

Thomas Shepard (1605-1649)

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THE
FIRST PRINCIPLES
OF
THE ORACLES OF GOD

*“For when for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again which are
the first principles of the oracles of God; and have become such as have need of milk, and not of
strong meat.” – Heb. 5.12*

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER.

It is no disparagement at all for this wise master-builder to labor sometimes, by the hammer of the word, to fasten these nails of truth in a sure place – even in the heads and hearts of infant Christians. Neither is it below the highest scholar in Christ’s school to hold fast the form of wholesome words.

The great apostle himself (who was raptured into the third heaven – 2Cor 12:2), although he had received a commission of Christ, his Master, to make disciples, yet he was still a disciple; for he not only catechized others, but learned – again and again – the first principles of the oracles of God, which are called the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and the depths of God; that is, in plain English, those doctrinal truths which are truly fundamental, and absolutely necessary to salvation; so that we may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the naysayers; and always be ready to give an answer to every man who asks, a reason for the hope that is in us.

Thus heartily beseeching you, in the name of Christ, to search the Scriptures, and to give yourself continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word, so that you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2Pet 3:18), I now commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified (Ac 20:32). So be it.

Friend, I am yours, if you love the truth and our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

WILLIAM ADDERLEY

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CHARTER HOUSE, LONDON,

February 1, 1647

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER

Being desired to peruse and give our opinion of the resolutions in this letter now presented to your view, we must confess they appeared very precious to us; for we have seldom seen acuteness, profoundness, and godliness so eminently, equally, and happily matched. There are in Christ's school various grades: beginners, and men of exercised wits. The scholar proposing these cases was no puny thinker, and he was happy to meet with a teacher so able to analyze. Therefore whoever reads and heeds this will not regret his labor. But the more knowing the reader is, and the more experienced in the ways of Christ, the more delight he may take in, and the more profit may he reap by, these pious and profound resolutions. So we are

Yours, in Christ Jesus,

JOHN GEREE,

WM. GREENHILL

March 27, 1648

THE
SUM OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION
IN WAY OF QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question. What is the best and chief end of man?

Answer. To live for God. (Rom. 6.10,11. Gal. 2.9. 2Cor.5.13,15)¹

Q. How is man to live for God?

A. Two ways: *First*, by faith in God. (Ps. 18.2); *Secondly*, by obeying God's commands. (Eccl. 12.13)²

Q. What is faith in God?

A. It is the first act of our spiritual life which the soul, by believing God, believes *in* God, and rests there, in the only author and principle of life. (Heb. 4.3; 10.38; 11.13. John 3.33,36; Rom. 4. 3. Deut.30.20)³

Q. What is God?

A. Only God knows himself; no man can know him and live. Yet he has revealed himself to us only in what we may see of him, according to our way or measure of knowing things; and we do not need to know more than these in order to live. (1 Tim. 6.16. Ex.33.20, 23)⁴

Q. What things may be seen of God?

A. There are two: *First*, his sufficiency (Ps 36:8; 2Co 3:5); *Secondly*, his efficiency (Rom. 4.21)⁵

¹ **Rom 6:10** For the death he died, he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. **Gal 2:9** For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. **2 Cor 5:13** For whether we are beside ourselves, it is unto God; or whether we are of sober mind, it is unto you. **2Cor 5:15** and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.

² **Psalms 18:2** The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower. **Ecc 12:13** Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.

³ **Heb 4:3** For we who have believed enter into rest; **Heb 10:38** Now the just shall live by faith; **Heb 11:3** Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which are apparent. **Jn 3:33,36** He who has received his testimony has set to his seal that God is true. He who believes on the Son has everlasting life: and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him. **Rom 4:3** For what does the scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. **Deu 30:20** ²⁰ That you may love the LORD your God, *and* that you may obey his voice, and that you may cleave to him: for he *is* your life, and the length of your days:

⁴ **1Tim 6:16** Who has immortality only, dwelling in the light toward which no man can approach; whom no man has seen, nor can see: **Ex 33:20** And he said, You cannot see my face: for no man shall see me there and live. **Ex 33:23** And I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.

⁵ **Ps 36:8** They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fullness of your house; and you shall make them drink of the river of your pleasures. **2Cor 3:5** Our sufficiency *is* of God; **Rom 4:21** And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was also able to perform.

Q. What is God's sufficiency?

A. It is his perfect fullness of all good, by which he is all-sufficient for us, in himself. (Ps. 16.2; Gen. 17.1)⁶

Q. In what is God's sufficiency found, and how does it appear to us?

A. *First*, in his essence. (Ps. 36.9) *Secondly*, in his being or person. (2Sam. 7.21-22)⁷

Q. What is God's essence?

A. He is the absolute first being. (Rev. 1.8; Isa. 44.6; Ex. 3.14)⁸

Q. Can you sufficiently conceive of the glory of this one most-pure essence by one act of faith?

A. No; therefore the Lord has revealed it to us by various attributes. (Deut. 29.29; Ex. 34.6,7)⁹

Q. What do we mean by God's attributes?

A. They are the one most-pure essence as it is divinely understood by us, and as it is variously made known to us. (1John 4.16; Isa. 43.25)¹⁰

Q. How many kinds of attributes are there?

A. There are two sorts of attributes. *First*, some display what God is. *Secondly*, some display who God is.

Q. By which attributes do you know what God is?

A. By these: God is Spirit, living entirely of himself. (John 4.24; 5.26)¹¹

⁶ **Ps 16:2** *O my soul*, you have said to the LORD, You *are* my Lord: I have no good apart from you;

⁷ **Psalm 36:9** For with You *is* the fountain of life; In Your light we see light. **2 Samuel 7:21-22** "For Your word's sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to make Your servant know *them*. "Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For *there is* none like You, nor *is there any* God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

⁸ **Rev 1:8** ⁸ ¶ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End*," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." **Isa 44:6** "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I *am* the First and I *am* the Last; Besides Me *there is* no God. **Ex 3:14** And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

⁹ **Deut 29:29** "The secret *things belong* to the LORD our God, but those *things which are* revealed *belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we* may do all the words of this law. **Ex 34:6-7** And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

¹⁰ **1 Jn 4:16** And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. **Isa 43:25** " I, *even I, am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.

¹¹ **Jn 4:24** "God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." **Jn 5:26** ²⁶ "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

Q. By which attributes do you understand who God is?

A. By his essential properties, which show us, *First*, how great a God he is. (Ps. 77.13) *Secondly*, what kind of God he is. (Matt. 6.17)¹²

Q. Which attributes show how great a God he is?

A. *First*, his infiniteness, by which he has no limits as to his essence. (2Chron. 2.5,6.) *Secondly*, by his eternity, by which he has no limits as to his beginning, continuing, or ending in time. (Ps. 102.25-27. 1Tim. 1.17)¹³

Q. Which attributes show what kind of God he is?

A. His qualities by which he acts, and these are of two kinds: *First*, his faculties, by which he is able to act. (Isa. 60.16; 63.1) *Secondly*, the virtues of those faculties, by which he is prompt and ready to act. (Ps. 86.5)¹⁴

Q. What are his faculties?

A. *First*, his understanding, by which he understands all truth, both together and at once. (Heb. 4.13. Acts 15.8) *Secondly*, his will, by which he purely wills all good. (Ps. 119.68)¹⁵

Q. What are the virtues of those faculties?

A. *First*, they are intellectual; the virtues of his understanding, such as wisdom, knowledge, and all the rest. *Secondly*, they are moral: the virtues of his will, such as love, holiness, and mercy. God's happiness consists in his acting through both of these.

This much has concerned God's sufficiency in regard to his essence. Now follows his being.

Q. What does his being, or persons, consist of?

A. They consist of that one most-pure essence, with its relative properties.

Q. What are those relative properties?

A. There are three: *First*, to generate. *Secondly*, to be generated. *Thirdly*, to proceed from both.

¹² **Ps 77:13** Your way, O God, *is* in the sanctuary; Who *is* so great a God as *our* God? **Mat 6:17-18** "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, "so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who *is* in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

¹³ **2Chr 2:5-6** And the temple which I build *will be* great, for our God is greater than all gods. But who is able to build Him a temple, since heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him? **Ps 102:25-27** Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. But You *are* the same, And Your years will have no end. **1 Tim 1:17** Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

¹⁴ **Isa 60:16** You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, And milk the breast of kings; You shall know that I, the LORD, *am* your Savior And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. **Isa 63:1** Who *is* this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This *One who is* glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength? -- "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." **Ps 86:5** For you, Lord, *are* good, and ready to forgive; and abundant in lovingkindness to all those who call upon you.

¹⁵ **Heb 4:13** And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account. **Acts 15:8** "So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as *He did* to us, **Ps 119:68** ⁶⁸ You *are* good, and do good; Teach me Your statutes.

Q. From this, how many persons do you learn are in God?

A. Three: *First*, the Father, the first person in order, eternally generating the Son. (Ps. 2.7) *Secondly*, the Son, the second person, eternally generated of the Father. (John 3.6; Heb. 1.3) *Thirdly*, the Spirit, the third person, proceeding from both of them. (John 15.26)¹⁶

Q. Are these three persons three distinct Gods?

A. No. For they are that one most-pure essence, and therefore they are only one God. (John 1.1; Rom. 9.5; 1Cor. 6.16; 2.10)

Q. If each of these persons is God, then how can they be distinct persons, and not distinct Gods?

A. Because something may have a number of properties, and various respects of its being; in the Godhead this makes for distinct persons; the same man may be a father in one respect, a manager in another respect, and a scholar in another respect.

Q. If these three persons are only one God, what follows from this?

A. That all the three persons are co-equal and co-eternal; they subsist in one another and are not separated from each other; therefore they delight in each other and glorify each other. (Prov. 8.30)¹⁷

This much has concerned God himself. Now, concerning the works of God.

Q. Having explored God's sufficiency, what is his efficiency?

A. It is that property by which he works all things, and is all in all. (Rom. 11.36; Isa. 45.7)¹⁸

Q. What things of God's efficiency shine out and are meant for you to see?

A. Two things: *First*, God's omnipotence in respect to his essence. *Secondly*, the cooperation and separate kinds of working of the three persons. (Rom. 1.20; John 5.17)¹⁹

Q. What is God's omnipotence?

A. It is his almighty power by which he is able to bring to pass all that he wills, or whatever he can will or decree. (2Chr. 20.6; Phil. 3.21; Matt. 3.9)²⁰

¹⁶ **Ps 2:7** "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You. **Jn 3:6** "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **Heb 1:3** who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, **Jn 15:26** "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

¹⁷ **Prov 8:30** ³⁰ Then I was beside Him *as* a master craftsman; And I was daily *His* delight, Rejoicing always before Him – (*speaking of the personified Wisdom of God who is Christ*).

¹⁸ **Rom 11:36** For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory forever. **Isa 45:7** I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

¹⁹ **Rom 1:20** For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse; **Jn 5:17** But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

²⁰ **2 Chr 20:6** "O LORD God of our fathers, *are* You not God in heaven, and do You *not* rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand *is there not* power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? **Phil 3:20-21** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly

Q. What is God's decree?

A. It is his eternal and determinate purpose for which he effects all things by his mighty power, and according to his own counsel. (Eph. 1.11)²¹

Q. What attributes or glory of God appear in his decree?

A. First, his constancy, by which his decree remains unchangeable. (Num. 23.19) Secondly, his truth, by which he delivers nothing except what he has decreed. (Jer. 10.10) Thirdly, his faithfulness, by which he effects whatever he decrees according to it. (Isa. 46.10)²²

Q. What is God's counsel?

A. It is his deliberation to best effect everything according to his wisdom. (Acts 4.24. Ps. 40.5)²³

Q. What is God's wisdom?

A. It is the idea or perfect platform of all things in the mind of God, which either can be known, or shall be done, according to the good pleasure of his will. (Heb. 11.3; Prov. 8.12,13)²⁴

Q. What is the good pleasure of God's will?

A. It is his will acting most freely, by which he wills himself directly as the greatest good; all other things he wills for himself according to his good pleasure. (Matt. 11.25 Prov. 16.4)²⁵

Q. What follows from this?

A. That God's good pleasure is the first and best cause of all things. (Ps. 115.3; 33.8-11.)²⁶

body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. **Mat 3:9** "and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

²¹ **Eph 1:11** In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

²² **Num 23:19** "God *is* not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? **Jer 10:10** But the LORD *is* the true God; He *is* the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth will tremble, And the nations will not be able to endure His indignation. **Isa 46:10** Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

²³ **Acts 4:24** So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You *are* God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, **Ps 40:5** Many, O LORD my God, *are* Your wonderful works *Which* You have done; And Your thoughts toward us Cannot be recounted to You in order; *If* I would declare and speak *of them*, They are more than can be numbered.

²⁴ **Heb 11:3** By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. **Prov 8:12-13** "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge *and* discretion.

²⁵ **Mat 11:25** At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. **Prov 16:4** The LORD has made all for Himself, yes, even the wicked for the day of doom.

²⁶ **Ps 115:3** But our God *is* in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. **Ps 33:8-11** Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. ⁹ For He spoke, and it was *done*; He commanded, and it stood fast. ¹⁰ The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. ¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.

Q. In God's efficiency, what is the cooperation of the three persons?

A. It is how they work the same thing together inseparably. (John 5.17,19; and 16.13-14)²⁷

Q. If they work the same thing together, how is it that some works are attributed to God the Father, such as creation; some to the Son, such as redemption; and some to the Holy Spirit, such as the application of grace?

A. This is not because the same work is not common to all three persons, but because the work is principally attributed in Scripture to that person whose distinct way of working is made apparent in that work.

Q. What is God the Father's distinct way of working?

A. His working comes from himself by the Son and to the Holy Ghost. (Ps. 33.6; John 1.3)²⁸ And so the beginning and the creation of all things is attributed to him.

Q. What is God the Son's way of working?

A. His working is from the Father, by the Holy Ghost (John 14.16)²⁹, and so the dispensation of all things, and our redemption, are attributed to him.

Q. How does the work of the Holy Ghost proceed?

A. It proceeds from the Father and the Son, (2Cor 5:5; Jn 14.26; 1Cor 12:7-11)³⁰ and so the consummation of all things and the application of grace are attributed to him.

Q. Where does God's efficiency or working become apparent?

A. In two things. *First*, in his creation of the world. *Secondly*, in his providence over the world. (Isa. 37.16; Rom 1:20)³¹

²⁷ **John 5:17, 19** But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working." ¹⁹ Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. **John 16:13-14** "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴ "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

²⁸ **Ps 33:6** By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. **Jn 1:3** All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

²⁹ **Jn 14:16** "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever

³⁰ **2 Cor 5:5** Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. **Jn 14:26** "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. **1 Cor 12:7, 11** ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*: ¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

³¹ **Isa 37:16** "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, *the One* who dwells *between* the cherubim, You *are* God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. **Rom 1:20** ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Q. What is God's creation of the world?

A. It is God's efficiency, by which he made the whole world out of nothing, in which everything he made was originally very good. (Ps. 33:9; Gen. 1.31)³²

Q. Did the Lord make the world in an instant?

A. No; he made it a portion at a time, in the space of six days, as described by Moses. (Gen. 1)

Q. When did the Lord make the third heaven, with the angels as the inhabitants?

A. On the first day, at the beginning of the day. (Gen. 1.1; Job 38.6,7; 2Cor 12:2)³³

Q. What is the creation of the third heaven?

A. It is God making the heaven of heavens, a most glorious place, filled with all that pleasure which belongs to eternal happiness, in which his majesty is seen face to face, and therefore it is called the habitation of God. (2 Chr.2.5,6; Ps 68:5; 1Cor 13.12;)³⁴

Q. What is the creation of the angels?

A. It is the creation of countless angels, in holiness, to be ministering spirits, having acute understanding, liberty of will, great strength, and speedy motion, to celebrate his praises and to execute his commands, especially to the heirs of salvation. (Heb. 12.22; John 5.4; Heb.1.14; 2Sam. 14.20; Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2.11; Isa. 6.2; Ps. 103.20)³⁵

Q. When did God create man?

A. On the sixth day. (Gen. 1.27, 31)

³² **Ps 33:9** For he spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. **Gen 1:31** Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

³³ **Genesis 1:1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. **Job 38:6** To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone,⁷ When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy? **2 Cor 12:2** I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago -- whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows -- such a one was caught up to the third heaven. -- *John Gill wrote: The apostle refers to a distinction among the Jews of "the supreme heaven, the middle heaven, and the lower heaven"; and who also make a like division of worlds, and which they call, "the supreme world, and the middle world, and the lower world"; and sometimes the world of angels, the world of the orbs, and the world of those below;"*

³⁴ **2 Chr 2:5-6** And the temple which I build *will be* great, for our God is greater than all gods. ⁶ But who is able to build Him a temple, since heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him? **Ps 68:5** A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, *Is* God in His holy habitation. **1Cor 13:12** For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.

³⁵ **Heb 12:22** But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, **Jn 5:4** For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. **Heb 1:14** Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? **2 Sam 14:20** to change the face of the matter has your servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth. [*The Angel of God, or Angel of the Lord, is to be understood as God Himself in the Second Person, rather than a created being – hence Christ is the Wisdom of God - WHG*]. **Jude 1:6** And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; **2Pet 2:11** whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord. **Isa 6:2** Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. **Ps 103:20** Bless the LORD, you his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word.

Q. What did God create man to be?

A. He made him a reasoning creature, having a body and an immortal soul, in the image of God. (Gen. 2:7; 1:27; 1Cor 15:44)³⁶

Q. What is the image of God in which man was made?

A. It is the ability of man to resemble God, and in which he was like God, in wisdom, holiness, and righteousness, both in his nature, and in how he governed himself and all creatures. (Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Gen. 1:26)³⁷

Q. What happened to man after being made this way?

A. He was placed in the Garden of Eden, like a royal court, to live to God, together with the woman whom God gave him. (Gen. 2:15)³⁸

This much has concerned God's creation.

Q. What is God's providence?

A. It is how he provides for his creatures that he made, in every circumstance. (Ps. 145:15-16; Prov. 16:33)³⁹

Q. How does God's providence differ in its administration?

A. It is either, *First*, ordinary and mediated – providing for his creatures by ordinary and usual means; (Hos. 2:21-22; Jer 14:22) or *Secondly*, extraordinary and immediate – providing for his creatures by miracles, or directly, by himself. (Ps. 36:4; Dan.3:17)⁴⁰

³⁶ **Gen 2:7** And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. **Gen 1:27** So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. **1 Cor 15:44** It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

³⁷ **Col 3:10** And having put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: **Eph 4:24** Put on the new man, which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. **Gen 1:26** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

³⁸ **Gen 2:15** And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

³⁹ **Ps 145:15-16** The eyes of all wait upon you; and you give them their meat in due season. You open your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing. **Prov 16:33** The lot is cast into the lap; but the entire disposition of it *is* of the LORD.

⁴⁰ **Hos 2:21-22** “It shall come to pass in that day *That* I will answer,” says the LORD; “I will answer the heavens, And they shall answer the earth. The earth shall answer With grain, With new wine, And with oil; **Jer 14:22** Are there any among the idols of the nations that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give showers? *Are* You not He, O LORD our God? Therefore we will wait for You, Since You have made all these. **Dan 3:17** “If that *is the case*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king. **Ps 136:3-4** Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords! For His mercy *endures* forever: To Him who alone does great wonders,

Q. Where do we see his providence?

A. *First*, in his conduct, by which he upholds all things in their existence and working. (Acts 17:28; Ps. 104:29-30; Neh. 9:6) *Secondly*, in his governing, by which he guides, directs, and brings all creatures to their appointed ends. (Jer 5:22; Ps. 33:9-11)⁴¹

Q. Does God govern all creatures alike?

A. No. He governs some by common providence, and others, such as angels and men, by special providence; giving them an eternal estate of happiness by pleasing him, or an eternal state of misery by displeasing him. (Deut. 30:15-18)⁴²

Q. How is God's providence involved in his special governing of man?

A. By two things. 1. Man's apostasy, or fall. 2. His recovery, or rising up again.

Q. Concerning man's fall, what should you observe in it?

A. Two things. 1. His sin in eating the forbidden fruit. (Gen. 2:17) 2. That Adam's sin was passed on to all of his offspring (Rom. 5:10).⁴³

Q. Was eating the forbidden fruit really so great a sin?

A. Yes, it was a very great sin. This tree was a sacrament of the covenant; and Adam was warned not to eat of it; in committing the sin, the whole of mankind broke the whole law, even though God so highly favored him.

Q. What are the causes of this transgression?

A. The blameless cause was God's law. (Rom. 7:7) And just as the law caused sin without blame, so God caused it, and yet he remained holy, just, and good. (Rom. 7: 10-12.)⁴⁴

⁴¹ **Acts 17:28** "for in Him we live and move and have our being"; **Ps 104:29-30** You hide Your face, they are troubled; You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; **Neh 9:6** You alone *are* the LORD; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. **Jer 5:22** Do you not fear Me?' says the LORD. 'Will you not tremble at My presence, the one who has placed the sand as the boundary of the sea, by a perpetual decree, so that it cannot pass beyond it? And though its waves toss to and fro, yet they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it. **Ps 33:9-11** For He spoke, and it was *done*; He commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.

⁴² **Deut 30:15-18** "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, I announce to you today that you shall surely perish;

⁴³ **Rom 5:12** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned

⁴⁴ **Rom 7:7** I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." **Rom 7:10-12** And the commandment, which *was to bring* life, I found to *bring* death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*. Therefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

Q. What are the blamable causes?

A. Mostly two: 1. The devil abused the serpent to deceive the woman. (Gen. 3.1) 2. Man abused his own free will, giving in to the temptations which he might have resisted. (Gen 3:6; Gen 4:7; Jam 1:14)⁴⁵

Q. What is the devil?

A. It is the collective name given to the many apostate and rebellious angels who, through pride and blasphemy against God, and with malice toward man, became liars and murderers of man by drawing him into sin. (Luke 11.18; 1Tim. 3.6-7; 1Jn 3.12; 8.44)⁴⁶

Q. What are the effects and fruits of this transgression?

A. There are two. 1. *Guilt*, by which sinners are bound to undergo due punishment for their fault. (Rom. 3.19) 2. *Punishment*, which is the just anger of God towards them for the filth of their sin. (Rom. 1.18; Eph 5:6)⁴⁷

Q. What are the particular punishments inflicted because of this sin?

A. Besides the fearful punishment of the devils, mentioned Jude 6-7, and the punishments mentioned in the Garden, (Gen. 3.14-17) the punishment of man was, *First*, original and actual sin. (Jn 8:44; Rom 7:14; 1Cor 15:22) *Secondly*, death. (Gen. 5.5)⁴⁸

⁴⁵ **Gen 3:1** Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" **Gen 4:7** "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." **Jam 1:14** But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. **Gen 3:6** So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

⁴⁶ **Lk 11:18** "If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? **1Tim 3:6-7** not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. **1 Jn 3:12** not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. **Jn 8:44** "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

⁴⁷ **Rom 3:19** Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be shut, and all the world may become guilty before God. **Rom 1:18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness; **Eph 5:6** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

⁴⁸ **Jude 1:6-7** And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. **Gen 3:14-17** So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." ¹⁶ To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you." ¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. **Jn 8:34** Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. **Rom 7:14** For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. **1 Cor 15:22** For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. **Gen 5:5** So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is the transgression of God's law. (Dan 9:11; 1Jn 3:4)⁴⁹

Q. What are original and actual sin?

A. *Original sin* is the whole nature of man being contrary to the law of God, opposed to all good and inclined to all evil. (Eccl. 8:11; Gen. 6:5; Rom. 6:20)⁵⁰ *Actual sin* is the continual clash between the actions of man and the law of God because of original sin, so that man has no free will to do any spiritual good. (Isa. 65:2-3; Jam 1:14-15; Rom 7:15-17)⁵¹

Q. What kind of death does God inflict on man for sin?

A. A double death. 1. The first is death of the body, together with its beginnings in this world, such as grief, shame, loss, and sickness. (Deut. 28:20-25)⁵² 2. The second is death of the soul, which is eternal separation and ejection of the soul after death, and ejection of soul and body after judgment, from God, into everlasting torments in hell. (Rev 20:14; 21:18)⁵³

Q. Does death have birth pangs, just as life has birth pangs?

A. Yes, 1. The heart becomes callous and hard, so it cannot feel the evil of sin. (Ps 119:70; Heb 3:13) 2. There are terrors of conscience. (Heb. 2:15) 3. Then comes the bondage of Satan. (Eph. 2:2-3; Rom 6:16) 4. Finally the curse of God removes their blessings and fits them for destruction. (Rom. 9:22)⁵⁴

⁴⁹ **Dan 9:11** "Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. **1Jn 3:4** Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

⁵⁰ **Ecc 8:11** Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. **Gen 6:5** Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. **Rom 6:20** For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness.

⁵¹ **Isa 65:2-3** I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in a way *that is* not good, According to their own thoughts; A people who provoke Me to anger continually to My face; **Jam 1:14-15** But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. **Rom 7:15-17** For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law *that it is* good. But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

⁵² **Deuteronomy 28:20-25** "The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. "The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. "The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. "And your heavens which *are* over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you *shall be* iron. "The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed. "The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth.

⁵³ **Rev 20:14** Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. **Rev 21:8** "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

⁵⁴ **Ps 119:70** Their heart is as fat as grease (*fig of speech: calloused and unfeeling*); **Heb 3:13** but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. **Heb 2:15** and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. **Ephesians 2:1-3** And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts

Q. Which of God's attributes are displayed in this?

A. 1. His *holiness*; being pure from all sin, God cannot put up with the least sin in the best of his creatures. (1Pet. 1.15-16) 2. His *justice*; being perfectly just, God must punish man for sin, as well as reward him for well-doing. (Hos 4:9; Mat. 6:4; Rom 2:6) 3. His *patience*; God exercises pity, patience, and goodness toward his offending creatures. (Rom. 2.4)⁵⁵

Q. Does sin and its punishment carry forward to all generations?

A. Yes. (Num 14:18; Ps 51:5; Eph 2:3)⁵⁶

Q. How is it propagated?

A. By imputing Adam's sin to us; thus the punishment must follow as well. (Rom. 5.12-13)⁵⁷

Q. Why should Adam's sin be imputed to all his posterity?

A. Because we were in him just as members of a body are under their head, as children come from their father, as debtors are bound by their surety, and as branches come from their roots; So it is just that, if he had stood, all would have stood by imputing his righteousness to them. But having fallen, all are fallen by imputing his sin to them.

Q. Having seen man's apostasy from God, what is his recovery?

A. Man is returned to God's favor merely by favor, by his free grace. (Eph. 2.12-13; Rom. 5.8)⁵⁸

Q. How are we recovered into favor again, and what are the components of this recovery?

A. There are two ways. *First*, by redemption. (2Cor. 5.19, 21) *Secondly*, by applying that redemption to us. (Eph 1:7)⁵⁹

of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. **Rom 6:16** Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey. **Rom 9:22** What if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

⁵⁵ **1Pet 1:15-16** but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." **Hos 4:9** So I will punish them for their ways, And reward them for their deeds. **Mat 6:4** "that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. **Rom 2:6** But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who "will render to each one according to his deeds;" **Rom 2:4** Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

⁵⁶ **Num 14:18** 'The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generation*.' **Ps 51:5** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. **Eph 2:3** we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

⁵⁷ **Rom 5:12-13** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.

⁵⁸ **Eph 2:12-13** that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **Rom 5:8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁵⁹ **2Cor 5:19** God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. **1 Pet 1:2** elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience

Q. What is redemption?

A. Redemption is satisfying or paying the price owed to God to uphold his justice, and to clear the debt created by sin. It purchased the life of the elect, delivering them from the captivity of sin, Satan, and death. It was paid by our Redeemer according to the covenant made between him and the Father. (1Cor. 6.20; Luke 1.74; Act 26:18; Jn 17:2)⁶⁰

Q. Who is this redeemer?

A. Jesus Christ, who is both God and Man. (Matt. 1.23; Jn 1.14; Col. 2.9)⁶¹

Q. Why is he God-Man?

A. So he might be a fit Mediator, to transact all business between God and man in the execution of the three offices to which he was anointed by the Father. (Lk. 7:16; Act 7:37; 1Tim 2.5; Heb 4.14)⁶²

Q. What are those three offices of Christ?

A. 1. His *prophetical* office, by which he reveals the will of the Father. (Acts 3.22; Col. 2.3)⁶³

2. His *priestly* office, by which he makes full atonement to the Father for us. (Col. 1.20)⁶⁴

3. His *kingly* office, by which he governs his people whom he has taught and reconciled, subduing their enemies, and procuring their eternal peace. (Ps. 2.6-7; Isa. 9.6)⁶⁵

Q. How has Christ Jesus made satisfaction for us?

A. By his humiliation, in which he was made subject to the strict justice of God throughout his whole life and death, to perform whatever God's justice required of man. (Gal. 4.4-5)⁶⁶

and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: **Eph 1:7** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

⁶⁰ **1Cor 6:20** For you were bought at a price; **Lk 1:74** To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, **Acts 26:18** 'to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' **Jn 17:2** since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

⁶¹ **Mat 1:23** "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." **Jn 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. **Col 2:9** For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

⁶² **Lk 7:16** Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people." **Acts 7:37** "This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.' **1Tim 2:5** For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus, **Heb 4:14** Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession.

⁶³ **Acts 3:22** ²² "For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. **Col 2:3** [Christ], in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

⁶⁴ **Col 1:20** and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

⁶⁵ **Ps 2:6-7** "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You.'" **Isa 9:6** For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁶⁶ **Gal 4:4-5** But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Q. What did God's justice require of man?

A. 1. *Death* for breaking the law, which Christ tasted for us in his bitter sufferings of both body and soul, by being made sin for us and thus abolishing sin; this is called his **passive obedience**. (Heb. 2.9; Eph. 1.7; 2Cor. 5.21; Gal. 3.13) 2. *Perfect obedience* in fulfilling the law perfectly, both in his nature and by his actions, to procure and merit eternal life; this is called his **active obedience**. (Heb. 7.26-28)⁶⁷

Q. What follows Christ's humiliation?

A. His exaltation in its various degrees, which is his glorious victory and visible triumph over all his and our enemies, and over sin, Satan, and death. (Lk 24.26; Phil. 2.8-9; 1Cor 15.55-57; Col. 2.15)⁶⁸

Q. What is the first degree of Christ's exaltation?

A. His *resurrection* on the third day, at which his body and soul, by the power of the Godhead, were brought together again; and so he rose from death, appearing to his disciples for a period of forty days. (1 Cor. 15.3-4; John 2.19-21; Acts 1.3)⁶⁹

Q. What is the second degree of Christ's exaltation?

A. His ascension into heaven, which was his natural man going up from Mount Olivet into the third heaven by the power of the Godhead in the sight of his disciples. (Acts 1.9-12)⁷⁰

⁶⁷ **Heb 2:9** But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. **Eph 1:7** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. **2 Cor 5:21** For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. **Gal 3:13** Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree"), **Heb 7:26-28** For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, *appoints* the Son who has been perfected forever.

⁶⁸ **Lk 24:26** "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" **Phil 2:8-9** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient *to the point of* death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, **1 Cor 15:55-57** "O Death, where *is* your sting? O Hades, where *is* your victory?" The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **Col 2:15** Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

⁶⁹ **1 Cor 15:3-4** Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and He was buried, and He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, **Jn 2:19-21** Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body. **Acts 1:3** to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

⁷⁰ **Acts 1:9-12** Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

Q. What is the third degree of his exaltation?

A. Sitting at the right hand of God where, in all the fullness of his glory in both his natures, he governs and rules all things together with the Father, as Lord over all, for the good of his people. (Mark 16.19; Ps. 110.1; 1Cor. 15.25; Eph.1.20-22; 1Pet.3.22)⁷¹

Q. What is the fourth and last degree of his exaltation?

A. His return in judgment, which is his second coming into this world with great glory and majesty, to judge the living and the dead, to the shame of all those who would not have him rule over them, and to the unspeakable good of his people. (Matt. 19.28; 2Tim. 4.1; Acts 17.31; 2Th. 1.7-9)⁷²

This concludes redemption, the first part of his recovery.

Q. How is redemption applied to his people in the second part of man's recovery?

A. The Spirit, through the word and by its ministry, applies to the church all of what Christ has done for the church as Mediator, making it effectual to the church, as her own. (John 16.14; Tit. 3.5-7; John 14.16-17; Rom. 10.14, 17; Eph. 5.25-26)⁷³

Q. What is the church?

A. It is the full number of God's elect. (Heb. 12.23; Jn 17.9-11; 10.16; Eph. 1.22-23)⁷⁴

⁷¹ **Mk 16:19** So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. **Ps 110:1** The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." **1 Cor 15:25** For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. **Eph 1:20-22** which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, **1 Pet 3:22** who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

⁷² **Mat 19:28** So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. **2Tim 4:1** I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **Acts 17:31** "because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." **2Th 1:7-9** and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

⁷³ **Jn 16:14** "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. **Tit 3:5-7** not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. **John 14:16-17** "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever -- "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. **Rom 10:14,17** How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. **Eph 5:25-26** Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

⁷⁴ **Heb 12:23** to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, **Jn 17:9-11** "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. "And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. **Jn 10:16** "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I

Q. How does the Spirit apply Christ's work to the church?

A. 1. By uniting the soul to Christ. (Rom 6.3,5; Gal 3:27) 2. By communicating the benefits of Christ to the soul. (1Cor. 2.10; Eph 3.5)⁷⁵

Q. What is this union?

A. By joining the soul to Christ, the Lord makes it one spirit with Christ, and so he gives the soul possession of Christ, and a right to all the benefits and blessings of Christ. (1Cor. 6.17; Jn 17.21; Rom. 8.32; 1Pet 3.5; Eph. 1.13-14)⁷⁶

Q. How does the Spirit make this union?

A. Two ways. 1. By cutting off the soul from the old Adam, or the wild olive tree, in the work of preparation. (Rom. 11.23-24.) 2. By putting or ingrafting the soul into the second Adam, Christ Jesus, through calling it to Christ. (Acts 26.18)⁷⁷

Q. How is the soul prepared for Christ?

A. There are two ways. 1. *Contrition*, by which the Spirit immediately severs the soul from its security in sin, making it mourn because of it, and separating the soul from sin by enabling it to see sin as the greatest evil. (Isa. 61.1, 3; Jer. 4.3-4. Mat. 11.20, 28)⁷⁸ 2. *Humiliation*, by which the Spirit cuts the soul off from its self-confidence in any good it has or does; especially by making it feel its great need

must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. **Eph 1:22-23** He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

⁷⁵ **Rom 6:3,5** Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, **Gal 3:27** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. **1Cor 2:10** But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. **Eph 3:5** which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets.

⁷⁶ **1Cor 6:17** But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*. **Jn 17:21** "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. **Rom 8:32** He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? **1 Pet 1:3-5** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **Eph 1:13-14** you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

⁷⁷ **Rom 11:23-24** ³ And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who *are* natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree? **Acts 26:18** 'to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

⁷⁸ **Isa 61:1** "The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound; **Jer 4:3-4** For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: "Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, And take away the foreskins of your hearts, You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Lest My fury come forth like fire, And burn so that no one can quench *it*, Because of the evil of your doings." **Mat 11:20** Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent; Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

for and unworthiness of Christ; hence the soul submits itself to God to be disposed of as he pleases. (Phil. 3.7- 8; Luke 15.17-19)⁷⁹

Q. How is the soul called to Christ?

A. 1. The Lord's call and invitation to come to Christ, is made in the revelation and offer of Christ, and of his rich grace. (2Cor. 5.19-20) 2. By receiving Christ, at which the whole soul comes out of itself to Christ, and for Christ, by virtue of the irresistible power of the Spirit in the call; and this is faith. (Jer. 3.32; John 6.44-45; 10.16; Isa. 55.6)⁸⁰

Q. How are Christ's benefits communicated to the soul?

A. Souls possessed by Christ, which have a right to him, have his fruits and all his benefits by the Spirit. (John 4.10,14)⁸¹

Q. What is the first of those benefits that we enjoy from Christ?

A. **Justification**, which is the gracious sentence of God the Father, given in return for Christ's satisfaction, received by faith, and imputed to the faithful; God absolves believers from the guilt and condemnation of all their sins, and accepts them as perfectly righteous, which brings them out from condemnation, and into eternal life. (Rom. 3.24-25; 4.6-8; 8.33-34)⁸²

Q. What is the difference between justification and sanctification?

A. 1. We are justified by Christ's righteousness which is inherent in Christ only; we are sanctified by a righteousness which comes from Christ, but which is inherent in ourselves. (2Cor. 5.21; Phil. 3.9)⁸³

⁷⁹ **Phil 3:7-8** But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ. **Luke 15:17-19** *Prodigal Son* "But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 'I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 'and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.' "

⁸⁰ **2Cor 5:19-20** God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and he has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. **Jer 3:22** "Return, you backsliding children, *And* I will heal your backslidings." "Indeed we do come to You, For You are the LORD our God." **Jn 6:44-45** "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. **Jn 10:16** and they will hear My voice; **Isa 55:6** Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.

⁸¹ **Jn 4:10, 14** Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water... but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

⁸² **Rom 3:24-25** being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth *as* a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, **Rom 4:6-8** just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: "Blessed *are those* whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; Blessed *is the* man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin." **Rom 8:33-34** Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

⁸³ **2Cor 5:21** For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. **Phil 3:9** and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; **Jn 17:17** "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

2. Justification is completed at once, without degrees, because it is Christ's perfect righteousness. Sanctification is imperfect, because it is begun in this life and never completed. (Phil 1.6; Phil. 3.11)⁸⁴

Q. What is the second benefit, after justification, which the faithful receive from Christ?

A. **Reconciliation**, by which a justified Christian is actually reconciled and at peace with God. (Rom. 5.1; Col 1:19-22)⁸⁵ From this peace, follows his peace with all creatures.

Q. What is the third benefit, after reconciliation?

A. **Adoption**, by which the Lord considers the faithful his sons, crowns them with the privileges of sons, and gives them the Spirit of adoption – the same Spirit which is in his only-begotten Son. (1 John 3.2; Rom. 8.11, 14-17.)⁸⁶

Q. What is the fourth benefit, after adoption?

A. **Sanctification**, by which the sons of God are renewed in the whole man, in the image of their heavenly Father in Christ Jesus, first by *mortification*, or daily dying to sin because of Christ's death; and second by *vivification*, or daily rising to newness of life because of Christ's resurrection. (1Th. 5.23-24; Eph. 4.24; Col. 3.10; Jer. 31.33; Rom. 6.4)⁸⁷

Q. What follows from mortification and vivification?

A. A continual war and combat between the renewed part, assisted by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the unrenewed part, assisted by Satan and this evil world. (Rom. 7.21-23)⁸⁸

Q. What is the fifth and last benefit, after sanctification?

A. **Glorification**, which has two degrees: one in this life, and the other in the world to come.

⁸⁴ **Phil 1:6** being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ; **Phil 3:11-12** if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

⁸⁵ **Rom 5:1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **Col 1:19-22** For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight.

⁸⁶ **1 Jn 3:2** Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. **Rom 8:11** But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. **Romans 8:14-17** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

⁸⁷ **1 Thess 5:23-24** Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you *is* faithful, who also will do *it*. **Eph 4:24** put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. **Col 3:10** put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, **Jer 31:33** "But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. **Rom 6:4** Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁸⁸ **Romans 7:21-23** I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Q. What is the first degree of glorification *in this life*?

A. It is a lively expectation of glory from the assurance and shedding abroad God's love in our hearts, which works unspeakable joy in us. (Rom. 5.2, 5; Tit. 2.13)⁸⁹

Q. What is the second degree of glorification *in the world to come*?

A. It is the full enjoyment of glory; being made complete and perfect in holiness and happiness, we will enjoy all that eye has not seen, nor ear has heard, in our immediate and eternal communion with God in Christ. (Heb. 12.22-23; 1Cor. 15.28)⁹⁰

This concludes the first part, of living to God by faith in God.

Q. What is the second part of living to God, by our observance?

A. It is the duty we are to perform to God, through the power of his Holy Spirit working in us by faith, according to the will of God. (Eph. 6.6-7; Ps. 139.24; Rom. 6.1-2; Luke 1.74-75)⁹¹

Q. What does our observance of God consist of?

A. It is either *moral* or *ceremonial*.

Q. What does our *Moral* Observance of God consist of?

A. Two things: 1. Submitting to God's will, by which a believer, for the sake of Christ, chooses to suffer any misery rather than commit the least sin. (Heb. 11.25; Acts 21.12-13)⁹² 2. Doing his will, by which a believer, being sensitive to Christ's love, universally obeys the law of God. (Rom. 7.22; 1Jn 5.3; Lk 1.6; Phil. 3.12)⁹³

⁸⁹ **Rom 5:2** through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Rom 5:5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. **Tit 2:13** looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

⁹⁰ **Heb 12:22-23** But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, **1 Cor 15:28** Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

⁹¹ **Eph 6:6-7** not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, **Ps 139:24** ²⁴ And see if *there is any* wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting. **Rom 6:1-2** What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? **Lk 1:74-75** grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

⁹² **Heb 11:25** choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, **Acts 21:12-13** Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

⁹³ **Rom 7:22** For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. **1Jn 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. **Lk 1:6** And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. **Phil 3:12** Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

Q. Is the law of any use to a Christian?

A. Although it is abolished for a Christian as a covenant to obtain life, (but Adam's posterity are still under it) it remains a rule of life for him, and it prepares the heart for Christ. (Rom. 6.14-15; Matt. 5.17-20; Ezek. 10.11; Rom 3.31)⁹⁴

Q. Why is a Christian *not* under the law as a covenant of life, so that he dies if he breaks the least sin?

A. Because Jesus Christ has kept it perfectly for him. (Rom. 8.3-4; 5.20-21)⁹⁵

Q. Can any man keep the law perfectly in this life?

A. No. The unregenerate, lacking the Spirit of life, cannot perfectly obey it. The regenerate, having the Spirit only in part, obey it imperfectly. (Rom. 8.7-8; 7.20-21)⁹⁶

Q. What happens to the **un-regenerate** when they disobey the law?

A. They receive the eternal curse of God for the least sin, and the increase of God's fierce and fearful wrath as they increase in sin. (Gal. 3.10; Rom. 2.5)⁹⁷

Q. What happens to the **regenerate** after they break the law, and imperfectly obey it?

A. The Lord may threaten and correct them, but his loving kindness (in covering their sins with the best duties of Christ, and accepting their worst services when they are motivated by his Spirit) is never taken from them. (Ps. 89.31-33; Zech. 3.7-8; Isa. 55.7)⁹⁸

⁹⁴ **Rom 6:14-15** For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! **Matthew 5:17-20** "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. **Ezra 10:11** "Now therefore, make confession to the LORD God of your fathers, and do His will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the pagan wives." **Rom 3:31** Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

⁹⁵ **Rom 8:3-4** For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. **Rom 5:20-21** Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

⁹⁶ **Rom 8:7-8** Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. **Rom 7:20-21** Now if I do what I will *not to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

⁹⁷ **Gal 3:10** for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." **Rom 2:5** But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

⁹⁸ **Ps 89:31-33** If they break My statutes And do not keep My commandments, Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, Nor allow My faithfulness to fail. **Zech 3:7-8** "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'If you will walk in My ways, And if you will keep My command, Then you shall also judge My house, And likewise have charge of My courts; I will give you places to walk Among these who stand here. 'Hear, O Joshua, the high priest, You and your companions who sit before you, For they are a wondrous sign; For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH. **Isa 55:7** Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous

Q. Which imperfect obedience of believers is acceptable?

A. When they observe the will of Christ, that is, 1. They confess and lament their sins. (1Jn 1.9; Rom. 7.24)⁹⁹ 2. They desire mercy in the blood of Christ, and more of his Spirit. (Phil. 3.9-11)¹⁰⁰ 3. They give him praise for their least ability to do his will. (Ps. 32.5; 1Cor. 15.10)¹⁰¹

Q. How is the Law, or the Ten Commandments, divided?

A. There are two tablets. The first tablet shows our immediate duty to God, in the first four commandments. The second tablet shows our duty to man, in the last six commandments. (see Ex 20.1-17)

Q. What rules are you to observe to understand the moral law?

A. These are the rules:

1. Whatever commandment covers any duty, the contrary sin is forbidden; and where any sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded.
2. The law is spiritual, and therefore it requires not only outward obedience, but inward and spiritual obedience.
3. Where any general sin is forbidden, all lesser sins, degrees of, means to, and provocations to that sin are also forbidden; in God's account, they too are that sin. And so, where any duty is commanded, all the lesser duties, means to, and provocations to that duty are also commanded. (Mat. 5.21-22; Lk. 17.10)¹⁰²
4. The law is perfect, and therefore there is no sin in all the Scripture that is not forbidden in it; nor is there any duty required (if moral) that is not commanded in it.

This concludes our moral observance of God.

Q. What does our *Ceremonial* Observance consist of?

A. It consists of the celebration of the two sacraments: *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*.¹⁰³

man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

⁹⁹ **1Jn 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **Rom 7:24** O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

¹⁰⁰ **Phil 3:9-11** and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

¹⁰¹ **Ps 32:5** I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. **1Cor 15:10** But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was* with me.

¹⁰² **Mat 5:21-22** "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' "But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. **Lk 17:10** "So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.' "

¹⁰³ Also known as the Eucharist, or Communion.

Q. What is a sacrament?

A. It is a holy ceremony appointed by Christ, in which external tangible things, are separated from their common use to signify, exhibit, and seal to us that assurance of eternal life which we have by Christ Jesus, according to the covenant of his grace. (Gen. 17.9-10)¹⁰⁴

Q. Which are these sacraments?

A. They are two, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*.

Q. What is the external tangible part of baptism?

A. Water. (John 3.23)¹⁰⁵

Q. What is the inward and spiritual part of baptism that is signified, exhibited, and sealed by it?

A. Christ's righteousness and his Spirit. 1. Washing away our sin, and thus delivering us from death. 2. Presenting us cleared before the Father, and thus restoring us again to life. (Rom. 6.4; 1Pet. 3.21; Matt. 3.11)¹⁰⁶

Q. What follows from this?

A. 1. That it is a sacrament of our new birth, and of being grafted into Christ. (John 3.5; Rom. 11.17; Gal. 3.27)¹⁰⁷ 2. That because we are completely justified at once, and new-born once, we shall never die again. And so this seal is to be administered only once.

Q. What is the external and tangible part of the Lord's Supper?

A. Bread and wine, with the sacramental actions revolving around them.

Q. What is the inward and spiritual part that is signified, sealed, and exhibited by them?

A. The body and blood of the crucified Christ, offered and given to nourish and strengthen believers, renewing their faith unto eternal life. (1Cor. 11.24; John 6.54-55)¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ **Gen 17:9-10** God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. "This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you:

¹⁰⁵ **Jn 3:23** Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.

¹⁰⁶ **Rom 6:4** Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. **1 Pet 3:21** There is also an antitype which now saves us -- baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, **Mat 3:11** "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

¹⁰⁷ **Jn 3:5** Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **Rom 11:17** And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, **Gal 3:27** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

¹⁰⁸ **1Cor 11:24** and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Q. What follows from this?

A. 1. That it is the sacrament of our growth in Christ, being new-born, because it is food given to nourish us, having now received life (Jn 6:54-57). 2. Therefore it is to be administered and received often, so that we may grow.(Jn 6:63) 3. Children, fools, and the wicked should not partake of the sacrament, because they cannot examine themselves, and thus renew their faith. (1Cor. 11.28-29)¹⁰⁹

Q. Should the sacrament be administered to carnal people who have been baptized?

A. No, because they are not within the covenant, and have no right to the seal of the covenant.

Q. Where should believers, who have a right to this sacrament, partake of it?

A. It should not be administered privately. God's people are to enjoy their right to it in some particular visible church, in joining with them as fellow-members of that local body. (1Cor. 11.20-22; 1Cor. 10.17; Acts 2.42)¹¹⁰

Q. Who should be members of every particular visible church?

A. Christ, being the Head of every particular church, and that church being part of his body, only members of Christ by faith are to be members of the church. (1Cor. 1.2; 1Th. 1.1,6)¹¹¹

Q. But do not hypocrites and those who are not true members of Christ creep in?

A. Yes; but if they were known to be such, they should be kept out; and when they are known, they are to be removed in an orderly way. (Mat. 25.11-12; 2Tim. 3.5; Rev. 2.20; Tit. 3.20)¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ **Jn 6:53-57** Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. **Jn 6:63** "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life. **1Cor 11:28-29** But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

¹¹⁰ **1 Cor 11:20-22** Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? **1 Cor 10:17** For we, *though* many, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread. **Acts 2:42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

¹¹¹ **1 Cor 1:2** To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: **1 Th 1:1** To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: ⁶ And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit,

¹¹² **Mat 25:11-12** Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' **2Tim 3:5** having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! **Rev 2:20** "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. **Tit 3:10** Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition,

Q. Are these members bound to cling only to Christ their head, by faith?

A. Yes; and to one another also by brotherly love, which they are bound to strengthen and confirm (as well as their faith) by a solemn covenant. (Eph. 4.15-16; Col. 1.4; Jer. 1.5; Isa. 56.4-5; Zeph. 3.9; Ps. 119.106)¹¹³

Q. What benefits are there to joining a particular church?

A. 1. By joining, believers come under the special government of Christ in his church, and its officers. (Isa. 30.20; 1Cor. 12.7, 11-12, 27)¹¹⁴ 2. They have the promise of special blessing on themselves and on their children. (Ps. 133; Ex. 20.6; 1Cor 7:14; 2Jn 1:4)¹¹⁵ 3. They have the promise of God's special presence in: (a.) Revealing his will to them. (Ps. 27.4; 63.2-3)¹¹⁶ (b.) Protecting them. (Ps. 61.3-4)¹¹⁷ (c.) Hearing all their prayers. (Deut. 4.7; Matt. 18.19)¹¹⁸

¹¹³ **Eph 4:15-16** but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head -- Christ -- from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. **Col 1:4** since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; **Jer 1:5** "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; **Isa 56:4-5** For thus says the LORD: "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, And choose what pleases Me, And hold fast My covenant, Even to them I will give in My house And within My walls a place and a name Better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name That shall not be cut off. **Zeph 3:9** "For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, That they all may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him with one accord. **Psalm 119:106** I have sworn and confirmed That I will keep Your righteous judgments.

¹¹⁴ **Isa 30:20** And *though* the Lord gives you The bread of adversity and the water of affliction, Yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, But your eyes shall see your teachers. **1 Cori 12:7** Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. **1 Cor 12:11-12** All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. **1 Cor 12:27** Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. **Colo 1:18** And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. **Eph 1:22-23** And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

¹¹⁵ **Psalm 133:1-3** Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* For brethren to dwell together in unity! *It is* like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. *It is* like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing -- Life forevermore. **Ex 20:6** showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. **1Cor 7:14** For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. **2 Jn 1:4** I rejoiced greatly that I have found *some* of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father.

¹¹⁶ **Ps 27:4** One *thing* I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple. **Ps 63:2-3** So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness *is* better than life, My lips shall praise You.

¹¹⁷ **Ps 61:3-4** For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.

¹¹⁸ **Deut 4:7** "For what great nation *is there* that has God *so* near to it, as the LORD our God *is* to us, for whatever *reason* we may call upon Him? **Mat 18:19** "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.

Q. Are there some who never find these benefits?

A. Yes. Because many do not know how to make use of God's ordinances, they do not feel a need for God's presence through them; their sin also blinds and partly hardens their hearts and pollutes God's house; and so they become worse, even when they have the best means available. (Matt. 11:23; Jer. 17:5-6; Heb. 6:8; 1Sam. 5:8-9; Ezek. 14:4-5; 1Kgs 8:21)¹¹⁹

Q. What are the miseries of those who carelessly and willfully despise God's church, and refuse to join a particular church?

A. Besides the loss of God's presence in the fellowship of his people, it is a fearful sign that God never intends to save their souls. (Acts 2:47; 1Jn 2:10-11; 4:20)¹²⁰

Q. What should people labor for most, and evidence to the church, so that they may join it?

A. It is a threefold work: 1. *Humiliation* for their misery, death, and sin, seeing it as their greatest evil. (Acts 2:37-38; Matt. 3:5-8) 2. *Vocation*, or drawing near to Christ out of this misery, as their greatest and only good. (Acts 1:38, 41) 3. *New obedience*, evidencing how they have walked in Christ since they were called. (Acts 9:26-27; Mat. 3:8)¹²¹

¹¹⁹ **Mat 11:23** "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. **Jer 17:5-6** Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited. **Heb 6:8** but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned. **1Sam 5:8-9** Therefore they sent and gathered to themselves all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" And they answered, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried away to Gath." So they carried the ark of the God of Israel away. So it was, after they had carried it away, that the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction; and He struck the men of the city, both small and great, and tumors broke out on them. **Eze 14:4-5** "Therefore speak to them, and say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD: "Everyone of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, "that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols." **1 Kgs 8:21** "And there I have made a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt."

¹²⁰ **Acts 2:47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. **Heb 10:25** not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. **1Jn 2:10-11** He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. **1Jn 4:20** If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

¹²¹ **Acts 2:37-38** Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **Acts 2:41** Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. **Mat 3:5,8** They were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins... "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, **Acts 9:26-27** And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. **Mat 3:8** "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance.