Which is the first commandment?*

A. The first commandment is, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

Ex. 20:3.

Q. 104. *What are the duties required in the first commandment?*

A. The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him; giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.

1 Chron. 28:9; Deut. 26:17; Isa. 43:10; Jer. 14:22; Ps. 95:6-7; Matt. 4:10; Ps. 29:2; Mal. 3:16; Ps. 63:6; Eccl. 12:1; Ps. 71:19; Mal. 1:6; Isa. 45:23; Josh. 24:15, 22; Deut. 6:5; Ps. 123:25; Isa. 8:13; Ex. 14:31; Isa. 26:4; Ps. 130:7; Ps. 37:4; Ps. 32:11; Rom. 12:11; Num. 25:11; Phil. 4:6; Jer. 7:23; Jas 4:7; 1 John 3:22; Jer. 31: 18; Ps. 119:136; Mic. 6:8.

Q. 105. *What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the first commandment are atheism, in denying, or not having a God; idolatry, in having or worshiping more gods than one, or any with, or instead of the true God; the not having and avouching him for God, and our God; the omission or neglect of any thing due to him, required in this commandment; ignorance, forgetfulness, misapprehensions, false opinions, unworthy and wicked thoughts of him; bold and curious searching into his secrets; all profaneness, hatred of God; self-love, self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things, and taking them off from him in whole or in part; vain credulity, unbelief, heresy, misbelief, distrust, despair, incorrigibleness, and insensibleness under judgments; hardness of heart; pride; presumption; carnal security; tempting of God; using unlawful means, and trusting in lawful means; carnal delights and joys; corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal; lukewarmness, and deadness in the things of God; estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God; praying, or giving any religious worship, to saints, angels, or any other creatures; all compacts and consulting with the devil, and hearkening to his suggestions; making men the lords of our faith and conscience; slighting and despising God and his commands; resisting and grieving of his Spirit, discontent and impatience at his dispensations, charging him foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us; and ascribing the praise of any good we either are, have, or can do, to fortune, idols, ourselves, or any other creature.

Ps. 14:1; Eph. 2:12; Jer. 2:27-28; 1 Thess. 1:9; Ps. 81:11; Isa. 43:22-24; Jer. 4:22; Hos. 4:1, 6; Jer. 2:32; Acts 17:23, 29; Isa. 40:18; Ps. 50:21; Deut. 29:29; Titus 1:16; Heb. 12:16; Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2; Phil. 2:21; 1 John 2:15-16; 1 Sam. 2:29; Col. 3:2, 5; 1 John 4:1; Heb. 3:12; Gal. 5:20; Titus 3:10; Acts 26:9; Ps. 78:22; Gen. 4:13; Jer. 5:3; Isa. 42:25; Rom. 2:5; Jer. 13:15; Ps. 19:13; Zeph. 1:12; Matt. 4:7; Rom. 3:8; Jer. 17:5; 2 Tim. 3:4; Gal. 4:17; John 16:2; Rom. 10:2; Luke 9:54-55; Rev. 3:16; Rev. 3:1; Ezek. 14:5; Isa. 1:4-5; Rom. 10:13-14; Hos. 4:12; Acts 10:25-26; Rev. 19:10; Matt. 4:10; Col. 2:18; Rom. 1:25; Lev. 20:6; 1 Sam. 28:7, 11;

1 Chron. 10:13-14; Acts 5:3; 2 Cor. 1:24; Matt. 23:9; Deut. 32:15; 2 Sam. 12:9; Prov. 13:13; Acts 7:51; Eph. 4:30; Ps. 73:2-3, 13-15, 22; Job 1:22; 1 Sam. 6:7-9; Dan. 5:23; Deut. 8:17; Dan. 4:30; Hab. 1:16.

Q. 106. *What are we especially taught by these words (before me) in the first commandment?*

A. These words (*before me*) or before my face, in the first commandment teach, us that God who seeth all things, taketh special notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other god; that so it may be an argument to dissuade from it, and to aggravate it as a most impudent provocation; as also to persuade us to do as in his sight, whatever we do in his service.

Ezek. 8:5-18; Ps. 44:20-21; 1 Chron. 28:9.

Q. 107. *Which is the second commandment?*

A. The second commandment is, *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

Ex. 20:4-6.

Q. 108. *What are the duties required in the second commandment?*

A. The duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath instituted in his Word; particularly prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ; the reading, preaching, and hearing of the Word; the administration and receiving of the sacraments; church government and discipline; the ministry and maintenance thereof; religious fasting; swearing by the name of God, and vowing unto him: as also the disapproving, detesting, opposing, all false worship; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry.

Deut. 32:46-47; Matt. 28:20; Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 6:13-14; Phil. 4:6; Eph. 5:20; Deut. 17:18-19; Acts 15:21; 2 Tim. 4:2; Jas. 1:21-22: Acts 10:33; Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-30; Matt. 18:15-17; Matt. 16:19; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4: 11-12; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 Cor. 9:7-15; Joel 2:12-13; 1 Cor. 7:5; Deut. 6:13; Isa. 19: 21; Ps. 76:11; Acts 17:16-17; Ps. 16:4; Deut. 7:5; Isa. 30:22.

Q. 109. *What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counselling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself; tolerating a false religion; the making any representation of God, of all, or of any of the three Persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever; all worshiping of it, or God in it or by it; the making of any representation of feigned deities, and all worship of them, or service belonging

to them; all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever; simony; sacrilege; all neglect, contempt, hindering, and opposing the worship and ordinances which God hath appointed.

Num. 15:39; Deut. 13:6-8; Hos. 5:11; Mic. 6:16; 1 Kings 11:33; 1 Kings 12: 33; Deut. 12:30-32; Deut. 13:6-12; Zech. 13:2-3; Rev. 2:2, 14-15, 20; Rev. 17:12, 16-17; Deut. 4:15-19; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:21-23, 25; Dan. 3:18; Gal. 4:8; Ex. 32: 5; Ex. 32:8; 1 Kings 18:26, 28; Isa. 65:11; Acts 17:22; Col. 2:21-23; Mal. 1:7-8, 14; Deut. 4:2; Ps. 106:39; Matt. 15:9; 1 Pet. 1:18; Jer. 44:17; Isa. 65:3-5; Gal. 1: 13-14; 1 Sam. 13:11-12; 1 Sam. 15:21; Acts 8:18; Rom. 2:22; Mal. 3:8; Ex. 4:24-26; Matt. 22:5; Mal. 1:7, 13; Matt. 23:13; Acts 13:44-45; 1 Thess. 2:15-16.

Q. 110. *What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it?*

A. The reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it, contained in these words, *For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments;* are, besides God's sovereignty over us, and propriety in us, his fervent zeal for his own worship, and his revengeful indignation against all false worship, as being a spiritual whoredom; accounting the breakers of this commandment such as hate him, and threatening to punish them into divers generations; and esteeming the observers of it such as love him and keep his commandments, and promising mercy to them unto many generations.

Ex. 20:5-6; Ps. 45:11; Rev. 15:3-4; Ex. 34:13-14; 1 Cor. 10:20-22; Jer. 7:18-20; Ezek. 16:26-27; Deut. 32:16-20; Hos. 2:2-4; Deut. 5:29.

Q. 111. *Which is the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment is, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

Ex. 20:7.

Q. 112. *What is required in the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment requires, that the name of God, his titles, attributes, ordinances, the word, sacraments, prayer, oaths, vows, lots, his works, and whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, be holily and reverently used in thought, meditation, word, and writing; by an holy profession, and answerable conversation, to the glory of God, and the good of ourselves and others.

Matt. 6:9; Deut. 28:58; Ps. 29:2; Ps. 68:4; Rev. 15:3-4; Mal. 1:14; Eccl. 5:1; Ps. 138:2; 1 Cor. 11:24-25, 28-29; 1 Tim. 2:8; Jer. 4:2; Eccl. 5:2, 4-6; Acts 1:24, 26; Job 36:24; Mal. 3:16; Ps. 8:1, 3-4, 9; Col. 3:17; Ps. 105:2, 5; Ps. 102:18; 1 Pet. 3: 15; Mic. 4:5; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 10:31; Jer. 32:39; 1 Pet. 2:12.

Q. 113. *What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the third commandment are, the not using of God's name as is required; and the abuse of it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious, or wicked mentioning or otherwise using his titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, by blasphemy, perjury; all sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful; and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful; murmuring and quarreling at, curious prying into, and misapplying of God's decrees and providences; misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the Word, or any part of it, to profane jests, curious or unprofitable questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines; abusing it, the creatures, or any thing contained under the name of God, to charms, or sinful lusts and practices; the maligning, scorning, reviling, or any wise opposing of God's truth, grace, and ways; making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by unconformable, unwise, unfruitful and offensive walking, or backsliding from it.

Mal. 2:2; Acts 17:23; Prov. 30:9; Mal. 1:6-7, 12; Mal. 3:14; 1 Sam. 4:3-5; Jer. 7:4, 9-10, 14, 31; Col. 2:20-22; 2 Kings 18:30, 35; Ex. 5:2; Ps. 139:20; Ps. 50:16-17; Isa. 5:12; 2 Kings 19:22; Lev. 24:11; Zech. 5:4; Zech. 8:17; 1 Sam. 17:43; 2 Sam. 16:5; Jer. 5:7; Jer. 23:10; Deut. 23:18; Acts 23:12, 14; Esther 3:7; Esther 9:24; Ps. 22:18; Ps. 24:4; Ezek. 17:16, 18-19; Mark 6:26; 1 Sam. 25:22, 32-34; Rom. 9:14, 19-20; Deut. 29:29; Rom. 3:5, 7; Rom. 6:1-2; Eccl. 8:11; Eccl. 9:3; Ps. 39:1-13; Matt. 5:21-28; Ezek. 13:22; 2 Pet. 3:16; Matt. 22:24-31; Isa. 22:13; Jer. 23:34, 36, 38; 1 Tim. 1:4, 6-7; 1 Tim. 6:4-5, 20; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; Rom. 13:13-14; 1 Kings 21:9-10; Jude 1:4: Acts 13:45; 1 John 3:12; Ps. 1:1; 2 Pet. 3:3; 1 Pet. 4:4; Acts 13:45-46, 50; Acts 4:18; Acts 19:9; 1 Thess. 2:16; Heb. 10:29; 2 Tim. 3:5; Matt. 23:14; Matt. 6:1-2, 5, 16; Mark 8:38; Ps. 73:14-15; 1 Cor. 6:5-6; Eph. 5:15-17; Isa. 5:4; 2 Pet. 1:8-9; Rom. 2:23-24; Gal. 3:1, 3; Heb. 6:6; 2 Tim. 2:14; Titus 3:9; Deut. 18:10-14; Acts 19:13.

Q. 114. *What reasons are annexed to the third commandment?*

A. The reasons annexed to the third commandment, in these words, *"The Lord thy God," and "for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain"* are, because he is the Lord and our God, therefore his name is not to be profaned or any way abused by us; especially because he will be so far from acquitting and sparing the transgressors of this commandment, as that he will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment, albeit many such escape the censures and punishments of men.

Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; Ezek. 36:21-23; Deut. 28:58-59; Zech. 5:2-4; 1 Sam. 2:12, 17, 22, 24; 1 Sam. 3:13.

Q. 115. *Which is the fourth commandment?*

A. The fourth commandment is, *Remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath-day and hallowed it.*

Ex. 20:8-11.

Q. 116. *What is required in the fourth commandment?*

A. The fourth commandment requireth of all men the sanctifying or keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word, expressly one whole day in seven; which was the seventh from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week ever since, and so to continue to the end of the world; which is the Christian sabbath, and in the New Testament called The Lord's Day.

Deut. 5:12-14; Gen. 2:2-3; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Matt. 5:17-18; Isa. 56:2, 4, 6-7; Rev. 1:10.

Q. 117. *How is the sabbath or the Lord's day to be sanctified?*

A. The sabbath or Lord's day is to be sanctified by an holy resting all the day, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful; and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy) in the public and private exercises of God's worship: and, to that end, we are to prepare our hearts, and with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose, and seasonably to despatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day.

Ex. 20:8, 10; Ex. 16:25-28; Neh. 13:15-22; Jer. 17:21-22; Matt. 12:1-13; Isa. 58: 13; Luke 4:16; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Ps. 92 title; Isa. 66:23; Lev. 23:3; Ex. 20: 8; Luke 23:54, 56; Ex. 16:22, 25-26, 29; Neh. 13:19.

Q. 118. *Why is the charge of keeping the sabbath more specially directed to governors of families and other superiors?*

A. The charge of keeping the sabbath is more specially directed to governors of families and other superiors, because they are bound not only to keep it themselves, but to see that it be observed by all those that are under their charge; and because they are prone ofttimes to hinder them by employments of their own.

Ex. 20:10; Josh. 24:15; Neh. 13:15, 17; Jer. 17:20-22; Ex. 23:12.

Q. 119. *What are the sins forbidden in the fourth commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the fourth commandment are, all omissions of the duties required, all careless, negligent, and unprofitable performing of them, and being weary of them; all profaning the day by idleness, and doing that which is in itself sinful; and by all needless works, words, and thoughts, about our worldly employments and recreations.

Ezek 22:26; Acts 20:7, 9; Ezek. 33:30-32; Amos 8:5; Mal. 1:13; Ezek. 23:38; Jer. 17:24, 27; Isa. 58:13.

Q. 120. *What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, the more to enforce it?*

A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, the more to enforce it, are taken from the equity of it, God allowing us six days of seven for our own affairs, and reserving but one for himself, in these words, *six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work:* from God's challenging a special propriety in

that day, *the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God:* from the example of God, who *in six days made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day:* and from that blessing which God put upon that day, not only in sanctifying it to be a day for his service, but in ordaining it to be a means of blessing to us in our sanctifying it, *wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath-day and hallowed it.*

Ex. 20:9; Ex. 20:10; Ex. 20:11.

Q. 121. *Why is the word* remember *set in the beginning of the fourth commandment?*

A. The word *remember* is set in the beginning of the fourth commandment, partly, because of the great benefit of remembering it, we being thereby helped in our preparation to keep it; and, in keeping it, better to keep all the rest of the commandments, and to continue a thankful remembrance of the two great benefits of creation and redemption, which contain a short abridgement of religion; and partly, because we are very ready to forget it, for that there is less light of nature for it, and yet it restraineth our natural liberty in things at other times lawful; that it cometh but once in seven days, and many worldly businesses come between, and too often take off our minds from thinking of it, either to prepare for it, or to sanctify it; and that Satan with his instruments much labor to blot out the glory, and even the memory of it, to bring in all irreligion and impiety.

Ex. 20:8; Ex. 16:23; Luke 23:54, 56; Mark 15:42; Neh. 13:19; Ps. 92 title, 13-14; Ezek. 20:12, 19-20; Gen. 2:2-3; Ps. 118:22, 24; Acts 4:10-11; Rev. 1:10; Ezek. 22:26; Neh. 9:14; Ex. 34:21; Deut. 5:14-15; Amos 8:5; Lam. 1:7; Jer. 17:21-23; Neh. 13:15-23.

Q. 122. *What is the sum of the six commandments which contain our duty to man?*

A. The sum of the six commandments which contain our duty to man, is, to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to do to others what we would have them to do to us.

Matt. 22:39; Matt. 7:12.

Q. 123. *Which is the fifth commandment?*

A. The fifth commandment is, *Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

Ex. 20:12.

Q. 124. *Who are meant by* father *and* mother *in the fifth commandment?*

A. By *father* and *mother*, in the fifth commandment, are meant, not only natural parents, but all superiors in age and gifts; and especially such as, by God's ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or commonwealth.

Prov. 23:22, 25: Eph. 6:1-2; 1 Tim. 5:1-2; Gen. 4:20-22; Gen. 45:8; 2 Kings 5: 13; 2 Kings 2:12; 2 Kings 13:14; Gal. 4:19; Isa. 49:23.

Q. 125. *Why are superiors styled* father *and* mother*?*

A. Superiors are styled *father* and *mother*, both to teach them in all duties towards their inferiors, like natural parents, to express love and tenderness to them, according to their several relations; and to work inferiors to a greater willingness and cheerfulness in performing their duties to their superiors, as to their parents.

Eph. 6:4; 2 Cor. 12:14; 1 Thess. 2:7-8, 11; Num. 11:11-12; 1 Cor. 4:14-16; 2 Kings 5:13.

Q. 126. *What is the general scope of the fifth commandment?*

A. The general scope of the fifth commandment is the performance of those duties which we mutually owe in our several relations, as inferiors, superiors, or equals.

Eph. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:17; Rom. 12:10.

Q. 127. *What is the honor that inferiors owe to their superiors?*

A. The honor which inferiors owe to their superiors is, all due reverence in heart, word, and behavior; prayer and thanksgiving for them; imitation of their virtues and graces; willing obedience to their lawful commands and counsels; due submission to their corrections; fidelity to, defence and maintenance of their persons and authority, according to their several ranks, and the nature of their places; bearing with their infirmities, and covering them in love, that so they may be an honor to them and to their government.

Mal. 1:6; Lev. 19:3; Prov. 31:28; 1 Pet. 3:6; Lev. 19:32; 1 Kings 2:19; 1 Tim. 2: 1-2; Heb. 13:7; Phil. 3:17; Eph. 6:1-2, 5-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Rom. 13:1-5; Heb. 13: 17; Prov. 4:3-4; Prov. 23:22; Ex. 18:19, 24; Heb. 12:9; 1 Pet. 2:18-20; Titus 2: 9-10; 1 Sam. 26:15-16; 2 Sam. 18:3; Esther 6:2; Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:6-7; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6; Gen. 45:11; Gen. 47:12; 1 Pet. 2:18; Prov. 23:22; Gen. 9:23; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 31:23.

Q. 128. *What are the sins of inferiors against their superiors?*

A. The sins of inferiors against their superiors are, all neglect of the duties required toward them; envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against, their persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands, and corrections; cursing, mocking, and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.

Matt. 15:4-6; Num. 11:28-29; 1 Sam. 8:7; Isa. 3:5; 2 Sam. 15:1-12; Ex. 21:15; 1 Sam. 10:27; 1 Sam. 2:25; Deut. 21:18-21; Prov. 30:11, 17; Prov. 19:26.

Q. 129. *What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?*

A. It is required of superiors, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand, to love, pray for, and bless their inferiors; to instruct, counsel and admonish them; countenancing, commending, and rewarding such as do well; and discountenancing, reproving, and chastising such as do ill; protecting, and providing for them all things necessary for soul and body: and, by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory

to God, honor to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God hath put upon them.

Col. 3:19; Titus 2:4; 1 Sam. 12:23; Job 1:5; 1 Kings 8:55-56; Heb. 7:7; Gen. 49:28; Deut. 6:6-7; Eph. 6:4; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 Pet. 2:14; Rom. 13:3; Esther 6:3; Rom. 13:3-4; Prov. 29:15; 1 Pet. 2:14; Job 29:12-17; Isa. 1:10, 17; Eph. 6:4; 1 Tim. 5: 8; 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Kings 3:28; Titus 2:15.

Q. 130. *What are the sins of superiors?*

A. The sins of superiors are, besides the neglect of the duties required of them, an inordinate seeking of themselves, their own glory, ease, profit, or pleasure; commanding things unlawful, or not in the power of inferiors to perform; counseling, encouraging, or favoring them in that which is evil; dissuading, discouraging, or discountenancing them in that which is good; correcting them unduly; careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger; provoking them to wrath; or in any way dishonoring themselves, or lessening their authority, by an unjust, indiscreet, rigorous, or remiss behavior.

Ezek. 34:2-4; Phil. 2:21; John 5:44; John 7:18; Isa. 56:10-11; Deut. 17:17; Dan. 3:4-6; Acts 4:17-18; Ex. 5:10-18; Matt. 23:2, 4; Matt. 14:8; Mark 6:24; 2 Sam. 13: 28; 1 Sam. 3:13; John 7:46-49; Col. 3:21; Ex. 5:17; 1 Pet. 2:18-20; Heb. 12:10; Deut. 25:3; Gen. 38:11, 26; Acts 18:17; Eph. 6:4; Gen. 9:21; 1 Kings 12:13-16; 1 Kings 1:6; 1 Sam. 2:29-31.

Q. 131. *What are the duties of equals?*

A. The duties of equals are, to regard the dignity and worth of each other, in giving honor to go one before another; and to rejoice in each other's gifts and advancement, as their own.

1 Pet. 2:17; Rom. 12:10; Rom. 12:15-16; Phil. 2:3-4.

Q. 132. *What are the sins of equals?*

A. The sins of equals are, besides the neglect of the duties required, the undervaluing of the worth, envying the gifts, grieving at the advancement or prosperity one of another; and usurping pre-eminence one over another.

Rom. 13:8; 2 Tim. 3:3; Acts 7:9; Gal. 5:26; Num. 12:2; Esther 6:12-13; 3 John 1:9; Luke 22:24.

Q. 133. *What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment, the more to enforce it?*

A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment in these words, *"that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,"* is an express promise of long life and prosperity, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good, to all such as keep this commandment.

Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; 1 Kings 8:25; Eph. 6:2-3.

Q. 134. *Which is the sixth commandment?*

A. The sixth commandment is, *Thou shalt not kill.*

Ex. 20:13.

Q. 135. *What are the duties required in the sixth commandment?*

A. The duties required in the sixth commandment are, all careful studies, and lawful endeavours, to preserve the life of ourselves and others by resisting all thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions, and avoiding all occasions, temptations, and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any; by just defence thereof against violence, patient bearing of the hand of God, quietness of mind, cheerfulness of spirit; a sober use of meat, drink, physic, sleep, labor, and recreation; by charitable thoughts, love, compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness; peaceable, mild, and courteous speeches and behavior: forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient bearing and forgiving of injuries, and requiting good for evil; comforting and succoring the distressed, and protecting and defending the innocent.

Eph. 5:28-29; 1 Kings 18:4; Jer. 26:15-16; Acts 23:12, 16-17, 21, 27; Eph. 4: 26-27; 2 Sam. 2:22; Deut. 22:8; Matt. 4:6-7; Prov. 1:10-11, 15-16; 1 Sam. 24:12; 1 Sam. 26:9-11; Gen. 37:21-22; Ps. 82:4; Prov. 24:11-12; 1 Sam. 14:45; Jas. 5:7-11; Heb. 12:9; 1 Thess. 4:11; 1 Pet. 3:3-4; Ps. 37:8-11; Prov. 17:22; Prov. 25:16, 27; 1 Tim. 5:23; Isa. 38:21; Ps. 127:2; Eccl. 5:12; 2 Thess. 3:10, 12; Prov. 16:26; Eccl. 3:4, 11; 1 Sam. 19:4-5; 1 Sam. 22:13-14; Rom. 13:10; Luke 10:33-34; Col. 3:12-13; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 3:8-11; Prov. 15:1; Judg. 8:1-3; Matt. 5:24; Eph. 4:2, 32; Rom. 12:17, 20-21; 1 Thess. 5:14; Job 31:19-20; Matt. 25:35-36; Prov. 31:8-9.

Q. 136. *What are the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the sixth commandment are, all taking away the life of ourselves, or of others, except in case of public justice, lawful war, or necessary defence; the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life; sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge; all excessive passions, distracting cares; immoderate use of meat, drink, labor, and recreations; provoking words; oppression, quarreling, striking, wounding, and whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.

Acts 16:28; Gen. 9:6; Num. 35:31, 33; Jer. 48:10; Deut. 20:1-20; Ex. 22:2-3; Matt. 25:42-43; Jas. 2:15-16; Eccl. 6:1-2; Matt. 5:22; 1 John 3:15; Lev. 19:17; Prov. 14:30; Rom. 12:19; Eph. 4:31; Matt. 6:31, 34; Luke 21:34; Rom. 13:13; Eccl. 12: 12; Eccl. 2:22-23; Isa. 5:12; Prov. 15:1; Prov. 12:18; Ezek. 18:18; Ex. 1:14; Gal. 5:15; Prov. 23:29; Num. 35:16-18, 21; Ex. 21:18-36.

Q. 137. *Which is the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment is, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

Ex. 20:14.

Q. 138. *What are the duties required in the seventh commandment?*

A. The duties required in the seventh commandment are, chastity in body, mind, affections, words, and behavior; and the preservation of it in ourselves and others; watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses; temperance, keeping of chaste company, modesty in apparel; marriage by those that have not the gift of continency, conjugal love, and cohabitation; diligent labor in all our callings; shunning all occasions of uncleanness, and resisting temptations thereunto.

1 Thess. 4:4; Job 31:1; 1 Cor. 7:34; Col. 4:6; 1 Pet. 3:2; 1 Cor. 7:2, 35-36; Job

31:1; Acts 24:24-25; Prov. 2:16-20; 1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Cor. 7:2, 9; Prov. 5:19-20; 1 Pet. 3:7; Prov. 31:11, 27-28; Prov. 5:8; Gen. 39:8-10.

Q. 139. *What are the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the seventh commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are, adultery, fornication, rape, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts; all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections; all corrupt or filthy communications, or listening thereunto; wanton looks; impudent or light behavior; immodest apparel; prohibiting of lawful, and dispensing with unlawful marriages; allowing, tolerating, keeping of stews, and resorting to them; entangling vows of single life; undue delay of marriage; having more wives or husbands than one at the same time; unjust divorce or desertion; idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, unchaste company; lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancing, stage plays; and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others.

Prov. 5:7; Heb. 13:4; Gal. 5:19; 2 Sam. 13:14; 1 Cor. 5:1; Rom. 1:24, 26-27; Lev. 20:15-16; Matt. 5:28; Matt. 15:19; Col. 3:5; Eph. 5:3-4; Prov. 7:5, 21-22; Isa. 3:16; 2 Pet. 2:14; Prov. 7:10, 13; 1 Tim. 4:3; Lev. 18:1-21; Mark 6:18; Mal. 2: 11-12; 1 Kings 15:12; 2 Kings 23:7; Deut. 23:17-18; Lev. 19:29; Jer. 5:7; Prov. 7:24-27; Matt. 19:10-11; 1 Cor. 7:7-9; Gen. 38:26; Mal. 2:14-15; Matt. 19:5; Mal. 2:16; Matt. 5:32; 1 Cor. 7:12-13; Ezek. 16:49; Prov. 23:30-33; Gen. 39:10; Prov. 5:8; Eph. 5:4; Ezek. 23:14-16; Isa. 23:15-17; Isa. 3:16; Mark 6:22; Rom. 13:13; 1 Pet. 4:3; 2 Kings 9:30; Jer. 4:30; Ezek. 23:40.

Q. 140. *Which is the eighth commandment?*

A. The eighth commandment is, *Thou shalt not steal.*

Ex. 20:15.

Q. 141. *What are the duties required in the eighth commandment?*

A. The duties required in the eighth commandment are, truth, faithfulness, and justice in contracts and commerce between man and man; rendering to every one his due; restitution of goods unlawfully detained from the right owners thereof; giving and lending freely, according to our abilities, and the necessities of others; moderation of our judgments, wills, and affections, concerning worldly goods; a provident care and study to get, keep, use, and dispose of those things which are necessary and convenient for the sustentation of our nature, and suitable to our condition; a lawful calling, and diligence in it; frugality; avoiding unnecessary law-suits, and suretyship, or other like engagements; and an endeavor, by all just and lawful means, to procure, preserve, and further the wealth and outward estate of others, as well as our own.

Ps. 15:2, 4; Zech. 7:4, 10; Zech. 8:16-17; Rom. 13:7; Lev. 6:2-5; Luke 19:8; Luke 6:30, 38; 1 John 3:17; Eph. 4:28; Gal. 6:10; 1 Tim. 6:6-9; Gal. 6:14; 1 Tim. 5:8; Prov. 27:23-27; Eccl. 2:24; Eccl. 3:12-13; 1 Tim. 6:17-18; Isa. 38:1; Matt. 11: 8; 1 Cor. 7:20; Gen. 2:15; Gen. 3:19; Eph. 4:28; Prov. 10:4; John 6:12; Prov. 21: 20; 1 Cor. 6:1-9; Prov. 6:1-6; Prov. 11:15; Lev. 25:35; Deut. 22:1-4; Ex. 23:4-5; Gen. 47:14, 20; Phil. 2:4; Matt. 22:39.

Q. 142. *What are the sins forbidden in the eighth commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the eighth commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are, theft, robbery, man-stealing, and receiving any thing that is stolen; fraudulent dealing; false weights and measures; removing landmarks; injustice and unfaithfulness in contracts between man and man, or in matters of trust; oppression; extortion; usury; bribery; vexatious lawsuits; unjust inclosures and depopulations; engrossing commodities to enhance the price, unlawful callings, and all other unjust or sinful ways of taking or withholding from our neighbor what belongs to him, or of enriching ourselves; covetousness; inordinate prizing and affecting worldly goods; distrustful and distracting cares and studies in getting, keeping, and using them; envying at the prosperity of others; as likewise idleness, prodigality, wasteful gaming; and all others ways whereby we do unduly prejudice our own outward estate, and defrauding ourselves of the due use and comfort of that estate which God hath given us.

Jas. 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17; Eph. 4:28; Ps. 62:10; 1 Tim. 1:10; Prov. 29:24; Ps. 50:18; 1 Thess. 4:6; Prov. 11:1; Prov. 20:10; Deut. 19:14; Prov. 23:10; Amos 8:5; Ps. 37:21; Luke 16:10-12; Ezek. 22:29; Lev. 25:17; Matt. 23:25; Ezek. 22:12; Ps. 15:5; Job 15:34; 1 Cor. 6:6-8; Prov. 3:29-30; Isa. 5:8; Mic. 2:2; Prov. 11:26; Acts 19:19, 24-25; Job 20:19; Jas. 5:4; Prov. 21:6; Luke 12:15; 1 Tim. 6:5; Col. 3:2; Prov. 23:5; Ps. 62:10; Matt. 6:25, 31, 34; Eccl. 5:12; Ps. 73:3; Ps. 37:1, 7; 2 Thess. 3:11; Prov. 18:9; Prov. 21:17; Prov. 23:20-21; Prov. 28:19; Eccl. 4:8; Eccl. 6:2; 1 Tim. 5:8.

Q. 143. *Which the ninth commandment?*

A. The ninth commandment is, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*

Ex. 20:16.

Q. 144. *What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?*

A. The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting of truth between man and man, and the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own: appearing and standing for the truth; and from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully, speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in all other things whatsoever; a charitable esteem of our neighbors; loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name; sorrowing for, and covering of their infirmities; freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces, defending their innocency; a ready receiving of good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging tale-bearers, flatterers, and slanderers; love and care of our own good name, and defending it when need requireth; keeping of lawful promises; study and practising of whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.

Zech. 8:16; 3 John 1:12; Prov. 31:8-9; Ps. 15:2; 2 Chron. 19:9; 1 Sam. 19:4-5; Josh. 7:19; 2 Sam. 14:18-20; Lev. 19:15; Prov. 14:5, 25; 2 Cor. 1:17-18; Eph. 4:25; Heb. 6:9; 1 Cor. 13:7; Rom. 1:8; 2 John 1:4; 3 John 1:3-4; 1 Cor. 1:4-5, 7; 2 Tim. 1:4-5; 1 Sam. 22:14; 1 Cor. 13:6-7; Ps. 15:3; Prov. 25:23; Prov. 26:24-25; Ps. 101:5; Prov. 22:1; John 8:49; Ps. 15:4; Phil. 4:8; 2 Cor. 2:4; 2 Cor. 12:21; Prov. 17:9; 1 Pet. 4:8.

Q. 145. *What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbors, as well as our own, especially in public judicature; giving false evidence; suborning false witnesses; wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause; out-facing and overbearing the truth; passing unjust sentence; calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked; forgery; concealing the truth; undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful and equivocal expressions, to the prejudice of truth or justice; speaking untruth, lying, slandering, backbiting, detracting, tale-bearing, whispering, scoffing, reviling, rash, harsh, and partial censuring; misconstructing intentions, words, and actions; flattering, vain-glorious boasting, thinking or speaking too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others; denying the gifts and graces of God; aggravating smaller faults; hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins, when called to a free confession; unnecessary discovering of infirmities; raising false rumours, receiving and countenancing evil reports, and stopping our ears against just defence; evil suspicion; envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any, endeavouring or desiring to impair it, rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy; scornful contempt; fond admiration; breach of lawful promises; neglecting such things as are of good report; and practicing or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering what we can in others, such things as procure an ill name.

1 Sam. 17:28; 2 Sam.16:3; 2 Sam. 1:9-10, 15-16; Lev. 19:15; Hab. 1:4; Prov. 19:5; Prov. 6:16, 19; Acts 6:13; Jer. 9:3, 5; Acts 24:2, 5; Ps. 12:3-4; Ps. 52:1-4; Prov. 17: 15; 1 Kings 21:9-14; Isa. 5:23; Ps.119:69; Luke 19:8; Luke 16:5-7; Lev. 5:1; Deut. 13:8; Acts 5:3, 8-9; 2 Tim. 4:16; 1 Kings 1:6; Lev. 19:17; Isa. 59:4; Prov. 29:11; 1 Sam. 22:9-10; Ps. 52:1-5; Ps. 56:5; John 2:19; Matt. 26:60-61; Gen. 3:5; Gen. 26: 7, 9; Isa. 59:13; Lev. 19:11; Col. 3:9; Ps. 50:20; Ps. 15:3; Jas. 4:11; Jer. 38:4; Lev. 19:16; Rom. 1:29-30: Gen. 21:9; Gal. 4:29; 1 Cor. 6:10; Matt. 7:1; Acts 28:4; Gen. 38:24; Rom. 2:1; Neh. 6:6-8; Rom. 3:8; Ps. 69:10; 1 Sam. 1:13-15; 2 Sam. 10:3; Ps. 12:2-3; 2 Tim. 3:2; Luke 18:9, 11; Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 4:6; Acts 12:22; Ex. 4: 10-14; Job 27:5-6; Job 4:6; Matt. 7:3-5; Prov. 28:13; Prov. 30:20; Gen. 3:12-13; Jer. 2:35; 2 Kings 5:25; Gen. 4:9; Gen. 9:22; Prov. 25:9-10; Ex. 23:1; Prov. 29:12; Acts 7:56-57; Job 31:13-14; 1 Cor. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:4; Num. 11:29; Matt. 21:15; Ezra 4:12-13; Jer. 48:27; Ps. 35:15-16, 21; Matt. 27:28-29; Jude 1:16; Acts 12:22; Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3; 1 Sam. 2:24; 2 Sam. 13:12-13; Prov. 5:8-9; Prov. 6:33.

Q. 146. *Which is the tenth commandment?*

A. The tenth commandment is, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.*

Ex. 20:17.

Q. 147. *What are the duties required in the tenth commandment?*

A. The duties required in the tenth commandment are, such a full content-

ment with our own condition, and such a charitable frame of the whole soul toward our neighbor, as that all our inward motions and affections touching him, tend unto, and further all that good which is his.

Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:6; Job 31:29; Rom. 12:15; Ps. 122:7-9; 1 Tim. 1:5; Esther 10:3; 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

Q. 148. *What are the sins forbidden in the tenth commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the tenth commandment are, discontentment with our own estate; envying, and grieving at the good of our neighbor, together with all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his.

1 Kings 21:4; Esther 5:13; 1 Cor. 10:10; Gal. 5:26; Jas. 3:14, 16; Ps. 112:9-10; Neh. 2:10; Rom. 7:7-8; Rom. 13:9; Col. 3:5; Deut. 5:21.

Q. 149. *Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?*

A. No man is able, either of himself, or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.

Jas. 3:2; John 15:5; Rom. 8:3; Eccl. 7:20; 1 John 1:8, 10; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7: 18-19; Gen. 6:5; Gen. 8:21; Rom. 3:9-19; Jas. 3:2-13.

Q. 150. *Are all transgressions of the law of God equally heinous in themselves, and in the sight of God?*

A. All transgressions of the law of God are not equally heinous; but some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.

John 19:11; Ezek. 8:6, 13, 15; 1 John 5:16; Ps. 78:17, 32, 56.

Q. 151. *What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?*

A. Sins receive their aggravations,

1. From the persons offending: if they be of riper age, greater experience or grace, eminent for profession, gifts, place, office, guides to others, and whose example is likely to be followed by others.

2. From the parties offended: if immediately against God, his attributes, and worship; against Christ, and his grace; the Holy Spirit, his witness, and workings; against superiors, men of eminency, and such as we stand especially related and engaged unto; against any of the saints, particularly weak brethren, the souls of them or any other, and the common good of all or many.

3. From the nature and quality of the offence: if it be against the express letter of the law, break many commandments, contain in it many sins: if not only conceived in the heart, but break forth in words and actions, scandalize others, and admit of no reparation: if against means, mercies, judgments, light of nature, conviction of conscience, public or private admonition, censures of the church, civil punishments; and our prayers, purposes, promises, vows, covenants, and engagements to God or men: if done deliberately, wilfully, presumptuously, impudently, boastingly, maliciously, frequently, obstinately, with delight, continuance, or relapsing after repentance.

4. From circumstances of time and place: if on the Lord's day, or other times of divine worship; or immediately before or after these, or other helps to prevent or remedy such miscarriages: if in public, or in the presence of others, who are thereby likely to be provoked or defiled.

Jer. 2:8; Job 32:7, 9; Eccl. 4:13; 1 Kings 11:4, 9; 2 Sam. 12:14; 1 Cor. 5:1; Jas. 4:17; Luke 12:47-48; Jer. 5:4-5; 2 Sam. 12:7-9; Ezek. 8:11-12; Rom. 2:17-24; Gal. 2:11-14; Matt. 21:38-39; 1 Sam. 2:25; Acts 5:4; Ps. 51:4; Rom. 2:4; Mal. 1:8, 14; Heb. 2:2-3; Heb. 12:25; Heb. 10:29; Matt. 12:31-32; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 6:4-6; Jude 1:8; Num. 12:8-9; Isa. 3:5; Prov. 30:17; 2 Cor. 12:15; Ps. 55:12-15; Zeph. 2:8, 10-11; Matt. 18:6; 1 Cor. 6:8; Rev. 17:6; 1 Cor. 8:11-12; Rom. 14:13, 15, 21; Ezek. 13:19; 1 Cor. 8:12; Rev. 18:12-13; Matt. 23:15; 1 Thess. 2:15-16; Josh. 22:20; Prov. 6:30-33; Ezra 9:10-12; 1 Kings 11:9-10; Col. 3:5; 1 Tim. 6:10; Prov. 5:8-12; Prov. 6:32-33; Josh. 7:21; Jas. 1:14-15; Matt. 5:22; Mic. 2:1; Matt. 18:7; Rom. 2:23-24; Deut. 22:22, 28-29; Prov. 6:32-35; Matt. 11:21-24; John 15:22; Isa. 1:3; Deut. 32:6; Amos 4:8-11; Jer. 5:3; Rom. 1:26-27; Rom. 1:32; Dan. 5:22; Titus 3:10-11; Prov. 29:1; Titus 3:10; Matt. 18:17; Prov. 27:22: Prov. 23:35; Ps. 78:34-37; Jer. 2: 20; Jer. 42:5-6, 20, 21; Eccl. 5:4-6; Prov. 20:25; Lev. 26:25; Prov. 2:17; Ezek. 17: 18-19; Ps. 36:4; Jer. 6:16; Num. 15:30; Ex. 21:14; Jer. 3:3; Prov. 7:13; Ps. 52:1; 3 John 1:10; Num. 14:22; Zech. 7:11-12; Prov. 2:14; Isa. 57:17; Jer. 34:8-11; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; 2 Kings 5:26; Jer. 7:10; Isa. 26:10; Ezek. 23:37-39; Isa. 58:3-5; Num. 25: 6-7; 1 Cor. 11:20-21; Jer. 7:8-10; Prov. 7:14-15; John 13:27, 30; Ezra 9:13-14; 2 Sam. 16:22; 1 Sam. 2:22-24.

Q. 152. *What doth every sin deserve at the hands of God?*

A. Every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty, goodness, and holiness of God, and against his righteous law, deserveth his wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come; and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ.

Jas. 2:10-11; Ex. 20:1-2; Hab. 1:13; Lev. 10:3; Lev. 11:44-45; 1 John 3:4; Rom. 7:12; Eph. 5:6; Gal. 3:10; Lam. 3:39; Deut. 28:15-68; Matt. 25:41; Heb. 9:22; 1 Pet. 1:18-19.

Q. 153. *What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us by reason of the transgression of the law?*

A. That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us by reason of the transgression of the law, he requireth of us repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and the diligent use of the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation.

Acts 20:21; Matt. 3:7-8; Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 16:30-31; John 3:16, 18; Prov. 2: 1-5; Prov. 8:33-36.

Q. 154. *What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation?*

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to his church the benefits of his mediation, are all his ordinances; especially the Word, Sacraments, and prayer: all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation.

Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:42, 46-47.

Q. 155. *How is the Word made effectual to salvation?*

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the Word, an effectual means of enlightening, convincing, and humbling sinners; of driving them out of themselves, and drawing them unto Christ; of conforming them to his image, and subduing them to his will; of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions; of building them up in grace, and establishing their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.

Neh. 8:8; Acts 26:18; Ps. 19:8; 1 Cor. 14:24-25; 2 Chron. 34:18-19, 26-28; Acts 2:37, 41; Acts 8:27-39; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Cor. 10:4-6; Rom. 6:17; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; Eph. 6:16-17; Ps. 19:11; 1 Cor. 10:11; Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Rom. 16:25; 1 Thess. 3:2, 10-11, 13; Rom. 15:4; Rom. 10:13-17; Rom. 1:16.

Q. 156. *Is the Word of God to be read by all?*

A. Although all are not to be permitted to read the Word publicly to the congregation, yet all sorts of people are bound to read it apart by themselves, and with their families: to which end, the holy Scriptures are to be translated out of the original into vulgar languages.

Deut. 31:9, 11-13; Neh. 8:2-3; Neh. 9:3-5; Deut. 17:19; Rev. 1:3; John 5:39; Isa. 34:16; Deut. 6:6-9; Gen. 18:17, 19; Ps. 78:5-7; 1 Cor. 14:6, 9, 11-12, 15-16, 24, 27-28.

Q. 157. *How is the Word of God to be read?*

A. The holy Scriptures are to be read with an high and reverent esteem of them; with a firm persuasion that they are the very Word of God; and that he only can enable us to understand them; with desire to know, believe, and obey, the will of God revealed in them; with diligence, and attention to the matter and scope of them; with meditation, application, self-denial, and prayer.

Ps. 19:10; Neh. 8:3-10; Ex. 24:7; 2 Chron. 34:27; Isa. 66:2; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; Luke 24:45; 2 Cor. 3:13-16; Deut. 17:19-20; Acts 17:11; Acts 8:30, 34; Luke 10:26-28; Ps. 1:2; Ps. 119:97; 2 Chron. 34:21; Prov. 3:5; Deut. 33:3; Prov. 2:1-6; Ps.119: 18; Neh. 8:6, 8.

Q. 158. *By whom is the Word of God to be preached?*

A. The Word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office.

1 Tim. 3:2, 6; Eph. 4:8-11; Hos. 4:6; Mal. 2:7; 2 Cor. 3:6; Jer. 14:15; Rom. 10: 15; Heb. 5:4; 1 Cor. 12:28-29; 1 Tim. 3:10; 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 Tim. 5:22.

Q. 159. *How is the Word of God to be preached by those that are called thereunto?*

A. They that are called to labor in the ministry of the Word are to preach sound doctrine, diligently, in season, and out of season; plainly, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; faithfully, making known the whole counsel of God; wisely, applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers; zealously, with fervent love to God and the souls of his people; sincerely, aiming at his glory, and their conversion, edification, and salvation.

Titus 2:1, 8; Acts 18:25; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Cor. 14:19; 1 Cor. 2:4; Jer. 23:28; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; Acts 20:27; Col. 1:28; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12-14; Luke 12:42; Acts 18:25; 2 Cor. 5:13-14; Phil. 1:15-17; Col. 4:12; 2 Cor. 12:15; 2 Cor. 2:17; 2 Cor. 4:2; 1 Thess. 2:4-6; John 7:18; 1 Cor. 9:19-22; 2 Cor. 12:19; Eph. 4:12; 1 Tim. 4:16; Acts 26:16-18.

Q. 160. *What is required of those that hear the Word preached?*

A. It is required of those that hear the Word preached, that they attend upon it with diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine what they hear by the Scriptures; receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the Word of God; meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives.

Prov. 8:34; 1 Pet. 2:1-2; Luke 8:18; Ps. 119:18; Eph. 6:18-19; Acts 17:11; Heb. 4:2; 2 Thess. 2:10; Jas. 1:21; Acts 17:11; 1 Thess. 2:13; Luke 9:44; Heb. 2:1; Luke 24:14; Deut. 6:6-7; Prov. 2:1; Ps.119:11; Luke 8:15; Jas. 1:25.

Q. 161. *How do the Sacraments become effectual means of salvation?*

A. The Sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not by any power in themselves, or any virtue derived from the piety or intention of him by whom they are administered; but only by the working of the Holy Ghost, and the blessing of Christ by whom they are instituted.

1 Pet. 3:21; Acts 8:13, 23; 1 Cor. 3:6-7; 1 Cor. 12:13.

Q. 162. *What is a Sacrament?*

A. A Sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ in his Church, to signify, seal, and exhibit unto those that are within the covenant of grace, the benefits of his mediation; to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces; to oblige them to obedience; to testify and cherish their love and communion one with another; and to distinguish them from those that are without.

Gen. 17:7, 10; Ex. 12:1-51; Matt. 28:19; Matt. 26:26-28; Rom. 4:11; 1 Cor. 11: 24-25; Rom. 15:8; Ex. 12:48; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 10:16; Rom. 4:11; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3- 4; 1 Cor. 10:21; Eph. 4:2-5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:11; Gen. 34:14.

Q. 163. *What are the parts of a Sacrament?*

A. The parts of a Sacrament are two: the one, an outward and sensible sign used according to Christ's own appointment; the other, an inward and spiritual grace thereby signified.

Matt. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; Rom. 2:28-29.

Q. 164. *How many Sacraments hath Christ instituted in his Church under the New Testament?*

A. Under the New Testament Christ hath instituted in his Church only two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:20, 23; Matt. 26:26-28.

Q. 165. *What is Baptism?*

A. Baptism is a Sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained

the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself, of remission of sins by his blood, and regeneration by his Spirit; of adoption, and resurrection unto everlasting life; and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible Church, and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's.

Matt. 28:19; Eph. 5:26; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Cor. 15:29; Rom. 6:5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:4.

Q. 166. *Unto whom is Baptism to be administered?*

A. Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible Church, and so strangers from the covenant of promise, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but infants descended from parents, either both or but one of them professing faith in Christ, and obedience to him, are in that respect, within the covenant, and to be baptized.

Acts 8:36-37; Acts 2:38; Gen. 17:7, 9; Gal. 3:9, 14; Col. 2:11-12; Acts 2:38-39; Rom. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 7:14; Matt. 28:19; Luke 18:15-16; Rom. 11:16.

Q. 167. *How is our Baptism to be improved by us?*

A. The needful but much neglected duty of improving our Baptism, is to be performed by us all our life long, especially in the time of temptation, and when we are present at the administration of it to others, by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it, and of the ends for which Christ instituted it, the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby, and our solemn vow made therein; by being humbled for our sinful defilement, our falling short of, and walking contrary to, the grace of Baptism and our engagements; by growing up to assurance of pardon of sin, and of all other blessings sealed to us in that Sacrament; by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ, into whom we are baptized, for the mortifying of sin, and quickening of grace; and by endeavoring to live by faith, to have our conversation in holiness and righteousness, as those that have therein given up their names to Christ; and to walk in brotherly love, as being baptized by the same Spirit into one body.

Col. 2:11-12; Rom. 6:4, 6, 11; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 1:11-13; Rom. 6:2-3; Rom. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 3:21; Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:22; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 12:13, 25-27.

Q. 168. *What is the Lord's Supper?*

A. The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament of the New Testament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, his death is shewed forth; and they that worthily communicate feed upon his body and blood, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace; have their union and communion with him confirmed; testify and renew their thankfulness, and engagement to God, and their mutual love and fellowship each with other, as members of the same mystical body.

Luke 22:20; Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Cor. 11:24; 1 Cor. 10:14-16, 21; 1 Cor. 10:17.

Q. 169. *How hath Christ appointed bread and wine to be given and received in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?*

A. Christ hath appointed the ministers of his Word, in the administration of this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to set apart the bread and wine from common use, by the word of institution, thanksgiving, and prayer; to take and break the bread, and to give both the bread and the wine to the communicants: who are, by the same appointment, to take and eat the bread, and to drink the wine, in thankful remembrance that the body of Christ was broken and given, and his blood shed, for them.

1 Cor. 11:23-24; Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20.

Q. 170. *How do they that worthily communicate in the Lord's Supper feed upon the body and blood of Christ therein?*

A. As the body and blood of Christ are not corporally or carnally present in, with, or under the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper; and yet are spiritually present to the faith of the receiver, no less truly and really than the elements themselves are to their outward senses; so they that worthily communicate in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, do therein feed upon the body and blood of Christ, not after a corporal or carnal, but in a spiritual manner; yet truly and really, while by faith they receive and apply unto themselves Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death.

Acts 3:21; Matt. 26:26, 28; 1 Cor. 11:24-29; 1 Cor. 10:16.

Q. 171. *How are they that receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to prepare themselves before they come unto it?*

A. They that receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, are, before they come, to prepare themselves thereunto, by examining themselves of their being in Christ; of their sins and wants; of the truth and measure of their knowledge, faith, repentance, love to God and the brethren, charity to all men, forgiving those that have done them wrong; of their desires after Christ, and of their new obedience; and by renewing the exercise of these graces, by serious meditation, and fervent prayer.

1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Cor. 5:7; Ex. 12:15; 1 Cor. 11:29; 2 Cor. 13:5; Matt. 26:28; Zech. 12:10; 1 Cor. 11:31; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; Acts 2:46-47; 1 Cor. 5:8; 1 Cor. 11:18, 20; Matt. 5:23-24; Isa. 55:1; John 7:37; 1 Cor. 5:7-8; 1 Cor. 11:25-26, 28; Heb. 10:21-22, 24; Ps. 26:6; 1 Cor. 11:24-25; 2 Chron. 30:18-19; Matt. 26:26.

Q. 172. *May one who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation, come to the Lord's Supper?*

A. One who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof; and in God's account hath it, if he be duly affected with the apprehension of the want of it, and unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity: in which case (because promises are made, and this Sacrament is appointed, for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians) he is to bewail his unbelief, and labor to have his doubts

resolved; and, so doing, he may and ought to come to the Lord's Supper, that he may be further strengthened.

Isa. 1:10; 1 John 5:13; Ps. 88:1-18; Ps. 77:1-12; Jonah 2:4, 7; Isa. 54:7-10; Matt. 5:3-4; Ps. 31:22; Ps. 73:13, 22-23; Phil. 3:8-9; Ps. 10:17; Ps. 42:1-2, 5, 11; 2 Tim. 2:19; Isa. 1:10; Ps. 66:18-20; Isa. 40:11, 29, 31; Matt. 11:28; Matt. 12:20; Matt. 26:28; Mark 9:24; Acts 2:37; Acts 16:30; Rom. 4:11; 1 Cor. 11:28.

Q. 173. *May any who profess the faith, and desire to come to the Lord's Supper, be kept from it?*

A. Such as are found to be ignorant or scandalous, notwithstanding their profession of the faith, and desire to come to the Lord's Supper, may and ought to be kept from that Sacrament, by the power which Christ hath left in his Church, until they receive instruction, and manifest their reformation.

1 Cor. 11:27-34; Matt. 7:6; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Jude 1:23; 1 Tim. 5:22; 2 Cor. 2:7.

Q. 174. *What is required of them that receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the time of the administration of it?*

A. It is required of them that receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, that, during the time of the administration of it, with all holy reverence and attention they wait upon God in that ordinance, diligently observe the sacramental elements and actions, heedfully discern the Lord's body, and affectionately meditate on his death and sufferings, and thereby stir up themselves to a vigorous exercise of their graces; in judging themselves and sorrowing for sin; in earnest hungering and thirsting after Christ, feeding on him by faith, receiving of his fulness, trusting in his merits, rejoicing in his love, giving thanks for his grace; in renewing of their covenant with God, and love to all the saints.

Lev. 10:3; Heb. 12:28; Ps. 5:7; 1 Cor. 11:17, 26-27; Ex. 24:8; Matt. 26:28; 1 Cor. 11:29; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:26; 1 Cor. 10:3-5, 11, 14; 1 Cor. 11:31; Zech. 12:10; Rev. 22:17; John 6:35; John 1:16; Phil. 3:9; Ps. 63:4-5; 2 Chron. 30:21; Ps. 22:26; Jer. 50:5; Ps. 50:5; Acts 2:42.

Q. 175. *What is the duty of Christians, after they have received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?*

A. The duty of Christians, after they have received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is seriously to consider how they have behaved themselves therein, and with what success; if they find quickening and comfort, to bless God for it, beg the continuance of it, watch against relapses, fulfill their vows, and encourage themselves to a frequent attendance on that ordinance: but if they find no present benefit, more exactly to review their preparation to, and carriage at, the Sacrament; in both which, if they can approve themselves to God and their own consciences, they are to wait for the fruit of it in due time: but, if they see that they have failed in either, they are to be humbled, and to attend upon it afterward with more care and diligence.

Ps. 28:7; Ps. 85:8; 1 Cor. 11:17, 30-31; 2 Chron. 30:21-23, 25-26; Acts 2:42, 46-47; Ps. 36:10; Song of Sol. 3:4; 1 Chron. 29:18; 1 Cor. 10:3-5, 12; Ps. 50:14; 1 Cor. 11:25-26; Acts 2:42, 46; Song of Sol. 5:1-6; Eccl. 5:1-6; Ps. 73:1-2; Ps. 42:5, 8; Ps. 43:3-5; 2 Chron. 30:18-19; Isa. 1:16, 18; 2 Cor. 7:11; 1 Chron. 15:12-14.

Q. 176. *Wherein do the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper agree?*

A. The Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper agree, in that the author of both is God; the spiritual part of both is Christ and his benefits; both are seals of the same covenant, are to be dispensed by ministers of the gospel and by none other; and to be continued in the Church of Christ until his second coming.

Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 10:16; Rom. 4:11; Col. 2:12; Matt. 26:27-28; John 1:33; Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:23; 1 Cor. 4:1; Heb. 5:4; Matt. 28: 19-20; 1 Cor. 11:26.

Q. 177. *Wherein do the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper differ?*

A. The Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper differ, in that Baptism is to be administered but once, with water, to be a sign and seal of our regeneration and ingrafting into Christ, and that even to infants; whereas the Lord's Supper is to be administered often, in the elements of bread and wine, to represent and exhibit Christ as spiritual nourishment to the soul, and to confirm our continuance and growth in him, and that only to such as are of years and ability to examine themselves.

Matt. 3:11; Titus 3:5; Gal. 3:27; Gen. 17:7, 9; Acts 2:38-39; 1 Cor. 7:14; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Cor. 11:28-29.

Q. 178. *What is prayer?*

A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of his Spirit; with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

Ps. 62:8; John 16:23; Rom. 8:26; Ps. 32:5-6; Dan. 9:4; Phil. 4:6.

Q. 179. *Are we to pray unto God only?*

A. God only being able to search the hearts, hear the requests, pardon the sins, and fulfill the desires of all; and only to be believed in, and worshiped with religious worship; prayer, which is a special part thereof, is to be made by all to him alone, and to none other.

1 Kings 8:39; Acts 1:24; Rom. 8:27; Ps. 65:2; Mic. 7:18; Ps. 145:18-19; Rom. 10:14; Matt. 4:10; 1 Cor. 1:2; Ps. 50:15; Rom. 10:14.

Q. 180. *What is it to pray in the name of Christ?*

A. To pray in the name of Christ is, in obedience to his command, and in confidence on his promises, to ask mercy for his sake; not by bare mentioning of his name, but by drawing our encouragement to pray, and our boldness, strength, and hope of acceptance in prayer, from Christ and his mediation.

John 14:13-14; John 16:24; Dan. 9:17; Matt. 7:21; Heb. 4:14-16; 1 John 5:13-15.

Q. 181. *Why are we to pray in the name of Christ?*

A. The sinfulness of man, and his distance from God by reason thereof, being so great, as that we can have no access into his presence without a mediator; and there being none in heaven or earth appointed to, or fit for, that glorious work but Christ alone, we are to pray in no other name but his only.

John 14:6; Isa. 59:2; Eph. 3:12; John 6:27; Heb. 7:25-27; 1 Tim. 2:5; Col. 3: 17; Heb. 13:15.

Q. 182. *How doth the Spirit help us to pray?*

A. We not knowing what to pray for as we ought, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, by enabling us to understand both for whom, and what, and how prayer is to be made; and by working and quickening in our hearts (although not in all persons, nor at all times, in the same measure) those apprehensions, affections, and graces, which are requisite for the right performance of that duty.

Rom. 8:26-27; Ps. 10:17; Zech. 12:10.

Q. 183. *For whom are we to pray?*

A. We are to pray for the whole church of Christ upon earth; for magistrates and ministers; for ourselves, our brethren, yea, our enemies; and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter; but not for the dead, nor for those that are known to have sinned the sin unto death.

Eph. 6:18; Ps. 28:9; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; Col. 4:3; Gen. 32:11; Jas. 5:16; Matt. 5: 44; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; John 17:20; 2 Sam. 7:29; 2 Sam. 12:21-23; 1 John 5:16.

Q. 184. *For what things are we to pray?*

A. We are to pray for all things tending to the glory of God, the welfare of the church, our own or others' good; but not for any thing that is unlawful.

Matt. 6:9; Ps. 51:18; Ps. 122:6; Matt. 7:11; Ps. 125:4; 1 John 5:14.

Q. 185. *How are we to pray?*

A. We are to pray with an awful apprehension of the majesty of God, and deep sense of our unworthiness, necessities, and sins; with penitent, thankful, and enlarged hearts; with understanding, faith, sincerity, fervency, love, and perseverance, waiting upon him, with humble submission to his will.

Eccl. 5:1; Gen. 18:27: Gen. 32:10; Luke 15:17-19; Luke 18:13-14; Ps. 51:17; Phil. 4:6; 1 Sam. 1:15; 1 Sam. 2:1; 1 Cor. 14:15; Mark 11:24; Jas. 1:6; Ps. 145:18; Ps. 17:1; Jas. 5:16; 1 Tim. 2:8; Eph. 6:18; Mic. 7:7; Matt. 26:39.

Q. 186. *What rule hath God given for our direction in the duty of prayer?*

A. The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in the duty of prayer; but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which our Saviour Christ taught his disciples, commonly called, *The Lord's Prayer.*

1 John 5:14; Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4.

Q. 187. *How is the Lord's Prayer to be used?*

A. The Lord's Prayer is not only for direction, as a pattern, according to which we are to make other prayers; but may also be used as a prayer, so that it be done with understanding, faith, reverence, and other graces necessary to the right performance of the duty of prayer.

Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2.

Q. 188. *Of how many parts doth the Lord's prayer consist?*

A. The Lord's prayer consists of three parts; a preface, petitions, and a conclusion.

No references.

Q. 189. *What doth the preface of the Lord's prayer teach us?*

A. The preface of the Lord's prayer (contained in these words, *Our Father which art in heaven,*) teacheth us, when we pray, to draw near to God with confidence of his fatherly goodness, and our interest therein; with reverence, and all other child-like dispositions, heavenly affections, and due apprehensions of his sovereign power, majesty, and gracious condescension: as also, to pray with and for others.

Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:13; Rom. 8:15; Isa. 64:9; Ps. 123:1; Lam. 3:41; Isa. 63:15-16; Neh. 1:4-6; Acts 12:5.

Q. 190. *What do we pray for in the first petition?*

A. In the first petition (which is, *Hallowed be thy name,*) acknowledging the utter inability and indisposition that is in ourselves and all men to honor God aright, we pray, that God would by his grace enable and incline us and others to know, to acknowledge, and highly to esteem him, his titles, attributes, ordinances, word, works, and whatsoever he is pleased to make himself known by; and to glorify him in thought, word, and deed: that he would prevent and remove atheism, ignorance, idolatry, profaneness, and whatsoever is dishonorable to him; and by his overruling providence, direct and dispose of all things to his own glory.

Matt. 6:9; 2 Cor. 3:5; Ps. 51:15: Ps. 67:2-3; Ps. 83:18; Ps. 86:10-13, 15; 2 Thess. 3:1; Ps. 147:19-20; Ps. 138:1-3; 2 Cor. 2:14-15; Ps. 145:1-21: Ps. 8; Ps. 103:1; Ps. 19:14; Phil. 1:9, 11; Ps. 67:1-4; Eph. 1:17-18; Ps. 97:7; Ps. 74:18, 22-23; 2 Kings 19:15-16; 2 Chron. 20:6, 10-12; Ps. 83:1-18; Ps. 140:4-8.

Q. 191. *What do we pray for in the second petition?*

A. In the second petition, (which is, *Thy Kingdom come,*) acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan, we pray that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; the church furnished with all gospel officers and ordinances, purged from corruption, countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrates; that the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed, and made effectual to the converting of those that are yet in their sins, and the confirming, comforting, and building up those that are already converted: that Christ would rule in our hearts here, and hasten the time of his second coming, and our reigning with him for ever: and that he would be pleased so to exercise the kingdom of his power in all the world, as may best conduce to these ends.

Matt. 6:10; Eph. 2:2-3; Ps. 68:1, 18; Rev. 12:10-11; 2 Thess. 3:1; Rom. 10:1; John 17:9, 20; Rom. 11:25-26; Ps. 67:1-7; Matt. 9:38; 2 Thess. 3:1; Mal. 1:11; Zeph. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; Acts 4:29-30; Eph. 3:14-20; Rev. 22:20; Isa. 64:1-2; Rev. 4:8-11; Eph. 6:18-20; Rom. 15:29-30, 32; 2 Thess. 1:11; 2 Thess. 2:16-17.

Q. 192. *What do we pray for in the third petition?*

A. In the third petition, (which is, *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,*) acknowledging that by nature we and all men are not only utterly unable and unwilling to know and do the will of God, but prone to rebel against his word, to repine and murmur against his providence, and wholly inclined to do the will of the flesh, and of the devil: we pray, that God would by his Spirit take away from ourselves and others all blindness, weakness, indisposedness, and perverseness of heart; and by his grace make us able and willing to know, do, and submit to his will in all things, with the like humility, cheerfulness, faithfulness, diligence, zeal, sincerity, and constancy, as the angels do in heaven.

Matt. 6:10; Rom. 7:18; Job 21:14; 1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7; Ex. 17:7; Num. 14:2; Eph. 2:2; Eph. 1:17-18; Eph. 3:16; Matt. 26:40-41; Jer. 31:18-19; Ps. 119:1, 8, 35-36; Acts 21:14; Mic. 6:8; Ps. 100:2; Job 1:21; 2 Sam. 15:25-26; Isa. 38:3; Ps. 119: 4-5; Rom. 12:11; Ps. 119:80; Ps. 119:112; Isa. 6:2-3; Ps. 103:20-21; Matt. 18:10.

Q. 193. *What do we pray for in the fourth petition?*

A. In the fourth petition, (which is, *Give us this day our daily bread,*) acknowledging, that in Adam, and by our own sin, we have forfeited our right to all the outward blessings of this life, and deserve to be wholly deprived of them by God, and to have them cursed to us in the use of them; and that neither they of themselves are able to sustain us, nor we to merit, or by our own industry to procure them; but prone to desire, get, and use them unlawfully: we pray for ourselves and others, that both they and we, waiting upon the providence of God from day to day in the use of lawful means, may of his free gift, and as to his fatherly wisdom shall seem best, enjoy a competent portion of them, and have the same continued and blessed unto us in our holy and comfortable use of them, and contentment in them; and be kept from all things that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort.

Matt. 6:11; Gen. 2:17; Gen. 3:17; Rom. 8:20-22; Jer. 5:25; Deut. 28:15-68; Deut. 8:3; Gen. 32:10; Deut. 8:17-18; Jer. 6:13; Mark 7:21-22; Hos. 12:7; Jas. 4: 3; Gen. 43:12-14; Gen. 28:20; Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:11-12; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 4: 3-5; 1 Tim. 6:6-8; Prov. 30:8-9.

Q. 194. *What do we pray for in the fifth petition?*

A. In the fifth petition, (which is, *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,*) acknowledging, that we and all others are guilty both of original and actual sin, and thereby become debtors to the justice of God; and that neither we, nor any other creature, can make the least satisfaction for that debt: we pray for ourselves and others, that God of his free grace would, through the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, apprehended and applied by faith, acquit us both from the guilt and punishment of sin, accept us in his Beloved, continue his favour and grace to us, pardon our daily failings, and fill us with peace and joy, in giving us daily more and more assurance of forgiveness; which we are the rather emboldened to ask, and encouraged to expect, when we have this testimony in ourselves, that we from the heart forgive others their offences.

Matt. 6:12; Rom. 3:9-22; Matt. 18:24-25; Ps. 130:3-4; Rom. 3:24-26; Heb. 9:22;

Eph. 1:6-7; 2 Pet. 1:2; Hos. 14:2; Jer. 14:7; Rom. 15:13; Ps. 51:7-10, 12; Luke 11: 4; Matt. 6:14-15; Matt. 18:35.

Q. 195. *What do we pray for in the sixth petition?*

A. In the sixth petition, (which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,*) acknowledging that the most wise, righteous, and gracious God, for divers holy and just ends, may so order things that we may be assaulted, foiled, and for a time led captive by temptations; that Satan, the world, and the flesh, are ready powerfully to draw us aside and ensnare us; and that we, even after the pardon of our sins, by reason of our corruption, weakness, and want of watchfulness, are not only subject to be tempted, and forward to expose ourselves unto temptations; but also of ourselves unable and unwilling to resist them, to recover out of them, and to improve them; and worthy to be left under the power of them: we pray, that God would so overrule the world and all in it, subdue the flesh, and restrain Satan, order all things, bestow and bless all means of grace, and quicken us to watchfulness in the use of them, that we and all his people may by his providence be kept from being tempted to sin; or, if tempted, that by his Spirit we may be powerfully supported and enabled to stand in the hour of temptation; or when fallen, raised again and recovered out of it, and have a sanctified use and improvement thereof: that our sanctification and salvation may be perfected, Satan trodden under our feet, and we fully freed from sin, temptation, and all evil for ever.

Matt. 6:13; 2 Chron. 32:31; 1 Chron. 21:1; Luke 21:34; Mark 4:19; Jas. 1:14; Gal. 5:17; Matt. 26:41; Matt. 26:69-72; Gal. 2:11-14; 2 Chron. 18:3; 2 Chron. 19: 2; Rom. 7:23-24; 1 Chron. 21:1-4; 2 Chron. 16:7-10; Ps. 81:11-12; John 17:15; Ps. 51:10; Ps. 119:133; 2 Cor. 12:7-8; 1 Cor. 10:12-13; Heb. 13:20-21; Matt. 26: 41; Ps. 19:13; Eph. 3:14-17; 1 Thess. 3:13; Jude 1:24; Ps. 51:12; 1 Pet. 5:8-10; 2 Cor. 13:7, 9; Rom. 16:20; Zech. 3:2; Luke 12:31-32; John 17:15; 1 Thess. 5:23.

Q. 196. *What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?*

A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, (which is, *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*) teacheth us to enforce our petitions with arguments, which are to be taken, not from any worthiness in ourselves, or in any other creature, but from God: and with our prayers to join praises, ascribing to God alone eternal sovereignty, omnipotency, and glorious excellency; in regard whereof, as he is able and willing to help us, so we by faith are emboldened to plead with him that he would, and quietly to rely upon him, that he will fulfill our requests. And, to testify this our desire and assurance, we say, *Amen.*

Matt. 6:13; Rom. 15:30; Dan. 9:4, 7-9, 16-19; Phil. 4:6; 1 Chron. 29:10-13; Eph. 3:20-21; Luke 11:13; 2 Chron. 20:6, 11; 2 Chron. 14:11; 1 Cor. 14:16; Rev. 22:20-21.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

QUESTION 1. *What is the chief end of man?*
ANSWER. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.
1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 11:36; Ps. 73:25-28.

Q. 2. *What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?*
A. The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.
2 Tim. 3:16; Eph. 2:20; 1 John 1:3-4.

Q. 3. *What do the Scriptures principally teach?*
A. The Scriptures principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.
2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 3:16.

Q. 4. *What is God?*
A. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.
John 4:24; Job 11:7-9; Ps. 90:2; Jas. 1:17; Ex. 3:14; Ps. 147:5; Rev. 4:8; Rev. 15:4; Ex. 34:6-7.

Q. 5. *Are there more Gods than one?*
A. There is but one only, the living and true God.
Deut. 6:4; Jer. 10:10.

Q. 6. *How many persons are there in the Godhead?*
A. There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.
1 John 5:7; Matt. 28:19.

Q. 7. *What are the decrees of God?*
A. The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of

his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.
Eph. 1:4,11; Rom. 9:22-23.

Q. 8. *How doth God execute his decrees?*
A. God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence.

Q. 9. *What is the work of creation?*
A. The work of creation is, God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.
Gen. 1; Heb. 11:3.

Q. 10. *How did God create man?*
A. God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.
Gen. 1:26-28; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24.

Q. 11. *What are God's works of providence?*
A. God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions.
Ps. 145:17; Ps. 104:24; Isa. 28:29; Heb. 1:3; Ps. 103:19; Matt. 10:29-31.

Q. 12. *What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the estate wherein he was created?*
A. When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.
Gal. 3:12; Gen. 2:17.

Q. 13. *Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?*
A. Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.
Gen. 3:6-8, 13; Eccl. 7:29.

Q. 14. *What is sin?*
A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.
1 John 3:4.

Q. 15. *What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?*
A. The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.
Gen. 3:6, 12.

Q. 16. *Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?*
A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned

in him, and fell with him in his first transgression.
Gen. 2:16-17; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21-22.

Q. 17. *Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?*
A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.
Rom. 5:12.

Q. 18. *Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?*
A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.
Rom. 5:12, 19; Rom. 5:10-20; Eph. 2:1-3; Jas. 1:14-15; Matt. 15:19.

Q. 19. *What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?*
A. All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.
Gen. 3:8, 10, 24; Eph. 2:2-3; Gal. 3:10; Lam. 3:39; Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41, 46.

Q. 20. *Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?*
A. God having, out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.
Eph. 1:4; Rom. 3:20-22; Gal. 3:21-22.

Q. 21. *Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?*
A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever.
1 Tim. 2:5-6; John 1:14; Gal. 4:4; Rom. 9:5; Luke 1:35; Col. 2:9; Heb. 7:24-25.

Q. 22. *How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?*
A. Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.
Heb. 2:14, 16; Heb. 10:5; Matt. 26:38; Luke 1:27, 31, 35, 42; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 4:15; Heb. 7:26.

Q. 23. *What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?*
A. Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.
Acts 3:21-22; Heb. 12:25 with 2 Cor. 13:3; Heb. 5:5-7; Heb. 7:25; Ps. 2:6; Isa. 9:6-7; Matt. 21:5; Ps. 2:8-11.

Q. 24. *How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?*

A. Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by his Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

John 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; John 15:15; John 20:31.

Q. 25. *How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?*

A. Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

Heb. 9:14, 28; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 7:24-25.

Q. 26. *How doth Christ execute the office of a king?*

A. Christ executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

Acts 15:14-16; Isa. 33:22; Isa. 32:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:25.

Q. 27. *Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?*

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

Luke 2:7; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 12:2-3; Isa. 53:2-3; Luke 22:44; Matt. 27:46; Phil. 2: 8; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Acts 2:24-27, 31.

Q. 28. *Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?*

A. Christ's exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

1 Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:19; Eph. 1:20; Acts 1:11; Acts 17:31.

Q. 29. *How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?*

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit.

John 1:11-12; Titus 3:5-6.

Q. 30. *How doth the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?*

A. The Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.

Eph. 1:13-14; John 6:37, 39; Eph. 2:8; Eph. 3:17; 1 Cor. 1:9.

Q. 31. *What is effectual calling?*

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

2 Tim. 1:9; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 2:37; Acts 26:18; Ezek. 36:26-27; John 6: 44-45; Phil. 2:13.

Q. 32. *What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?*
A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, sanctification, and the several benefits which, in this life, do either accompany or flow from them.
Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:26, 30.

Q. 33. *What is justification?*
A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.
Rom. 3:24-25; Rom. 4:6-8; 2 Cor. 5:19, 21; Rom. 5:17-19; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9.

Q. 34. *What is adoption?*
A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God.
1 John 3:1; John 1:12; Rom. 8:17.

Q. 35. *What is sanctification?*
A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.
2 Thess. 2:13; Eph. 4:23-24; Rom. 6:4, 6; Rom. 8:1.

Q. 36. *What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?*
A. The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.
Rom. 5:1-2, 5; Rom. 14:17; Prov. 4:18; 1 John 5:13; 1 Pet. 1:5.

Q. 37. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?*
A. The souls of believers are, at their death, made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves until the resurrection.
Heb. 12:23; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6, 8; Phil. 1:23; Luke 23:43; 1 Thess. 4:14; Isa. 57:2; Job 19:26-27.

Q. 38. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?*
A. At the resurrection, believers, being raised up to glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.
1 Cor. 15:43; Matt. 25:23; Matt. 10:32; 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 4: 17-18.

Q. 39. *What is the duty which God requireth of man?*
A. The duty which God requireth of man, is obedience to his revealed will.
Mic. 6:8; 1 Sam. 15:22.

Q. 40. *What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?*
A. The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.
Rom. 2:14-15; Rom. 10:5.

Q. 41. *Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?*
A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.
Deut. 10:4; Matt. 19:17.

Q. 42. *What is the sum of the ten commandments?*
A. The sum of the ten commandments is, to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.
Matt. 22:37-40.

Q. 43. *What is the preface to the ten commandments?*
A. The preface to the ten commandments is in these words, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*
Ex. 20:2.

Q. 44. *What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us?*
A. The preface to the ten commandments teacheth us, that because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments.
Luke 1:74-75; 1 Pet. 1:15-19.

Q. 45. *Which is the first commandment?*
A. The first commandment is, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*
Ex. 20:3.

Q. 46. *What is required in the first commandment?*
A. The first commandment requireth us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God, and to worship and glorify him accordingly.
1 Chron. 28:9; Deut. 26:17; Matt. 4:10; Ps. 29:2.

Q. 47. *What is forbidden in the first commandment?*
A. The first commandment forbiddeth the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying, the true God as God, and our God; and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due to him alone.
Ps. 14:1; Rom. 1:21; Ps. 81:10-11; Rom. 1:25-26.

Q. 48. *What are we specially taught by these words, "before me," in the first commandment?*
A. These words, *"before me,"* in the first commandment teach us, that God, who seeth all things, taketh notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God.
Ezek. 8:5-18; Ps. 44:20-21.

Q. 49. *Which is the second commandment?*
A. The second commandment is, *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven*

image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Ex. 20:4-6.

Q. 50. *What is required in the second commandment?*

A. The second commandment requireth the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his Word.

Deut. 32:46; Matt. 28:20; Acts 2:42.

Q. 51. *What is forbidden in the second commandment?*

A. The second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his Word.

Deut. 4:15-19; Ex. 32:5, 8; Deut. 12:31-32.

Q. 52. *What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?*

A. The reasons annexed to the second commandment are, God's sovereignty over us, his propriety in us, and the zeal he hath to his own worship.

Ps. 95:2-3, 6; Ps. 45:11; Ex. 34:13-14.

Q. 53. *Which is the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment is, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

Ex. 20:7.

Q. 54. *What is required in the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works.

Matt. 6:9; Deut. 28:58; Ps. 68:4; Rev. 15:3-4; Mal. 1:11, 14; Ps. 138:1-2; Job 36:24.

Q. 55. *What is forbidden in the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning or abusing of anything whereby God maketh himself known.

Mal. 1:6-7, 12; Mal. 2:2; Mal. 3:14.

Q. 56. *What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?*

A. The reason annexed to the third commandment is, that however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment.

1 Sam. 2:12, 17, 22, 29; 1 Sam. 3:13; Deut. 28:58-59.

Q. 57. *Which is the fourth commandment?*

A. The fourth commandment is, *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.

Ex. 20:8-11.

Q. 58. *What is required in the fourth commandment?*

A. The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his Word; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself.

Deut. 5:12-14.

Q. 59. *Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?*

A. From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week, ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.

Gen. 2:2-3; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7.

Q. 60. *How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?*

A. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

Ex. 20:8, 10; Ex. 16:25-28; Neh. 13:15-19, 21-22; Luke 4:16; Acts 20:7; Ps. 92 title; Isa. 66:23; Matt. 12:1-13.

Q. 61. *What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?*

A. The fourth commandment forbiddeth the omission, or careless performance, of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about our worldly employments or recreations.

Ezek. 22:26; Amos 8:5; Mal. 1:13; Acts 20:7, 9; Ezek. 23:38; Jer. 17:24-26; Isa. 58:13.

Q. 62. *What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?*

A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, his challenging a special propriety in the seventh, his own example, and his blessing the Sabbath day.

Ex. 20:9, 11.

Q. 63. *Which is the fifth commandment?*

A. The fifth commandment is, *Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

Ex. 20:12.

Q. 64. *What is required in the fifth commandment?*

A. The fifth commandment requireth the preserving the honor, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

Eph. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:17; Rom. 12:10.

Q. 65. *What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?*

A. The fifth commandment forbiddeth the neglecting of, or doing anything against, the honor and duty which belongeth to every one in their several places and relations.

Matt. 15:4-6; Ezek. 34:2-4; Rom. 13:8.

Q. 66. *What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?*

A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is, a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory, and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.

Deut. 5:16; Eph. 6:2-3.

Q. 67. *Which is the sixth commandment?*

A. The sixth commandment is, *Thou shalt not kill.*

Ex. 20:13.

Q. 68. *What is required in the sixth commandment?*

A. The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life, and the life of others.

Eph. 5:28-29; 1 Kings 18:4.

Q. 69. *What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?*

A. The sixth commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbor unjustly, or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.

Acts 16:28; Gen. 9:6.

Q. 70. *What is the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment is, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

Ex. 20:14.

Q. 71. *What is required in the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in heart, speech, and behaviour.

1 Cor. 7:2-3, 5, 34, 36; Col. 4:6; 1 Pet. 3:2.

Q. 72. *What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?*

A. The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.

Matt. 15:19; Matt. 5:28; Eph. 5:3-4.

Q. 73. *Which is the eighth commandment?*
A. The eighth commandment is, *Thou shalt not steal.*
Ex. 20:15.

Q. 74. *What is required in the eighth commandment?*
A. The eighth commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.
Gen. 30:30; 1 Tim. 5:8; Lev. 25:35; Deut. 22:1-5; Ex. 23:4-5; Gen. 47:14, 20.

Q. 75. *What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?*
A. The eighth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever doth, or may, unjustly hinder our own, or our neighbor's, wealth, or outward estate.
Prov. 21:17; Prov. 23:20-21; Prov. 28:19; Eph. 4:28.

Q. 76. *Which is the ninth commandment?*
A. The ninth commandment is, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*
Ex. 20:16.

Q. 77. *What is required in the ninth commandment?*
A. The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbor's good name, especially in witness bearing.
Zech. 8:16; 3 John 1:12; Prov. 14:5, 25.

Q. 78. *What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?*
A. The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbor's good name.
1 Sam. 17:28; Lev. 19:16; Ps. 15:3.

Q. 79. *Which is the tenth commandment?*
A. The tenth commandment is, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.*
Ex. 20:17.

Q. 80. *What is required in the tenth commandment?*
A. The tenth commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbor, and all that is his.
Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:6; Job 31:29; Rom. 12:15; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

Q. 81. *What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?*
A. The tenth commandment forbiddeth all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbor, and all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his.
1 Kings 21:4; Esther 5:13; 1 Cor. 10:10; Gal. 5:26; Jas. 3:14, 16; Rom. 7:7-8; Rom. 13:9; Deut. 5:21.

Q. 82. *Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?*

A. No mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.

Eccl. 7:20; 1 John 1:8, 10; Gal. 5:17; Gen. 6:5; Gen. 8:21; Rom. 3:9-21; Jas. 3:2-13.

Q. 83. *Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?*

A. Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.

Ezek. 8:6, 13, 15; 1 John 5:16; Ps. 78:17, 32, 56.

Q. 84. *What doth every sin deserve?*

A. Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.

Eph. 5:6; Gal. 3:10; Lam. 3:39; Matt. 25:41.

Q. 85. *What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse, due to us for sin?*

A. To escape the wrath and curse of God, due to us for sin, God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption.

Acts 20:21; Prov. 2:1-5; Prov. 8:33-36; Isa. 55:3.

Q. 86. *What is faith in Jesus Christ?*

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

Heb. 10:39; John 1:12; Isa. 26:3-4; Phil. 3:9; Gal. 2:16.

Q. 87. *What is repentance unto life?*

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

Acts 11:18; Acts 2:37-38; Joel 2:12; Jer. 3:22; Jer. 31:18-19; Ezek. 36:31; 2 Cor. 7:11; Isa. 1:16-17.

Q. 88. *What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?*

A. The outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption are, his ordinances, especially the Word, Sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:42, 46-47.

Q. 89. *How is the Word made effectual to salvation?*

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.

Neh. 8:8; 1 Cor. 14:24-25; Acts 26:18; Ps. 19:8; Acts 20:32; Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Rom. 10:13-17; Rom. 1:16.

Q. 90. *How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?*

A. That the Word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer; receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.

Prov. 8:34; 1 Pet. 2:1-2; Ps. 119:18; Heb. 4:2; 2 Thess. 2:10; Ps. 119:11; Luke 8:15; Jas. 1:25.

Q. 91. *How do the Sacraments become effectual means of salvation?*

A. The Sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

1 Pet. 3:21; Matt. 3:11; 1 Cor. 3:6-7; 1 Cor. 12:13.

Q. 92. *What is a Sacrament?*

A. A Sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.

Gen. 17:7, 10; Ex. 12; 1 Cor. 11:23, 26.

Q. 93. *Which are the Sacraments of the New Testament?*

A. The Sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

Matt. 28:19; Matt. 26:26-28.

Q. 94. *What is Baptism?*

A. Baptism is a Sacrament, wherein the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:4; Gal. 3:27.

Q. 95. *To whom is Baptism to be administered?*

A. Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible Church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible Church are to be baptized.

Acts 8:36-37; Acts 2:38-39; Gen. 17:10 with Col. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 7:14.

Q. 96. *What is the Lord's Supper?*

A. The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

1 Cor. 11:23-26; 1 Cor. 10:16.

Q. 97. *What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?*

A. It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves, of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

1 Cor. 11:28-29; 2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Cor. 11:31; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 1 Cor. 5:7-8.

Q. 98. *What is prayer?*

A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

Ps. 62:8; 1 John 5:14; John 16:23; Ps. 32:5-6; Dan. 9:4; Phil. 4:6.

Q. 99. *What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer?*

A. The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in prayer, but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called, *The Lord's Prayer.*

1 John 5:14; Matt. 6:9-13 with Luke 11:2-4.

Q. 100. *What doth the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?*

A. The preface of the Lord's Prayer, which is, *"Our Father which art in heaven,"* teacheth us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father, able and ready to help us; and that we should pray with and for others.

Matt. 6:9; Rom. 8:15; Luke 11:13; Acts 12:5; 1 Tim. 2:1-2.

Q. 101. *What do we pray for in the first petition?*

A. In the first petition, which is, *"Hallowed be thy name,"* we pray, that God would enable us, and others, to glorify him in all that whereby he maketh himself known, and that he would dispose all things to his own glory.

Matt. 6:9; Ps. 67; 2-3; Ps. 83.

Q. 102. *What do we pray for in the second petition?*

A. In the second petition, which is, *"Thy kingdom come,"* we pray, that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

Matt. 6:10; Ps. 68:1, 18; Rev. 12:10-11; 2 Thess. 3:1; Rom. 10:1; John 17:9, 20; Rev. 22:20.

Q. 103. *What do we pray for in the third petition?*

A. In the third petition, which is, *"Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,"* we pray, that God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

Matt. 6:10; Ps. 67; Ps. 119:36; Matt. 26:39; 2 Sam. 15:25; Job. 1:21; Ps. 103: 20-21.

Q. 104. *What do we pray for in the fourth petition?*

A. In the fourth petition, which is, *"Give us this day our daily bread,"* we pray, that of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.

Matt. 6:11; Prov. 30:8-9; Gen. 28:20; 1 Tim. 4:4-5.

Q. 105. *What do we pray for in the fifth petition?*

A. In the fifth petition, which is, *"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,"* we pray, that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

Matt. 6:12; Ps. 51:1-2, 7, 9; Dan. 9:17-19; Luke 11:4; Matt. 18:35.

Q. 106. *What do we pray for in the sixth petition?*

A. In the sixth petition, which is, *"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,"* we pray, that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

Matt. 6:13; Matt. 26:41; 2 Cor. 12:7-8.

Q. 107. *What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?*

A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, which is, *"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen,"* teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him; and in testimony of our desire and assurance to be heard, we say, *Amen.*

Matt. 6:13; Dan. 9:4-9, 16-19; 1 Chron. 29:10-13; 1 Cor. 14:16; Rev. 22:20-21.

Directory for Church Government

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the *Directory* is to provide the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America definitions and procedures to implement the doctrinal statements concerning the nature of the church and its government, as they have been stated in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America*. For the purposes of this Directory, "fundamental law" refers to the *Westminster Confession* and *Catechisms* and the *Reformed Presbyterian Testimony*. The "law and order of the church" refers to the *Directory for Church Government*, the *Book of Discipline* and the *Directory for Worship* together with the actions of the Synod.

These definitions and procedures as set down in this *Directory* are to be received as official statements declaring the law and order of the church. The *Directory* may be amended by any given Synod by a two-thirds majority vote. If, however, Synod considers that the item before it should have the consideration and discussion of the sessions, it can by a simple majority vote decide to use the procedure of sending proposed amendments down in overture; however, any such amendments must be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the Synod before they can be sent down in overture to the sessions. The same amendment process shall be followed for *The Book of Discipline* and *The Directory of Public Worship*.

CHAPTER 1

The Communicant Membership of the Church

1. Any person capable of forming moral judgments and of making decisions for himself may be received into communicant membership in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, upon credible profession of faith, baptism, and acceptance of the Covenant of Church Membership. Communicant members have an obligation to present their children for

baptism and to do all in their power to rear their children so that they will seek communicant membership in the church.

2. In a regularly organized congregation it belongs to the session alone to admit to membership in the church. In extraordinary circumstances, such as the organization of a new congregation, presbytery may assume this function or delegate it to a temporary governing body. In the early stages of work in a foreign mission field, special powers may be exercised by the missionaries in this regard until such time as a congregation with a regular session can be organized. (Suggested Form 9)

3. Classes should be conducted, under the oversight of the session, for baptized children as well as for prospective members for their instruction in the principles of truth maintained by the Church with a view to preparing them to be communicant members.

4. Candidates for communicant membership shall be examined by the session in constituted court. The examination shall seek to bring out the degree of the candidate's knowledge of Divine truth, his personal sense of sin and need of salvation and his knowledge of and willing acceptance of the Covenant of Church Membership including the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. The degree of knowledge necessary for admission depends, to a considerable extent, upon the capacity of the candidate and the opportunities which he has had for acquiring such knowledge. Children should be encouraged to memorize the *Shorter Catechism* and urged to read and study the *Testimony* and *Confession of Faith* as they come to years of fuller understanding. No one should be admitted who is ignorant of the plan of salvation, or who gives no credible evidence of having been born again, or who assumes an attitude antagonistic to the principles set forth in the standards of the Church.

5. When the candidates have given assent to the Covenant of Church Membership and when their examination has been sustained, they shall, if they have been baptized, be declared in communicant membership and may sign the Covenant of Church Membership. After prayer on their behalf, the members of the session shall welcome them by extending the right hand of fellowship.

6. Where there is no definite knowledge that a candidate has been baptized in a true church as defined by Synod (chap. 25 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church),* this sacrament shall be administered.

7. The new members should be publicly recognized. This may be done by having them stand before the congregation to give public assent to the Covenant of Church Membership. The congregation may be asked to join in giving assent to the Covenant. This question shall be addressed to the congregation: "Do you, the members of this congregation, welcome into your fellowship these who have now professed their faith in Christ, and have been received by your session; and do you promise to help and encourage them in the Christian life?" The congregation should respond, "We do." A few words of counsel may be given to the new members and prayer offered in their behalf.

8. Members should willingly consecrate their talents and gifts to the service of Christ. They should prayerfully consider accepting a position in the church when called to do so.

9. A member of any congregation of any Reformed Presbyterian Church, in this or other lands, may be received into communicant membership of any congregation of the church, upon presentation of a certificate from the session of his congregation. An applicant from another denomination shall satisfy the session of his acceptance of the basic truths of the historic Christian faith and of the Covenant of Church Membership. (In each case send Suggested Form 1-B to the dismissing session.) Certificates shall be valid for one year only from the date of issue, unless reasons can be shown for the delay in presenting them. If a certificate states exceptions, or grounds of censure, the applicant shall give full satisfaction to the session before being admitted.

10. Neglect of the ordinances should be a matter of church discipline; but where a member has, for a period of one year failed to attend, to contribute, or to give any other evidence of interest and cannot be contacted, he may be removed from the roll of communicant membership. The session officially shall attempt to notify him of that action. He may be restored to communicant membership when he has given credible evidence of adherence to the Covenant of Church Membership.

11. A member of the Church moving from one congregation to another congregation in the denomination shall be given a certificate of transfer of membership at his request. (Suggested Form 1) Notice shall also be given to the session of the congregation to which he desires transfer. A person leaving the membership of the Reformed Presbyterian Church shall also be given a certificate of transfer of membership including any qualifications the session has in its records.

12. If a member becomes a member of another denomination without a regular dismissal, the session shall record the fact (Suggested Form 1-A) and remove his name from the roll. If charges are pending against him these charges may be prosecuted.

13. A member certified to another congregation of the denomination is under the jurisdiction of the session issuing his certificate of membership until he has been received by the session to which he has been certified, but shall not be entitled to vote or hold office. A certificate of transfer of membership becomes effective immediately. A person restored to membership in a congregation by the return of a certificate of transfer to the session which issued it, is not entitled to exercise the functions of any office previously held. He may, however, be re-elected to the same.

14. Presbytery may establish a temporary roll of membership. Such a roll may be used for a mission church or may authorize the temporary governing body to receive members on such a roll. It may also be used when a congregation becomes disorganized. It is to be considered a temporary roll. In the case of disorganization, those placed on the rolls of presbytery should become members of another congregation within one year. Diligent effort should be made to retain members in the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

CHAPTER 2

The Congregation

1. A congregation is organized on the basis of the standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and in conformity with its law and order. A fully organized congregation is made up of a group of members with a session of elders for the oversight of the congregation and a board of deacons responsible chiefly for the ministry of mercy and stewardship. The teaching elder/pastor is a member of the congregation and his ministerial credentials are held by the presbytery. Presbyteries are directed to exercise due care and diligence to see that both sessions and boards of deacons are duly chosen, ordained and established in every congregation under their care. All ordained officers shall be chosen by vote of the congregation, and every communicant member shall have an equal voice in such choice.

2. Children of communicant members of the Church, in consequence of their covenant relationship, shall receive baptism, pastoral care and instruction, and are baptized members of the Church, but are not to be admitted to the Lord's Supper until they have reached years of understanding and have voluntarily professed their faith in Christ and assumed for themselves the vows and obligations of the Covenant of Church Membership. Baptized members have no vote in the congregational meetings.

3. Persons, not members of the congregation, who regularly attend the services, participate in the worship, and contribute to the support are known as adherents. They have no vote in the congregational meetings.

4. In many states or provinces, congregations are required to have a Board of Trustees in whom the title of the church property is vested and who represent the congregation in all legal matters. The Board shall be elected from the membership of the congregation and shall have no duties beyond those necessary to fulfill the legal requirements. For efficiency in handling its affairs, the membership and officers of the Board of Trustees may be identical with or chosen from the Board of Deacons.

5. The session shall have general oversight and review of all organizations within the congregation. These may include a Sabbath school for study based on the Scriptures; a mid-week meeting; missionary and young people's societies, and other fellowship groups. There may be other organizations, as desired, provided they promote the principles, practices and ministries of the Church.

6. Every congregation is under special obligation to give religious instruction to the youth, to seek the salvation of the lost, and to declare the whole Gospel to all within its reach. A congregation has certain other responsibilities among which are: To elect its own elders and deacons; to transact its business; to require reports from its organizations, officers and committees; to petition the courts of the church for any action it may desire; to appeal from decisions of the lower courts to the higher; to maintain the ordinances of public worship; to provide a suitable place of worship and equipment to carry on its

activities; to be obedient in the Lord to the law and order of the Church, with care to maintain a godly fellowship in love and loyalty and support to all its members and to the denomination.

7. An annual meeting of the congregation shall be held to hear reports and transact business. Special meetings may be called by the session either on its own volition, or at the written request of the board of deacons, or by petition of the congregation, if the purpose(s) be of sufficient importance and in accordance with the law and order of the Church. The purpose(s) of such meeting shall be stated in the notice, and no other business shall be transacted. Notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at the public services on two preceding Lord's Days. If the congregation has no public meeting, ten days' notice by mail or other suitable means of communication shall be sufficient.

8. All congregational meetings shall be under the supervision of the session, either directly leading the meeting or overseeing the election of congregational officers to lead the meeting. The Session shall issue an edict setting the date, time, and place for an election. (Suggested Form 6) The congregational meetings shall be governed according to the common rules as applied in ecclesiastical assemblies. The clerk of session or a congregational secretary shall record all proceedings in the minutes. Unless otherwise specified in the charter, one-fourth of the active resident communicant membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of ordinary business, but no business vitally affecting the welfare of the congregation should be transacted without the presence of at least one-half the active resident communicant membership. Meetings for the election of a teaching elder, ruling elders or deacons shall be under the supervision of the session in constituted court and presided over by its moderator.

9. A congregation becomes disorganized when the session is reduced to less than two resident elders. Two elders will suffice to hold the organization. The presbytery may enable the congregation to continue its existence by appointing an elder(s) from a neighboring congregation to act with the remaining resident elder as a provisional session until such time as a new elder(s) may be elected. An alternative procedure is to reduce the congregation to a preaching station under the immediate supervision of presbytery.

10. Two congregations may agree to unite by a two-thirds majority vote in each congregation and with the sanction of presbytery. The plan of union shall provide for adjustment of the pastorates, of the sessions and boards of deacons, and of other congregational organizations. This plan shall be adopted by each congregation before being made effective by presbytery.

11. The congregation, or its boards, holds the property of the congregation in trust for the Synod and cannot divert it from the use to which it was originally intended. The property is in law a trust which the civil courts will protect. If a congregation wishes to change the location of its place of worship, it shall first secure the approval of presbytery both as to removal and as to the new location. A particular congregation shall not sell or mortgage property without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through

the session of the congregation. When a presbytery determines that a congregation is disorganized, title to all properties held by or for the congregation shall immediately be transferred to Synod's Board of Trustees who shall determine with the counsel of the appropriate presbytery the disposition of such properties and/or proceeds of the same. Distribution of assets or expenditures beyond the normal course of operation may not be made in anticipation of disorganization without prior approval of the presbytery and the Trustees of Synod. (For policies and procedures, see *1972 Minutes of Synod,* pages 13, 150-152.)

CHAPTER 3

The Officers of the Church

The Scriptures indicate no separation of office as regards the ruling and teaching that is to be carried on in Christ's church. According to their qualifications and circumstances elders will exhibit gifts that enable them to discern and meet the needs of the flock through oversight (ruling) and exhortation. Among them will be those more qualified to engage in the study and public proclamation of the Scriptures. This distinction of function warrants the continuance of the popular titles of "ruling elder" and "teaching elder" when understood as stated above. The office of deacon was given by the Holy Spirit to the New Testament church to assist the church in the fulfillment of its ministry.

I. ELDERS: RULING ELDERS

A. Qualifications

Those eligible to be called as ruling elders must:

1. Be male communicant members in good standing of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

2. Evidence the standards of character and conduct consistent with those set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; in Titus 1:5-9; and 1 Peter 5:1-3.

3. Be knowledgeable of and committed to the subordinate doctrinal standards of the denomination as being consistent with the Scriptures.

B. Duties

The duties of ruling elders include:

1. Active pastoral care of the congregation.

2. Regular attendance and participation in session meetings.

3. Involvement in and oversight of the teaching ministry of the congregation.

4. Involvement in and oversight of the observance of the sacraments.

5. Training of the whole congregation to mature discipleship.

6. Ministry to the erring and lost.

7. Visitation to the sick and needy.

8. Dedication to the advancement of the whole church of Christ.

9. Regular participation in the higher courts of the church.

10. Meeting jointly with the board of deacons periodically for evaluation and growth in their respective ministries.

C. Privileges

The privileges of ruling elders include:

1. Moderation of any court of the church.

2. Permanent membership on his session.

3. Voting membership in the higher courts.

4. When deemed by his session or presbytery to be qualified in the areas of personal godliness, theology, Biblical knowledge and church history he would be eligible for:

   a. Occasional ministry of the Word in the congregation at the request of the session or at the request of another court.

   b. Occasional ministry of the Word within the denomination where specifically requested by another court.

   c. Occasional pronouncing of God's benediction upon His people.

5. A ruling elder may qualify for more regular occasional preaching of the Word and pronouncing the benediction at the appointment of his session or another court of the church by satisfying the presbytery of his readiness for this ministry by being examined in personal godliness, Bible Knowledge, systematic theology, and the preaching of an expository sermon. (See Eligibility to Preach, IIc2e).

6. Under extraordinary circumstances, to administer the sacraments when specifically appointed to do so on a given occasion by the presbytery.

7. Appointment, in special circumstances by presbytery, to serve as a provisional elder of another session.

D. Procedure for Election

1. Authorization

An election of ruling elders may be authorized as follows:

a. The initiative for an election of elders must include one or more of the following:
   (1) An appeal from the congregation to the session to increase the number of elders.
   (2) A judgment of the session that there are qualified men in the congregation and that an increase in the number of elders is needed.
   (3) A directive by presbytery for a session to hold an election under extraordinary circumstances.

b. An election for elders is to be conducted by the session at a specially called meeting of the congregation.

2. Calling a Meeting

The procedure to call a meeting will be:

a. The session shall issue an edict setting the date, time and place for an election.

b. Eight days' notice of the meeting shall be given publicly to the congregation by reading of the edict at the worship services on the two preceding Lord's Days.

c. If the congregation has no public meeting, ten days' notice by mail or phone to all members who can be reached shall be sufficient.

3. Order of Meeting

The order of the meeting shall be as follows:

a. The congregation having been called together for the election, the session shall be constituted by the moderator or presbytery's appointee.

b. The session shall have a complete list of all communicant members of the congregation in good standing from which a quorum is to be determined (one-half of the active communicant resident members). A quorum is necessary for each ballot.

c. Inquiry by the moderator if the congregation still desires to proceed with the election.

d. The final reading of the edict.

e. Worship, with a sermon, shall be conducted under the direction of the session.

f. The election shall be conducted.

g. The court shall be adjourned with prayer.

4. Balloting

The election shall be conducted as follows:

a. The session may indicate their judgment as to the number of positions to be filled by the election. Such judgment shall be based on the needs of the congregation and the evidence of spiritual maturity of potential candidates.

b. Session may submit a list of nominations.

c. If the session has indicated its desire for a certain number of elders, its list of nominees shall not contain less than that number.

d. Nominations may also be made by a communicant member of the congregation present.
e. The election may also proceed without nominations.
f. Even when nominations have been made, votes may be cast for any qualified candidate.
g. Voting shall be by ballot with the session taking due precaution to ensure the integrity of the vote.
h. When the number to be elected is determined, the number of names per ballot is not to exceed the announced number to be elected.
i. Communicant members unable to attend the meeting may send their votes in writing (also known as absentee votes), enclosed in sealed envelopes which bear their names and are addressed to the session. Absentee votes are valid only on the first electing ballot.
j. The use of a nominating ballot is not encouraged; if it is used, absentee votes are valid only on the first electing ballot. Absentee votes will not be used on a nominating ballot.
k. Only those receiving at least two-thirds of the votes cast shall be declared elders-elect. Blank ballots shall not be counted in determining the total number of votes cast. A ballot marked "No," indicating that the person desires not to vote for any candidate, should be counted in determining the total number of votes cast.
l. If a two-thirds vote has not been reached after three ballots, the moderator, in consultation with the session, may postpone the election.
m. Two tellers shall be appointed by the moderator to collect the ballots and tabulate the results of the election and report to the moderator.

E. Procedure for Examination, Ordination and Installation

1. Examination

The examination of an elder-elect shall proceed as follows:

a. The elder-elect shall notify the session, preferably within two weeks, regarding his intention to accept or decline the call of the congregation.
b. If the elder-elect indicates his desire to accept the call, the session shall meet in constituted court to examine him with respect to his qualifications as stated above in section I.A.
c. The elder-elect shall be examined in his soundness in the faith and commitment to the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.*
d. If the session shall judge any elder-elect unfit for the office, it shall not proceed with his ordination and/or installation.
e. Ordination will not be required if:
    (1) An elder-elect holds ordination in the denomination as an elder.
    (2) An elder-elect is certified as having been ordained to an equivalent office in another true branch of the visible church and has met our denominational conditions to be a ruling elder.
f. Public ordination and/or installation to the session will be required of all elders-elect who have declared their desire to serve and have been examined and approved by the session.

2. Authorization

The session shall authorize the ordination and/or installation in the following manner:

a. The session shall set the time, date and place for the ordination and installation of qualified elders-elect. (Any objections by the congregation shall be presented to the session in writing prior to the called meeting. Session shall act on the objection prior to the called meeting.)

b. Notice of the date, time, location, and names of the elder(s)-elect shall be given by the installing session to all sessions within the presbytery.

3. Calling a Meeting

To call a meeting for ordination and/or installation:

a. An edict shall be prepared by the session. (Suggested Form 10)

b. The edict shall be read eight days prior to the congregational meeting at the worship services on the two preceding Lord's Days.

c. If the congregation has no public meeting, ten days' notice by mail or phone to all members who can be reached shall be sufficient.

4. Order of Meeting

The order of the meeting shall be as follows:

a. The session shall be constituted by the moderator or presbytery's appointee, and the privileges of the floor shall be extended to all elders of the denomination present.

b. A quorum of one-half of the active resident communicant membership shall be confirmed.

c. The edict shall be read for the final time.

d. Worship, with a sermon, shall be conducted under the direction of the session.

e. An appointed elder shall narrate the previous steps leading up to the ordination and/or installation.

f. An appointed elder shall ask the appropriate Queries for Ordination of the candidates and elicit an affirmative response.

g. Candidates shall publicly sign the Queries for Ordination.

h. In the case of ordination and installation the candidate shall kneel for prayer and all elders present shall be invited to join in the laying on of hands.

i. In the case of installation only an installation prayer shall be offered.

j. An elder shall offer the prayer of ordination and/or installation in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ.

k. The elders shall extend the right hand of fellowship receiving the newly installed elder(s).

l. Special charges to the newly installed elder(s) and to the congregation should be given at the discretion of the session.

m. The session shall adjourn and close the meeting with prayer and the benediction.

n. Opportunity shall be given to the congregation and friends to greet the newly installed elder(s).

5. Cessation of Service on a Session

A ruling elder's service may cease under the following circumstances:

a. An elder may request the session to accept his resignation from sessional responsibilities within the congregation. Conferring the title of 'emeritus' in cases of long, faithful service should be considered.
b. An elder whose resignation has been accepted must be re-elected in order to serve again in that office.
c. An elder no longer serving regularly on the session to which he was installed for reasons of distance, health, or other justifiable reasons may be relieved of his duties; his session shall move with care to relieve him of the official exercise of his office and declare his status to be inactive (i.e. non-voting). In cases of suspension, see *Book of Discipline*.
d. An elder or his session may arrange for a sabbatical leave of absence, normally up to one year, during which time he shall be on inactive status.
e. A congregation may arrange for rotation of elders, subject to the approval of its session and presbytery.
f. An elder granted an inactive status may be reinstated to active service at the discretion of the session.
g. An elder ceases to serve on a session when he has moved his communicant membership into the jurisdiction of another session.

6. Removal from Office

A ruling elder may be removed from office. The following principles shall apply to this procedure:

a. An elder can be divested of his ordination only by deposition at the hands of his session or presbytery.
b. The session shall notify the presbytery whenever it intends to initiate deposition procedures by forwarding a copy of the charges.
c. In extraordinary cases the presbytery may also originate jurisdiction if it concludes that a particular session has been unable to exercise proper discipline over the elder in question.
d. No elder shall be suspended or deposed except after a fair trial.
e. Procedure for judicial process is set forth in the *Book of Discipline*.

7. Cessation of Ordination

The continuing privileges and responsibilities of ordination would cease if:

a. An elder is deposed from his ordination by judicial action of a church court.
b. An elder's request that his ordination be terminated is granted by a church court after careful consideration.

II. ELDERS: TEACHING ELDERS

The official proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments in the congregation shall be entrusted in ordinary circumstances to the one who has been trained to exercise his teaching gifts. Those displaying the gift for the teaching ministry shall be encouraged to undertake sufficient academic preparation and present themselves for public examination by presbytery in order to devote themselves to live in obedience to Christ and His Word in full-time ministerial service with all the privileges and duties this involves.

The elder who publicly teaches exercises a broader responsibility but has no higher authority than any other elder. While all the elders have pastoral responsibilities, common practice warrants the use of the title "pastor" for those who are called as teaching elders of congregations. Congregations whose size and/or work require additional teaching elders (associate pastors) will follow the same procedure.

In the case of the departure of a pastor from a congregation having more than one pastor, there is no requirement for an existing associate pastor to receive a new call in order for his role to be changed. Presbytery has already established him as a teaching elder in the congregation. For the sake of clarity and peace, a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation is required for any existing pastor of the congregation to assume the role of the departing pastor. There is then no need to declare the pulpit vacant. It is prudent that the Session carefully lead a congregation in these matters for unity's sake.

All teaching elders serving whose active duty is in the Armed Forces of the United States Chaplain Corps and who have been approved by presbytery shall be considered as missionaries (Suggested Form 8) employed by their presbyteries and on loan to the Armed Forces of the United States, and their presbyteries shall have oversight and require reports of their activities. (See *1985 Minutes of Synod,* page 91).

A. Qualifications

Along with those qualifications specified in Section I.A., those eligible to be called as teaching elders must display the Spirit's call and gifts to study diligently and proclaim publicly the Word of God (1 Timothy 5:17).

B. Duties

Along with duties specified in Section I.B., the duties of a teaching elder include:

1. Proclaiming God's Word in worship.

2. Administering the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

3. Conducting wedding and funeral services.

Retired teaching elders are most welcome, but are not required, to participate regularly in the church's higher courts; their absence does not require a formal excuse request.

C. Preparation

1. Initial Steps

To become a teaching elder the following steps must be taken:

a. He must present himself to his session as one desiring to prepare himself to become a teaching elder.

b. If the session supports his intentions they shall request presbytery to take him under care.

c. In ordinary cases he shall complete a bachelor's degree or its equivalent before undertaking specific theological education.
d. Upon completion of his collegiate degree or its equivalent and his reception by presbytery as a student of theology, he shall be expected to complete the course of seminary instruction required by his presbytery leading to a Master of Divinity or its equivalent.
e. Under ordinary circumstances he shall be expected to attend at least one full year in a Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary.
f. At the end of his first year he shall give evidence to his presbytery that he will continue training to become a teaching elder. (A sermon may be requested of him by his presbytery at this point.)
g. After favorable evaluation of the evidence presented by the student under care and reception of a favorable report from the seminary, he shall be certified by presbytery to further his seminary training.
h. The student may be invited to preach only under the direct supervision of a session until he is certified as being eligible to preach.
i. A man, who is not a student but has completed a Master of Divinity or its equivalent, shall follow steps a and b above to become a candidate under care of presbytery.
j. The candidate may be invited to preach only under the direct supervision of a session until he is certified as being eligible to preach.
k. Licensure by presbytery shall consist of two steps: Eligibility to Preach and Eligibility for a Call.

2. Eligibility to Preach (First Step for Licensure)

To become eligible to preach, a candidate shall follow this procedure:

a. If a student, he shall become eligible for certification to preach any time after his first year.
b. If a student, he shall request the seminary to forward to his presbytery an evaluation of his qualifications for ministry and statement of his academic standing.
c. The candidate shall be examined by his presbytery in constituted court in the following areas:
    (1) Personal godliness
    (2) Bible Knowledge
    (3) Systematic Theology and Distinctive Principles
    (4) The preaching of an expository sermon
    (5) The presentation of a paper on church history (Presbytery is responsible to make these assignments which may correspond to assignments fulfilled in seminary.)
d. Following each area of examination, delegates may make comments and/or state reasons when appropriate for the way he will vote. Comments are to be considered individual reflections or judgments, not the settled conclusions of the court. A roll call vote should be taken.
e. If the discourse and examinations are sustained by a two-thirds vote, an appointed elder shall ask the appropriate Queries for Certification to Preach.
f. Presbytery should vote by roll call when deemed appropriate whether to certify him a Candidate to Preach.

g. If the candidate is approved by a two-thirds vote he shall sign the appropriate Queries for Certification.

h. An appointed elder shall offer prayer officially certifying the candidate in the name of Christ, the King and Head of the Church.

i. An appointed elder shall address the candidate with words of counsel as to his duties and the limitations which are as follows:

(1) He may not administer the sacraments.
(2) He may not perform marriages.
(3) He may not pronounce the benediction.

j. Presbytery shall adjourn the meeting with prayer and benediction.

k. The candidate shall be given a Certificate of Eligibility to Preach. (Suggested Form 11)

l. He remains under the care of his presbytery and the jurisdiction of his session.

m. Certification ordinarily shall be for a term of five years and may be renewed at the discretion of presbytery.

3. Eligibility for a Call (Final Step for Licensure)

To become eligible for a call, a candidate shall follow this procedure:

a. If a student, he shall be eligible for certification to receive a call at the end of his second year.

b. If a student, he shall request of the seminary to forward to his presbytery an evaluation of his qualifications for ministry and a statement of his academic standing.

c. The candidate shall be examined by his presbytery in constituted session in the following areas:

(1) Evidence of pastoral and evangelistic gifts
(2) Systematic Theology and Distinctive Principles
(3) Church History
(4) The preaching of an expository sermon on an assigned topic
(5) The presentation of an exegesis paper (Presbytery is responsible to make these assignments which may correspond to assignments fulfilled in seminary.)

d. Following each area of examination, delegates may make comments and/or state reasons when appropriate for the way he will vote. Comments are to be considered individual reflections or judgments, not the settled conclusions of the court. A roll call vote should be taken.

e. If the discourse and examinations are sustained by a two-thirds vote, an appointed elder shall ask the appropriate Queries for Certification to Receive a Call.

f. Presbytery should vote by roll call when deemed appropriate whether to certify him a Candidate to Receive a Call. This certification must be made by a two-thirds vote.

g. If the candidate is approved by a two-thirds vote he shall sign the appropriate queries.

h. An appointed elder shall offer prayer officially certifying the candidate as being eligible for a call in the name of Christ, the King and Head of the Church.

i. An appointed elder shall address the candidate with words of counsel as to his

duties and the limitations which are as follows:

(1) He may not administer the sacraments.

(2) He may not perform marriages.

(3) He may not pronounce the benediction.

j. Presbytery shall adjourn the meeting with prayer and benediction.

k. The candidate shall be given a Certificate of Licensure. (Suggested Form 12)

l. He remains under the care of his presbytery and the jurisdiction of his session.

m. Certification ordinarily shall be for a term of five years and may be renewed at the discretion of presbytery.

D. Procedure for Election

1. Authorization

The election of a teaching elder may be authorized as follows:

a. The initiative for an election of a teaching elder must include one or more of the following:

(1) An appeal from the congregation through the session to hold an election or an appeal directly from the session to presbytery.

(2) A directive by presbytery for a session to hold an election under extraordinary circumstances.

b. An election for a teaching elder is to be conducted by the session at a specially called meeting of the congregation.

2. Calling a Meeting

The procedure to call a meeting will be:

a. The session shall issue an edict setting the date, time and place for an election.

b. Eight days' notice of the meeting shall be given publicly to the congregation, including announcement at the worship services on the two preceding Lord's Days.

c. If the congregation has no public meetings, ten days' notice by mail or phone to all members who can be reached shall be sufficient.

3. Order of Meeting

The order of the meeting shall be as follows:

a. The session shall have a complete list of all communicant members of the congregation in good standing from which a quorum is to be determined (one-half of the active resident members). A quorum is necessary for each ballot.

b. The final reading of the edict.

c. Worship, with a suitable discourse, shall be conducted under the direction of the session.

d. The session shall be constituted by the moderator or presbytery's appointee.

e. An election shall be conducted.

f. The court shall be adjourned with prayer.

4. Balloting

The election shall be conducted as follows:

a. Candidates shall ordinarily consist of teaching elders in good standing in the Reformed Presbyterian Church and those certified as eligible for a call (Licentiates) in the denomination.

b. Teaching elders who are members in good standing in denominations with whom we have fraternal relations who have expressed commitment to the position of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and who have been examined by a presbytery in the denomination may be candidates for a call.
c. Any ruling elder in good standing in the denomination may be considered a candidate when he demonstrates to his presbytery the educational background and experience necessary to be a teaching elder. (See IIC2c and 3c.)
d. Nominations may be offered by the session and/or a communicant member of the congregation present.
e. The election may also proceed without nominations.
f. Even when nominations have been made, votes may be cast for any qualified candidate.
g. Voting shall be by ballot with the session taking due precaution to ensure the integrity of the vote.
h. Members unable to attend the meeting may send their votes in writing (also known as absentee votes), enclosed in sealed envelopes which bear their names and are addressed to the session. Absentee votes are valid only on the first electing ballot.
i. The use of a nominating ballot is not encouraged; if it is used, absentee votes are valid only on the first electing ballot. Absentee votes will not be used on a nominating ballot.
j. Only a candidate receiving at least two-thirds of the votes cast shall be elected. Blank ballots shall not be counted in determining the total number of votes cast. A ballot marked "No," indicating that the person desires not to vote for any candidate, should be counted in determining the total number of votes cast.
k. If a two-thirds majority vote has not been reached after three ballots, the moderator, in consultation with the session, may postpone the election.
l. Two tellers shall be appointed by the moderator to collect the ballots and tabulate the results of the election and report to the moderator.
m. The moderator shall declare the results of the election.
n. An appointed elder shall present the terms of the call (which shall include the financial agreement presented by the board of deacons—see Suggested Form 7) for the approval of the congregation. (The session and deacon board shall have previously prepared the terms of the call.)
o. Opportunity shall be given the communicant members and adherents of the congregation to sign the call. The moderator shall explain that signing the call indicates one's willingness to support and work with the teaching elder-elect whether the member voted for him or not.

5. Disposition of a Call

The call shall be handled in the following manner:

a. The moderator shall immediately notify the teaching elder-elect informing him concerning the vote tallies and all other pertinent information that may assist him in reaching a decision.
b. The call shall remain in the hands of the session for a period of time up to and including two Lord's Days so that other communicant members and adherents may sign the call.

c. Any communicant member or adherent may request the clerk of the session to add his name to the call, in which case the clerk shall append his own initials to the signature.
d. A copy of the call shall be sent to the teaching elder-elect.
e. The call shall be forwarded to the presbytery along with a communicant membership roll and the minutes of the meeting.

6. Processing a Call

A call shall be processed in the following manner:

a. Presbytery, after receiving a call, shall determine whether the call was made in accordance with the law and order of the church.
b. Presbytery shall sustain it as a regular call and forward it to the teaching elder-elect within the presbytery or the presbytery holding the credentials of the teaching elder-elect. (Suggested Form 14)
c. Presbytery may decline to forward the call for any of the following reasons:
(1) The refusal of a considerable minority to sign the call.
(2) Failure to make suitable financial arrangements.
(3) A conviction on the presbytery's part that establishing the relationship would not be wise.
d. If presbytery does not sustain a call, reasons shall be recorded in the minutes, the candidate shall be notified, the call returned to the congregation and a copy of the minutes stating the reason(s) shall go to both the candidate and the congregation.
e. If a call is addressed to a teaching elder of a congregation within the presbytery, the interest of that congregation shall be considered carefully.
f. A presbytery which is in session may present a call immediately to a teaching elder whose credentials are held by the presbytery or to a student under its care, if the person is present.
g. The teaching elder-elect may either accept or decline the call or ask for more time to consider it.
h. If the call is rejected, the teaching elder-elect shall notify the congregation and the presbytery in writing.
i. If the call is accepted, presbytery shall take steps toward ordination and/or installation.
j. If the teaching elder-elect is not present, presbytery shall forward the call to him.
k. Upon reception of the call from his presbytery, the teaching elder-elect shall inform the congregation and the presbytery of his decision within two weeks.
l. A call may not be presented by a presbytery other than the one having oversight of the one called.
m. When the person called is from a congregation within another presbytery, the presbytery of the congregation making the call, having approved it, shall forward it to the other presbytery for evaluation and presentation.
n. If the call is accepted the credentials of the person called shall be transferred to the presbytery of the congregation making the call. (Suggested Form 15)
o. That presbytery shall take necessary steps toward ordination and/or installation.

E. Procedures for Examination, Ordination and Installation

The examination, ordination and installation of a teaching elder belongs to the presbytery alone. Presbytery shall hold the credentials which shall include as complete a record as possible of his education, certification to preach, eligibility to receive a call, ordination and installation(s) (Suggested Form 16). Ordination should be with a view to, and in connection with, installation into a pastoral relationship. A board may request permission from Synod for the presbytery to ordain a man to minister in a special field. (Suggested Forms 8 and 9)

1. Authorization

Presbytery shall authorize the ordination and/or installation as follows:

a. Presbytery, or a commission of presbytery, shall arrange for the examination, ordination and/or installation of a teaching elder-elect at the earliest convenience of the parties involved. (Any objections by concerned parties shall be presented in writing to the Ad Interim Commission prior to the called meeting. If objections are raised, the Commission shall deal with them before proceeding.)

b. The commission or presbytery, in consultation with the session, shall set the time, date and place for the examination, ordination and/or installation. (Suggested Form 13)

2. Calling of Meetings

a. The commission or presbytery shall issue an edict and direct that it be read to the congregation on the two preceding Lord's Days.

b. If the congregation has no public meeting, ten days' notice by mail or phone to all members who can be reached shall be sufficient.

c. The date of ordination and/or installation is subject to the sustaining of his examination by presbytery.

3. Meeting for Examination

The examination of a teaching elder-elect entering his first pastorate within the Reformed Presbyterian Church shall proceed as follows:

a. At the appointed time, presbytery shall be constituted with prayer by an elder.

b. The candidate shall be examined in the following:

(1) A sermon preached on an assigned portion of Scripture

(2) Personal godliness

(3) Soundness in the faith and commitment to the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church*

c. Following each area of examination, a vote to sustain or not sustain will be taken. Each member of the court may state his reasons for his vote or make appropriate comments. Such comments are to be considered individual reflections or judgements, not the settled conclusions of the court. A roll call should be taken by Presbytery. If the examination is sustained by a two-thirds vote, presbytery may then adjourn to meet at a later time for the ordination and installation service or may elect to proceed immediately.

4. Meeting for Ordination/Installation

The order of this meeting shall be as follows:

a. If presbytery adjourned following the examination meeting, the service of ordination and installation should begin with the constitution of the court.

b. The steps taken up to this point shall be narrated.

c. The edict shall be read for the last time.

d. Recognizing that the examination of the candidate has already been sustained, the congregation shall be asked to indicate their adherence to the call by a rising vote.

e. The candidate shall be asked to indicate his adherence to his acceptance of the call.

f. The candidate shall come forward and answer the prescribed Queries for Ordination.

g. Having given his assent to the queries, he shall sign them.

h. A sermon shall be preached by an appointed elder.

i. The candidate to be ordained shall kneel and the members of presbytery shall lay their hands upon his head as the formal words of ordination are uttered in prayer. In case of installation, only a prayer of installation shall be offered.

j. A suggested formula of ordination for use in prayer is as follows: "…bless your servant (naming him) as we do now set him apart as a minister of the Gospel in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, and install him as teaching elder of (name) congregation…."

k. The clerk of presbytery is now responsible to hold his credentials.

l. His membership is transferred to the congregation where he is installed.

m. Special charges to the newly installed teaching elder and congregation may be given at the discretion of the presbytery.

n. Presbytery shall be adjourned with prayer, and the new teaching elder shall pronounce the benediction.

o. Members of presbytery and others present shall be given opportunity to extend the right hand of fellowship to the newly installed pastor and his family.

p. The installation of a previously ordained elder is the same as outlined above except the particular steps which refer only to ordination.

q. A teaching elder ordained in another true branch of the visible church may be received into the Reformed Presbyterian Church when he has met our denomination's conditions for a teaching elder. He shall be examined by the presbytery or a commission. A member of the presbytery shall lead in prayer on his behalf, and he shall sign the Queries for Ordination. Members of the presbytery shall be given the opportunity to extend the right hand of fellowship.

5. Cessation of Service

A teaching elder's service may cease under the following circumstances:

a. A teaching elder may request the presbytery to release him from his relationship with the congregation.

b. Any teaching elder desiring to resign shall give notice of his intention to the congregation at least two weeks before offering his resignation to the presbytery.

If the congregation objects to this action, their objections should be considered by presbytery.

c. Presbytery shall set the date upon which the pastoral relationship shall be dissolved and shall with prayer effect the dissolution.

d. Presbytery shall inform the clerk of session by letter (Suggested Form 17) that the pastoral relationship has been dissolved, conveying presbytery's authorization and counsel regarding the replacement of the departing teaching elder. This letter shall be read to the congregation. If the dissolution leaves the congregation without an installed teaching elder, the letter shall also declare the pulpit vacant and include presbytery's authorization and counsel regarding pulpit supply, administration of sacraments and moderating a call.

e. If the resignation of the teaching elder leaves the session with only one congregationally elected member, presbytery, to maintain the organization of the congregation, shall appoint at least one provisional elder.

f. When because of special circumstances such as health, age, et cetera, a teaching elder is no longer able to exercise regularly his pastoral duties, his presbytery may with care relieve him of the official duties of his office and declare his status to be inactive.

g. A retired teaching elder maintains the privileges of his office. If presbytery decides that a teaching elder's situation and/or vocation are inconsistent with the calling of a minister of the Gospel, the presbytery may, after a period of five consecutive years, declare his status to be inactive.

h. A teaching elder who has moved into the jurisdiction of another presbytery shall have his credentials transferred to that presbytery and his communicant membership changed to the local congregation.

i. A teaching elder desiring affiliation with another denomination may upon application be given credentials by his presbytery and a letter of standing by his session. If there are charges pending, they shall be included.

j. A teaching elder who leaves the denomination without a regular dismissal is not considered to be in regular standing. It is the responsibility of the presbytery to notify the receiving body of this fact and to seek to clear any possible conflict between the two bodies.

k. A congregation desiring a change in the pastoral relationship may make official request to the session through:

(1) A committee authorized by the congregation.

(2) A petition signed by a majority of the congregation's members.

l. If the session refuses the above request, the congregation may petition presbytery directly.

6. Removal from Office

A teaching elder may be removed from office. The following principles apply to this procedure:

a. A teaching elder can be divested of his ordination by deposition at the hands of the presbytery.

b. A session may petition the presbytery to dissolve the relationship between a particular teaching elder and the congregation; yet the presbytery holds original jurisdiction regarding the deposition of a teaching elder from his ordination.

c. In extraordinary cases the presbytery may also initiate jurisdiction if it concludes that a particular session has been unable to exercise proper discipline over the teaching elder in question.

d. Procedure for judicial process is set forth in the *Book of Discipline*.

e. Presbytery shall set the date upon which the pastoral relationship shall be dissolved and shall with prayer effect the dissolution.

f. Presbytery shall inform the clerk of session by letter (Suggested Form 17) that the pastoral relationship has been dissolved, conveying presbytery's authorization and counsel regarding the replacement of the departing teaching elder. This letter shall be read to the congregation. If the dissolution leaves the congregation without an installed teaching elder, the letter shall also declare the pulpit vacant and include presbytery's authorization and counsel regarding pulpit supply, administration of sacraments and moderating a call.

g. If the removal of the teaching elder leaves the session with only one congregationally elected member, presbytery, to maintain the organization of the congregation, shall appoint at least one provisional elder.

h. If a teaching elder undergoing judicial process leaves the denomination, ordinarily charges against him should be tried.

i. A teaching elder forfeits his ordination by renouncing his faith, or may do so by conduct unbecoming a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Such actions warrant judicial process.)

7. Cessation of Ordination

The continuing privileges and responsibilities of ordination would cease if:

a. A teaching elder is deposed from his ordination by judicial action of a church court.

b. A teaching elder's request that his ordination be terminated is granted by a church court after careful consideration.

III. DEACONS

The Diaconate is a spiritual office responsible for the ministry of mercy and stewardship of the congregation. It is neither a ruling nor a teaching office. Its exercise, like the whole life of the church, is under the oversight of the session and its function is administrative.

A. Qualifications

Those eligible to be called as deacons must:

1. Be communicant members in good standing of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

2. Evidence the standards of character and conduct consistent with those set forth in Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and 1 Corinthians 12:28.

3. Be knowledgeable in and committed to the subordinate doctrinal standards of the denomination as being consistent with Scriptures.

B. Duties

The duties of deacons include:

1. Regular attendance and participation in the meetings of the deacon board.

2. Meeting jointly with the session periodically for prayer, evaluation and growth in their respective ministries.

3. Maintaining an active ministry of mercy, such as:
   a. Leading the congregation in discerning and ministering to needs such as:
      (1) local needs of individuals and institutions,
      (2) national and international needs.
   b. Gathering and distribution of funds.
   c. Training the congregation in the use of the members' gifts in the ministry of mercy.
   d. Helping the congregation evaluate requests for funds by organizations outside the denomination.

4. Maintaining an active ministry of stewardship, such as:
   a. Overseeing the work of the treasurer.
   b. Appointing a finance committee as needed.
   c. Keeping the congregation informed at least quarterly of financial needs.
   d. Securing an annual audit of all the congregation's accounts.
   e. Preparing an annual budget in conjunction with the session.
   f. Offering family budget counseling.
   g. Teaching principles of giving.
   h. Overseeing the maintenance of property.

5. Developing these ministries by personal visitation.

6. Performing other duties assigned to them by the session, congregation or presbytery.

C. Privileges

The board of deacons has no legislative or judicial powers; its work is wholly administrative, subject to the direction of the session and sensitive to the counsel of the congregation.

The regular privileges of deacons include:

1. Serving as permanent members of the board of deacons to which they are elected.

2. Serving as consultative members in higher courts of the church when appointed.

D. Procedure for Election

1. Authorization

An election of deacons may be authorized as follows:

a. The initiative for an election of deacons must include one or more of the following:

(1) A request from the deacon board that an increase of its membership is needed.

(2) A judgment of the session that there are qualified persons in the congregation, and an increase in the number of deacons is necessary.
(3) An appeal from the congregation to the session to increase the number of deacons.

b. An election of deacons is to be conducted by the session at a specially called meeting of the congregation.

2. Calling a Meeting

The procedure to call a meeting will be:

a. The session shall issue an edict setting the date, time and place for an election.
b. Eight days' notice of the meeting shall be given publicly to the congregation by reading of the edict at the worship services on the two preceding Lord's Days.
c. If the congregation has no public meeting, ten days' notice by mail or phone to all members who can be reached shall be sufficient.

3. Order of Meeting

a. The congregation having been called together for the election, the session shall be constituted by the moderator or presbytery's appointee.
b. The session shall have a complete list of all communicant members of the congregation in good standing from which a quorum is to be determined (one-half of the active communicant resident members). A quorum is necessary for each ballot.
c. Inquiry by the moderator if the congregation still desires to proceed with the election.
d. The final reading of the edict.
e. Worship, with a sermon, shall be conducted under the direction of the session.
f. The election shall be conducted.
g. The court shall be adjourned with prayer.

4. Balloting

The election shall be conducted as follows:

a. The session may indicate their judgment as to the number of positions to be filled by the election. Such a judgment shall be based on the needs of the congregation and the evidence of spiritual maturity of potential candidates.
b. Session may submit a list of nominations.
c. If the session has indicated its desire for a certain number of deacons, its list of nominees shall not contain less than that number.
d. Nominations may also be made by a communicant member of the congregation present.
e. The election may also proceed without nominations.
f. Even when nominations have been made, votes may be cast for any qualified candidate.
g. Voting shall be by ballot, with the session taking due precaution to ensure the integrity of the vote.
h. When the number to be elected is determined, the number of names per ballot is not to exceed the announced number to be elected.

i. Communicant members unable to attend the meeting may send their votes in writing (also known as absentee votes), enclosed in sealed envelopes which bear their names and are addressed to the session. Absentee votes are valid only on the first electing ballot.

j. The use of a nominating ballot is not encouraged; if it is used, absentee votes are valid only on the first electing ballot. Absentee votes will not be used on a nominating ballot.

k. Only those receiving at least two-thirds of the votes cast shall be declared deacons-elect. Blank ballots shall not be counted in determining the total number of votes cast. A ballot marked "No," indicating that the person desires not to vote for any candidate, should be counted in determining the total number of votes cast.

l. If a two-thirds vote has not been reached after three ballots, the moderator, in consultation with the session, may postpone the election.

m. Two tellers shall be appointed by the moderator to collect the ballots and tabulate the results of the election and report to the moderator.

E. Procedure for Examination, Ordination and Installation

1. Examination

The examination of a deacon-elect shall proceed as follows:

a. The deacon-elect shall notify the session, preferably within two weeks, regarding his intention to accept or decline the call of the congregation.

b. If the deacon-elect indicates his desire to accept the call, the session shall meet in constituted court to examine him with respect to his qualifications as stated above in Section I.A.

c. The session shall examine him in his soundness in the faith and in his commitment to the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church*.

d. If the session shall judge any deacon-elect unfit for the office, it shall not proceed with his ordination and/or installation.

e. Ordination will not be required if:

(1) A deacon-elect holds ordination in the denomination as a deacon.

(2) A deacon-elect is certified as having been ordained to an equivalent office in another true branch of the visible church and has met our denominational conditions to be a deacon.

f. Public ordination and/or installation to the board of deacons will be required of all deacons-elect who have declared their desire to serve and have been examined and approved by the session.

2. Authorization

The session shall authorize the ordination and/or installation in the following manner:

a. The session shall set the time, date and place for the ordination and installation of qualified deacons-elect. (Any objections by the congregation shall be presented to the session in writing prior to the called meeting. Session shall act on the objection prior to the called meeting.)

b. Notice of the date, time, location, and names of the deacon(s)-elect shall be given by the installing session to all sessions within the presbytery.

3. Calling a Meeting

To call a meeting for ordination and/or installation:

a. An edict shall be prepared by the session. (Suggested Form 10)

b. The edict shall be read eight days prior to the congregational meeting at the worship services on the two preceding Lord's Days.

c. If the congregation has no public meeting, ten days' notice by mail or phone to all members who can be reached shall be sufficient.

4. Order of Meeting

The order of the meeting shall be as follows:

a. The session shall be constituted by the moderator or presbytery's appointee, and the privileges of the floor shall be extended to all elders of the denomination present.

b. A quorum of one-half of the active resident communicant membership shall be confirmed.

c. The edict shall be read for the final time.

d. Worship, with a sermon, shall be conducted under the direction of the session.

e. An appointed elder shall narrate the previous steps leading up to the ordination and/or installation.

f. An appointed elder shall ask the appropriate Queries for Ordination of the candidates and elicit an affirmative response.

g. Candidates shall publicly sign the Queries for Ordination.

h. In the case of ordination and installation the candidate shall kneel for prayer and all elders present shall be invited to join in the laying on of hands.

i. In the case of installation only an installation prayer shall be offered.

j. An elder shall offer the prayer of ordination and/or installation in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ.

k. The elders shall extend the right hand of fellowship receiving the newly installed deacon(s).

l. Special charges to the newly installed deacon(s) and to the congregation may be given at the discretion of the session.

m. The session shall adjourn and close the meeting with prayer and the benediction.

n. Opportunity shall be given to the congregation and friends to greet the newly installed deacon(s).

5. Cessation of Service on a Board of Deacons

A deacon's service may cease under the following circumstances:

a. A deacon may request the session to accept his resignation from the board of deacons.

b. A deacon whose resignation has been accepted must be re-elected in order to serve again in that office.

c. A deacon is no longer able to serve regularly on the board of deacons to which he was installed for reasons of distance, health, or other justifiable reasons; his session shall move with care to relieve him of the official exercise of his office and declare his status to be inactive (i.e. non-voting). In cases of suspension, see *Book of Discipline.*

d. A deacon or his session may arrange for a sabbatical leave of normally up to one year, during which time he shall be on inactive status.

e. A congregation may arrange for rotation of deacons, subject to the approval of session and presbytery.

f. A deacon granted an inactive status may be reinstated to active service at the discretion of the session.

g. A deacon ceases to serve on the board of deacons when he has moved his communicant membership to another congregation.

h. A congregation may petition a session to depose a particular deacon, but the session holds original jurisdiction regarding deposition of a deacon from his ordination.

6. Removal from Office

A deacon may be removed from office. The following principles shall apply to this procedure:

a. A deacon can be divested of his ordination only by deposition at the hands of his session or presbytery.

b. The session shall notify the presbytery whenever it intends to initiate deposition procedures by forwarding a copy of the charges.

c. In extraordinary cases the session may appeal to presbytery to assume jurisdiction in adjudicating a proposed deposition.

d. In extraordinary cases the presbytery may also originate jurisdiction if it concludes that a particular session has been unable to exercise proper discipline over the deacon in question.

e. No deacon shall be suspended or deposed except after a fair trial.

f. Procedure for judicial process is set forth in the *Book of Discipline*.

7. Cessation of Ordination

The continuing privileges and responsibilities of ordination would cease if:

a. A deacon is deposed from his ordination by judicial action of a church court.

b. A deacon's request that his ordination be terminated is granted by a church court after careful consideration.

CHAPTER 4

The Session

1. The session is the court having original jurisdiction over the members of a congregation. It consists of at least two resident elders elected by the congregation. A majority of the number of elders shall constitute a quorum. Where there is but one elder the congregation becomes disorganized. Steps should be taken to increase the number by requesting the presbytery for the appointment of a provisional elder(s) leading to the election of at least one additional resident elder.

2. Ordinarily, a teaching elder is the moderator of the session. Extraordinary

circumstances may arise where it is advisable for the session to elect as moderator an elder other than the teaching elder, or for the moderator to be appointed by presbytery. No elder shall moderate session in the absence of the regular moderator without the authority of the presbytery.

3. A teaching elder may be appointed by the presbytery to serve as a stated supply in the congregation. He shall be appointed to serve for a given period of time and may be asked to moderate the session. A licentiate may serve as stated supply, but shall not perform the functions of an ordained officer.

4. The moderator shall see that the session is properly constituted and adjourned in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church. He shall direct the business in accord with the law and order of the church and may vote. The session shall elect one of its members as clerk. He shall see that announcement is made of the meetings, keep accurate record of the proceedings, handle correspondence and fulfill other responsibilities as ordered by the court. He shall issue citations when required and shall furnish extracts from the minutes when ordered by the court. He shall have charge of all the papers and records belonging to the session.

5. The session shall hold meetings at stated intervals. Ordinarily, meetings and minutes of the session are open to members of the congregation except when "executive session"* is called. Special meetings may be called by the moderator at his discretion, or upon request. The constitution and adjournment of the court shall be duly recorded in the minutes, with the names of the members in attendance. The meetings of the session shall center around prayer for wisdom in dealing with those persons under its care. No action is official unless taken at a regularly called and constituted meeting. Actions agreed upon by the members meeting informally must be ratified at a regular meeting and recorded. The minutes of all meetings must be read for correction and approval, transcribed in the record book and signed by the moderator and clerk. The record book of the session shall be presented for review by the presbytery once a year, or at such times as the presbytery may designate.

6. The session alone admits to and dismisses from the membership of the congregation. The clerk shall keep a complete and accurate record of all persons admitted to membership or suspended from or dismissed from membership, of baptisms including dates of birth of infants baptized, and of deaths. The record shall include the date of each event. He shall also keep up-to-date rolls of all those in communicant membership, of baptized members, and non-members approved to commune with the congregation.

7. A particular responsibility of the session is to care for the spiritual interest of the congregation and of each member. Therefore, it shall maintain the ordinances of public worship in accordance with the principles of the church. It shall be responsible for the leadership of the singing, for the observances of the sacraments, and for the visitation of the people of the congregation. It should exercise general supervision of Christian education, missionary societies, young people's societies, and all other organizations and

activities in the congregation. It shall guard against any inappropriate or disorderly use of the church building. It shall particularly seek to provide wholesome recreation for its young people.

8. The session is subordinate to the higher courts and shall be governed by their decisions. Each session is to insure that it will be adequately represented at respective meetings of the higher courts. It shall appoint and certify delegates to the meetings of presbytery and Synod and shall furnish certificates signed by the moderator and clerk. (Suggested Form 4) The elders who are delegates to any regular meeting of the superior courts shall be members of any special meeting, unless it be a meeting for the purpose of changing the time or place, in which case the delegates to the ensuing regular meeting shall serve.

9. All judicial action affecting the standing of the members of the congregation shall be initiated in the session, and the trial shall be conducted in accordance with the rules set forth in the *Book of Discipline*. All communications, appeals, complaints, and papers by members of the congregation or of the session, which are addressed to presbytery or to Synod must be brought before the session for transmission to the higher court. It shall be transmitted unless the communication deals with improper subjects or is expressed in disrespectful language. The transmission of the paper by the session does not imply its endorsement of the views expressed.

10. A session may present a paper to presbytery on any subject to which, in its judgment, the attention of the presbytery should be called. It may refer to the presbytery any doctrinal or disciplinary difficulty with which it does not feel competent to deal. Such reference shall be accompanied by a full statement of the problem.

* Refer to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

CHAPTER 5

The Board of Deacons

1. The work of the board of deacons is a spiritual service and is administrative. The board does not have legislative or judicial powers. In the absence of deacons their ministries of mercy and stewardship are included in the responsibilities of the elders.

2. The deacons shall organize as a board, choosing a chairman and secretary from their own membership, and also a treasurer. When deemed prudent the deacon board may ask session to appoint a communicant member of the congregation to serve as the treasurer. The deacons shall meet at stated intervals and shall open and close their meetings with prayer. Adequate records of these meetings should be recorded.

3. The duties of the board of deacons include:
   a. Maintaining an active ministry of mercy. There should be a mercy fund for the relief of needy persons, both within the congregation and outside of it, whether Christian or non-Christian. The mercy fund may be supplied by voluntary gifts

above the regular offering and may be kept in a separate account. Session may assign other tasks that relate to the ministry of mercy.

b. Overseeing the finances of the congregation. This includes receiving the offerings and other income and keeping an accurate record of all contributions. It also includes the responsibility of insuring that the financial obligations of the congregation are met, and that periodic financial reports are made to the session and the congregation. Financial policies and the development of stewardship should be the responsibility of the session.

Under the direction of the session, the deacons should oversee a proposed budget for congregational approval providing for the needs and responsibilities of the congregation including an adequate salary for the pastor and other employees. The deacons should make the congregation aware of and encourage giving to other works of the church as reflected in the missions and ministries of presbytery and Synod. Once the congregation has had the opportunity to give input into the budget and to indicate congregational approval, it is the responsibility of the session to adopt the budget.

c. The deacons should oversee the maintenance and repair of the property of the congregation.

Large financial outlay, not included in the annual budget, shall be submitted to the congregation for approval.

CHAPTER 6

The Presbytery

1. Groups of congregations are organized into presbyteries within certain geographical boundaries. Appeal for such organization may be made to the Synod by interested congregations.

2. The Synod, alone, may organize a presbytery, define its approximate boundaries, determine which congregations shall be under its oversight, and approve its name. The credentials of all teaching elders, including those who are serving as ruling elders in particular congregations, shall be held by the presbytery in which they reside. The session of each congregation within the presbytery shall send delegates to each meeting of presbytery; these would normally include a teaching elder and a ruling elder, but congregations with more than one hundred members (communicant and baptized) shall be entitled to an additional delegate. Each presbytery shall determine its policies for other certifications and for participation in the travel fund. Elders from other presbyteries and elders from other denominations with whom we have fraternal relations may be invited to be consultative members without the right to vote.

3. A presbytery shall hold regular meetings at least once a year. It shall meet within its boundaries except, by permission of Synod, during the meeting of Synod. In the latter case due notice of the meetings shall be given on the floor of Synod. The elders of the presbytery who are delegates to Synod shall be members of such meetings of

the presbytery. An Ad Interim Commission may be appointed to attend to necessary business in the interval between regular meetings.

4. A presbytery may arrange special meetings. The moderator may, at his own discretion, or upon the request of two members, call a meeting to transact business requiring immediate attention. At least ten days' notice shall be given, and the call shall specify the business to be considered. The first decision after the organization of the court shall be on the question of sustaining the action of the moderator in calling the meeting. The presbytery shall consider only the business specified; other items may be introduced by a two-thirds vote.

5. If a presbytery adjourns without fixing a time or place for the next meeting, or if the presbytery fails to meet at the fixed time, it shall be the duty of the moderator, or if he is absent or disqualified, of the clerk, to call a meeting of the presbytery that it may resume its functions. Notice shall be sent through the sessions to each congregation at least ten days before the time set. If a presbytery becomes permanently disorganized, the Synod shall allocate the congregations to the presbyteries that are most convenient.

6. In order to have a quorum for the transaction of business, two conditions must be met: (1) there must be elders present from at least half of the congregations on the roll of presbytery; and (2) at least 1/4 of the elders present must be ruling elders. A smaller number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is obtained.

7. Each presbytery shall elect from its members a moderator, a clerk and, if needed, an assistant clerk, These shall serve for one year and may be re-elected. It shall be the duty of the moderator to see that each session of the court is opened with a devotional service and constituted and adjourned with prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, King and Head of the Church. The moderator shall perform the duties commonly belonging to the presiding officer in a church court; he shall state the subject to be discussed, keep members to the questions before the court, maintain order, decide disputed points of order not matters of law and, if requested, sum up the arguments before putting the vote; he does not vote when the aye's and nay's are called for, and in other cases does vote when the aye's and nay's are equal on a question.

8. In case of the absence or disability of the moderator, the clerk shall have power to call a special meeting, if necessary. Upon convening, either in regular or special session, the court shall be constituted by the last preceding moderator, who shall preside during the organization of the court and the election of a new moderator or of a moderator *pro tem.*

9. The clerk of presbytery shall keep the minutes of the presbytery meetings, which shall be read, corrected and adopted at the close of each meeting. He shall prepare a list of items of unfinished business which should have the attention of presbytery. He shall see that the record book of the presbytery is presented at Synod for review, and shall prepare a report to each regular meeting of Synod concerning students of theology, licensures, ordinations, installations, the number of teaching elders, those without charge, congregations without teaching

elders, the dissolutions of pastoral relationships, the organization, disorganization, union or division of congregations, important congregational or presbytery-wide projects and other data which indicate the conditions within the presbytery. The report must be submitted to the presbytery for adoption before it is presented to the Synod.

10. It is the duty of the presbytery to maintain a faithful supervision over all the congregations within its bounds and to provide for presbyterial visitation, to guard against any teaching contrary to sound doctrine and any corruption of the worship of God, and to institute presbyterial discipline when necessary. The presbytery should give special care to vacant congregations, see that they are properly organized, that the sessions and boards of deacons and trustees function as they should, and that the ordinances are regularly maintained.

11. Presbyteries should make a careful survey of the territory within their bounds with a view to establishing preaching stations in needy fields which might be nurtured into congregations.

12. The presbytery shall review the sessional records of the congregations once a year and make note of anything contrary to the law and order of the church. It shall adjudicate all matters coming before it by appeal, complaint, reference or petition from the sessions, or from members of the congregations, if properly transmitted by the sessions, and shall transmit to the Synod all papers, regular in form, requiring the attention of that body. If a session refuses to transfer any paper submitted by an individual member, he may appeal to the presbytery and ask for a hearing.

13. The presbytery shall have oversight of the men preparing for the gospel ministry and shall have power to license candidates for the teaching eldership. It shall direct the moderation of calls, determine whether they are in order, and present them, if considered to be for the best interests of all concerned. The presbytery has power to ordain, install, try, remove, suspend or depose teaching elders. It shall receive the credentials of teaching elders from other presbyteries and transfer such credentials to other presbyteries. It may receive teaching elders from other denominations or dismiss teaching elders who desire to withdraw from this denomination. (See chap. 3, sect. II.)

14. The presbytery is subordinate to the Synod, is bound by its action, and is under obligation to carry out its decrees. It is the right and privilege of the presbytery to petition Synod.

15. The presbytery may facilitate its work by referring to committees various items of business for consideration and for report with recommendations. The presbytery may also transact business through commissions. A commission has the full authority of the court which appoints it in matters referred to it, subject to the review of the appointing court. The Ad Interim Commission, appointed to attend to necessary business between regular and called meetings of presbytery, may attend to the moderation, sustaining, and presentation of calls and to installations, and may arrange for ordinations; they also are to deal with other items which need the attention of the presbytery in the interim.

A judicial commission may be appointed to investigate a situation or adjudicate a case which has come before the presbytery. A quorum of a commission shall consist of not less than two-thirds of its members. A commission shall report to the presbytery and submit its minutes, which shall be spread on the minutes of the presbytery. The minutes of the commission cannot be changed by the presbytery, but the presbytery may rescind the action of the commission.

16. The presbytery, having completed its work, shall adjourn in prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, to meet at a given time and place.

CHAPTER 7

Organizing New Congregations

1. One of the New Testament patterns of the Church fulfilling the Great Commission is the work of establishing local congregations with their own local leadership. Scripture does not provide a single, uniform model of establishing new congregations. The book of Acts gives instances where new congregations are initiated by the Church through sending missionaries (Acts 13:3-4), initiated by a local request to receive missionaries (Acts 16:9), or initiated in response to other circumstances of God's providence (Acts 8:4-5). In each case, the broader Church is always involved such that the new congregations are never independent of one another (Acts 15).

2. The formal duties and responsibility of establishing new churches belong to the presbytery, which has the authority and prerogative to declare a new congregation to be organized. A new church-planting endeavor may be initiated by any number of persons petitioning the presbytery within whose boundaries they reside, or by the presbytery as it identifies needs or opportunities for a new work within its own boundaries. The ordinary progression of establishing a new congregation is from exploratory work to mission church to organized congregation, although this order is neither fixed nor required, and may not be necessary in every circumstance.

Exploratory Work

3. An exploratory work may consist of a Bible study, an evangelistic outreach, or a preaching station, without the structural organization of formal membership or locally elected leadership. A preaching station consists of a group of people who gather regularly for public worship. At this initial stage of church planting, there is greater flexibility regarding how the presbytery or a local session exercises oversight of the work. The presbytery may call one or more teaching elder(s) or licentiate(s) to serve as a church planter(s) for an exploratory work. When this is done, presbytery must take special care to ensure proper support and oversight of the church planter(s). A licentiate shall not perform the functions of an ordained officer.

The Mission Church

4. Ordinarily, an exploratory work shall be actively nurtured by the presbytery or a local session until it is of sufficient strength to be established as a mission church. The mission church differs from an organized congregation in that it has no permanent governing body of its own. Therefore, the presbytery must give careful oversight to the mission church until it is sufficiently mature to become an organized congregation.

5. Because of its transitional nature, the mission church requires a temporary organization. A temporary governing body (TGB) of elders, appointed by the presbytery, oversees the mission church. This temporary governing body has authority to examine and receive new members, to exercise church discipline, to administer the sacraments, to conduct elections for church officers, to examine officers-elect in preparation for the mission church to become an organized congregation, and to oversee the financial affairs of the mission church.

6. The establishment of a mission church requires only a decision of presbytery or its Ad Interim Commission and the appointment of a TGB.

7. The temporary governing body (TGB) may be established by presbytery in one of the following ways:

a. The presbytery may cooperate with the session of an existing congregation in arranging a parent-child relationship. The session of the parent congregation would be appointed by presbytery to serve as the TGB of the mission church. It is permissible for the appointed session to assign a subset of its members to the task of overseeing the mission church.

b. The presbytery may appoint a commission to serve as the TGB of the mission church. If there are RPCNA elders involved in the prospective mission church, they should be considered for appointment to this commission.

8. One or more teaching elder(s) or licentiate(s) may be called to serve as the church planter(s) for the mission church either by the parent congregation (see 7a) or the commission (see 7b). The ordained church planter(s) would normally become a member(s) of the TGB.

9. Members received into a mission church become communicant or baptized members of the RPCNA. Mission churches shall maintain their own rolls of communicant and baptized members in the same manner as organized congregations. However, presbytery and synod financial assessments for an organized congregation may be waived for a mission church. Mission churches and their members shall have the full rights of judicial process of the courts of the church in appeal from their governing body, and shall enjoy the same status as organized congregations in relation to civil government. However, a TGB is not entitled to send delegates to presbytery or synod nor to vote on overtures. A

church planter who is not a member of an organized congregation's session is delegated to presbytery and synod by the presbytery.

10. When the TGB has identified at least two men as potential elders in the mission church and when the TGB determines that the mission church has reached sufficient strength to begin the process of becoming an organized congregation, the TGB may conduct an election for ruling elders and one or more teaching elder(s). Deacons may also be elected. Ruling elders-elect and deacons-elect shall be examined by the TGB. If teaching elders have been elected, provision shall be made for the presbytery or its Ad Interim Commission to review and approve the terms of the call and, if necessary, make arrangements for ordination examinations of the pastor(s)-elect. If at least two elders-elect are sustained, the temporary governing body shall petition presbytery for the organization of the congregation (Form 18). Upon granting the petition, presbytery shall communicate the edict of organization (Form 19) to the TGB, which is then responsible for arranging for the organization service.

Organizing a Congregation

11. When presbytery receives a petition for organization of a congregation (Form 18), due notice shall be given and an opportunity to be heard shall be afforded to any congregation that might be affected, including those of sister denominations. If the petition is granted, the presbytery shall appoint a time and place and prepare an edict (Form 19) to proceed with the organization. If necessary, the presbytery may appoint an organizing commission.

12. At the appointed time and place, an elder shall constitute the court of the presbytery (or the organizing commission) with prayer. The steps taken to this point shall be narrated followed by a service of worship which shall include a sermon. The court shall then determine the communicant members that will make up the roll of the new congregation. Baptized children of those received shall be placed on the baptized roll of the new congregation.

13. After the roll has been determined, all the communicant members of the new congregation shall stand and give assent to the Covenant of Communicant Membership and to this additional pledge:

> **"Do you solemnly covenant with God and with one another that you will live together in brotherly unity as an organized congregation on the basis of the Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America; that you will be obedient to the courts that are over you in the Lord; and that you will, by a godly life, seek to promote the purity, peace, and prosperity of the church as a whole?"**

Members of the new congregation shall sign the Covenant of Communicant Membership. An elder shall offer prayer constituting the congregation in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church. The

moderator shall then declare the congregation officially organized.

14. In the same meeting, the presbytery shall proceed to ordain and/or install those officers who have been previously elected by the mission church, and examined and sustained by the TGB, or in the case of a teaching elder, examined and sustained by the presbytery. If civil law requires trustees for the congregation, these can be appointed at this time, if not done prior to the organizational meeting. In exceptional cases, the congregation may elect its officers in this same meeting, and if appropriate, the readings of necessary edicts waived in order that those chosen may immediately be examined, ordained, and installed. All proceedings shall be recorded in the minutes of both the presbytery and the session of the new congregation.

Receiving an Existing Congregation

15. An independent congregation or a congregation from another denomination desiring to unite with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America shall make formal application to the appropriate presbytery. Presbytery shall make full investigation of the situation of the petitioning congregation, and shall satisfy itself that the motives and procedures involved will promote the purity and peace of Christ's Church, both for the RPCNA branch and that branch from which the congregation is coming. Under normal circumstances, the presbytery should not act hastily and should adhere closely to proper ecclesiastical order. Diligent efforts ought to be made to communicate the benefits and responsibilities belonging to members and congregations in the RPCNA. The presbytery shall arrange for appropriate discussions and examinations of all the communicant members of the church on the basis of the Covenant of Communicant Membership, and the ordained officers on the basis of the vows related to their respective offices. The teaching elder of the congregation shall apply for membership in the presbytery (DCG: 3.II.D.4.b). A service of reception shall be planned and conducted by the presbytery or, if necessary, by a commission appointed by the presbytery, with due notice given to the congregations/sessions within its bounds. (Suggested Form 20)

16. At the appointed time and place, an elder shall constitute the court of the presbytery (or the organizing commission) with prayer. The steps taken to this point shall be narrated followed by a service of worship which shall include a sermon. The court shall then determine the communicant members that will make up the roll of the new congregation. Baptized children of those received shall be placed on the baptized roll of the new congregation.

17. After the roll has been determined, all the communicant members of the congregation being received shall stand and give assent to the Covenant of Communicant Membership and to this additional pledge:

> **"Do you solemnly covenant with God and with one another that you will live together in brotherly unity as an organized congregation on the basis of the Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America; that you will be obedient to the courts that are over you in the Lord; and that you will,**

by a godly life, seek to promote the purity, peace, and prosperity of the church as a whole?"

Members of the newly received congregation shall sign the Covenant of Communicant Membership. The appropriate vows will then be presented to the congregation's ordained officers for acceptance, and the vows shall be signed. A member of the presbytery will lead in a prayer of reception of the congregation in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church. The moderator shall then declare the congregation officially received by the presbytery. An address to the newly-received congregation shall be presented by a presbyter, and the court will be adjourned in prayer. The congregation's pastor may be asked to pronounce the benediction.

18. Following a congregation's reception, the presbytery shall give particular attention to the settling and assimilating of the new congregation into the life and fellowship of the presbytery and denomination.

CHAPTER 8

The Synod

1. The Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America is the highest court of the church, and is the bond of organic union, cooperation, and mutual helpfulness, between the presbyteries. It is responsible for the continuing reformation of the church in maintaining the subordinate standards of the church in harmony with the Scriptural truth and order. Its decisions are final, but its authority is limited by its subordinate standards. Within the subordinate standards of the church, those documents that declare confessional truth (*Westminster Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* and the *Reformed Presbyterian Testimony*) constitute the fundamental law of the church while the documents that declare the functions of the church (*Directory for Church Government, Book of Discipline* and *Directory for Worship*) together with the actions of the Synod constitute the law and order of the church.

2. The session of each congregation shall send certified delegates to each meeting of Synod; these would normally include a teaching elder and a ruling elder, but where a congregation has called other teaching elders to serve on its staff they should also be certified as delegates. Congregations with more than 100 members (communicant and baptized) shall be entitled to an additional delegate. Teaching elders who are retired or who are serving the church under oversight of boards of Synod or are certified by a presbytery are also delegates to Synod. (Suggested Form 3) The clerk shall make up a roll of all of the above-mentioned elders. No member shall withdraw from the Synod before final adjournment without the consent of the court. Synod shall reimburse from its travel fund certified delegates from each congregation. All teaching elders and others required to be there for Synod's business are also eligible to participate in the travel fund.

3. The Synod shall meet at least every other year and before the adjournment of any meeting shall fix the time and place of the next meeting. If the Synod does not fix a meeting for the following year, the Synod shall appoint a five-man ad interim commission to deal with any emergencies that might require action. The commission shall be comprised of the two most recent moderators and three others nominated by the Nominating Committee, with the most recent moderator serving as chairman. Synod may itself appoint special meetings to attend to particular business. In cases of emergency, the moderator may at his own discretion, or in response to the request of a presbytery, or of twelve elders representing at least two presbyteries, call a special meeting. If for any reason the moderator is unable to act, the clerk may issue the call. At least thirty days' notice shall be given, and the purpose of the meeting specifically stated. The call of the moderator must first be sustained before Synod can proceed to the business specified, and no other business can be transacted at any special meeting except by a two-thirds vote of the court.

4. In order to have a quorum for the transaction of business, two conditions must be met: (1) there must be elders present from at least half of the congregations on the roll of Synod; and (2) at least 1/4 of the elders present must be ruling elders. A smaller number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is obtained.

5. The regular meeting of Synod shall begin with a service of worship. The retiring moderator, or an alternate appointed at the previous meeting, shall preach the sermon. The moderator shall then constitute the court with prayer. In case of the absence or disqualification of the moderator, the court shall be constituted by the last preceding moderator. After the call of the roll by the clerk, Synod shall proceed to the election of a moderator. Any member of the court may nominate a candidate. Any member of the court may be elected moderator. The election may be by ballot, voice, show of hands, or rising, as the court may choose. The moderator-elect shall immediately assume office.

6. After election of a clerk and assistant clerk, the former clerk shall submit his report, concerning the duties assigned him by the previous Synod, and listing the errors of the published minutes. The adoption of the clerk's report shall constitute Synod's approval of the published minutes as corrected. The clerk shall make the necessary corrections in one official copy of the published minutes, certify them as correct, and place them on file in the office of the stated clerk, who is the official statistician and keeper of records for the denomination. Synod's clerk shall have previously prepared and published a docket for the approval of Synod together with the reports of boards and committees. He shall include in the docket a list of items of unfinished business.

7. Each day's session of the meeting of Synod shall be constituted and adjourned in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, either by the moderator or by a member of the court named by him.

8. It shall be the duty of the moderator to preside over all meetings of Synod during his term of office, which shall be until the next regular meeting of Synod. He shall see that the business of Synod is conducted in an orderly manner, according to the general

rules governing ecclesiastical assemblies, and any special rules which Synod may have adopted. He shall appoint the regular and standing committees of Synod not otherwise provided for. Committees shall ordinarily consist of three to five elders. The person first named shall be considered chairman of the committee.

9. The clerk shall make up the roll of Synod, which shall be taken at each session of Synod. He shall keep a record of the attendance, and include it in the published minutes. The minutes of each session shall be read for correction and approval.

10. The work of the Synod shall be carried on through boards, permanent committees and commissions (see chap. 6, par. 15), which shall make a full report of their work at each meeting of Synod. Membership of these agencies shall primarily consist of ordained officers, and shall work according to the instructions of Synod. Permanent boards and committees shall be so organized that the terms of only a minor portion of their membership expire each year. In most cases, the term shall be for three years, one-third of the members being elected for each year. Except as approved by Synod as essential to continue, members of boards and committees are limited to two consecutive terms. Vacancies may be filled by the Moderator, Clerk, and Assistant Clerk.

11. A member has the right to petition any court of the church to whose jurisdiction he is subject in relation to any matter of reasonable importance. All communication from subordinate courts, or from individuals not members of the court, to be brought to the attention of Synod, such as papers, petitions, proposed overtures, appeals and complaints, must bear endorsement showing that they have been regularly transferred by the lower courts. A petition addressed to a presbytery or Synod shall first be submitted to a session, and by it transferred to the presbytery or through the presbytery to the Synod. The action of the lower court shall be recorded on the document and signed by the moderator and clerk. Such transference shall be made upon request, and does not carry approval of the petition. If the session or presbytery refuses to transmit the petition, the petitioner may protest and appeal to the next higher court. The higher court may in exceptional cases admit a petition directly from a person who is not a member of the court.

12. A lower court may petition a higher. A session petitioning Synod should have its petition transferred through the presbytery. Synod, however, may assume original jurisdiction over all matters affecting the purity and welfare of the church, and may, without complaint or appeal, investigate and adjudicate any matter requiring its attention or may direct the lower courts to deal with the matter. A complaint or appeal against the decision of a judicial commission of Synod may be made to the Synod itself.

13. Upon request of one-third of the sessions, or one-third of the presbyteries, Synod shall give consideration to an overture. Any proposal of change in the fundamental law of the church, if adopted by Synod by a two-thirds vote, shall be submitted to the sessions of the congregations. Proposed major changes in the fundamental law (*Westminster Confession of Faith, Westminster Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms, Reformed Presbyterian Testimony*, Covenant of Church Membership, Queries for Ordination and Licensure, Covenant of Baptism) require that formal notice be given to the Synod

one regular meeting in advance. No change shall be made in the fundamental law of the church until the proposed change has been sent down in overture and has been approved by two-thirds of all the sessions of the church (not including provisional sessions) that cast votes and a majority of the elders voting. The law and order documents (The Directory of Church Government, The Book of Discipline, and The Directory of Public Worship) may be amended by any given Synod by a two-thirds majority vote. If, however, Synod considers that the item before it should have the consideration and discussion of the sessions, it can by a simple majority vote decide to use the procedure of sending proposed amendments down in overture; however, any such amendments must be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the Synod before they can be sent down in overture to the sessions.

14. All such communications shall be directed to the Committee on the Business of Synod no less than thirty days before the meeting of the Synod. No paper shall be brought directly to Synod except those which are presented as a challenge to the recommendation of the Committee on the Business of Synod. Exception may be granted by a two-thirds vote of the Synod.

15. When an overture has been approved by Synod, Synod's clerk shall send down the overture to the voting sessions within fifteen days of the beginning of the following calendar year. Synod's clerk may utilize secure communication means and presbytery clerks for the distribution aiming to reach all session clerks and so all congregational elders. There shall be an interval of at least ten days between the local reception of the overture and the session/elder votes. In taking the vote, the Session shall record whether it favors or opposes the overture. Sessions not casting a "yes" or "no" vote shall be considered to have cast a blank ballot, which shall not be counted in the number of sessions voting. In addition, the Clerk of Session shall record the number of elders favoring and opposing the overture.

16. The voting sessions (regular and provisional) shall be those as of December 31 following the Synod at which the overture was adopted and ordered sent down to the sessions by the Synod. For the purposes of consideration in voting on an overture: (a) A provisional session exists only where there are fewer than two resident elected elders. Such sessions do not vote on overtures.However, the one individual resident elected elder may cast a vote which will be counted in the overall elder count. (b) For purposes of overtures, a session with two resident, elected elders is not a provisional session even though it has provisional elders. (c) Provisional elders (ruling or teaching) who serve on a session with two resident, elected elders and who are not active and voting on any other session, shall be allowed to cast a vote on a session they serve on, both in determining the session vote and the individual elder vote.

17. The Synod shall appoint a committee to canvass the vote and report the results. The clerks of the sessions shall report to the clerk of Synod the complete record of the vote by the time the Committee to Canvass the Vote on the Overture is appointed by the Synod at its regular meeting. The Moderator shall declare the decision. If it is found that two-thirds of the sessions (not including provisional sessions) that cast votes and a majority of the elders voting have voted in favor of adoption, the statement submitted

shall be declared a part of the law of the church.

18. It is the privilege of a member of Synod to dissent from an action to which he is opposed and to have his dissent and the reasons therefor recorded in the minutes, if they are respectful and of reasonable length. He must, however, give notice of his dissent at the time the action is taken but may be allowed until the next day's session to formulate his reasons.

19. Synod shall determine the funds necessary to carry on the work of the church for the ensuing year(s), until the next regular meeting of Synod, and designate the amount to be allocated to the several boards and committees for their respective ministries. It shall also devise and recommend ways and means of raising the required amounts.

CHAPTER 9

Rules of Order for a Meeting of Synod

1. The following rules for the guidance of Synod are those commonly observed by the courts of all churches in the presbyterian system. Insofar as they are applicable they should be followed also by lower courts. It is not to be assumed that they meet every condition, for "Under extraordinary circumstances, extraordinary things may be done."

2. After the organization of Synod, the moderator shall call for the report of the Business of Synod Committee regarding papers addressed to the court (chap. 8, par. 11), together with recommendations to the Synod for action. Recommendations of the Business of Synod Committee may include the following: (1) return of the paper with reasons for the return stated, (2) immediate action by the Synod, (3) referral to a standing or special committee, commission or board for study and recommendations, or (4) consideration by the Synod at another time.

3. Reports from boards, commissions, permanent committees, committees appointed by the moderator, and committees appointed by the Synod come properly before the Synod as they are scheduled in the docket. For reports that are printed in the *Digest* it is normal procedure to read only the recommendations. These reports and recommendations are before the court for immediate discussion and adoption unless some special disposition of the matter is proposed. No motion is necessary for Synod to take action on the recommendations or the report as a whole. No substantive changes are to be made in the body of the report on the floor of Synod; if a report is to be changed substantively it is to be resubmitted to the board or committee.

4. It shall be out of order to call for persons to be heard following a report, unless for a definite and special reason which shall be stated to the court; provided, however, that a single short speech, when needed to stress the value or importance of an item of the work of the church, shall be in order without special permission of the court. The time

allowed for such a speech shall not exceed five minutes, except by special permission of the court; and the assistant clerk shall give a signal one minute before the expiration of the allotted time. When the court decides that persons shall be heard following a report, the time limit for any one speech shall not exceed ten minutes, and the total time for all speeches following a single report shall not exceed thirty minutes. The speakers shall be informed by the assistant clerk as to the amount of time at their disposal before they address the court. The assistant clerk shall be provided with a signal system, which he shall ring one minute before the expiration of the time for any such speech and again at the expiration of the time. If the speaker continues after the second ringing of the bell, the moderator shall require him to desist. Courtesy to a particular speaker must not be allowed to interfere with the business of the entire Synod.

5. All other matters to be considered by the Court must be brought before the Synod by motion of a member of the court and seconded by a member of the court. Motions are to be in written form and handed to the clerk before being debated and voted upon. Special resolutions fall into this category and if signed by two or more members of the Court do not need a second. A two-thirds vote of Synod is necessary to receive a special resolution following the deadline for the introduction of papers.

6. The moderator shall at all times enforce the rule that there be no discussion of any matter until there is a motion before the house. Main motions are used to introduce business, require a second and are debatable. Motions dealing with expenditures of money should designate the recommended source for such expenditures. Motions calling for reports should indicate whether the report is to be brought to the current meeting of Synod or to a future meeting of Synod.

7. Subsidiary motions are applied to main motions in order to dispose of them most appropriately. All require a second. They are as follows:

a. *To commit.* The object is to place the business in the hands of a smaller body for study and recommendations. A motion may be committed (or referred) to a board or existing committee or special committee. The motion to commit should designate the board or committee to whom the item is to be committed. Items involving the expenditure of money are automatically referred to the Committee on Finance. Items involving appointment or election of board or committee members are automatically committed to the Nominating Committee.

b. *To amend.* The object is to change or modify. Debate should be confined to the amendment. An amendment germane to the motion may be proposed. An amendment to an amendment may be moved, but no further complication shall be permitted. The vote shall be first on the amendment of the second degree, then on the amendment to the motion, and finally on the motion as amended.

c. *To substitute.* A motion not germane to the one being considered may be moved as a substitute. This is done by moving to lay the original motion on the table "to entertain the following substitute: ' _____ _____'." If the motion to entertain the substitute carries, the substitute becomes the question before the house, and, if it passes, the original motion is lost. If the substitute is voted down, the motion comes automatically before the Court.

d. *To divide.* If a motion contains two or more parts which involve separate

principles or statements of fact, a division of the question may be called for and must be granted. Each part shall be considered and voted on as an independent motion.

e. *To lay on the table.* The object is to postpone action until a later time. Discussion is limited to the propriety of postponing. It can be amended as to time. It requires a two-thirds vote. The item can be taken up again in the same session by a majority vote.

f. *To postpone indefinitely.* The object is to kill the motion without bringing it to a vote. It is debatable and requires a two-thirds vote.

g. *To cut off debate* (to call for the "previous question"). The object is to cut off debate on the motion immediately before the court. It requires a two-thirds vote. If passed, the only qualifying motion allowable is for a record of the aye's and nay's. The vote should be taken immediately. (To call "Question" from the floor is not appropriate, and has no formal validity.)

h. *To withdraw.* A motion may be withdrawn by the maker with the consent of the second if it has not been debated. Otherwise consent to withdraw must be obtained from the court.

i. *To reconsider.* The object is to bring back to the floor action already decided by the current meeting of Synod. A motion to reconsider can be made and seconded only by the members of Synod who voted with the majority on the previous action. The motion is debatable and requires a simple majority. If passed, the original motion is again open for discussion and vote.

j. *To appeal the action of the Committee on Finance.* Where the Committee on Finance recommends no action or modified action on recommendations or resolutions calling for the appropriation of money, boards and committees making the recommendations or those signing the resolution, or any two of them, shall have the right to appeal from this decision by moving and seconding the original recommendation or resolution on the floor of Synod immediately after the report of the Committee on Finance is disposed of.

8. Incidental motions which may be raised at any time are as follows:

a. *Point of Order.* A member of the Court may at any time break into the debate, by gaining the moderator's attention, and saying, "I rise to a point of order." The moderator will ask, "What is your point of order?" Points of order may be: debate without a motion, debate not relevant to the motion, or a serious breach of decorum on the part of the speaker. The moderator shall decide whether the speaker or his debate is out of order.

b. *Appeal.* Any member of the court with a second may appeal from any decision of the moderator. The moderator may stand on his decision or submit it to the parliamentarians. If the decision of the parliamentarians or of the moderator is still appealed, it shall be put before the Court in this way, "Do you sustain the decision of the moderator?"

9. Privileged motions are motions which take precedence over all other motions and are undebatable. They are as follows:

a. *Order of the Day.* The object is to determine the time when specific business will come before the Court. The clerk shall be alert to determine that there has not

already been an order of the day established at that time.
b. *Adjourn.* The object is to stop business immediately. It requires a second.
c. *To extend the time.* The object is to continue business beyond the established time of adjournment. It requires a second. It may be amended and may be reconsidered.

10. The following motions must be decided without debate.
a. To adjourn.
b. To take up particular items of business or motions relating to the priority of business (Order of the day).
c. To cut off debate (for the previous question).

11. The following motions require a two-thirds vote:
a. To postpone indefinitely.
b. To lay on the table.
c. For the previous question.
d. To suspend the rules of order.
e. To submit an overture.

All other motions require a simple majority.

12. A member of the court may speak only once on the following:
a. A question of order.
b. Postponement for the present.
c. Commitment.

On all other questions a member may speak not more than twice except by permission of the court. He may speak only on the privilege. Each speech shall be no longer than ten minutes, except by permission of the court.

13. During debate the following motions only may be entertained with precedence in the order named:
a. To fix the time to which to adjourn. This may be amended as to time.
b. To adjourn. This is always in order, except when a vote is being taken or when a member is speaking.
c. To lay on the table or to postpone.
d. To postpone to a certain time. This may be amended as to time.
e. For the previous question.
f. To commit. This may be amended as to the committee and the accompanying instructions.
g. To substitute.
h. To amend.

14. A member who desires to speak must rise and address the moderator, and may not proceed until the moderator announces his name. The moderator shall give the floor to the one who first addresses him. If two or more address him at the same time, the one farthest from the chair shall be recognized.

15. Every member when speaking shall address himself first to the moderator, and then speak to the house in general, but he shall not address any member individually except through the moderator. He shall treat all members with decorum and respect and shall attend closely in his speech to the business in hand under consideration. Members of the Court shall attend closely to the business in hand and shall not engage in private conversation or in anything that may cause confusion or disorder. If a speaker acts in a disorderly manner, indulges in personal reflection, uses improper language, or deviates from the subject in hand, it is the privilege of any member and the duty of the moderator to call him to order. No speaker shall be interrupted unless out of order, or that mistakes may be corrected, or because the hour has arrived for the order of the day, or for recess, or adjournment. If interrupted for the latter reason he shall be entitled to continue when consideration of the subject is resumed.

16. Before putting any debatable question to vote, the moderator shall give opportunity for debate. The moderator shall require all speakers to limit their remarks strictly to matters germane to the motion before the house at the time. Synod may set a time limit on all speakers and speeches during the debate of a specific item of business. When opinion is sharply divided, the moderator shall see that time is shared as equitably as possible between representatives of both sides of the question. When the moderator has begun taking the vote, no further debate or remarks shall be admitted, unless evidently there has been a mistake.

17. The moderator shall not engage in the discussions of the court. If he desires to exercise his rights as a member temporarily, he may ask the clerk to preside. If he leaves the chair, he shall call upon a former moderator to preside until he returns.

18. The moderator shall decide all points of order. Any member may appeal from a decision and state his reasons. The moderator may reply without leaving the chair. There shall be no further debate, and without a motion a vote shall be taken on sustaining the decision.

19. In placing a motion before the court for a vote, the moderator shall repeat the motion or have it repeated. Following the vote, the moderator shall announce whether the motion carried or not. Special provisions are as follows:

a. *Division.* If the moderator is unable to decide which way the vote went, or if any member of the court calls for a division, the vote shall be taken by a standing vote. The clerks shall count the votes, and the moderator shall announce the decision.

b. *Roll Call or Ballot Vote.* One-fourth of the members present may request a recording of the aye's and nay's or may request a vote by ballot on any question. By common consent this record may be omitted from the published minutes.

c. *Vote of the Moderator.* When the vote is by roll call or by ballot, the moderator shall vote with the other members. In no other cases shall he vote unless the court be equally divided. If he declines to vote, the motion is lost.

20. Members ought always to vote except for valid reasons. Unless excused by the court,

non-voters must be considered as acquiescing with the majority. A member has no vote in the trial of a case in which he is involved.

21. The sessions of Synod shall ordinarily be open to the public, but the court may sit with closed doors on matters which, in its judgment, should not become common knowledge. It may be expedient to refer judicial cases to commissions, which shall try them according to the procedure laid down for Synod. To gain greater freedom of debate, Synod may resolve itself into a committee of the whole. When the committee rises, its chairman shall report its conclusion to Synod, but any action of the committee to be of force must be passed by Synod.

The glory of God, the welfare of the church, and the best interests of all its members shall be the ruling motives in all the actions of the courts of the church.

The Book of Discipline

Adopted 2003

INTRODUCTION

Discipline is a vital element in discipleship, and discipleship, in turn, is based upon a call by Jesus involving a personal allegiance to Him in love and obedience. Those who became the original disciples were first taught by Jesus, and only after that were they sent out as His representatives (Mark 3:14-15). In our own day we also have the witness of the Word, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and sound preaching to draw us to faith in Jesus. Then to bind us together we have the fellowship of His Church as the Bride of Christ and the oversight of the elders into whose hands the leadership of the Church is placed.

The purpose of Christian discipline is to bring about a redemptive change, and a continuing growth toward holiness in the life of a Christian. Although we all fall into sin, as Christians we must still become involved in every process which produces righteousness and leads an individual toward growth in grace. Thus, Christians must set a good example of encouraging each other in love and in good deeds (Heb. 10:24).

Discipline is both positive and negative. Since it is a continuing process in our growth in grace, it becomes the responsibility of every member of the congregation. We must show a concern for every offender and at the same time a love that brings about repentance.

The elders must also exercise leadership by appropriately responding to weaknesses and sin among the members of their congregation. Of course they cannot reach out to members if they do not know them well, pray for them constantly, and visit consistently. We call this preventive discipline, and it is the first step in maintaining strong spiritual health among all members of a congregation. Preventive discipline will certainly avoid some of the need for corrective discipline.

Both teaching and ruling elders must establish full biblical discipline for the sake of order and peace in the congregation. Since it is their duty to mold and perfect mental and moral character, the elders must begin by disciplining themselves. They then become a good influence upon every member of the congregation. Finally, they should apply discipline impartially upon the membership of the entire congregation. Such discipline should begin with sound preaching and the acceptance on the part of the session of a

personal responsibility for the spiritual life of each member of the congregation.

Any book of church discipline must emphasize the more formal, corrective, and often negative aspects of discipline because our leaders must maintain the strong reprimands and judgments that Jesus instructs us to keep. A great problem is that the degeneration of our moral and spiritual world since the Fall leads us to recognize that families can be formed and children may grow up without the example of any Christian principles or teachings. We must pray for the presence of Christ in every thought, attitude, and deed so that we can build both personal and corporate lives that will glorify His name.

The appropriate church court should take notice of behavior that may lead to civil lawsuits. In particular, one member shall not go to law against another member until the case has been referred to the appropriate court (1 Cor. 6:1-8). The court may employ mediation, arbitration, or another alternate dispute resolution process.

This Book of Discipline is purposely in two sections. The first, section I, will be the normal procedure that courts will use. It is less formal, and is especially useful in those common situations when the church member who must undergo discipline has admitted his sin, and neither desires to contest any charges nor any censures. It is by no means a "prejudging the case," for a member charged with sin may contest the very charge itself and demand a trial for it long before the court has determined any censure that affects his standing or eligibility for the sacraments. The second part is more formal and with more rigorous procedure. Any time a member desires to contest either a charge against him, or the severity of the censure, he may request formal trial done in accord with Section II. This request must be granted.

SECTION I:
DEFINITIONS, PRINCIPLES, AND GENERAL DISCIPLINARY ACTION

CHAPTER 1

The Scriptural Foundation and Basic Principles of Church Discipline

1. God's people are called to be holy. The sin of any member of the church has an adverse effect on the whole church. This includes communicant and baptized members, both of whom are subject to the discipline of the church.

2. God has established an orderly manner for dealing with sin in His church. This order, as set forth in Matthew 18:15-17, involves loving personal confrontation, using witnesses, and calling upon church leaders for counsel and judgment.

3. Five purposes of church discipline are: primarily, to reclaim a sinning member; then to deter others from similar offenses; to maintain the honor of Christ and the purity and peace of His Church; to maintain the truth of the gospel; and to avoid the wrath of God coming upon the church.

4. A church which does not follow our Lord's commands regarding church discipline will certainly lose His blessing, deteriorating more and more in doctrine and in life.

5. Discipline should be exercised with prudence, discretion, humility, and in full dependence upon the guidance of the Spirit of God, with love for both the Lawgiver and the lawbreaker.

6. Not everything displeasing to an individual is ground for formal disciplinary process. Offenses which require discipline are of three kinds: heresy; disregard for or violation of the moral law (refusal to submit in the Lord to the teaching and government of this church as being based upon the Scriptures and described in substance in the Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America); and contempt for the courts of the church (refusal, in case of need of correction in doctrine or life, to respect the authority and discipline of the church).

Scripture: Ex. 23:1; Num. 35:30; Deut. 13:1-11; 17:2-13; 19:15-20; 21:18-21; 22:20-22; Josh. 7:1-26; Matt. 16:19; 18:15-18; John 20:21-23; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11; 13:1; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thess. 5:12-15; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; 2 Tim. 5:19-21; Titus 3:10-11; Heb. 12:1-13; 13:17; Rev. 2:2, 20.

CHAPTER 2

Dealing with Sin in the Church— Personal Responsibility

1. If a member sins against another person, or if a member sins and this sin becomes known to another member of the church, the person sinned against or aware of the sin should go privately to the sinner and confront him.

2. If the sinner repents, there must be forgiveness and reconciliation, and the matter shall be closed. You have won your brother.

3. If the sinner does not repent, the member aware of the sin should take one or two others along as witnesses and seek the sinner's repentance. It is at this point that a plan of mediation or arbitration may be useful. If this is successful, the matter shall be closed. You have won your brother.

4. If the sinner still does not repent, the person aware of the sin shall bring the matter to the session for action.

5. If the sin is known generally, and therefore cannot be solved privately, charges may be taken directly to the appropriate church court.

Scripture: Matt. 18:15-17, 1 Cor. 5:1-2; 1 Tim. 5:19-20.

CHAPTER 3

Dealing with Sin in the Church— Corporate Responsibility

1. If session or a higher court learns of a sinning member, it must not ignore the situation. The court may deal with the situation directly or by a judicial commission. (See section II, chap. 4, par. 1, as well as the *Directory for Church Government,* chap. 6, par. 15 on page D-33.)

2. If there is reasonable evidence that a member is teaching heresy, disregarding or violating the moral law, or showing contempt for the courts of the church, the court shall contact that member in love and with care, and shall investigate the allegations.

3. If the sinner confesses and repents, there must be forgiveness and reconciliation, and the matter shall be closed. You have won your brother. Such closure may include counsel or censure appropriate to the circumstances.

4. If the accused does not contest the charges, regardless of whether or not he acknowledges the truthfulness of the accusation, and does not give evidence of repentance from the alleged sin, the court may proceed, without formal trial, to the imposition of any formal censure in hope of repentance. (See chap. 4 for appropriate censures.)

5. However, if the accused takes steps to contest the charges, the court may not proceed to issue a censure beyond admonition or rebuke without conducting a formal trial. (See section II for the formal trial process.)

Scripture: Matt. 18:17; Deut. 19:15; 2 Cor. 13:1.

CHAPTER 4

The Imposition of Church Censures

1. There are five formal degrees of censure. These are admonition, rebuke, suspension, deposition, and excommunication. These formal censures shall be used if the sin is confirmed, and if censure is appropriate, or the sinner is confronted but does not repent. These formal censures shall be put in writing, with a clear statement of the sin, and, if possible, conveyed to the sinner personally by one or more of the members of the court. Any of these censures may be imposed by the court without first imposing lesser censures. In addition, the court may remove members from the roll without formal censure, as mentioned in paragraph 2 of this chapter.

a. *Admonition*—This is the lightest degree of censure and is commonly used by the court in cases of neglect of duty. It consists of reproving the offender, warning him of the danger of his course, and charging him to be more faithful in his Christian life. The court may also make the people under its oversight aware publicly of the fact of and reason for the admonition. (See Suggested Form 27.)

b. *Rebuke*—This is a censure for a more aggravated sin and is commonly used by the court in cases of active transgression or of continued neglect of duty in spite of counsel. It consists of authoritative reproof in the name of Christ, and a call for repentance and reformation of life. The court may also make the people under its oversight publicly aware of the fact of and reason for the rebuke. (See Suggested Form 28.)

c. *Suspension*—This is the temporary exclusion from the privileges of church membership, including participation in the sacraments or from the exercise of ordained office or from both. This becomes necessary when members are guilty of gross sin or of persistent neglect. This censure shall be pronounced by the moderator in constituted court, and in the name of Jesus Christ. The court shall also make the people under its oversight aware publicly of the fact of and reason for the suspension. The lifting of suspension depends on evidence of repentance. (See Suggested Forms 29 and 30.)

d. *Deposition*—This is the disciplinary removal of an ordained officer of the church from his office. It may also be accompanied by suspension from church privileges. This censure shall be imposed for serious offenses in doctrine or in conduct that obviously disqualify the person for exercising office. The sentence shall be pronounced by the moderator in constituted court, and in the name of Jesus Christ. The court shall also make the people under its oversight aware publicly of the fact of and reason for the suspension. When a teaching elder is deposed, the court shall promptly (normally within seven days) notify, in writing, the clerks of all presbyteries of the church and the clerk of Synod. A person suspended or deposed shall, upon his request, be granted a letter of standing, which shall include the grounds upon which the censure was imposed. (See Suggested Form 31.)

e. *Excommunication*—This is the disciplinary exclusion of a member from the visible church. It should be imposed only for such malignant errors or persistent violations of God's law as are grossly inconsistent with the Christian profession of faith or subversive to the doctrine and order of Christ's Church. All possible efforts should first be made to bring the sinner to repentance. Before excommunication is pronounced, a valid attempt should be made by the court to inform the offender of the pending action. Excommunication shall be pronounced by the moderator in constituted court and in the name of Jesus Christ. Prayer shall be offered to God for mercy and repentance. The court shall make the people under its oversight aware publicly of the fact of and reason for the excommunication. Members should then relate to the person as one who is outside the visible church and in need of repentance and salvation. (See Suggested Form 32.)

2. Where appropriate, the court may elect to remove members from church membership without formal censure, as follows:

a. If a member does not attend or show other signs of interest in the church, his session may, after sufficient attempts to reclaim the person, inform him that his actions have caused the session to remove him from church membership. The session should warn the person that outside the visible church there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. A Certificate of Dismissal shall be sent to the person removed. (See Suggested Form 2-A.)

b. If a member requests that he be removed from membership, his request may be granted. If it appears to the session that a member has requested removal merely to avoid church discipline, the request shall not be given effect until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded. If no transfer to another church is planned, the session should warn the person that outside the visible church there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. A Certificate of Dismissal shall be sent to the person removed. (See Suggested Form 2-B.)

c. If a member cannot be located or contacted, he may be removed from the membership of the church.

d. The session shall inform the people under its oversight of the member's removal and the reasons for it.

3. The following shall apply as appropriate:

a. In giving information to the people under its oversight regarding any censure, the court should use discretion in determining how much to reveal to those under its oversight of the details of the case. Only that which is necessary and proper should be stated, and then normally only to the members. The court shall seek to protect the sinner from undue exposure and those under its oversight must not engage in gossip or improper curiosity.

b. The session may discipline a teaching elder as a member of the congregation, but its authority is limited to the censures of admonition and rebuke. Any censures of suspension, deposition, or excommunication shall remain with the presbytery or the court holding his credentials.

c. In the case of imposition or removal of discipline of a teaching elder by a presbytery or higher court, the acting court shall advise each presbytery of the action taken. Each presbytery shall then advise its sessions as appropriate.

d. In the case of officers or members who have been disciplined, pastoral care should be given to the innocent family members and other parties in the case.

e. Because the multiplication of processes tends to weaken the authority of discipline the court shall not use formal processes for slight offenses.

Scripture: 1 Thess. 5:14; Titus 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6; Matt. 18:17-18; John 20:23; 1 John 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:10; Matt. 19:22.

CHAPTER 5

Rights of Appeal

The Presbyterian form of government provides for a gradation of courts whereby the lower is answerable to the higher. A decision of the lower court is subject to review and correction by a higher court. Any member of the church may carry his case through the lower courts even to the highest court for adjudication. For sufficient reasons the higher court may decline to act. The action of a lower court may be brought under the jurisdiction of a higher court by *Review of the Records, Complaint, Reference,* or *Appeal*. (See section II, chap. 4, as well as the *Directory for Church Government*, chap. 6, par. 15 on page D-33.)

Scripture: Ex. 18:22; Acts 15:2; Acts 25:10-12; 2 Cor. 13:1.

CHAPTER 6

Repentance, Forgiveness, and Restoration after Censure

1. At any time, a person under censure may approach the church by coming before the censuring court to confess his sin, repent, and ask for forgiveness and for the lifting of censure.

2. When the court sees satisfactory evidence of true repentance, it shall restore the person with the same solemnity and publicity that attended the imposition of the censure, and lead its members in granting its forgiveness. Such repentance would include satisfactory attempts at reconciliation and restitution to any parties sinned against. (Suggested Form 33)

3. Restoration of an excommunicated member shall include a renewal of his vows of church membership.

4. In the case of suspension from ordained office, when there is full restoration, the court shall lift the censure and restore the person to the former place on the local deacon board or session. When the court believes it is justified, it may impose a period of probation before there is full restoration to any office. Restoration of a teaching elder from suspension, deposition, or excommunication is under the jurisdiction of presbytery.

5. In the case of deposition from ordained office, a court may lift the censure and, after it has been lifted, must restore ordination by laying on of hands. The ruling elder

or deacon is then eligible for reelection to service, or the teaching elder for a call.

6. Restoration of a person under censure should be made only by the court that imposed the sentence or with its advice and consent.

7. The entire disciplinary process should be carried out with reverence, prayer, gentleness, carefulness, love, fairness, humility, and perseverance by those who will someday give an account to God for their work.

Scripture: 2 Cor. 2:5-11; Gal. 6:1-5; 1 Tim. 5:1-2, 19-22; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

SECTION II: SPECIAL DISCIPLINARY PROCESS OF FORMAL TRIAL

INTRODUCTION

Please read Section I before using Section II.
Section II is only to be used in case of a formal trial.

CHAPTER 1

Parties and Jurisdiction

Parties to the Case

1. The injured party should be the accuser in private or personal offenses. Formal process shall not be instituted unless evidence is presented that the means of reconciliation referred to above (section I, chap. 2) have been tried. Before such process is instituted, it is proper for the court to seek a solution of the case without formal trial.

2. Any member in good standing in the church may press charges against any other member before the court to whose jurisdiction he himself belongs. No person can be compelled to become an accuser. No charge shall be received without investigation from any one who is not of good character, or is mentally deficient, nor shall any be accepted at any time from one who manifests malice. Any accuser may be subject to censure, if the charges prove false or if they prove to have been made through malice.

3. A church court must not permit discipline to fail in its purpose for lack of an accuser. If an offense is public, or if a private offense grows into a public scandal, and an individual is unwilling to act as accuser, the court itself must institute proceedings by appointing a special prosecutor to pursue the case. A special prosecutor may be a member(s) of the court, a lower court, or the congregation.

4. A court may begin process on the ground of public report (fama clamosa) by appointing a special prosecutor. This public report is different from an idle rumor in that it is widespread, persistent, commonly known, and has the appearance of credibility. The charge will be stated in more general terms, but will conform in all other respects to the rule for a specific accusation (see below in chap. 2, par. 1). To avoid any process on the grounds of gossip, a committee may be first appointed to investigate the rumors. A person who considers himself slandered may request an investigation. The court may exercise its discretion in granting or refusing the request.

Jurisdiction

5. The presbytery has original jurisdiction in relation to suspension, deposition,

or excommunication of teaching elders; the session in relation to all others. A higher court may direct a lower court to begin process; or the higher court may begin process or appoint a commission to do so, if the lower court has neglected or refused to begin process, or is otherwise incapable of proper action.

6. If a member of a congregation living within the bounds of another congregation is accused of a censurable offense, the session of the congregation where he resides shall refer the case to the session of his own congregation. A presbytery may take similar action in the case of a teaching elder who resides within its bounds, but is a member of another presbytery. Or the court to which a member or teaching elder belongs may request and authorize the court in whose bounds he resides to try the case. When a congregation is disorganized, a case pending before its session comes under the jurisdiction of presbytery. If a presbytery is disorganized, a case pending before it comes under the jurisdiction of Synod.

Special Provisions

7. No one who serves as a party to or counsel or special prosecutor in a case may participate in the judgment of that case.

8. No person who has been tried and acquitted, or convicted, may be subjected to another trial or further disciplinary action for the same offense.*

**chap. 3, par. 13, last sentence.*

9. The court may look to these section II provisions for guidance in handling section I disciplinary actions. However, the foregoing paragraphs 7 and 8 of these Special Provisions shall apply to any disciplinary action finalized under section I.

CHAPTER 2

Instituting Judicial Process

1. In order to institute a formal judicial process, the accuser or the special prosecutor shall sign and submit a charge in writing (Suggested Form 21). It shall name the specific offense, the time, place and circumstances of its commission. It shall also provide a list of the witnesses and of all papers to be offered in evidence.

2. The signers of the charge shall be responsible for prosecuting the case. If the court judges the alleged offense censurable, and the proposed evidence sufficient to warrant a trial, and is satisfied that Christ's rule (Matt. 18:15-16) has been followed, it shall put the charge or charges with these details into the form of a written accusation (Suggested Form 22).* It is also signed by the moderator and clerk of the issuing court.

**See also section II, chap. 3, par. 5.*

3. At the meeting in which the accusation is issued no further steps shall be taken, except to fix the time and place of the trial and to summon all who are concerned to appear. There shall be no unnecessary delay in hearing a case, but both parties shall have sufficient time for preparation. At least ten days shall pass between the issuing of the accusation and the date of the trial, except by consent of all concerned. If additional witnesses or new evidence are discovered, the accused shall be informed and further time given him or her to prepare a defense.

4. An official copy of the accusation shall be placed in the hands of the accused, left at his residence, or delivered by certified mail, accompanied by a summons, signed by the moderator and clerk, to appear and answer to the accusation. If the first summons is not obeyed, the court shall issue another, allowing such extension of time as it deems proper, and serving notice that if the individual does not appear it will proceed in his absence. Even though the accused declares that he or she will not obey the first summons, the court shall issue a second summons. (See Suggested Form 23.)

5. The summons may be served by any person appointed by the court, who shall certify to the court that he has performed his duty, or it may be sent by certified mail. If the accused does not reply, the court shall proceed to try the case in his absence.

6. The clerk of the court shall issue a summons to appear to each of the witnesses named by either the prosecutor or the accused. Only members of the church can be summoned to appear, and these only by the court to which they are subject.* Other persons may be requested to appear. Members who do not obey summonses to appear are liable to censure for contempt of court. (See Suggested Form 24.)

**See section II, chap. 3, par. 8.*

7. A church court is obliged to afford the accused every opportunity to protect his or her good name, and under all circumstances to preserve the right of each individual accused to be able to cross-examine witnesses and to respond to the accuser or special prosecutor, preferably in-person. If appearing in-person is not reasonably feasible, the use of technologies such as videoconferencing for cross-examination and for responding to the accuser or prosecutor may be permitted. In these circumstances, the court should consider that the accused was not in the physical presence of the accuser or prosecutor

8. If appearing in-person is not reasonably feasible the trial court may instead arrange for such witnesses to join the trial via technologies such as videoconferencing and give testimony. In either case, when determining the value of such testimony, the court should consider that the witnesses were not in the physical presence of the accused, and in the case of a certified copy, that no one had opportunity for cross-examination

9. In cases when it is not reasonably feasible for all parties of a trial to be physically

present in the same location, the trial court should give careful consideration to how severely a lack of physical presence would affect the trial proceedings. The court should exercise pastoral care in allowing alternate arrangements (e.g., videoconferencing) and seek to arrange a process that is as fair and agreeable to both the accused and the accuser as possible. If alternate arrangements are allowed, the trial court should also provide direction on how best to limit any detrimental effect on the arrangements.

10. The court may require the accused to refrain from the exercise of communicant privileges, or from the exercise of office, or from both, until final action in the case has been taken, provided there is no unnecessary delay in its prosecution.

CHAPTER 3

The Trial of the Case

1. In conducting a trial, a record of all proceedings shall be carefully kept by any accurate and dependable method. It shall include, in particular, the charges and accusations, the plea and the judgment, together with the testimony of the witnesses. A complete, authenticated copy of the entire record shall be available for reference to a higher court, if desired. The parties shall be allowed copies at their own expense.

2. When the court has been constituted, the moderator shall inquire if the accusation has been served, and the witnesses summoned; if the parties are present or represented by counsel; and if the witnesses or their recorded testimony are present. Before proceeding with the trial, the moderator shall remind the members of the court of the solemn duty in which they are about to engage, and of their responsibilities as judges in the Lord's house, and shall enjoin them to dismiss from their minds all prejudice or personal considerations, and to concern themselves for the spiritual welfare of the accused and of the church. He shall explain the nature and seriousness of the charge, and set forth the ends of discipline. He shall make clear the rights and duties of the accused, and assure him a fair and impartial trial. At any stage of the proceedings the court may decide by a two-thirds vote to exclude observers, often called "executive session."

3. Each of the parties shall be entitled to appear and to be represented by counsel. No person shall be permitted to act as counsel who is not a member of the church and subject to the jurisdiction of its courts. This does not preclude the parties from seeking legal advice privately. No one who serves as a party to or counsel or special prosecutor in a case may participate in the judgment of that case.

4. The accused may offer objections to proceeding with the trial on the grounds that there have been gross irregularities, that the court has no jurisdiction, or that the offense charged, if proved, is not censurable. The court shall hear his objections, but he shall not

be permitted to argue against the principles of the church. If any of these objections prove to be well founded, the court must dismiss the case, or permit amendments to the charge without changing its nature. The accused may challenge the right of any member of the court to sit in judgment of the case. If the challenge is sustained and there is no longer a quorum, the case shall be referred to a higher court.

5. If the objections are overruled, the moderator shall call upon the accused to answer to the charges, "guilty," or "not guilty." If he plead "guilty," the court shall determine the degree of censure to be imposed. If he plead "not guilty," or declines to answer, the court shall proceed with the trial. In any case, his plea, or failure to answer, shall be entered on the record. If necessary to proceed with trial, the witnesses of the prosecution shall be called, then those of the defense. Each party shall have the right to cross-examine the witnesses of the other party. The witnesses shall be examined in the presence of the accused, unless he has failed to appear. After all the original testimony has been heard, rebuttal testimony may be introduced by either party; but no new evidence shall be admitted except by permission of the court and when the accused has been furnished with the names of witnesses and the purport of the evidence.

6. The examination of the witnesses shall be conducted through the moderator. Either party may object to the course pursued in the examination, or to a particular question. If the moderator overrules the objection, an appeal may be taken to the court; if his ruling be not sustained, this fact, together with the objection, shall be entered in the record. The court itself, or either of the parties, may require the witnesses to be sworn. The oath shall be administered by the moderator. All present shall stand; the witness shall raise his right hand while taking the oath.*

**For the form of oath, see Suggested Form 25.*

7. Either party may question the character or the competency of any witness, and the court must hear his objections, and judge as to their validity. If the objections be sustained, the witness is to be dismissed. Mental deficiency, immaturity, infamy of character, and malice, are grounds upon which the testimony of a witness may be challenged. The degree of any of these disqualifications may not be sufficient to prevent a witness from testifying, but the members of the court must use their judgment in determining the value of such testimony.

8. A witness is under obligation to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so far as it pertains to the case in hand. He may not be compelled to answer if in so doing he would incriminate himself, but he must state his reason. The question, his refusal to answer, and the reason for his refusal shall all be entered on the record. It is the duty of every member of the court to make known to the court as a witness everything he may directly know concerning the case that would help in reaching a righteous decision.

9. A witness may at any time during the progress of the trial amend his testimony by a postscript, duly recorded. Statements of deceased persons, who would have been credible witnesses, and documentary evidence, whether written or printed, must be duly authenticated before being admitted. Ordinarily it should be certified by affidavit, witnessed by a lawfully appointed official. Extracts from the minutes of other judicatories are authenticated by the signature of the clerk. Circumstantial evidence cannot be regarded as conclusive. A husband or wife shall not be compelled, but may be permitted, to bear testimony when the other is on trial.

10. The accused may be permitted to testify in his own behalf. In extreme cases, where proof is wanting, an oath of purgation may be admitted, but not urged.* At the request of either party, witnesses to be afterward examined, unless members of the court, shall be removed during the examination of earlier witnesses.

**Form 34.*

11. After all the evidence has been presented, closing statements shall be heard. The accused shall be heard first and then the prosecutor, but neither shall go beyond the record or introduce new matter. The court shall then decide whether either party shall be further heard.

12. A motion "that the parties be removed" is next in order. By this they are excluded from further participation in the proceedings, unless recalled by the court to clear up some doubtful point in their testimony. The court may withdraw from the room or require the withdrawal of the parties, witnesses, and all other persons not members of the court. If either party objects, no member of the court who has not been present during the whole trial shall be allowed to vote in the final decision. For this reason an accurate record of attendance shall be kept.

13. The court shall begin its deliberation with prayer for Divine guidance in weighing the evidence and in reaching a just decision. The burden of proof shall rest upon the prosecution. The accusation may contain a number of counts or specifications, and, if so, the vote shall be taken on each count separately. The accused cannot be convicted of any count on the testimony of a single witness. If adjudged guilty on any or all counts, the court shall fix the degree of censure to be administered. (Suggested Form 26A) If the legal evidence does not warrant conviction, the decision should be "not guilty." (Suggested Form 26B) When the court has reached its decision, the parties should be recalled and the result announced. Even after censure has been imposed, if new evidence in behalf of the one adjudged guilty is discovered, which seems to be of sufficient significance, the court of original jurisdiction may reopen the case.

CHAPTER 4

Removal of a Case from a Lower to a Higher Court

1. The Presbyterian form of government provides for a gradation of courts whereby the lower is answerable to the higher. A decision of the lower court is subject to review and correction by a higher court. Any member of the church may carry his or her case through the lower courts even to the highest court for adjudication. For sufficient reasons the higher court may decline to act. The action of an inferior court may be brought under the judgment of a higher court by Review of the Records, Complaint, Reference, or Appeal.

Review of the Records

2. Lower courts shall submit their records once each year for review by the next higher court. If such review reveals a neglect of duty in dealing with censurable offenses, the higher court shall call attention to the neglect, and may direct the lower court to perform its duty. If a review of the minutes reveals any departure from the law and order of the church or any obvious injustice done to any member, the higher court may direct the lower to make the needed correction. The reviewing court may not reverse a judicial decision until the case has been brought before it by complaint or appeal.

Complaint

3. A complaint is a written statement made to a higher court by one or more persons aggrieved by an action of a lower court. It may be made by the parties concerned, by members of the court, or by any interested persons.* The complainant shall give notice to the lower court within 30 days. He shall file his complaint, together with the reasons therefor, with the moderator and clerk of the lower court. He shall then file the same with the higher court at its next regular meeting or at a time fixed by that court. If the complainant does not appear in person or by counsel to prosecute his case, the action of the lower court shall stand, unless such absence is shown to be unavoidable.

**See Directory for Church Government, chap. 8, par. 11.*

4. The lower court shall transmit to the higher all records and papers pertaining to the case. If this is not attended to, the higher court may reprove the lower for its negligence and postpone the hearing until these documents have been received. The lower court is the defendant in the case, and shall be represented by one or more of its members or other persons appointed for this purpose. No one who is a party or has served as counsel to the complainant(s), or who is a member of the lower court whose action is under review, shall propose or second motions or vote in any decisions pertaining to the case. The complainant(s) and defendant(s) may challenge the right of any member of the

higher court to sit in judgment of the complaint, subject to the judgment of the court.

5. If a complaint is sustained, the higher court may censure the lower court, and may annul in whole or in part the action complained of, and instruct the lower court as to further proceedings. The sustaining of a complaint, however, does not necessarily reverse the decision. A member of the court disagreeing with any action, but not wishing to make a complaint, may register his dissent and request that it be recorded in the minutes. His request must be complied with, provided it is expressed briefly and in respectful language.

6. A court may prosecute a complaint against a court of equal rank with the next higher court under the same general rules as govern the prosecution of complaints against individuals.

Reference

7. A lower court dealing with a judicial case may either without instituting process or at any stage of the proceedings refer it to the higher court for advice or instructions on any matters that may be involved. Or it may refer the whole case to the higher court for adjudication. All references shall be in writing, and accompanied by the records and papers pertaining to the case. It shall be the duty of the clerk of the lower court to transmit these to the higher court, and to notify the parties of the time and place set for the hearing.

8. A lower court must not take advantage of the privilege of reference to relieve itself of a disagreeable responsibility. Under ordinary circumstances it should handle all cases that come properly under its jurisdiction. But it may feel itself incompetent to deal with an important case because of the fewness of its members, or because of its inability to reach a decided opinion, or because members of the court are related to the parties involved, or because the nature of the case makes it unwise to conduct it in the local community, or because the law in the case is indefinite, or because the decision would tend to establish a precedent which would affect the church at large. Any one of these reasons, if established, would justify the lower court in referring a case.

9. The members of the lower court who are members of the higher may participate in the hearing and decision of a case sent up by reference. It is within the province of the higher court to give or refuse advice, to take over the trial of the case, or to return it to the lower court with or without instructions.

Appeal

10. An appeal is the removal to a higher court of a case already decided by a lower court.

None but parties can appeal. They may appeal on the following grounds: irregularity in the proceedings; injustice or undue severity in the censure imposed; manifest prejudice or unfairness to the party on trial; admission of improper testimony or refusal to hear testimony that is important; or undue haste in reaching a decision before all the testimony has been heard.

11. Written notice of an intent to appeal and a summary statement of the reasons must be filed with the clerk of the court appealed from within thirty (30) days after the accused is informed of the action, and the clerk shall transmit the same, with the necessary records and papers, to the clerk of the higher court. The higher court, upon receiving notice of the intent to appeal, shall make available an appropriate advisor from among the members of the court for the appellant. At least sixty (60) days shall be given for preparing the appeal and transmitting it to the clerk of the higher court, along with a full statement of reasons for the appeal and all relevant documents. In order for members of the higher court to have time to read and process the appeal, a period of at least thirty (30) days must elapse between the court's receiving the appeal and the meeting where it is to be adjudicated. Parties are entitled to such extracts from the minutes as may be necessary in preparing an appeal. The clerk of the court shall furnish such extracts, but, if they are large, the court may request the party demanding them to pay the necessary expense.

12. The notice of appeal shall serve to restrain the lower court from administering the censures of admonition or rebuke until the case has been determined by the higher court, unless the appellant shall fail to prosecute the appeal. A sentence of suspension from the privileges of the church, or of deposition from office, or of excommunication, shall be in force until the appeal has been decided. No one who is a party or has served as counsel to the appellant(s), or who is a member of the lower court whose action is being appealed, shall propose or second motions or vote in any decisions pertaining to the case. The appellant(s) and members of the lower court may challenge the right of any member of the higher court to sit in judgment of the appeal, subject to the judgment of the court.

13. An appeal shall be prosecuted by the appellant in person, unless, for reasons satisfactory to the court, he cannot be present. In this case he may request his advisor to act on his behalf. If an appellant fails to prosecute his appeal at the next meeting of the higher court, or at such time as the court may designate, the decision of the lower court shall stand. He may, however, appear at a later meeting, due notice having been given to the court from which he appealed, and present proof that his failure to appear was due to unavoidable circumstances. If the court is satisfied, it may proceed at once to hear the appeal, or appoint a later date for the hearing.

14. A higher court, when considering an appeal, shall inquire whether due notice has been given the lower court, and whether the records and papers pertaining to the case

are present. If these requirements are met, the court shall proceed as follows:

a. The clerk shall read the sentence appealed from.

b. He shall read the appeal and the reasons assigned by the appellant, which must be the same as those presented to the lower court.

c. The records and papers in the case shall be read. If the members of the court judge that they have had sufficient opportunity to review the record and papers, the court may waive the reading of the record. Either party may request the reading of specific portions of the record important to the case if the reading of the full record is waived.

d. The answer of the lower court to the reasons of appeal shall be read, if such have been submitted.

e. The parties shall be heard, the appellant having the opening and closing speeches. He shall not be permitted to introduce any new arguments in his closing speech, but confine himself to a summary of his appeal and a rebuttal of the argument presented by the other side.

f. Opportunity shall be given for discussion of the case by the members of the court.

g. The vote shall be taken on sustaining or not sustaining the appeal, each specification of error being voted on separately.

15. The decision of the higher court must be based solely on the records of the lower court. The higher court may confirm, or reverse, in whole or in part, the decision of the lower court. If the appeal is sustained, the judgment of the lower court is reversed. If an appeal is not sustained, the judgment of the lower court is affirmed. If the lower court has not followed the prescribed order in the conduct of the case, the higher court may, at its discretion, return the whole case to the lower for a new trial. If the decision of the lower court appears unjust and unwarranted, the higher court may itself try the case. A full record shall be kept of all the proceedings with the reasons for each decision.

The Directory of Public Worship

Adopted 2010

Preamble

The purpose of this directory is to guide the worship of the church according to the Scriptures as summarized in the standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.

Chapter 1
The Nature of Worship

1. God made man in His image to glorify and enjoy Him. In the public worship of the church, the people of God, redeemed by Christ, glorify and enjoy the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as He reveals Himself in His Word.

2. The main purpose of worship is to bring glory to the triune God, particularly for His work of redemption through Jesus Christ. However, God, in His benevolence, also invites and commands His people to draw near to Him to experience all the benefits of their redemption, to declare their dependence on Him, to enjoy His appointed means of grace, to encourage one another, to celebrate their union with Jesus Christ and to be transformed, more and more, into His image.

3. In the corporate worship of the church the triune God meets with His people in accordance with the terms of the Covenant of Grace. In worship the church remembers God's covenant of grace and renews her commitment to her Lord. Worship involves intimate communion between God and His redeemed people. In worship God initiates a covenantal dialogue with His people in which He calls them to worship, declares to them His great acts of creation and redemption, assures them of the efficacy of His promises, and seals His promises to them by means of sacraments. In response to God's initiative, the people of God offer prayers of confession, petition, and thanksgiving, sing Psalms with grace in their hearts, receive God's word as it is both read and preached, make offerings to Him and seal their personal and corpo-

rate commitment to Him through the sacraments.

4. Because worship involves drawing near to the living and holy God, God's people should enter public worship prepared for communion with Him. In addition, pastors and elders should lead the congregation in public worship in a manner commensurate with the joy, dignity, solemnity and glory of such a holy occasion. All of God's people should enter His presence with both reverence and awe.

5. Jesus Christ is the sole mediator of the Covenant of Grace and the only mediator between God and man. Therefore, the worship of God's people is acceptable to God only as it is offered in Christ's name and through humble reliance on His High Priestly intercession and service.

6. Jesus Christ, as our Prophet, Priest and King, has revealed to His people how to worship Him in a pleasing manner. Therefore, "the acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by Himself and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshiped 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 Scriptures" (WCF 21:1).

7. In His Word, God has specially appointed one day in seven, the Sabbath day, for His people to assemble for the purpose of public corporate worship. Since the resurrection of our Lord, the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, has been set aside as the Christian Sabbath, to be kept holy as the day for the church's worship and for rest from regular work.

8. Given the high calling and privilege of public worship, the people of God should prepare their hearts and come to worship with a joyous willingness, not absenting themselves through indifference or because of family activities or other Christian meetings. In normal circumstances, neither personal devotions nor family worship are to be regarded as proper substitutes for public worship. In addition to attending the scheduled services of public worship, the Lord's Day may be fruitfully observed through activities such as: personal Bible reading and study, meditation and prayer, discussion of the sermon, the enjoyment of physical rest, acts of mercy, spiritual fellowship, hospitality, instructing and catechizing the children and visiting the sick.

Chapter 2
The Practice of Worship

1. The Scriptures do not prescribe a fixed order of worship, but so that all things may be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40), it is desirable that the exercises of worship be conducted in a biblical, thoughtful, dignified, and edifying manner. The assembled congregation meets in God's presence as His covenant people: They confess their sins, hear His promises of forgiveness and acceptance, and listen to the righteous requirements of His Word. The whole is a dialogue between God and His people. The order and content of the service should reflect this dialogue that occurs on the basis of the Covenant of Grace. The following order of service is suggested, although it may be varied:

Call to Worship, and Greeting

Prayer of Adoration
Psalm
Baptism, when administered
Old Testament Reading
Psalm, or Prayer of Confession
New Testament Reading
Prayer of Intercession
Scripture Text for Sermon
Sermon
Prayer
Presentation of Tithes and Offerings
Lord's Supper, when administered:
Words of Institution
Warning and Invitation
Celebration of the Lord's Supper
Psalm
Benediction

2. The scriptural elements of ordinary public worship are prayer, the singing of Psalms, the reading, preaching, and hearing of the Word of God, the presentation of tithes and offerings, and the celebration of the sacraments. To these may be added the special ordinances of fasting, thanksgiving, taking of oaths and vows, and public covenanting. Each part of the service should be briefly explained at regular intervals in contemporary terms, so as to make its purpose clear to all present. Announcements should be made prior to or after the service and kept to a minimum so as not to intrude upon the worship of God.

3. The local session is responsible for the immediate oversight of public worship. Ordinarily the pastor takes the leadership role in planning and conducting the worship service. Ruling elders may call the congregation to worship and give the greeting, lead the congregation in prayer, introduce the Psalms to be sung, and read the Scripture. On occasion a ruling elder may preach the Word and pronounce the benediction, but he may not administer the sacraments except under extraordinary circumstances (DCG 3:I:C:4–6). On occasion a student under care may lead part of the service.

Call to Worship, Greeting, and Prayer of Adoration

4. An elder should call the congregation to worship using a suitable scriptural text such as those that declare the majesty of God's holy name, the praise of His perfections, or the goodness of His works of creation and redemption. He should also greet God's people, perhaps using an apostolic salutation such as "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

5. The elder should then offer a prayer of adoration. It may include the following:

a. Reverent acknowledgement of the incomprehensible greatness, goodness, and majesty of the Lord, in whose presence the congrega-

tion is gathered.
b. Solemn confession of our unworthiness by nature to approach Him and our inability of ourselves to worship Him.
c. Humble seeking of His pardon, assistance, and acceptance in the worship service.
d. Grateful blessing of Him for the unspeakable gift of His Son Jesus, the only Savior of sinners, and the only mediator between God and man.
e. Joyful claiming of the promises to the saints of His covenant of grace.
f. Expectant seeking of His blessing upon the praise, prayer, and proclamation of the Word that day.

6. The whole congregation should assemble promptly, that all may be present and may join together for the entire worship service. As the service begins, each one should give undivided attention to the worship of God. The worshipers should refrain from any behavior that is disruptive or is a hindrance to their own faithful service to the Lord. Unless necessary, none should depart until after the benediction.

The Singing of Praise

7. The New Covenant is like a marriage bond between God and His people. Their meeting each week properly brings joy and delight. So the saints sing Psalms to God.

8. The heartfelt singing of praise is an element of public worship. The Psalms of the Bible, because of positive biblical warrant, their inherent excellence, and their divine inspiration, are to be sung in the public worship of God, to the exclusion of all songs or hymns of human composition. They are to be sung without the accompaniment of instruments, since these are not authorized for New Testament worship. For the sake of unity, the Psalm versions used in the praise of God should ordinarily be those approved by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Psalms, or portions of Psalms, should be chosen for the appropriateness of their content within a particular service of worship. If only a portion of a Psalm is sung, careful attention must be given to the larger context. Congregations should not fall into the habit of using only certain favorite Psalms, and sessions should consider a plan of singing systematically through the Book of Psalms.

9. The people of God are to sing thoughtfully, reverently, and enthusiastically, with grace in the heart. Careful attention should be paid to the music and to the leading of the precentor, that the praise might resound with a beauty reflective of the glory of God and His holiness. Those chosen to be precentors should have the marks of Christian maturity and the gifts to perform this function. They should lead the singing in a simple, orderly, and dignified manner. They should not interject interpretations or comments on the content of the Psalms sung. One of the fruits of the Reformation was the restoration of the biblical practice of congregational singing. A choir may be formed to help lead the praise, but singing must not be left to the choir. Congregational

singing ought always to be the norm.

10. The Psalms have a depth of meaning and beauty that will repay the most careful study. It is vitally important that the congregation understand what is sung. Therefore, it is helpful for the elders to make brief comments on the Psalms sung. It is particularly helpful if one of the Psalms is selected for a more substantial, succinct explanation by an elder before it is sung. Attention should be given to how the Psalm reveals the work of Christ and the blessings of the New Covenant.

Prayer

11. Prayer is an element of public worship in which the saints draw near to the throne of grace. Prayer is to be offered boldly in the name of Jesus Christ, with the utmost reverence in thought, language, and manner, with the deep humility appropriate to forgiven sinners approaching the presence of the Holy God, and with the joy of children accepted by a loving father. Although led by an elder, it becomes the prayer of the whole assembly as the Lord's people participate by giving earnest attention to the content of the prayer and adding, by an audible or inaudible "Amen," their enthusiastic concurrence with its petitions.

12. Prayers in a worship service will include adoration, thanksgiving, confession of sin, and intercession. That portion of intercessory prayer focusing on confession of sin may be offered separately, following a reading of God's Law and followed by an assurance of pardon.

13. The prayer of intercession should be comprehensive without being excessively prolonged. It should be carefully planned. It may include the following:

a. Adoration of the majesty of God, as the giver of life and of every good and perfect gift, and, most especially, of the gift of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners.

b. Confession of our great sinfulness, because of both original sin (the human condition by nature) and actual sin (our actual transgressions of God's will), of the justice of God's condemnation of sinners, and of our unworthiness of the least of His blessings.

c. Thanksgiving for the provision of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Mediator who gave His life as the atoning sacrifice for sin and for the sovereign grace by which He has sought and saved His people, and continues, by the gospel, to call all people everywhere to repent and believe in Him that they might have eternal life.

d. Requesting the work of His Spirit: to pour God's love into our hearts, seal to us, by the Spirit of adoption, the full assurance of our pardon and reconciliation, comfort those who mourn, speak peace to the wounded and troubled spirit, and bind up the broken-hearted; to convert sinners, opening their eyes, convicting their consciences, and turning them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they also may receive forgiveness of sin, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus; and to sanctify us, putting to death the sin that remains in us, enlivening

our souls with the life of God in Christ, and giving us grace to equip us for our life and witness before God and in the world, strength against temptations, the godly use of both blessings and trials, and perseverance in the faith throughout our lives.

e. Intercession for the spread of the gospel and the kingdom of Christ to all the nations of the world: for the conversion of Jews and Gentiles, and the hastening of the second coming of our Lord; for the flourishing of the church at home and abroad; for the relief from oppression of persecuted believers; and for civil governments, that they would rule with justice in the fear of the Lord.

f. Specific petitions for the saints and the community: for the sick and distressed; for the challenges of the coming week; and for the growth of the fellowship and the reaching of the lost.

g. Blessing the Lord for the Lord's Day and the joy and privilege of gathering for worship; and praying for the demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the Word, to the end that Christ may be so formed in us, and live in us, that all our thoughts might be brought into captivity to obey Christ, and our hearts established in every good word and work forever.

14. The prayer after the sermon gives thanks to God for His goodness toward His saints, and asks that He impress the truth on the hearts of all present and accept graciously the worship that has been offered.

15. The Scriptures do not explicitly command particular postures in prayer. They do give the examples of kneeling and standing as postures that are suitable signs of reverence and devotion.

16. Congregations may pray together the Lord's Prayer, which is not only a pattern of prayer but also a most comprehensive prayer.

Reading the Scriptures

17. The reading of the Word of God is an element of worship and a primary means appointed by God for the building up of His people. In it we acknowledge our dependence upon the Lord and our submission to Him. The reading is to be led by an elder as God's servant. Through it God speaks directly to the congregation.

18. The reading of Scripture in worship involves the recounting of the history by which God brought His people to Himself. The giving of the Law under the Old Covenant began by recounting God's saving of Israel: "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Ex. 20:1-2). Likewise, under the New Covenant, God's saving acts in Christ are proclaimed in the gospel. God in Christ has vanquished the enemies of His people: the power of sin, Satan, and the last enemy, death itself (Col. 1:13-14).

19. All the canonical books of the Old and New Testament (but none of those which are commonly called Apocrypha) shall be publicly read in the language of the people, from a sound translation, distinctly, so that everyone may hear and understand. Scripture may also be read responsively or in uni-

son.

20. The length of the passages to be read is left to the wisdom of the elder. It is commendable to read a passage from each Testament in the service. This could be done in a consecutive manner, so as to read the whole of Scripture in the course of time. Some passages may be read more frequently, such as the Law and scriptural promises of pardon and acceptance. One of the passages may be the text for the sermon.

Preaching the Word of God

21. The preaching of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, is central to the work of the ministry. It should be done in such a way that the workman need not be ashamed, but may save both himself and those who hear him (I Tim. 4:16). The one who ministers the Word is to prepare for the preaching by careful study of the Scriptures and prayer. He should seek the aid of the Holy Spirit that he may declare the whole counsel of God. He should read widely and keep abreast of the scholarship and the social and doctrinal issues of the times. His messages should be adapted to the congregation, both in content and delivery.

22. The sermon is an exposition and application of Scripture. The continuous exposition of a book or a section of a book is an excellent method of preaching. However, topical messages are also appropriate to address the needs of the congregation and issues of the culture. The preacher should interpret Scripture in the context of redemptive history and the unfolding of God's plan of salvation. Faithful preaching must proclaim the explicit teaching of the Bible, the Word of God written, and proclaim Christ, the Word of God incarnate.

23. The servant of Christ is to preach in this manner:

a. Diligently, not doing the work of the Lord negligently.

b. Plainly, so that all ages and abilities may understand; delivering the truth not in the enticing words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect (I Cor. 2:4; 1:17); also abstaining from an unprofitable use of unknown languages, strange phrases, and cadences of sounds or words; and sparingly citing quotations from ecclesiastical or other human writers, ancient or modern, however elegant.

c. Faithfully, for the honor of Christ and for the conversion, edification, and salvation of the people, and not for his own gain or glory; keeping nothing back that may promote these goals, giving to each what is needed, and having impartial respect to everyone, without neglecting the most lowly, or sparing the most influential, in their sins.

d. Wisely, framing all his teaching, exhortations, and especially his reproofs, in such a manner as may be most likely to be effective; showing all due respect to each one's person and place, and not giving way to his personal animosities or prejudices.

e. Solemnly, as appropriate to the Word of God; avoiding any gestures, tone of voice, and expressions that would give opportunity for

people to despise him and his ministry.
f. Lovingly, that the saints may see his ministry springing from a genuine zeal for the Lord and a deep desire to do them good.
g. As taught by God, and convinced in his own heart, that all that he teaches is the truth of Christ; living before the congregation as an example to them; earnestly, both in private and public, recommending his labors to the blessing of God, and watchfully looking to himself, and to the flock of which the Lord has made him an overseer.

In this way, the truth will be faithfully preserved, many people will be converted to Christ and built up in the Christian faith and life, and he himself will receive many encouragements in his ministry in this life, and afterward a crown of glory in the world to come.

24. The worshipers participate in the preaching of the Word as they listen with "diligence, preparation, and prayer, receive it with faith and love, lay it up in [their] hearts, and practice it in [their] lives" (*WSC* Q. 90).

The Offering

25. The presentation of tithes and offerings is warranted as part of worship. We are commanded to set aside our offerings on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1-2). God calls His people to return a portion of their substance to Him cheerfully, systematically, and as He has prospered them. The receiving of the offering may be preceded or followed by a brief prayer that joyfully gives thanks for God's provision and commits the gifts to the work of Christ's kingdom and the blessing of the Lord.

The Benediction

26. Public worship should be concluded with a solemn blessing upon the saints. Here are two common forms:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. (II Cor. 13:14)

and,

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace. (Num. 6:24–26).

Scripture supplies other suitable benedictions (for example: II Thes. 3:16, Eph. 6:23–24, Heb. 13:20–21).

27. The benediction is a pronouncement, not a prayer of adjournment, and should never become a mere formality for dismissing the congregation. The bestowing of the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is a high and holy privilege. The congregation should wait quietly and reverently to receive the benediction.

28. The Lord has commanded us to remember one day in seven, the Lord's Day, and to delight in it. We are to keep the whole of the day holy, by resting from our regular and all unnecessary work, by remembering God's works of Creation and Redemption, by anticipating our eternal rest in Christ, and by showing mercy to those in need.

29. The session should carefully consider how to lead the church in observing the day. Since the circumstances of each congregation vary, the session should carefully consider whether a second meeting should be held, and whether it should be a public worship service or some other gathering for fellowship and edification, always considering the glory of God and the good of the congregation.

Chapter 3
The Administration of the Sacraments

1. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, in which symbols and actions signify Christ and the benefits of the covenant of grace. Sacraments become means of grace and seals of the benefits of the covenant only by the blessing of Christ and the working of His Spirit in those who by faith receive them.

2. The sacraments of the New Covenant ordained by Christ are two: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are to be administered according to Christ's appointment, by pastors or by ruling elders authorized by the presbytery to meet special circumstances. They are ordinarily to be administered at a time when the congregation assembles for worship at the call of the elders. In the case of those unable to attend public worship, the sacraments may be administered apart from a regular worship service, but in such cases the congregation must be represented by other members in addition to the pastor, and there should be a brief service of worship.

Baptism

3. Baptism marks participation in the visible church, and is the sacramental sign and seal of union with Christ, of newness of life in Him, and of cleansing from sin through His blood. It is not to be repeated. The element in Baptism is water, which, having been set apart by prayer for sacramental use, is applied by sprinkling or pouring. Immersion, while not required as the mode of Baptism, is also valid.

4. Under the oversight of the Session, Baptism is to be administered to those who make a credible profession of faith in Christ, and to their children. The Baptism of adults must follow their public profession of faith and assent to the Covenant of Communicant Membership. When a covenant child is born, the session should encourage the parents to arrange for the child's Baptism as soon as it is convenient. The elders should use this occasion to speak with the parents about their own Christian walk, and to encourage them to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5. In the Baptism, the pastor should follow substantially the pattern described in the following sections, although he may employ different language.

Baptism of an Adult

6. Before Baptism is administered, instruction should be given as to the institution, nature, and purpose of the sacrament.

The institution of Baptism should be read in Matthew 28:18-20. (Other suitable Scriptures, such as Ezekiel 36:25-27, may also be read.)

The following (or similar) instruction should be given:

> Baptism is a sacrament ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a sign and seal of the inclusion of the person who is baptized in the covenant of grace. Baptism with water teaches that we and our children are conceived and born in sin. It signifies our dying to sin and our rising to newness of life by virtue of our union with Christ in His death and resurrection. It also signifies and seals to us cleansing from sin by the blood and Spirit of Christ. Since these gifts of salvation are the gracious provision of the triune God, who is pleased to claim us as His very own, we are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Baptized persons are called upon to assume the obligations of the covenant; Baptism summons us to renounce sin and the world, and to walk humbly with our God in devotion to His commandments.

The congregation should be encouraged to reflect on their own Baptism, to repent of their sins against their covenant God, to stir up their faith, and so to improve and make right use of their Baptism.

After the instruction, the one who is to receive Baptism is to take his/her place in the front of the congregation. The elders may also be asked to come forward.

The person who is to be baptized shall then give his/her assent to the Covenant of Communicant Membership. If the Session deems it appropriate, it may also ask the person to give a personal testimony of his/her faith and relationship with Christ.

The pastor should ask the congregation to rise and respond to the following question:

> Do you, the members of this congregation, receive this person into your fellowship and promise to pray for him/her, and to help and encourage him/her in the Christian life?

The pastor is to lead in prayer, giving thanks for God's grace, seeking His blessing on this ordinance of Baptism, and setting apart the water from a common to a sacramental use, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the church.

The pastor shall then baptize the person, calling his/her name and saying,

> I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Spirit, one God, blessed forever, Amen.

The pastor (or another elder) should conclude in prayer, that the grace signified and sealed in Baptism would be abundantly realized in the life of this person, and that God would graciously enable him/her to be a covenant keeper, daily dying to sin and walking in newness of life in Christ.

Baptism of a Covenant Child

7. When a covenant child is to be baptized, instruction should be given as to the institution, nature, and purpose of the sacrament.

The institution of Baptism should be read in Matthew 28:18-20. (Other suitable Scriptures, such as Isaiah 44:1-5 or Ezekiel 36:25-27, may also be read.) The following (or similar) instruction should be given:

> Baptism is a sacrament ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a sign and seal of the inclusion of the person who is baptized in the covenant of grace. Baptism with water teaches that we and our children are conceived and born in sin. It signifies our dying to sin and our rising to newness of life by virtue of our union with Christ in His death and resurrection. It also signifies and seals to us cleansing from sin by the blood and Spirit of Christ. Since these gifts of salvation are the gracious provision of the triune God, who is pleased to claim us as His very own, we are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Baptized persons are called upon to assume the obligations of the covenant; Baptism summons us to renounce sin and the world, and to walk humbly with our God in devotion to His commandments.

The pastor shall give further instruction (in addition to that given above) as to the ground of infant Baptism:

> Although our young children do not yet understand these things, they are nevertheless to be baptized. For the promise of the covenant is made to believers and to their children, as God declared to Abraham, 'And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.' (Genesis 17:7) Under the New Testament, no less than in the Old, the children of believers, have, by virtue of their birth, an interest in the covenant and a right to the seal of it. The covenant of grace is the same in substance in both the Old and the New Testament, and Baptism has replaced circumcision as the seal of that covenant. (Colossians 2:11,12) Our Savior admitted little children into His presence, embracing them and blessing them, and saying, 'Of such is the kingdom of God.' (Mark 10:14) The grace signified in Baptism is not tied to the moment of administration. Scripture teaches that our children are covenantally holy before their baptism (I Corinthians 7:14). Baptism applies the promises and obligations of the covenant to our children, and calls them to personal repentance and faith as they come to years of

understanding.

The congregation should be encouraged to reflect on their own Baptism, and to repent of their sins against their covenant God, to stir up their faith, and so to improve and make right use of their Baptism.

After the instruction, the parents are to bring the child to the front of the congregation. If one believing parent is not a member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, he or she may come forward with the other parent, and give assent to the Covenant of Baptism in so far as he or she is able in good conscience to do so. An unbelieving parent may be invited to accompany the believing parent in presenting the child, but should not be asked to give assent to the Covenant. The elders may also be asked to come forward.

The pastor shall ask the parents to respond to the following question:

> Do you publicly renew your profession of faith in Christ and acknowledge your acceptance of the Covenant of Communicant Membership?

The parents shall then assent to the Covenant of Baptism in relation to their child.

The pastor should ask the congregation to rise and respond to the following question:

> Do you, the members of this congregation, receive this child into your fellowship and promise to pray for him/her, and to help and encourage the parents as they seek to bring him/her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

The pastor is to lead in prayer, giving thanks for God's grace, seeking His blessing on this ordinance of Baptism, and setting apart the water from a common to a sacramental use, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the church.

The pastor shall then baptize the person, calling his/her name and saying,

> I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, one God, blessed forever, Amen.

The pastor or another elder, should conclude in prayer, that the grace signified and sealed in Baptism would be abundantly realized in the life of this person, and that God would graciously enable him/her to be a covenant keeper, daily dying to sin and walking in newness of life in Christ.

8. An accurate record should be kept in the Session minutes of all persons baptized, with the date, and, in the case of a child, with the names of the parents and the date of birth. A certificate of Baptism should be provided for each person baptized.

The Lord's Supper

9. The Lord's Supper, or Communion, is given by Christ to the church until He comes again, as a perpetual commemoration of the sacrifice in His

death. It signifies and seals the benefits of that death to true believers, and nourishes their souls to grow in Him. It is also a covenant and pledge of their commitment to faithful discipleship, and of their communion with Him, and with each other, as members of His body, the church.

10. The Lord's Supper is to be observed regularly, as often as the Session may decide. The elements are bread and wine, representing the body and blood of Christ, and the sacramental actions performed by the pastor signify His incarnation, His consecration to His saving work, His suffering and death upon the cross, and His offer of Himself as Savior. The actions of the communicants signify their acceptance of Christ, and their feeding upon Him, who is the Bread of Life, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

11. Only those who have been baptized and are communicant members in good standing in a true branch of Christ's visible church are to partake of the Lord's Supper. Persons whose manner of life is notably inconsistent with their Christian profession, or who are unknown to the Session in charge of the Table, are not to be invited to commune. Those who desire to commune, who are not members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, are to be interviewed by the elders as to their personal faith and commitment to Christ, their church membership and their Baptism. The church's practice of session-controlled Communion should be clearly explained to visitors, preferably by a carefully worded written statement, given out as people enter the service.

12. It is the privilege and duty of every member to partake of the Lord's Supper regularly and with careful preparation. The Session may appoint one or more preparatory services to assist the people in their preparation. Such Communion seasons are appropriate occasions for pastors from other congregations to be invited to preach the Word. The Covenant of Communicant Membership may be read and explained at one of the preparatory services.

13. In the observance of the Lord's Supper, the pastor should read the Scriptural basis for the sacrament from one of the Gospels, or I Corinthians 11. He should follow the general pattern in the following sections, although he may employ different language.

14. The pastor shall give instruction as to the institution, nature, and purpose of the Lord's Supper, drawing attention to the words of institution in I Corinthians 11:23-26.

> The Lord's Supper is an ordinance instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be observed until He comes again, in remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself which He offered upon the cross. The physical elements of bread and wine represent the body and blood of the Savior, and are received by true believers as signs and seals of all the benefits of His sacrifice. The Supper signifies and seals remission of sins, and nourishes our souls to grow in Christ, and is a bond and pledge of our union and communion with Him and with each other as members of His body, the church. It assures us that God is faithful to fulfill the promises of the Covenant of Grace, and it calls us to renewed commitment to obey and serve the Lord in gratitude for His salvation. Christ Himself is present by His Spirit in the Supper, to make it truly a means of grace to those who receive it in faith. Those who partake of the Supper do so in thankful remembrance that

the body of Christ was given, and His blood shed, for them. They rejoice in hope as they anticipate the completion of their redemption in that day when they will share in the marriage supper of the Lamb.

15. The pastor shall then declare who may partake of the Lord's Supper, and who should refrain from partaking, drawing attention to the words of warning and invitation in I Corinthians 11:27ff.

It is the duty of the church to warn you that if you do not trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation, or if you are living an ungodly, disobedient life, and have not repented, you should not partake of the Lord's Supper, lest you eat and drink condemnation to yourself. The Lord's Supper is for repentant and believing sinners, who, after examining themselves and seeking reconciliation with their brothers, come confessing Christ as their Savior.

This warning is not designed to keep the humble and contrite away from the Lord's Supper. On the contrary, the Supper is a means of grace offered to sustain weak pilgrims on their journey through the wilderness of this life. We who come to partake of the symbols of Christ's body and blood, come as sinners whose only hope is the grace of God in Christ. We come in a worthy manner if we recognize that in ourselves we are unworthy sinners who need a Savior, if we discern His body given for our sins, if we hunger and thirst after Christ, giving thanks for His grace, trusting in His merits, feeding on Him by faith, renewing our covenant with Him and His people.

If you are prepared to come in this way, then hear the Lord's words of gracious invitation:
[Here should be read Scriptural invitations, such as Isa. 55:1-3; Matt.11:28-30; Rev. 22:17.]

16. During the singing of an appropriate Psalm, the elders may take their places before the congregation. Those who are to commune may be invited to move forward, or to be seated at tables. The distribution of the elements may take place in a variety of ways, as determined by the session.

17. The pastor shall lift the bread and the cup, and exhibit them to the communicants, using words such as these:

The Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread and also the cup. Following His example, and ministering in His name, I take this bread and this cup, and exhibit them to you as the sacramental symbols of the body and blood of the Lord.

Replacing the elements, he shall say,

After the Lord Jesus had taken the bread and the cup, He blessed them. Let us pray, as we give thanks, and consecrate these elements.

In this prayer, the pastor should praise God for His grace in bringing salvation; reaffirm the trust of God's people in God's grace and Christ's righteousness and mediation; and plead for the Lord to grant the gracious, effectual working of His Spirit through the sacrament. The elements are then set apart, using these or similar words:

> Bless so much of these elements as shall be used on this occasion, which we hereby set apart from a common to a sacramental use, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church.

The pastor shall take the bread (or a portion of it), and break it, saying:

> After the Lord Jesus had blessed the bread He broke it. Following His command and example, and ministering in His name, I break this bread (here the bread is broken) and give it to you His disciples, saying as He said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

The bread is then distributed to the communicants, including the elders, who receive it and partake of it. During the distribution, some appropriate Scriptures may be read or Psalms sung.

Next the pastor shall take the cup and offer it to the congregation, saying:

> In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood; this do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

The cup is then distributed to the communicants, including the elders, who receive it and partake of it. During the distribution, some appropriate Scriptures may be read or Psalms sung.

After all have partaken, a brief address may be given, emphasizing the grace of God in Jesus Christ as set forth in the sacrament, and "exhorting them to continue in the faith" (Acts 14:22).

The communion service is concluded by a prayer of thanksgiving, the singing of an appropriate Psalm, and the pronouncing of the benediction.

Chapter 4
Special Ordinances

1. Under the New Testament, there is no day commanded in Scripture to be kept holy but the Lord's Day, which is the Christian Sabbath. Nevertheless it may be appropriate to separate a day or days for public fasting or thanksgiving, as extraordinary dispensations of God's providence give occasion.

Fasting

2. Special days of fasting, humiliation and prayer are particularly appropriate when God's judgments are evident in the land, or when corporate sin in church or nation provokes the Lord and invites His judgments. It is appropriate that such days be observed in connection with services preparatory to the Lord's Supper or on days designated by Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods for this purpose.

3. In Christian fasting, as an ordinance of God, the believer voluntarily abstains from food or some ordinary pleasure for a season for the purpose of seeking the will of God, strength for service, or deeper spirituality. It should be accompanied by meditation, self-examination, humiliation before God, confession of sin, repentance and renewed dedication to a life of obedience.

4. A fast day may be marked by a service of public worship. In such services, it is fitting that psalms of penitence be sung, along with the offering of prayers of confession of sin and petitions for pardon.

5. If the civil authority calls for a time of prayer and fasting that is in harmony with the Scriptures, Sessions may encourage the people of God to pay due respect to that call. Besides such general occasions, there may be times when families and individuals, for their own reasons, give themselves to prayer and fasting for a season.

Thanksgiving

6. Christians should be thankful at all times, but there are occasions when special seasons of corporate thanksgiving should be observed. These may be in response to a particular blessing of God in the life of the congregation, the call of the civil authority for a day of national thanksgiving (if in keeping with Scripture), or in thanksgiving for God's provision of material blessings.

7. On such occasions, Sessions may deem that a suitable service of public worship be conducted at which the people recount God's blessings, sing His praises, thank Him for His mercies corporate and individual, call upon Him in prayer for both church and nation, and are exhorted from the Word of God upon the theme of gratitude to God. Opportunity may be given for the people to express that gratitude by making a contribution to some benevolent cause.

Covenanting

8. Covenanting with God is a solemn act of worship in which individuals, churches, or nations declare their acceptance of Him as their God and pledge allegiance and obedience to Him. Public covenanting is an appropriate response to the Covenant of Grace. The "Covenant of Communicant Membership" is to be accepted by individuals who profess faith in Christ and unite with the Church. Ordinarily, such individuals are to give public assent to this covenant in the presence of the congregation. When circumstances warrant, churches and nations also may produce statements of responsibility arising from the application of the Word of God to the times in which they are made. Such covenants have continuing validity in so far as they give true expres-

sion to the Word of God for the times and situations in which believers live. (For a fuller discussion of vows and covenanting see Testimony, chapter 22, especially paragraphs 8 and 9.) Examples of such covenants are the Scottish National Covenant of 1638, the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America's Covenant of 1871.

Chapter 5
Weddings and Funerals

Weddings

1. Marriage is ordained by God for the welfare and happiness of humanity. God has ordained that marriage is between one man and one woman, for their joy and sanctification, for the raising of children, and for the more certain continuance of the church. In marriage husband and wife leave their parents and cleave to one another faithfully, and are not separated except by death.

2. As God created marriage in the beginning, it is not peculiar to the church, nor a sacrament, but is integral to all societies and nations, and is therefore rightly recognized by both church and state. The state, therefore, should recognize the role of the church in solemnizing marriages, and the church should respect and abide by all reasonable and sound civil regulations that do not violate Scripture. The pastor in particular should ensure that sound state regulations are fulfilled, while also keeping the church's own record of marriages.

3. As God has commanded that when Christians marry, they must marry in the Lord, has instructed all husbands and wives how to live together, and has even used marriage as an analogy for the love between Jesus Christ and His church, it is right and proper that marriages be solemnized by the church and witnessed by credible witnesses.

4. Ordinarily, weddings should not be held on the Lord's Day. If circumstances make this necessary, care must be taken that the wedding ceremony not interfere with the public worship of the church.

5. The following order and wording are suggested:

a. When bride and groom are before the pastor, he may say,

> We are gathered in the presence of God and this company to join this man and this woman in the holy estate of marriage. God instituted marriage in the beginning, and by it signifies the mystical union of Jesus Christ and his church. Jesus honored marriage by doing his first miraculous sign at a wedding, and He declared 'what God has joined together, let no man separate.' Marriage is therefore not to be entered into lightly, but reverently and soberly, and in the fear of God.

b. The pastor should then pray for God's blessing on the union about to be effected.

c. Scripture may be read, and a suitable sermon given. Gen. 2:18-25; Ruth 1:16-17; Eph. 5:22-33; and Col. 3:12-15 are a few of many ap-

propriate passages.
d. The pastor shall next ask the parties to join their hands and shall ask the groom to repeat after him these or similar words,

> I, N, take you, N, to be my lawfully wedded wife, and covenant before God and these witnesses, to be your loving and faithful husband: for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part.

And the bride shall answer with these or similar words,

> I, N, take you, N, to be my lawfully wedded husband, and covenant before God and these witnesses, to be your loving and faithful wife: for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part.

e. If rings are used, the pastor may ask, "What pledge do you give of your marriage vows?" As (each) ring is presented to its recipient, the pastor may say,

> Give and receive this ring as a token of your marriage vows. May it be to you a symbol of the value, constancy, and purity of your wedded love, and a seal of the solemn vows you have made to one another before God.

f. The pastor may then say,

> By virtue of the authority vested in me as a minister of the Gospel, and in accordance with the laws of God and of this commonwealth, I now pronounce you husband and wife. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.

g. The ceremony may then conclude with a prayer for God's blessing.

6. Where applicable, marriage following the publication of Banns may be pursued according to local regulations. The form may be as follows:

> I hereby publish the Banns of Marriage between Miss N of [city, province], and Mr. N. of [city, province], who are engaged to be married on the Nth [day] of [month, year] in [city, province]. If any of you know cause, or just impediment, why these two persons should not be joined together in holy Marriage, you are to declare it to the elders of this congregation. This is the first [second, or third] time of publishing these Banns.

Funerals

The Christian funeral should honor Jesus Christ and comfort the bereaved.

It can be held in whatever place and at whatever time is most suitable, though the Lord's Day should be avoided if possible. It should be simple and without unnecessary display. Though the deceased may be lovingly remembered, the funeral is ultimately to praise God, not man.

As there is a great difference between the end of the believer and the unbeliever, so the funeral service may need to be modified. The suggested service that follows has been constructed with the believer in mind. However, the pastor should never declare the deceased to have died unsaved (God alone being the Judge), nor imply the salvation of those whose lives supply no grounds for such a hope. Rather, he is to point to Jesus Christ as our sole hope in life and in death.

There should be no compromise with secret orders. If called to officiate where such orders desire to perform their ritual, the pastor should make his service distinctly separate. (See Testimony 25:19.)

Likewise, neither the pastor nor any Christian may offer worship or veneration to any idol or ancestor. The pastor should ensure that the funeral is clearly free of idol worship.

Christians should mourn with those who mourn, yet not mourn as those without hope. Therefore it is right and proper for Christians to gather with their families and loved ones before and after funerals, so long as their allegiance to the Lord Jesus is not compromised by any unbiblical practices such as ancestor worship or prayers for or to the dead.

It is appropriate to consult the family about favorite passages of Scripture and inviting other pastors of like precious faith to share in the service.

1. The Scriptures should be selected with care, the prayers should be well considered, and the address should set forth Christ and his salvation as the basis of comfort and counsel for the living.

2. The following is a suggested order for the funeral service:

    a. Introduction: an appropriate Scripture, such as John 11:25-26; Ps. 103:13-14; 116:15; 124:8; Rom. 14:7-9; Job 1:21; 19:25-27, or 2 Cor. 1:3-4

    b. Prayer

    c. Psalm

    d. Scripture reading. Two or three of the following may be chosen: Scriptures that provide comfort, (e.g. Ps. 23; 39:4ff; 90; 103; and 130); Scriptures that preach salvation, (e.g. John 3:16ff; 10:9-11; 14:1-11; Rom. 5:1-11; 8:1-11); and Scriptures that speak of the Resurrection, (e.g. Ps. 73:23-26; I Cor. 15:20-28, 35-58; Rev. 21:1-4, 22-27; and 22:1-7).

    e. Sermon. It should be timely, of an appropriate length, provide comfort, avoid undue praise of the dead, and honor Christ.

    f. Psalm

    g. Prayer

3. At the grave the pastor may use words like these:

    We commit the body to the grave in the hope of a glorious resurrection through faith in Him who is the resurrection and the life.

Suitable Scripture may be read, such as I Cor. 15:53-58, or the benefits of Christ cited (see WSC Q&A 37 & 38). A brief prayer may conclude the service.

Official Vows

Covenant of Communicant Membership

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule for faith and life?

2. Do you believe in the one living and true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as revealed in the Scriptures?

3. Do you repent of your sin; confess your guilt and helplessness as a sinner against God; profess Jesus Christ, Son of God, as your Saviour and Lord; and dedicate yourself to His service: Do you promise that you will endeavor to forsake all sin, and to conform your life to His teaching and example?

4. Do you promise to submit in the Lord to the teaching and government of this church as being based upon the Scriptures and described in substance in the *Constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America?* Do you recognize your responsibility to work with others in the church and do you promise to support and encourage them in their service to the Lord? In case you should need correction in doctrine or life, do you promise to respect the authority and discipline of the church?

5. To the end that you may grow in the Christian life, do you promise that you will diligently read the Bible, engage in private prayer, keep the Lord's Day, regularly attend the worship services, observe the appointed sacraments, and give to the Lord's work as He shall prosper you?

6. Do you purpose to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness in all the relationships of life, faithfully to perform your whole duty as a true servant of Jesus Christ, and seek to win others to Him?

7. Do you make this profession of faith and purpose in the presence of God, in humble reliance upon His grace, as you desire to give your account with joy at the Last Great Day?

Queries for Ordination, Installation, and Licensure

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and life?

2. Do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the only Redeemer of men, and do you confess Him publicly as your Saviour and Lord?

3. Do you believe that it is the duty of Christians to profess publicly the content of faith as it applies to the particular needs of each age and situation, and that such public profession, otherwise called covenanting, should be made formally by the churches and other institutions as well as informally by each believer according to his ability?

4. Do you believe in and accept the system of doctrine and the manner of worship set forth in the *Westminster Confession of Faith,* the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms,* and the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church,* as being agreeable to, and founded upon, the Scriptures?

5. Do you believe it to be the teaching of Scripture—that church and state are distinct and separate institutions; that both are under the mediatorial rule of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that the permanent form of church government is presbyterian?

6. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is Saviour and Lord of men and nations, and that in loyalty and obedience to Him, it is our duty to follow the noble example of the faithful confessors and martyrs of Jesus in their witness for divine truth, and in their sacrifices and labors to establish the Kingdom of God on earth?

7. So far as you can know in your own heart, is it the call of Christ, the glory of God and the welfare of the church, and not any selfish object, that moves you to undertake this sacred office?

8. That you may perform faithfully all the duties of the office to which you have been called, do you engage to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit? Do you promise, in His strength, to live a holy and exemplary life, to study and promote the purity, peace, unity and progress of the church—

(*to deacons*): to lead the congregation in the ministry of mercy, to practice the grace of scriptural stewardship, to cultivate it in the congregation, and to endeavor to handle the Lord's money in a manner which is efficient and above reproach?

(*to elders*): to watch over the spiritual growth of the members of the congregation, to endeavor to win others to Christ, to visit the afflicted and to attend the meetings associated with your office?

(*to persons certified to preach, or to licentiates*): to seek diligently to become an able expositor of the Word, an understanding and helpful counselor, a true minister of God?

(*to ministers*): to bring to your congregation the fruits of earnest study of the Word, to maintain a testimony for the Kingdom of God, to endeavor to minister to others and win them to Christ, to watch for souls as one who must give account?

9. Do you promise subjection in the Lord to the courts of this church, and engage to follow no divisive courses from the doctrine and order which the church has solemnly recognized and adopted; and do you promise to submit to all the brotherly counsel which your brethren may tender you in the Lord?

10. Do you make these promises in the presence of God, in humble reliance upon His grace, as you desire to give your account with joy at the Last Great Day?

The Covenant of Baptism

1. Do you believe this child is a possession of God entrusted to your care?

2. In this light, do you promise to provide for his/her temporal well-being, to teach him/her to love God and His Word, the Bible, and to provide him/her with a God-centered education?

3. Do you promise to teach him/her of his/her sinful nature, of the plan of salvation which centers in Jesus Christ, and his/her own personal need of a relationship with Christ?

4. To the end that he/she may grow in the Christian life, do you promise to pray for him/her, and to train him/her to read the Bible, to pray, to keep the Lord's Day and to understand the nature of the Church, the value of its worship and fellowship, and his/her need to seek communicant membership in the church?

5. Do you promise to lead him/her, by your example and parental discipline exercised in love, to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness in all the relationships of life?

6. Do you make these promises in the presence of God, in humble reliance upon His grace, as you desire to give your account with joy at the Last Great Day?

Suggested Forms

Form 1
Certificate of Transfer of Membership

This is to certify that _____[name of the communicant member]_____ is a member of the _____[name and location of the congregation]_____, and is at his/her own request, hereby dismissed to unite with the _____ [name and location of the congregation]_____.

(The first paragraph may be amended to include other communicant members from the same family transferring to the same congregation. If there are baptized children, not communicant members, it should be noted here, and their name(s) should be recorded.)

Given this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, by order of the Session.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

This certificate is valid for one year from the date of issue for transfer within the denomination. For transfer from the denomination the transfer becomes effective immediately.

If the issuing Session desires to state exceptions, or grounds of censure in the certificate, they should be noted above the signatures of the Clerk and Moderator. This certificate should be given to the communicant member(s).

Form 1-A
Certificate of Dismissal

This is to certify that _____[name of the member]_____ was on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____ dismissed by us to the membership of the _____[name and location of the congregation]_____.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

_____
Name of Congregation

(If the issuing session desires to state exceptions they should be noted above the signatures of the Clerk and Moderator. This form should be sent to the receiving session.)

Form 1-B
Certificate of Reception

This is to certify that _____[name of the member]_____ was received into membership of the _____[name and location of the congregation] _____ on the _____ day of _____ _____ in the year _____.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

(This form is to be returned to the dismissing session.)

Form 2-A
Certificate of Dismissal for an Indifferent Member

The session certifies that you, _____[name of the member]_____, have not participated in the worship and fellowship of the ____[name and location of the congregation]_____ Reformed Presbyterian Church for an extended period of time. We are deeply saddened that we must remove you from the church because of your neglect of the ordinances as of this date: _____. We remind you that, outside the visible church, there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

(This certificate should be sent by trackable mail to the last known address of the communicant member.)

Form 2-B
Certificate of Dismissal for a Member Requesting to Be Removed

This is to certify that you, _____[name of the member]_____, having been a member of the _____[name and location of the congregation]_____ Reformed Presbyterian Church, are hereby removed from the membership at your own request. We are deeply saddened that you have thereby separated yourself from the visible church, outside of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

Form 3
Certificate of Teaching Elder to Synod

The _____[name of the presbytery]_____ has certified the following teaching elders to the meeting of Synod, on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____, at _____ a.m./p.m., at _____[location of the place of the meeting]_____.

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Given this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, by order of the Presbytery.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Presbytery/ Clerk of the Ad Interim Commission

Moderator of the Presbytery/ Moderator of the Ad Interim Commission

Form 4
Certificate of Delegates to Presbytery or Synod

The Session of the _____[name and location of the congregation]_____ has certified the following elders to be delegates to the meeting of _____[name of the presbytery or synod]_____, meeting on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____, at _____ a.m./p.m., at _____[location of the place of the meeting]_____. The membership of the congregation as of the last day of December was _____.

(This last sentence for congregation only.)

_____,Teaching Elder
_____,Teaching Elder
_____,Ruling Elder
_____,Ruling Elder

_____,Ruling Elder––Alternate
_____,Ruling Elder––Alternate

Given this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, by order of the Session.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

Form 5
Petition for the Moderation of a Call

To the _____[name of the presbytery]_____ meeting on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____, at _____[location of the meeting]_____.

The _____[name and location of the congregation]_____, being without a teaching elder serving as its pastor, the Session hereby petitions its presbytery to grant them the moderation of a Call, and to appoint an elder to moderate in the election.

Given this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, by order of the Session.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

Form 6
Notice of a Congregational Meeting to Elect an Ordained Officer(s)

The Session having decided to conduct an election for a pastor/elder(s)/deacon(s), the congregation is called to meet on the _____ day of _____ _____ in the year _____, at _____a.m./p.m., at _____[place of the meeting]_____.

Members unable to be present may send absentee votes to the meeting enclosed in a sealed envelope, or given or mailed to the Clerk of Session. The envelope shall bear the name of the communicant member, and shall be addressed to the session. Absentee votes are valid only on the first electing ballot.

Given this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, by order of the Session.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

Form 7
Pastor's Call

We, the _____[name and location of the congregation]_____, under the care of the _____[name of the presbytery]_____, being without a pastor to take the spiritual oversight of us in the Lord; and satisfied that your spiritual attainments, intellectual abilities and soundness in the faith and the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church* are fitted to our capacities, do now, with the concurrence of Presbytery, call you, _____[full name of the teaching elder] _____, to undertake the office of pastor among us. Upon your accepting this call and performing the duties of your office as set forth by the Constitution, we promise you all due respect and support in the Lord.

We hereby promise to pay you _____[list the amount of the total compensation package]_____, in the event of your accepting this call, and performing the duties of a pastor among us—a direct compensation of $_____,

payable in _____ installments of $_____ each. Of this compensation _____% is designated as an allowance for furnishings and appurtenances for your dwelling as set forth by Section 107 of the I.R. Code. (For a call issued outside of the United States, the sentence has to be modified, following the word "dwelling.")

We include the following in the compensation package, except item 4 as shown below:

1. Housing (Indicate which of the following you will provide.)

Free use of the manse.

$_____ per month to be used for housing.

$_____ as an interest-free loan to be used for down payment on housing.

Payment of utilities, water, gas, electricity, phone, trash service, etc.

Payment of $_____ to be used for utilities.

List any other housing arrangements.

2. Business Expense

(Indicate which of the following you will provide by a check mark and/or fill in the amount.)

_____ Provide a car/van for church use.

_____ Mileage allowance as set forth by Synod.

Mileage allowance of _____ cents per mile.

Mileage allowance of $_____ per month.

_____ Office materials and supplies.

Book allowance of $_____ per month.

_____ Study/office, equipment, telephone, etc.

Fees: _____ Synod; _____ Presbytery; _____ Presbytery Camps;

_____ Seminars; _____ Educational Meetings; _____(list any others).

_____ Secretarial services.

$_____ to be used for hospitality and/or entertainment expenses.

List any other business expenses to be paid.

3. Other Benefits

(Indicate the congregation's specific plan and commitment to provide for the new pastor's continuing pastoral development such as sabbatical leaves, annual professional conference attendance, the purchase of books and related professional resources as recommended by the Synod.)

(Indicate which of the following you will provide by a check mark and/or fill in the amount.) Pension Plan: _____ Synod: _____ Annuity: _____. $_____ Payment in lieu of Social Security. Health Insurance: [name of plan, and amount to be paid].

_____ [number] of weeks will be provided for vacation time each year.

Attendance at church functions: _____ time off for Synod; _____ Presbytery; _____ [number] of Communion(s) allowed each year in the congregations; _____ family youth conferences; _____ [list any others].

Non-financial compensation—e.g. food for locker, etc.

List any other special benefits.

4. Moving Expenses

(Indicate which of the following you will provide.)

Cost of professional movers from present location to new location.

$_____ to be used for moving expenses.

We promise to review annually with you the adequacy of this compensation prior to the adoption of the congregation's budget meeting to take into account the cost of living increase (e.g. C.P.I.).

In witness thereof, we subscribe this call and financial agreement, the _____ day of _____ in the year _____, in the presence of these witnesses:

Elders: _____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Deacons: _____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Communicant Members:
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Adherents: _____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Witnesses: _____ _____

Attestation of a Call and Financial Agreement

I hereby certify that this call and financial agreement were made out on the date therein specified in accord with the law and order of the church.

_____
Moderator

Form 8
Chaplain's Call

We, the _____[name of the presbytery]_____ of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, call you _____[full name of the teaching elder]_____ to undertake the office of missionary. We call you to the office of chaplain with the Armed Forces of _____[name of the nation]_____. We find that your spiritual attainments, intellectual abilities and soundness in the faith and the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America* qualify you for this call. Upon accepting this call and performing the duties of this office, we promise you all respect and support in the Lord.

All your compensation and other expenses related to this call will come from the Armed Forces of _____[name of the nation]_____.

During your tour of active duty in the Armed Forces, you will be required to attend the regular meeting of Synod and to make mandatory non-deductible contributions to the Pension Plan of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.

During the time you are serving in North America, you will be required to make an annual report to this presbytery at that time. Other reports may be required by this presbytery.

In witness, thereof, we subscribe this call, this _____ day of _____ in the year _____.

_____	_____
Clerk of the Presbytery/	Moderator of the Presbytery/
Clerk of the Ad Interim	Moderator of the Ad Interim
Commission	Commission

On this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, I _____[full name of the teaching elder]_____, do hereby accept this call.

_____
(signature of teaching elder)

Form 9
Missionary's Call

We, the _____[name of the presbytery or Board of Foreign Missions] _____ of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, being in need of a teaching elder to serve in _____[name of location]_____ under the supervision of the Presbytery/Board in cooperation with _____[name of the session/commission]_____, for the work of church planting; and satisfied that your spiritual attainments, intellectual abilities and soundness in the faith and the *Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America* are fitted to our capacities, do now, with the concurrence of the church, call you, _____[full name of the teaching elder]_____, to undertake this work. Upon your accepting this call, and contingent on your passing our requirements, we promise to give you our prayerful support in the Lord.

In the event of your accepting this call and performing the duties outlined in our manual and in cooperation with the _____[name of the session/commission) _____, we promise to pay you according to the following scale in monthly installments plus other fringe benefits as approved by the Presbytery/Board. (Information concerning compensation, housing, travel, transportation to and from the field, outfit allowances provided, and other compensation arrangements should be listed here.)

By order of the Presbytery/Board this _____ day of _____ in the year _____.

_____	_____
Clerk of the Presbytery/ Executive Secretary/ Clerk of the Ad Interim Commission	Moderator of the Presbytery/ President of the Board/ Moderator of the Ad Interim Commission

Form 10
Edict for Ordination and/or Installation of Ruling Elder or Deacon

_____[name of the elder(s) or the deacon(s)_____, having been chosen to the office of ruling elder/deacon by this congregation, and having been examined by Session and judged qualified to take the office, notice is hereby given that the _____ day of _____ in the year _____ has been fixed as the time for the ordination and/or installation, with certification that the Session will proceed in the same manner, unless some valid objections be offered to the Session, which is appointed to meet on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____, at _____ a.m./p.m., at _____[place of the meeting]_____. The meeting for the ordination and/or installation will be held at _____ a.m./p.m., at _____[place of the meeting]_____.

Given this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, by order of the Session.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

Form 11
Certificate of Eligibility to Preach

This is to certify _____[name of the one to be certified]_____ has been examined and approved by the _____[presbytery]_____ of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America to be a candidate to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He may not administer the sacraments, perform marriages, nor pronounce the benediction.

This certification shall be for a term of five (5) years.

Given this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, by order of the Presbytery.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Presbytery Moderator of the Presbytery

Form 12
Certificate of Licensure

This is to certify _____[name of the one to be certified]_____ has been examined and approved by the _____[presbytery]_____ of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America to be a candidate eligible for a call as a pastor in the church.

This licensure is for a term of five (5) years. He may not administer the sacraments, perform marriages, nor pronounce the benediction.

Given this _____ day of _____ in the year _____, by order of the Presbytery.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Presbytery Moderator of the Presbytery

Form 13
Edict for Ordination and/or Installation of a Teaching Elder

The _____[name of the presbytery]_____ has received a call made by the _____[name and location of the congregation]_____ upon _____[full name of the one called]_____ to be their pastor, and has sustained it as a regular gospel call. He has signified his intention to accept the call. Notice is hereby given that the _____ day of _____ in the year _____, has been fixed as the time for his ordination and/or installation, with certification that the Presbytery will proceed in the same, unless some valid objections be offered to the Presbytery, which is to meet at _____[place of the meeting]_____ on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____.

The meeting for the ordination and/or installation will be held at _____ a.m./p.m., at _____[place of the meeting]_____.

_____ _____
Clerk of the Session/ Moderator of the Session/
Clerk of the Ad Interim Commission Moderator of the Ad Interim Commission

By order of the Presbytery this _____ day of _____ in the year _____.

Form 14
Transfer of a Call from One Presbytery to Another

This call made by _____[name and location of the congregation]_____ upon _____[full name of the one called]_____ on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____, was made in accordance with the law and order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and has by _____[name of the presbytery]_____ been sustained as a regular gospel call. It is hereby transferred to _____[name of the presbytery]_____, of which _____[full name of the one called]_____ is a member, for presentation.

By order of the Presbytery this _____ day of _____ in the year _____.

_____
Clerk of the Presbytery/
Clerk of the Ad Interim Commission

_____
Moderator of the Presbytery/
Moderator of the Ad Interim Commission

Form 15
Certificate of Transfer of a Teaching Elder from One Presbytery to Another

This certifies that _____[full name of the teaching elder]_____ has, until this date, been a teaching elder under the oversight of the _____[name of the presbytery]_____ of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and is hereby certified to the ____[name of the presbytery]_____ at his own request. His credentials are in order and are attached to this certificate.

By order of the Presbytery this _____ day of _____ in the year _____.

_____
Clerk of the Presbytery/
Clerk of the Ad Interim Commission

_____
Moderator of the Presbytery/
Moderator of the Ad Interim Commission

Form 16
Ministerial Credentials

_____

Certificate of Ministerial Credentials
In the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

_____

Name: (Last Name) (First Name) (Second Name)

_____

Birthplace: Date of Birth: _____
Citizenship: _____

_____

Baptized on _____ day of _____ in the year _____ in the _____ congregation.

Profession of Faith on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____ in the _____ congregation.

Education

Institutions attended (High School +) From to Diploma/Degree

_____

_____

_____

_____

Record of Service

Date Presbytery

1. Taken under care as a student of theology

---

2. Certificate to Preach

---

3. Certificate of Licensure

---

4. Ordination

---

5. Other service in the church and other denomination(s)
Installed in _____ congregation
Released from _____ congregation

Installed in _____ congregation
Released from _____ congregation

Installed in _____ Board/Presbytery
Released from _____ Board/Presbytery
Installed in _____ Board/Presbytery
Released from _____ Board/Presbytery

Other: (Disciplinary actions, restorations, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

Form 17
Declaring a Pulpit Vacant

The pastor of this congregation presented his resignation to Presbytery at its meeting at _____[place of the meeting]_____ on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____. The resignation was accepted, to take effect on the _____ day of _____ in the year _____, and the pastoral relationship was dissolved. May the Lord guide the congregation to the choice of another under-shepherd.

(This form shall also contain presbytery's authorization and counsel regarding pulpit supply, administration of sacraments and moderating a call.)

_____ _____

Clerk of Presbytery/Ad Interim Moderator of Presbytery/Ad Interim

This form should be sent to the Clerk of Session.

Form 18
Petition for the Organization of a New Congregation

To the ___[name of the presbytery]___, meeting on the ___ day of ____ in the year , at ___[location of meeting]___.

We the __[name of mission church, fellowship, or "undersigned" in case of no current organization]__, a body of _[number]_ people located in or around _[location within presbytery's bounds]_, confident in Christ's promises to build His church and convinced by His providence that such a work has begun among us, hereby petition this presbytery to grant the organization of this body into a congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America under the oversight of the _[name of presbytery]_. We believe God has provided men capable of constituting a session and acting as Christ's undershepherds for us. We seek this privilege from the presbytery with full reliance on God's grace and not on ourselves.

Given this __ day of _____ in the year ___ by request of the undersigned.

Temporary Governing Body _____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Ruling Elder(s)-elect (as applicable) _____ _____
_____ _____

Teaching elder(s)-elect (as applicable) _____ _____

Communicant Members (as applicable) _____ _____

Adherents (as applicable) _____ _____

Form 19
Edict for Organization of a New Congregation

The ___[name of the presbytery]___ has received a petition made by the [name of petitioning body]__ requesting the organization of a congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America to be located in [location], and has granted this petition.

The meeting for organization is intended to include the ordination and/or installation of the following officers, having been elected by the mission church and examined in accordance with the law and order of the Church:

__[name(s)]__ to the office of teaching elder (as applicable)

__[name(s)]__ to the office of ruling elder (as applicable)

__[name(s)]__ to the office of deacon (as applicable).

Notice is hereby given that the ___ day of _____ in the year ____ has been fixed as the time for the organization of this congregation with the ordination and/or installation of the aforementioned officers, with certification that the presbytery will proceed in the same, unless some valid objections be offered to the presbytery, which is to meet at [place of the meeting]_____ on the _____ day of _____ in the year ____.

The meeting for organization will be held at __ a.m./p.m., at __[place of meeting]__.

Given this _____ day of ____ in the year ___, by order of the presbytery.

Clerk of the Presbytery OR	Moderator of the Presbytery OR
Clerk of the Ad Interim Commission	Moderator of the Ad Interim Commission

Form 20
Edict for Reception of an Existing Congregation

The ___[name of the presbytery]___ has received a petition made by the [name of petitioning body]___ requesting its reception into the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America to be located in [location]. The presbytery has granted this petition.

The meeting for organization is intended to include the reception of the following officers each of whom has given assent to their respective ordination vows of the RPCNA.

__[name(s)]__ to the office of teaching elder (as applicable)

__[name(s)]__ to the office of ruling elder (as applicable)

__[name(s)]__ to the office of deacon (as applicable).

Notice is hereby given that the ___ day of _____ in the year ___ has been fixed as the time for the reception of this congregation with certification that the presbytery will proceed in the same, unless some valid objections be offered to the presbytery, which is to meet at ___[place of the meeting]___ on the _____ day of _____ in the year ___.

The meeting for reception will be held at ___ a.m./p.m., at ___[place of meeting]___.

Given this _____ day of ___ in the year ___, by order of the presbytery.

Clerk of the Presbytery OR Clerk of the Ad Interim Commission	Moderator of the Presbytery OR Moderator of the Ad Interim Commission

Form 21
Charge of Sin

To the session of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of _____. Your informant respectfully states that _____, a member of your congregation, is believed guilty of a serious sin, contrary to the Word of God and to the profession of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in that _____ on or about _____, did _____, and that _____ ought to be proceeded against by your court to determine whether or not the charge is true.

Date _____
Name _____
List of witnesses:
List of material offered in evidence:

Form 22
Accusation of Sin

Whereas a Charge of Sin has been brought against you, a copy of which is attached: and

Whereas the charge (or parts thereof) appear credible and therefore require action by this court: and Whereas _____ is a serious sin, contrary to the Word of God and to the position taken by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and you, _____, are charged with this offence in that on or about _____ (date), at _____ you did _____:

Resolved, that if this charge is found relevant and proved against you, you ought to be disciplined by this court of the Lord's House.

_____ Clerk of the Session	_____ Moderator of the Session

List of witnesses:

List of material offered in evidence:

Note—See *Book of Discipline,* section II, chap. 2, par. 4.

Form 23
Summons to the Accused Accompanying the Charge

By order of _____, you, _____, are summoned to appear and to answer to the charge, at _____ on _____ and to bring any witnesses you may have.

Date: _____.

_____ _____

Clerk of the Session Moderator of the Session

Form 24
Summons to a Witness

You, _____, are hereby summoned to appear before the _____ on _____ to give testimony in the case of _____.

By order of the Court of _____.

Date: _____.

_____ _____

Clerk of the Court Moderator of the Session

Form 25
Oath of a Witness

Do you swear by the Living God (or affirm) that you will tell the truth, all the truth, and nothing but the truth, as far as you know it, in the case now under trial, as you shall answer to God in the Judgment?

Answer: I do.

Form 26A
Pronouncement of Guilt

Whereas you, _____, have been found guilty by this court of Christ's House, the decision of the Court is that you are deserving of the censure of _____. Now, therefore, for your own spiritual good and for the peace and purity of the Church, receive the pronouncement of this censure.

Form 26B
Pronouncement of Innocence

Whereas you, _____, have been found not guilty by this court of Christ's House, the decision of the Court is that you are not deserving of censure and the charge against you is dismissed. Now, therefore, for your own spiritual good and for the peace and purity of the Church, we commend you to the fellowship of the church.

Form 27
Admonition

You, _____, have brought reproach on Christ and are in danger of drifting further away from the Lord. This Court of the Lord's House admonishes you to put away your sin, to watch and pray, and to walk faithfully with Christ.

Form 28
Rebuke

You, _____, by your continued neglect of your Christian duty and by the sin of _____, have brought reproach on yourself, and have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to mock and curse. This Court of the Church of Christ sadly and solemnly judges and rebukes you for your sin. You are commanded to give evidence of sincere repentance, and to be more watchful, studying to know and to do the will of God.

Form 29
Suspension of a Member

Whereas you, _____, have been found guilty of the sin of _____, this Court, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, sadly and solemnly suspends you from the privileges of church membership, including participation in the sacraments, until you have given satisfactory evidence of true repentance, and have been restored to good standing by this Court.

Form 30
Suspension of an Officer

You, _____, have been found guilty before this Court of the Church of Christ of the sin of _____. This Court, therefore, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, suspends you from the office of _____ (Teaching Elder, Ruling Elder, Deacon), and forbids you to perform any of the duties belonging to it [and further excludes you from the privileges of church membership, including participation in the sacraments]. This censure shall continue in effect until you have given satisfactory evidence of true repentance, and have been restored to good standing by this Court.

(Note––Suspension from office does not always require exclusion from church membership. See *Book of Discipline,* section I, chap. 4, par. 1c.)

Form 31
Deposition of an Officer

You, _____, have been convicted of the sin of _____, and have been found to be deserving of the penalty of deposition from your office in the Church of Christ. Now, therefore, in His Name, this Court of His House, deposes you from the office of _____ (Teaching Elder, Ruling Elder, Deacon), and declares your relationship to the congregation in this capacity to be dissolved. You are forbidden to exercise any of the powers or duties of that office anywhere in the Church of Christ [and you are excluded from the privileges of Church membership, including participation in the sacraments] until penitence and new obedience on your part have shown you worthy of the exercise of those privileges,

and until this Court restores your ordination by prayer and laying on of hands making you then eligible for re-election to an office.

(Note––Deposition from office does not always require exclusion from church membership. See *Book of Discipline,* section I, chap. 4, par. 1d.)

Form 32
Excommunication

You, _____, have been found guilty of the sin of _____, a sin deserving of the extreme penalty of excommunication, yet you continue obstinate and give no evidence of repentance, although efforts have been made to restore you. Now, therefore, this Court, constituted in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and acting under His authority, hereby excommunicates you, removing you from the membership of the Church, outside of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. May God have mercy upon you by awakening you to repentance and bringing you to righteousness, so that you may be among the redeemed in the Day of the Lord Jesus.

Form 33
Restoration of Deposed or Excommunicated Persons

You, _____, having been _____ (deposed or excommunicated) because of sinful conduct, and having now given very evident proofs of sincere repentance, the _____ in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as a Court constituted by His authority, hereby absolves you from the censure of _____ given against you; and restores you to the membership of the Church, and to the fellowship of the Christian sacraments.

(Note—In the case of deposition, the statement as to restoration should fit the penalty imposed.)

Form 34
Oath of Purgation

I, _____, now on trial before the _____ for the sin of _____ charged against me, for the ending of such process, and

giving satisfaction to the Church of Christ, do most solemnly declare before God and this court that I am innocent and free of this sin, and hereby call the living God, the Judge and Avenger of all falsehood, to be judge and witness against me in this matter if I be guilty, as I shall answer to God in the Judgment.

Signature: _____
Date: _____

Form 35
Bequest

I do give and bequeath to the Trustees of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, its successors and assigns forever, _____ dollars to be credited to:

1. The current account of the following funds:

_____

2. The endowment of the following funds or institutions:

_____

3. "Funds functioning as endowments" as follows:

_____

4. To be distributed according to the judgment of Synod:

_____.

(Special Note––A will should be witnessed by at least three persons, all of whom see the signing by the one making the will and by each other. In case of doubt, secure legal advice.)

I do give and bequeath to the Trustees of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, its successors and assigns forever, all that certain piece of land situated in _____, the proceeds from the same to be devoted to:

(Use list of plans above, or others as desired.)

History of the Standards

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America is a branch of the Church Visible and is presbyterian in its form of government. It holds the doctrines and principles of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and, particularly, testifies to the duty of public covenanting by churches and nations. It accepts the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God as the supreme and infallible rule of faith and life and its subordinate standards as "agreeable unto and founded upon" those Scriptures. These subordinate standards are: *The Westminster Confession of Faith*; the *Catechisms, Larger* and *Shorter*; the Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America; the Directory for Church Government; the Book of Discipline and the Directory for Worship.

1738–1987

The first known organized congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America was that of Middle Octorara, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (1738). The Reformed Presbytery was constituted in 1774 by ministers sent for that purpose: John Cuthbertson, who came from Scotland in 1752 and Matthew Linn and Alexander Dobbin, who came from Ireland in 1774, it was dissolved in 1782, the Reformed Presbytery of the United States of North America was reconstituted in 1798, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Synod was constituted in 1809.

The first extant record of Church Standards is a reference in 1802 to an earlier decision "to display a judicial testimony for truth and against error." In 1804 Presbytery ordered the preparation of a three-fold Testimony, Historical, Declaratory, and Argumentative. In 1806 Presbytery adopted the Historical View, with a Preface, and the Declaration and Testimony.

In 1834 a continuation of the Historical View through 1833 was approved. This document was never included with the standards named in the Terms of Communion. A complete revision of it, continuing the history to the time of

its revision and written especially for young people, was authorized in 1921, and published in booklet form in 1929, was entitled "A Brief History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church."

The Argumentative Testimony was designed to examine the various systems of doctrine considered hostile to the Reformation and to warn against them individually. At least four chapters were prepared in overture by 1841. In 1845 the plan of work was changed. No final action was ever taken.

The Declaration and Testimony was amended in 1823 by the addition of a chapter on Adoption, with its proof texts added in 1834. In 1861 a section was added on Secret Associations (chap. 22.5 and error 7) and one on Slavery (29.4 and errors 7 and 10). In 1883 a section on Temperance was added (22.6 and error 9). These sections confirmed officially in permanent form positions long held by the church. (Secrecy—from the beginning, as was stated by Synod in 1821. Slavery—errors 8 and 9 were in the original Testimony. Temperance—a cumulative witness, recorded from 1801 on). In 1928 chapters 29 and 30 were revised.

In 1807 Presbytery adopted revisions of the Terms of Communion and the Formula of Queries. The original Terms and Queries, of which there is no record extant, evidently were those of the Presbyteries in Scotland and Ireland (for these, see Matthew Hutchison's *The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland: Its Origin and History*, p. 213). In the Terms and Queries now adopted is found the only extant record of the place occupied as subordinate standards by the Westminster documents—*Confession of Faith, Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*, Form of Church Government, and Directory for Worship—and by the National Covenant of Scotland and the Solemn League and Covenant. The Westminster standards were approved "as they were received by the Church of Scotland." The reference is to the Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1647 and 1648 approving the documents (see regular editions of these standards). The Church made two reservations regarding the Confession of Faith, the first being the lack of mention of the different ecclesiastical officers, and the second being strictures on Chapter 31.2 and its teaching on the relation of magistrates to the Church. Reservations were made in adopting the Directory for Worship, concerning the observance of the Lord's Supper, as well as to particular items of order and practice appointed by the Church. Reservations were made in adopting the Form of Government concerning the office of doctor or teacher, and concerning the relations of presbyteries and people in the calling of ministers. These points are covered by declarations in our Synod's standards. The Terms were amended in 1823 by the substitution of the name of the Synod. In 1841 the second statement of the First Term was restored, after years of omission in printed copies. In 1878 the Fourth Term was amended to include the Covenant of 1871. In 1938 a complete revision was adopted, and in 1948 the new Fourth Term was amended to fit the revised standards. In connection with the revision of 1938 a Covenant of Church Membership was adopted. The Queries were revised in 1939, to conform to the revised Terms.

In 1802 Presbytery appointed a minister to prepare a Form of Covenant, "containing the spirit of the National and Solemn League." Various forms were prepared in later years, but none was adopted until the one solemnly subscribed by Synod in 1871, and by the several congregations. Fifty years after, in 1921, Synod adopted an "Additional Statement," but did not submit it in overture. A brief covenant was developed by the Synod of 1953 and subscribed by the church at her National Conference the following year. Subsequently, most of the congregations held their own subscription services.

In 1807 Presbytery took steps to prepare a Directory for the Worship of God and a Book of Discipline. Both were adopted in 1819, and Forms of Process were ordered prepared to accompany the latter. The Directory was not published, and the Westminster Directory remained the standard until 1945. The Book of Discipline was not published. A revised draft was published in 1836, with the Forms. It was amended and adopted in 1841, and the Forms were approved. Extensive amendments were adopted in 1863.

In 1819 and in 1836 a Form of Church Government was submitted in overture. Neither Form was adopted, and the Westminster Form remained the standard. In 1863 Rules of Procedure for conducting ecclesiastical business, taken almost entirely from Chapter 3 of the proposed Book of 1836, were adopted, and served as a supplement to the Westminster form. "Rules for directing the organization and proceedings of" (Presbytery and) Synod were listed in 1802 and revised last in 1874.

It appears that the Westminster standards, with the exception of the Form of Government, were not printed by the Church in her official publications. In 1806 the Declaration and Testimony and the Historical View were published in one volume, entitled "Reformation Principles Exhibited." In 1834 the Terms of Communion and the Queries were included in this volume. In 1874 the Covenant of 1871 was included. A second volume was published in 1841, containing the Westminster Form of Government, the Book of Discipline with the Forms, the Terms of Communion and the Queries. There were added in 1863 the Rules of Procedure; in 1874 the Rules for the meetings of Synod; and also the Covenant of 1871.

A committee of four men was appointed in 1939 to the work of revision. The revised Form of Government (including the Rules of Procedure and Rules for Meetings of Synod), Book of Discipline and Directory for Worship were sent down in overture, and in 1945 were declared adopted by the Church.

After several years of discussion in the Synod and *The Covenanter Witness*, the church in 1964 officially declared there was not enough evidence to require the practice of what had come to be called "Political Dissent" and subsequently changes were made in the Testimony, particularly Chapters 29 and 30, a change which continued to assert the Church believed Christ was king in the public arena.

The Synod of 1969 gave approval to the "rewriting of the Testimony of

the Church without change in the system of theology." A committee completed the task by 1979 when the full document went down in overture to the Sessions of the church. The 1980 Synod declared the revised Testimony to be the law and order of the Church. It is presented in a form which enhances the teaching of the Confession, yet speaks to issues of the day without unnecessary duplication.

Following several years of study by the Synod on "Officers of the Church," the Synod of 1981 appointed a special committee to revise and rewrite the Form of Church Government, taking into consideration the conclusions regarding the nature of the eldership already adopted by Synod. The procedure of the committee was to add principial parts of the previous Form of Church Government to appropriate chapters in the Testimony, and to put procedural parts in a new Directory for Church Government. All of the proposed changes were adopted by the Synod of 1986 and sent down in overture. The 1987 Synod declared the revisions to the Testimony and the new Directory for Church Government to be the law and order of the church. The revision of the Forms in the back of the Directory for Church Government was approved by the 1987 Synod.

1987-2012

During the 1980s and into the 1990s there was considerable discussion in the courts of the church as to whether the Bible required either communicant members or ordained church officers to abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages. The Synod resolved the matter by interpreting the Declaration and Testimony to teach that while total abstinence was encouraged it was not required of communicant members nor officers.

The Synod determined in 1997 that the "Queries for Ordination and Installation" had never been sent down in overture and were not therefore a part of the Constitution. It was deemed this situation needed immediate correction so the Queries were subsequently sent down in overture with two optional forms of Query 8. The first option continued the Query as worded since 1939. The second was a modified Query 8 which removed the clause requiring total abstinence from beverage alcohol and habit-forming drugs. The queries, including the second option of Query 8, were ratified by the Sessions and declared adopted by the 1998 Synod.

Synod in the 1990's determined a revision of 1945 Book of Discipline was needed. A revision was approved in 2002 and sent down in overture and was declared passed by the 2003 Synod.

The Directory for Worship was next document to be revised. After several starts and stops a new Directory was approved by the Synod in 2009 and sent down in overture and declared adopted by the 2010 Synod.

Throughout this present volume, the earlier documents are to be interpreted by those adopted later.

The Covenant

Sworn and Subscribed by the Synod of
The Reformed Presbyterian Church
of North America

at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, May 21, 1871

and by
the several congregations

Believing assuredly that in covenanting with God, and thereby binding our souls by oath to fear and serve Him, we do make a near approach into His august and holy presence, and knowing that they only are approved and accepted who come with self-abasement, filled with shame and godly sorrow, and ingenuously confessing and forsaking their sins, according to that word, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" [1 John 1:9], we do now give glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him.

We do humbly and sincerely confess and lament that we have not duly valued and improved the unsearchable riches of truth and grace in the Holy Scriptures, by making them our constant, earnest and prayerful study, by accepting Christ in all His fulness of saving blessings, and by seeking for the Holy Spirit in His illuminating and renewing grace to apply to our souls the redemption of Christ, and thus reconcile us unto God, and make us partakers of everlasting life.

We acknowledge, with shame, want of faith in God and in the promises and threatenings of His Word, formality in religious services, pride, selfishness, vanity, conformity to the spirit of the world, lukewarmness, untenderness in our walk and in our dealings with others, unwatchfulness, sinful security, and want of spirituality in our disposition and deportment. We are chargeable with remissness in the duties of the closet, the family, the prayer-meeting, and the sanctuary. We have not hallowed the Sabbath by observing it with the care and

sacredness required by the divine Commandment. We have shown criminal apathy and unfaithfulness in that we have not cherished love for all men, and especially for the faithful in Christ Jesus, and in that we have not exhorted one another daily, and sought to promote the spiritual growth and holiness of the saints.

We mourn that religion has not been cultivated and practiced in our homes as it should have been. Parents have not felt in any adequate measure their responsibility for the salvation of their children; and in consequence, family worship, reading the Scriptures in the household, instruction in the accepted manuals of the faith of the Church, and pleading the covenant and promise of God on behalf of our seed, are mournfully neglected.

We lament that, as professing witnesses for Christ, we have failed in obedience to His command to preach the Gospel to every creature, to make known His will and law among the nations, and to administer with fidelity the law and discipline of His own house. While property is hoarded up, or wasted upon the luxuries and vanities of life, and in very many cases upon objects pernicious to both body and soul, means are wanting to make known the way of salvation in the sight of the heathen. We confess and bewail our forgetfulness of the obligations laid upon us by the Covenants of our fathers, in that we have often walked contrary thereunto, in not testifying fully and clearly in word and act for the claims of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. We have sinned, too, in that, while witnessing for social covenanting as an ordinance of God, binding under the dispensation of the Gospel, we have not as a Church in this country, by our own act, performed the duty.

We humble ourselves in the sight of the Just and Holy One, in view of the many and great iniquities of the land in which we live. The nation refuses to own its responsibility to God and to the Mediator, to recognize the supremacy of the Bible in national affairs, and to countenance and encourage the true Christian religion. Atheists, infidels, and all classes of vile men, are made constitutionally eligible to the most responsible positions under the government. Consonant with these essential effects, the history of the government has been largely one of oppression and injustice towards its aboriginal and colored people, and of iniquitous distinction of caste; while Sabbath desecration, prostitution of the oath, official corruption and dishonesty, profanation of the name of God, murder, drunkenness, excess and rioting, violation of the ordinance of marriage, vanity of apparel, sinful extravagance, lying and deceit, are become common and ordinary sins. These, and all other transgressions whereof our people and land are guilty, we desire to acknowledge, and to be humbled on account of them, that all men may see that righteousness belongeth unto God, and shame and confusion of face unto us, as appears this day.

And because the promise of mercy is made to those who not only confess, but forsake their sin, we do resolve and engage before the Lord carefully

to avoid, for the time to come, all these offences, together with temptations leading thereunto; and to testify the integrity of our hearts in this resolution and engagement, and that we may be the better enabled in the power of the Lord's strength to perform the same, we, in obedience to the command of God, comformably to the practice of the godly in former times and recognizing all that is moral in the Covenants of our worthy religious progenitors of the Second Reformation, do hereby give ourselves in covenant to God, to His Church, and to one another.

Covenant

We, Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Members of the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA, with our hands lifted up, do jointly and severally swear by the Great and Dreadful Name of the Lord our God:

1. That coming into the presence of the Lord God with a deep conviction of His awful majesty and glory, of His omniscience, His purity, His justice and His grace; of our guilt and total depravity by nature, and our utter inability to save ourselves from deserved condemnation to everlasting punishment; with renunciation of all dependence on our own righteousness as the ground of pardon and acceptance with God, we receive for ourselves and for our children the Lord Jesus Christ as He is offered in the Gospel to be our Saviour—The Holy Spirit to be our Enlightener, Sanctifier and Guide—and God, the Father, to be our everlasting portion; we approve and accept of the Covenant of Grace as all our salvation and desire, and take the moral law as dispensed by the Mediator, Christ, to be the rule of our life, and to be obeyed by us in all its precepts and prohibitions.

Aiming to live for the glory of God as our chief end, we will, in reliance upon God's grace, and feeling our inability to perform any spiritual duty in our own strength, diligently attend to searching the Scriptures, religious conversation, the duties of the closet, the household, the fellowship-meeting and the sanctuary, and will seek in them to worship God in spirit and in truth. We do solemnly promise to depart from all iniquity, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, commending and encouraging, by our example, temperance, charity and godliness.

2. That after careful examination, having embraced the system of faith, order and worship revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and summarized, as to doctrine, in the *Westminster Confession* and *Catechisms,* and *Reformed Presbyterian Testimony*, and, as to order and worship, justly set forth in substance and outline in the *Westminster Form of Church Government* and *Directory for Worship,* we do publicly profess and own this as the true Christian faith and religion, and the system of order and worship appointed by Christ for His own house, and,

by the grace of God, we will sincerely and constantly endeavor to understand it more fully, to hold and observe it in its integrity, and to transmit the knowledge of the same to posterity. We solemnly reject whatever is known by us to be contrary to the Word of God, our recognized and approved manuals of faith and order, and the great principles of the Protestant Reformation. Particularly, we abjure and condemn Infidelity, under all its various aspects; Atheism, or the denial of the divine existence; Pantheism with its denial of the divine personality; Naturalism, with its denial of the divine Providential Government; Spiritualism, with its denial of the Bible redemption; Indifferentism, with its denial of man's responsibility; Formalism, with its denial of the power of godliness. We abjure and condemn Popery, with its arrogant assumption of supremacy and infallibility; its corrupt and heretical teachings; its dogma of the Immaculate Conception; its hostility to civil and religious liberty, to the progress of society in civilization and intelligence, and especially its denial, in common with Infidelity, of the right and duty of the State to educate in morality and religion by the use of the Bible in schools enjoying its patronage and support.

Believing Presbyterianism to be the only divinely instituted form of government in the Christian Church, we disown and reject all others forms of ecclesiastical polity, as without authority of Scripture, and as damaging to purity, peace and unity in the household of faith.

We reject all systems of false religion and will-worship, and with these all forms of secret oath-bound societies and orders, as ensnaring in their nature, pernicious in their tendency, and perilous to the liberties of both Church and State; and pledge ourselves to pray and labor according to our power, that whatever is contrary to godliness may be removed, and the Church beautified with universal conformity to the law and will of her Divine Head and Lord.

3. Persuaded that God is the source of all legitimate power; that He has instituted civil government for His own glory and the good of man; that He has appointed His Son, the Mediator, to headship over the nations; and that the Bible is the supreme law and rule in national as in all other things, we will maintain the responsibility of nations to God, the rightful dominion of Jesus Christ over the commonwealth, and the obligation of nations to legislate in conformity with the written Word. We take ourselves sacredly bound to regulate all our civil relations, attachments, professions and deportment, by our allegiance and loyalty to the Lord, our King, Lawgiver and Judge; and by this, our oath, we are pledged to promote the interests of public order and justice, to support cheerfully whatever is for the good of the commonwealth in which we dwell, and to pursue this object in all things not forbidden by the law of God, or inconsistent with public dissent from an unscriptural and immoral civil power.

We will pray and labor for the peace and welfare of our country, and for its reformation by a constitutional recognition of God as the source of all power, of Jesus Christ as the Ruler of Nations, of the Holy Scriptures as the

supreme rule, and of the true Christian religion; and we will continue to refuse to incorporate by any act, with the political body, until this blessed reformation has been secured.

4. That, believing the Church to be *one,* and that all the saints have communion with God and with one another in the same Covenant; believing, moreover, that schism and sectarianism are sinful in themselves; and inimical to true religion, and trusting that divisions shall cease, and the people of God become one Catholic church over all the earth, we will pray and labor for the visible oneness of the Church of God in our own land and throughout the world, on the basis of truth and of Scriptural order. Considering it a principal duty of our profession to cultivate a holy brotherhood, we will strive to maintain Christian friendship with pious men of every name, and to feel and act as one with all in every land who pursue this grand end. And, as a means of securing this great result, we will by dissemination and application of the principles of truth herein professed, and by cultivating and exercising Christian charity, labor to remove stumbling-blocks, and to gather into one the scattered and divided friends of truth and righteousness.

5. Rejoicing that the enthroned Mediator is not only King in Zion, but King over all the earth, and recognizing the obligation of His command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and resting with faith in the promise of His perpetual presence as the pledge of success, we hereby dedicate ourselves to the great work of making known God's light and salvation among the nations, and to this end will labor that the Church may be provided with an earnest, self-denying and able ministry. Profoundly conscious of past remissness and neglect, we will henceforth, by our prayers, pecuniary contributions and personal exertions, seek the revival of pure and undefiled religion, the conversion of Jews and Gentiles to Christ, that all men may be blessed in Him, and that all nations may call Him blessed.

6. Committing ourselves with all our interests to the keeping of Him in whom we have believed; in faithfulness to our own vows, and to the Covenants of our fathers, and to our children whom we desire to lead in the right ways of the Lord; in love to all mankind, especially the household of faith; in obedience to the commandment of the everlasting God to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, we will bear true testimony in word and in deed for every known part of divine truth, and for all the ordinances appointed by Christ in His kingdom; and we will tenderly and charitably, but plainly and decidedly, oppose and discountenance all and every known error, immorality, neglect or perversion of divine institutions. Taking as our example the faithful in all ages, and, most of all, the blessed Master Himself, and with

our eye fixed upon the great cloud of witnesses who have sealed with their blood the testimony which they held, we will strive to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, in hope of the crown of life which fadeth not away.

Finally, we enter upon this solemn act of covenanting before the Omniscient God, with unfeigned purpose of paying our vow. All sinister and selfish ends and motives we solemnly disavow, and protest that we have no aim but the glory of God, and the present and everlasting welfare of immortal souls. And our prayer to God is and shall be to strengthen us by His Holy Spirit to keep this our promise, vow and oath, and to bless our humble attempt to glorify His name and honor His truth and cause with such success as will bring salvation to our own souls, the wider spread and triumph of truth and holiness, and the enlargement and establishment of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, one God, be glory in the Church throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN.

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Acceptable way instituted by God and revealed in Scriptures, CF 21:1; T 21:1-2; LC 109; SC 51
False to be opposed, LC 108-109; SC 50-51
Family, T 21:9
Fasting, T 21:7
Light of nature shows God to be worshiped, CF 21:1
Parts of religious worship, CF 21:3, 5; T 21:4-8
Praise, use of psalms, T 21:5-6; without instruments, T 21:6
Required by God, CF 2:2
Small group, T 21:10
Worship to be given to God alone in the mediation of Christ, CF 21:2; LC 179, 181

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Corrupt, blind, and indiscreet, sinful, LC 105:SC 47
For God, a duty, LC 104: SC 46