



EKKLESIA MUSKOGEE

FORMS OF UNITY

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO
The Identity and Mission of Ekklesia Muskogee

WHO LEADS
The Leadership Structure of Ekklesia Muskogee

WHAT WE TEACH
The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith

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Chapter 1

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Identity and Mission of Ekklesia Muskogee as a Local Church

EKKLESIA MUSKOGEE IS A REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

Ekklesia Muskogee is a Reformed Baptist church that gathers for worship in Muskogee, Oklahoma. We confess the 1689 Second London Baptist Confession of Faith. We affirm the Five Solas of the Reformation as well as the Doctrines of Grace (otherwise known as *the Five Points of Calvinism*), and each of our pastors would not be ashamed to be called a Calvinist. We are a church led by elders (also called *pastors* and *overseers* in the scriptures), of which there is a plurality. Our mission is to make disciples, love cities, and plant churches.

We believe the local church is a community of regenerated believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. They have been reconciled both to God and one another through the work of Jesus Christ. In obedience to the Bible they organize under qualified leadership, gather regularly for preaching and worship, observe Baptism and the Lord's Supper as biblical sacraments; they are unified by the Holy Spirit and disciplined for holiness; they scatter to fulfill the Great Commandment (to love God and man) as well as the Great Commission (to make disciples of all nations). They are to do all this as missionaries to the world for God's glory and people's good.

WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP EVERY SUNDAY

Our worship gatherings are completely centered on the gospel, for the glory of God and the good of all people.

We worship God the Father, Son, and Spirit together through the preaching and receiving of the gospel from the Bible, singing, praying, taking the Lord's Supper, observing Baptism as the outward sign of faith in Jesus, as well as the giving of our finances to fuel the mission of Jesus' church.

OUR COMMUNITY GROUPS MEET EVERY WEEK IN ONE ANOTHER'S HOMES

In addition to gathering for worship every Sunday, we have Community Groups that typically meet at least once per week. If the local church is like a family, the Sunday gathering is like a family reunion and Community Groups are like an immediate family. Each week we gather in these smaller groups to share a meal, pray, study the Bible, discuss the previous week's sermon, and generally seek one another's good. To get plugged in to a Community Group, come to a worship gathering, email brett@ekkleSIAMuskogee.church, or call pastor Brett at (918) 348-1595.

WE ARE DEVOTED TO FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION

We seek to make disciples of Jesus, in obedience to his commands.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20

We believe a disciple is someone who has received a new identity from Jesus, by grace through faith, which leads to new activity for Jesus. The new identity we receive in Christ includes adoption into God’s family, forgiveness of sins, as well as being counted righteous before God. By God’s grace, this new identity leads to new activity. This new activity is summed up in one word: holiness. To be holy means to be set apart in obedience to God. This is the true aim of every Christian because the Holy Spirit works in them both to will and to work his good pleasure, though we all stumble in many ways. These blessings are received through faith in Jesus and his gospel, to the praise of God’s glorious grace.

We believe unbelievers need to hear the Gospel and be exhorted to turn from their sin and put their faith in Jesus alone so that they may be saved from their sin, escaping the wrath of God and becoming a citizen of heaven.

In addition, we believe Christians need to hear the Gospel and be exhorted in much the same way, because the Gospel is the fuel for the Christian life. As the Holy Spirit changes us we continually gaze at Jesus and his commands become a joy to obey. We believe ordinary means of grace such as prayer, Bible study, corporate worship, and being engaged in Christian community are vital for the life of a Christian.

WE ARE DEVOTED TO LOVING CITIES

As we seek to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, we all also seek to love our neighbor.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:37-39

We believe we should love our city through *evangelism*, *prayer*, and *practical service*. This includes engaging people with the Gospel outside of church gatherings, inviting people to worship gatherings and community groups, as well as being involved in various organizations that are already working to make Muskogee peaceful and prosperous. We are also open to starting new ministries when needed to better love our neighbors. We strive to always be seeking the peace and prosperity of the city as a whole (Jeremiah 29:4-11), as well as loving our neighbors individually (Luke 10:25-37).

WE WANT TO PLANT OTHER GOSPEL-CENTERED CHURCHES

We plant churches so that more people will be saved by Jesus as well as grow in love and service to both God and neighbor.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Jesus, in Acts 1:8

We believe the promise of Acts 1:8 will be ultimately fulfilled by Jesus, through his church, as they obey the great commission. For Ekklesia Muskogee, planting churches is a natural extension of Jesus’ command for us to *make disciples of all nations*. Church planting is a priority for us. We believe the book of Acts shows this: the way the first Christians sought to fulfill the great commission (Matthew 28:19-20) was by planting churches that would preach the gospel, love God, love their neighbors, and seek to plant other churches. Through churches, people hear about Jesus, come to faith in him, worship God, experience true community, and become part of Jesus’ mission here on earth. By God’s grace, we are committed to what we believe is the same mission of the Apostles in the book of Acts: plant the gospel in different communities across the globe by planting churches.

Chapter 2

WHO LEADS

The Leadership Structure of Ekklesia Muskogee as a Local Church

JESUS, THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

Jesus lived, died, and arose to reconcile sinners both to God and to one another as the church (Eph. 5:25). Jesus is the ultimate authority and head over the church (Eph. 1:9, 19-23, 4:15-16, 5:23). Jesus is the apostle that plants a church (Heb. 3:1). Jesus is the leader who builds the church (Matt. 16:18). Jesus is the chief Shepherd that rules the church (2 Pet. 5:4). In addition, it is ultimately Jesus who closes churches when they have become faithless or fruitless (Rev. 2:5). Therefore it is vital that we as a local church love, obey, imitate, and follow Jesus at all times, remembering everything is about Jesus (Col. 1:15-20).

How do we know if we are following Jesus as the ultimate authority in our local church? We know we are obeying Jesus as we hold to the scriptures as the final rule for faith and practice. We believe what we believe because of what is written. We do what we do because of what is written. We must study, pray, and meditate on the scriptures, asking God's help to understand and apply the truths therein. This is how we obey Jesus as a local church (1 Tim. 3:16-17).

HUMAN LEADERSHIP, UNDER JESUS' AUTHORITY

Human leadership in local churches is little more than qualified believers who are following Jesus and encouraging others to follow them as they emulate faithfulness. Church leaders must be good sheep who follow their chief Shepherd faithfully before they are fit to be shepherds leading sheep. This is in large part what the Apostle Paul meant as he wrote,

"Be imitators of me as I am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Serving under Jesus in formal local church offices are pastors (also called *elders* and *overseers*) and deacons. In the opening his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul well illustrated church structure when he wrote,

"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the pastors and deacons." (Philippians 1:1)

Packed into this one verse we discover the three kinds of believers that take responsibility for the health and progress of the local church: members, pastors, and deacons.

PASTORS, THE QUALIFIED AND ENTRUSTED LEADERS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

PASTORS MUST BE QUALIFIED MEN

Pastors, also called elders and overseers in the New Testament, are the godly male shepherds of the local church (1 Tim. 3:1-7). The Apostle Paul teaches that godly men are those who have strong prayer lives (1 Tim. 2:8), are a clear

example of being a servant (1 Pet. 5:2-3), and are practically responsible in leading their homes as well as leading in the public square (1 Tim. 3:4-7). The following is why we believe that scriptures teach that only the best of Jesus' men should serve as pastors:

1. God made humanity male and female, which means that men and women are equal yet different (Gen. 1:26-27).
2. The senior spiritual leadership of God's people in the Old Testament was comprised of male priests.
3. Jesus chose twelve men as his apostles. Although he befriended, loved, taught, honored, healed, and included women in his ministry, he did not place them in a senior position of leadership.
4. In 1 Timothy 2:11-3:5, Paul first states that women should learn doctrine and theology. This was brand new in the days of the early church. Apparently the women in Ephesus were behaving in a disrespectful fashion during church gatherings. They were much like their Christian sisters in Corinth (1 Cor. 14:33-35) whom Paul likewise commanded to be respectful toward church leadership. Paul added two requirements for the Ephesian women who wanted to learn theology and doctrine: quietness and submissiveness.
5. Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, emphatically commanded that women should not "teach" men nor "exercise authority" over men in the church (1 Tim. 2:12). Simply, this rules out women for the position or function of pastor. Serving or functioning as a pastor includes such things as ruling and leading the church, managing the church, rightly exercising authority in the church, teaching the Bible correctly, preaching, teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings, leading the disciplinary process concerning unrepentant Christians within the church, and developing other leaders and teachers. These are just a few of the qualifications which are impossible to carry out without having authority over some and being able to teach them. Therefore by the clear testimony of God we are firmly convinced that only Jesus' best men are to be or function as pastors in the local church.

PASTORAL QUALIFICATIONS

According to the Bible, formal theological training is not required for pastors though such training can indeed be beneficial. A salary is also not required though pastors are worth an honorable wage (1 Tim. 5:17-18). Ultimately, the Holy Spirit appoints men as pastors. Paul tells the Ephesian elders,

"the Holy Spirit has made you overseers." (Acts 20:28)

If a man desires the task of overseer (1 Tim. 3:1), he should submit himself to the oversight of his current pastors and church members for examination to see if he meets the qualifications. There are two major passages in God's word that set forth the qualifications for pastors, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

Primarily, these passages are dealing with the pastor or would-be-pastor being a faithful Christian who follows Jesus in every aspect of his life, bearing fruits in keeping with repentance. This is what all Christians are commanded and empowered to do, though “we all stumble in many ways” (James 3:2).

Before appointing a new pastor, the current pastors as well as church members should examine the pastor in training and then agree to appoint him to the office. This should not be done hastily or flippantly because God says through the Apostle Paul,

“Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.” (1 Timothy 5:22)

PASTORAL DUTIES

The duties of pastors laid out in scripture at least these:

- Prayer and the study of scripture (Acts 6:4)
- Ruling and leading the church (1 Tim. 5:17)
- Managing the church (1 Tim. 3:4-5)
- Caring for the members of the church (1 Pet. 5:2-5)
- Living exemplary lives (Heb. 13:7)
- Rightly using the authority God has given them (Acts 20:28)
- Teaching the Bible correctly (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:2)
- Preaching (1 Tim. 5:17)
- Praying for the sick (James 5:13-15)
- Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Tit. 1:9)
- Working hard (1 Thess. 5:12)
- Rightly using money and authority (1 Pet. 5:1-3)
- Protecting the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17-31)
- Overseeing the discipline of unrepentant members (Matt. 18:15-17, Gal. 6:1-5)
- Obeying the secular laws as a legal ruling body of a corporation (Rom. 13:1-7)
- Giving account to God for the church (Heb. 13:17)
- Training other leaders and teachers (Eph. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 2:1-2)

FIRST AMONG EQUALS

The specific responsibilities of the team of pastors will vary according to gifting and personality. We believe there should be one man who is the leader of the pastors, a first among equals. We see this in scripture by the role that Peter fulfilled among the Apostles (Acts 1:15-22; 2:14-40; Matt. 16:18). Many resist seeing leadership as a team effort, while others resist believing leadership within the pastor team is biblical. We believe that for any pastoral team to function effectively, it must have a called, qualified, gifted, devoted, humble, and competent man who leads the pastoral team and helps guard the gate for new pastors joining the team to ensure unity and faithfulness. To do his job, that man must not be offered blind obedience or given complete unaccountable authority. Rather, he must have the freedom, trust, authority, respect, honor, and

support of the other pastors and church leaders to actually lead the church. As a general rule, we think the best person to hold the position of first among equals is the primary preaching pastor. Paul says in 1 Timothy 5:17,

“Let the elders who rule well be considered of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.”

DEACONS, THE APPOINTED LEAD-SERVANTS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

The word deacon (*diakonos*) means “servant; attendant; minister; waiter; one who serves food and drink; one that runs errands” and it is both masculine and feminine. Unlike pastors, the New Testament says very little about the function of deacons.

A PROBABLE START

We believe that the first deacons were appointed by the Apostles of the early church in Acts 6:1-6. In Acts 6:2 Peter says “It is not right that we should give up preaching the Word of God to serve tables.” That word serve (*diakoneo*) is the verb form of deacon. Much as our verb form of servant is serve. We know that part of the definition for a deacon is “one who serves food and drink,” thus we conclude that this is the birth of deacons, who are “appointed servants of the church.”

WHY DEACONS?

As the early church outgrew the oversight of the Apostles in Acts 6:1-6, discrimination of the widows began to occur inadvertently. The Apostles could have given their time to that need and organization, but only if they neglected essential pastoral duties, particularly time for prayer and Bible study. Therefore lead-servants were appointed by the Apostles to serve alongside pastors and to focus on the care for the church—especially the widows and the poor. We believe it is clear in scripture that deacons are to work alongside the pastors to make sure the church is loved and cared for.

Deacons are mentioned in two specific places in The New Testament, both times in relation to pastors. This is further evidence that suggests the two groups of leaders work so closely together for the good of the local church. Practically, pastors and deacons work together like left and right hands, with pastors specializing in leading by their words and deacons specializing in leading by their works. It is worth noting that the qualification list for deacons is nearly identical to the pastors (minus the teaching and preaching abilities). They must clearly know doctrine and hold it with a clear conscience (1 Tim. 3:9). Finally, deacons are to be appointed only after they have proven themselves to the pastors and other church members as faithful and mature church members (1 Tim. 3:10).

WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF DEACONS?

While the duties of pastors are clearly articulated throughout The New Testament, the duties of deacons are not. The first deacons were appointed to serve the widows and to care for the physical needs of the church body, but

other than that we see no clear duties. Therefore in light of the literal translation of deacon being “servant,” etc. and allowing that God has not given us specific duties for them to perform, we believe the specifics should be left to each local church’s members and pastors. The specific duties will, by God’s grace, be ever-changing as a church grows larger and more people come to worship Jesus together.

WHO CAN BE A DEACON?

There is much dispute as to whether a woman can become a Deacon. Much of this debate centers on Paul’s qualifications for Deacons in 1 Timothy 3:11. Paul begins the list by speaking of the greek word “*gune*.” This Greek word is translated either “women” or “wives.” Various translations of the English Bible opt for one or the other, usually with a footnote that explains the other option. We believe it is best translated “women,” meaning *deacons who are women*. If the verse were giving qualifications for male deacons’ wives, then we would have to ask why there are no requirements for the wives of male pastors. We believe it would be misguided to believe that male deacons are held to a higher standard than male pastors, who hold the highest position of human authority in the local church. Therefore we believe that the verse should not be accepted as an additional requirement for the wives of male deacons. If understood this way the passage flows quite nicely as the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:8-10 being both for male and female deacons—indicated by the word “likewise” in the following verse (3:11) which applies those qualifications to women. 1 Timothy 3:11 goes on to list additional requirements for female deacons, while verses 12-13 list the additional requirements for male deacons.

Further evidence for female deacons is found in Romans 16:1, where Phoebe is greeted first, which denotes honor; she is called a “*diakonos*” (same word for deacon) which likely indicates she was a deacon in the church of Cenchrea. Additionally, other women whom Paul honors for their assistance to him may have also been female deacons, though this is admittedly speculative. Among them are Mary (Romans 16:6), Tryphaena and Tryphosa (Romans 16:12), and Euodia and Syntyche (Phil 4:2-3).

Lastly, most churches have women in positions of leadership and service, even if their roles are restricted to administration, women’s ministries, and children’s ministries. Unless the church calls such women by the biblical title of deacon and holds them accountable to the biblical qualifications for their leadership, they are forced to invent titles such as “director” and so on. This is problematic because it has no biblical precedent. Therefore we believe and will operate with male pastors who are the senior human leadership in the church, but who are free to appoint, by the approval of the members, both male and female deacons as lead-servants of the church.

MEMBERS, THE COVENANT BODY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

In addition to pastors and deacons, within the church are members. These church members take responsibility to ensure the local church's health and growth. Church members are Christians whose eyes are capable of seeing beyond themselves to the wellbeing of the whole body. They realize Jesus died not just for them but also for their church (Acts 20:28). They also realize that he calls them to selflessly give of their money (2 Cor 8:8-15) and abilities in order to build up their church (1 Cor. 14:12) just as Jesus has selflessly given his riches and abilities to redeem us.

WHO SHOULD BE A CHURCH MEMBER?

Some Christians question whether they need to have a church home in which they participate as official members. The illustrative imagery of the church through The New Testament leaves no room for non-membership. The imagery used includes the fact that Christians are to work together as a family (1 Tim. 3:15; 5:1-2) or as the parts of a body (1 Cor. 12:16-17). The early church had a notion of membership that included numerical records (Acts 2:37-47), records of widows (1 Tim. 5:3-16), elections of deacons (Acts 6:1-6), discipline (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5; Gal. 6:1), accountability (Heb. 13:17), and an awareness of who was a church member (Rom. 16:1-16).

We believe obedience to New Testament teaching requires that a Christian be an official member of a local church. When the Bible speaks of church membership it does not take it lightly, but does so with all seriousness in relational terms. Christians are to work within their particular church for the cause of the gospel (Rom. 12:4-5; Eph. 2:18-19). Church members must be trained and released to use their gifts and resources in various ways so that they too are serving the church, behind the pastors and deacons, so that all may be doing "the work of the ministry" (Eph. 4:11-12). Inside the church and outside the church, members are to serve believers and unbelievers by telling the gospel of God concerning Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit. In addition, all members are to serve their church and the world by loving others as themselves. The church, purchased by Jesus, empowered by the Spirit, reconciled to the Father, works together as ministers of the same reconciliation of the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5).

CONCLUSION

In the church, Jesus is the ultimate authority, pastors are the entrusted leaders, deacons are the appointed lead-servants, members are the covenant body; all are ministers of the same reconciliation, a kingdom and priests to our God (Rev. 5:10).

Chapter 3

WHAT WE TEACH

The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith

The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith, also called the Second London Baptist Confession, was written by Particular Baptists, who held to a Calvinistic soteriology in England to give a formal expression of their Christian faith from a Baptist perspective.

CHAP. I.

Of the Holy Scriptures.

1. The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible (a) rule of all saving Knowledge, Faith and Obedience; Although the (b) 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 His will, which is necessary unto Salvation. (c) 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 afterward 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 (d) writing; which maketh the Holy Scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of Gods revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.

a 2 Tim. 3 15,16,17. Isa. 8. 20. Luk. 16. 29,31. Eph. 2. 20. b Rom. 1. 19,20,21. &c. ch 2. 14,15. Psal. 19. 1,2,3. c Heb. 1. 1. d Pro. 22. 19,20,21. Rom. 15. 4. 2 Pet. 1. 19,20.

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

Of the Old Testament.

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

Of the New Testament.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Pauls Epistle to the Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Phillippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, The first and second Epistles of Peter, The first, second and third Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, the Revelation. All which are given by the (e) inspiration of God, to be the rule of Faith and Life.

e 2 Tim. 3. 16.

3. The Books commonly called Apocrypha not being of (f) Divine inspiration, are no part of the Canon (or rule) of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority to the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of, then other humane writings.

f Luk. 24. 27.44. Rom. 3. 2.

4. The Authority of the Holy Scripture for which it ought to be believed dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or Church; but wholly upon (g) God (who is truth it self) the Author thereof; therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.

g 2 Pet. 1. 19,20,21. 2 Tim. 3. 16. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Joh. 5. 9.

5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church of God, to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scriptures; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the Doctrine, and the Majesty of the stile, 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 mans salvation, and many other incomparable Excellencies, and entire perfections thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence it self to be the Word of God; yet notwithstanding; our (h) 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.

h Joh. 16. 13,14. 1 Cor. 2. 10,11,12. 1 John 2. 2,20,27.

6. The whole Counsel of God concerning all things (i) necessary for his own Glory, Mans Salvation, Faith and Life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new Revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of men.

Nevertheless we acknowledge the (k) 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 humane actions and societies; which are to be (l) ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

i 2 Tim. 3. 15,16,17. Gal. 1. 8,9. k John 6. 45. 1 Cor. 2. 9,10,11,12. l 1 Cor. 11, 13,14. & ch. 14. 26. & 40.

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

m 2 Pet. 3. 16. n Ps. 19. 7. and 119. 130.

8. The Old Testament in (o) 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 (p) authentic; so as in all controversies of Religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them (q) But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have a right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded in the fear of God to read (r) and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every Nation, unto which they (s) come, that the Word of God dwelling (t) plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.

o Rom. 3. 2. p Isa. 8. 20. q Act. 15. 15. r John 5. 39. s 1 Cor. 14, 6.9.11,12.24.28. t Col. 3. 16.

9. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the (u) Scripture it self: 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 by other places that speak more clearly.

u 2 Pet. 1. 20,21. Act. 15. 15,16.

10. The supreme judge by which all controversies of Religion are to be determined, and all Decrees of Councils, opinions of ancient Writers, Doctrines of men, and private Spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which (x) Scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved.

x Mat. 22. 29.31. Eph. 2. 20 Acts 28. 23.

CHAP. II.

Of God and of the Holy Trinity.

1. The Lord our God is but (a) one only living, and true God; whose (b) subsistence is in and of himself, (c) infinite in being, and perfection, whose Essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself; (d) a most pure spirit, (e) invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, who is (f) immutable, (g) immense, (h) eternal, incomprehensible, (i) Almighty, every way infinite, (k) most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute, (l) working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable, and most righteous will, (m) for his own glory, most loving, gracious, merciful, long suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, (n) the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and withall most just, (o) and terrible in his judgements, (p) hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the (q) guilty.

a 1 Cor. 8.4 6. Deut. 6.4. b Jer 10.10. Isaiah 48.12. c Exod 3.14. d Joh. 4.24. e 1 Tim. 1.17. Deut. .15,16. f Mal. 3.6. g 1 King. 8.27. Jer. 23.23. h Ps. 90.2. i Gen. 17.1. k Isa. 6.3. l Ps. 115.3. Isa. 46.10. m Pro. 16.4. Rom. 11.36. n Exod. 34.6,7. Hebr. 11.6. o Neh. 9.32,33. p Ps. 5.5,6. q Exod. 34.7. Nahum. 1.2,3.

2. God having all (r) life, (s) glory, (t) goodness, blessedness, in and of himself: is alone in, and unto himself all-sufficient, not (u) standing in need of any Creature 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, (x) of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things, and he hath most sovereign (y) dominion over all creatures, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth; in his sight (z) all things are open and manifest, his knowledge is (a) 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 (b) all his Works, and in all his Commands; to him is due (c) from Angels and men, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience as Creatures they owe unto the Creator, and whatever he is further pleased to require of them.

r Joh. 5.26. s Ps. 148.13. t Ps. 119.68. u Job. 22.2,3. x Rom. 11.34,35,36. y Dan. 4.25. and v. 34,35. z Heb. 4.13. a Ezek. 11.5 Act. 15.18. b Ps. 145.17. c Rev. 5.12,13,14.

3. In this divine and infinite Being there are three subsistences, (d) the Father the Word (or Son) and Holy Spirit, of one substance, power, and Eternity, each having the whole Divine Essence, (e) yet the Essence undivided, the Father is of none neither begotten nor proceeding, the Son is (f) Eternally begotten of the Father, the holy Spirit (g) proceeding from the Father and the Son, all infinite, without beginning, therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and Being; but distinguished by several peculiar, relative properties, and personal relations; which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our Communion with God, and comfortable dependance on him.

d 1 Joh. 5.7. Mat. 28.19. 2 Cor. 13.14. e Exod. 3.14. Joh. 14.11. 1 Cor. 8.6. f Joh. 1.14.18. g Joh. 15.26. Gal. 4.6.

CHAP. III. **Of Gods Decree.**

1. God hath (a) Decreed in himself from all Eternity, by the most wise and holy Counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin, (b) nor hath fellowship with any therein, nor is violence offered to the will of the Creature, nor yet is the liberty, or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather (c) established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power, and faithfulness (d) in accomplishing his Decree.

a Is. 46.10. Eph. 1.11. Heb. 6.17. Rom. 9.15,18. b Jam. 1.15,17. 1 Joh. 1.5. c Act 4.27,28. Joh. 19.11. d Numb. 23.19. Eph. 1.3,4,5.

2. Although God knoweth whatsoever may, or can come to pass upon all (e) supposed conditions; yet hath he not Decreed anything, (f) because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.

e Act. 15.18. f Rom. 9.11.13.16.18.

3. By the decree of God for the manifestation of his glory (g) some men and Angels, are predestinated, or fore-ordained to Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ to the (h) praise of his glorious grace; others being left to act in their sin to their (i) just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice.

g 1 Tim. 5.21. Mat. 25.41. h Eph. 1.5,6. i Rom. 9.22,23. Jud. 4.

4. These Angels and Men thus predestinated, and fore-ordained, are particularly, and unchangeably designed; and their (k) number so certain, and definite, that it cannot be either increased, or diminished.

k 2 Tim. 2.19. Joh. 13.18.

5. Those of mankind (l) that are predestinated to 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 sheer free grace and love; (m) without any other thing in the creature as a condition or cause moving him thereunto.

l Eph. 1.4,9.11. Rom. 8.30. 2 Tim. 1.9. 1 Thes. 5.9. m Rom. 9.13.16. Eph. 1.6.12.

6. As God hath appointed the Elect unto glory, so he hath by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained (o) all the means thereunto, wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, (p) are redeemed by Christ, are effectually (q) called unto faith in Christ, by his spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith (r) unto salvation; neither are any other redeemed by Christ, or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the Elect (s) only.

o 1 Pet. 1.2. 2 Thes. 2.13. p 1 Thes. 5.9,10. q Rom. 8.30. 2 Thes. 2.13. r 1 Pet. 1.5. s Joh. 10.26. Joh. 17.9. Joh. 6.64.

7. The Doctrine of this high mystery of predestination, is to be handled with special prudence, and care; that men attending the will of God revealed in his word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their (t) eternal election; so shall this doctrine afford matter (u) of praise, reverence, and admiration of God, and (x) of humility, diligence, and abundant (y) consolation, to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.

t 1 Thes. 1.4,5. 2 Pet. 1.10. u Eph. 1.6. Rom. 11.33. x Rom. 11.5,6. y Luk. 10.20.

CHAP. IV.

Of Creation.

1. In the beginning it pleased God the Father, (a) Son, and Holy Spirit, for the manifestation of the glory of (b) his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, to Create or make the world, and all things therein, (c) whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.

a John 1.2,3. Heb. 1.2. Job 26.13 b Rom. 1.20. c Col. 1.16. Gen 2.1,2.

2. After God had made all other Creatures, he Created (d) man, male and female, with (e) reasonable and immortal souls, rendering them fit unto that life to God; for which they were Created; being (f) made after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holyness; having the Law of God (g) written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was (h) subject to change.

d Gen. 1.27. e Gen. 2.7. f Eccles. 7.29. Gen. 1.26. g Rom. 2.14,15. h Gen. 3.6.

3. Besides the Law written in their hearts, they received (i) a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which whilst they kept, they were happy in their Communion with God, and had dominion (k) over the Creatures.

i Gen. 6.17. & ch. 3.8,9,10. k Gen. 1.26,28.

CHAP. V.

Of Divine Providence.

1. God the good Creator of all things, in his infinite power, and wisdom, doth (a) uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all Creatures, and things, from the greatest even to the (b) least, by his most wise and holy providence, to the end for the which they were Created; according unto his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable Counsel of his (c) own will; to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness and mercy.

a Heb. 1.3. Job 38.11. Isa. 46 10,11. Ps. 135.6. b Mat. 10.29,30,31. c Eph. 1.11.

2. Although in relation to the foreknowledge and Decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass (d) immutably and infallibly; so that there is not any thing, befalls any (e) by chance, or without his Providence; yet by the same Providence he ordereth them to fall out, according to the nature of second causes, either (f) necessarily, freely, or contingently.

d Act. 2.23. e Pro. 16.33. f Gen. 8.22.

3. God in his ordinary Providence (g) maketh use of means; yet is free (h) to work, without, (i) above, and (k) against them at his pleasure.

g Act. 27.31.44. Isa. 55.10 11. h Hos. 1.7 i Rom. 4.19,20,21. k Dan. 3.27.

4. The Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his Providence, that his determinate Counsel (l) extendeth it self even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of Angels, and Men; (and that not by a bare permission) which also he most wisely and powerfully (m) boundeth, and otherwise ordereth, and governeth, in a manifold dispensation to his most holy (n) ends: yet so, as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the Creatures, and not from God; who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be, the author or (o) approver of sin.

l Rom. 11 32,33.34. 2 Sam. 24 1. 1 Chro. 21.1. m 2 Kings 19.28. Ps. 76.10. n Gen. 50 20. Isa. 10 6,7.12. o Ps. 50.21 1 Joh. 2.16.

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

So that whatsoever befalls any of his elect is by his appointment, for his glory, (q) and their good.

6. As for those wicked and ungodly men, whom God as a righteous judge, for former sin doth (r) blind and harden; from them he not only withholdeth his (s) Grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understanding, and wrought upon in their hearts: But sometimes also withdraweth (t) the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such (u) objects as their corruptions makes occasion of sin; and withall (x) gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan, whereby it comes to pass, that they (y) harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for the softening of others.

r Rom. 1.24.26.28. ch. 11.7.8. s Deut. 29.4. t Mat. 13.12. u Deut. 2.30. 2 King. 8.12,13. x Psal. 1.11,12. 2 Thes. 2.10,11,12. y Exod. 8.15.32. Is. 6.9,10. 1 Pet. 2.7,8.

7. As the Providence of God doth in general reach to all Creatures, so after a most special manner it taketh care of his (z) Church, and disposeth of all things to the good thereof.

z 1 Tim. 4.10. Amos 9.8.9. Isa. 43.3,4,5.

CHAP. VI.

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

1. Although God created Man upright, and perfect, and gave him a righteous law, which had been unto life had he kept it, (a) and threatened death upon the breach thereof; yet he did not long abide in this honour; (b) Satan using the subtlety of the serpent to seduce Eve, then by her seducing Adam, who without any compulsion, did willfully transgress the Law of their Creation, and the command given unto them, in eating the forbidden fruit; which God was pleased according to his wise and holy Counsel to permit, having purposed to order it, to his own glory.

a Gen. 2.16,17, b Gen. 3.12,13. 2 Cor. 11 3.

2. Our first Parents by this Sin, fell from their (c) original righteousness and communion with God, and we in them, whereby death came upon all; (d) all becoming dead in Sin, and wholly defiled, (e) in all the faculties, and parts, of soul, and body.

c Rom. 3.23. d Rom 5.12 & c. e Tit. 1.15 Gen. 6.5. Jer. 17 9. Rom. 3.10-19.

3. They being the (f) root, and by Gods appointment, standing in the room, and stead of all mankind; the guilt of the Sin was imputed, and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation, being now (g) conceived in Sin, and by nature children (h) of wrath, the servants of Sin, the subjects (i) of death and all other miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal, unless the Lord Jesus (k) set them free.

f Rom. 5.12-19. 1 Cor. 15.21,22.45.49. g Ps. 51.5. Job 14.4. h Eph. 2.3. i Rom. 6.20. & ch. 5.12. k Heb. 2.14. 1 Thes. 1.10.

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

l Rom. 8.7. Col. 1.21. m Jam. 1 14,15. Mat. 15.19.

5. The corruption of nature, during this Life, doth (n) remain in those that are regenerated: and although it be through Christ pardoned, and mortified, yet both it self, and the first motions thereof, are truly and properly (o) Sin.

n Rom. 7.18.23. Eccles. 7.20. 1 Joh. 1.8. o Rom. 7.24.25. Gal. 5.17

CHAP. VII.

Of Gods Covenant.

1. The distance between God and the Creature is so great, that although reasonable Creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have attained the reward of Life, but by some (a) voluntary condescension on Gods part, which he hath been pleased to express, by way of Covenant.

a Luk. 17.10. Job 35.7.8.

2. Moreover Man having brought himself (b) under the curse of the Law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a Covenant of Grace wherein he freely offereth unto Sinners, (c) Life and Salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them Faith in him, that they may be saved; and (d) promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal Life, his holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to believe.

b Gen. 2.17. Gal. 3.10. Rom. 3.20,21. c Rom. 8.3. Mark 16.15,16. Joh. 3.16. d Ezek. 36.26,27. Joh 6.44 45. Ps. 110.3.

3. This Covenant is revealed in the Gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of Salvation by the (e) seed of the woman, and afterwards by farther steps, until the full (f) discovery thereof was completed in the new Testament; and it is founded in that (*) Eternal Covenant transaction, that was between the Father and the Son, about the Redemption of the Elect; and it is alone by the Grace of this Covenant, that all of the posterity of fallen Adam, that ever were (g) saved, did obtain life and a blessed immortality; Man being now utterly incapable of acceptance with God upon those terms, on which Adam stood in his state of innocency.

e Gen. 3.15. f Heb. 1.1. * 2 Tim. 1.9. Tit. 1.2. g Heb, 11.6.13. Rom. 4.1,2, & c. Act. 4.12. Joh. 8.56.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Christ the Mediator.

1. It pleased God in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus his only begotten Son, according to the Covenant made between them both, (a) to be the Mediator between God and Man; the (b) Prophet, (c) Priest and (d) King; Head and Saviour of his Church, the heir of all things, and judge of the world: Unto whom he did from all Eternity (e) give a people to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

a Is. 42.1. 1 Pet. 1.19,20. b Act. 3.22. c Heb. 5.5,6. d Ps. 2.6, Luk. 1.33 Eph. 1.23 Heb. 1.2. Act. 17.31 e Is. 53.10. Joh. 17.6. Rom. 8:30.

2. The Son of God, the second Person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, the brightness of the Fathers glory, of one substance and equal with him: who made the World, who upholdeth and governeth all things he hath made: did when the fullness of time was come take unto him (f) mans nature, with all the Essential properties, and common infirmities thereof, (g) yet without sin: being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Womb of the Virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit coming down upon her, and the power of the most High overshadowing her, (h) and so was made of a Woman, of the Tribe of Judah, of the Seed of Abraham, and David according to the Scriptures: So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, were inseparably joined together in one Person: without conversion, composition, or confusion: which Person is very God, and very Man; yet one (i) Christ, the only Mediator between God and Man.

f Joh. 1.1.14. Gal. 4.4. g Rom. 8.3. Heb. 2.14.16,17. ch. 4.15. h Luk. 1.27,31.35. i Rom. 9.5. 1 Tim. 2.5.

3. The Lord Jesus in his humane nature thus united to the divine, in the Person of the Son, was sanctified, & anointed (k) with the Holy Spirit, above measure; having in him (l) all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in whom it pleased the Father that (m) all fullness should dwell: To the end that being (n) holy, harmless, undefiled, and full (o) of Grace, and Truth, he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a Mediator, and (p) Surety; which office he took not upon himself, but was thereunto (q) called by his Father; who also put (r) all power and judgement in his hand, and gave him Commandement to execute the same.

k Ps. 45.7. Act. 10.38 Joh. 3.34. l Col. 2.3. m Col. 1.19. n Heb. 7.26. o Joh. 1.14. p Heb. 7.22. q Heb. 5.5. r Joh. 5.22.27. Mat. 28.18. Act. 2.36.

4. This office the Lord Jesus did most (s) willingly undertake, which that he might discharge he was made under the Law, (t) and did perfectly fulfill it, and underwent the (u) punishment due to us, which we should have born and suffered, being made (x) Sin and a Curse for us: enduring most grievous sorrows (y) in his Soul; and most painful sufferings in his body; was crucified, and died, and remained in the state of the dead; yet saw no (z) corruption: on the (a) third day he arose from the dead, with the same (b) body in which he suffered; with which he also (c) ascended into heaven: and there sitteth at the

right hand of his Father, (d) making intercession; and shall (e) return to judge Men and Angels, at the end of the World.

s Ps. 40.7,8. Heb. 10.5-11. Joh. 10.18. t Gal. 4.4. Mat. 3.15. u Gal. 3.13. Isa. 53.6. 1 Pet. 3.18. x 2 Cor. 5.21. y Mat. 26.37,38. Luk. 22.44. Mat. 27.46. z Act. 13.37. a 1 Cor. 15.3,4. b Joh. 20.25,27. c Mark 16.19. Act. 1.9,10,11. d Rom. 8.34. Heb. 9.24 e Act. 10.42. Rom. 14.9,10. Act. 1.10.

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

f Heb. 9.14. ch. 10.14. Rom. 3.25,26. g Joh. 17.2. Heb. 9.15.

6. Although the price of Redemption was not actually paid by Christ, till after his Incarnation, (*) yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefit thereof were communicated to the Elect in all ages successively, from the beginning of the World, in and by those Promises, Types, and Sacrifices, wherein he was revealed, and signified to be the Seed of the Woman, which should bruise the Serpents head; (h) and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the World: (i) Being the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

* 1 Cor. 4.10. Heb. 4.2. 1 Pet. 1.10,11. h Rev. 13.8. i Heb. 13.8.

7. Christ in the work of Mediation acteth according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to it self; yet by reason of the Unity of the Person, that which is proper to one nature, is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the Person (k) denominated by the other nature.

k Joh. 3.13. Act. 20.28.

8. To all those for whom Christ hath obtained eternal redemption, he doth certainly, and effectually (l) apply, and communicate the same; making intercession for them, uniting them to himself by his spirit, (m) revealing unto them, in and by the word, the mystery of salvation; persuading them to believe, and obey; (n) governing their hearts by his word and spirit, and (o) overcoming all their enemies by his Almighty power, and wisdom; in such manner, and ways as are most consonant to his wonderful, and (p) unsearchable dispensation; and all of free, and absolute Grace, without any condition foreseen in them, to procure it.

l Joh. 6.37. ch. 10.15,16. & ch. 17.9. Rom. 5.10. m Joh. 17.6. Eph. 1.9. 1 Joh. 5.20. n Rom. 8.9,14. o Ps. 110.1. 1 Cor. 15.25,26. p Joh. 3.8 Eph. 1.8.

9. This office of Mediator between God and Man, is proper (q) only to Christ, who is the Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church of God; and may not be either in whole, or any part thereof transfer'd from him to any other.

q 1 Tim. 2.5.

10. This number and order of Offices is necessary; for in respect of our (r) ignorance, we stand in need of his prophetic Office; and in respect of our alienation from God, (s) and imperfection of the best of our services, we need his Priestly office, to reconcile us, and present us acceptable unto God: and in

respect o our averseness, and utter inability to return to God, and for our rescue, and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need his Kingly office, (t) to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to his Heavenly Kingdom.

r Joh. 1.18. s Col. 1.21. Gal. 5.17. t Joh. 16.8. Ps. 110.3 Luk. 1.74.75.

CHAP. IX.

Of Free Will.

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

a Mat. 17.12. Jam. 1 14. Deut. 30.19.

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

b Eccl. 7.29. c Gen. 3.6

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

d Rom. 5.6. ch. 8.7. e Eph. 2.1.5. f Tit. 3 3,4,5. Joh. 6.44.

4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of Grace (g) he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone, enables him (h) freely to will, and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that by reason of his (i) remaining corruptions he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good; but doth also will that which is evil.

g Col. 1.13. Joh. 8.36. h Phil. 2.13. i Rom. 7.15.18,19 21.23.

5. The Will of Man is made (k) perfectly, and immutably free to good alone, in the state of Glory only.

k Eph. 4.13.

CHAP. X.

Of Effectual Calling.

1. Those whom God hath predestinated unto Life, he is pleased in his appointed, and accepted time, (a) 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 (b) by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds, spiritually, and savingly to (c) understand the things of God; taking away their (d) heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his Almighty power determining them (e) to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come (f) most freely, being made willing by his Grace.

a Rom. 8.30. Rom. 11.7. Eph. 1.10,11. 2 Thes. 3.13,14.[Note] b Eph. 2.1-6. c Act. 26.18. Eph. 1.17.18. d Ezk. 36.26. e Deut. 30 6. Ezek. 36.27. Eph. 1.19. f Ps. 110.3. Cant. 1.4.

2. This Effectual Call is of God's free, and special grace alone, (g) not from any thing at all foreseen in man, nor from any power, or agency in the Creature, coworking with his special Grace, (h) the Creature being wholly passive therein, being dead in sins and trespasses, until being quickened & renewed by the holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the Grace offered and conveyed in it; and that by no less (i) power, then that which raised up Christ from the dead.

g 2 Tim. 1.9. Eph. 2.8. h 1 Cor. 2.14. Eph. 2.5. Joh. 5.25. i Eph. 1.19,20.

3. Elect Infants dying in infancy, are (k) regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit; who worketh when, and where, and (l) how he pleaseth: so also are all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the Ministry of the Word.

k Joh. 3.3 5,6. l Joh. 3.8.

4. Others not elected, although they may be called by the Ministry of the word, (m) and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet not being effectually drawn by the Father, they neither will, nor can truly (n) come to Christ; and therefore cannot be saved: much less can men that receive not the Christian Religion (o) be saved; be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the Law of that Religion they do profess.

m Mat. 22 14. ch. 13.20,21. Heb. 6.4,5. n John 6.44,45,65. l Joh. 2.24,25. o Act. 4.12. Joh. 4.22. ch. 17.3.

CHAP. XI.

Of Justification.

1. Those whom God Effectually calleth, he also freely (a) justifieth, not by infusing Righteousness into them, but by (b) pardoning their sins, and by accounting, and accepting their Persons as (c) Righteous; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone, not by imputing faith it self, the act of believing, or any other (d) evangelical obedience to them, as their Righteousness; but by imputing Christs active obedience unto the whole Law, and passive obedience in his death, for their whole and sole Righteousness, they (e) receiving, and resting on him, and his Righteousness, by Faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

a Rom. 3.24. ch. 8.30. b Rom. 4.5,6,7,8. Eph. 1.7. c 1 Cor. 1.30,31. Rom. 5.17 18,19. d Phil. 3.8,9. ph. 2.8,9,10. e Joh. 1.12. Rom. 5.17.

2. Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ, and his Righteousness, is the (f) alone instrument of Justification: yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving Graces, and is no dead faith, (g) but worketh by love.

f Rom. 3.28. g Gal. 5.6 Jam. 2.17 22,26.

3. Christ by his obedience, and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are justified; and did by the sacrifice of himself, in the blood of his cross, undergoing in their stead, the penalty due unto them: make a proper, real and full satisfaction (h) to Gods justice in their behalf: yet in asmuch as he was given by the Father for them, and his Obedience and Satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both (i) freely, not for any thing in them; their Justification is only of Free Grace, that both the exact justice and rich Grace of God, might be (k) glorified in the Justification of sinners.

h Heb. 10.14. 1 Pet. 1.18,19. Isa. 53.5,6. i Rom. 8.32. 2 Cor. 5.21. k Rom. 3.26. Eph. 1.6,7. ch. 2.7.

4. God did from all eternity decree to (l) justify until all the Elect, and Christ did in the fulness of time die for their sins, and rise (m) again for their Justification; Nevertheless they are not justified personally, untill the Holy Spirit, doth in due time (n) actually apply Christ unto them.

l Gal. 3.8. 1 Pet. 1.2. 1 Tim. 2.6. m Rom. 4.25. n Col. 1.21;22. Tit. 3.4,5,6,7.

5. God doth continue to (o) Forgive the sins of those that are justified, and although they can never fall from the state of (p) justification; yet they may by their sins fall under Gods (q) Fatherly displeasure; and in that condition, they have not usually the light of his Countenance restored unto them, untill they (r) humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith, and repentance.

o Mat. 6.12. 1 John 1.7,9. p Joh. 10.28. q Ps. 89.31,32,33. r Psal. 32:5. & 51. Mat. 26.75.

6. The Justification of Believers under the Old Testament was in all these respects, (s) one and the same with the justification of Believers under the New Testament.

s Gal. 3.9. Rom. 4.22,23,24.

CHAP. XII.

Of Adoption.

1. All those that are justified, God vouchsafed, in, and for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the Grace (a) of Adoption; by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the Liberties, and (b) Privileges of Children of God; have his (c) name put upon them, (d) receive the Spirit of Adoption, (e) have access to the throne of Grace with boldness, are enabled to cry Abba, Father, are (f) pitied, (g) protected, (i) provided for, and (k) chastened by him, as by a Father; yet never (l) cast off; but sealed (m) to the day of Redemption, and inherit the promises, (n) as heirs, of everlasting Salvation.

a Eph. 1.5. Gal. 4.4,5. b Joh. 1.12 Rom. 8.17 c 2 Cor. 6.18. Rev. 3.12. d Rom. 8.15. e Gal. 4.6. Eph. 2.18 f Ps. 103.13. g Prov. 14.26. i 1 Pet. 5.7. k Heb. 12.6. l Is. 54.8,9. Lam. 3.31. m Eph. 4.30. n Heb. 1.14. ch. 6.12.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Sanctification.

1. They who are united to Christ, Effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart, and a new Spirit created in them, through the virtue of Christ's death, and Resurrection; are also (a) farther sanctified, really, and personally, through the same virtue, (b) by his word and Spirit dwelling in them; (c) the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, (d) and the several lusts thereof, are more and more weakened, and mortified; and they more and more quickened, and (e) strengthened in all saving graces, to the (f) practice of all true holyness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

a Act. 20.32. Rom. 6.5,6. b Joh. 17.17. Eph. 3.16,17,18,19. 1 Thes. 5.21,22,23. c Rom. 6.14. d Gal. 5.24. e Col 1.11. f 2 Cor. 7.1. Heb. 12.14.

2. This Sanctification is (g) throughout, in the whole man, yet imperfect (h) in this life; there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a (i) continual, and irreconcilable war; the Flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh.

g 1 Thes. 5.23. h Rom. 7.18,23. i Gal. 5.17. 1 Pet. 2.11.

3. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much (k) prevail; yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ the (l) regenerate part doth overcome; and so the Saints grow in Grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, (m) pressing after an heavenly life, in Evangelical Obedience to all the commands which Christ as Head and King, in his Word hath prescribed to them.

k Rom. 7.23. l Rom. 6.14. m Eph. 4.15.16. 2 Cor. 3.18. ch. 7.1.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Saving Faith.

1. The Grace of Faith, whereby the Elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ (a) in their hearts; and is ordinarily wrought by the Ministry of the (b) Word; by which also, and by the administration of Baptism, and the Lords Supper, Prayer and other Means appointed of God, it is increased, (c) and strengthened.

a 2 Cor. 4.13. Eph. 2.8. b Rom. 10 14.17. c Luk. 17.5. 1 Pet. 2.2. Act. 20.32.

2. By this Faith, a Christian believeth to be true, (*) whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the Authority of God himself; and also apprehendeth an excellency therein, (d) above all other Writings; and all things in the world: as it bears forth the Glory of God in his Attributes, the excellency of Christ in his Nature and Offices; and the Power and Fullness of the Holy Spirit in his Workings, and Operations; and so is enabled to (e) cast his Soul upon the truth thus believed; and also acteth differently, upon that which each particular, passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the (f) commands, trembling at the (g) threatenings, and embracing the (h) promises of God, for this life, and that which is to come: But the principal acts of Saving Faith, have immediate

relation to Christ, accepting, receiving, and resting upon (i) him alone, for Justification, Sanctification, and Eternal Life, by virtue of the Covenant of Grace.

* Act. 24.14. d Ps. 19.7,8,9,10. Ps. 119.72. e 2 Tim. 1.12. f Joh. 15.14. g Is. 66.2. h Heb. 11.13. i Joh. 1.12. Act. 16.31. Gal. 2.20. Act. 15.11.

3. This Faith although it be different in degrees, and may be weak, (k) or strong; yet it is in the least degree of it, different in the kind, or nature of it (as is all other saving Grace) from the Faith, (l) and common grace of temporary believers; and therefore though it may be many times assailed, and weakened; yet it gets (m) the victory; growing up in many, to the attainment of a full (n) assurance through Christ, who is both the Author (o) and finisher of our Faith.

k Heb. 5.13,14. Mat. 6.30 Rom. 4.19 20.12 Pet. 1.1. m Eph. 6.16. 1 Joh. 5.4,5. n Heb. 6.11,12. Col. 2.2. o Heb. 12.2.

CHAP. XV.

Of Repentance unto Life and Salvation.

1. Such of the Elect as are converted at riper years, having (a) sometimes lived in the state of nature, and therein served divers lusts and pleasures, God in their Effectual Calling giveth them Repentance unto Life.

a Tit. 3.2,3,4,5.

2. Whereas there is none that doth good, and sinneth (b) not; and the best of men may through the power, and deceitfulness of their corruption dwelling in them, with the prevalency of temptation, fall into great sins, and provocations; God hath in the Covenant of Grace, mercifully provided that Believers so sinning, and falling, (c) be renewed through Repentance unto Salvation.

b Eccl. 7.20. c Luk. 22.31,32.

3. This saving Repentance is an (d) evangelical Grace, whereby a person being by the Holy Spirit made sensible of the manifold evils of his sin, doth, by Faith in Christ, humble himself for it, with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self abhorreny; (e) praying for pardon, and strength of grace, with a purpose and endeavour by supplies of the Spirit, to (f) walk before God unto all well pleasing in all things.

d Zech. 12.10. Act. 11.18. e Ezek. 36.31. 2 Cor. 7.11. f Ps. 119.6. Ps. 119.128.

4. As Repentance is to be continued through the whole course of our lives, upon the account of the body of death, and the motions thereof; so it is every mans duty, to repent of his (g) particular known sins, particularly.

g Luk. 19.8. 1 Tim. 1.13,15.

5. Such is the provision which God hath made through Christ in the Covenant of Grace, for the preservation of Believers unto Salvation, that although there is no sin so small, but it deserves (h) damnation; yet there is no sin so great, that it shall bring damnation on them that (i) repent; which makes the constant preaching of Repentance necessary.

h Rom. 6.23. i Is. 1.16,18. Is. 55.7.

CHAP. XVI.

Of Good Works.

1. Good Works are only such as God hath (a) commanded in his Holy word; and not such as without the warrant thereof, are devised by men, out of blind zeal, (b) or upon any pretense of good intentions.

a Mic. 6.8. Heb. 13 21. b Mat. 15.9. Isa. 29.13.

2. These good works, done in obedience to Gods commandments, are the fruits, and evidences (c) of a true, and lively faith; and by them Believers manifest their (d) thankfulness, strengthen their (e) assurance, edify their (f) brethren, adorn the profession of the Gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries and glorify (g) God whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus (h) thereunto, that having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end (i) eternal life.

c Jam. 2.18,22. d Ps. 116.12,13. e 1 Joh. 2 3.5. 2 Pet. 1.5-11. f Mat. 5.16. g 1 Tim. 6.1. 1 Pet. 2.15. Phil. 1.11 h Eph. 2.10. i Rom. 6.22.

3. Their ability to do good works, is not at all of themselves; but wholly from the Spirit (k) of Christ; and that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is necessary an (l) 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 (m) stirring up the Grace of God that is in them.

k Joh. 15.4.6. l 2 Cor. 3.5. Phil. 2.13. m Phil. 2.12. Heb. 6.11 12. Isa. 64.7.

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

n Job 9.2 3. Gal. 5.17. Luk. 17.10.

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 (o) 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 (p) Spirit, and as they are wrought by us they are defiled (q) and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection that they cannot endure the severity of Gods judgement.

o Rom. 3.20. Eph. 2.8,9. Rom. 4.6. p Gal. 5.22,23. q Isa. 64.6. Ps. 143 2.

6. Yet notwithstanding the persons of Believers being accepted through Christ their good works also are accepted in (r) him; not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unreprouable in Gods sight; but that he looking upon them in his Son is pleased to accept and reward that which is (s) sincere although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.

r Eph. 1.6. 1 Pet. 2.5. s Mat. 25.21,23. Heb. 6.10

7. Works done by unregenerate men although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use, both to themselves and (t) others; yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by (u) faith, nor are done in a right manner according to the (w) word, nor to a right end the (x) glory of God; they are therefore sinful and cannot please God; nor make a man meet to receive grace from (y) God; and yet their neglect of them is more sinful and (z) displeasing to God.

t 2 King. 10.30. 1 King. 21.27,29 u Gen. 4.5. Heb. 11 4.6. w 1 Cor. 13.1. x Mat. 6.2.5. y Amos 5 21.22. Rom. 9.16 Tit. 3.5. z Job 21.14,15. Mat. 25.41,42,43.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Perseverance of the Saints.

1. Those whom God hath accepted in the beloved, effectually called and Sanctified by his Spirit, and given the precious faith of his Elect unto, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace; (a) but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved, seeing the gifts and callings of God are without Repentance, (whence he still begets and nourisheth in them Faith, Repentance, Love, Joy, Hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality) and though many storms and floods arise and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon: notwithstanding through unbelief and the temptations of Satan the sensible sight of the light and love of God, may for a time be clouded, and obscured from (b) them, yet he is still the same (c) and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God unto Salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraven upon the palm of his hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all Eternity.

a Joh. 10.28,29. Phi. 1.6. 2 Tim. 2.19. 1 Joh. 2.19. b Psal. 89.31,32. 1 Cor. 11.32. c Mal. 3.6.

2. This perseverance of the Saints depends not upon their own free will; but upon the immutability of the decree of (d) Election flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ (e) and Union with him, the (f) oath of God, the abiding of his Spirit & the (g) seed of God within them, and the nature of the (h) Covenant of Grace from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

d Rom. 8.30. ch. 9.11.16. e Rom. 5.9,10. John 14.19. f Heb. 6.17,18. g 1 Joh. 3.9. h Jer. 32.40.

3. And though they may through the temptation of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of means of their preservation fall into grievous (i) sins, and for a time continue therein; whereby they incur (k) Gods displeasure, and grieve his holy Spirit, come to have their graces and (l) comforts impaired have their hearts hardened, and their Consciences wounded, (m) hurt, and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgements (n) upon themselves: yet they shall renew their (o) repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation.

1. Although temporary Believers, and other unregenerate men, may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions, of being in the favour of God, and state of salvation, (a) which hope of theirs shall perish; yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good Conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured (b) 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 (c) ashamed.

a Job 8.13.14. Mat. 7.22 23. b 1 Joh. 2.3. ch. 3.14 18,19.21.24. ch. 5.13. c Rom. 5.2.5.

2. This certainty is not a bare conjectural, and probable persuasion, grounded upon (d) a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith founded on the Blood and Righteousness of Christ (e) revealed in the Gospel; and also upon the inward (f) evidence of those graces of the Spirit unto which promises are made, and on the testimony of the (g) Spirit of adoption, witnessing with our Spirits that we are the children of God; and as a fruit thereof keeping the heart both (h) humble and holy.

d Heb. 6.11.19. e Heb. 6.17,18. f 2 Pet. 1.4,5,10.11. g Rom. 8.15,16. h 1 Joh. 3 1,2,3.

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 (i) 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 means (k) attain thereunto: and therefore it is the duty of every one, to give all diligence to make their Calling and Election sure, that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the holy Spirit, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper (l) fruits of this Assurance; so far is it (m) from inclining men to looseness.

i Isa. 50.10. Ps. 88. & Psa. 77.1-12. k 1 Joh. 4 13. Heb. 6.11 12. l Rom. 5.1,2.5. ch. 14,17. Ps. 119.32. m Rom. 6.1,2. Tit. 2.11,12.14.

4. True Believers may have the assurance of their Salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as (n) by negligence in preserving of it, by (o) falling into some special Sin, which woundeth the Conscience, and grieveth the Spirit, by some sudden or (p) vehement temptation, by Gods withdrawing the (q) light of his countenance and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light; yet are they never destitute of the (r) seed of God, and Life (s) 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 (t) revived: and by the which in the mean time they are (u) preserved from utter despair.

n Cant. 5.2,3.6. o Ps. 51.8.12.14. p Psa. 116.11. Ps. 77.7,8. Ps. 31 22. q Ps. 30.7 r 1 Joh. 3.9. s Luk. 22.32. t Ps. 42.5.11. u Lam. 3.26.27-31.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the Law of God.

1. God gave to Adam a Law of universal obedience, (a) written in his Heart, and a particular precept of not eating the Fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; by which he bound him, and all his posterity to personal entire exact and perpetual (b) obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and (c) threatened death upon the breach of it; and indued him with power and ability to keep it.

a Gen. 1.27. Eccl. 7.29. b Rom. 10 5. c Gal. 3.10.12,

2. The same Law that was first written in the heart of man, (d) continued to be a perfect rule of Righteousness after the fall; & was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in (e) Ten Commandments and written in two Tables; the four first containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to man.

d Rom. 2.14,15. e Deut. 10.4.

3. Besides this Law commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel Ceremonial Laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, (f) prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth divers instructions (g) of moral duties, all which Ceremonial Laws being appointed only to the time of reformation, are by Jesus Christ the true Messiah and only Law-giver who was furnished with power from the Father, for that end, (h) abrogated and taken away.

f Heb. 10.1. Col. 2.17. g 1 Cor. 5 7. h Col. 2.14,16,17 Eph. 2.14.16.

4. To them also he gave sundry judicial Laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any now by virtue of that institution; their general (i) equity only, being of moral use.

i 1 Cor. 9.8,9,10.

5. The moral Law doth for ever bind all, (k) 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 (l) authority of God the Creator; who gave it: Neither doth Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve, (m) but much strengthen this obligation.

k Rom. 13 8,9,10. Jam. 2.8,10,11,12 l Jam. 2 10,11. m Mat. 5.17,18,19. Rom. 3.31.

6. Although true Believers be not under the Law, as a Covenant of Works, (n) to be thereby Justified or condemned; yet it is of great use to them as well as to others: in that, as a Rule of Life, informing them of the Will of God, and their Duty, it directs and binds them, to walk accordingly; (o) discovering also the sinful pollutions of their Natures, Hearts and Lives; so as Examining themselves thereby, they may come to further Conviction of, Humiliation for, and Hatred against Sin; together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ and the perfection of his Obedience: It is likewise of use to the Regenerate to restrain their Corruptions, in that it forbids Sin; and the Threatenings of it serve to shew what even their Sins deserve; and what afflictions in this Life they may expect for them, although free'd from the Curse

and unallayed Rigor thereof. The Promises of it likewise shew them Gods approbation of Obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof, though not as due to them by the Law as a Covenant of Works; so as mans doing Good and refraining from Evil, because the Law encourageth to the one and deterreth from the other, is no Evidence of his being (p) under the Law and not under Grace.

n Rom. 6.14. Gal. 2.16. Rom. 8.1. cha. 10.4. o Rom. 3.20. chap. 7.7. & c. p Rom. 6.12,13,14. 1 Pet. 3.8.-13.

7. Neither are the forementioned uses of the Law (q) contrary to the Grace of the Gospel; but do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing (r) 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.

q Gal. 3.21. r Eze. 36.27.

CHAP. XX.

Of the Gospel, and of the extent of the Grace thereof.

1. The Covenant of Works being broken by Sin, and made unprofitable unto Life; God was pleased to give forth the promise of Christ, (a) the Seed of the Woman, as the means of calling the Elect, and begetting in them Faith and Repentance; in this Promise, the (b) Gospel, as to the substance of it, was revealed, and therein Effectual, for the Conversion and Salvation of Sinners.

a Gen. 3.15. b Rev. 13.8.

2. This Promise of Christ, and Salvation by him, is revealed only by (c) the Word of God; neither do the Works of Creation, or Providence, with the light of Nature, (d) make discovery of Christ, or of Grace by him; so much as in a general, or obscure way; much less that men destitute of the Revelation of him by the Promise, or Gospel; (e) should be enabled thereby, to attain saving Faith, or Repentance.

c Rom. 1.17. d Ro. 10.14,15,17. e Pro. 29.18. Isa. 25.7. with ch. 60.2,3.

3. The Revelation of the Gospel unto Sinners, made in divers times, and by sundry parts; with the addition of Promises, and Precepts for the Obedience required therein, as to the Nations, and Persons, to whom it is granted, is merely of the (f) Sovereign Will and good Pleasure of God; not being annexed by virtue of any Promise, to the due improvement of mens natural abilities, by virtue of Common light received, without it; which none ever did (g) make, or can so do: And therefore in all Ages the preaching of the Gospel hath been granted unto persons and Nations, as to the extent, or straightening of it, in great variety, according to the Council of the Will of God.

f Ps. 147.20. Act. 16.7. g Rom. 1.18, &c.

4. Although the Gospel be the only outward means, of revealing Christ, and saving Grace; and is, as such, abundantly sufficient thereunto; yet that men who are dead in Trespases, may be born again, Quickened or Regenerated; there is moreover necessary, an effectual, insuperable (h) work of the Holy Spirit, upon

the whole Soul, for the producing in them a new spiritual Life; without which no other means will effect (i) their Conversion unto God.

h Ps. 110.3. 1 Cor. 2.14, Eph. 1.19 20. i Joh. 6.44. 2 Cor. 4.4.6.

CHAP. XXI.

Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience.

1. The Liberty which Christ hath purchased for Believers under the Gospel, consists in their freedom from the guilt of Sin, the condemning wrath of God, the Rigor and (a) Curse of the Law; and in their being delivered from this present evil (b) World, Bondage to (c) Satan, and Dominion (d) of Sin; from the (e) Evil of Afflictions; the Fear, and Sting (f) of Death, the Victory of the Grave, and (g) Everlasting Damnation; as also in their (h) free access to God; and their yielding Obedience unto him not out of a slavish fear, (i) but a Child-like love, and willing mind.

All which were common also to Believers under the Law (k) for the substance of them; 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 (l) Free Spirit of God, then Believers under the Law did ordinarily partake of.

a Gal. 3.13. b Gal. 1.4. c Act. 26.18. d Rom. 8.3. e Rom. 8.28. f 1 Cor. 15.54,55,56,57. g 2 Thes. 1.10. h Rom. 8.15. i Luk. 1.74,75. 1 Joh. 4 18. k Gal. 3,9:14. l Joh. 7.38,39. Heb. 10, 19,20,21.

2. God alone is (m) Lord of the Conscience, and hath left it free from the Doctrines and Commandments of men, (n) which are in any thing contrary to his Word, or not contained in it. So that to Believe such Doctrines, or obey such Commands out of Conscience, (o) is to betray true liberty of Conscience; and the requiring of an (p) implicit Faith, and absolute and blind Obedience, is to destroy Liberty of Conscience, and Reason also.

m Jam. 4.12, Rom. 14.4. n Act. 4.19 & 5.29. 1 Cor. 7.23. Mat. 15.9: o Col: 2.20 22,23: p 1 Cor. 3.5: 2 Cor. 1.24.

3. They who upon pretense of Christian Liberty do practice any sin, or cherish any sinful lust; as they do thereby pervert the main design of the Grace of the Gospel, (q) to their own Destruction; so they wholly destroy (r) the end of Christian Liberty, which is, that being delivered out of the hands of all our Enemies we might serve the Lord without fear in Holiness, and Righteousness before him, all the days of our Life.

q Rom. 6.1,2. r Gal. 5.13. 2 Pet. 2.18.-21.

CHAP. XXII.

Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day.

1. The light of Nature shews that there is a God, who hath Lordship, and Sovereignty over all; is just, 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 all the Soul, (a) and with all the Might. But the acceptable way of Worshipping the true God, is (b) 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 representations, or (c) any other way, not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.

a Jer. 10.7. Mar. 12.33. b Deut. 12 32. c Exo 20.4,5,6.

2. Religious Worship is to be given to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to him (d) alone; not to Angels, Saints, or any other (e) Creatures; and since the fall, not without a (f) Mediator, nor in the Mediation of any other but (g) Christ alone.

d Mat. 4.9,10. Joh 6.23. Mat. 28.19. e Rom. 1.25. Col. 2.18. Revel. 19.10. f Joh. 14.6. g 1 Tim. 2.5.

3. Prayer with thanksgiving, being one special part of natural worship, is by God required of (h) all men. But that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the (i) Name of the Son, by the help (k) of the Spirit, according to (l) his Will; with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and when with others, in a (m) known tongue.

h Psal. 95 1-7. Psal. 65.2. i Joh. 14.13,14. k Rom. 8.26. l 1 Joh. 5.14. m 1 Cor. 14.16,17.

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

n 1 Tim. 2.1,2. 2 Sam. 7.29. o 2 Sam. 12.21,22,23. p 1 Joh. 5.16.

5. The (q) reading of the Scriptures, Preaching, and (r) hearing the word of God, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual songs, singing with grace in our Hearts to (s) the Lord; as also the Administration (t) of Baptism, and (u) the Lords Supper are all parts of Religious worship of God, to be performed in obedience to him, with understanding, faith, reverence, and godly fear; moreover solemn humiliation (x) with fastings; and thanksgiving upon (y) special occasions, ought to be used in an holy and religious manner.

q 1 Tim. 4.13. r 2 Tim. 4.2. Luk. 8.18. s Col. 3.16. Eph. 5.19 t Mat. 28, 19,20. u 1 Cor. 11 26. x Esth. .16. Joel. 2.12 y Exo. 15.1. &c. Ps. 107.

6. Neither Prayer, nor any other part of Religious worship, is now under the Gospel tied unto, or made more acceptable by, any place in which it is (z) performed, or towards which it is directed; but God is to be worshipped every where in Spirit, and in truth; as in (a) private families (b) daily, and (c) in secret each one by himself, so more solemnly in the public Assemblies, which are not

carelessly, nor willfully, to be (d) neglected, or forsaken, when God by his word, or providence calleth thereunto.

z Joh. 4.21. Mal. 1.11. 1 Tim 2.8. a Act. 10.2. b Mat. 6.11. Ps. 55.17. c Mat. 6.6 d Heb. 10.25. Act. 2.42.

7. As it is of the Law of nature, that in general a proportion of time by Gods appointment, be set a part for the Worship of God; so by his Word in a positive-moral, and perpetual Commandement, binding all men, in all Ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a (e) Sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the World to the Resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week (f) which is called the Lords day; and is to be continued to the end of the World, as the Christian Sabbath; the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.

e Exo. 20.8. f 1 Cor. 16.1,2. Act. 20.7. Rev. 1.10.

8. The Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs aforehand, do not only observe an holy (g) rest all the day, from their own works, words, and thoughts, about their worldly employment, and recreations, but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties (h) of necessity and mercy.

g Isa. 58.13. Neh 13.15-23. h Mat. 12.1-13.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of Lawful Oaths and Vows.

1. A lawful Oath is a part of religious worship, (a) wherein the person swearing in Truth, Righteousness, and Judgement, solemnly calleth God to witness what he sweareth; (b) and to judge him according to the Truth or falseness thereof.

a Exo. 20.7. Deut. 10.20. Jer. 4.2. b 2 Cro. 6.22,23.

2. The Name of God only is that by which men ought to swear; and therein it is to be used, with all Holy Fear and reverence, therefore to swear vainly or rashly by that glorious, and dreadful name; or to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful and to be (c) abhorred; yet as in matter of weight and moment for confirmation of truth, (d) and ending all strife, an Oath is warranted by the Word of God; so a lawful Oath being imposed, (e) by lawful Authority, in such matters, ought to be taken.

c Mat. 5.34,37. Jam. 5.12 d Heb. 6.16. 2 Cor. 1.23. e Neh. 13.25.

3. Whosoever taketh an Oath warranted by the Word of God, ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act; and therein to avouch nothing, but what he knoweth to be the truth; for that by rash, false, and vain Oaths the (f) Lord is provoked, and for them this Land mourns.

f Levit. 19.12. Jer. 23.10.

4. An Oath is to be taken in the plain, and (g) common sense of the words; without equivocation, or mental reservation.

g Ps. 24.4.

5. A Vow which is not to be made to any Creature, but to God alone, (h) is to be made and performed with all Religious care, and faithfulness: But Popish Monastical Vows, (i) of perpetual single life, professed (k) poverty, and regular obedience, are so far from being degrees of higher perfection, that they are superstitious, (l) and sinful snares, in which no Christian may entangle himself.

h Psal. 76.11. Gen. 28.20,21 22. i 1 Cor. 7.2,9. k Eph. 4.28. l Mat. 19.11.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of the Civil Magistrate.

1. God the supreme Lord, and King of all the World, hath ordained Civil (a) 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 defence and encouragement of them that do good, and for the punishment of evil doers.

a Rom. 13 1,2,3,4.

2. It is lawful for Christians to Accept, and Execute the Office of a Magistrate when called thereunto; in the management whereof, as they ought especially to maintain (b) Justice, and Peace, according to the wholesome Laws of each Kingdom, and Commonwealth: so for that end they may lawfully now under the New Testament (c) wage war upon just and necessary occasions.

b 2 Sam. 23.3. Ps. 82.3,4. c Luk. 3.14.

3. Civil Magistrates being set up by God, for the ends aforesaid; subjection in all lawful things commanded by them, ought to be yielded by us, in the Lord; not only for wrath (d) but for Conscience sake; and we ought to make supplications and prayers for Kings, and all that are in

Authority, (e) that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

d Rom. 13.5,6,7. 1 Pet. 2.17. e 1 Tim. 2.1,2.

CHAP. XXV.

Of Marriage.

1. Marriage is to be between one Man and one Woman; (a) neither is it lawful for any man to have more then one Wife, nor for any Woman to have more then one Husband at the same time.

a Gen. 2.24. Mal. 2 15. Mat. 19.5,6.

2. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help (b) of Husband and Wife, (c) for the increase of Man-kind, with a legitimate issue, and for (d) preventing of uncleanness.

b Gen. 2.18. c Gen 1.28. d 1 Cor. 7 2,9.

3. It is lawful for (e) all sorts of people to Marry, who are able with judgment to give their consent; yet it is the duty of Christians (f) to marry in the Lord, and therefore such as profess the true Religion, should not Marry with Infidels, (g) or Idolaters; neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by marrying with such as are wicked, in their life, or maintain damnable Heresy.

e Heb. 13,4. 1 Tim. 4,3. f 1 Cor. 7.39. g Neh. 13 25,26,27.

4. Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity, (h) or Affinity forbidden in the word; nor can such incestuous Marriage ever be made lawful, by any law of Man or consent of parties, (i) so as those persons may live together as Man and Wife.

h Levit. 18. i Mar. 6.18. 1 Cor. 5.1.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the Church.

1. The Catholic or universal Church, which (with respect to the internal work of the Spirit, and truth of grace) may be called invisible, consists of the whole (a) 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.

a Heb. 12.23. Col. 1.18. Eph. 1.10,22,23. & ch. 5.23,27,32.

2. All persons throughout the world, professing the faith of the Gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ, according unto it; not destroying their own profession by any Errors everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, (b) are and may be called visible Saints; (c) and of such ought all particular Congregations to be constituted.

b 1 Cor. 1 2. Act. 11.26. c Rom. 1.7. Eph. 1.20,21,22.

3. The purest Churches under heaven are subject (d) to mixture, and error; and some have so degenerated as to become (e) no Churches of Christ, but Synagogues of Satan; nevertheless Christ always hath had, and ever shall have a (f) Kingdom in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in him, and make profession of his Name.

d 1 Cor. 15. Rev. 2. & ch. 3. [Note] e Rev. 18.2. 2 Thes. 2.11,12. f Mat. 16.18. Ps. 72.17. & Ps. 102.28. Rev. 12.17.

4. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, in whom by the appointment of the Father, (g) all power for the calling, institution, order, or Government of the Church, is invested in a supreme & sovereign manner, neither can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is (h) that Antichrist, that Man of sin, and Son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God; whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

g Col. 1.18. Mat. 28.18,19,20. Eph. 4.11,12. h 2 Thes. 2.3-9.

5. In the execution of this power wherewith he is so entrusted, the Lord Jesus calleth out of the World unto himself, through the Ministry of his word, by his Spirit, (i) those that are given unto him by his Father; that they may walk before him in all the (k) ways of obedience, which he prescribeth to them in his Word. Those thus called he commandeth to walk together in particular societies, or (l) Churches, for their mutual edification; and the due performance of that public worship, which he requireth of them in the World.

i Joh 10.16. chap. 12.32. k Mat. 28.20. l Mat. 18.15-20.

6. The Members of these Churches are (m) Saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing (in and by their profession and walking) their obedience unto that call of Christ; and do willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of Christ, giving up themselves, to the Lord & one to another by the will of God, (n) in professed subjection to the Ordinances of the Gospel.

m Rom. 1.7. 1 Cor. 1.2. n Act. 2.41,42. ch. 5.13.14. 2 Cor. 9.13.

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

o Mat. 18.17,18. 1 Cor. 5.4,5. with v.13. 2 Cor. 2.6,7,8.

8. A particular Church gathered, and completely Organized, according to the mind of Christ, consists of Officers, and Members; And the Officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the Church (so called and gathered) for the peculiar Administration of Ordinances, and Execution of Power, or Duty, which he entrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the World are (p) Bishops or Elders and Deacons.

p Act. 20:17, with v.28. Phil. 1.1.

9. The way appointed by Christ for the Calling of any person, fitted, and gifted by the Holy Spirit, unto the Office of Bishop, or Elder, in a Church, is, that he be chosen thereunto by the common (q) suffrage of the Church it self; and Solemnly set apart by Fasting and Prayer, with imposition of hands of the (r) Eldership of the Church, if there be any before Constituted therein; And of a Deacon (s) that he be chosen by the like suffrage, and set apart by Prayer, and the like Imposition of hands.

q Act. 14.23: See the original. r 1 Tim. 4.14. s Act. 6.3,5,6.

10. The work of Pastors being constantly to attend the Service of Christ, in his Churches, in the Ministry of the Word, and Prayer, (t) with watching for their Souls, as they that must give an account to him; it is incumbent on the Churches to whom they Minister, not only to give them all due respect, (u) but also to communicate to them of all their good things according to their ability, so as they may have a comfortable supply, without being themselves (x) entangled in Secular Affairs; and may also be capable of exercising (y)

Hospitality toward others; and this is required by the (z) Law of Nature, and by the Express order of our Lord Jesus, who hath ordained that they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.

t Act. 6.4. Heb. 13.17. u 1 Tim. 5.17,18. Gal. 6.6,7. x 2 Tim. 2.4. y 1 Tim. 3.2. z 1 Cor. 9.6.-14.

11. Although it be incumbent on the Bishops or Pastors of the Churches to be instant in Preaching the Word, by way of Office; yet the work of Preaching the Word, is not so peculiarly confined to them; but that others also (a) gifted, and fitted by the Holy Spirit for it, and approved, and called by the Church, may and ought to perform it.

a Act. 11.19,20,21. 1 Pet. 4.10,11.

12. As all Believers are bound to join themselves to particular Churches, when and where they have opportunity so to do; So all that are admitted unto the privileges of a Church, are also (b) under the Censures and Government thereof, according to the Rule of Christ.

b 1 Thes. 5.14. 2 Thes 3.6,14,15.

13. No Church-members upon any offense taken by them, having performed their Duty required of them towards the person they are offended at, ought to disturb any Church order, or absent themselves from the Assemblies of the Church, or Administration of any Ordinances, upon the account of such offence at any of their fellow-members; but to wait upon Christ, (c) in the further proceeding of the Church.

c Mat. 18.15,16,17. Eph. 4 2,3.

14. As each Church, and all the Members of it are bound to (d) pray continually, for the good and prosperity of all the Churches of Christ, in all places; and upon all occasions to further it (every one within the bounds of their places, and callings, in the Exercise of their Gifts and Graces) so the Churches (when planted by the providence of God so as they may enjoy opportunity and advantage for it) ought to hold (e) communion amongst themselves for their peace, increase of love, and mutual edification.

d Eph. 6.18. Ps. 122.6. e Rom. 16.1,2. 3 Joh. 8,9,10.

15. In cases of difficulties or differences, either in point of Doctrine, or Administration; wherein either the Churches in general are concerned, or any one Church in their peace, union, and edification; or any member, or members, of any Church are injured, in or by any proceedings in censures not agreeable to truth, and order: it is according to the mind of Christ, that many Churches holding communion together, do by their messengers meet to consider, (f) and give their advice, in or about that matter in difference, to be reported to all the Churches concerned; howbeit these messengers assembled are not entrusted with any Church-power properly so called; or with any jurisdiction over the Churches themselves, to exercise any censures either over any Churches, or Persons: or (g) to impose their determination on the Churches, or Officers.

f Act. 15.2,4,6. & 22,23,25. g 2 Cor. 1.24. 1 Joh. 4.1

CHAP. XXVII.

Of the Communion of Saints.

1. All Saints that are united to Jesus Christ their Head, by his Spirit, and Faith; although they are not made thereby one person with him, have (a) fellowship in his Graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory; and being united to one another in love, they (b) have communion in each others gifts, and graces; and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, in an orderly way, (c) as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.

a 1 Joh. 1.3. Joh. 1.16. Phil. 3 10 Rom. 6.5 6. b Eph. 4.15.16. 1 Cor. 12.7. 1 Cor. 3 21,22,23. c 1 Thes. 5.11.14. Rom. 1.12. 1 Joh. 3.17.18. Gal 6.10.

2. Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services, (d) as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in (e) outward things according to their several abilities, and necessities; which communion according to the rule of the Gospel, though especially to be exercised by them, in the relations wherein they stand, whether in (f) families, or (g) Churches; yet as God offereth opportunity is to be extended to all the household of faith, even all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus; nevertheless their communion one with another as Saints, doth not take away or (h) infringe, the title or propriety, which each man hath in his goods and possessions.

d Heb. 10 24,25. with ch. 3.12,13. e Act. 12.29.30. f Eph. 6.4. g 1 Cor. 12.14.-27. h Act. 5.4 Eph. 4.28

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of Baptism and the Lords Supper.

1. Baptism and the Lords Supper are ordinances of positive, and sovereign institution; appointed by the Lord Jesus the only Law-giver, to be continued in his Church (a) to the end of the world.

a Mat. 28 19,20. 1 Cor. 11.26.

2. These holy appointments are to be administred by those only, who are qualified and thereunto called according (b) to the commission of Christ.

b Mat. 28.19. 1 Cor. 4.1.

CHAP. XXIX.

Of Baptism.

1. Baptism is an Ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party Baptized, a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death, (c) and resurrection; of his being engrafted into him; of (d) remission of sins; and of his (e) giving up unto God through Jesus Christ to live and walk in newness of Life.

c Rom. 6,3,4,5. Col. 2.12. Gal. 3.27. d Mar. 1.4. Act. 26.16. e Rom, 6,2,4.

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

f Mar. 16.16. Act. 8.36,37.

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

g Mat 28.19,20. with Act. 8.38.

4. Immersion, or dipping of the person (h) in water, is necessary to the due administration of this ordinance.

h Mat. 3.16. Joh. 3 23.

CHAP. XXX.

Of the Lords Supper.

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

a 1 Cor. 11.23,24,25,26. b 1 Cor. 10.16,17,21.

2. In this ordinance Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all, for remission of sin of the quick or dead; but only a memorial of that (c) one offering up of himself, by himself, upon the crosse, once for all; and a spiritual oblation of all (d) possible praise unto God for the same; so that the Popish sacrifice of the Mass (as they call it) is most abominable, injurious to Christs own only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the Elect.

c Heb. 9.25,26,28. d 1 Cor. 11.24. Mat. 26.26,27.

3. The Lord Jesus hath in this Ordinance, appointed his Ministers to Pray, and bless the Elements of Bread and Wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use, and to take and break the Bread; to take the Cup, (e) and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the Communicants.

e 1 Cor. 11.23,24,25,26, &c

4. The denial of the Cup to the people, worshiping the Elements, the lifting them up, or carrying them about for adoration, and reserving them for any pretended religious use, (f) are all contrary to the nature of this Ordinance, and to the institution of Christ.

f Mat 26.26,27,28. Mat. 15.9. Exod. 20.4,5.

5. The outward Elements in this Ordinance, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, as that truly, although in terms used figuratively, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit the (g) body and Blood of Christ; albeit in substance, and

nature, they still remain truly, and only (h) Bread, and Wine, as they were before.

g 1 Cor. 11.27. h 1 Cor. 11.26. & v.28.

6. That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of Bread and Wine, into the substance of Christs body and blood (commonly called Transubstantiation) by consecration of a Priest, or by any other way, is repugnant not to Scripture (i) alone, but even to common sense and reason; overthroweth the (k) nature of the ordinance, and hath been and is the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross Idolatries.

i Act. 3.21. Luk. 24.6. & v.39. k 1 Cor. 11.24,25.

7. Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible Elements in this Ordinance, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally, and corporally, but spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified (l) & all the benefits of his death: the Body and Blood of Christ, being then not corporally, or carnally, but spiritually present to the faith of Believers, in that Ordinance, as the Elements themselves are to their outward senses.

l 1 Cor. 10.16. ch. 11.23-26.

8. All ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion (m) with Christ; so are they unworthy of the Lords Table; and cannot without great sin against him, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, (n) or be admitted thereunto: yea whosoever shall receive unworthily are guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, eating and drinking judgement to themselves.

m 2 Cor: 6,14,15, n 1 Cor. 11.29. Mat. 7.6.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the State of Man after Death and of the Resurrection of the Dead.

1. The Bodies of Men after Death return to dust, (a) and see corruption; but their Souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortal subsistence, immediately (b) return to God who gave them: the Souls of the Righteous being then made perfect in holyness, are received into paradise where they are with Christ, and behold the face of God, in light (c) and glory; waiting for the full Redemption of their Bodies; and the souls of the wicked, are cast into hell; where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to (d) the judgement of the great day; besides these two places for Souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.

a Gen. 3.19. Act. 13.36. b Eccles. 12.7. c Luk. 23.43. 2 Cor. 5.1,6,8. Phil. 1.23 Heb. 12.23. d Jud. 6 7. 1 Pet. 3.19. Luk. 16.23,24.

2. At the last day such of the Saints as are found alive shall not sleep but be (e) changed; and all the dead shall be raised up with the self same bodies, and (f) none other; although with different (g) qualities, which shall be united again to their Souls for ever.

e 1 Cor. 15: 51,52. 1 Thes. 4.17. f Job 19.26,27. g 1 Cor. 15.42,43.

3. The bodies of the unjust shall by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonour; the bodies of the just by his spirit unto honour, (h) and be made conformable to his own glorious Body.

h Act. 24.15. Joh. 5.28,29. Phil. 3.21

CHAP. XXXII.

Of the Last Judgement.

1. God hath appointed a Day wherein he will judge the world in Righteousness, by (a) Jesus Christ; to whom all power and judgement is given of the Father; in which Day not only the (b) Apostate Angels shall be judged; but likewise all persons that have lived upon the Earth, shall appear before the Tribunal of Christ; (c) 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.

a Act. 17.31. Joh. 5.22. 27. b 1 Cor. 6.3. Jud. 6. c 2 Cor. 5.10. Eccles. 12.14. Mat. 12.36. Rom. 14.10.12. Mat. 25: 32. &c.

2. The end of Gods appointing this Day, is for the manifestation of the glory of his Mercy, in the Eternal Salvation of the Elect; (d) and of his Justice in the Eternal damnation of the Reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient; for then shall the Righteous go into Everlasting Life, and receive that fulness of Joy, and Glory, with everlasting reward, in the presence (e) 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 (f) punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

d Rom. 9.22,23. e Mat. 25.21. 34. 2 Tim. 4.8. f Mat. 25.46. Mar. 9.48. 2 Thes. 1.7,8,9,10.

3. As Christ would have us to be certainly perswaded that there shall be a Day of judgement, both (g) to deter all men from sin, and for the greater (h) 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 (i) Lord will come; and may ever be prepared to say, (k) Come Lord Jesus, Come quickly, Amen.

g 2 Cor. 5.10,11. h 2 Thes. 1.5,6,7. i Mar. 13.35,36,37 Luk. 13.35,36. [Note] k Rev. 22.20.

Chapter 4

HOW WE LEARN **The Baptist Catechism**

Written by Benjamin Keach (1640-1704)

Originally from Buckinghamshire, Keach worked as a tailor during his early years. He was baptized at the age of 15 and began preaching at 18. He was the minister of the congregation at Winslow before moving in 1668 to the church at Horsleydown (Horse-lie-down), Southwark where he remained for 36 years as pastor (1668-1704). This congregation later became the New Park Street Church and then moved to the Metropolitan Tabernacle under the pastorship of Charles Spurgeon. Keach's catechism was first published in 1693.

Q. 1. Who is the first and best of beings?

A. God is the first and best of beings. (Isaiah 44:6; Psalm 8:1; 97:9)

Q. 2. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. (1 Cor. 10:31; Psalm 73:25-26)

Q. 3. How do we know there is a God?

A. The light of nature in man, and the works of God, plainly declare that there is a God; but His Word and Spirit only, do effectually reveal Him unto us for our salvation. (Rom. 1:18-20; Psalm 19:1,2; 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Cor. 1:21-24; 1 Cor. 2:9,10)

Q. 4. What is the Word of God?

A. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, being given by divine inspiration, are the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. (2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; Isaiah 8:20)

Q. 5. How do we know that the Bible is the Word of God?

A. The Bible evidences itself to be God's Word by the heavenliness of its doctrine, the unity of its parts, its power to convert sinners and to edify saints; but the Spirit of God only, bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in our hearts, is able fully to persuade us that the Bible is the Word of God. (1 Cor. 2:6,7,13; Ps. 119:18, 129; Acts 10:43, 26:22; Acts 18:28; Heb 4:12; Ps. 19:7-9; Rom. 15:4; John 16:13,14; 1 John 2:20-27; 2 Cor. 3:14-17)

Q. 6. May all men make use of the Scriptures?

A. All men are not only permitted, but commanded and exhorted, to read, hear, and understand the Scriptures. (John 5:39; Luke 16:29; Acts 8:28-30; 17:11)

Q. 7. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man. (2 Tim. 3:16,17; John 20:31; Acts 24:14; 1 Cor. 10:11; Eccles. 12:13)

Q. 8. What is God?

A. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. (John 4:24; Ps. 147:5; Ps. 90:2; James 1:17; Rev. 4:8; Ps. 89:14; Exod. 34:6,7; 1 Tim. 1:17)

Q. 9. Are there more gods than one?

A. There is but one only, the living and true God. (Deut. 6:4; Jeremiah 10:10)

Q. 10. How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in essence, equal in power and glory. (1 Cor. 8:6; John 10:30; John 14:9; Acts 5:3,4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14)

Q. 11. What are the decrees of God?

A. The decrees of God are His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby for His own glory, He has fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass (Eph. 1:11; Rom. 11:36; Dan. 4:35)

Q. 12. How does God execute His decrees?

A. God executes His decrees in the works of creation and providence. (Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; Matt. 6:26; Acts 14:17)

Q. 13. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing, by the Word of His power, in the space of six days, and all very good. (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3; Ex. 20:11; Gen. 1:31)

Q. 14. How did God create man?

A. God created man male and female, after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures. (Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Gen. 1:28)

Q. 15. What are God's works of providence?

A. God's works of providence are His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions. (Neh. 9:6; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; Ps. 103:19; Matt. 10:29,30)

Q. 16. What special act of providence did God exercise towards man, in the estate wherein he was created?

A. When God had created man, He entered into a covenant of works with him, upon condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death. (Gen. 2:16,17; Gal. 3:12; Rom. 5:12)

Q. 17. Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

A. Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God. (Gen. 3:6; Eccles. 7:29; Rom. 5:12)

Q. 18. What is sin?

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God. (1 John 3:4; Rom. 5:13)

Q. 19. What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

A. The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit. (Gen. 3:6,12,13)

Q. 20. Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself but for his posterity, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression. (1 Cor. 15:21,22; Rom. 5:12,18,19)

Q. 21. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery. (Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:18,19; Is. 64:6)

Q. 22. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereunto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereunto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin, together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it. (Rom. 5:19; 3:10; Eph. 2:1; Is. 53:6; Ps. 51:5; Matt. 15:19)

Q. 23. What is the misery of that estate whereunto man fell?

A. All mankind, by their fall lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever. (Gen. 3:8,24; Eph. 2:3; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41-46; Ps. 9:17)

Q. 24. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

A. God, out of His mere good pleasure, from all eternity, having chosen a people to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation, by a Redeemer. (Eph. 1:3,4; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 5:21; Acts 13:8; Jer. 31:33)

Q. 25. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was and continues to be God and man, in two distinct natures and one person, forever. (Gal. 3:13; 1 Tim. 2:5; John 1:14; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 9:5; Col. 2:9) Q 26. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

Q. 26. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

A. Christ, the Son of God became man by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul; being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary and born of her, yet without sin. (Heb. 2:14; Matt. 26:38; Luke 2:52; John 12:27; Luke 1:31,35; Heb. 4:15; 7:26)

Q. 27. What offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer?

A. Christ, as our Redeemer, executes the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, both in His estate of humiliation and exaltation. (Acts 3:22; Heb. 5:6; Ps. 2:6)

Q. 28. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A. Christ executes the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by this Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation. (John 1:18; 14:26; 15:15)

Q. 29. How does Christ execute the office of a priest?

A. Christ executes the office of a priest, in His once offering up of Himself, a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us. (1 Peter 2:24; Heb. 9:28; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 2:17; 7:25; Rom. 8:34)

Q. 30. How does Christ execute the office of a king?

A. Christ executes the office of a king, in subduing us to Himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all His and our enemies. (Ps. 110:3; Matt. 2:6; 1 Cor. 15:25)

Q. 31. Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross, in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time. (Luke 2:7; Gal. 4:4; Is. 53:3; Luke 22:44; Matt. 27:46; Phil. 2:8; Matt. 12:40; Mark 15:45,46)

Q. 32. Wherein consists Christ's exaltation?

A. Christ's exaltation consists in His rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day. (1 Cor. 15:4; Acts 1:11; Mark 16:19; Acts 17:31)

Q. 33. How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us, by His Holy Spirit. (John 3:5,6; Titus 3:5,6)

Q. 34. How does the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. The Spirit applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling. (Eph. 2:8; 3:17)

Q. 35. What is effectual calling?

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He does persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel. (2 Tim. 1:9; John 16:8-11; Acts 2:37; 26:18; Ezekiel 36:26; John 6:44,45; 1 Cor. 12:3)

Q. 36. What benefits do they that are effectually called, partake of in this life?

A. They that are effectually called, do in this life partake of justification, adoption, sanctification, and the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them. (Rom. 8:30; Gal. 3:26; 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 8:31,32; Eph. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:30)

Q. 37. What is justification?

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone. (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:19; Phil. 3:9; Gal. 2:16)

Q. 38. What is adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. (1 John 3:1; John 1:12; Rom. 8:16,17)

Q. 39. What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification is a work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness. (2 Thess. 2:13; Eph. 4:23,24; Rom. 6:11)

Q. 40. What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A. The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end. (Rom. 5:1-5; 14:17; Prov. 4:18; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 John 5:13)

Q. 41. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

A. The souls of believers are at death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection. (Heb. 12:23; Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:8; Luke 23:43; 1 Thess 4:14; Is. 57:2; Job 19:26)

Q. 42. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the Resurrection?

A. At the resurrection, believers become raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity. (Phil. 3:20,21; 1 Cor. 15:42,43; Matt. 10:32; 1 John 3:2; 1 Thess. 4:17)

Q. 43. What shall be done to the wicked at death?

A. The souls of the wicked shall at death, be cast into the torments of hell, and their bodies lie in their graves till the resurrection and judgement of the great day. (Luke 16:22-24; Ps. 49:14)

Q. 44. What shall be done to the wicked at the day of judgement?

A. At the day of judgement, the bodies of the wicked, being raised out of their graves, shall be sentenced, together with their souls, to unspeakable torments with the devil and his angels forever. (Dan. 12:2; John 5:28,29; 2 Thess. 1:9; Matt. 25:41)

Q. 45. What is the duty which God requires of man?

A. The duty which God requires of man, is obedience to His revealed will. (Micah 6:8; Eccles. 12:13; Ps. 119:4; Luke 10:26-28)

Q. 46. What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

A. The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience was the moral law. (Rom. 2:14,15; 5:13,14)

Q. 47. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?

A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments. (Deut. 10:4; Matt. 19:17)

Q. 48. What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?

A. The sum of the Ten Commandments is, to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves. (Matt. 22:36-40; Mark 12:28-33)

Q. 49. What is the preface to the Ten Commandments?

A. The preface to the Ten Commandments is, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." (Exodus 20:2)

Q. 50. What does the preface to the Ten Commandments teach us?

A. The preface to the Ten Commandments teaches us, that because God is the Lord, and our God and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all His commandments. (Deut 11:1)

Q. 51. Which is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3)

Q. 52. What is required in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God, and to worship and glorify Him accordingly. (Joshua 24:15; 1 Chron. 28:9; Deut. 26:17; Ps. 29:2; Matt. 4:10)

Q. 53. What is forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment forbids the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God, as God and our God; and the giving that worship and glory to any other, which is due unto Him alone. (Joshua 24:27; Rom. 1:20,21; Ps. 14:1; Rom. 1:25)

Q. 54. What are we especially taught by these words, “before me,” in the first commandment?

A. These words, “before me”, in the first commandment, teach us, that God, who sees all things, takes notice of, and is much displeased with the sin of having any other God. (Deut.30:17,18; Ps. 44:20,21; Ps. 90:8)

Q. 55. Which is the second commandment?

A. The second commandment is, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.” (Exodus 20:4-6)

Q. 56. What is required in the second commandment?

A. The second commandment requires the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances, as God has appointed in His Word. (Deut. 32:46; Matt. 28:20; Deut. 12:32)

Q. 57. What is forbidden in the second commandment?

A. The second commandment forbids the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in His Word. (Rom. 1:22,23; Deut. 4:15,16; Matt. 15:9; Col. 2:18)

Q. 58. What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?

A. The reasons annexed to the second commandment, are, God’s sovereignty over us, His propriety in us, and the zeal He has for His own worship. (Ps. 45:11; Ex. 34:14; 1 Cor. 10:22)

Q. 59. Which is the third commandment?

A. The third commandment is, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” (Exodus 20:7)

Q. 60. What is required in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God’s names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, and works. (Ps.29:2; Deut. 32:1-4; Deut.28:58,59; Ps.111:9; Matt. 6:9, Eccles. 5:1; Ps. 138:2, Job 36:24; Rev. 15:3,4; Reve 4:8)

Q. 61. What is forbidden in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment forbids all profaning and abusing of any thing whereby God makes Himself known. (Malachi 1:6,7; Lev. 20:3;19:12; Matt. 5:34-37; Isa. 52:5)

Q. 62. What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the third commandment is, that howsoever the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape His righteous judgment. (Deut. 28:58,59; Malachi 2:2)

Q. 63. Which is the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment is, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” (Exodus 20:8-11)

Q. 64. What is required in the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment requires the keeping holy to God such set times as He has appointed in His Word, expressly one whole day in seven to be a holy Sabbath to Himself. (Lev. 19:30; Deut. 5:12)

Q. 65. Which day of the seven has God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?

A. From the creation of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath. (Gen. 2:3; John 20:19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1,2; Rev. 1:10)

Q. 66. How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, and spending the time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy. (Lev. 23:3; Isa. 58:13,14; Isa. 66:23; Matt. 12:11,12)

Q. 67. What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment forbids the omission or careless performance of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations. (Ezekiel 22:26; 23:38; Jer. 17:21; Neh. 13:15,17; Acts 20:7)

Q. 68. What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?

A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, His challenging a special propriety in the seventh, His own example and His blessing the Sabbath day. (Exodus 34:21; 31:16,17; Gen. 2:2,3)

Q. 69. Which is the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment is, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12)

Q. 70. What is required in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment requires the preserving the honor, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals. (Lev. 19:32; 1 Peter 2:17; Rom. 13:1; Eph. 5:21,22; Eph. 6:1,5,9; Col. 3:19-22; Rom. 12:10)

Q. 71. What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment forbids the neglecting of, or doing anything against the honor and duty which belongs to every one in their several places and relations. (Prov. 30:17; Rom. 13:7,8)

Q. 72. What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve God's glory and their own good), to all such as keep this commandment. (Eph. 6:2,3; Prov. 4:3-6; 6:20-22)

Q. 73. Which is the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment is, "Thou shalt not kill." (Exodus 20:13)

Q. 74. What is required in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment requires all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life and the life of others. (Eph. 5:29,30; Ps. 82:3,4; Prov. 24:11,12; Act 16:28)

Q. 75. What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment forbids the taking away our own life, or the life of our neighbor unjustly, or whatsoever tends thereto. (Gen. 4:10,11; 9:6; Matt. 5:21-26)

Q. 76. Which is the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14)

Q. 77. What is required in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment requires the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior. (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2; 2 Tim. 2:22; Matt. 5:28; 1 Peter 3:2)

Q. 78. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions. (Matt. 5:28-32; Job 31:1; Eph. 5:3,4; Rom. 13:13; Col. 4:6)

Q. 79. Which is the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment is, "Thou shalt not steal." (Exodus 20:15)

Q. 80. What is required in the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment requires the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward state of ourselves and others. (Prov. 27:23; Lev. 25:35; Deut. 15:10; 22:14)

Q. 81. What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment forbids whatsoever does or may unjustly hinder our own or our neighbor's wealth or outward state. (1 Tim. 5:8; Prov. 28:19; 23:20,21; Eph. 4:28)

Q. 82. Which is the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment is, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." (Exodus 20:16)

Q. 83. What is required in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbor's good name, especially in witness bearing. (Zech. 8:16; Acts 25:10; Eccles. 7:1; 3 John 12; Prov. 14:5,25)

Q. 84. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment forbids whatsoever is pre-judicial to truth, or injurious to our own, or our neighbor's good name. (Eph. 4:25; Ps. 15:3; 2 Cor. 8:20,21)

Q. 85. Which is the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment is, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's." (Exodus 20:17)

Q. 86. What is required in the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment requires full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit towards our neighbor, and all that is his. (Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:6; Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 13:4-7; Lev. 19:18)

Q. 87. What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment forbids all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbor, and all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his. (1 Cor. 10:10; James 5:9; Gal. 5:26; Col. 3:5)

Q. 88. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A. No mere man, since the fall, is able in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but daily breaks them in thought, word, and deed. (Eccles. 7:20; Gen. 6:5; Gen. 8:21; 1 John 1:8; James 3:8; James 3:2; Rom. 3:23)

Q. 89. What then is the purpose of the law since the fall?

A. The purpose of the law, since the fall, is to reveal the perfect righteousness of God, that His people may know his will for their lives and the ungodly, being convicted of their sin, may be restrained therein and brought to Christ for salvation. (Ps. 19:7-11; Rom. 3:20,31; 7:7; 12:2; Titus 2:12-14; Gal. 3:22,24; 1 Tim. 1:8)

Q. 90. Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?

A. Some sins in themselves and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others. (Ezekiel 8:13; John 19:11; 1 John 5:16)

Q. 91. What does every sin deserve?

A. Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and in that which is to come. (Eph.5:6; Gal. 3:10; Prov. 3:33; Ps. 11:6; Rev. 21:8)

Q. 92. What does God require of us, that we may escape His wrath and curse, due to us for sin?

A. To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requires of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with the diligent use of all the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption. (Acts 20:21; Acts 16:30,31; 17:30)

Q. 93. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel. (Heb. 10:39; John 1:12; Phil. 3-9; Gal. 2:15,16)

Q. 94. What is repentance unto life?

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience. (Acts 2:37; Joel 2:13; Jer. 31:18,19; 2 Cor. 7:10,11; Rom. 6:18)

Q. 95. What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are His ordinances, especially the Word, Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation. (Rom. 10:17; James 1:18; 1 Cor. 3:5; Acts 14:1; 2:41,42)

Q. 96. How is the Word made effectual to salvation?

A. The Spirit of God makes the reading, but especially the preaching of the Word an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation. (Ps. 119:11,18; 1 Thess. 1:6; 1 Peter 2:1,2; Rom. 1:16; Ps. 19:7)

Q. 97. How is the Word to be read and heard that it may become effectual to salvation?

A. That the Word may become effectual to salvation we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation and prayer, receive it in faith and love, lay it up in our hearts and practice it in our lives. (Prov. 8:34; 1 Peter 2:1,2; 1 Tim. 4:13; Heb. 2:1,3; Heb. 4:2; 2 Thess. 2:10; Ps. 119:11; James 1:21,25)

Q. 98. How do Baptism and the Lord's Supper become effectual means of salvation?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them or in him that administers them, but only by the blessing of Christ and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them. (1 Peter 3:21; 1 Cor. 3:6,7; 1 Cor. 12:13)

Q. 99. Wherein do Baptism and the Lord's Supper differ from the other ordinances of God?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper differ from the other ordinances of God in that they were specially instituted by Christ to represent and apply to believers the benefits of the new covenant by visible and outward signs. (Matt. 28:19; Acts 22:16; Matt. 26:26-28; Rom. 6:4)

Q. 100. What is Baptism?

A. Baptism is an holy ordinance, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, signifies our ingrafting into Christ and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's. (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27)

Q. 101. To whom is Baptism to be administered?

A. Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ; and to none other. (Acts 2:38; Matt. 3:6; Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12,36; Acts 10:47,48)

Q. 102. Are the infants of such as are professing believers to be baptized?

A. The infants of such as are professing believers are not to be baptized; because there is neither command nor example in the Holy Scriptures, or certain consequence from them, to baptize such.

Q. 103. How is Baptism rightly administered?

A. Baptism is rightly administered by immersion, or dipping the whole body of the person in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 3:16; John 3:23; Acts 8:38,39)

Q. 104. What is the duty of those who are rightly baptized?

A. It is the duty of those who are rightly baptized to give up (join) themselves to some visible and orderly church of Jesus Christ, that they may walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. (Acts 2:46,47; Acts 9:26; 1 Peter 2:5; Heb. 10:25; Rom. 16:5)

Q. 105. What is the visible church?

A. The visible church is the organized society of professing believers, in all ages and places, wherein the Gospel is truly preached and the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper rightly administered. (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Acts 7:38; Eph. 4:11,12)

Q. 106. What is the invisible church?

A. The invisible church is the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head. (Eph. 1:10; 1:22,23; John 10:16; 11:52)

Q. 107. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper is a holy ordinance, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, His death is showed forth, and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporeal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace. (1 Cor. 11:23-26; 10:16)

Q. 108. What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?

A. It is required of them that would worthily (that is, suitably) partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves, of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body; of their faith to feed upon Him; of their repentance, love, and new obedience: lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves. (1 Cor. 11:27-31; 1 Cor. 5:8; 2 Cor. 13:5)

Q. 109. What is Prayer?

A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies. (1 John 5:14; 1 John 1:9; Phil. 4:6; Ps. 10:17; 145:19; John 14:13,14)

Q. 110. What rule has God given for our direction in prayer?

A. The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in prayer, but the special rule of direction is that prayer, which Christ taught His disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer. (Matt. 6:9-13; 2 Tim. 3:16,17)

Q. 111. What does the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The preface of the Lord's Prayer, which is, "Our Father, which art in heaven," teaches us to draw near to God, with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father, able and ready to help us, and that we should pray with and for others. (Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:13; Rom. 8:15; Acts 12:5; 1 Tim. 2:1-3)

Q. 112. What do we pray for in the first petition?

A. In the first petition, which is "Hallowed be thy name," we pray that God would enable us and others to glorify Him in all that whereby He makes Himself known, and that He would dispose all things to His own glory. (Matt. 6:9; Ps. 67:1-3; Rom. 11:36; Rev. 4:11)

Q. 113. What do we pray for in the second petition?

A. In the second petition, which is "Thy kingdom come," we pray that satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced; ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened. (Matt. 6:10; Ps. 68:1-18; Rom. 10:1; 2 Thess. 3:1; Matt. 9:37,38; Rev. 22:20)

Q. 114. What do we pray for in the third petition?

A. In the third petition, which is, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," we pray that God by His grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to His will in all things, as the angels do in heaven. (Matt. 6:10; Ps. 103:20,21; Ps. 25:4,5; Ps. 119:26)

Q. 115. What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

A. In the fourth petition, which is, "Give us this day our daily bread," we pray that of God's free gift, we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life and enjoy His blessing with them. (Matt. 6:11; Prov. 30:8,9; 1 Tim. 6:6-8; 4:4,5)

Q. 116. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

A. In the fifth petition, which is, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," we pray that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by His grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others. (Matt. 6:12; Ps. 51:1,3,7; Mark 11:25; Matt. 18:35)

Q. 117. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

A. In the sixth petition, which is, “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,” we pray that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted. (Matt. 6:13; 26:41; Ps. 19:13; 1 Cor. 10:13; John 17:15)

Q. 118. What does the conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer teach us?

A. The conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer, which is, “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen,” teaches us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise Him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to Him; and in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, AMEN. (Matt. 6:13; Dan. 9:18,19; 1 Chron. 29:11-13; 1 Cor. 14:16; Phil. 4:6; Rev. 22:20)

Chapter 5

HOW WE STAY FAITHFUL

The Ekklesia Muskogee Statement on Church Discipline

CONCERNING CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties plainly spelled out in Scripture or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church and/or rendering doubtful a profession of faith, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, deposition from office, and even excommunication if necessary (see Matthew 18:15–17; 1 Timothy 5:19–20; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5).

The purpose of such discipline should be as follows:

- **For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined** (see Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4–5; Hebrews 12:1–11; Psalm 119:115; 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25: 12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26–27; 18:15–17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1–5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1:22);
- **For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them** (see Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15: 33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24–25);
- **For the purity of the church as a whole** (see 1 Corinthians 5: 6–7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5: 27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2);
- **For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians** (see Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10);
- **Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character** (see Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; 18:17, 25; Romans 2:24; 15: 5–6; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7: 1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12).

CONCERNING THE TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death, and it shall also recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her self-professed apostasy as confirmed by congregational vote. Additionally, the church may recognize the termination of a person's membership after he or she has voluntarily resigned or joined with another church. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline at the recommendation of the elders. Such termination of membership would require two-thirds vote of the covenant members present at a regular member meeting, or special meeting called in advance in order to decide on the issue under consideration. The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

Chapter 6

WHAT WE AGREE TO

The Ekklesia Muskogee Membership Covenant

CONCERNING THE PURPOSE OF OUR MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

When anyone enters into relationship with God by grace through faith in Jesus Christ they are entering into two covenants. The first is to journey with God for the rest of their lives and love Him fully. The second is to journey with His children in the community of a local church. Your membership in a church is an official recognition of this, and the purposes of the Ekklesia Membership Covenant are:

- I. To clarify the biblical obligations and expectations for both the pastors of Ekklesia Muskogee and the individual members of the Ekklesia Muskogee church body.
- II. To establish teaching and doctrinal parameters for the Ekklesia Muskogee church body.
- III. To serve as a tool for reflection and growth toward holiness.

This covenant does not imply that you will never fall short of the goals, but that the desire of your heart is to fulfill each of the responsibilities stated to the best of your ability by the grace of God. We trust that your commitment will be a personal blessing to your own relationship with Christ Jesus, as well a blessing to those around you.

BIBLICAL FACTS OF MEMBERSHIP

- A numerical record was kept (Acts 2:37-47)
- Records were kept of widows (I Tim. 5:3-16)
- Elections were conducted (Acts 6:1-6)
- Discipline was carried out (Matt. 18:15-20; I Cor. 5; Gal. 6:1)
- Pastors will be held accountable for members (Heb. 13:17)
- There was an awareness of who was a church member (Rom. 16:1-16)

WHAT WE AGREE TO

The pastors agree with the following: With the help of the Holy Spirit,

- I. We will lovingly care for you, seeking your growth in Christ above all (Heb. 13:17; I Thess. 5:12).
- II. We will provide teaching, preaching and counsel from the Scriptures (Gal. 6:6; I Tim. 5:17-18).
- III. We will make sure our teaching will span the whole counsel of God's word (Acts 20:27-28).
- IV. We will help you in times of need (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35, Jm. 2:14-17).
- V. We will make sure your pastors and deacons meet the criteria assigned to them in the scriptures (I Tim. 3:1-13 & 5:17-22, Titus 1:5-9, I Pt. 5:1-4).
- VI. We will pray for you regularly, particularly when you are sick (James 5:14).
- VII. We will be on guard against false teachers (Acts 20:28-31).
- VIII. We will exercise church discipline when necessary for God's glory and your good (Matt. 18:15-20; I Cor. 5; Gal. 6:1).

- IX. We will equip you for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11-13).
- X. We will seek God's will for our church community to the best of our ability as we study the scriptures (Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:1-5).
- XI. We will set an example and join you in fulfilling the duties of church members (1 Co. 11:1, Philip. 3:17, I Tim. 4:12).

The church members agree with the following: With the help of the Holy Spirit,

- I. I am a Christian who has been saved from my sins and made righteous by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. I have been baptized after my coming to faith in Jesus to a give public testimony of my identification with Christ as well as his church, in obedience to the scriptures.
- II. I have read and understood the Ekklesia Muskogee Forms of Unity and agree to not be divisive to its teaching. I also understand the importance of submission to church leadership and will be diligent to preserve unity in the bond of peace (Heb. 13:7, 17; Eph. 4:1-3).
- III. I will endeavor to be ever-increasing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and commit to regular personal Bible reading, prayer, and fellowship and practice of the other spiritual disciplines. My journey in Christ will be evident through my regular participation in the corporate worship gatherings, and involvement with other believers are a personal level (Ps. 119:97, Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:23-25, 2 Pet. 3:18).
- IV. I will properly manage the resources God has given me, including my time, body, gifts and talents, attitudes, finances and possessions (Eph. 5:15-18; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:1-16; Gal. 5:22-26; Prov. 3:9-10).
- V. I will be committed to the Ekklesia Muskogee church family and agree to aid in fulfilling its stated purpose to make disciples, love cities, and plant churches. I commit to being on mission to reach the lost, disciple the saved, and help plant other gospel-centered churches that do the same (Matt. 28:19-20).
- VI. I will use the spiritual gifts and abilities God has given me for the building up of the church, both at Ekklesia and universally (I Pet. 4:10-11; Rom. 12:1-8, I Cor. 12:7-31).
- VII. I will practice the humility and sacrificial attitude of Christ by considering the needs of others (Phil. 2:1-11), not gossiping (Prov. 16:28, Matt. 18:15-17), and seeking spiritual friendships (Prov. 17:17).
- VIII. I will have friendly Christian relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ from other churches, but I will not function in leadership or as a member in another church family (Heb. 13:17).
- IX. I will follow the biblical procedures of church discipline and submit myself to discipline if the need should ever arise (Matt. 18:15-17, Gal. 6:1-5).
- X. I will submit to the authority of the scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues (Ps. 119, 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

God enabling me, I will strive to consider my commitment to this Membership Covenant on a yearly basis. I understand that it is an evaluative tool, as well as an affirmation of my continuing conviction and purpose. My responsibility will be to notify the Ekklesia Muskogee pastors if at any time I can no longer commit to this covenant, or if I have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding Ekklesia Muskogee.



Ekklesia Muskogee is a Reformed Baptist Church that gathers for worship in Muskogee, Oklahoma. We confess the 1689 Second London Baptist Confession of Faith. We affirm the Five Solas of the Reformation as well as the Doctrines of Grace (otherwise known as the Five Points of Calvinism), and each of our pastors would not be ashamed to be called a Calvinist. We are a church led by elders, of which there is a plurality (also called pastors and overseers in the scriptures). Our mission is to make disciples, love cities, and plant churches.

We believe the local church is a community of regenerated believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. They have been reconciled to God and to one another through the work of Jesus Christ, and are given a new life with God and one another. In obedience to the Bible they organize under qualified leadership, gather regularly for preaching and worship, observe baptism and the Lord's supper as biblical sacraments; they are unified by the Holy Spirit, disciplined for holiness; they scatter to fulfill the Great Commandment (to love God and man) as well as the Great Commission (to make disciples of all nations). They are to do all this as missionaries to the world for God's glory people's good.