

# **Westminster Skeletons**

*Teaching Outlines on the Westminster  
Confession of Faith*

David P Murray

[HeadHeartHand.org/blog](http://HeadHeartHand.org/blog)



**Chapter 1: The Word of God**

**I. The Revelation of Scripture**

**II. The Inspiration of Scripture**

**III. The Canon of Scripture**

**IV. The Authority of Scripture**

**V. The Sufficiency of Scripture**

**VI. The Clarity of Scripture**

**VII. The Preservation of Scripture**

**VIII. The Translation of Scripture**

**IX. The Interpretation of Scripture**

**X. The Supremacy of Scripture**

## WCF 1.1

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 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.

## I. The Revelation of Scripture

### **A. General Revelation**

1. The sources of general revelation
  - a. The light of nature
  - b. The works of creation
  - c. The works of providence
2. The message of general revelation
  - a. The goodness of God
  - b. The wisdom of God
  - c. The power of God
3. The effect of general revelation
  - a. It reaches all
  - b. It leaves all unexcusable
  - c. It leaves all unsaved

### **B. Special Revelation**

1. It pleased the Lord
2. It varied
  - a. At sundry times
  - b. And in divers manners
3. It revealed (Himself)
4. It was limited (to His Church)
5. It has ended

### **WCF 1.1-1.2**

(1.1) ...and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing: which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary;

(1.2) Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these...Genesis...the Revelation of John all which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.

### **WCF 1.2-1.3**

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

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

(1.3) 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.

## **II. The Inspiration of Scripture**

### **A. The Reasons for Inspiration**

1. For the better preserving and propagating of the truth,
2. For the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against
  - b. The corruption of the flesh
  - c. The malice of Satan
  - d. The malice of the world
3. He committed the same wholly unto writing

### **B. The Result of Inspiration**

1. Holy Scripture,
2. The Word of God written
3. All the books of the Old and New Testament
4. The rule of faith and life

## **III. The Canon of Scripture**

### **A. The Product**

1. The Old Testament books
2. The New Testament books

### **B. The Practice**

1. The rule of faith
2. The rule of life.

### **C. The Prohibition**

1. The Apocrypha is not inspired
2. The Apocrypha is not part of the canon of the Scripture
3. The Apocrypha has no authority in the Church of God
4. The Apocrypha is to be treated like other human writings

### WCF 1.4-1.5

(1.4) 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.

(1.5) We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to a 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.

### IV. The Authority of Scripture

#### **A. Primary Authority of Scripture**

1. Not
  - a. The testimony of any man
  - b. The testimony of the Church
2. God alone
  - a. Who is truth itself
  - b. And the author of it
3. And therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.

#### **B. Secondary Authority of Scripture**

1. The Church
  - a. The testimony of the Church
  - b. Induces a high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture.
2. The Bible itself
  - a. The heavenliness of the matter
  - b. The efficacy of the doctrine
  - c. The majesty of the style,
  - d. The consent of all the parts,
  - e. The scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God)
  - f. The full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation
  - g. The many other incomparable excellencies
  - h. The entire perfection thereof,

#### **C. Experiential Authority of Scripture**

1. Our full persuasion and assurance of its infallible truth and authority
2. Is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit with the Word in our heart

## WCF 1.6

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.

## V. The Sufficiency of Scripture

### **A. What we have**

1. The whole counsel of God
2. Concerning all things necessary for
  - a. His own glory
  - b. Man's salvation, faith and life
3. Is either
  - a. Expressly set down in Scripture
  - b. Or may be deduced from Scripture

### **B. What we don't need**

1. New revelations of the Spirit
2. Traditions of men

### **C. What we do need**

1. The inward illumination of the Spirit of God is necessary
2. For the saving understanding of God's Word

### **D. What is not covered**

1. Circumstantial matters in
  - a. The worship of God
  - b. The government of the Church
2. Commonsense matters
  - a. To be ordered by the light of nature
  - b. To be ordered by Christian prudence
  - c. All under the general rules of God's Word

### WCF 1.7

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.

### WCF 1.8

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 authentic; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.

## VI. The Clarity of Scripture

### **A. Limited Clarity**

1. Not everything is clear
2. Not everyone is clear

### **B. Saving Clarity**

1. Things necessary for salvation
2. Are clear in some place of Scripture

### **C. Working Clarity**

1. The workers: the learned and the unlearned
2. The work: A due use of the ordinary means
3. The product: Sufficient understanding

## VII. The Preservation of Scripture

### **A. What is preserved**

1. The inspired Hebrew Old Testament text
2. The inspired Greek New Testament text

### **B. How it is preserved**

1. By God's singular care and providence

### **C. When it is preserved**

1. In all ages

### **D. Why it is preserved**

1. To provide authentic Scriptures
2. To provide authoritative Scriptures

### WCF 1.8

But, because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them,

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 Scriptures, may have hope.

### WCF 1.9

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.

### WCF 1.9

The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined...can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture

Controversies of religion...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

## VIII. The Translation of Scripture

### **A. The Problem of Translation**

1. God's people can't read Hebrew or Greek
2. God's people must read the Bible

### **B. The Profit of Translation**

1. More Christian knowledge
2. More Christian worship
3. More Christian experience

## IX. The Interpretation of Scripture

### **A. Rule 1: Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture**

### **B. Rule 2: Scripture has one meaning**

### **C. Rule 3: Interpret the obscure in the light of the clear**

## VIII. The Supremacy of Scripture

### **A. The Judge**

1. The supreme Judge
2. The Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture

### **B. The Judged**

1. Controversies of religion
2. Decrees of councils
3. Opinions of ancient writers
4. Doctrines of men
5. Private spirits

### **C. The Judgment**

1. Examination
2. Sentence
3. Rest

## **Chapter 2: God and the Holy Trinity**

**I. God's Being**

**II. God's Character**

**III. God's Self-Sufficiency**

**IV. God's Tri-unity**

**WCF 2.1**

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

**WCF 2.1**

... almighty,  
most wise,  
most holy,  
most free, most absolute; working all things according 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.

**I. God's Being**

- A. Is Unique**
- B. Is Infinite**
- C. Is Spiritual**
- D. Is Unchangeable**
- E. Is Everywhere**
- F. Is Eternal**
- G. Is Incomprehensible**

**II. God's Character**

- A. Powerful**
- B. Wise**
- C. Holy**
- D. Sovereign**
  
- E. Loving**
- F. Gracious**
- G. Merciful**
- H. Patient**
- I. Good**
- J. True**
- K. Forgiving**
- L. Rewarding**
- M. Just**

### WCF 2.2

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 creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience He is pleased to require of them.

### WCF 2.3

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.

### III. God's Self-Sufficiency

#### **A. God Has Everything**

1. God has everything He needs
2. God needs nothing from His creatures

#### **B. Everything Needs God**

1. Everything depends on God
2. Everything is subject to God

#### **C. Everything is Known to God**

#### **D. Everything Should Worship God**

### IV. God's Tri-Unity

#### **A. Three Persons**

1. Three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit
2. One Godhead: One substance, power, eternity

#### **B. Three Properties**

1. The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding
2. The Son is of the Father
3. The Spirit is of the Father and the Son

**Chapter 3: Of God's Eternal Decree**

**I. God's Plan**

**II. God's Plan Partitions**

**III. God's Plan Pardons**

**IV. God's Plan Passes-by**

**V. God's Plan Produces**

### WCF 3.1-2

(3.1) 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 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.

(3.2) 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

### WCF 3.3-3.4

(3.3) 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.

(3.4) These angels and men, thus predestinated, and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

### I. God's Plan

#### **A. God's plan is**

1. Eternal
2. Wise
3. Holy
4. Independent
5. Unchangeable
6. All embracing

#### **B. God's plan does not**

1. Authorize sin
2. Violate the will of the creature
3. Eliminate second causes
4. Foresee then plan

### II. God's Plan Partitions

#### **A. A clear partition**

1. Some are predestinated unto everlasting life
2. Some are fore-ordained to everlasting death

#### **B. A certain partition**

1. The numbers cannot be increased
2. The numbers cannot be reduced

### WCF 3.5-3.6

(3.5) 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.

(3.6) As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, fore-ordained 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.

### WCF 3.7

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.

### III. God's Plan Pardons

**A. Chosen in eternity**

**B. Chosen in Christ**

**C. Chosen in love**

1. Not foreseen faith, good works, or perseverance
2. No creature causes or conditions

**D. Chosen for His glory**

**E. Chosen means**

1. Christ's redemption
2. Christ's call
3. Christ's Spirit
4. Christ's time
5. Christ's power

### IV. God's Plan Passes By

**A. The Rest**

**B. The Root**

**C. The Right**

**D. The Rejection**

**E. The Result**

**F. The Responsibility**

**G. The Renown**

### WCF 3.8

The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care,

that men attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. 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.

### V. God's Plan Produces

#### **A. Right teaching**

- a. Acknowledges the plan's mystery
- b. Handles the plan prudently and carefully

#### **B. Right believing**

- a. Promotes assurance
- b. Praise
- c. Humility
- d. Diligence
- e. Comfort

## **Chapter 4: Creation**

**I. God Made the World**

**II. God Made Man**

#### **WCF 4.1**

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.

#### **WCF 4.2**

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 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.

#### **I. God Made the World**

- A. The Maker**
- B. The Manifestation**
- C. The Means (all things out of nothing)**
  
- D. The Minutes**
- E. The Mark**

#### **II. God Made People**

- A. Different**
- B. Spiritual**
- C. Like Him**
- D. Obedient**
- E. Changeable**
  
- F. Tested**
- G. Happy**
- H. Ruling**

**Chapter 5: God's Providence**

- I. Panoramic Providence**
- II. Perspectives on Providence**
- III. Perfect Providence**
- IV. Paternal Providence**
- V. Punishing Providence**
- VI. Particular Providence**

### WCF 5.1

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 foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.

### WCF 5.2-5.3

(5.2) Although, in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first Cause, all things come to pass immutably, and infallibly:

yet, by the same providence, He ordereth them to fall out, according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.

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

### WCF 5.4

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.

## I. Panoramic Providence

- A. All of God's Actions**
- B. All of God's Creatures**
- C. All of God's Wisdom**
- D. All for God's Glory**

## II. Perspectives on Providence

- A. God is the First Cause**
  - 1. All things come to pass
  - 2. Immutably and infallibly
- B. God uses Second Causes**
  - 1. He orders them to fall out
  - 2. According to the nature of second causes
  - 3. Either necessarily, freely, or contingently
- C. God is the Miraculous Cause**
  - 1. God ordinarily uses means
  - 2. But may work without, above, and against them

## III. Perfect Providence

- A. God Planned Sin**
  - 1. The unholy sins
    - a. The first sin
    - b. All sin (of angels and men)
  - 2. The holy plan
    - a. Not a bare permission
    - b. But a powerful bounding, ordering, and governing
    - c. To his own holy ends
- B. God Prohibits Sin**
  - 1. Sin proceeds only from the creature
  - 2. God neither authors it nor approves it

### WCF 5.5

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.

### WCF 5.6

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 occasion of sin;  
and, withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the  
power of Satan,  
whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, even under those means  
which God uses for the softening of others.

### IV. Paternal Providence

#### **A. Our Father's Wisdom**

#### **B. Our Father's Withdrawal**

1. When does he leave them
  - a. Oftentimes
  - b. For a season
2. What does he leave them to
  - a. Manifold temptations
  - b. The corruption of their own hearts

#### **C. Our Father's Will**

1. To chastise them for their former sins,
2. To show them their strong hidden corruption
3. To expose their heart-deceit
4. To humble them
5. To draw them to Himself
6. To make them more watchful against sin
7. For other just and holy purposes

### V. Punishing Providence

#### **A. God justly hardens the wicked**

1. Withholds grace
2. Withdraws gifts
3. Exposes them to temptation
4. Gives them over

#### **B. The wicked sinfully harden themselves**

1. Even under the means of grace

**WCF 5.7**

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

**VI. Particular Providence**

**A. General Creature Providence**

**B. Special Church Providence**

**Chapter 6: The Fall of Man, Sin, and the Punishment**

**I. The Primary Sin**

**II. The Propagation of Sin**

**III. The Produce of Sin**

**IV. The Punishment of Sin**

### WCF 6.1-6.2

(6.1) 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.

(6.2) 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 parts and faculties of soul and body.

### WCF 6.3

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.

### WCF 6.4-6.5

(6.4) 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.

(6.5) 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.

### I. The Primary Sin

#### **A. Our first parents lusted**

1. Satan seduced them to sin
2. God permitted them to sin

#### **B. Our first parents lost**

1. Righteousness
2. Communion
3. Life
4. Purity

### II. The Propagation of Sin

#### **A. They were the sinful root**

1. Guilty root
2. Dead root
3. Corrupt root

#### **B. We are the sinful fruit**

1. Guilt, death, and corruption
2. Imputed and conveyed
3. To all ordinary descendents

### III. The Produce of Sin

#### **A. Our relation to good**

1. Utterly indisposed, disabled and made opposite to all good

#### **B. Our relation to evil**

1. Wholly inclined to all evil

#### **C. Our relation to Christ**

1. We are regenerated, pardoned and mortified through Christ
2. But our corrupt nature remains sinful through all our days

## **WCF 6.6**

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.

## **IV. The Punishment of Sin**

### **A. The essence of sin**

1. Every sin transgresses God's righteous law

### **B. The effect of sin**

1. Every sin brings guilt upon the sinner

### **C. The end of sin**

1. The wrath of God
2. The curse of the law
3. Death
4. All miseries (spiritual, temporal, eternal)

**Chapter 7: God's Covenant with Man**

**I. The Covenant of Works**

**II. The Covenant of Grace**

### **WCF 7.1-7.2**

(7.1) The distance between God and the creature is go 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.

(7.2) 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.

### **WCF 7.3-7.6**

(7.3) 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.

(7.4) 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.

### **I. The Covenant of Works**

- A. A Great Distance**
- B. A Great Debt**
- C. A Great Disability**
- D. A Great Descent**
  
- E. A Great Dividend**
  
- F. A Great Demand**

### **II. The Covenant of Grace**

#### **A. The Grace of the Covenant**

1. Man broke the covenant of works
2. God made a covenant of grace
  - a. Salvation by faith for sinners
  - b. Saving faith for sinners

#### **B. The Graphics of the Covenant**

1. A Testament
2. A Testator
3. A Title

(7.5) 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.

(7.6) 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 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.

### **C. The Government of the Covenant**

1. The Old Testament Administration
  - a. Christ promised, prophesied and pictured to the Jews
  - b. Christ set forth by many and varied means
  - c. Christ believed upon by the Spirit's work
  - d. Christ saved fully, freely, and forever
  
2. The New Testament Administration
  - a. Christ present, preached and pictured to Jews and Gentiles
  - b. Christ set forth in fewer and simpler means
  - c. Christ believed upon by more because of more spiritual power
  - d. Christ saved fully, freely, and forever
  
3. **ONE COVENANT OF GRACE WITH TWO ADMINISTRATIONS**

## **Chapter 8: Christ the Mediator**

**I. The Summary**

**II. The Synthesis**

**III. The Spirit**

**IV. The Sufferings**

**V. The Salvation**

## WCF 8.1

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.

## I. The Summary

### **A. Christ's Ordination**

1. The ordainer: God the Father
2. The ordained: God the Son

### **B. Christ's Offices**

1. Mediator between God and man
2. Prophet, priest, king
3. Head and Savior of His Church
4. Heir of all things
5. Judge of the world

### **C. Christ's Operations**

1. He redeems His people
2. He calls His people
3. He justifies His people
4. He sanctifies His people
5. He glorifies His people

## WCF 8.2

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 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.

## WCF 8.3

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.

## II. The Synthesis

### **A. Two Natures**

1. God
  - a. Eternal God
  - b. Essence of God
  - c. Equal with God
2. Man
  - a. Entered human time
  - b. Took human nature
  - c. Experienced human infirmities
  - d. Avoided human sinfulness

### **B. One Person**

1. Two whole, perfect, distinct natures
2. Inseparably joined in one person
3. No conversion, composition, or confusion
4. One Christ
5. One Mediator

## III. The Spirit

### **A. The Holy Spirit Sanctified Him**

1. In His human nature
2. Above measure

### **B. The Holy Spirit Supplied Him**

1. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge
2. All the fulness
3. All purity
4. All grace and truth

### **C. The Holy Spirit Supported Him**

1. In executing the office of a mediator and surety
2. In obeying the call and command of the Father

## WCF 8.4-8.7

(8.4) This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake; which that He 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.

(8.5) 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.

(8.6) 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 to-day the same, and forever.

(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.

## IV. The Sufferings

### **A. The Eagerness of the Suffering**

1. Most willing
2. Made under the law

### **B. The Experience of the Suffering**

1. Grievous torments in His soul
2. Painful sufferings in His body
3. Death

### **C. The Exception of the Suffering**

### **D. The End of the Suffering**

1. Rose on the third day in the same body

### **E. The Exaltation for the Suffering**

1. Ascended to heaven
2. Reigns in heaven
3. Prays in heaven
4. Waits in heaven

### **F. The Effect of the Suffering**

1. Effective in satisfying the justice of God
2. Effective in reconciling His people
3. Effective in purchasing a heavenly inheritance for His people
4. Effective for His Old Testament people
  - a. Redemption accomplished by incarnation
  - b. Redemption effective before incarnation
  - c. Redemption communicated by promises, types, and sacrifices

### **G. The Enigma of the Suffering**

1. Each nature does only what each nature can do
2. Actions of one nature seem to be attributed to the other nature
3. Reason = unity of the person

### **WCF 8.8**

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 such manner,  
and ways, as are most consonant to His wonderful and unsearchable dispensation.

### **V. The Salvation**

#### **A. Internal Salvation**

1. He applies it to them
2. He communicates it to them
3. He intercedes for them
4. He reveals to them
5. He persuades them
  - a. By His Spirit
  - b. To believe and obey
6. He governs them
  - a. By His Word
  - b. By His Spirit

#### **B. External Salvation**

1. Overcoming all their enemies
2. By His almighty power and wisdom

## **Chapter 9: Free Will**

**I. Free Will**

**II. Fallen Will**

**III. Freed Will**

**IV. Future Will**

### **WCF 9.1-9.2**

(9.1) God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil.

(9.2) 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.

### **WCF 9.3**

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.

### **WCF 9.4**

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

### **WCF 9.5**

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

### **I. Free Will**

#### **A. Liberty**

1. Natural
2. Neutral

#### **B. Ability**

1. Powerful state
2. Pleasing state

#### **C. Changeability**

1. He may fall from it

### **II. Fallen Will**

#### **A. A Dreadful State**

#### **B. A Deficient State**

#### **C. A Disinclined State**

#### **D. A Dead State**

#### **E. A Disabled State**

### **III. Freed Will**

#### **A. Freed by God**

1. Translated into a state of grace
2. From natural bondage under sin

#### **B. Freed by Grace**

#### **C. Freed for Good**

#### **D. Freed but Grieved**

1. Grieved over remaining corruption
2. Grieved over imperfection and inconsistency

### **IV. Future Will**

#### **A. Immaculate Free Will**

#### **B. Immutable Free Will**

## **Chapter 10: Effectual Calling**

**I. Powerful Call**

**II. Problem Cases**

## WCF 10.1-10.2

(10.1) 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;

...by His Word and Spirit...

enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart 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.

(10.2) 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.

## I. Powerful Call

### **A. Who are called?**

1. God calls
2. All those He has predestined unto life

### **B. When are they called?**

### **C. Where are they called?**

1. From sin and death
2. To grace and salvation

### **D. How are they called?**

*By His Word and Spirit*

1. Enlightening their minds
2. Softening their hearts
3. Renewing their wills
  
4. Drawing them to Jesus Christ (freely and willingly)

### **E. Why are they called?**

1. God's free and special grace alone
2. Not from anything at all foreseen in them

### **WCF 10.3-10.4**

(10.3) 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 incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.

(10.4) Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common 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.

### **II. Problem Cases**

#### **A. What about the dead babies?**

1. Elect infants dying in infancy
2. Are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit

#### **B. What about the mentally handicapped?**

1. Elect persons incapable of being outwardly called by the Word
2. Are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit

#### **C. What about churchgoers?**

1. They are called by the Ministry of the Word
2. They have temporary spiritual impressions and experiences
3. They never come to faith in Christ
4. They cannot be saved

#### **D. What about other religions?**

1. Non-Christian religions cannot save
2. Morality cannot save

## **Chapter 11: Justification**

**I. God and Man**

**II. Faith and Works**

**III. Justice and Grace**

**IV. Eternity and Time**

**V. Pardon and Discipline**

**VI. Old and New**

### WCF 11.1

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,

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.

### WCF 11.2

Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification;

yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.

## I. God and Man

### **A. God Justifies Man**

1. Assertions
  - a. He pardons sin for Christ's sake alone
  - b. He accounts righteous for Christ's sake alone
  - c. He accepts as righteous for Christ's sake alone
  - d. He imputes the obedience and satisfaction of Christ
2. Denials
  - a. Not by infusing righteousness into them
  - b. Not for anything wrought in them
  - c. Not for anything done in them
  - d. Not by imputing faith or any evangelical obedience

### **B. Man is Justified by God**

1. They receive Christ and His righteousness by faith
2. They rest on Christ and His righteousness by faith
3. They are given the faith to receive and rest on Christ

## II. Faith and Works

### **A. Faith alone saves**

1. Faith alone
2. In Christ alone

### **B. Saving faith is never alone**

1. Not alone but accompanied
2. Not dead but doing

### **WCF 11.3**

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.

### **WCF 11.4**

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.

### **III. Justice and Grace**

#### **A. Justice**

1. The sinner's debt was paid by Christ
2. The Father's justice was satisfied by Christ

#### **B. Grace**

1. God's grace in giving Christ to us
2. God's grace in accepting Christ instead of us
3. God's grace in saving us despite us

#### **C. Glory**

1. God's exact justice glorified
2. God's rich grace glorified

### **IV. Eternity and Time**

#### **A. Eternity**

1. God decreed justification in eternity

#### **B. Time**

1. Christ secured justification in His time
2. The Holy Spirit applies justification in the Christian's time

### **WCF 11.5**

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.

### **WCF 11.6**

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.

### **V. Pardon and Discipline (and pardon)**

#### **A. Pardon**

1. A Christian can never become unforgiven
2. A Christian can never become unjustified

#### **B. Discipline**

1. A Christian can be disciplined
2. A Christian can be darkened

#### **C. Pardon**

1. Until they humble themselves
2. Confess their sins
3. Beg pardon
4. Renew their faith and repentance

### **VI. Old and New**

#### **A. Old Testament Justification**

1. In all these respects
2. One and the same

#### **B. New Testament Justification**

1. In all these respects
2. One and the same

**Chapter 12: Adoption**

**I. The Father's Foundation for Adoption**

**II. The Father's Favors in Adoption**

**WCF 12.1**

All those that are justified,  
God vouchsafeth, in and for His only Son Jesus Christ,  
to make partakers of the grace of adoption:

**WCF 12.1**

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 to the day of redemption,

and inherit the promises, as heirs of everlasting salvation.

**I. The Father's Foundation for Adoption**

**A. His justification**

**B. His Son**

**C. His grace**

**II. The Father's Favors in Adoption**

**A. A New Family**

1. Numbered by the Father

2. Named by the Father

**B. A New Father**

1. New prayers

2. New pity

3. New protection

4. New provision

5. New "punishment"

**C. A New Future**

1. Secure

2. Sealed

3. Saved

## **Chapter 13: Sanctification**

**I. The Success of Sanctification**

**II. The Struggle of Sanctification**

### **WCF 13.1**

They who are once 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.

### **WCF 13.2**

(13.2) 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.

(13.3) 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.

## **I. The Success of Sanctification**

### **A. The Three Assets of Sanctification**

1. Our new heart and spirit
2. Christ's death and resurrection
3. Christ's Word and Spirit

### **B. The Two Aspects of Sanctification**

1. Destruction
  - a. The dominion of the whole body of sin
  - b. Lusts more and more weakened and mortified
2. Construction
  - a. Energized and strengthened in all saving graces
  - b. Practice of true holiness

## **II. The Struggle of Sanctification**

### **A. The Forces**

1. The Spirit: Imperfect sanctification throughout the whole man
2. The Flesh: Remnants of corruption throughout the whole man

### **B. The Fight**

1. The expectation – constant and irreconcilable war
2. The engagement – flesh v spirit and spirit v flesh
3. The experience – remaining corruption may much prevail
4. The encouragement – It is winnable
5. The end – growth in grace and holiness

**Chapter 14: Saving Faith**

**I. The Existence of Faith**

**II. The Experience of Faith**

### WCF 14.1

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.

### WCF 14.2-14.3

(14.2) 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.

(14.3) 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.

## I. The Existence of Faith

### **A. Faith's Creation**

1. By the grace of Christ
2. By the Spirit of Christ
3. By the Word of Christ

### **B. Faith's Cultivation**

1. All the above plus...
2. The sacraments
3. Prayer

## II. The Experience of Faith

### **A. Faith in the Word**

1. Faith in the whole Word
2. Faith in the divine Word
3. Faith in the varied Word
  - a. Obeying the commands
  - b. Trembling at the threatenings
  - c. Embracing the promises

### **B. Faith in Christ**

1. Acts of Christ-centered faith: accepting, receiving, resting
2. Benefits of Christ-centered faith: justification, sanctification, eternal life
3. Cause of Christ-centered faith: the covenant of grace

### **C. Faith in Reality**

1. May be weak or strong
2. May be assailed and weakened
3. May be assured or trembling
4. Always starts and finishes with Christ

**Chapter 15: Repentance unto Life**

**I. The Preaching of Repentance**

**II. The Parts of Repentance**

**III. The Pardon for Repentance**

**IV. The Particularity of Repentance**

**V. The Publicity of Repentance**

### **WCF 15.1**

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.

### **WCF 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 endeavouring to walk with Him in all the ways of His  
commandments.

### **I. The Preaching of Repentance**

*Repentance is to be preached*

- A. As an evangelical grace**
- B. By every minister of the Gospel**
- C. As much as faith in Christ**

### **II. The Parts of Repentance**

- A. We see**
  - 1. Sin
    - a. Its danger
    - b. Its filthiness
    - c. Its offensiveness
    - d. Its opposition
  - 2. Salvation
    - a. God's mercy
    - b. In Christ
    - c. To the penitent
- B. We swivel**
  - 1. From sin
    - a. Grieves for his sins
    - b. Hates his sins
  - 2. To God
    - a. To walk with God
    - b. In all His commandments

#### **WCF 15.3-15.4**

(15.3) 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.

(15.4) 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.

#### **WCF 15.5**

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.

#### **WCF 15.6**

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.

### **III. The Pardon for Repentance**

#### **A. No pardon without it**

1. Not a satisfaction for sin
2. Not the cause of pardon
3. But necessary for any and every pardon

#### **B. Full pardon with it**

1. The smallest unrepentant sin deserves damnation
2. The greatest repented sin will be fully pardoned

### **IV. The Particularity of Repentance**

#### **A. General repentance of general sins**

#### **B. Particular repentance of particular sins**

### **V. The Publicity of Repentance**

#### **A. Confession to an offended God**

1. Pray for pardon
2. Forsake sin
3. Find mercy

#### **B. Confession to other offended parties**

1. The options
  - a. Private confession to an individual
  - b. Public confession to the Church
2. The obligations
  - a. Reconciliation with the offender
  - b. Receive the offender

## **Chapter 16: Good Works**

- I. The Evaluation of Good Works**
- II. The Effects of Good Works**
- III. The Energy of Good Works**
- IV. The Errors of Good Works**
- V. The Encouragement to Good Works**
- VI. The Exclusion of “Good” Works**

### **WCF 16.1**

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.

### **WCF 16.2**

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 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.

### **WCF 16.3**

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.

### **I. The Evaluation of Good Works**

#### **A. God is the Evaluator**

1. The only good works are divinely commanded works

#### **B. We are not the Evaluators**

1. Zeal does not make a work good
2. Good intention does not make a work good

### **II. The Effects of Good Works**

#### **A. The “beginning” of good works**

1. Obedience to God’s commands
2. True and lively faith

#### **B. The “middle” of good works**

1. Manifests our thankfulness
2. Strengthens our assurance
3. Edifies our brethren
4. Adorns our profession
5. Shuts our enemies mouths
6. Glorifies our God

#### **C. The “end” of good works**

1. Holiness
2. Eternal life

### **III. The Energy of Good Works**

#### **A. The denial of ability**

#### **B. The dynamo of spirituality**

1. The existing graces of the Holy Spirit
2. The ongoing influence of the Holy Spirit

#### **C. The danger of laxity**

#### **D. The duty of industry**

#### **WCF 16.4**

(16.4) 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.

(16.5) We cannot, by our best works, merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God,

by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom, by them, we can neither profit, nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins, 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.

#### **WCF 16.6**

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 unblamable and unreproveable 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.

#### **IV. The Errors of Good Works**

##### **A. Error 1: We can build up credit**

1. The greatest obedience falls short of what God requires

##### **B. Error 2: We can pay off our debts**

1. Our best works cannot pay for pardon of sin or eternal life
2. Five reasons
  - a. The disproportion between the price (works) and the prize (heaven)
  - b. The infinite distance between us and God
  - c. Good works are our duty independent of our debt
  - d. We are unprofitable servants
  - e. All good in our works is from God and any sin is from us

#### **V. The Encouragement to Good Works**

##### **A. The persons of believers are accepted through Christ**

##### **B. The performances of believers are accepted in Christ**

1. Our best works are weak and imperfect (though sincere)
2. God looks, accepts, and rewards them (through His Son)

## WCF 16.6

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 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

## VI. The Exclusion of “Good” Works

### **A. The works of unbelievers may be “good”**

1. Good actions
2. Commanded by God
3. Useful to themselves and others

### **B. The works of unbelievers are evil**

1. Not from a faith-purified heart
2. Not done according to God’s Word
3. Not aimed at the glory of God

### **C. The works of unbelievers are still required**

1. Their neglect is more sinful
2. Their neglect is more displeasing to God

**Chapter 17: The Perseverance of the Saints**

**I. The Guarantee**

**II. The Ground**

**III. The Grief**

### **WCF 17.1**

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.

### **WCF 17.2**

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.

### **WCF 17.3**

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.

### **I. The Guarantee**

- A. No true Christian will never fall from grace**
- B. All true Christians will finish in glory**

### **II. The Ground**

- A. Sinking Sand**
- B. Solid Rock**
  - 1. The Father's unchangeable love in election
  - 2. The Son's merit and intercession
  - 3. The Spirit's indwelling and ingrowing
  - 4. The nature of the covenant of grace

### **III. The Grief**

- A. Grievous sins**
  - 1. Sinful forces
    - a. The temptations of Satan and the world
    - b. The prevalence of remaining corruption
    - c. The neglect of the means of preservation
  - 2. Sinful fall
    - a. Fall into sin
    - b. Continue in sin (for a time)
- B. Grievous sequence**
  - 1. Incur God's displeasure
  - 2. Grieve the Holy Spirit
  - 3. Lose a measure of grace and comfort
  - 4. Hearts hardened
  - 5. Consciencs wounded
  - 6. Hurt and scandalize others
  - 7. Bring temporal judgments on themselves



## **Chapter 18: The Assurance of Grace and Salvation**

- I. The Distinction**
- II. The Definiteness**
- III. The Delay**
- IV. The Delights**
- V. The Darkness**

## **WCF 18.1**

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.

## **WCF 18.2**

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.

## **I. The Distinction**

### **A. The Unbeliever's False Assurance**

1. Vain hope
2. False hope
3. Carnal hope
4. Perishing hope

### **B. The Believer's True Assurance**

1. Loving hope
2. Holy hope
3. Certain hope
4. Happy hope
5. Unashamed hope

## **II. The Definiteness**

### **A. Definite Persuasion**

1. Not probably and infallible
2. But definite and infallible

### **B. Definite Parts**

1. Promises of salvation
2. Marks of grace
3. The Spirit's Witness

### **WCF 18.3**

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;

### **WCF 18.3**

...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.

### **WCF 18.4**

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 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 so 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.

### **III. The Delay**

#### **A. Some believers may have delayed assurance**

1. May be experienced by a true believer
2. May be long-term
3. May involve many difficulties

#### **B. All believers are to develop assurance**

1. Not by extraordinary revelation
2. By the right and diligent use of ordinary means

### **IV. The Delights**

#### **A. Enlarged peace and joy in the Holy Spirit**

#### **B. Enlarged love and thankfulness to God**

#### **C. Enlarged strength and cheerfulness in obedience**

**NB. It never leads to loose living!**

### **V. The Darkness**

#### **A. The Reverses**

1. Assurance may be shaken, reduced, or interrupted

#### **B. The Reasons**

1. Negligence in preserving assurance
2. Falling into special sin
3. Sudden or forceful temptation
4. Withdrawal of God's bright face

#### **C. The Revival**

1. The seeds of grace remain in us
2. The seeds of grace revive in us
3. The seeds of grace rally us

**Chapter 19: The Law of God**

**I. The Analysis of God's Law**

**II. The Authority of God's Law**

**III. The Advantages of God's Law**

## WCF 19.1-19.4

(19.1) 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.

(19.2) 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 six our duty to man.

(19.3) 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.

(19.4) 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.

## WCF 19.5

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.

## I. The Analysis of God's Law

### **A. The Moral Law**

1. It's original publication
  - a. Part of the covenant of works given to Adam
  - b. Required personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience
  - c. Promised life for obedience and death for disobedience
  - d. Endued Adam with power to obey
2. It's ongoing application
  - a. Continued after the fall as a rule of righteousness
  - b. Re-published on Mt Sinai as the ten commandments

### **B. The Ceremonial Law**

1. Presented to Israel as an infant Church
2. Pre-figured Christ's person and work
3. Prescribed different moral duties
4. Passed away under the New Testament

### **C. The Judicial Law**

1. Given to Israel as a nation-state
2. Given up with Israel's expiry as a nation-state
3. Gives general principles of equity

## II. The Authority of God's Law

*The Moral Law's Authority...*

### **A. The scope of it's authority**

### **B. The source of its authority**

1. The contents
2. The creator

### **C. The strengthening of its authority**

1. Christ does not dissolve the obligation
2. Christ strengthens the obligation

### WCF 19.6-19.7

(19.6) 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.

(19.7) 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.

### III. The Advantages of God's Law

#### **A. It is excluded as a way of salvation**

#### **B. It exhorts to obedience**

1. Informs of God's will
2. Incites to God's will

#### **C. It examines life**

1. Highlights sin
2. Humbles for sin
3. Hatred for sin

#### **D. It exalts Christ**

1. See our need of Christ
2. See the perfection of Christ

#### **E. It encourages obedience**

1. Forbids sin
2. Threatenings deter disobedience
3. Promises inspire obedience
4. Though not for salvation

#### **F. It exists with the Gospel**

1. Such uses of the law are not contrary to grace
2. Such uses of the law comply with grace

**Chapter 20: Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience**

- I. Christ purchases your freedom**
- II. Christ multiplies your freedom**
- III. Christ enlarges your freedom**
- IV. Christ protects your freedom**
- V. Christ examines your freedom**
- VI. Christ regulates your freedom**

### WCF 20.1

The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the Gospel...

### WCF 20.1

The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the Gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, and condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law; 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.

### WCF 20.1

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 law did ordinarily partake of.

### I. Christ Purchases your Freedom

#### **A. The Buyer: Christ**

#### **B. The Bought: Believers**

### II. Christ Multiplies your Freedom

#### **A. Freed from**

1. Guilt of sin
2. Condemning wrath of God
3. Curse of the moral law
4. Present evil world
5. Bondage to Satan
6. Dominion of sin
7. Evil of afflictions
8. Sting of death
9. Victory of the grave
10. Everlasting damnation

#### **B. Freed to**

1. Freely access God
2. Lovingly obey God

### III. Christ Enlarges your Freedom

#### **A. Old Testament Seeds**

1. All freedoms for all OT believers

#### **B. New Testament Flowers**

1. Freedom from yoke of ceremonial law
2. Greater boldness of access to the throne of grace
3. Fuller communications of the free Spirit of God

### **WCF 20.2**

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.

### **WCF 20.3**

They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, do practice any sin, or cherish any lust, do thereby destroy the end of Christian liberty,

which is, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve the Lord, without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.

### **IV. Christ Protects your Freedom**

#### **A. The Lord of your Conscience**

1. Is God alone
2. Is not the doctrines and commandments of men
  - a. Contrary to His Word
  - b. Beside His Word in matters of faith or worship

#### **B. The Lessons for your Conscience**

1. Don't give up your freedom
  - a. To believe such doctrines or obey such commands out of conscience
  - b. Betrays true liberty of conscience
2. Don't take away another's freedom
  - a. The requiring of an implicit faith and an absolute, blind obedience
  - b. Destroys liberty of conscience and reasons

### **V. Christ Examines your Freedom**

#### **A. False Christian Liberty**

1. They who upon pretence of Christian liberty
2. Do practice any sin or cherish any lust
3. Destroy the end of Christian liberty

#### **B. True Christian Liberty**

1. Delivered out of the hands of our enemies
2. We serve the Lord without fear
3. In holiness and righteousness before him
4. All the days of our life

## WCF 20.4

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.<sup>1</sup>

## VI. Christ Regulates your Freedom

### **A. The Powers**

1. The powers which God has ordained
2. The freedom which Christ has purchased

### **B. The Purpose**

1. Not intended by God to destroy
2. But mutually to uphold and preserve one another,

### **C. The Potential**

1. They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty,
2. Shall oppose
  - a. Any lawful power (civil or ecclesiastical)
  - b. Or the lawful exercise of it (civil or ecclesiastical)
3. Resist the ordinance of God

### **D. The Problems**

1. Publishing and practicing
2. Contrary to
  - a. The light of nature
  - b. The known principles of Christianity
  - c. The power of godliness
3. Destructive to the peace and order of the Church

### **E. The Penalty**

1. They may lawfully be called to account and proceeded against
2. By the censures of the Church
3. By the power of the civil magistrate

---

<sup>1</sup> **OPC** omits “and by the power of the civil magistrate.” **PCA** omits “and proceeded against by the censures of the Church, and by the power of the civil magistrate.” **ARP** edited 20.4 and added an explanatory note on the separation of powers.

**Chapter 21: Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day**

**I. The Obligation of Worship**

**II. The Rule of Worship**

**III. The Object of Worship**

**IV. The Content of Worship**

**V. The Place of Worship**

**VI. The Day of Worship**

### **WCF 21.1**

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.

### **WCF 21.1**

But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will,

that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture.

### **WCF 21.2**

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

### **I. The Obligation Of Worship**

#### **A. Nature teaches us**

1. God exists
2. God is Lord and Sovereign over all
3. God is good and does good to all

#### **B. Nature obliges us**

1. To fear, love, praise, call upon, trust in, serve Him
2. With everything we have

### **II. The Rule of Worship**

#### **A. The Bible prescribes acceptable worship**

1. Instituted by God Himself
2. Limited by His own revealed will

#### **B. The Bible proscribes unacceptable worship**

1. The imaginations and devices of men
2. Or the suggestions of Satan
3. Under any visible representation
4. Or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture

### **III. The Object of Worship**

#### **A. Only Worship**

1. God: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit

#### **B. Never Worship**

1. Angels
2. Saints
3. Any other creature
4. Without the mediation of Christ

## WCF 21.3-5

(21.3) 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.

(21.4) 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.

(21.5) The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear,

the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith and reverence;  
singing of psalms with grace in the heart;

as also, 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.

## IV. The Content of (Ordinary) Worship

### **A. Prayer**

1. The requirement of prayer: Required of all men
2. The mediator of prayer: In the name of the Son
3. The helper of prayer: By the help of His Spirit,
4. The guide of prayer: According to His will
5. The spirit of prayer: With understanding...
6. The substance of prayer
  - a. Pray for lawful things
  - b. Pray for all who live or who will live
  - c. Do not pray for the dead
  - d. Do not pray for those who are known to have sinned the sin unto death

### **B. Bible Reading**

### **C. Preaching**

1. Sound preaching]
2. Conscionable hearing

### **D. Psalm Singing**

### **E. The Sacraments**

1. Due administration
2. Worthy receiving

### **F. Non-ordinary (special occasion) worship**

1. Special time
2. Special manner
3. Special activities
  - a. Religious oaths
  - b. Vows
  - c. Solemn fastings
  - d. Thanksgivings

**Chapter 22: Lawful Oaths (A) and Vows (B)**

**Lawful Oaths (A)**

- I. A lawful oath is worship**
- II. Before God as witness and judge**
- III. In the holy name of God**
- IV. To lawful authority**
- V. In serious, lawful, possible matters**
- VI. And so obliges to honest performance**

**WCF 22.1**

A lawful oath is a part of religious worship...

**WCF 22.1**

...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.

**WCF 22.2**

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

**WCF 22.2-3**

(22.2) 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.

(22.3) 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 is it a sin to refuse an oath touching anything that is good and just, being imposed by lawful authority.<sup>1</sup>

**I. A lawful oath is worship**

**II. Before God as witness and judge**

**A. God is called as witness**

**B. God is called as judge**

**III. In the holy name of God**

**A. Swear by**

1. By God's name alone
2. With holy fear and reverence

**B. Do not swear**

1. By God's name vainly or rashly
2. By any other thing

**IV. To lawful authority**

**A. Take lawful oaths to lawful authorities**

**B. Do not refuse lawful oaths to lawful authorities**

### **WCF 22.3**

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 is it a sin to refuse an oath touching anything that is good and just, being imposed by lawful authority.

### **WCF 22.4**

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.

Not is it to be violated, although made to heretics, or infidels.

### **V. In serious, lawful, possible matters**

**A. Serious matters**

**B. Lawful matters**

**C. Possible matters**

### **VI. And so obliges to honest performance**

**A. Pretending doesn't cancel the truth**

**B. Pain doesn't cancel the truth**

**C. People don't cancel the truth**

**Chapter 22: Lawful Oaths (A) and Vows (B)**

**Lawful Vows (B)**

- I. A vow is similar to an oath**
- II. But is made to God**
- III. Voluntarily**
- IV. Out of faith and conscience to duty**
- V. To thank God for mercy received**
- VI. Or to strongly express our desires**
- VII. Committing ourselves more to holy actions**
- VIII. According to the Word of God**

**WCF 22.5**

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

**WCF 22.6**

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.

**WCF 22.7**

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.

**I. A vow is similar to an oath**

- A. Similar principles
- B. Similar practice

**II. But is made to God**

**III. Voluntarily**

**IV. Out of faith and conscience to duty**

**V. To thank God for mercy received**

**VI. Or to strongly express our desires**

**VII. Committing ourselves more to holy actions**

**VIII. According to the Word of God**

- A. Do not vow what is contrary to God's Word
- B. Do not vow what hinders God's Word
- C. Do not vow what adds to God's Word

---

<sup>1</sup> OPC and PCA omit "Yet it is a sin to refuse an oath touching anything that is good and just, being imposed by lawful authority."

## **Chapter 23: The Civil Magistrate**

**I. The Ruler's Relation to God**

**II. The Ruler's Relation to Christians**

**III. The Ruler's Relation to the Church**

**IV. The Christian's Relation to the Ruler**

**V. The Church's Relation to the Ruler**

### **WCF 23.1**

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 evil doers

### **WCF 23.2**

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.

## **I. The Ruler's Relation to God**

### **A. God is above rulers**

### **B. God authorizes rulers**

1. Under him
2. Over the people
3. For his own glory
4. And the public good

### **C. God arms rulers**

1. For the defense and encouragement of them that are good
2. And for the punishment of evildoers

## **II. The Ruler's Relation to Christians**

### **A. Lawful responsibility (for a Christian)**

1. To accept the office of a magistrate (ruler)
2. To execute the office of a magistrate

### **B. Higher responsibility**

1. To maintain piety, justice and peace
2. According to the wholesome laws of each commonwealth

### **C. Serious responsibility**

1. They may lawfully wage war
  - a. When just
  - b. When necessary

### **WCF 23.3**

The civil magistrate may not assume to himself<sup>1</sup> the administration of the Word and sacraments; or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven;<sup>2</sup>

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, administrated, 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 be according to the mind of God

### **WCF 23.4**

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

Infidelity, or difference in religion, doth not make void the magistrates' just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to them

### **III. The Ruler's Relation to the Church**

#### **A. Civil magistrates may not**

1. Administer the Word and sacraments
2. Exercise church discipline

#### **B. Civil magistrates must ensure that**

1. Unity and peace be preserved in the Church
2. The truth of God be kept pure and entire
3. All blasphemies and heresies be suppressed
4. Corruptions & abuses in worship and discipline be prevented or reformed
5. All the ordinances of God be duly settled, administrated, and observed

#### **C. The civil magistrate may**

1. Call synods
2. Be present at them
3. Ensure that all proceedings are according to the mind of God.

### **IV. The Christian's Relation to the Ruler**

#### **A. It is the duty of people**

1. To pray for magistrates
2. To honor their persons
3. To pay them tribute or other dues,
4. To obey their lawful commands
5. To be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake

#### **B. Infidelity, or difference in religion, does not**

1. Make void the magistrates' just and legal authority,
2. Nor free the people from their due obedience to them:
3. From which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted

#### WCF 23.4

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

#### V. The Church's Relation to the Ruler

##### **A. From which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted**

##### **B. Much less has the Pope any power and jurisdiction**

1. Over them in their dominions
2. Or over any of their people
3. Least of all to deprive them of their dominions, or lives,
  - a. If he shall judge them to be heretics
  - b. Or upon any other pretence whatsoever.

---

<sup>1</sup> **OPC** and **PCA** replace “himself” with “themselves.”

<sup>2</sup> The **Scottish Presbyterian Churches** have varied declaratory acts in which they “declare the meaning” of this and other parts of the confession as they relate to the relationship between the Church and the civil magistrate. For example the **Free Church of Scotland** Declaratory Act of 1846 states: “...the Church firmly maintains the same scriptural principles as to the duties of nations and their rulers in reference to true religion and the Church of Christ, for which she has hitherto contended, she disclaims intolerant or persecuting principles, and does not regard her Confession of Faith, or any portion thereof, when fairly interpreted, as favouring intolerance or persecution, or consider that her office-bearers, by subscribing it, profess.”

The **RPCNA** omits the rest of the paragraph after this semi-colon and add explanatory comments.

**OPC** and **PCA** omit the rest of this paragraph and replace it with: “or, in the least, interfere in matters of faith [in the matter of faith - PCA]. Yet, as nursing fathers, it is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Christians above the rest, in such a manner that all ecclesiastical persons whatever shall enjoy the full, free, and unquestioned liberty of discharging every part of their sacred functions, without violence or danger. And, as Jesus Christ hath appointed a regular government and discipline in his church, no law of any commonwealth should interfere with, let, or hinder, the due exercise thereof, among the voluntary members of any denomination of Christians, according to their own profession and belief. It is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the person and good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretense of religion or of infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever: and to take order, that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation or disturbance.”

The **ARP** omits the rest of this paragraph and replaces it with: “yet, as the gospel revelation lays indispensable obligations upon all classes of people who are favored with it, magistrates as such, are bound to execute their respective offices in a subserviency thereunto, administering government on Christian principles, and ruling in the fear of God, according to the directions of his word; as those who shall give an account to the Lord Jesus, whom God hath appointed to be the judge of the world. Hence, magistrates, as such, in a Christian country, are bound to promote the Christian religion, as the most valuable interest of their subjects, by all such means as are not inconsistent with civil rights; and do not imply an interference with the policy of the church, which is the free and independent kingdom of the Redeemer; nor an assumption of dominion over conscience.”

**Chapter 24: Marriage and Divorce**

**I. The Parties in Marriage**

**II. The Purpose of Marriage**

**III. The Purity of Marriage**

**IV. The Parting of Marriage**

### **WCF 24.1**

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

### **WCF 24.2**

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.

### **WCF 24.3-4**

(24.3) It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry, who are able with judgment to  
give their consent.

Yet it is 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<sup>1</sup>, 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.

(24.4) Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity  
forbidden by 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.<sup>2</sup>

### **I. The Parties in Marriage**

- A. One man**
- B. One woman**
- C. At one time**

### **II. The Purpose of Marriage**

- A. Companionship**
- B. Children**
- C. Church**
- D. Cleanness**

### **III. The Purity of Marriage (24.3-4)**

- A. Rule 1: Competent to Competent**
- B. Rule 2: Christian to Christian**
  - 1. Reformed Christians must marry other Reformed Christians
  - 2. Not infidels, papists, idolaters, ungodly, notoriously wicked, heretics
- C. Rule 3: Unrelated to Unrelated**
  - 1. God rules on degrees of consanguinity
  - 2. God rules on degrees of affinity
  - 3. God cannot be overruled by civil laws or personal agreement

## WCF 24.5-6

(24.5) 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.

(24.6) Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God has joined together in marriage: yet nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage:

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

---

<sup>1</sup> ARP omits “papists.”

<sup>2</sup> OPC, PCA, ARP and RPCNA omit this last sentence.

## IV. The Parting of Marriage

### **A. The Two “Whens” of Divorce**

1. Adultery
  - a. Before marriage (after engagement)
  - b. After marriage
  
2. Wilful desertion
  - a. As can no way be remedied by the Church, or civil magistrate,

### **B. The Two “Hows” of Divorce**

1. A public and orderly course of proceeding
2. In consultation with others

**Chapter 25: The Church**

**I. The Church's Name**

**II. The Church's Work**

**III. The Church's Health**

**IV. The Church's Head**

### WCF 25.1-2

(25.1) 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.

(25.2) 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.

### WCF 25.3

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

### I. The Church's Name

#### **A. The Invisible Church** (*which is catholic and universal*)

1. Consists of
  - a. All the elect
  - b. All in Christ
2. And is
  - a. Christ's spouse
  - b. Christ's body
  - c. Christ's fulness

#### **B. The Visible Church** (*also catholic and universal*)

1. Consists of
  - a. All who profess the true religion
  - b. All their children
2. And is
  - a. Christ's Kingdom
  - b. God's house
  - c. God's family
3. **NB: Out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation**

### II. The Church's Work

#### **A. Christ gives work**

1. Christ gives
  - a. The Ministry
  - b. The oracles
  - c. The ordinances of God
2. For the
  - a. Gathering of the saints
  - b. Perfecting of the saints

#### **B. Christ gives help**

1. He promises His presence
2. He promises His Spirit

### WCF 25.4-5

(25.4) 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.

(25.5) 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.

### WCF 25.6

There is no other head of the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome<sup>1</sup>, 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.<sup>2</sup>

## III. The Church's Health

### **A. The Changing Church**

1. Sometimes more visible
2. Sometimes less visible

### **B. The Standard Church**

1. Some are more pure (in teaching, ordinances, worship)
2. Some are less pure (in teaching, ordinances, worship)

### **C. The Purest Church**

1. Is subject to mixture
2. Is subject to error

### **D. The Worst Church**

1. Not churches of Christ
2. But synagogues of Satan

### **E. The Guaranteed Church**

1. There will always be a Church on earth
2. To worship God according to His will

## IV. The Church's Head

### **A. Christ is the only Head of the Church**

### **B. The Pope is not the Head**

1. What the Pope is
  - a. The Antichrist
  - b. The man of sin
  - c. The son of perdition
2. What the Pope does
  - a. Exalts himself in the Church
  - b. Exalts himself against
    - i. Christ
    - ii. All that is called God

---

<sup>1</sup> **ARP** replaces “Pope of Rome” with “mere man.”

<sup>2</sup> **OPC** and **PCA** have omitted “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.”

**Chapter 26: The Communion of Saints**

**I. Communion with Christ**

**II. Communion with Christians**

**III. The Small Print**

### **WCF 26.1**

All saints, that are united to Jesus Christ their Head by His Spirit and by faith,

have fellowship with Him in His grace, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory:

### **WCF 26.1-2**

(26.1) and, being united to one another in love,

they have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and 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.

(26.2) 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.

### **WCF 26.3**

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 propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions.

## **I. Communion with Christ**

### **A. All Saints are United with Christ**

1. By His Spirit
2. By Faith

### **B. All Saints have Fellowship with Christ**

1. In His grace
2. In His sufferings
3. In His death
4. In His resurrection
5. In His glory

## **II. Communion with Christians**

### **A. United with other Christians**

### **B. Fellowship with other Christians**

1. Spiritual fellowship
2. Practical fellowship
3. Worshipping fellowship
4. Edifying fellowship
5. Generous Fellowship
6. Worldwide fellowship

## **III. The Small Print**

### **A. Communion with Christ does not make them God**

1. Does not make them partakers of Godhead
2. Does not make them equal with Christ

### **B. Communion with Christians does not make them communists**

1. Does not take away or infringe rights of private property



**Chapter 27: The Sacraments**

**I. Sacramental Author**

**II. Sacramental Purpose**

**III. Sacramental Union**

**IV. Sacramental Power**

**V. Sacramental Simplicity**

**VI. Sacramental Administration**

**VII. Sacramental Continuity**

### **WCF 27.1**

Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God

### **WCF 27.1**

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.

### **WCF 27.2**

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

### **I. Sacramental Author**

**A. Sacraments are immediately instituted by God**

### **II. Sacramental Purpose**

**A. To represent**

1. To represent (sign) Christ and His benefits

**B. To confirm**

1. To confirm (seal) our interest in Him

**C. To distinguish**

1. Between those that belong unto the Church
2. And the rest of the world

**D. To engage**

1. To the service of God in Christ
2. According to His Word

### **III. Sacramental Union**

**A. The essence of the union**

1. There is a spiritual relation or sacramental union
2. Between the sign and the thing signified

**B. The effects of the union**

1. The names and effects of the one
2. Are attributed to the other

### **WCF 27.3**

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

### **WCF 27.4**

There are only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord:

### **WCF 27.4**

neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the Word lawfully ordained.

### **WCF 27.5**

The sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard to the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the New.

## **IV. Sacramental Power**

### **A. Sacramental grace does not come**

1. From the sacraments
2. From the administrator of the sacraments

### **B. Sacramental grace comes from**

1. God's Spirit
2. God's Word
  - a. Authorizes use
  - b. Promises benefit (to worthy receivers)

## **V. Sacramental Simplicity**

### **A. The only two Gospel sacraments**

1. Baptism
2. The Lord's Supper

## **VI. Sacramental Administration**

### **A. Not by anyone and everyone**

### **B. By a minister of the Word lawfully ordained**

## **VII. Sacramental Continuity**

### **A. Two sacramental stages**

1. Old Testament
2. New Testament

### **B. One sacramental substance**

1. Same spiritual things signified
2. Same spiritual things exhibited

## **Chapter 28: Baptism**

- I. What does baptism mean?**
- II. What is involved in baptism?**
- III. Do I need a minister to baptize me?**
- IV. Does baptism have to be by immersion?**
- V. Who should be baptized?**
- VI. Can a person be saved without being baptized?**
- VII. Is every baptized person saved?**
- VIII. So, what's the point in being baptized?**
- IX. Should a person ever be rebaptized ?**

### **WCF 28.1**

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 the newness of life. Which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in His Church until the end of the world.

### **WCF 28.2**

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.

### **WCF 28.2**

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.

### **WCF 28.3**

Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but Baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.

### **WCF 28.4**

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.

### **I. What does baptism mean?**

#### **A. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament**

#### **B. Ordained by Jesus Christ**

1. For the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church
2. To be unto him a sign and seal
  - a. Of the covenant of grace
  - b. Of his ingrafting into Christ
  - c. Of regeneration
  - d. Of remission of sins
  - e. Of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in new life

#### **C. To be continued in His Church until the end of the world**

### **II. What is involved in baptism?**

#### **A. Water**

#### **B. Word**

### **III. Do I need a minister to baptize me?**

#### **A. By a minister of the Gospel lawfully called thereunto**

### **IV. Does baptism have to be by immersion?**

#### **A. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary**

#### **B. Baptism is rightly administered**

1. By pouring water upon a person
2. Or by sprinkling water upon the person

### **V. Who should be baptized?**

#### **A. Those that do actually profess faith in and obedience to Christ**

#### **B. Also the infants of one, or both, believing parents**

**WCF 28.5**

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.

**WCF 28.5-6**

(28.5) 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.

(28.6) The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered...

**WCF 28.6**

...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.

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.

**WCF 28.7**

The sacrament of Baptism is but once to be administered unto any person

**VI. Can a person be saved without being baptized?**

- A. It is a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance**
- B. But a person can be saved without it**

**VII. Is every baptized person saved?**

- A. Not all baptized are saved**
  
- B. Some baptized are saved later**

**VIII. So what's the point in being baptized?**

- A. The Blessings**
  - 1. It promises grace
  - 2. It offers grace
  - 3. It exhibits grace
  - 4. It confers grace
- B. The Blessed**
  - 1. Those that grace belongs to (young or old)
- C. The Blesser**
  - 1. By God's Spirit
  - 2. According to God's will
  - 3. In God's time

**IX. Should a person ever be re-baptized?**

- A. No**

**Chapter 29: The Lord's Supper**

- I. Who started the Lord's Supper?**
- II. What's the point of the Lord's Supper?**
- III. Is the Lord's Supper a continuation of Christ's sacrifice?**
- IV. What happens at the Lord's Supper?**
- V. What should be avoided in the Lord's Supper?**
- VI. Are the bread and wine changed into Christ's body and blood?**
- VII. What is experienced at the Lord's Supper?**
- VIII. Who should not take of the Lord's Supper?**

### **WCF 29.1**

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,

### **WCF 29.1**

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.

### **WCF 29.2**

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.

### **I. Who started the Lord's Supper?**

- A. Who: Our Lord Jesus**
- B. When: In the night He was betrayed**
- C. What: The sacrament of His body and blood**
- D. Where: In His Church**
- E. How long: Until the end of the world**

### **II. What's the point of the Lord's Supper?**

- A. To remind**
- B. To seal**
- C. To nourish**
- D. To engage**
- E. To commune**
  - 1. With Christ
  - 2. With each other

### **III. Is the Lord's Supper a continuation of Christ's sacrifice?**

- A. Christ's sacrifice is not continued**
- B. Christ's sacrifice is commemorated**
- C. Christ's sacrifice is celebrated**
- D. Christ's sacrifice is contradicted**
  - 1. By the Roman Catholic mass

### **WCF 29.3**

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.<sup>1</sup>

### **WCF 29.4**

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.

### **WCF 29.5-6**

(29.5) 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.

(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.

## **IV. What happens at the Lord's Supper?**

### **A. Institution**

### **B. Intercession**

### **C. Benediction**

### **D. Consecration**

### **E. Distribution**

## **V. What should be avoided in the Lord's Supper?**

### **A. Private elements**

### **B. Denial of elements**

### **C. Worshipping the elements**

### **D. Reserving the elements**

## **VI. Are the bread and wine changed into Christ's body and blood?**

### **A. The bread and the wine remain bread and wine**

1. Are set apart to the uses ordained by Christ
2. Are related to Christ
3. Are sometimes called the body and blood of Christ
4. But in substance and nature they remain only bread and wine

### **B. The bread and wine are not changed into Christ's body and blood**

1. By consecration of a priest (or by any other way)
2. That false doctrine (transubstantiation)
  - a. Is repugnant to Scripture, common sense, and reason
  - b. Overthrows the nature of the sacrament
  - c. Causes manifold superstitions

### **WCF 29.7**

Worthy receivers outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this 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.

### **WCF 29.8**

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.

and cannot, without great sin against Christ while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereunto.

### **VII. What is experienced at the Lord's Supper?**

#### **A. Worthy receivers partake outwardly**

#### **B. Worthy partakers partake inwardly**

1. How
  - a. Spiritually and inwardly by faith
  - b. Not carnally and corporally by mouth
2. Who
  - a. Receive and feed upon Christ and all benefits of his death
3. What
  - a. The bread and wine are present to the outward sense
  - b. The body and blood are present to the faith of believers

### **VIII. Who should not take of the Lord's Supper**

#### **A. The ignorant and wicked do not receive Christ**

1. They receive the bread and wine by mouth
2. They do not receive Christ's body and blood by faith

#### **B. The ignorant and wicked receive condemnation**

1. Their crime
  - a. They are unfit and unworthy
  - b. They are guilty of Christ's body and blood
2. Their sentence
  - a. They sin against Christ
  - b. To their own damnation

#### **C. The ignorant and wicked should be curbed**

1. While they remain ignorant and wicked
2. They should not be admitted to the Lord's Table

---

<sup>1</sup> ARP qualifies this to allow administration of the Lord's Supper "to worthy persons prevented from attendance upon the public administration of the sacrament.

**Chapter 30: Church Censures**

**I. The People**

**II. The Power**

**III. The Purpose**

**IV. The Process**

### **WCF 30.1**

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.

### **WCF 30.2**

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.

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.

### **WCF 30.3**

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.

## **I. The People**

- A. The originator of Church government**
- B. The officers of Church government**
- C. The opposite of Church government**

## **II. The Power**

- A. The importance of key-power**
  - 1. Keys of the kingdom of heaven
- B. The implementation of key-power**
  - 1. For the penitent
    - a. To remit sin
    - b. To open the kingdom
  - 2. For the impenitent
    - a. To remit sin
    - b. To shut the kingdom
- C. The instruments of key-power**
  - 1. By the Word/ministry of the Gospel
  - 2. By censures/absolution from censures

## **III. The Purpose**

*Church censures are necessary*

- A. To reclaim brothers**
- B. To deter others**
- C. To purge out leaven**
- D. To vindicate Christ's honor and Gospel**
- E. To protect from God's wrath**

### **WCF 30.4**

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 the crime, and demerit of the person.

### **IV. The Process**

#### **A. Different Sentences**

1. Admonition
2. Suspension from Lord's Supper
3. Excommunication from the Church

#### **B. Different Situations**

1. The nature of the crime
2. And demerit of the person

**Chapter 31: Synods and Councils**

**I. The Benefits of Church Courts**

**II. The Beginning of Church Courts**

**III. The Business of Church Courts**

**IV. The Bowing to Church Courts**

**V. The Blunders of Church Courts**

**VI. The Boundaries of Church Courts**

### **WCF 31.1**

For the better government, and further edification of the Church, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called synods or councils.

### **WCF 31.2<sup>1</sup>**

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 virtue of their office, or they, with other fit persons upon delegation from their Churches, may meet together in such assemblies.

### **WCF 31.3**

It belongs 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...

### **WCF 31.3**

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.

## **I. The Benefits of Church Courts**

### **A. Better government of the Church**

### **B. Further edification of the church**

## **II. The Beginning of Church Courts**

### **A. Magistrates may call them**

1. For consultation and advice about religious matters

### **B. Ministers may call them**

1. If magistrates are open enemies to the Church
2. Ministers and other Church delegates may meet in Church courts

## **III. The Business of Church Courts**

*It belongs to synods and councils, ministerially*

### **A. To determine**

1. Controversies of faith
2. Cases of conscience

### **B. To set down rules**

1. For public worship
2. For church government

### **C. To receive complaints**

1. In cases of maladministration
2. And authoritatively determine the same

## **IV. The Bowing to Church Courts**

### **A. Right rulings**

### **B. Right reception**

1. Reverence
2. Submission

### **C. Right reasons**

1. The support of the Word
2. The power of God
- 3.

#### **WCF 31.4**

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.

#### **WCF 31.5**

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

---

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph has been omitted by the **OPC**, the **PCA**, and the **RPCNA**. The **ARP** have edited it to allow that in extraordinary circumstances the magistrate can call a synod.

#### **V. The Blunders of Church Courts**

- A. Church courts err in faith and practice**
- B. Church courts are not the rule of faith and practice**
- C. Church courts help faith and practice**

#### **VI. The Boundaries of Church Courts**

- A. Two clear boundaries**
  - 1. Inside = Ecclesiastical matters
  - 2. Outside = Civil matters
- B. Two rare exceptions**
  - 1. Humble petition in extraordinary cases
  - 2. Advice when asked for by civil magistrate

**Chapter 32: Death and Resurrection**

- I. What happens on our death-day?
- II. What happens on the last day?

### **WCF 32.1**

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 acknowledges none.

### **WCF 32.2-32.3**

(32.2) 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 forever.

(32.3) The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor: the bodies of the just, by His Spirit, unto honor; and be made conformable to His own glorious body.

### **I. What happens on our death-day?**

#### **A. Our bodies separate from our souls**

1. Our bodies go to the dust and see corruption
2. Our souls return to God who gave them

#### **B. The righteous separate from the wicked**

1. Righteous souls
  - a. Are made perfect in holiness
  - b. Are received into the highest heavens
  - c. Behold the face of God in light and glory
  - d. Wait for the full redemption of their bodies
2. Wicked souls
  - a. Are cast into hell
  - b. Remain in torments and utter darkness
  - c. Reserved to the judgment of the great day
3. No other options

### **II. What happens on the last day?**

#### **A. What happens to the living?**

1. They shall not die
2. They shall be changed

#### **B. What happens to the dead?**

1. They will be raised
2. They will be reunited
  - a. With their souls
  - b. Forever
3. They will be rewarded
  - a. The bodies of the unjust will receive dishonor
  - b. The bodies of the just will be honored
    - i. Raised by Christ's Spirit
    - ii. Conformed to Christ's body

### **Chapter 33: The Last Judgment**

- I. Who will judge?**
- II. Who will be judged?**
- III. What will be judged?**
- IV. Why are we judged?**
- V. What happens after the judgment?**
- VI. When will the judgment be?**

**WCF 33.1**

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.

**WCF 33.1**

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...

**WCF 33.1**

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

**WCF 33.2**

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.

**I. Who will judge?**

- A. God's appointed day**
- B. God's appointed standard**
- C. God's appointed judge**

**II. Who will be judged?**

- A. All apostate angels**
- B. All who have ever lived**

**III. What will be judged?**

- A. To give an account**
  - 1. Of their thoughts
  - 2. Of their words
  - 3. Of their deeds
- B. To receive a reward**
  - 1. According to what they have done in the body
  - 2. Whether good or evil

**IV. Why are we judged?**

*The end of God's appointing this day is*

- A. To manifest his glorious mercy**
  - 1. In the eternal salvation of the elect
- B. To manifest his glorious justice**
  - 1. In the damnation of the reprobate

### **WCF 33.2**

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.

### **WCF 33.3**

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

### **V. What happens after the judgment?**

#### **A. The righteous**

1. Eternal life
2. Eternal joy
3. Eternal presence

#### **B. The wicked**

1. Eternal torments
2. Eternal destruction
3. Eternal loneliness

### **VI. When will the judgment be?**

#### **A. A Definite Day**

1. Deters all from sin
2. Consoles the godly

#### **B. An Indefinite Date**

1. Reduces carnal security
2. Increases watchfulness
3. Intensifies prayer

*Come Lord Jesus, come quickly, Amen.*